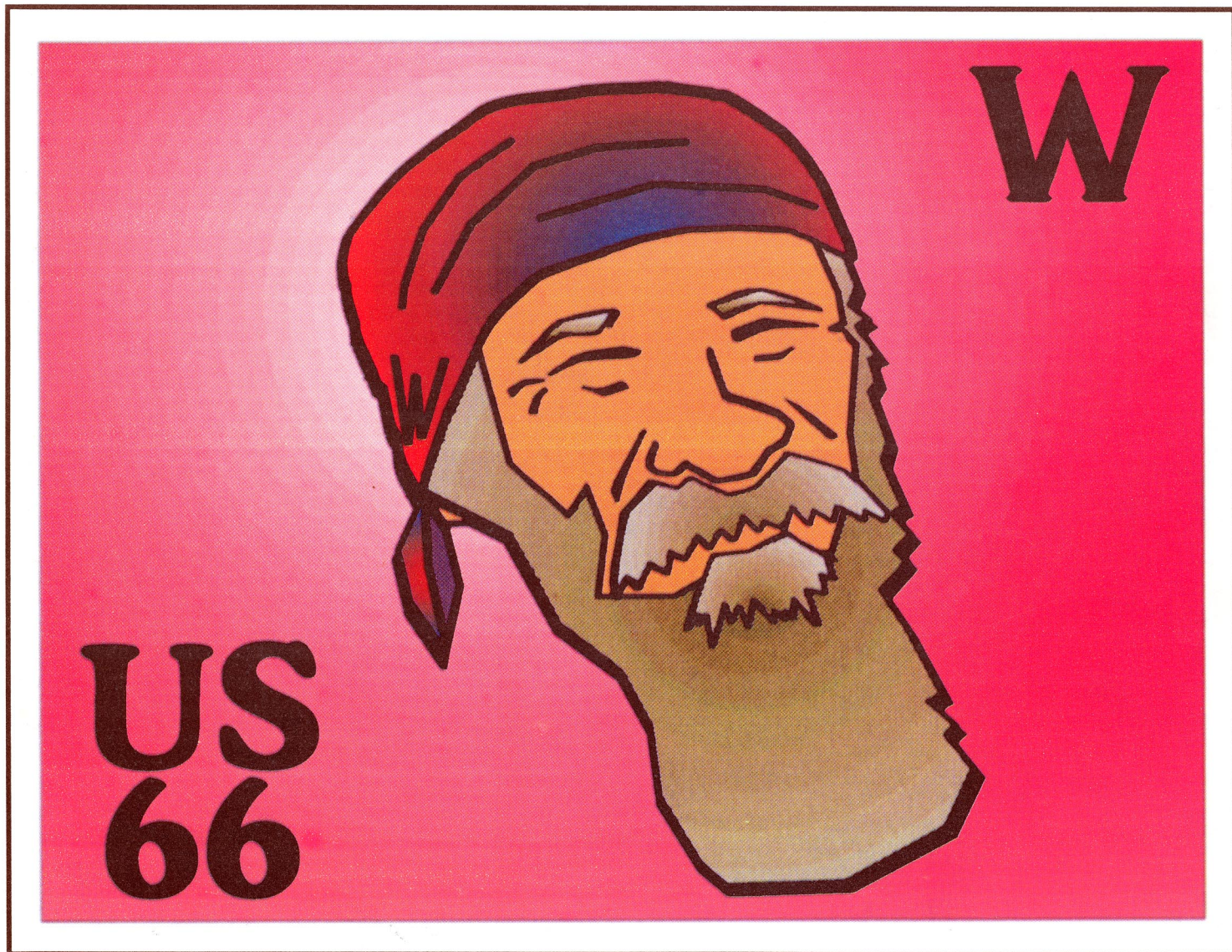


ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

# THE 66 NEWS

SPRING 1995

\$2.00



WHERE'S WALDMIRE?

"ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN."



## Officers and Board Members

The officers and board members of the Route 66 Association are available at most reasonable times to answer your questions and hear your comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them if you need to. The date under or to the right of each officer's or member's name is the expiration date of their term.

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<p>Executive Committee members are the officers, plus Jeff Meyer and Ray Schroeder.</p>
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## Meeting Schedule

All members are welcome to attend the board meetings and motor tour planning committee meetings of the Association. The location of board meetings varies. Motor tour meetings take place at Mount Hope Township Hall in McLean.

### Board Meetings:

April 2, Feddersen's Pizza Garage, Dwight (complete buffet dinner for \$6!)

Meal at noon, business meeting at 1 p.m.

July 30, Harrah's, Joliet

Brunch at 11 a.m., business meeting at noon

### Motor Tour Meetings:

March 19, May 21

Business meeting starts at noon

## In Memoriam

Our sympathies go to Association member Dorothy Seratt on the death of her mother last December 23. Dorothy lives in Odell and is active in several preservation programs.

## Bunion Derby Walker Takes Last Step

Harry Abrams, perhaps the last surviving contestant of the 1928 Bunion Derby, died November 20 at his home in Briarcliff, New York.

Champaign's C.C. Pyle organized the cross-country footrace. It started in L.A., followed Route 66 to Chicago, then took other roads to New York. Abrams challenged conventional wisdom by walking the entire length of the race instead of running. Although he won no money, he did manage to finish in 11th place. The next year he finished ninth, earning \$1,500.

Abrams learned to walk in his native Manhattan. Working as an errand boy for a lithographer, he would walk for blocks instead of taking a streetcar. "I could walk faster than the streetcar anyway," he once said. "I pocketed that carfare."

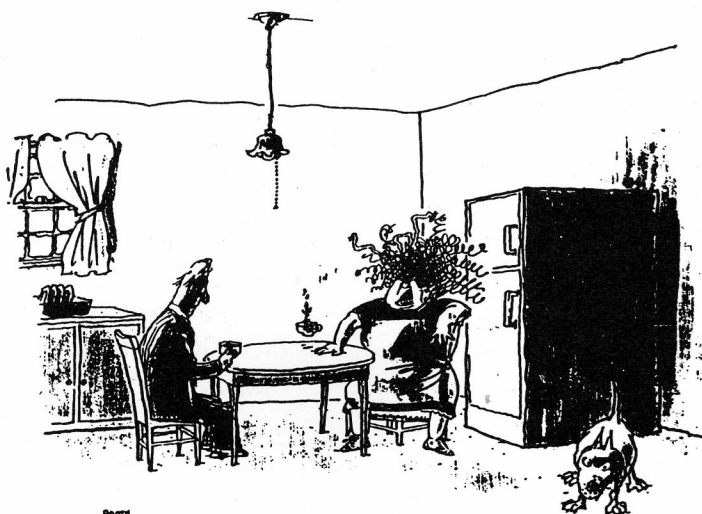
Abrams was also the Grand Marshall for the Association's first annual motor tour in 1990.



## New Members

Since our last newsletter, 44 new members from eight states and two other countries have joined our association. They include 11 families, three businesses and two sustaining members. We extend a right hand in welcome and fellowship to:

Christine Anderson, Elgin; Alan & Carmen Auerbach, Elmhurst; **Charly Bailly, Belgium**; Laura Bash-Denslow, Urbana; Stacy Cannino, Chicago; Pontet Claire, San Francisco, CA; Glenna Eaves & Chris Boebel, Chicago; Edward Evans, Streamwood; Dwight Ferrell, St. Charles; John Ferrell, New York, NY; Jim Gasior, Braidwood; **Greg's Motor Sales, Mishawaka, IN, Sustaining**; Mark & Barb Gronowski, Chicago; Lon Haldeman, Sharon, WI; Rusty Holcomb, Wooddale; Jerry Holmes, Portland, OR; Mike Hoyle, Munster, IN; Warren Johnson Sr., Lombard; Steve Ingram, Ottawa; Franklin Kolody, Burr Ridge; Randy & Constance Lash, Riverwood; Wiulliam & Peggy Ludwig, Romeoville; James & Brenda Lutz, Mazon; Betty McMullen, Monticello; Philip Menk Jr., Kenner, LA; Brock & Kim Miele, Elgin; Madelyn Muniz, Staten Island, NY; Maynard Olsen, Dwight; **Regis Piau, France**; Ralph Pinkham, Brewer, ME; Prairie Trails Historical Society, Odell; John & Joyce Reed, Shorewood; Robert Sech, Whiting, IN; Greg Seifert, Springfield; James Talarek, Homewood; Donald & Bernardine Theis, Arlington Heights; Dick & Kay Thompson, Pontiac; **Bertrand Vial, Pont D'Ain, France**; Doug Wierzgac, Alsip; Missy Wierzgac, Burbank; Mitch & Lou Wierzgac, Oak Lawn; **the Estate of David Wilda, Joliet, Sustaining**; James Wilson, Evanston, and Floyd Zwieg, West Allis, WI.



*"I'm going to get my old dog, get an old pickup, a double-barrelled shotgun, get my old pink cotton print dress, and get back on Route 66!"*

## A Bumper Crop of Conferences

Route 66 is coming into its own as a subject for workshops and seminars. Enhance your enjoyment of the old road by attending one or more of these upcoming events:

Jim Ross, co-author of the landmark "Here It Is!" series of Route 66 maps, will lead "Route 66: A Living History Workshop" May 26-29 near Hinton, Oklahoma. His co-presenter will be Paul Myers, a poet and teacher of creative writing. Set in a canyon retreat not far from 66, the workshop will include a mix of lectures, slide and video presentations, a field trip, an opportunity for participants to write about their travel experiences, and a commemorative video. Registration cost is \$300, including room, board and transportation from the Oklahoma City airport. Enrollment is limited to 20 persons. For more information, write to Creative Presentations, 3710 N. Divis Ave., Bethany, OK 73008.

Terri Ryburn-LaMonte, who will soon become the first Doctor of Route 66, will lead another three-day seminar about Route 66 June 7-9 at Illinois State University in Normal. Terri has taught a college course about Route 66, has given many public talks about it, and has organized a special Route 66 exhibit which will open late this spring at the McLean County Museum in Bloomington. Like the Oklahoma seminar, Terri's workshop will feature a mix of lectures, slide and video presentations, a field trip and some "fun" group exercises. For more information, write to Terri Ryburn-LaMonte, 107 E. Sycamore, Normal, IL 61761.

Tom Teague will present his second annual Elderhostel program on Route 66 March 20-24 at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield. The program, which is limited to folks age 60 or over, will include talks, videos, two field trips and visits with eight Route 66 Hall of Famers. Cost for the week, including room and board, is about \$350. Commuting students are also welcome. For more information, contact Community Services, Lincoln Land Community College, 5250 Shepherd Road, Springfield, IL 62783, phone 217-786-2432.

The last of these events is "A Route 66 Celebration," slated for June 23-25 at the Clarion Hotel in Oklahoma City. It is sponsored by the National Historic Route 66 Federation and promises to be the biggest and most festive gathering of Route 66 fans since the road's 66th birthday party on the Santa Monica Pier back in '92. Look for the celebration's ad elsewhere in this issue. Its speaker line-up already includes Michael Wallis, Jim Ross, Marian Clark and Tom Teague. In addition, there will be two bus tours, a photo display, Route 66 memorabilia, and plenty of great food. The people you meet could be worth the trip all by themselves. For more information, contact David Knudson, Executive Director, National Historic Route 66 Federation, P.O. Box 423, Tujunga, CA, 91042.



# How to Cruise 66

Car buffs and Route 66 fans will have ample opportunity to go cruising 66 in Illinois this year. Two groups, one up near Chicago and the other in Springfield, are responsible for this. And both welcome fellow travelers.

The Roadrunners are a group, mostly Association members, who enjoy three to six day trips a year along 66 and other old roads in the state. An informal bunch, they call themselves an un-club. Their un-president is John Weiss. He drives an un-Corvette. To find out where the Roadrunners are headed, send a half dozen self-addressed and stamped envelopes to John and Lenore Weiss, 21149 Hillside, Frankfort, IL 60423. Each month or so they'll send you notice of where the next trip is going to be. The Roadrunners have no dues, fees or meetings--just fun! And it's hard telling where you'll end up.

The Route 66 Cruisers are an antique car club in Springfield who have worked with the Association many times. If you have a car that's at least 25 and want to go cruising in the Springfield area, these folks know all the good hang-outs. Count on good cars, good music and good people. They even have dash plaques and drawings. Here's their 1995 schedule:

April 22-23	Capital Airport
May 7	Jefferson Hardee's
May 20	South Grand Hardee's
May 26	Rock 'n' Roll Hardee's
June 10	Clear Lake Hardee's
June 16	Rock 'n' Roll Hardee's
July 8	Toronto Rd. Hardee's
July 15	Pizza Hut
July 21	Rock 'n' Roll Hardee's
August 5	Rock 'n' Roll Hardee's
August 25	South Grand Hardee's
August 26	Clear Lake Hardee's
September 15	Rock 'n' Roll Hardee's
September 30	Toronto Rd. Hardee's
October 6	Rock 'n' Roll Hardee's
October 8	Jefferson Hardee's
October 29	Lowe's Hardware

Check your calendars: Friday and Saturday cruises run from 7-11 p.m. Sunday cruises go from 1-5 p.m. The April 22-23 cruise runs from 6-11 a.m. both days. Dash plaques,

door prizes and general good times abound. For more information, contact John Cartwright, 1527 Percy Ave., Springfield, IL 62703.

## You in the News (I'll Show You How)

by John Weiss

Here is a win-win situation for you and your family, too. It is a chance to get your names and photos in your local newspapers as representatives of the Route 66 Association of Illinois.

Everyone of you, regardless of what state you live in, can and should participate in this adventure. This is especially true of residents of Illinois and surrounding states.

Best of all, it is easy and fun. My wife, Lenore, and I will do most of the work. We just need to know if you want to be included.

This is what we are doing and how you can be spotlighted.

The 1995 Route 66 Motor Tour of Illinois will be June 9-11. We need to spread the word to everyone outside of our association. Your local newspapers will probably print information about the motor tour if they receive it in a news release format. They are even more eager and likely to print this information if it pertains to a local citizen. That is where you come in.

We will send you a news release. All you have to do is sign it and include your address and phone number, then mail it to your local newspaper. They should print it and a photo of you, too, if you send one along. They might even do a feature story on you.

It is not even necessary for you to be going on the tour yourself this year.

Send your name and address to John and Lenore Weiss, 21149 Hillside Rd. Frankfort, IL 60423, phone 815-469-5219, fax 815-464-5680. We will send you a promotional packet complete with very easy instructions. Packets will also be available at the April 2 board meeting in Dwight.

We need every member's help in making the 1995 Motor Tour the biggest and best roadie trip ever. Give us a call or drop us a line. We need your help. Please do your part.

The 66 News is published quarterly by the Route 66 Association of Illinois around the first of March, June, September and December. It is meant as a service to Association members and other people and organizations interested in the preservation, promotion and enjoyment of Route 66. Contributions are accepted, but we do not pay. However, any article that you submit remains your property and cannot be reused in any way by the Association or anyone else without your permission. Advertising rates are \$90 for a whole page, \$50 for a half page, \$30 for a quarter page and \$10 for a business card ad. Submit first-class, camera-ready copy only. We can't use Xeroxes. All stories and ads must be submitted at least six weeks prior to publication. Address inquiries and contributions to:

Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704.



# Cayuga Cabaret

*Editor's Note--This article is based on the nomination of Andrew and Mary Renner Foltin to the Route 66 Hall of Fame by their granddaughter, Association member Germaine Knudsen.*

My grandparents owned a small farm on the south edge of Streator, Illinois. The farm was never a big money maker, so Grandpa (people called him "Andy") often had "something going on the side" to earn more income for the family. He was quite an entrepreneur for his day and not afraid to try something new.

One of his ventures was the Hilltop Tavern located along Route 66 in Cayuga, Illinois. The tavern was virtually in the middle of nowhere, so it was a welcome stopping point for many tired, hungry and thirsty travelers off of Route 66. The year was 1943.

The tavern was long and narrow with hardwood floors which were light in color because they were scrubbed every-day. The walls were dark and the bar was made of hard maple and stained to match the walls. There was a multitude of wooden tables and chairs and the usual assortment of glasses and liquors behind the bar.

Grandma and Grandpa would take my sisters and me to the tavern on Sundays when the tavern was closed. The long ride from Streator was a treat, but it was cleaning day for all of us and clean we did. I remember the dreaded hamburger grill in the kitchen. It had a grease catcher that needed to be emptied and it was always the worst job. We used to argue over who had to clean it. We were allowed to wash glasses, but Grandpa scrutinized them for lipstick marks and spots and if we'd left any, we were immediately admonished for

our error.

After the cleaning was all done, we would be treated to an ice cream cone. It was real ice cream--rich, creamy and cold. The cones were pointed at the bottom and in the very bottom of the tip there was a little rolled-up paper that had a message in it. Mostly it was advertising but once in awhile, if we you really lucky, it would say that you had won a free cone. Grandpa always gave us the free cone, even though we hadn't paid for the first one. Then they would fill a small paper sack for each of us with penny candy and gum as a further reward. Again, it was free for my sisters and me. We felt really lucky--the customers had to pay for these fine treasures.

Route 66, or the hard road as Grandma and Grandpa called it, ran right past the tavern. Many travelers stopped by for a good thick hamburger and a beer or pop. Or perhaps they'd order the house specialty--a fresh liverwurst sandwich with mild onions on rye bread. Many locals stopped by, too. The tavern was surrounded by corn fields and the farmers would come in after working hard in the fields, wanting a cold beer and a few card games to relax awhile before supper.

There was a large grate in the middle of the floor that let the heat up from the huge fire-belching furnace below. I remember people stopping by in the winter, ordering food and beverages and standing around the grate talking about the weather and road conditions.

Grandpa owned the tavern for about five years before the long drive from Streator became too hard for him. So he sold his happy little tavern and went on to a new venture. I'm told the tavern is still standing, but is now a private home. The hard road is still there, of course, and is still used. As for Grandma and Grandpa Foltin, their souls have left their physical bodies, but I somehow believe that they are smiling and looking down on us from their new little tavern on their own piece of Heaven that they have named Route 66.



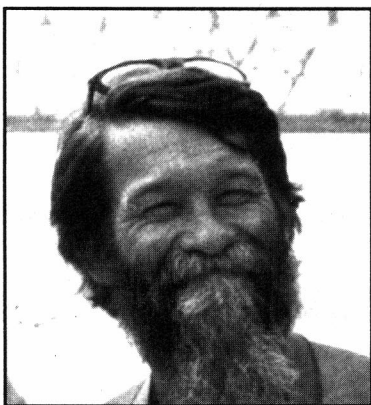
Andrew Foltin behind the bar at the Hilltop Tavern in Cayuga



# Where's Waldmire?

by Tom Teague

Cover illustration by Mike Getz



Here's Waldmire

We'd lived in the same town, Springfield, for 15 years, but it was a woman 600 miles away who finally put Bob Waldmire and me together. Lucille Hamons has owned and operated a combination store, gas station and motel alongside Route 66 near Hydro, Oklahoma, for more than 50 years. I spent a couple of days with her in 1986 when I

was doing research for my book. Unbeknownst to me, Bob set off on his own 66 journey in 1987 and also met Lucille. When she found we didn't know each other, she told Bob to correct the situation. When he got back home a few months later, he invited me out to Cardinal Hill, the Waldmire family estate near Rochester. He introduced me to his folks. He became my friend and collaborator. It was even on Bob's bus that the idea of a Route 66 Association of Illinois was born. I am a reporter and organizer of 66. That's okay, but it's derivative. Bob, however, is the genuine item, the next generation of Route 66 oldtimers. And as long as we have him, we'll have the road.

Bob is one of five sons of Ed Waldmire, inventor of the corn dog and Springfield's first commissioner of human rights. He inherited his father's latent wanderlust, which may be one reason why he never settled in at college or a regular job. Instead, he hit the road, traveling mostly west. For nearly a quarter century, his homes have had wheels and pavement's been their foundation.

A doodler since childhood, Bob had grown up painting signs and lettering menus at the family restaurant, the Cozy Drive-In in Springfield. As a fulltime wanderer, he turned his artistic talents to poster drawing. He'd find a town which appealed to him, usually one with a college, and spend a month or more there getting to know the people and the sights. Then he'd draw a panoramic, bird's-eye-view map of the town. Often it would be sponsored by businesses featured on it. Then he was on to another town and another map--34 in all. Along the way, he also drew dozens of wildlife sketches and nature posters.

Bob used all those years and miles behind the wheel or a pen to hone his philosophy of life. Though it's as complex

and detailed as one of Bob's posters, he easily summarizes it: "Small is beautiful. Slow is beautiful. Old is beautiful," he says in his soft, measured drawl. No person or thing should be any bigger than necessary. Hurrying places only cheapens the moment. And nothing is as old as nature itself, yet so new everyday.

The only thing Bob gets impatient about is the environment. He once told a reporter, "I have anxieties about how slow change seems to be happening, with the way people live and what they live for, what their objectives are. The sooner people change their priorities to just wanting to live and be healthy and nurture their environment on a small scale, the sooner the wounds that we've caused the earth will heal."

Out of respect for the natural kingdom, Bob became a strict vegetarian many years ago. He doesn't even wear clothes or shoes made from animals. Perhaps his only violation of his philosophy has been his choice of living quarters. But at least he started out small. For many years, he lived out of a Volkswagen squareback. About 15 years ago, he stepped up to a posher neighborhood with the purchase of a Volkswagen camper van. Six years ago, he bought a 1966 Chevrolet school bus. Using mostly "found" materials, he set about turning it into a rolling palace. The seats are long gone, replaced by willow furniture, a cast iron stove, a red oak sink, a walnut bannister, dozens of shelves for books and plants and, of course, a drawing table. Space has been set aside for a shower and a self-composting toilet. And in 1992, Bob cut a hole in the roof of the bus and started work on a second story. It will feature an observation deck and a bedroom.

Before Bob could finish this grand project, though, he bought an old general store in Hackberry, Arizona. Along with the store, he inherited a house and two outbuildings. About two months after his father's death in August 1993, he moved out west to take possession. The bus is parked at Cardinal Hill. Getting it out to Hackberry somehow is one of Bob's most insistent dreams.

"I've always babied my vehicles and related to them as kind of a companion and a shell, my home," Bob said. "You get intimately attached to a vehicle if you have it long enough. It's a joy just to be in it. You don't even have to be traveling. Just to turn a key and fire up an engine when you're in one spot and engage the gear and start to move...there's nothing like it."

With his westward bent and his joy in the slow life, Bob frequently found himself on Route 66. This association led to his magnum opus.



"There's this feeling, this bump ba bump ba bump as you go over the seams of poured cement slabs," he said, "this feeling of going slower, being closer to the land and nature, where the plants are right there. It's a very therapeutic experience for me. That's why I started taking the frontage roads a long time ago.

"Then one day I was on my way back to Illinois from Arizona on 66. This was seven years ago. And I was discouraged when I came to a dead end stretch and I had to get back on the interstate. That made me more determined to get off at the earliest possible opportunity and start avoiding the interstate even more, taking it only when I had to. Within a few more miles, the light bulb lit that I should make a map about old Route 66. 'I'm a mapmaker,' I thought, 'and I've traveled back and forth on 66. I can do it!' Yeah."

Bob started work on his new idea as soon as he returned to Cardinal Hill. A hundred thousand pen strokes later, he was done.

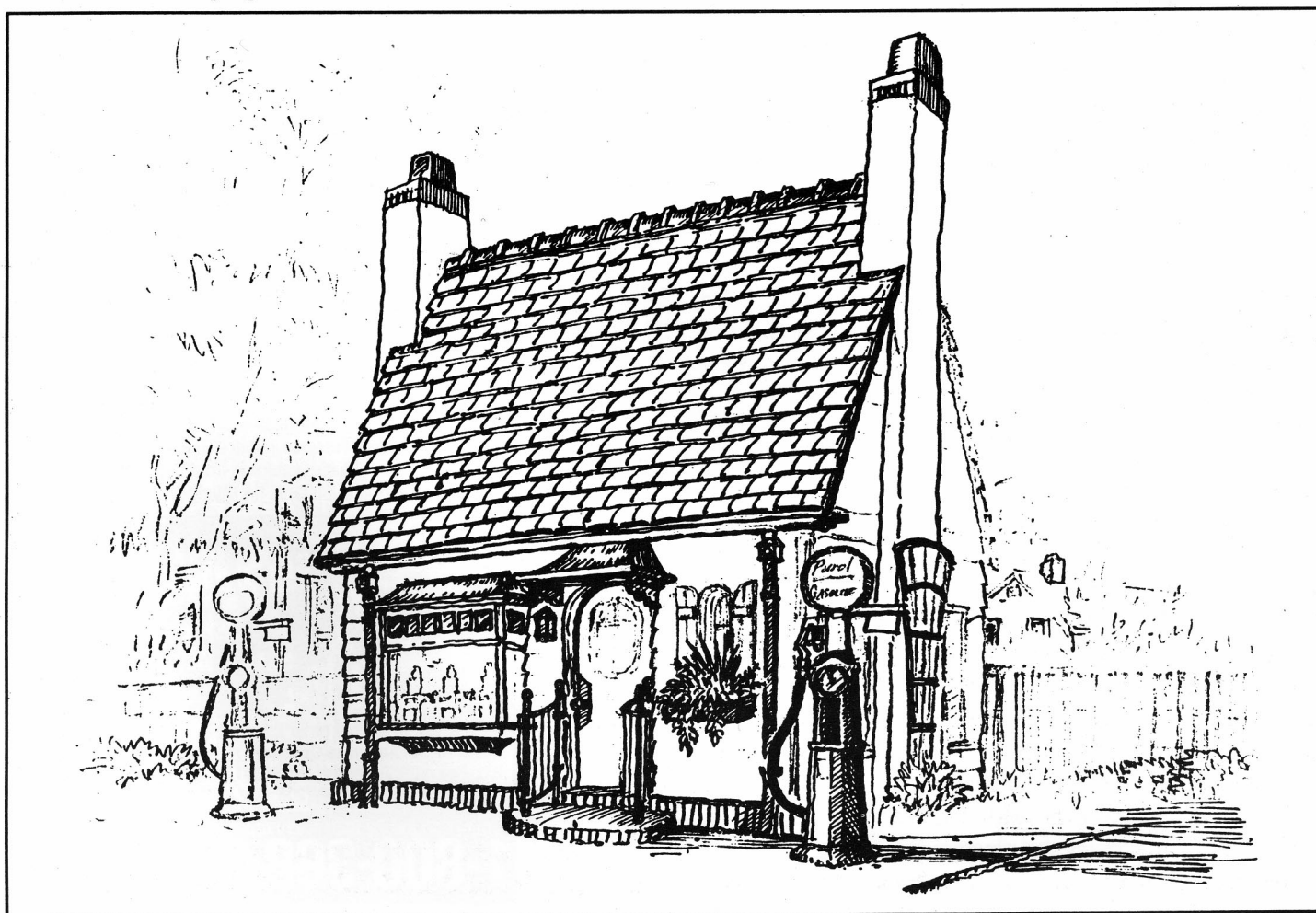
"Initially I figured I'd knock out a four-page map in a few months' time," he said. "It ended up being a 16-page project that took four and a half years. When I started it, I was a young middle-aged man. When I finished it, I was an old middle-aged man. It aged me."

But it also established him. The map itself is ten pages long, printed on a continuous sheet with half of the route on each side. A careful reader with a magnifying glass could actually use the map to drive 66 from one end to the other. But it wouldn't be easy. That's because Bob refuses to be read in a linear way. Somehow the road finds its way from one side of each page to the other. But it has to wend its way through a seamless forest of sketches and thumbnail histories. The people of the road are there, the businesses, the plants, the animals, the geography and geology, the climate, and such oddities of the car culture as an Edsel graveyard and Cadillac Ranch. They crowd each page in such profusion that sometimes Route 66 itself looks like just another detail. Bob finally had to add a six-page legend to the map to fit everything in. Rumor has it that the hard-to-find cartoon character, Waldo, even appears on the map seven times. But I've been able to find him only twice.

Bob published the map and legend in 1992. Total sales now are nearing the 10,000-mark. From the map and later work, Bob also started a series of Route 66 postcards. Counting those that have been commissioned by businesses along the way, he has produced more than 50 cards so far.

*continued next page*

*A Waldmire work in progress*



Their total sales have topped 100,000. He's also done numerous signs and other jobs along the road. Stroke by stroke, the highway has become Bob's career.

And now it's where he is making his stand. The west had long attracted Bob because it offers so many uninterrupted views of nature. From the day we met, he'd talked of buying land on Route 66 in western Arizona and parking there one last time. Not that he'd put his bus up on blocks or hang a skirt around it, but at least he wouldn't have to be rolling to be home. Achievement of this goal was both hastened and delayed by his father's losing bout with cancer in the early part of this decade. It spurred him to find the store in Hackberry and, with family help, finance its purchase in early 1993. But Ed Waldmire counted the end of each day a victory in his battle for life and Bob couldn't leave home until the tally was over. At the end some months later, only Ed found rest. Everyone else had to keep moving. Bob's direction was west. In the fall of that year, he put his van on a trailer and towed it to Arizona behind a jumpacked Ryder truck.

"For years I've wanted to have a place where I can plant things and grow things--one place," he said. "Now I've got it. My plan is to establish an international bioregional Old 66 visitors' center. I'll sell my own work and natural foods from along 66 like Funks Grove sirup and Cabin Creek pecans. I have most of my father's books and will establish the Edwin Waldmire Memorial Peace Library. Outside, I'll have a cactus garden, a teepee and a nature trail."

Remodeling and a hefty commission from Levi Strauss for a jeans ad helped Bob through a cold and lonely first winter. Then last spring a young woman from Michigan, Sally Taylor, stopped out front to take a picture of Bob's joshua tree. He invited her in. She stayed. The next several months were among the sweetest in Bob's life. The couple even took in a cat, Einstein. But his art and the inertia from a half century of bachelorhood still pull strong on Bob. As of press time, he had yet to figure out how to balance new passions with old. But he's working on it.

Bob's also had to come to terms with the responsibilities of owning real estate. Hackberry has anchored him. But his art means travel. His family ties mean travel. His life with Sally, should it develop, will mean a journey all its own. Some days, Bob's felt like firing up the engine of his van (a smaller shell) and just go rolling on down the road. "Where's Waldmire?" you might ask. He could be most anywhere.

But the next morning, travelers will knock unexpected on Bob's door and the day will pass in easy conversation and some sales. Already he's welcomed visitors from 30 countries and nearly as many states at the center. Other days, this gentlest of lords will be walking his land and delight in discovering a new plant or wild creature. Or he'll finish a project and feel he owns the place even more. The prairie couldn't hold Bob Waldmire, but he may yet take root in the desert. Stop by and visit him.

## New Route 66 Video!

# "Brilliant!"

...Perfectly captures the spirit of the road."  
-Michael Wallis, Author, "Route 66: The Mother Road"

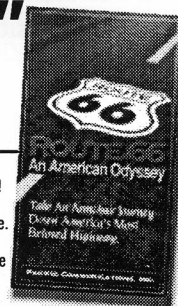
# "Fantastic!"

...The complete story of Route 66 like it has never been told before."  
-Angel Delgadillo, Founder, Route 66 Assoc. / Arizona

# "Wow!"

...A major masterpiece on Route 66."  
Bob Waldmire, Curator,  
Old Route 66 Visitor Center

**Route 66: An American Odyssey**  
The story of Route 66 comes alive! From the building of the road to today's renaissance...You are there. A beautiful motion picture with original music, rare historic footage and stunning new cinematography that capture the magic of the road. A visual experience you'll watch again and again.



# "The Ultimate"

...video tribute to the Mother Road."  
-Route 66 Magazine.

# "Loved It!"

...truly captures the mood and magic of 66."  
-Out West Magazine.

# "Superb!"

...the best Route 66 video I have seen.  
A mind blowing array of images!"  
-Bob Moore, Author, A Guidebook to the Mother Road

# "Wonderful"

...musical score. I loved it!"  
-Bobby Troup, Singer / Songwriter,  
"Get Your Kicks on Route 66."

## Bonus - Free Poster!

Your purchase includes a beautiful three foot, full-color poster and viewer's guide, written by Michael Wallis. Features a map of Route 66 and dozens of images captured from this acclaimed film. Suitable for framing.



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Robert Waldmire, Caretaker, Box 46, HACKBERRY, ARIZONA 86411

Phone (602) 769-2605

## OLD 66 DISPATCH, Fall, 1994

Issue #2  
Free while they last

A YEAR HAS PASSED SINCE I ARRIVED HERE, AT THE OLD HACKBERRY GENERAL STORE — A YEAR SO EVENT-FILLED IT WOULD TAKE A SMALL BOOK TO DOCUMENT IT ALL. SO THIS "66 DISPATCH" WILL SERVE ONLY AS A BRIEF SUMMARY.

THAT FIRST WINTER WAS A LONG, COLD LONELY ONE — "CAUGHT IN THE DRAFT" WITH RECORD COLD TEMPS. DOWN TO 15°, & AIR LEAKS EVERYWHERE. MEMORIES OF GLEANING KINDLING FROM DUMPSTERS & ALLEYS IN KINGMAN & FROM A LONG 66... OF MANY NIGHTS ON THE FLOOR, SLEEPING BESIDE THE WOOD STOVE. THERE WERE FEW HUMAN VISITORS THEN, & MY DAYS WERE BRIGHTENED & CHEERED BY THE MORE NUMEROUS FEATHERED VISITORS — I BEGAN FEEDING THE BIRDS WHEN I ARRIVED, IN OCTOBER, 1993...

I HAVE COME TO APPRECIATE, & TO SENSE THE BEAUTY OF THE HARSH EXTREMES IN THIS PLACE: THE LONG CHILLY WINTER, WITH THE SOFT, FRAGRANT RAINS; THE CLOUD-ENSHROUDED HILLS, & THE ENDLESS SUBTLE VARIATIONS OF LIGHT, SHADOW & COLOR ON THE LAND; THE SPECTACULAR THUNDER & LIGHTNING STORMS THAT CAN OCCUR AT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR (BUT USUALLY IN SUMMER); THE RAINBOWS & THE INCREDIBLY STARRY NIGHTSKY; THE SILENCE, THE COYOTE SERENADES. THE RELENTLESS WINDS, SO COMMON THAT ONE REALLY NOTICES THOSE RARE TIMES WHEN THE AIR IS STILL.

THE SUMMER WAS ONE OF THE HOTTEST ON RECORD — MANY DAYS OVER 100 DEGREES, & ONE DAY IT HIT 108°! WINTER ARRIVED RATHER SUDDENLY IN LATE NOVEMBER, WITH TEMPS. DROPPING TO 20° AT NIGHT & THE WINDS BLOWING MOST OF THE LEAVES OFF THE ELM TREES... MY SWEET PEPPER PLANTS FROZE, AFTER PRODUCING DELICIOUS PEPPERS FOR 4 MONTHS.

THE LIZARDS & SNAKES HAVE GONE TO SLEEP FOR THE WINTER. WHITE-CROWNED SPARROWS, WARBLERS & RUBY-CROWNED KINGLETS HAVE ARRIVED FROM HIGHER LATITUDES (& ALTITUDES) TO SPEND THE WINTER HERE. SO FAR, I'VE IDENTIFIED 41 SPECIES OF RESIDENT & MIGRANT BIRDS — SOME I SEE JUST PASSING THROUGH, AND OTHERS ARE MY CONSTANT COMPANIONS.

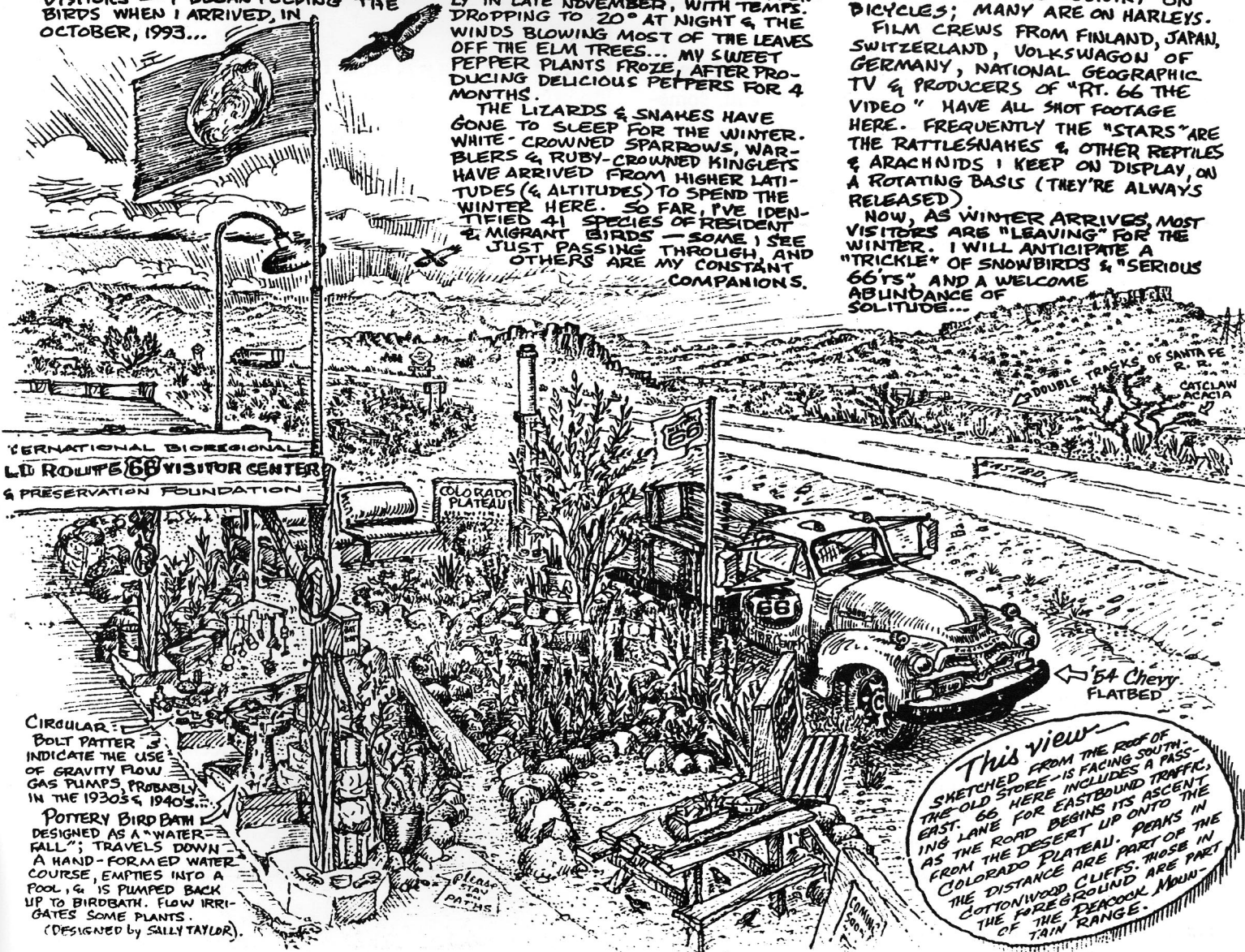
I'VE MET MANY OF THE "LOCALS" & HUNDREDS OF OTHER FOLKS FROM THROUGHOUT THIS COUNTRY & FROM MANY PARTS OF THE WORLD. VISITORS FROM 37 NATIONS HAVE SIGNED THE VISITOR REGISTERS HERE. ROUTE 66 IS NO TRIVIAL DESTINATION. BEING HERE IS LIKE BEING AN

"INTERNATIONAL GREETER." THE WHOLE WORLD STOPS BY HERE! I'VE SEEN VISITORS FROM EUROPE DISCOVER THEY'RE NEIGHBORS! THESE INTERACTIONS CAN BE BETWEEN VISITORS FROM PEORIA TO PRAQUE, FROM BERLIN TO BARSTOW, FROM NAPLES TO NEEDLES. VIRTUALLY FROM ANYWHERE!

INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES — SOME ON HONEYMOONS — FAMILIES, GROUPS, CARAVANS OF TRAVELLERS. SOME ARE CROSSING THE COUNTRY ON BICYCLES; MANY ARE ON HARLEYS.

FILM CREWS FROM FINLAND, JAPAN, SWITZERLAND, VOLKSWAGON OF GERMANY, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TV & PRODUCERS OF "RT. 66 THE VIDEO" HAVE ALL SHOT FOOTAGE HERE. FREQUENTLY THE "STARS" ARE THE RATTLESNAKES & OTHER REPTILES & ARACHNIDS I KEEP ON DISPLAY, ON A ROTATING BASIS (THEY'RE ALWAYS RELEASED).

NOW, AS WINTER ARRIVES, MOST VISITORS ARE "LEAVING" FOR THE WINTER. I WILL ANTICIPATE A "TRICKLE" OF SNOWBIRDS & "SERIOUS 66'YS" AND A WELCOME ABUNDANCE OF SOLITUDE...



CIRCULAR BOLT PATTERN INDICATE THE USE OF GRAVITY FLOW GAS PUMPS PROBABLY IN THE 1930S & 1940S...

POTTERY BIRD BATH DESIGNED AS A "WATER FALL"; TRAVELS DOWN A HAND-FORMED WATER COURSE, EMPTIES INTO A POOL, & IS PUMPED BACK UP TO BIRDBATH. FLOW IRRIGATES SOME PLANTS.

(DESIGNED BY SALLY TAYLOR)

This view SKETCHED FROM THE ROOF OF THE OLD STORE - IS FACING SOUTH. THE OLD STORE INCLUDES A PASSING LANE FOR EASTBOUND TRAFFIC. AS THE ROAD BEGINS ITS ASCENT FROM THE DESERT INTO THE COLORADO PLATEAU. PEAKS IN THE DISTANCE ARE PART OF THE COTTONWOOD CLIFFS. THOSE IN THE FOREGROUND ARE PART OF THE PECOCOK MOUNTAIN RANGE.

# A Couple of Keepers

by D. Harvey Hodges

Near the end of 1954, I placed an order for a new 1955 Ford convertible with the Ford dealership in Minonk. It was a difficult decision for two reasons. For one, I was particularly taken with the new Ford Thunderbird. The little coupe looked great and I really wanted one for my own. Second, I was a traveling salesman for a musical instrument company at the time. A station wagon or big sedan

would have been much more practical. However, I was a young single man and wanted something special, something sporty.

I decided the big Ford convertible was the answer. I could haul Sousaphones and bass drums for the music company. With the convertible top, I could even haul string basses. Then on weekends I had my sports car.

In late February, 1955, I took delivery of my new Ford Sunliner. It had a beautiful snowshoe white finish with a black top and a red and white interior. The car was simply equipped with a 272-cubic inch V-8, three-speed Over-drive, radio and heater.

Not long after accepting delivery, I made a trip to Chicago where I knew some nurses that were working at Wesley Memorial Hospital. We went for a ride in my new car down windy, snowy Michigan Avenue and up the Outer Drive. One of the girls was a cute little Irish lass, Sara Adella. Don't know if it was love at first sight for me or her or the Sunliner or exactly what, but she named the car "The Jitney" for its ability to attract free rides around the city.

It was a little later in March, with the first sign of warm days, that the top went down and I began to enjoy the real fun of a convertible. The Jitney began a long career, working on weekdays as my salesman's vehicle and then finding its way on weekends to Chicago where I was courting the pretty Adella.

Adella and I were married in 1956 and the Jitney was our honeymoon car to New Orleans. In 1957 we made the



*The Jitney on Tour*

grand tour of the western United States, on Route 66 to Santa Monica, then on to San Francisco, Seattle, Yellowstone and Nebraska. The Jitney was our family car as well as work car until we bought a 1957 Renault. My job requirements had changed and Adella used the '55 to commute to her work. Our records indicate that in May of 1959 the Sunliner had 62,000 miles on the odometer.

In March of 1960, our daughter Brenda was born. The Jitney went to the hospital to bring mother and daughter home. Soon we discovered the Renault was no family car, so we purchased a new Ford Falcon station wagon. The '55 was our second car, but we drove it a lot with our records showing 81,000 miles in 1961. Somewhere along the line the odometer broke. The rust in the lower panels was pretty bad, and with a tight budget the car was stored with various friends for several years. Adella acquired a used VW for her driving. I used a variety of station wagons as my career changed from music to real estate.

In the late 1960s we became members of our local car club and the '55 was becoming an antique. We patched and pieced to keep the convertible as our tour car. In 1971, with Adella's urging, we decided we could afford a little fix-up on the car. We replaced the lower panels and repainted the body. Minor repairs and regular tune-ups and maintenance have kept the vehicle in running condition. Last year while on a club tour, we heard some sounds that turned out to be the failure of the rear main bearing. We decided on a complete overhaul. The odometer, now repaired, reads 96,000 miles.

Over the years we acquired other collector's cars. We now have a 1915 T touring and a 1930 Model A coupe. Our family cars are a 1970 VW Beetle and a 1983 Thunderbird. Among other cars we've had are a 1930 Ford, a 1959 Chevy and a 1957 T-Bird.

If you know me, you know, of course, that I still have Adella as my wife and we still have our Jitney. They're a couple of keepers.



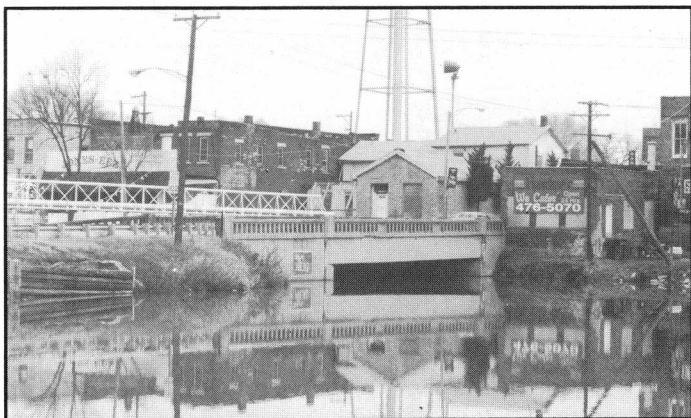
*Randy Smith Invites You to Name*

# The Bridges of 66 Country

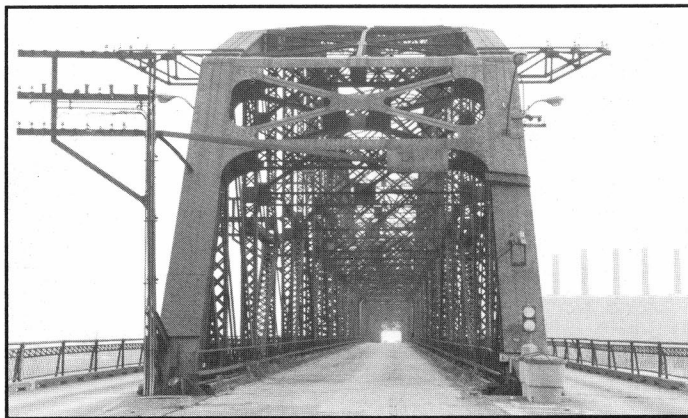
Randy Smith of East Peoria might be our state's most ardent traveler of Route 66. He is unquestionably its most active current photographer. For the past year or so, he's made a personal crusade of photographing and cataloguing the archeology of the road--not for any gain of his own, but because he thinks it should be done. We think he's right. In this issue we give you just a small sample of Randy's work: the bridges of 66 country. Everybody knows about the Chain of Rocks, but can you tell us where these bridges are? Write to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704. We'll run correct responses in the next issue, along with some of Randy's own commentary.

*Photos by Randy Smith*

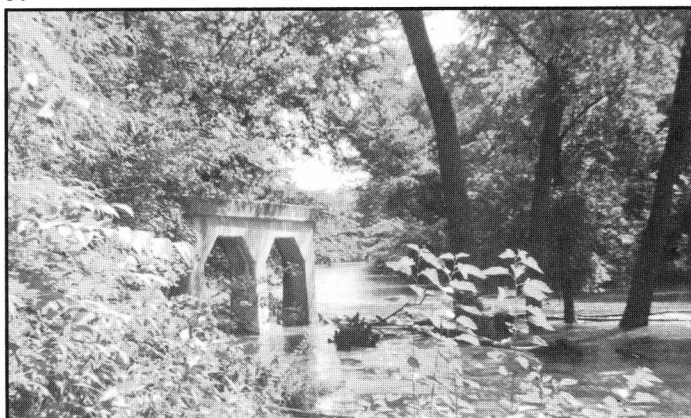
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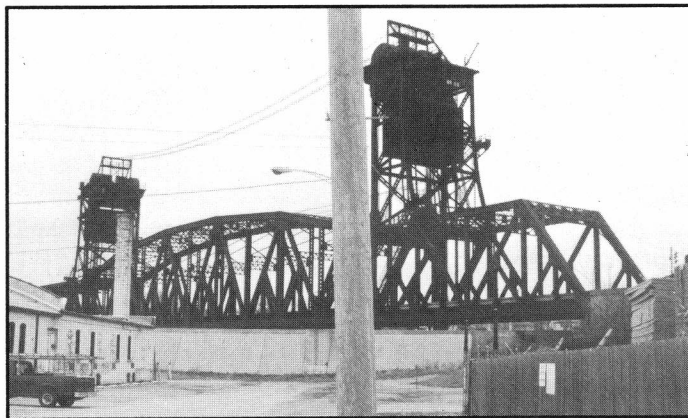
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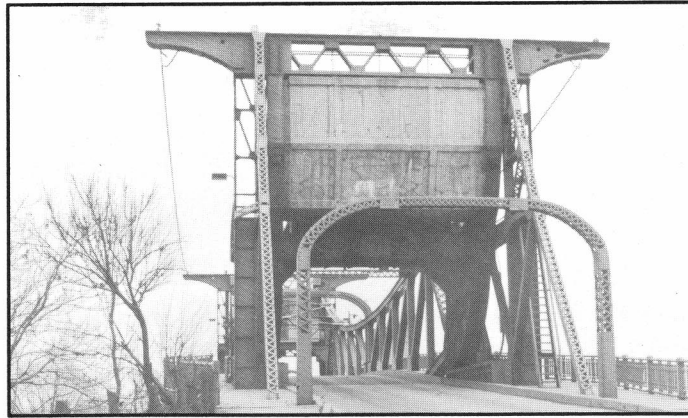
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# Route 66 Association Merchandise

**CLOTHES** All Association clothes feature black, white and red shield by Bob Waldmire. Available in S, M, L, XL, XXL unless noted. Add \$2 for XXL.

Association nylon Jacket, polyester-lined	\$22.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Sweatshirt	\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association T-Shirt--choice of black or white shield	\$10.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Fanny pack (black)	\$ 5.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Cap (black or white)	\$ 6.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Embroidered patch	\$ 5.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Glow in the Dark Shield T-Shirts	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Neon t-sided T (specify Chevy, 'Vette, Mustang or T-Bird)	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Too Kool collar	\$ 8.00 + \$1.50 p/h

## COLLECTIBLES

Oversized '95 Route 66 Car Culture calendar, Lucinda	\$10.00 + \$2.00 p/h
Lewis. Beautiful color photos!	
8" x 8" Illinois US 66, shield-shaped rubber car magnet	\$11.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Pair	\$20.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Large Letter State Postcards by Bob Waldmire, set of 8	\$ 2.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Illinois 66 metal refrigerator magnet	\$ 4.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Set of 42 Bob Waldmire Postcards--scenes of 66	\$ 8.50 + \$1.00 p/h
Hall of Fame Postcards (set of 15)	\$ 3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 ceramic salt & pepper shakers	\$ 5.00 + \$2.00 p/h
Hat pins--Large or Small	\$ 3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Illinois Route 66 metal license plate frame	\$ 6.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 earrings (specify post or dangled)	\$ 5.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Reproduction sign--shield shape, full size, 16-gauge steel	\$40.00 + \$5.00 p/h
Ceramic mug--choice of black or white	\$ 5.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Pewter Route 66 belt buckle	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Prism bumper sticker--choice of Chevy or Corvette	\$ 2.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Greetings from the Mother Road!	
postcard book by Michael Wallis	\$ 8.95 + \$1.50 p/h

Land of Lincoln "Route 66" license plate key chain

\$ 2.00 + \$ .50 p/h

"Route 66" music album by David Williams

\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h for CD \$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h for cassette

## BOOKS, MAPS AND VIDEOS

Guide Book to the Mother Road, Bob Moore & Patrick Grauwels. Great photos and mile-by-mile detail

\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h

Illinois fold-out map of Route 66 by Jim Ross and Jerry McClanahan

\$ 3.95 + \$1.50 p/h

It's Here! Full set of eight state maps by Ross & McClanahan

\$30.00 + \$3.00 p/h

Bob Waldmire map--10 pages, plus legend

\$ 5.00 + \$ .50 p/h

Searching for 66 by Tom Teague

\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h

Route 66--The Mother Road by Michael Wallis, paperback

\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h

Route 66 Roadside Companion by Tom Snyder

\$ 9.95 + \$1.50 p/h

A Guidebook to Highway 66 by Jack Rittenhouse (reprint of '46)

\$ 6.95 + \$1.50 p/h

Route 66: The Highway and Its People by Quinta Scott and Susan Kelly. Large format paperback

\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h

**Video!** "A Journey Down Route 66," narrated by Michael Wallis

\$19.98 + \$2.50 p/h

**Video!** "Route 66--The Video Road Trip," featuring

famous 66-ers

\$24.95 + \$2.50 p/h

Route 66 Cookbook by Marian Clark (folklore & recipes)

\$24.95 + \$2.00 p/h

Route 66 Fun Book (for kids of all ages)

\$ 3.50 + \$1.00 p/h

## Clearance Sale! Price Cuts!

Rubber Key chain--featuring Waldmire Illinois map

\$ 1.00 + No Postage!

Refrigerator Magnet--featuring Waldmire Illinois map

\$ 1.00 + No Postage!

Fuzzy Dice with Illinois U.S. 66 shield

\$ 4.00 + \$1.00 p/h

Two-in-One beverage holder

\$ 2.00 + \$1.00 p/h

*Send orders to:*

**Merchandise**

**Route 66 Association of Illinois**

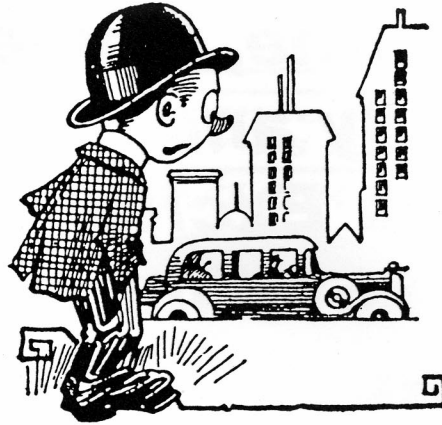
**2743 Veterans Parkway, Suite 166**

**Springfield, IL 62704**

Illinois residents please add 7 percent sales tax!

Accept no imitations or limitations! All product purchases benefit the Association!





## Who's this new kid on the block?

That's exactly what the Federation is because we're not even a year old yet.

But chances are, you've heard about us. Maybe just in discussions. Maybe you've seen our news stories. Or, maybe you've come across our nationwide ad campaign in magazines.

Our goals are simple. First, make all of America aware of the rapid disintegration of Route 66. Second, do something about it by means of acquiring federal, state, local and private funding.

We are the **ONLY** nationwide organization actively fighting to save this national treasure across the country.

Many prominent Route 66 supporters are already behind us. For example, Michael Wallis and Jim Ross will speak at our upcoming Nationwide Route 66 Celebration in Oklahoma City.

We are not replacing state Route 66 associations. In fact, quite the opposite. We will be supporting them as much as possible because the 'Mother Road' needs all the help she can get in every state.

If you are interested in finding out more details about the Federation and the Nationwide Route 66 Celebration, please send a self-addressed, stamped, business size envelope to:



**NATIONAL HISTORIC ROUTE 66 FEDERATION**  
P. O. Box 423, Dept. I, Tujunga, CA 91043-0423

# **Come One, Come All!** **Bring the Family and Spend 3 Days of** **Fun & Excitement** **on Route 66 In Illinois for the** **6th Annual 1995 Motor Tour** **June 9-11, 1995**

With Stops in  Chicago  Dwight  Bloomington 

 Divernon  Mount Olive 

See The Sights in  Berwyn  Romeoville  Joliet 

 Lincoln  Farmersville  Hamel 



**Visit The Route 66 Hall of Fame at the**  
**Dixie Trucker Home in McLean**



**Drive thru the State Farm Motor Tour Arch**



**Pre-tour Party Friday Night in Berwyn, June 9**

**Post-tour Party Sunday Night in Litchfield, June 11**

***Sponsored by the Route 66 Association of Illinois***

## **Registration Form**

Any Vehicle, Any Model

Please Print or Type

Registration Fee: \$20.00 for Members per vehicle \$25.00 for Non-Members per vehicle

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

☐ We plan to attend the Pre-tour Party in Berwyn How Many \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Fee \_\_\_\_\_

☐ We plan to attend the Post-tour Party in Litchfield How Many \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Fee \_\_\_\_\_

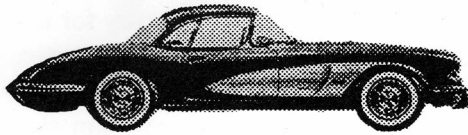
Motor Tour  
Route 66 Association of Illinois  
2743 Veterans Parkway #166  
Springfield, IL 62704

More Info:  
Frank Lozich Tour Chairman (708) 429-9173  
Jeff and Laura Meyer (708) 392-0860

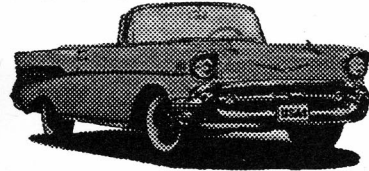
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## ----- ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

INTERESTS IN 66 \_\_\_\_\_

HOW I CAN HELP \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL DUES:** Individual-\$10, Family-\$15, Business-\$25, Sustaining-\$100 or more.

**TO:** Membership, Route 66 Association, 2743 Veterans Pkwy., Springfield, IL 62704

**Attention Motorcycle Fans!** If you would like information about a Route 66 Motorcycle Association, please check this box: ☐

# Checking In and Out on 66

One institution is about to check out and another is about to check back in on Old 66.

Coral Court, the Art Deco motel near St. Louis that became one of Route 66's most easily recognized landmarks, may have gone under the bulldozer by the time this issue comes out. Like many vintage motels, The Court did not make an easy transition from Main Street to side street. Each year, it faced stiffer competition from interstate behemoths which call themselves motels, but are actually hotels (park by your door in one of these places and you'll get arrested!). Finally, like so many other early roadside businesses, Coral Court closed down when its original owner died. That was about two years ago. A group of area citizens led by Missouri 66 president Jim Powell have worked enthusiastically since then to raise money to buy and preserve the motel. So far they haven't succeeded. One reason they haven't is that the land on which Coral Court stands is more valuable vacant than with a motel on it. Then a developer could come in and build something far more profitable. So, with no customers and no buyers, Coral Court deteriorated. Then last December the trustees of the village of Marlborough, where the motel is located,



*The Coral Court*

have reportedly bought the Club. They plan to turn it into a '50's-style diner, which isn't too far a stretch. The family even hopes to bring back the Fat Man sign whose Mona Lisa-like smile invited people into the Club for many decades. So you can't check in at the Coral Court anymore, but you can check out the Club again.

But before you head off to dinner, ponder this: Mike Jackson, architectural historian, estimates it would take only \$100,000 to dismantle one of the Coral Court's units piece-by-piece and reassemble it on another site. We all should hope the Coral Court will stand where it is. But if it can't, does anyone out there have \$100,000? And does someone else have a vacant lot? Call Tom Teague or Jim Powell.

voted unanimously to ask St. Louis County to condemn it. This would clear the way for it to be razed. Sounds suspicious to me. After all, if bulldozers come, can strip malls be far behind?

Down the road in New Mexico, though, there's good news. The Club Cafe in Santa Rosa, closed since its owner Ron Chavez declared bankruptcy in 1992, will soon reopen. The Campos family, longtime owners and operators of the successful Joseph's Restaurant in Santa Rosa,

**Route 66 Association of Illinois  
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**ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS**

# **THE 66 NEWS!**

**\$2.**

**SUMMER 1995**



## **HALL OF FAME ISSUE**

**"ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN."**



## Officers and Board Members

The officers and board members of the Route 66 Association are available at most reasonable times to answer your questions and hear your comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them if you need to. The date under or to the right of each officer's or member's name is the expiration date of their term.

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*10-95*

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309-828-2925

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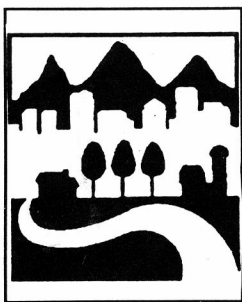
**John Weiss,**

*At Large, 10-95*

21149 Hillside  
Frankfort, IL 60423  
815-469-5219

Executive Committee members are the officers, plus Jeff Meyer and Ray Schroeder.

## Scenic Illinois



Scenic Illinois is a volunteer group dedicated to preserving and enhancing the scenic character of our state's communities and countryside. Like its parent organization, Scenic America, its goals are to fight visual pollution, promote visual quality and preserve scenic byways.

They quote Thomas Jefferson: "Communities should be planned with an eye to the effect on the human spirit of being continually surrounded by a maximum of beauty." On one of their brochures, they decry the encroachment of billboards and other development on such beauty. "As we quarantine the nation's scenic resources in parks and historic districts, we reduce the quality of our daily lives and separate ourselves from the scenic heritage that could be ours," they warn.

Scenic Illinois is small and new, but has a most worthy goal. The Illinois Department of Transportation has proposed replacing U.S. 20 between Dubuque, Iowa, and Rockford with a four-lane, controlled-access highway. Scenic Illinois believes transportation needs can be met by simply upgrading the current road.

For more information, write to Paul Steinhauer, Scenic Illinois, P.O. Box 2925, Des Plaines, IL 60017-2925.

## How to Run This Organization

*by the Nominating Committee*

Vote in our elections or, better yet, run for office! Elections will take place at our Annual Meeting October 15 in Bloomington. Make plans now to attend. We will have a ballot election for President and Secretary. We are also searching for someone to serve as Treasurer for a one-year term. County board positions up for election are Cook, Will, Grundy, Logan, Montgomery and St. Clair. Three at large Board positions are also up for election. If you are interested in serving as an officer or board member, or if you want to nominate someone, please feel free to contact a member of the Nominating Committee. The members are Dorothy Seratt (815-998-2300), Duke Cartwright (815-726-3574), Lenore Weiss (815-469-5219), Barbara Lorenz (309-822-8197) and Deborah Mileur (217-324-5551).



# PICNIC - PICNIC

## Sunday, September **10**, 1995

by John & Lenore Weiss

Last year's picnic turned out great! Fun and food, food, food were in abundance. This year's event should be even better.

We will go to a new location, Railsplitter Park on Old Route 66 near Lincoln. There is plenty of room and lots to see and do.

Here is the plan: Everybody bring a dish to pass. This creates a huge buffet. Last year, Hall of Famer Ernie Edwards of the Pig Hip was lured out of retirement to flip hot dogs. He said, "It was so much fun--let's do it again!" This year he promised he will also mix up a batch of secret sauce and make authentic Pig Hip sandwiches for everyone at no charge.

This is a fantastic opportunity to have a Route 66 treat--a food that fueled Route 66 travelers for more than 50 years. Ernie, his wife Frances, and Lenore Weiss will assemble the sandwiches. Be sure to ask Ernie about the sandwich's

unique name and then take his picture and get his autograph.

That takes care of the good food. Now some fun. We will have music and games, such as horseshoes (great set up), water balloons (remember last year?) and more. We do ask that if you have a set of horseshoes or other yard games that you bring them along to share. Bring lawn chairs, too.

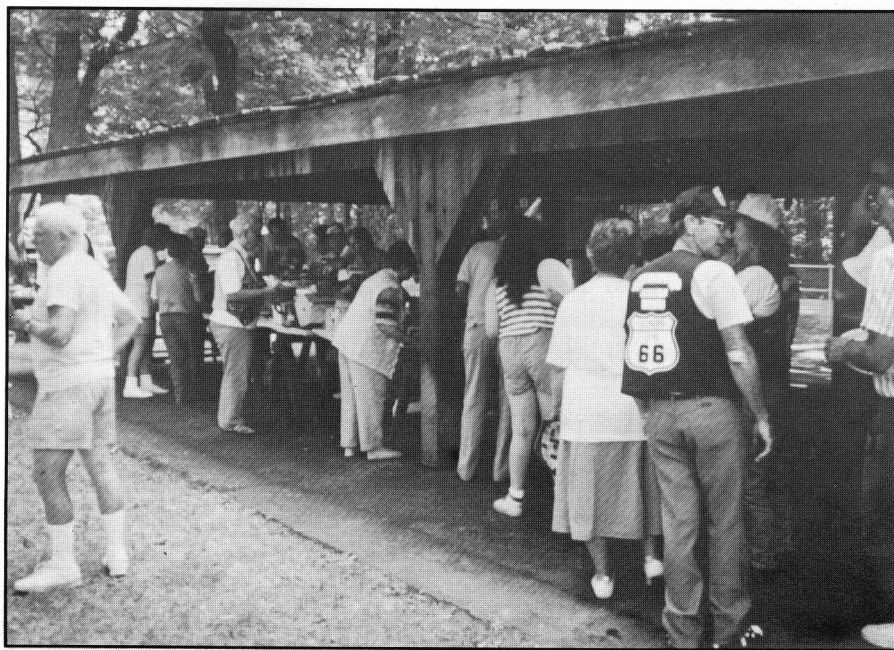
This is a family event, a great old fashioned picnic the way it should be. When you mix the ingredients of a great location, plenty of food, a Pig Hip sandwich, and a bunch of terrific people, you have a recipe for fun! Plan on arriving between 11 a.m. and noon, or earlier if you want to keep Ernie company. Food will be served about 12:30 p.m.

Don't miss this

fun event!

Here are the directions to Railsplitter Park: Take exit 123 off of I-55. Head south on Old 66. Watch for Railsplitter Park signs. Picnic signs will also be posted in the park.

For more information, call Lenore at 815-469-5219.



*Last year's picnic at Funks Grove Church grounds*

## July 30th More Than a Meeting

by John & Lenore Weiss

July 30th is more than just the date of our next meeting. It is an invitation to come into Joliet and visit the beautiful City Center.

Before or after the meeting, be sure to take the riverwalk. Then walk over the lift bridge and visit historic Bicentennial Park. Climb up to the observation for a fantastic bird's eye view. Watch the river boats come and go. Stroll downtown on Route 66 as it passes the Rialto Theater. Visit a trendy restaurant, such as Mia Figliani's. You could also try your

luck on a casino cruise after the meeting.

The board and general meetings will be held in the pavilion, lower level, of Harrah's Casino. Harrah's has donated the room, but apologizes that the restaurants may be closed on that date due to remodeling. So eat before you drive to the meeting or visit a local eatery. Free parking is available on the deck across from Harrah's pavilion.

Our bylaws state that all Association meetings are open to all members. The board meeting starts at 11 a.m. and the general meeting begins at 1 p.m.

Come to Joliet this July 30th. Become active in your association. Find out what's happening on Route 66 and what is about to happen. Then turn this day into an interesting, fun-filled mini-vacation!

## New Members

Since our last issue, the Route 66 Association of Illinois has welcomed 63 new members. They include 19 families, five businesses, three sustaining memberships, and people from nine states and three other countries. More than two-thirds of them don't even live in towns along 66! We extend a right hand in fellowship and appreciation to:

Thomas Miller Family, Mount Prospect; Kevin's Korner, Braidwood; **Art's Restaurant, Farmersville, Sustaining**; Dale Stringham, Blue Island; Lorraine Stastny, Chicago; **Livingston County Historical Society, Pontiac, Sustaining**; Gordon Zschiesche, Davenport, IL; Robert Brooks, Aurora; Berry Neil Rangan, Rock Island; Route 66 Cruisers, Springfield; USA Direct Services, New York, NY; Paul Steinhauer, Des Plaines; Illinois Harley-Davidson, Inc. Berwyn; Don & Jan Shannon, Oak Park; James Talarek, Homewood; **Maverick Steakhouse, Springfield, Sustaining**; Bob Rinehart, Edwardsville; Gina Maddalone, Elmwood; David Christensen Family, Homewood; H. Wayne Price, Springfield; Maureen Wildfong, Saginaw, MI; Terry & Debby Sumwalt, Stoughton, WI; Rick & Kerry Hulse, Gifford; **Brian Hopkins, Chicago**; Kay Hendrick, Atlanta, GA; Fred Zander, Topeka, KS; Randa & Deborah Wosilus, Villa Park; Dana & Carol Palmer, Elburn; Larry DeLong, Morton; Josef & Edwina Erlemann, Chicago; Robin Smith, Rensselaer, NY; **Andrea Berek, Stuttgart, Germany**; L.H. & Ruth Hochuli, Granite City; Frederick Sasse, Griffith, IN; Dick Banner, Eureka; Ken & Bunny Disher, Winfield; Ron & Marcia Mintun, Rock Falls; Carol Scott, Bethany; R.T. M's, Wilmington; Scott & Carolyn Hamilton, Wheaton; Samuel Craig, Braidwood; Craig Ellis, Peoria; Bill Shepke, Schaumburg; Leonard & Elizabeth Davis, Brookfield; Shirley Sullivan Family, Somonauk; Raymond Cox, Plymouth, IN; **R.R. Finniger, Bemson, England**; **Hiroyuki Shiozaki, Osaka, Japan**; Robert Hildebrand, Glen Ellyn; Susan Nast, Roselle; Arnold & Sara Van Merkesteyn, Crete; Res Wolfe, Ossian, IN; John & Irene Clemons, Livingston; Ryan & Suzy McNally, LaGrange; Doug Young, Woodridge; Allen & Arlen Bird, Union; Lee Rudolph, Bloomington; Nicholas Stratton, Springfield, and Donald Mette, Edmonston, KY.



## Speaking in Plates

Winter cut back our road time in the midwest, so there weren't quite as many 66 license plate spottings during that time. But the ones we did spot were good. Member Tom Jaguszewski of Chicago spotted a Wisconsin plate that said "US 66." Bob Bresner of Elgin sports "I DROV 66" plates on his car. And Shellee Graham of St. Louis reported that even the Homer Simpson cartoon family has "SIMPS 66" plates on their convertible!

Then springtime came and Randy Smith and Marie Jibben sent in this group of plates: STAR 66, BG MG 66, ABE 66, HES 66, ROOT 66, SMB 66, JPK 66, PHYL 66, FRIER 66, 66 IMPA, TINY 66, PSALM 66, TWP 66, and 66 856! Paul Melchert, who sparked this column two years ago, sent in several fine pictures. Mike Photakis sent in his motorcycle plate: TRVL 66. And a member whose name we misplaced sent in an Illinois plate on the back of a Mazda which read US66 in red letters! Can anyone tell us about red letter car plates?

Spottings of other Route 66 plates should be reported to newsletter editor Tom Teague. Send photos when you can. Someday we'll have a license plate display at the Hall of Fame.

The 66 News is published quarterly by the Route 66 Association of Illinois around the first of March, June, September and December. It is meant as a service to Association members and other people and organizations interested in the preservation, promotion and enjoyment of Route 66. Contributions are accepted, but we do not pay. However, any article that you submit remains your property and cannot be reused in any way by the Association or anyone else without your permission. Advertising rates are \$90 for a whole page, \$50 for a half page, \$30 for a quarter page and \$10 for a business card ad. Submit first-class, camera-ready copy only. We can't use Xeroxes. All stories and ads must be submitted at least six weeks prior to publication. Address inquiries and contributions to:

Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704.

# Hall of Fame Welcomes Four New Members

Four new members whose ties with Route 66 total more than 200 years will be inducted into the Hall of Fame during this year's motor tour. They are Burt Parkinson of Gardner, the Benedict Family and Standard Station of McLean, Art's Restaurant of Farnersville and George Mecherle, founder of State Farm Insurance. Ceremonies will take place at 7 p.m., June 10 on the steps of the Old Courthouse Museum in downtown Bloomington. They will bring the number of Hall of Fame members to 23.

The Association started the Hall of Fame in 1990. Its purpose is to honor those people, places and events which gave the highway its unique blend of hardy individualism and grassroots community spirit and helped make it the Main Street of America. The Hall is located at Dixie Truckers Home in McLean. Exhibits there honor each member, as well as the general history of the road. Admission is free and it's open all day.

## **Burt Parkinson**

*Nominated by Ray Starks*

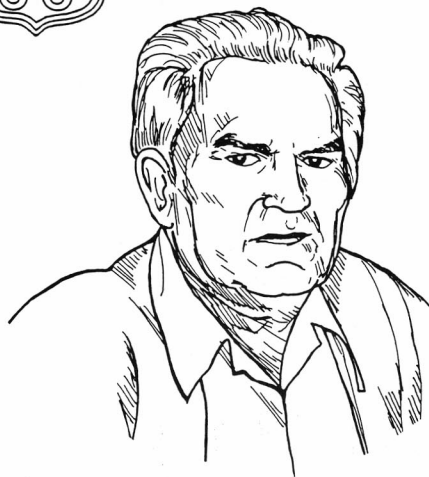
Until he sold it to a chain of papers earlier this year, Burt Parkinson had been part of the oldest family-owned newspaper along Route 66, the Gardner *Chronicle*. His grandfather, Henry Parkinson, started it during the Civil War. Before then, Henry had started *The Pantagraph* in Bloomington with Adlai Stevenson's grandfather. But he left that town because he thought it had no future. One of his paperboys at the *Chronicle* was Tony Cermac, who later became mayor of Chicago. Later, Burt's father, William, ran the paper for many years as well. And when Burt graduated from high school in 1935, he went to work there, too. Shortly afterwards, he became editor.

Good editors are community advocates, too. One of Burt's first triumphs in this area was his campaign for a public water system in Gardner. Although it was the middle of the Depression, Burt convinced voters that the WPA could build the system at little cost to the village. They approved the measure overwhelmingly and got their water. Years later, Burt waged a similar campaign to get a municipal sewer system. He won that one, too.

Burt is also an inveterate tinkerer. His license plate even reads INKMAN. That's because one night in 1948, the water system on his press broke down. Rather than miss a deadline, he mixed varnish, color and "a few chemicals" together to make a waterless ink. He met his deadline and patented his solution. It is now used on such products as frozen juice cans. In the 1970's, he invented and patented a process for diluting gasoline with water. No major refiner or car manufacturer has picked up on the idea, but Burt says they're just waiting



**Route 66  
Hall of Fame of Illinois**

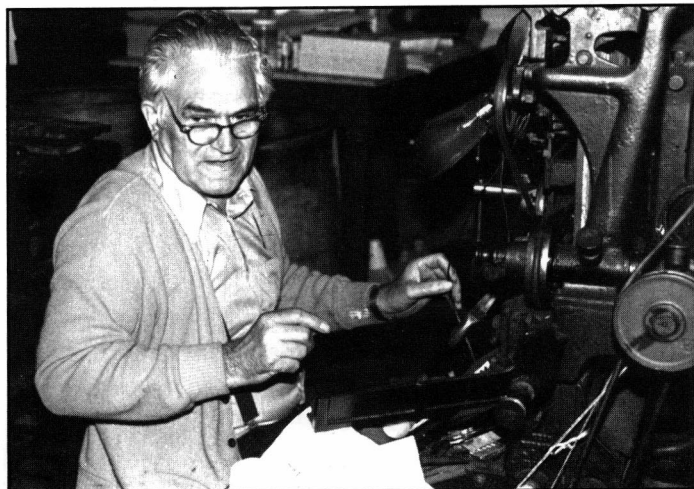


**Burt Parkinson  
Newspaperman and Inventor  
Gardner, Illinois  
1917 - Present**

**Inducted June 10, 1995  
Route 66 Association of Illinois**

until his patent runs out. He's used the mixture in his own car.

Burt remembers Route 66 well--and even the roads which went before it. He remembers when highways were marked by colored bands on telephone poles instead of with their own signs. He remembers a steep grade near town that cars





couldn't get over in a forward gear. But if they turned around and backed up the hill, they had plenty of power. When a band broke in his clutch one day, he remembers tying strips of bacon rind together and making do with that until he got home.

Time finally slowed Burt down a little bit last year and he had to quit publishing the Chronicle. His son is a newspaperman, but is a top executive for an international news service. So Burt had to sell the paper to a chain based in Dwight. Thus ended another family tradition along Route 66. But the paper is still published at Burt's shop in Gardner and you can find him there almost every day doing letterpress work on his Old Heidelberg press, which may be older than he is.

### The Benedict Family & Standard Station

*As Told and Nominated by Charles H. Benedict*

"Dad and Mom were Augusta and Charles A. Benedict. They built a service station on Route 4 northeast of McLean in 1925 on the road that would become 66. I was born less than a year later. In 1931, they built a home next to the station. This made it handy for Mom to run the cafe that they also added on. My grandfather and our Uncle Tink, who was shell-shocked from World War I helped out in the early days.



### Route 66 Hall of Fame of Illinois



**The Benedict Family &  
Standard Station  
McLean, Illinois  
1925 - 1977**

**Inducted June 10, 1995**

**Route 66 Association of Illinois**

May years later, my son became the fourth generation of Benedicts to work there.

"I can still see the sign at the top of the early station: 'Stop-



*The early station in McLean*

-Eat and Gas with Us! This attracted many hobos. Mom and Dad couldn't turn away anyone who was hungry. So we were marked as an easy touch and eventually had to close the cafe because it served more free meals than paying ones!

"My sister Eleanor and brother Delmar and I were all glad



*Remodeling, 1966*

when this happened. Mom was a great pie baker. But the good cream pies always sold out and all we got to eat was three-day-old raisin pie. After the cafe closed, we got to eat fresh pie and it did not last three days!

"When I got discharged from the Army Air Corps in 1946,

we already knew that the new four-lane 66 was going to bypass our station. Dad suggested to Delmar and me that we go into partnership and build a new station. We agreed and built the new station just a mile north of the original one. We mixed our own concrete, laid our own blocks, and did all the plumbing and carpentry. We started pumping gas on July 3, 1947.

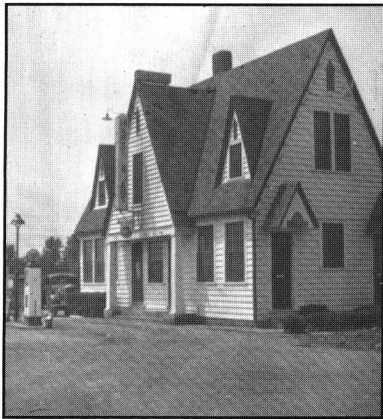
"In 1961 I bought the business outright and named it Chuck's Midway Station. We sold Standard gas. A lot of people stopped there because we were the first service station in 30 miles with a restroom. We led our company in gas sales south of I-80 from 1965 through 1972. "When the energy crunch came in 1972, we had to close on Sundays. This was death to a major highway station. Then came I-55 and we were cut off altogether. America was 200 years old and our station had been part of its history for more than 50 years. I finally had to sell our inventory in early 1977. They sell lawn tractors there now.

"There are two things I remember Dad saying to me often: 'If a thing is worth doing, do it your best' and 'If a man or woman's word is no good, they aren't either, so always be honest.' That was the way Mom and Dad ran their business-and it paid off."

#### Art's

*Nominated by Howard McAnarney and Grace Irwin Brown*

Art's had its beginning at the Ritz, a gaming parlor run by West Elevator Street run by Martin Gorman and Art McAnarney. It was one of 37 alleged bootleg establishments in Farmersville. In 1936, after the repeal of Prohibition, Marty and Art opened a new dance hall and casino on the southeast corner of Main Street and U.S. 66 in town.

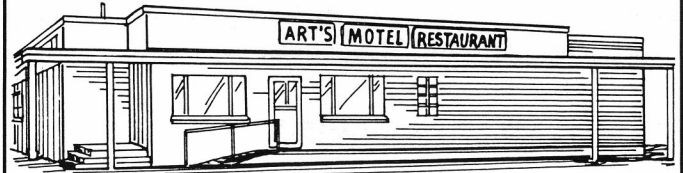


A few years earlier, Harry and Fred Hendricks had built a Conoco service station and a restaurant on the northwest corner of the intersection. It was then being operated by Cecil and Dorothy Hampton. Marty and Art bought that business in July 1937, moved their own building across 66 and attached it to the south side of the Hendricks station. Marty and Art ran the dance hall, casino and tavern while Homer Nichols supervised gas and oil sales and Josephine Welch ran the cafe. Shortly thereafter, Art became sole proprietor. As his part of the deal, Marty got their original building, which he moved back across the street.

For decades, Art's has been an integral part of the



#### Route 66 Hall of Fame of Illinois



#### Art's Restaurant, Motel, Gas Station & Community Center Farmersville, Illinois 1936 - Present

**Inducted June 10, 1995**  
**Route 66 Association of Illinois**

Farmersville community, a "purveyor of fine food and spirits" to all and an employer for many. During World War II, Art's had a servicemen's bulletin board with pictures and addresses. Daily luncheon specials continued, but cook June Wahl often prepared them without meat. When high school teams played out of town and the buses returned late, the restaurant stayed open until everyone was fed and the last of the farm kids were picked up by their parents.

Art's sons, Elmer and Joe, joined the business in 1946. The end of rationing made food product more available, but it also brought inflation. Coffee was still free, but two donuts now cost a dime. Hamburgers were a quarter and plate lunches were 90 cents. Art's famous chicken, which was never frozen before being double dipped and deep fried, was \$1 for a basket and \$1.75 for a complete dinner. Waitresses made about \$20 a week, plus tips.

Art's burned on November 8, 1952. Only the pine-sided dining room survived. Art and his sons rebuilt the rest of the business on its original foundation. Art died in 1954 and his sons owned the business for the next 24 years. In 1960, they built a thirteen-unit motel next door. The rent was \$6 a night. Mac and Edith Brown were paid 50 cents a room for housecleaning.

The McAnarney brothers leased the business to Wayne Stottler in 1969. Roger and Grace Brown took over the lease in 1971. Then Elmer McAnarney and his son Howard ran the business from 1975 until selling it to Roger and Grace Brown and Larry and Debbie Lucas in 1978. Roger died in 1988, but Grace, Larry, Debbie and "Liz" continue to run the business today. After nearly 60 years, Art's remains a socialization hub of the community--a place you can take your family and know the food will be good and the atmosphere friendly.

### **George Mecherle and State Farm Insurance**

*Nominated by Tom Teague*

Some people might see recognition of such a large company as State Farm Insurance as part of the Hall of Fame family as a departure from tradition. But in fact State Farm has much in common with these people and places. It began in Bloomington, Illinois, near what would become Route 66. During the formative years of both the company and the highway, State Farm founder George Mecherle (ma-HURL) and his family lived on Route 66 in Normal. For many years, both the state and national headquarters of State Farm have stood along 66 in Bloomington. And the qualities that typify people and small businesses along 66--hard work, honesty, innovation, hardy individualism, and grass roots community spirit--have also characterized State Farm.

Brothers Chris and Fred Mecherle migrated to America from a small town in Germany in 1852. After several years as farm hands, they'd saved enough to buy a piece of land near Merna, northeast of Bloomington. Drained and tiled, it became the base for the Mecherle family farm.

Fred stayed a bachelor all his life, but in 1864 Chris married Susanna Hull. They reared their seven children in George's Lutheran and Susanna's Quaker faiths. Born in 1877, George was the second youngest of their brood. He farmed until he turned 40. Then his wife of 17 years, Mae Edith Perry, contracted a disabling form of arthritis and George rented the farm out and moved his family to Florida. When that climate didn't improve Mae's health, the Mecherles moved back north to Normal in 1921. For many years they lived in a rambling old house on Main Street, Route 66's future path through town.

George tried many jobs, including selling car insurance. He did well, but his boss

thought George's ideas about car insurance were too progressive. "Go start your own company," the man told him. So George did.

Automobiles were as much a part of farmers' lives by then as their hats, coats and shoes, George thought. What farmers needed, he said, was an honest insurance company. It would be a mutual company, owned by the people it served. And every dollar taken in would purchase something.

George proposed a statewide company which would sell policies only to members of associated county farm bureaus.

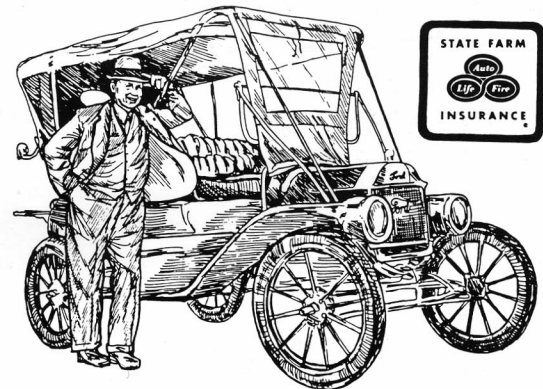
He and a partner loaned the new company \$4,000 for the required surplus note and in 1922 State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company sold its first policy.

Any good driver today can buy a full range of coverage for a fair price. But it wasn't that way when State Farm got started. The company's first policies, for example, insured drivers against collisions with moving objects such as cattle or other cars. But they did not insure them against collisions with stationary objects such as mailboxes. George figured drivers should be able to steer around such objects. Damage to a car's glass was not covered, either.

But as America's car culture grew, so did the insurance industry. Today's typical car policy is studded with features which we now take for granted, but which were considered innovations or even impossible when first suggested. State



### **Route 66 Hall of Fame of Illinois**



**George Mecherle  
Bloomington, Illinois  
1880 - 1951**

**Founder of State Farm Insurance  
1921 - Present**

**Inducted June 10, 1995**

**Route 66 Association of Illinois**

Farm was the first company, for example, to let policy holders pay their premiums semi-annually instead of annually. This made it easier for cash-strapped farmers to buy their first policy. George also came up with the idea of a deductible on all collision damages paid to hold down the number of "frivolous" claims. It was first set at \$10. And State Farm was the first company to have premiums paid to its home office instead of to the policyholders' agents.





Policy by policy and innovation by innovation, the company grew. After a year, it had 2,200 members or policyholders. By 1944, it had a million. Today it has 66 million. For four decades, State Farm has been the world's largest insurer of automobiles. It has 9,300 staff in the Bloomington area alone.

For many years now, State Farm's national as well as regional headquarters have stood along the 66 pypass, now called Veterans Parkway. But had it not been for George Mecherle and a coalition of other civic leaders, that road might never have been built. Even I-55 may have gone somewhere else. The growth which the four-lane bypass would bring at first met local resistance. For awhile, state highway officials even considered routing the four-lane version of 66 through Peoria. Then at the height of the controversy, a letter from George and the other leaders was published in the Bloomington Pantagraph.

"There is little that we can do to retard the march of progress," the writers said. "Nothing is permanent but change. We are either in the tide aiding and assisting in the improvements that are certain to come, or we are obstructionists. Is it better that Bloomington be located upon this [new] super highway, or is it better for our future that we be located on a second class highway?"

When the four-lane 66 was finally built, it came around Bloomington. State Farm and McLean County continued to grow.

Aside from insurance, the thing that State Farm is best known for is its atlases. In the insurance industry's infancy, good maps were as hard to find as good policies. Recognizing this, State Farm contracted with Rand McNally in 1937 to publish an annual free atlas in its name. The atlases were an immediate hit with the motoring public. Agents distributed them by the thousands to attract new customers. During World War II, military commanders even used the atlas when moving troops across country. To date, more than 21 million copies of the atlas have been printed.

George died in his sleep in 1951, but the company that he started still bears the Mecherle touch. His sons Ramond and George both worked for State Farm, as do many other family members yet today. There's a company-sponsored park on the south side of Bloomington for staff. State Farm is a prime sponsor of many civic and sporting events, including our Association's annual motor tour. And on their birthdays, all employees get a red rose and a greeting card on their desks. State Farm's "like a good neighbor" motto didn't come along until the 1970s, but it would always have fit George Mecherle.

# Circle Inn

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This article is based on Shirley Yedlicka Skuban's nomination of her parents, Anton "Tony" and Sara Yedlicka and the Circle Inn to the Route 66 Hall of Fame.

My parents, Anton and Sara Yedlicka, operated a tavern, cabaret and Standard Oil gas station alongside Route 66 in Braceville for 15 years. They called it the Circle Inn. They took possession of their newly reconstructed building in 1939 after operating a corner tavern in Braceville since 1939. Our family lived in an aptment alongside. Many customers worked at the Elwood Ordinance Plant 15 miles away.

Entertainment in the cabaret consisted of dances on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings and on Sunday afternoons. Occasionally Dad, who was of Bohemian descent, would hire a Bohemian Kaydo band for the pleasure of his friends and customers from the local Bohemian communities. Often he would hear of other entertainers (such as roller skaters, singers or dancers) who were passing through on their way to another commitment and would hire them for the

evening. The Wednesday night special was a free movie. In the summer of 1940, Dad hired a carnival, which was an outstanding event for the area. The ferris wheel, swings, go-carts and other rides were set up on our property.

In the food department, there were fish fries on Fridays and fried chicken dinners all week.

During the war years, the Circle Inn was a very popular entertainment spot. Word of mouth and the bright neon signs that could be seen from a far distance were all the advertising we needed. The only problem was the challenge presented by rationing, shortages and price controls. It was a juggling act to obtain enough products to sell.

Dad retired in 1952 and the Circle Inn was leased for a few years. But after I-55 was built, traffic on Route 66 was sparse and business dropped off dramatically. Eventually the building was converted into apartments. But the neon lights that cast a colorful reflection on the sky for many years remain a bright memory.



*Saturday afternoon at the Circle Inn*

**The Nationwide Route 66 Celebration, previously scheduled for June 23 - 25 in Oklahoma City, has been cancelled. Dave Knudson of the National Historic Route 66 Federation says he hopes to reschedule the event for next year in Albuquerque.**



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# Route 66 Association Merchandise

**CLOTHES** All Association clothes feature black, white and red shield by Bob Waldmire. Available in S, M, L, XL, XXL unless noted. Add \$2 for XXL.

Association nylon Jacket, polyester-lined	\$22.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Sweatshirt	\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association T-Shirt-- choice of black or white shield	\$10.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Fanny pack (black)	\$ 5.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Cap (black or white)	\$ 6.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Embroidered patch	\$ 5.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Glow in the Dark Shield T-Shirts	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Neon 2-sided T (specify Chevy, 'Vette, Mustang or T-Bird)	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Too Kool collar	\$ 8.00 + \$1.50 p/h

## COLLECTIBLES

Oversized '95 Route 66 Car Culture calendar, \$10.00 + \$2.00 p/h Lucinda Lewis. Beautiful color photos!	
8" x 8" Illinois US 66, shield-shaped rubber car magnet	\$11.00 + \$1.50 p/h, Pair \$20.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Large Letter State Postcards by Bob Waldmire, set of 8	\$ 2.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Illinois 66 metal refrigerator magnet	\$ 4.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Set of 42 Bob Waldmire Postcards--scenes of 66	\$ 8.50 + \$1.00 p/h
Hall of Fame Postcards (set of 15)	\$ 3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 ceramic salt & pepper shakers	\$ 5.00 + \$2.00 p/h
Hat pins--Large or Small	\$ 3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Illinois Route 66 metal license plate frame	\$ 6.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 earrings (specify post or dangled)	\$ 5.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Reproduction sign--shield shape, (full size, 16-gauge steel)	\$40.00 + \$5.00 p/h
Ceramic mug--choice of black or white	\$ 5.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Pewter Route 66 belt buckle	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Prism bumper sticker--choice of Chevy or Corvette	\$ 2.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Greetings from the Mother Road! postcard book by Michael Wallis	\$ 8.95 + \$1.50 p/h
Land of Lincoln "Route 66" license plate key chain	\$ 2.00 + \$ .50 p/h

## BOOKS, MAPS AND VIDEOS

<i>Guide Book to the Mother Road</i> , Bob Moore & Patrick Grauwels. Great photos and mile-by-mile detail	\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Illinois fold-out map of Route 66 by Jim Ross and Jerry McClanahan	\$ 3.95 + \$1.50 p/h
It's Here! Full set of eight state maps by Ross & McClanahan	\$30.00 + \$3.00 p/h
Bob Waldmire map--10 pages, plus legend	\$ 5.00 + \$ .50 p/h
<i>Searching for 66</i> by Tom Teague	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h
<i>Route 66--The Mother Road</i> by Michael Wallis, paperback	\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h
<i>Route 66 Roadside Companion</i> by Tom Snyder	\$ 9.95 + \$1.50 p/h
<i>A Guidebook to Highway 66</i> by Jack Rittenhouse (reprint of '46)	\$ 6.95 + \$1.50 p/h
<i>Route 66: The Highway and Its People</i> by Quinta Scott and Susan Kelly. Large format paperback	\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h
<b>Video!</b> "A Journey Down Route 66," narrated by Michael Wallis	\$19.98 + \$2.50 p/h
<b>Video!</b> "Route 66--The Video Road Trip," featuring famous 66-ers	\$24.95 + \$2.50 p/h
<i>Route 66 Cookbook</i> by Marian Clark (folklore & recipes)	\$24.95 + \$2.00 p/h
<i>Route 66 Fun Book</i> (for kids of all ages)	\$ 3.50 + \$1.00 p/h
"Route 66" music album by David Williams	\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h for CD \$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h for cassette
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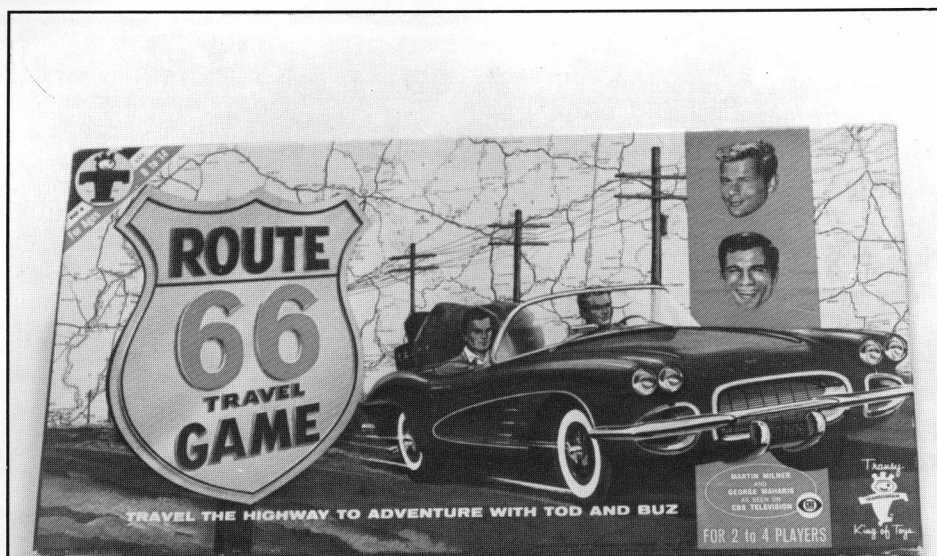
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## Collecting 66

This picture of the Route 66 board game, as well as the Route 66 Theme LP and some very nice matchbooks were sent in recently by a member whose name we couldn't decipher. If you'll try again, we'll be sure to give you credit in the next issue.



## Coming Events on 66

Get your 66 kicks at any of these fairs and festivals this year:

For more informatio on any of these events, call the local chamber of commerce.

Just send information to *Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704*. News of the following events was sent in for your enjoyment by Marilyn Pritchard of Pontiac:

**June Fest**, June 8-11, Joliet  
**Route 66 Association Motor Tour**, June 9-11, Chicago to St. Louis  
**Route 66 Celebration**, June 10, Berwyn  
**Heritage Festival**, June 10, Bloomington  
**Hang Loose Cruise Meet**, June 16-17, Pontiac  
**Bloomington Gold Corvette Show**, June 23-24, Springfield  
**Hometown Day**, June 24, Willimasville  
**Taste of Chicago**, June 24-July 4  
**Berwyn Family Fest**, June 30-July 4  
**Capitol City Celebration**, July 1-2, Springfield  
**Independence Day Celebration**, July 3-4, Litchfield  
**Grant Park Fireworks Show**, July 3, Chicago  
**Cruisin' 66 Festival**, July 7-9, Willowbrook & Burr Ridge  
**Sugar Creek Art Festival**, July 8-9, Normal  
**Macoupin County Fair**, July 11-16, Carlinville  
**Centennial Fest**, July 12-16, Romeoville  
**Elkhart Homecoming**, July 14-16

**Braidwood Summer Fest**, July 15-16  
**Taste of Country Fair and Route 66 Reunion**, July 22-23, Lexington  
**Livingston County 4-H Fair**, July 24-27, 4-H Park, Pontiac  
**McLean County Fair**, August 1-5, Bloomington  
**Logan County Fair**, August 1-6, Lincoln  
**Heritage Days Festival**, August 5, Town Square, Pontiac  
**Illinois State Fair**, August 11-20, Springfield  
**Corn Festival**, August 25-26, Normal  
**Party in the Park**, August 25-26, Litchfield  
**Art & Balloon Festival**, August 25-27, Lincoln  
**47th Annual Central States Thresherman's Reunion & Tractor Show**, August 31-September 4, Pontiac  
**Shady Lane Craft Show**, 100+ exhibitors, Call Marilyn at 815-844- 6937, Pontiac  
**Best Car Show by a Dam Site**, September 3, Wilmington  
**5th Annual Judged Car Show**, September 9, Berwyn  
**Antiques & Crafts Festival**, September 9-10, Lincoln  
**Harvest Fest**, September 15-17, Dwight  
**National Railsplitting Contest**, September 16-17, Lincoln  
**Fall Festival**, September 16-17, Carlinville  
**Route 66 Association Picnic**, September 24, Lincoln 1074  
**Thresherman's Bluegrass Festival**, September 29-October 1, Thresherman's Park, Pontiac  
**Autumn on the Boulevard**, October 7-8, Willimasville  
**Harvest Days Celebration**, October 7-8, Bloomington  
**Indian Summer Festival**, October 14-15, Springfield  
**Harvest Homefest**, October 28-29, Edwardsville



## Other Route 66 Associations

Looking for information about Route 66 in other states or countries? Contact these people for help:

### **Route 66 Association of Missouri**

P.O. Box 8117  
St. Louis, MO 63156  
Jim Powell, 314-539-5500, 314-367-2418

### **Kansas Historic Route 66 Association**

P.O. Box 169  
Riverton, KS 66770  
Scott Nelson, 316-848-3330

### **Oklahoma Route 66 Association**

901 Manvel  
Chandler, OK 74834  
Ron Burden, 405-258-0008

### **Old Route 66 Association of Texas**

P.O. Box 66  
McLean, TX 79057  
George Rook, 806-354-9716  
(sponsors a Route 66 museum in McLean)

### **New Mexico Route 66 Association**

1415 Central NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
Dave Nidel, 505-843-7185, 505-246-0211

### **Historic Route 66 Association of Arizona**

P.O. Box 66  
Kingman, AZ 86402  
Shirley Bellmore, 602-753-5001

### **California Historic Route 66 Association**

263 S. Cypress  
Orange, CA 92666  
Geoffrey & Joanne Willis, 714-639-2911

### **Route 66 Territory Visitors Bureau**

Thomas Winery Plaza  
7965 Vineyard Ave., Suite F-5  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
Bob Lundy, 909-948-9166  
(museum only--not a membership organization)

### **Dutch Route 66 Association**

Postbus 2012  
1620 EA Hoorn  
The Netherlands  
Hans Stuijbergen, Tel. 02290-18318

### **Route 66 Association of Belgium**

Georges Moreau Street 172  
1070 Brussels  
Belgium  
Patrick Grauwels, 32-2-6402635

### **Association Francaise Route 66**

88 rue de Chateau  
F.92600 Asnieres  
France

### **Route U.S. 66 Motorcycle Association**

R.R. 2, Box 16  
Girard, IL 62640  
George Rimini, 217-965-4748

## Meeting Minutes

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Marilyn Pritchard, Association Secretary, has prepared the following summary of Our April 2 board and general meetings for those people who weren't able to attend.

The Route 66 Association board met at 10 a.m. at Feddersen's Pizza Garage in Dwight. Eleven members were present. President Tom Knudsen conducted the meeting.

Dennis Pescitelli, planning chief for the Illinois Department of Transportation, reported on Phase I of that agency's Route 66 enhancement program. He said new 66 signs should be posted in time for this year's motor tour. He asked for proposals for their specific location. He said DOT is also looking seriously at Phase II of the program, which will include the improvement of several

sites along the way. He said this phase will need the help and support of communities that are affected.

Deborah Mileur was appointed as chair of the nominating committee. Elections will be held October 15.

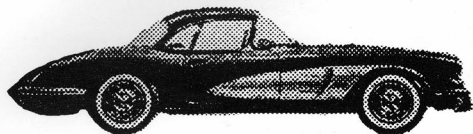
Priscilla Mathews reported that 118 members had renewed in the past three months and 85 new ones had signed up.

George Rimini announced there will be a Mother Road Ride & Rally for motorcyclists June 10-18. Riders will take off from Chicago and Santa Monica and meet at the halfway point. Some of them may start with our Motor Tour in Chicago.

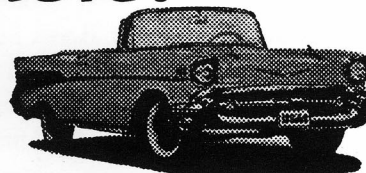
Terri Ryburn-LaMonte thanked the board for sending her and Frank Lozich to the "Preserving the Recent Past" conference in Chicago. They will file a full report later.

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

INTERESTS IN 66 \_\_\_\_\_

HOW I CAN HELP \_\_\_\_\_

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**TO:** Membership, Route 66 Association, 2743 Veterans Pkwy., Springfield, IL 62704

**Attention Motorcycle Fans!** If you would like information about a Route 66 Motorcycle Association, please check this box: ☐



# Name This 66 Spot!

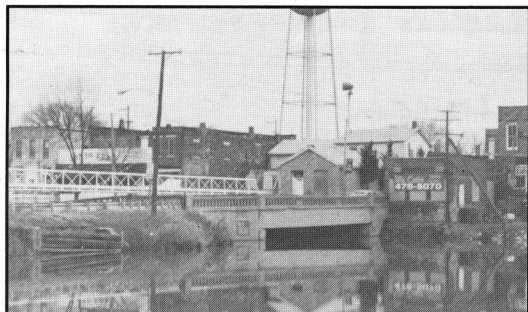
E.H. Fresen of Edwardsville sent in information about the "Federal Aid Route 77" sign featured in our Winter 1994 issue. Quoting from the Illinois Blue Book, he said many of our state's earlier paved roads were called "Federal Aid Routes" because that's where the money came from to build them. The state would use up all the federal money it had for

roadbuilding before it spent any money of its own.

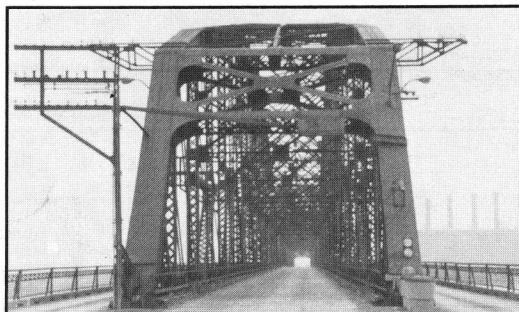
Photographer Randy Smith of East Peoria reports that the locations of the bridges featured in the Spring 1995 issue are: #1--Wilmington, #2--the McKenzie Bridge in East St. Louis, #3--the Salt Creek Bridge near Lincoln and #4, #5 & #6--Joliet.

Keep on sending in your 66 spots to the newsletter editor, folks! We've received several interesting stories as a result.

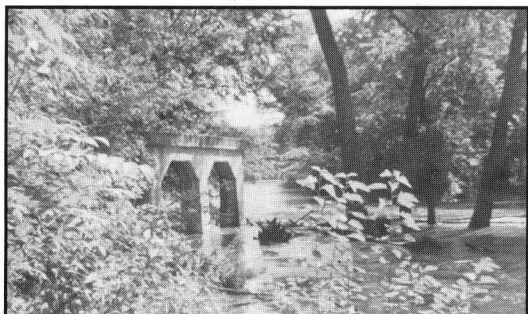
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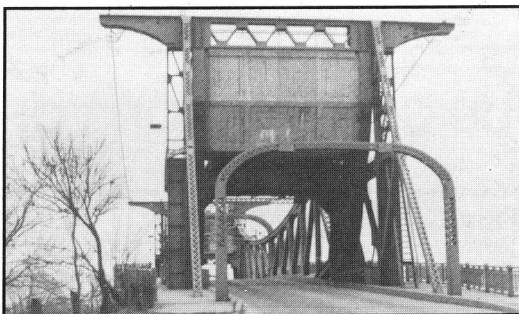
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# THE 66 NEWS!

FALL 1995

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"ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN."



# Officers and Board Members

The officers and board members of the Route 66 Association are available at most reasonable times to answer your questions and hear your comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them if you need to. The date to the right of each officer's or member's name is the expiration date of their term.

## President

Tom Knudsen, 10-95  
1202 Eastholme  
Bloomington, IL 61701  
309-828-2925

## Treasurer

Mike Yates, 10-96  
421 Brookcrest Dr.  
Washington, IL 61571  
309-444-9301

## Vice-President

Frank Lozich, 10-96  
7270 W. 174th Place  
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708-429-9173

## Secretary

Marilyn Pritchard, 10-95  
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Pontiac, IL 61764  
815-844-6937

## Newsletter Editor

Tom Teague  
1208 W. Edwards  
Springfield, IL 62704  
217-787-8839

## Board Members

**Jeff Meyer**, Cook, 10-95  
2802 Fremont St.  
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008  
708-392-0860

**Ernie Edwards**, Logan, 10-95  
P.O. Box 63  
Broadwell, IL 62623  
217-732-2337

**Todd Franek**, At Large, 10-95  
886 Cavalcade Circle  
Naperville, IL 60540  
708-961-3464

**Ed Schumann**, DuPage, 10-96  
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Oak Brook, IL 60521  
708-246-8241

**Ryan Russell**, Sangamon, 10-96  
640 W. Briar Pl., Apt 63  
Chicago, IL 60657  
312-525-0407

**Barbara Lorenz**, At Large, 10-96  
R.R. 2, 1392 Hickory Hills  
Metamora, IL 61548  
309-822-8197

**Duke Cartwright**, Will, 10-95  
407 Pasadena Ave.  
Crest Hill, IL 60435  
815-726-3574

**Priscilla Mathews**, Montgomery, 10-95  
410 N. Monroe  
Litchfield, IL 62056  
217-324-5551

**Lou Vandiver**, At Large, 10-95  
2504 Berkshire Ct.  
Champaign, IL 61824  
217-356-4949

**Ray Starks**, Grundy, 10-95  
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Morris, IL 60450  
815-942-0350

**George Rimini**, Macoupin, 10-96  
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**Ray Schroeder**, Livingston, 10-95  
217 Andrew St.  
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815-584-1019

**Deborah Mileur**, Madison, 10-96  
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Litchfield, IL 62056  
217-324-5551

**John Weiss**, At Large, 10-95  
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Frankfort, IL 60423  
815-469-5219

**Matt Knudsen**, McLean, 10-96  
1202 Eastholme  
Bloomington, IL 61701  
309-828-2925

**Rich Henry**, St. Clair, 10-96  
Old Route 66 & Madison  
Staunton, IL 62088  
217-635-5655

Executive Committee members are the officers, plus Jeff Meyer and Ray Schroeder.

## Internal Publication Information

The 66 News is published quarterly by the Route 66 Association of Illinois around the first of March, June, September and December. It is meant as a service to Association members and other people and organizations interested in the preservation, promotion and enjoyment of Route 66. Contributions are accepted, but we do not pay. However, any article that you submit remains your property and cannot be reused in any way by the Association or anyone else without your permission. Advertising rates are \$90 for a whole page, \$50 for a half page, \$30 for a quarter page and \$10 for a business card ad. Submit first-class, camera-ready copy only. We can't use Xeroxes. All stories and ads must be submitted at least six weeks prior to publication. Address inquiries and contributions to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704.

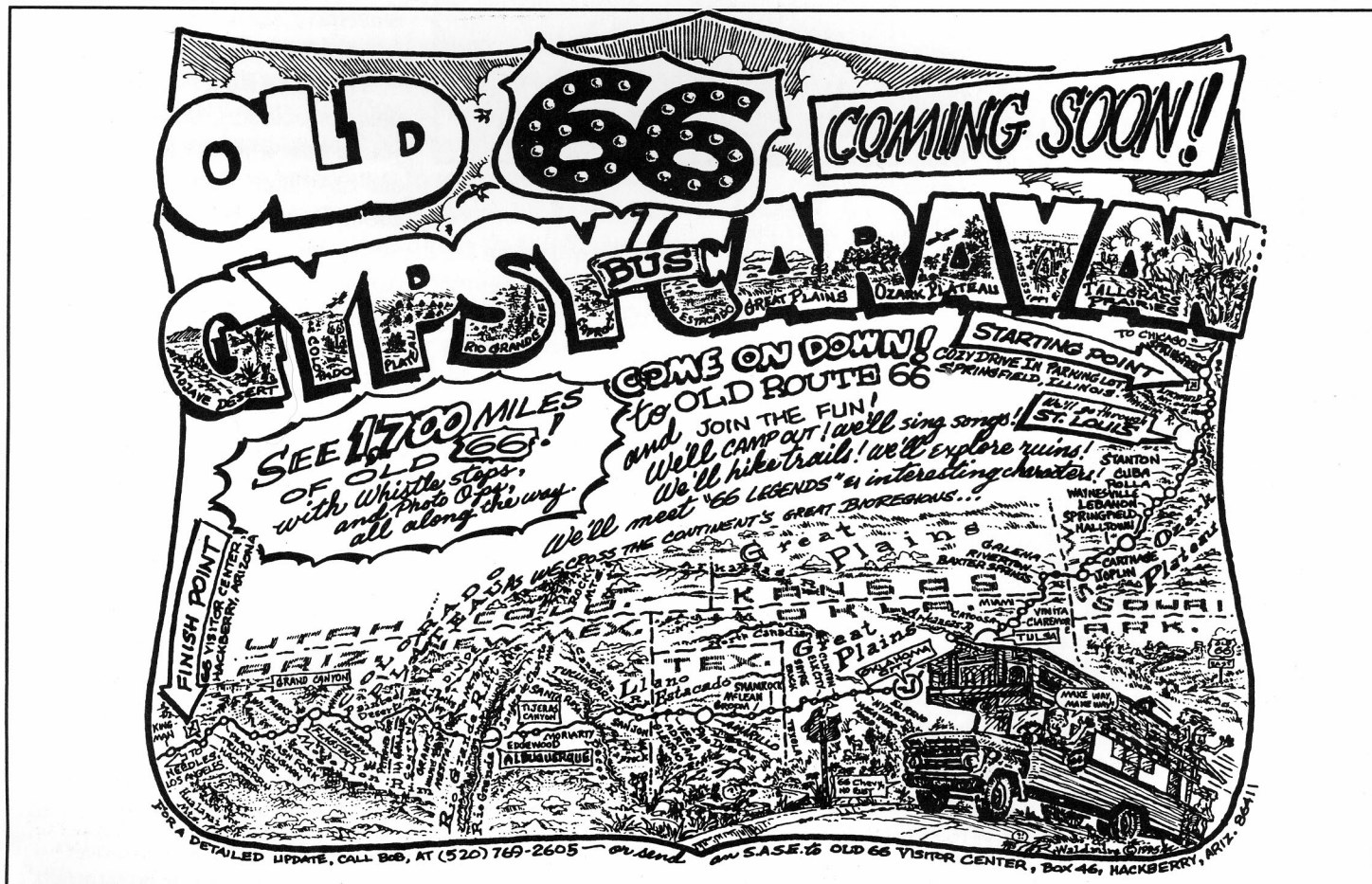
# The 66 Art of Jerry McClanahan

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Jerry McClanahan, whose watercolor painting of the landmark Standard/Sinclair station in Odell graces our cover, has a bachelor of fine arts degree from the University of North Texas. He illustrated and co-researched the "Here It Is" Route 66 map series. He designed the Route 66 neon mural on top of the Gallup Chamber of Commerce. Besides Route 66 scenes, he also does paintings of classic cars. His paintings and postcards can be found in stores up and down the road. The Odell painting is 16.5 x 21 inches and can be bought for \$600. Just write to Jerry 4815 W. Highway 31, Corsicana, TX 75110. The following is Jerry's Artist's Statement or, as he calls it, "How I Spent My Summer Vacations."

Route 66 is my "Vacation Road." The many summer journeys my family made down the Main Street of America during the 60's indelibly etched a succession of stunning roadside images into eager eyes. My Route 66 was an unbroken linear fantasy through the majestic and mysterious

west--a wonderland of mountains and mesas, cowboys and Indians, neon signs and pleading billboards. These rapid-fire visuals, framed through a Ford's bug-streaked windshield, strengthened and reinforced one another, becoming strong recollections of a boy's wistful yearnings as the roadside wonders sped by (dads hate to stop), memories that are now colored with a golden tint of desert sun and the patina of nostalgia.

Preserving and restoring Route 66 scenes through my artwork is my contribution to the commemoration and celebration of our highway heritage. The special visual fix I acquired as a child is still very strong, but 66 is now more than a vacation road to me as I have learned of the other roles the highway played in our country's development. My works may reflect the dustbowl days as well as the triumphs of tourism. I feel a particular kinship with those roadside entrepreneurs who staked their lives on two lanes of pavement and a steady stream of traffic. Behind the brightly lit facades and the chrome and glass are the people and their stories. They make their presence known in my artwork--sometimes in a subliminal shape glimpsed through a window, sometimes posing proudly along the road. I have visited with many of these business people through the years. We share a dependency on the old highway and a love for simpler times not too far past.





# DAVID WILDA: A Life on Route 66

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The following article is based on David L. Wilda's nomination of his son, David E. Wilda, to the Route 66 Hall of Fame of Illinois. The younger David was not inducted, but the Hall of Fame Committee asked his father's permission to print this wonderful story in our newsletter. We are proud to give you the story now, along with a note Mr. Wilda sent in response to our request.*

## A Father's Response

The following letter was written and rewritten several times between Thanksgiving and Christmas of 1993, just after my son was killed in an auto wreck. I did not submit it to the Association at that time because I felt it was not an appropriate nomination and would not be accepted. It was, however, good therapy for me and helped me begin to come to terms with my loss.

When I decided in December of 1994 to submit it as a nomination to the Hall of Fame, I still did not expect David to be chosen, but I felt the time had come to share my thoughts and feelings. And so I extend my deepest heartfelt thanks to the members of the Hall of Fame Committee for their generous offer to publish my letter and to all the Association members whose thoughts and prayers have been with us throughout this ordeal.

## The Original Nomination

Dear Hall of Fame Committee Members:

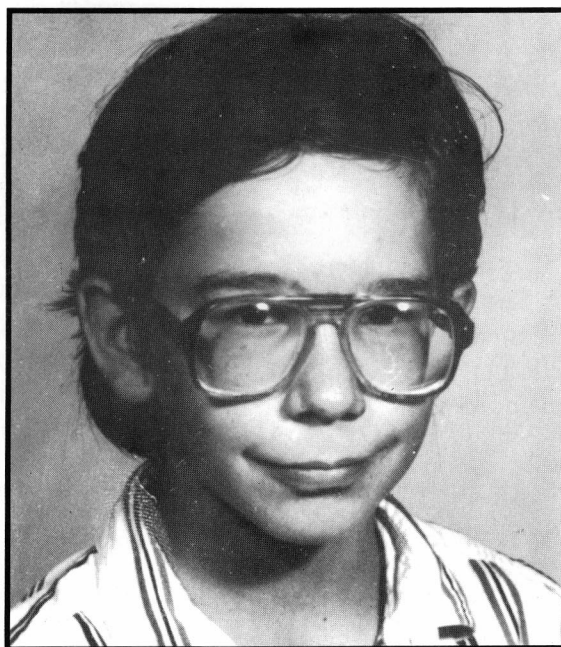
Considering the persons and types of businesses nominated for and inducted into the Hall of Fame in the past, I have a rather unusual nominee. Since all past nominees have spent their lives making Route 66 what it was, and still is, I feel it is time to nominate and induct someone that Route 66 and the Illinois Association helped make into who he was: DAVID EDWARD WILDA.

Although he was not born until Route 66 officially was no more, the road and the Illinois Association were the most important things in his life outside of his family.

As David was growing up, he was a very shy and withdrawn child. He would never speak to anyone he did not know and often not even to his few friends or family members. He was so introverted that he often had problems in school. These problems continued and worsened until by

he was often getting into fights after being teased by other students about his shyness and the problems and consequences of it. As a result of these fights and other behavior problems, he was put into a special education program. This eventually led to his transfer to a special school. Although this program did help, it was not until we joined the Route 66 Association that David really started to come out of his shell.

He went on the first motor tour and just fell in love with Route 66. He could not wait for the second tour. It was during the second tour that his mother, Toni, joined the board of directors and we all started to become more active in Association functions.



David E. Wilda

When David discovered that this meant he could stand behind the tables and help sell the Association's merchandise, he became a totally different person. I remember the first time I saw him doing this. I turned to his mother and asked, "Is that David?" When she said "Yes," I said "I meant our David. Is that really him standing there talking to people, making change, actually selling stuff?" I remembered being so shocked I thought if I had not seen it for myself that would never have believed it. I also felt like I must have been the proudest parent on earth right then.

Thanks to Route 66 and the Illinois Association, David became a young man who would talk to anyone anywhere anytime, especially about Route 66 and our association. He would do anything to promote or help. He got up at 5:30 a.m. on a Saturday to go to the campground where part of the European tour group was staying in 1993 so he could help fix a 1930 Model A Ford for a couple of gentlemen from Germany--or at least locate someone who could. He then helped out at Midwest Street Rods in Bolingbrook until after 11 p.m. selling merchandise and greeting people. He then got up at 5 a.m. on Sunday to help put up directional arrows through Joliet and Will County to make it easier for the group to find its way around some of the construction zones.

If only you could have seen him doing this. He was having so much fun jumping in and out of the car, an arrow sign in one hand and a roll of tape or a staple gun in the other. He sometimes almost wouldn't wait for me to get the car stopped.

During the European group's brief stop at the Launching Pad in Wilmington, David was greeting and talking to people from Germany, Holland, England and Poland. He talked to them all. And all this from a young man who was too shy to even look at a stranger three years before.

Route 66 and the Illinois Association gave David so much.

# Still Searching for 66

by Tom Teague

Each year I try to cover at least half of the length of Route 66 to renew old friendships, refresh my memory, and find a few new stories. Besides constant travel along the Illinois portion of 66 this year, I took a trip in May from Vega, Texas, to Needles, California. Although the short time I had available gave the trip a whirlwind effect, I still met an amazing number of people and came across several "new" 66 sites. After my original journey along the road in 1986 while I was researching my book, this one was my most rewarding.

My journey began with a late night flight into Albuquerque on May 4. The next morning, Friday, I rented a car and headed toward Vega where I was slated to speak on Saturday at the Texas Route 66 Hall of Fame ceremonies.

In Santa Rosa, I stopped to see what progress had been made on reopening the Club Cafe. A construction permit in the window made out to the Campos family was dated November 1994, but no work has yet been done. Later I stopped for lunch at Joseph's, the Campos family's longtime successful restaurant down the street. None of the family was there, but the store manager told me they still hope to reopen the Club this summer. Meanwhile, the bottom line in Santa Rosa is: Eat at Joseph's.

Before crossing into Texas, I stopped at the Blue Swallow Motel in Tucumcari and visited with Lillian Redman. Lillian came to New Mexico in a covered wagon. In her younger years, she worked as a Fred Harvey girl at that chain's rail station restaurants along 66. Then in 1958, when she was almost 50, her husband-to-be offered her the manager's post at a motel on 66 as an inducement to marriage.

"It was made from war surplus cabins by its original owner," Lillian said. "At first it looked like the loneliest place in the world." But she stayed, moving the cabins closer together and adding garages and a fresh coat of paint. A devoutly religious person, Lillian renamed the motel the Blue Swallow as a symbol of peace and harmony. Then she designed and added its crowning touch: a pink and blue neon sign of a swallow in flight. Even in neon-laden Tucumcari, Lillian's creation stood out. It has made the Blue Swallow, after the Coral Court, the most recognizable and most photographed motel along Route 66. Many people stop by virtually everyday to look at the sign and chat with Lillian. The only catch is that most of them go down the road to a newer, more comfortable motel. She estimates only 80-100 people a month spend the night there and about half of them are poor folks sponsored by local charities. If it weren't for income from family rental property, Lillian wouldn't be able to keep her doors open. Her brother has been urging her to retire, but she doesn't know what she would do otherwise.

All the way through New Mexico that day, there was a festive spirit in the air. People were preparing to celebrate

Cinco de Mayo, the Mexican independence day. But as soon as I crossed into the Texas, a language change took place and I found that it was once again May 5.

I stayed that evening at the Vega Motel. Like the Blue Swallow, it features attached garages and direct-control TVs. It also has a red and green neon sign which, although it's just block letters, casts the glow of another era on the grounds at night.

The Texas Hall of Fame ceremonies were held the next day in Vega in the county garage, which doubles as a community center. Delbert Trew, first president of the Texas



*Club Cafe, Santa Rosa*

Route 66 Association, was emcee. I'd been looking forward to this day because Texas is the only state besides Illinois that has a Route 66 Hall of Fame. Ours got started a year earlier than theirs, but as far as I know the states never talked with each other about the idea, so I was anxious to do some comparing.

What I found out was that there isn't much difference in the kind of people inducted. Texas Hall of Famers, like their Illinois counterparts, are hardworking, ingenious blue collar-type folks who treasure their independence, but also keep a door open for visitors. If there is any difference between the two Halls of Fame, it's in their physical structure. The Texas Hall is in an old Sears brassiere factory in McLean, Texas, that also houses the Devil's Rope (barbed wire) Museum. Delbert Trew is curator and manager of both. Our Hall, on the other hand, consists of nine well-stocked display cases in a hallway at Dixie Truckers Home in McLean, Illinois. Because Texas has so much more space than we do, they've adopted a more liberal policy about who they induct. If a person or business is considered worthy, they're inducted--no matter how many others are going in that year. Because of



our space limitations in Illinois, our policy has been to give preference to nominees who are still alive. That's why Texas, even though we got a head start on them, has already inducted 50 Hall of Famers. A great many of them are deceased. That's about twice as many as we have, even



*George Rook's Okie truck, Landergin, Texas*

though Illinois has a lot more of 66 than Texas does. So I'm looking for ways that we can honor more folks in Illinois without making our display cases a series of wall-to-wall plaques. Suggestions are welcome.

Besides new Hall of Famers, Texans were also celebrating new Route 66 signs in their state on the weekend I spent there. Like Illinois, there are also advisory signs on the interstate. They started going up in April. Soon Texas 66 fans hope exits to small towns like Vega and Groom will also be lighted. All eight states along 66 now have some degree of signage.

Besides myself, two other "chroniclers" of 66 attended the Texas Hall of Fame ceremonies. They are artist Jerry McClanahan of Corsicana, Texas, and Mark Adams, publisher of *The Heart of Route 66* in McLean, Texas. Jerry's story and art appear elsewhere in this issue. Mark's *Heart of 66* has been coming out once a month for a little more than a year. It's a 12-page, tabloid size newspaper that concentrates on the portion of 66 between Elk City, Oklahoma, and Tucumcari, New Mexico. I picked up a copy of the May issue, which featured articles on a World War II POW camp near McLean and several new or revived 66 businesses. There's also a story about a 1928 religious revival and local news, such as anniversary announcements and the high school honor roll. For a year's subscription, send \$6 to *The Heart of Route 66*, P.O. Box 6666, McLean, TX 79057.

George Rook, current president of the Texas 66 Association, has moved his Route 66 Antiques business from Amarillo to Landergin, about seven miles west of Vega. He features an Okie truck outside and a nicely-furnished, one-room Route 66 Museum inside, plus a "neon soda saloon," a fabulous selection of automotive and gasoline memora-

bilia, and the country's most comprehensive collection of Route 66 signs (many of which are also for sale). Like the Hall of Fame in McLean, Route 66 Antiques is a must stop for 66 travelers.

Another quart of gas will get you from Landergin to Adrian, Texas, where one of the road's most fascinating restoration projects is now underway. Shortly after World War II, returning veteran Bob Harris helped his mother and stepfather build a cafe-gas station-bus stop-dance hall in Adrian. It had a concrete roof and round roof timbers, which protruded through the walls to the outside. But its most distinctive feature was its entryway, the control room of a war surplus air control tower that Bob salvaged from a nearby air base. Like the rest of the tower, the top half or glass part of the door leaned outward almost a foot. The place originally had another name, but folks just naturally called it the Bent Door Cafe and that name stuck. But not too long after the business opened, Bob had a falling out with his stepfather and left town for 45 years. For much of that time, he was an oilfield hand. Then late last year, he finally returned home, bought the long-closed cafe, and vowed to remodel and reopen it. I think he can do it. As other readers pass by the Bent Door, I'd appreciate progress reports.

The next morning, a planned quick breakfast at Joseph's Restaurant in Santa Rosa, New Mexico, turned into a three-hour discussion about personal freedom, humane treatment of animals, backgammon and life in general. I had just ordered my first quesadilla of the day when I walked a 62-year-old



*Club Cafe, Santa Rosa*

my first quesadilla of the day when I walked a 62-year-old fellow with a bald spot, a ponytail and a neck brace to protect against road vibrations. We struck up a conversation across the aisle and I soon invited him to share my booth. The man has a formal name, but stopped using it 27 years ago. Since then, he's called himself "Swallow," the same harbinger of peace that Lillian Redman memorialized.

A native of Granite City, Illinois, Swallow became a top flight lab chemist for pharmaceutical companies in New Jersey. "But I got tired of making my living off of other people's cancer, quit, and moved to California," he said. "After a few months, I started interviewing for jobs out there. Until then, I hadn't thought much about the animals I worked with. If a rat or a rabbit had to die for an experiment, off came its head. Then one day I had an interview at a major lab near San Francisco. It went so well that the boss asked me to leave my suit jacket in his office and go on a tour of the lab itself. We were rounding a corner by some animal cages when a monkey looked straight out at me. I have never seen such eyes. There was no sound, but the animal said to me, 'Why are you doing this to us?' And I couldn't answer. When we got back to the office, I picked up my jacket, thanked the man for the interview, and left."

And he hasn't been back. Swallow sold or gave away most of his possessions, bought a Ford motor home, and has spent his time since then traveling the scenic roads and byways of this country, including Route 66. Backgammon, which he once played at the professional level because of the intense competitive spirit it inspired, no longer flicks his Bic. Today he talks of peace, harmony and centers of spiritual convergence such as Sedona, Arizona. Occasionally he'll also give clue of his Presbyterian upbringing with such in-the-hands-of-fate observations as "Whatever happens, happens" and "You gotta do what you gotta do."

When money's been short, Swallow has taken on home repair and remodeling jobs--a craft he discovered he had quite a flair for. On the Sunday that I met him, he was taking 66 back to Granite to help his father arrange his financial affairs. On his way west again, I told Swallow he should stop at Bob Harris' in Texas or Bob Waldmire's place in Arizona. Both men could use his handiwork. And I'm sure they'd find plenty to talk about.

Sunday evening I did something I don't like to do very often--stay in an expensive hotel. But it was the LaPosada, downtown Albuquerque's oldest and grandest, and there was live music in a blues bar just around the corner. So I made an exception. And aside from the fire at 5 o'clock the next morning, it was a great visit. Fortunately, the fire harmed nothing but our sleep and the fire department let guests go back to their rooms at 5:45. Then at 6:30, just after I was thoroughly asleep again, the fire alarm went off a second time and stayed on just long enough to thoroughly reawaken me. Since it rang for only 15-20 seconds this time, I chose to ignore it and went back to sleep. At 7 a.m., the phone rang.

"Is this another fire alarm?" I asked the caller. "No, sir," he said. "It's your wake-up call." At breakfast, the waiter asked if I'd had a good night. "I spent it here," I answered.

At one of his trading posts on the Navajo Reservation, I met Armand Ortega. Armand's father, Max, first opened a trading post in Lupton, Arizona, in 1945--the same year Armand graduated from high school. When Max was offered a government job soon afterward, he turned over operation of



*The Old Route 66 Visitor Center, Hackberry, Arizona*

the post to Armand. He now owns 15 trading posts in four states. In addition, he bought the El Rancho Hotel in Gallup, saving one of 66's finest hotels from sure demolition. Armand didn't have much time to talk, but he did say that all his youthful memories of Route 66 weighed heavily in his decision to buy the El Rancho.

If you like folk, blues, country and other popular music, Flagstaff is--for its size--the best music town along 66. I spent Monday evening there and found three great spots within a block of each other. After listening to a few strums at the two other places, I quickly settled in at the Flagstaff Brewing Company on Old 66. The band featured a young woman who played a solid body violin. They sang B.B. King, Lou Reed and Led Zeppelin, plus many originals. And the beer, which is brewed on the premises, was fresh and cold.

On my way west again the next day, I stopped in Seligman, Arizona, for a visit with Angel Delgadillo. Angel was the first president of Arizona's 66 association. Now, although his wife doesn't share his enthusiasm for the task, Angel is president again. In an earlier election, Arizona 66 members selected a president who hadn't lived in the state very long, but who spoke enthusiastically about the road's possibilities. When results didn't measure up promises, the fellow left office early. To protect against such persuasive newcomers in the future, Arizona 66 now has a new bylaw: No one can run for president without serving at least two years on the board first. That's good practice, but I'm not so sure about



it as codified policy. If we'd had such a policy in Illinois when I first became president, I could never have run.

Angel is still a barber, but is deliberately slowing down. For example, groups of motorcyclists used to stop at Angel's and have everybody get a shave. Now Angel performs only one exhibition shave. His main business is Route 66 souvenirs. As the most interviewed and photographed of Route 66 oldtimers, Angel gets swarms of visitors from all over the world. Often they come by the busload.

From Angel's, I headed on toward Hackberry, Arizona, to spend a couple of evenings with Bob Waldmire at his International Bioregional Old Route 66 Visitors Center. When Bob was considering buying the Hackberry General Store in early 1993, his mother and father and several other family members took the Amtrak out west with him to inspect the premises. Father Ed had the pithiest observation. "Everywhere I look, I see work," he said. But he and the rest of the family sensed Bob's determination about this project and helped him arrange financing for it. Two years later, although work is still visible everywhere, Bob has done a sensational job of "Waldmiring" the place. There's a booth and a counter from the Cozy Dog and a complete line of Waldmire art and Route 66 literature. Doodads and memorabilia sit, stand or hang from all over the place. There are also about a dozen pictures of Marilyn Monroe, a photo gallery of people who've visited the center, and a hippie cornucopia of other visual treasures, many of them donated by his visitors. Bob has truly settled in.

Well, maybe I speak too fast. Bob has two careers now—he's a shopkeeper as well as an artist—and sometimes they rub against each other. As a shopkeeper, he has to be "on" and available from dawn to dusk. As an artist, he craves uninterrupted privacy. Add to this a list of home improvement tasks so long that it makes the eyes sore just to read it and it's easy to see why Bob often feels torn between his priorities. I'm sure he'll strike a balance—I'm just not sure where he'll end up.

On the one full day that I spent with Bob, a Wednesday, he had about 30 visitors. About 10 were local folks and vendors. Another 10 were also Americans. But an equal share of visitors came from foreign countries—Germany,

Austria, New Zealand and England. Time and again, shopkeepers and other businessmen along 66 told me it's the foreign visitor that's keeping 66 going. And unlike most Americans that you meet along 66, most foreigners have

never traveled the road before. There's something reassuring about that kind of faith. To me, it shows that Route 66 does not have just a nostalgic past—it also has an exciting present and future.

After a brief visit in Kingman, Arizona, the next morning with Jerry Richard, co-founder of the Arizona 66 association, I inched up over Oatman Hill and cruised down a recently repaved section of Route 66 to California. Maggie McShan, historical anchor of eastern San Bernardino County, had arranged for me to give a talk that evening at the Hungry Bear Restaurant in Needles. Among the folks in attendance were Paul and Sandi Taylor, editor and business manager of Route 66 Magazine. These ex-Angelenos have dedicated almost two years now to giving the road a high quality, slick magazine. To see how well they've succeeded, pick up a copy of it at your local newsstand or send \$12 for a year's subscription to .

After the Needles talk, I highballed it back to Flagstaff in time to catch the last set of music for the night. As a writer, I accept the concept of delayed gratification as a fact of life. That's why it's so gratifying to go out after a hard day's work and see other artists—musicians—getting their kicks right away. It shows me that success is possible and helps get me back to the keyboard the next night.

On the next day, Friday, I drove back to Albuquerque. On Saturday I had breakfast in Old Town with Sam English, an artist friend that I featured in my book. When I met Sam in 1986, the art market was booming and he was selling up to 20 pieces a month. Then came the recession of the late '80s and the market has never recovered. Now Sam considers four sales in a month to be good. He even had to let his own son, Sam Jr., go after two years because there just wasn't enough income to support both their families. But Sam's painting is still gorgeous and soulful. At least we still have that.

On Saturday noon, I boarded a plane back to St. Louis, then home. So I guess that's the end of this story. But don't worry or celebrate. I intend to keep searching for 66 for some time to come. You'll be hearing from me again.



*The Bent Door Cafe, Adrian, Texas*

## New Members

*Compiled by Priscilla Mathews*

Since our summer issue, 71 new members have joined the association. They come from 13 states and two other countries. They include 24 families, five sustaining members and three businesses. We extend a right hand in fellowship to:

Gene & Marie Rothert, Algonquin; Frank LaMere, Alton; Andy Honiotes, Wilmington; Larry Bates, New Lenox; Art & Charlene Py, Antioch; Tom Gumm, Morris; **Horst Bunn, Berlin, Germany**; Robert Rizzo, Cranford, NJ; Arnold & Therese Duran, Palos Hills; Stephen Gordon, Aurora; Matt & Noemi Mattox, Forest Park; James Rogers, LaPorte, IN; Stephen Dohm, Milwaukee, WI; **Tony Anderson, St. Paul, MN**; M&M Collectibles, Dwight; James & Priscilla Seay, Mahomet; Jim & Rosemary Gorski, Lisle; Robert Kyes, Springfield; Phyllis Feaster, Bloomington; Ken Middleton, Arlington Heights; **Richard Meyer, Springfield**; Robert & Nancy McDade, Tinley Park; Merle & Sue Hansel, Troy; Mrs. Clarence Peterson, Valparaiso, IN; Gabriel Leon, Chicago; Michael Vukasovic, Tinley Park; Robert Hartley, Joliet; Raymond Gaines, Charlottesville, VA; Robert Lane, Aurora, CO; James Altano, Willow Springs; Charles Steber, Evansville, IN; Ralph White Merchandising, Spring, TX; Eleanore Wojnarowski, Joliet; Lynne Bailey, Chicago; **Tyge Jantzen, Luxembourg**; Steve Troutman, Owensboro, KY; John & Priscilla Vervynck, Varna; Steve & Louise Rager, Chillicothe; Peter Baenziger, Lincolnshire; David Hardy, Lisle; Emmy Bates, Dolton; Vivian Scholl, LeRoy; Robert Lizak, Woodridge; Albert Crowe, Downers Grove; Edna Borsano, Joliet; Don Aultman Family, East Peoria; Jeff Heckman, Minster, OH; Leon & Kathy Homan, New Bremen; Robert Werts, East Alton; Paul Kmitta, Peru; Kenneth & Carol Broeking, Oreana; Marjorie Jordan, St. Charles; Lou Hahne, Danville; Lazy SOB Recordings, Austin, TX; Addie & Mary Rose Wuehitech, Palos Heights; **The Original Route 66 Accessories Co., Western Springs**; Herbert Laffoon, Lynwood, CA; Larry Gilmer, Elmhurst; Pat & Rae Baker, Union Hill; D&D Travel Services, Bloomfield, CT; Carol Seifert, Moweaqua; Bob & Kathy Kaminski, Chicago; **Moscardelli Moving & Storage, Springfield**; Stephen & Deborah Murch, DeKalb; Joe Cirincione, Bensenville; Robert & Margaret Armstrong, Grafton, WI; **Robert Wish, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida**; William Lindemann, Buffalo Grove; Valerie McCaffrey, Hinsdale; Donald & Susan Schlosser, Elmhurst, and Greg Matulionis, Cincinnati, OH.

## Annual Picnic September 10

The date for our fifth annual Association picnic was incorrectly reported not once, but twice in our spring issue. And the park has also changed names since then. So forget those old dates and names and come on September 10 to Madigan Memorial Park south of Lincoln. Hall of Famer Ernie Edwards will be serving Pig Hip sandwiches and John and Lenore Weiss will be coordinating the entertainment. Bring a covered dish or dessert and all your own gear. Food will be served at about 12:30.

To get to Madigan Memorial Park, take Exit 123 off of I-55. Follow Route 66 south a couple of miles to Madigan Park. For more information, call Lenore Weiss at 815-469-5219.

## Meeting Schedule

All meetings of the Route 66 Association of Illinois are open to all members. There's a lot of fellowship and fun at our meetings, but they're also where we conduct our business. So come for both. The site of board meeting rotates. All motor tour meetings take place at Mount Hope Township Hall in McLean. We're not sure what the hall's address is.

### Board Meetings

October 15, 1995, Bloomington, La Posada Restaurant  
January 21, 1996, Lincoln, TBA (Snow date: February

4)

April 21, 1996, Hamel, TBA

July 21, 1996, Indian Head Park, Wolf's Head Inn

October 21, 1996, Springfield, TBA

### Motor Tour Meetings

The date of the November meeting will be determined at our October 15 board meeting. If you can't attend that session, call a board member or officer for information.

**Don't Forget  
to  
Vote!, Vote!, Vote!**



## Signs of Life

After years of hard lobbying by our association and other supporters of Route 66, the Illinois Department of Transportation finally has finally re-signed the road in our state. And though we may be the last state to get signs up, it looks like we're doing the best job. The 1940s version of the road is the primary one to get signs, but older alignments are getting signs, too, along with smaller placards indicating their dates of use. There are even directional arrows on the route and signs along the interstates. In all, nearly 600 signs have gone up.

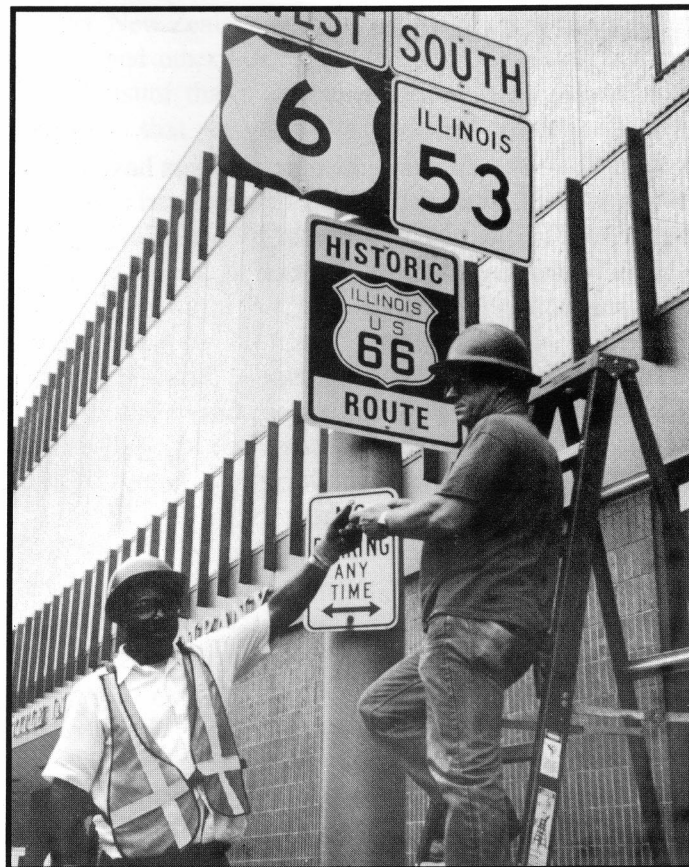
Director Kirk Brown of DOT is a longtime fan of Route 66 and deserves a great deal of credit for allowing federal highway enhancement funds to be used for these signs. Craig Williams of DOT's office of planning, also deserves praise for his work. But it's Dennis Pescitelli, chief of DOT's office of planning, who was the real spark plug behind this project. He's been coming to our meetings and other Route 66 events ever since the National Park Service conducted its first swoop survey in 1992. His patient persistence, we're sure, helped this project stay the course through the bureaucratic process.

Residents of some towns along 66 were unhappy to discover that their bypass was signed, but that the original road through the heart of town was not. But Pescitelli has repeatedly said that DOT is open to further suggestions. If any town wants additional signing, the association suggests that they form a committee of the mayor, the Chamber of Commerce, the tourism office and the association's county board member and call Dennis' assistant Bill Bennett. His number is 217-782-2908.

Would-be thieves, beware! DOT has special markings on the signs that quickly distinguish them from the souvenir versions that the association is selling. If you're caught with a stolen sign, you can do jail time. So give civility a chance—buy a souvenir sign and let the real ones do their job.

## Motor Tour Passport Stickers

If you failed to get all your passport stickers during our 1995 Motor Tour, they are still available. Please write to Lou Vandiver, 2504 Berkshire Court, Champaign, IL 61821 and tell her which ones you need. Be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Please note that the Romeoville/Stateville sticker was actually a rubber stamp. If you're missing those, you can send your passport to us or we'll send you a rubber-stamped piece that you can attach to your passport.



*Melvin Washington and John Hibner post a sign in Joliet*

## Vote! Vote! Vote! at Our Annual Meeting

*by the Nominating Committee*

Come and be heard! The elections will be held at our annual meeting on Sunday, October 15, in the Illinois Room of the Parkway Motel/LaPosada Restaurant in Bloomington. Make plans now to attend. We will have ballot elections for president and secretary. County board positions up for election are Cook, Will, Grundy, Logan, Montgomery and St. Clair. Three at-large board positions are also up for election. If you would like to nominate someone or are interested in serving as an officer or board member, please feel free to contact a member of the Nominating Committee. Call Dorothy Seratt (815-998-2300), Duke Cartwright (815-726-3574), Lenore Weiss (815-469-2282), Barbara Lorenz (309-822-8197), or Deborah Mileur (217-324-5551).

The Parkway/LaPosada is on Old 66, Beich Road, near its intersection with Morris Avenue in south Bloomington. The day starts with a board meeting at 11 a.m. Lunch is at noon. The annual meeting, at which we'll have elections, begins at 1 a.m. For more information, call Tom or Pat Knudsen (309-828-2925).

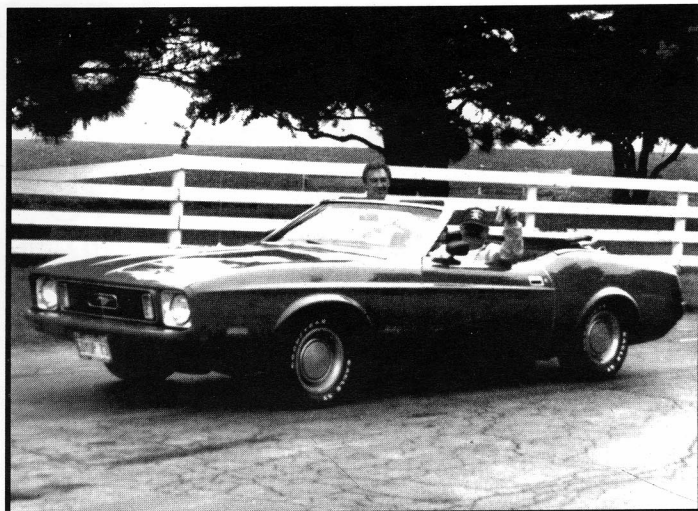
# Motoring On

With new signs to celebrate, this year's motor tour, the Association's sixth, set many new standards. With 250 cars entered, it was almost our largest. The pre-tour party at Ravello's in Berwyn drew a record 200 people. Our Hall of Fame ceremonies, held in conjunction with Bloomington's Heritage Days celebration, drew the largest crowd of any event we've ever sponsored. We had more new stops and attractions than ever before--Plainfield's White Fence Farms, Joliet's riverwalk, Stateville's prison, Bloomington's Old Court House Museum, Lincoln's Postville Courthouse, and more. In addition, we enjoyed visits to such familiar tour highlights as Grant Park, the Hall of Fame, the Cozy Dog and Hamel.

A once familiar sight on our tour was missing this year at every stop except Bloomington. That is the State Farm Arch. Although State Farm remains an active supporter of our association, it chose not to sponsor the arch along the entire route this year. By showing up everywhere that we did, the arch for five years was a powerful symbol of our community. Did you miss it this year? Think it over, then send your comments to the newsletter or to your board member. We've already begun planning next year's tour, so we're anxious to hear what you have to say.

The purpose of our annual motor tour is clear and simple--we just want to have fun and enjoy each other's company. So we try to keep the tour itself clear and simple. There's no Disneyworld or other technological marvel at the end of our road. And many of our stops enroute, such as Stateville, are certainly not conventional tourist destinations. But they're all part of the fabric of 66, so we check them out.

Be a part of the fabric of 66 next year by joining us on our seventh annual motor tour. We have inaugurated a new policy of traveling from north to south in odd-numbered years and south to north in even-numbered years. That means our '96 tour will start from near St. Louis. Please join us!



*David Wilda at White Fence Farm*



*Taking a break with a friend at Plainfield*



*Burt Parkinson at the Hall of Fame Ceremonies in Bloomington*



*Lunch in Dwight*



# Route 66:

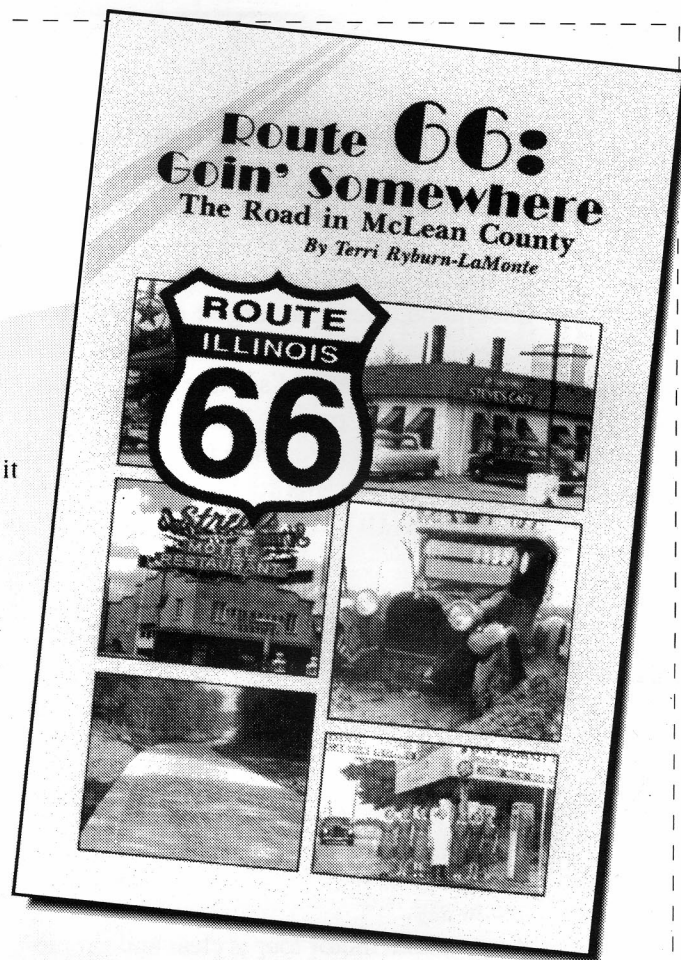
## Goin' Somewhere

*The Road in McLean County*

Order your book today!

Now available, this special 53-page book chronicles the most famous road in America as it winds through McLean County, Illinois. Filled with pictures, history and interviews with those who lived and worked along the road, this book is a must for Route 66 buffs, local historians, or anyone who likes to travel the open road.

The book also features a driving tour of Route 66, which starts in Chenoa and ends in McLean. By following the detailed instructions, one can still experience the thrill of this famous road.



**Hurry, supplies are limited. You may want to pick up two or three copies so you're sure to have one for yourself. To order, just fill out the coupon below.**

Yes, I'd like to order \_\_\_\_\_ copies of "Route 66: Goin' Somewhere, The Road in McLean County." Enclosed is \$9.95 for each book, plus \$1.50 each for shipping and handling. Make checks payable to: McLean County Historical Society

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Historical Society  
Old Courthouse Museum  
200 North Main St.  
Bloomington, IL 61701

# Route 66 Association Merchandise

**CLOTHES**--All Association clothes feature black, white and red shield by Bob Waldmire. Available in S, M, L, XL, XXL unless noted. Add \$2 for XXL.

Association nylon Jacket, polyester-lined	\$22.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Sweatshirt	\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association T-Shirt--choice of black or white	\$10.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Fanny pack (blk)	\$ 8.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Cap (black)	\$ 6.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Embroidered patch	\$ 5.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Glow in the Dark Shield T-Shirts	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Neon t-sided T (specify Chevy, 'Vette, Mustang or T-Bird)	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Too Kool collar	\$ 8.00 + \$1.50 p/h

## COLLECTIBLES

New! Illinois Historic Route 66 sign, 13 x 16, just like signs the state is putting up!	\$25.00 + \$6.00 p/h
8" x 8" Illinois US 66, shield-shaped rubber car magnet	\$11.00 + \$1.50 p/h    Pair \$20.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Large Letter State Postcards by Bob Waldmire, set of 8	\$2.00 + \$1.00 p/h
New! Historic Illinois 66 refrigerator magnet	\$2.50 + \$ .50 p/h
Route 66 shield metal refrigerator magnet	\$ 4.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Set of 42 Bob Waldmire Postcards--scenes of 66	\$8.50 + \$1.00 p/h
Hall of Fame Postcards (set of 15)	\$ 3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 ceramic salt & pepper shakers	\$ 5.00 + \$2.00 p/h
Illinois US 66 hat pins	\$ 3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Mother Road Route 66 metal license plate frame	\$ 6.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 earrings (specify post or dangled)	\$ 5.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Reproduction sign--shield shape, full size, 16-gauge steel)	\$40.00 + \$5.00 p/h
Ceramic mug--black	\$ 5.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Pewter Route 66 belt buckle	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Prism bumper sticker--Corvette	\$ 2.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Greetings from the Mother Road! postcard book by Michael Wallis	\$ 8.95 + \$1.50 p/h
Land of Lincoln "Route 66" license plate key chain	\$ 2.00 + \$ .50 p/h

## BOOKS, MAPS, VIDEOS AND MUSIC

Guide Book to the Mother Road, Bob Moore & Patrick Grauwels. Great photos and mile-by-mile detail	\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Illinois fold-out map of Route 66 by Jim Ross and Jerry McClanahan	\$ 3.95 + \$1.50 p/h
Missouri fold-out map of Route 66 by Jim Ross and Jerry McClanahan	\$ 3.95 + \$1.50 p/h
It's Here! Full set of eight state maps by Ross & McClanahan	\$20.00 + \$3.00 p/h
Bob Waldmire map--10 pages, plus 6-page legend	\$ 5.00 + \$ .50 p/h
Searching for 66 by Tom Teague	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Route 66--The Mother Road by Michael Wallis, paperback	\$18.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Route 66 Roadside Companion by Tom Snyder	\$10.95 + \$1.50 p/h
A Guidebook to Highway 66 by Jack Rittenhouse (reprint of '46)	\$ 7.95 + \$1.50 p/h
Route 66: The Highway and Its People by Quinta Scott and Susan Kelly. Large format paperback	\$18.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Main Street series by Susan Kirby: <i>Lemonade Days, Home for Christmas, Home Front Hero &amp; Good Bye, Desert Rose.</i> Paperback	\$ 3.50 + \$1.50 p/h each
"A Journey Down Route 66," 90-minute video narrated by Michael Wallis	\$19.98 + \$2.50 p/h
New! "Route 66 Revisited," Part 2 of "Journey"	\$17.95 + \$2.50 p/h
"Route 66: An American Odyssey" video (formerly Route 66, The Video Road Trip) featuring famous 66-ers	\$24.95 + \$2.50 p/h
New! "Route 66 Revisited," Part 2 of "Journey"	\$17.95 + \$2.50 p/h
Route 66 Cookbook by Marian Clark (folklore & recipes)	\$24.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Route 66 Fun Book (for kids of all ages)	\$ 3.50 + \$1.00 p/h
New! <i>The Mother Road</i> audiotape, Michael Wallis	\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h
"Route 66" music album by David Williams	\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h for CD    \$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h for cassette
Bobby Troup, <i>The Feeling of Jazz</i> CD with "Get Your Kicks"	\$15.00 + \$2 p/h
<b>Clearance Sale! Price Cuts!</b>	
Fuzzy Dice with Illinois U.S. 66 shield	\$ 3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Two-in-One beverage holder	\$ 1.00 + \$1.00 p/h

Send orders to:

Merchandise

Route 66 Association of Illinois  
2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166  
Springfield, IL 62704

Illinois residents please add 8 percent sales tax!



# Events That Happened

## 1995 Motor Tour--Bloomington

by Matt Knudsen, McLean County Board Member

I want to say a special thanks to my sisters Becky and Lisa and my nephew Jim for helping to sell merchandise in Bloomington. You did a great job! Thanks also to Barb and George Hinthorn, who helped throughout. And I want to thank my parents, President Tom and Pat Knudsen, for putting up tour signs in Bloomington because I was holding down two jobs and unable to get them up. The Heritage Festival was very pleased with our parade and tour. All I heard was favorable remarks on how good the State Farm arch looked. I only heard good words about the Hall of Fame ceremonies. Also a special thanks to Susan Kirby for stopping by and signing some of her books.

## Hang Loose X

by President Tom Knudsen

The Hang Loose X Car Show took place June 17 at Riverside Park in Pontiac. My wife Pat and I sold merchandise. We want to thank Pontiac, the Rustic Auto Club and its members Jay & Shirley Hockenberry, Raleigh & Marilyn Weber, Durelle & Marilyn Pritchard, Mike LoPiccolo, Dan Moran and all the sponsors for inviting us. They had a duck race. The wrestling team had a foodstand. We distributed a lot of brochures, answered questions and sold a variety of merchandise. The Friday night dance is something our members would enjoy attending.

## Taste of Country

by Matt Knudsen

On July 23 our association was well represented in Lexington's Route 66 Reunion parade for cars built before 1970. A special thanks goes to Ray & Phyllis Starks, who came to help sell merchandise. Merchandise chairman Jeff Meyer and Steve Williams from Downers Grove also helped. Besides selling merchandise, Barb & George Hinthorn and Tom & Pat Knudsen also helped set up and take down the booth. It was good seeing our Rustic Auto Club friends from Pontiac there enjoying themselves instead of making sure everything was running smoothly at one of their events back in Pontiac. It is nice to have fun sometimes, and not always having to make sure things run smoothly. Other association members in the parade were John & Lenore Weiss, Gretchen Staats, Jeff Meyer and Jeff Geisler. Marilyn Pritchard, our association secretary, demonstrated party favors at the park pavilion for two hours. Nice going, Marilyn! Thanks to all members who came to the reunion and our booth. We'll be back again next year on the fourth weekend in July.

# Route 66 On-Line

by Dave Holl

If you would like to talk on-line via computer with others interested in Route 66, join us on America On-Line in a private chat room called, of course, "Route 66." We get together on the sixth day of each month at 6 p.m. Mountain Time (7 p.m. Central Time). To get to the chat room, sign onto America On-Line and enter "People Connection." Click on "List Rooms." Then click on "Private Room," type in "Route 66" and start talking! For more information, subscribers can E-mail me at DCharlie. Those of you who have no idea what I am talking about can call me, Dave Holl, at 815-838-7748 and I'll do what I can to help you out. Internet users, send E-mail to DCharlie@AOL.com.

## Bike Across 66

People who are serious bicyclists as well as Route 66 fans will be able to indulge both passions next year when PAC Tours sponsors a 22-day ride from Chicago to Santa Monica. PAC



Lon Haldeman

Tours is headed by Lon Haldeman and Susan Notorangelo of Sharon, Wisconsin, who between them have set 10 records for crossing America on bicycles. In 1981, Lon crossed the country and back in 24 days. Both he and Susan have crossed the country solo in under 10 days. He and Susan set a man/woman tandem crossing record of nine days and 20 hours in 1986. And in 1987, Lon and Pete Pensyres rode a tandem across the country in seven days and 14 hours.

Lon and Susan started PAC (Pacific to Atlantic Coast) Tours several years ago so experienced cyclists could enjoy long, non-competitive group rides across the country. Each year, they sponsor at least three tours of 2,000 or more miles. Their Route 66 tour, in which riders will average 110 miles a day, is actually their easiest ride ever.

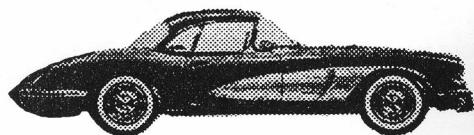
The Route 66 bike tour grew out of Lon's longtime interest in the road. It will begin June 1, 1996, in Chicago and end three weeks later in Santa Monica. Riders will use extensively-tested route instructions developed by Lon and a tour guide developed by Tom Teague. Evenings will be spent whenever possible at 66-era motels and will feature guest speakers or videos.

Lon recommends a Cross-Bike with 32mm tires for the trip, although a road bike with 28mm tires or a mountain bike with 26-inch slick tires would also work well. A support van will carry gear and spare parts.

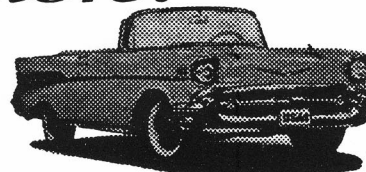
For more information on the tour, contact PAC Tour, P.O. Box 303, Sharon, WI 53585, or call 414-736-2453.

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**ANNUAL DUES:** Individual-\$10, Family-\$15, Business-\$25, Sustaining-\$100 or more.

**TO:** Membership, Route 66 Association, 2743 Veterans Pkwy., Springfield, IL 62704

**Attention Motorcycle Fans!** If you would like information about a Route 66 Motorcycle Association, please check this box: ☐



## Shea's Mini-Museum

Hall of Famer Bill Shea of Springfield has turned his place of business, Shea's Finest Truck Covers, into a working museum of service station memorabilia. Besides the camper tops, fork lift and hydraulic hoist necessary to Bill's work, there are also restored gas pumps, display cases crammed with bygone automotive products, and so many old oil cans that he had to hang them from the ceiling. Another display

case holds Bill's original Marathon uniform, which he can still fit into, and a collection of Marathon promotional merchandise.

Bill created the museum to celebrate his upcoming 50th anniversary of doing business on Route 66. Visitors are welcome from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays. Shea's Finest Truck Covers is at 2075 Peoria Road in Springfield, just a block or so south of the state fairgrounds.



*Bill Shea's Museum*

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# ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

# THE 66 NEWS!

# WINTER 1995

**\$2.00**



**"ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN."**



# Officers and Board Members

The officers and board members of the Route 66 Association are available at most reasonable times to answer your questions and hear your comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them if you need to. The date to the right of each officer's or member's name is the expiration date of their term.

## President

Tom Knudsen, 10-97  
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Bloomington, IL 61701  
309-828-2925

## Vice-President

Frank Lozich, 10-96  
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708-429-9173

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Ray Starks, Grundy, 10-97  
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Ray Schroeder, Livingston, 10-95  
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815-584-1019

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217-787-8839

Priscilla Mathews, Montgomery,  
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217-324-5551

Marci Rimini, Macoupin, 10-97  
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Girard, IL 62640  
217-965-4748

Deborah Mileur, Madison, 10-96  
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Litchfield, IL 62056  
217-324-5551

## At Large

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815-233-1148

Jeff Meyer, 10-97  
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Rolling Meadows, IL 60008  
708-392-0860

Gretchen Staats, 10-97  
1652 Killdeer  
Naperville, IL 60525  
708-983-1652

Lenore Weiss, At Large, 10-96  
21149 Hillside  
Frankfort, IL 60423  
815-469-5219

John Weiss, At Large, 10-97  
21149 Hillside  
Frankfort, IL 60423  
815-469-5219

Executive Committee members  
are the officers, plus Jeff Meyer  
and Ray Schroeder.

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## Internal Publication Information

The 66 News is published quarterly by the Route 66 Association of Illinois around the first of March, June, September and December. It is meant as a service to Association members and other people and organizations interested in the preservation, promotion and enjoyment of Route 66. Contributions are accepted, but we do not pay. However, any article that you submit remains your property and cannot be reused in any way by the Association or anyone else without your permission. Advertising rates are \$90 for a whole page, \$50 for a half page, \$30 for a quarter page and \$10 for a business card ad. Submit first-class, camera-ready copy only. We can't use Xeroxes. All stories and ads must be submitted at least six weeks prior to publication. Address inquiries and contributions to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704.

## New Members

*Compiled by Priscilla Mathews*

Since our last newsletter, 52 new members have joined our association. They come from seven states and one other country and include two sustaining members and a dozen family members. We extend a right hand in greeting and fellowship to:

James Creaser, Elmhurst; Evan Anderson, Evanston; Bruce Kukuch, Highland, TN; Jerrie Ruck, Peoria; Sharon Weiss, Chicago; Alan Toscano, Houston, TX; Michael Doherty, Stevens Point, WI; Thomas Cooney, Chicago; John Yelaska, Bloomington; Darlene Patterson, Zion; Carol Reich, Indian Head Park; Donald Steinmeyer, St. Louis; Frank Koroda, Allen Park, MI; Tom Kawall, Hinckley; Bill Dixon, Chicago; Oliver & Judy Schwallenstecker, Bunker Hill; Anna Medhurst, Joy; Laura Solomon, Wood Dale; Marrill See, Kalamazoo, MI; Randy Pomaro, St. Charles; Jack Hackenbroch, Oak Park; Catherine Hackenbroch, Oak Park; **Judy Majic, Braidwood, Sustaining**; Charles Meyerson, St. Louis; Paul Raso, Cedar Hill, MO; James & Vicki Moyer, Anderson, IN; Chris & Debbie Fuller, Florissant, MO; Burt & Annabelle Parkinson, Gardner; Robert & Pat Swisher, Braceville; Paul Miraldi, Bedford Park; George & Nancy Boyd, Urbana; Dale & Laura Barnes, Monee; Andrew Bremer, Indianapolis; Rilla Syler, Hardin; Bruce Nevers, Addison; Wayne Graphman, Martinsville, IN; Edward Hagen, Lawrence, MI; David Mingay, Chicago; Edward Harrigan, Joliet; Bill Elwell, Mokena; Clifford & Betty Thornau, Edwardsville; Roy Nelson, Lockport; Ronald & Frieda Boyd, Buckingham; **Helen Shea, Springfield, Sustaining**; **Robert Groeneveld, the Netherlands**; Walt & Millie Fritsch, Peoria; Robert Abbott, Waukegan; Donna Oakley, Chicago; Ronald Van Raalte, Roselle; Al Conratt, Aurora; Ross Dueringer, Maple Park, and Fremont Patterson, Springfield.

## About the Cover

The display of auto trim on our cover can be seen fullsize at the Route 66 Hall of Fame at the Dixie Truckers Home in McLean. It was designed by Becky McVay of Springfield from auto trim donated by Association member Ed Hickey of Round Lake Beach.

## Minutes Summary

*by Secretary Marilyn Pritchard*

### July 30 Board Meeting

The meeting was held at Harrah's in Joliet. Plans for the September 10 picnic were finalized. John & Lenore Weiss reported results of our motor tour survey (see article elsewhere in this issue). The tour had 252 entries this year. Priscilla Mathews reported that current membership is 956. Jeff Meyer reported that merchandise sales during the 1995 motor tour totaled \$10,230. A motion was passed that candidates for office leave the room during October while they were being discussed (but candidates actively disregarded it). Terri Ryburn-LaMonte is giving a Route 66 workshop in England. Members discussed buying a Campbell's 66 Express sign for the Hall of Fame.

### October 15 Board Meeting

Several technical changes to the Association's By-Laws were made, as well as one major one: creation of the post of Corresponding Secretary. Dorothy Seratt was elected to the post. A motion to prevent two or more members of the same household from holding offices in the Association was defeated.

Bill Bennett from the Illinois Department of Transportation gave a report on that agency's Route 66 Enhancement Project (see article elsewhere in this issue). Elections of officers and board members were coordinated by Deborah Mileur (see listing on p.2).

Hospitality plans for the woman and her dog who are walking Route 66 from California were discussed. The woman's trip would end later in Missouri when she suffered an accidental foot injury when her dog tipped over her luggage cart while trying to chase another dog.

Priscilla Mathews reported the Association has 930 members. Jeff Meyer reported that we sold \$990 worth of merchandise at the Taste of Country Fair in Lexington.

## In Memoriam

Association stalwart George Rimini passed away August 27 when he apparently had a heart attack while riding his Honda Gold Wing south of Chatham. He was treated for injuries at the scene, but died before the ambulance could reach the hospital in Springfield. The entire association will miss George's enthusiasm. It's hard to take any kind of comfort in such tragedy, but there are still two positives to the matter: George went out on his beloved motorcycle while riding on his beloved 66. And his wife Marci, who was riding behind George at the time of his accident, has taken over his post of Macoupin County board member.



# Preserving 66

by Terri Ryburn-LaMonte

An article in our winter 1994 newsletter announced formation of a group interested in preserving Route 66. Those who responded met in April 1995 to discuss preservation of buildings, structures, signs, bridges, pavement and other structures in Illinois. The group decided it needed to set some priorities quickly, identifying those sites which are in the most danger or most in need of preservation. They agreed to focus on three areas: 1) Nominating sites to the National Register of Historic Places; 2) Doing some fundraising to provide grants to those who seek to preserve or restore a site, and 3) Developing one or more sites to be used as information centers.

The group continues to meet and to explore possible sites for preservation. At its September meeting in Dwight, for example, it heard a report from two state engineers about the Alton Railroad overhead bridge near Gardner. The state would consider giving the bridge to an appropriate organization if arrangements were made to repair it—it might even donate some of the costs. But the bridge, which cost less than \$150,000 to build in 1939, would cost \$2.3 million to repair now.

The state recently gave the old rest stop on the north end of Sherman to the Village of Sherman. Two members of the

Route 66 Cruisers are to refurbish and re-landscape the stop. So preservation is possible! But to be successful, it is important to get as many people as possible involved in the preservation effort. Everyone is welcome to attend committee meetings. For information on the next one, call preservation chairman Frank Lozich at 708-429-9173, Dorothy Seratt at 815-998-2300, or myself at 309-452-5325.



Front row, from left: Robert Sech, Dorothy Seratt, John Weiss, Lenore Weiss. Back row: Roxanne Lozich, Frank Lozich, Steve Travis, Jeff Geisler, Jeff LaFollette, Annette LaFollette, Ray Starks.

## Two Studies

Two government studies on Route 66 have finally made it through the internal draft stage and are on to the next step in the approval process.

The National Park Service's Route 66 Resource Study was authorized by the Route 66 Study Act of 1991. It suggests five alternatives, the first four of which are familiar to people who have been following the project:

1. Preserve key resources under strong centralized management.
2. Designate 66 as a national historic trail to preserve significant resources and interpret the route's history. The federal government would administer the program while local organizations would provide day-to-day management.
3. No new federal action.
4. Commemorate the highway by posting federally-financed signs along the entire route.
5. Designate the road as a heritage highway. This is the new alternative. The federal government would provide historic preservation counsel and technical advice, but visitors services and

related opportunities would continue to be locally driven and managed.

The National Park Service has forwarded its report and recommendations to Congress. There is no indication at this time of any early action or significant interest from that body.

Barton-Aschman & Associates, a private consulting firm, has formally submitted a massive report and resource study to the state Department of Transportation. The first phase of this project, financed by federal ISTEAF funds, resulted in the new signs that were posted along 66 earlier this year. For the second phase, Barton-Aschman proposes a historic map and interpretive centers at a new rest stop near Hamel and at the Fitzpatrick House, a historic site at the intersection of Route 66 and the Illinois & Michigan Canal. Another center may possibly be located at the Funks Grove rest area. In addition, IDOT plans to erect a large sign near the intersection of Jackson and Michigan in Chicago to mark the road's beginning. Nothing is certain until it happens, but IDOT planner Bill Bennett said at the Association's October board meeting that funding was in place for these second phase projects. Perhaps they'll be in place in time for next year's motor tour.



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## Speaking in Plates

Since we've been doing this column for about two years now, we thought it was time to compile a master list of 66-related license plates that our readers have spotted. So here they are. Those marked with an asterisk are new ones. We'll print more as they're spotted, so keep on sending them in. In the future, however, we'll run only those plates which seem to have a tie with the road. IL RT 66, for example, is obviously about the highway. But TNADO 66 refers to a 1966 Old Toronado. As for initials like KNL 66, we can't tell what they refer to. But they're still fun to spot.



**The Master List:** 60 SIX \*, 60 SIX, 66 SWB \*, 66 DUNK \*, 66 IMPA, 66 LUVR, 66 GLR \*, 66 ROB \*, 6T SIX R, ABE 66, ADF 66 \*, ADR 66 \*, ANDE 66, BEF 66, BG MG 66, BIX 66 \*, BKS 66, C U ON 66, CA CAR 66 \*, CHER 66, CHI 66 \*, COZY 66, DEANO 66, DRIV 66, DUEX, 66 \*, EDZ 66, EGANS 66 \*, FLUTE 66, FRIER 66, GERI 66 \*, GNATS 66 \*, HARLY 66 \*, HES 66, HIST 66, HNC 66, HODEL 66 \*, HSTRC 66 \*, HWY 66, I RIDE 66 \*, I DRV 66, I LUV 66, I DROV 66, IL RT 66, IL US 66, ILINI 66 \*, JANAS 66 \*, JBT 66 \*, JCT US 66 \*, JPK 66, JUNE 66 \*, K SODA 66, KATE 66 \*, KISS 66 \*, KITT 66 \*, KIX ON 66, KLM 66 \*, KLS 66 \*, KNJ 66, \*, KSM 66 \*, KX ON 66, LISA I 66, LSE 66 \*, LUBE 66 \*, MA RD 66 \*, MAF 66 \*, MALON 66 \*, MAPLE 66, MART 66, MELS 66 \*, MHN 66 \*, MINDI 66, MOTHR RD \*, MOXIE 66, MR 66, MRS 66, OGRE 66, OOPS 66, PHYL 66, PSALM 66, PURPL 66 \*, PURR D 66, RCD 66 \*, REMS 66, RIDE 66, RMA 66 \*, RMJ 66 \*, ROOT 66, RT SIXT 6 \*, RT 66, RTE US 66 (California) \*, RUST 66 \*, RZ 66 \*, SALLY 66 \*, SAV RT 66, SHELY 66, SJB 66 \*, SLAR 66 \*, SMB 66, STAR 66, STUDE 66, SULZ 66 \*, THH 66 \*, TINY 66, TNADO 66, TRACI 66, TRI 66 \*, TRVL 66, TRW 66 \*, TURF 66 \*, TWP 66, US RTE 66 (Manitoba) \*, US 66, US RT 66, WA RA 66 \*, WFN 66 \*, WHIT 66 \*, WP PA 66 \*, ZBY 66.

## Meeting Schedule

All Association members are welcome to attend all meetings of the Association. This concept of openness was so important to us that it was written into our by-laws. So take advantage of it and please join us. Board meetings in 1996 will be held January 21 at the Tropics in Lincoln, April 21 in Hamel, July 21 at Wolf's Head Inn in Indian Head Park and October 21 in Springfield. They start at 11 a.m. with a break for lunch at noon. Motor tour meetings are tentatively set for January 28, March 3 and May 12. Each starts at noon at Mount Hope Township Hall in McLean; bring your own lunch.

Since meeting dates and times can change, it's always a good idea to check with your board member or an Association officer before leaving your driveway.

## Picnic Reprised

*by John & Lenore Weiss*

The 1995 Route 66 Association picnic had an abundance of sunshine, food and friendship. The lines were long to once again have a famous Pig Hip sandwich from the master sandwich maker himself, Ernie Edwards. He need all the help he could get and he received the best from his wife Frances, his brother Joe and his sister-in-law Gladys. Also very busy assisting was Lenore Weiss. Some 133 Pig Hips were served. Members who traveled the farthest to get to the picnic were Jeff and Annette LaFollette from New Liberty, Iowa, and Ecikel and Antoon Wolftraat from Belgium.



*Ernie and Frances Edwards, still slicing those Pig Hips*

# Hall of Fame Nominations Sought

Each year, the Association tries to honor those people and businesses whose blend of hearty individualism and grassroots community spirit gave Route 66 its unique flavor by inducting some of them into the Route 66 Hall of Fame of Illinois. New members for 1996 will be inducted on June 8 in conjunction with our seventh annual motor tour. If you'd like to honor someone in that way, you may nominate them between now and February 28. All we ask is 250 or more words about the nominee's history along the highway--with as much specific information as possible, but some feeling, too. Photos, news clips and other memorabilia are also helpful and welcome. Please send whatever you have to Tom Teague, 1208 W. Edwards, Springfield, IL 62704. Nominations will be judged by a panel of Association officers, historians and Hall of Fame members. In addition to new nominees, the panel will consider people who were nominated in past years, but not selected. Since the motor tour will start

at the southern end of the route in 1996, we are particularly interested in getting some nominees from that part of the road. The Luna Cafe in Mitchell and Earnie's Roadhouse in Hamel would both make excellent candidates. Is there anyone out there who can write up one or both of them? We'd be thrilled to hear from you.

## Run to the Heartland

The Old Route 66 Association of Texas is organizing Run to the Heartland, a cross-country celebration next year in honor of Route 66's 70th birthday. Caravans will leave Los Angeles and Chicago in early October and work their leisurely way toward Amarillo, where they will meet October 12 for a big party and car show. The Route 66 Association of Illinois has signed on as a co-sponsor of activities on the eastern end of the run. Watch this newsletter for details or call George Rook, president of the Texas 66 association, at 806-267-2719.

## Missouri Reports

Association member Steve Travis reports that the Diamonds Restaurant, a Route 66 landmark near Gray Summit, Missouri, for 75 years, has closed. The Eckelcamp family, longtime owners, cited uncertainty about where a new interstate exit ramp would go as their primary reason. The restaurant needed extensive repairs in the near future. If the new ramp would be built close to the Diamonds, making the repairs would be financially feasible. But if the ramp were placed

elsewhere, the restaurant would lose too much money. When the state said it wouldn't know where the new exit ramp would be until 1997, the Eckelcamps decided to close rather than make needed repairs.

Association member Janet Lamb of Bement reports that bricks from the Coral Court Motel will soon go on sale at the Museum of Transportation in St. Louis. They'll have engraved plaques, the Coral Court logo, and a \$50 price tag. We assume that shipping the bricks is out of the question because of their weight and their fragile condition. For more information, call the Museum of Transportation at 314-965-8007.



*The Diamonds, now closed*



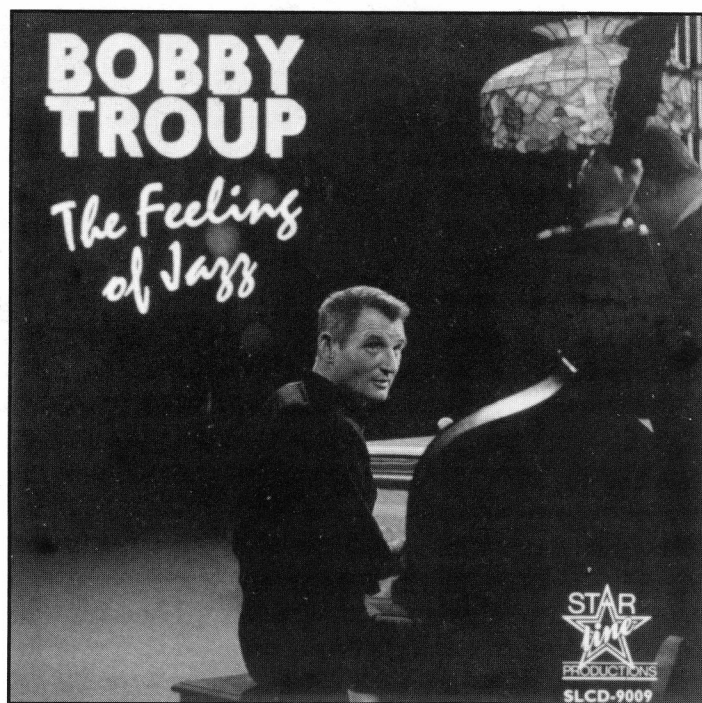
# Arts Alive on 66

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The arts continue to thrive along Route 66, giving strength to its revival. This issue we offer you proof from the worlds of music, photography, commercial art, television and writing. The first section of this article was written by Dave Leonatti, a partner in the Springfield architectural restoration firm of Melotte-Morse-Leonatti and the jazz critic for the State Journal-Register. All other pieces are by the editor.*

## The Feeling of Jazz

by Dave Leonatti

Few songwriters achieve what Bobby Troup has. He forever lengthened his 15 minutes in the sun into a lifetime when he penned "(Get Your Kicks on) Route 66," the paen to America's highway, the automotive lifeline across the palm of America.



Starline Compact Discs in 1994 released a collection of songs by Bobby Troup entitled *The Feeling of Jazz*. This retrospective covers a performance period between 1955 and 1967, and highlights Troup's own compositions and other jazz chestnuts as rendered in a small combo setting by Troup and a shifting cast of players.

The 21-track album includes Troup's muted, easygoing rendition of his trademark anthem, plus a dozen other tunes he either wrote alone or co-wrote with the likes of jazz

heavyweights like Duke Ellington, Neil Hefti and Gerry Mulligan.

The CD title is as accurate as any recording could be labeled. Troup is not a pure jazz artist, but is--by proxy and association--obviously a huge fan. His vocal and instrumental approach can be precious at times, he being perhaps the 50's version of a modern Harry Connick.

His vocals are a sing-songy spoken word monologue with a gentle swing. The mellow, smoky mood is that of a cocktail lounge--the smooth, non-threatening atmosphere that is very sweet and unadventurous. As the ample liner notes properly if not overzealously suggest, Bobby Troup's music is rendered for the lightness of entertainment, not as a pedantic, overacademic exercise. Cool swing, not chops galore, is the operative phrase.

This is not to say that there aren't moments of real jazz excitement on the CD. Guitarist Howard Roberts is charming throughout, briskly and effortlessly spinning inventive leads on songs like "Lullaby of Birdland" and a spritely, lyric solo on "Moonlight in Vermont."

Guitar notables Bucky Pizzarelli and Herb Ellis provide the other improvisational highlights. Limited organ by Jimmy Rowles is blithe and Bob Enevoldsen's trombone is muted and warm on the Troup-penned "Girl Talk."

Troup, for his part, plays a supportive, simple piano. Some gentle chord comping here, a brief and elementary solo there; never letting the musicianship overshadow the songs themselves.

Troup's initial musical achievement was penning the tune "Daddy," which he wrote as a student at the University of Pennsylvania. It was Number One for six weeks. After the war, Troup and his wife Cynthia left Pennsylvania to pursue his musical career out west. On the way, she suggested he write a song titled "Get Your Kicks on Route 66," which he did. Nat King Cole promptly recorded the song and within a month of arriving in California, Troup has another Number One hit.

## Music from the All-American Highway

David Sanger, drummer for the country swing band Asleep at the Wheel, has produced a near-definitive album of Route 66 music called *The Songs of Route 66*. All three of the road's best known songs are there. The opus opens with a graceful rendition of Nelson Riddle's "Theme from Route 66" by the ad hoc Route 66 Orchestra. Bobby Troup and jazzman Charles Brown each contribute versions of Bobby's "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" and Kevin Welch gives power and style to Woody Guthrie's "Willy Rogers Highway." But there are also seven other original songs about 66 on the album that will keep you humming and toe-tapping along.

Adding to the project's handmade flavor, Sanger has fashioned a unique distribution network consisting of truck stops and 66 sites and the album has become a best seller. After all



of Jazz are both available through the Association. See our merchandise page.

### McLean County Guide

Association member and Route 66 historian Terri Ryburn-LaMonte has written for McLean County what every county along the road should have--a comprehensive guidebook. Called *Route 66: Goin' Somewhere*, it has complete driving instructions from Chenoa to McLean. It has detailed suggestions for places to stop and visit. It has a brief history of 66, insets on such varied topics as water towers, neon signs, drive-in movies. And it has dozens of photos and thumbnail sketches of past and present sights along the way. Want to spend a leisurely day or two exploring a short stretch of the old road? Grab a copy of this book and a toothbrush and you're set.

*Goin' Somewhere* was published by the McLean County Historical as a fundraiser. The 54-page book is available for \$9.95, plus \$2 shipping, from the Society at Main & Washington Streets, Bloomington, IL 61701.

Terri and the McLean County Historical Society also teamed up this year for a special exhibit on Route 66. It has the same name as the book, *Goin' Somewhere*, and will be at the society's Old Courthouse Museum through February of 1996. Visiting hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Terri is also working on her PhD in history with emphasis, of course, on Route 66. In addition, she has a fulltime job and a family.

### Graham Exhibit in Chicago

Award-winning Route 66 photographer Shelled Graham of St. Louis will be featured in a special exhibition January 20-March 16 at the Chicago Public Library, 400 State Street. Graham's evolving and well-traveled display has also appeared in Los Angeles and many other Route 66 sites in

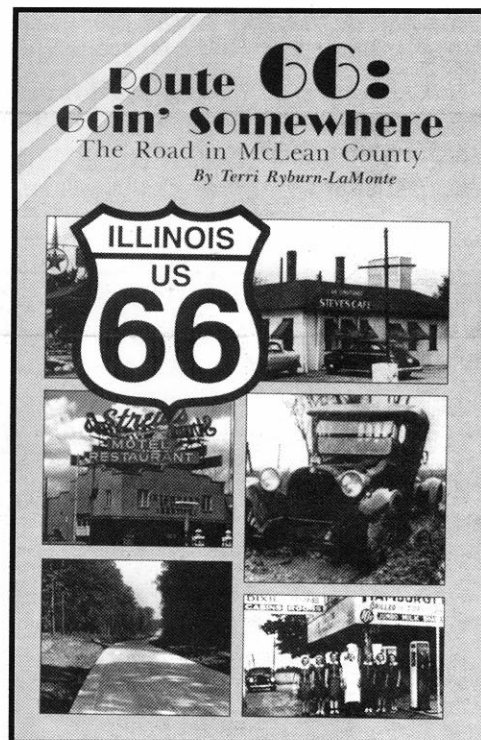
these years of trying, Route 66 finally has another hit.

"I guess it started for me in 1975," Sanger says of his interest in 66. "When visiting my brother at Occidental College in Los Angeles, it seemed that California 66 was the fastest way back to my own school in Claremont. The first night we made the drive, my brother started singing a song about the road we were on. I had never heard "Route 66" before, but it seemed to fit our mood at the time. A sound track for movement. Music for the road."

A decade of working in traveling bands kept Sanger returning to 66 and its music. But it was Asleep at the Wheel's 1992 tour along the road in 1992 to celebrate its 66th birthday that crystallized Sanger's thoughts. "It opened my eyes and heart to this road and the way that it brought its inhabitants together," he said. "Two years later, I began work on my own tribute to my favorite American treasure." The result makes you feel like cranking the top down and letting the scenery roll by.

The album was produced in Austin, Texas, by Sanger's own company, Lazy SOB Recordings. As might be expected from such heritage, most songs have a folksy, rural air to them. But that's how Route 66 is. The great cosmopolitan centers of Chicago and Los Angeles are the road's bookends, but there's a lot of country in between. My personal favorite on the album is Kevin Welch's "Willy Rogers Highway." But you might also enjoy the sardonic humor of "Don't Haul Bricks on 66" by the Dusty Chaps or tune in to Cindy Cashdollar's slide guitar work on "2200 Miles."

*The Songs of Route 66* and Bobby Troup's *The Feeling*



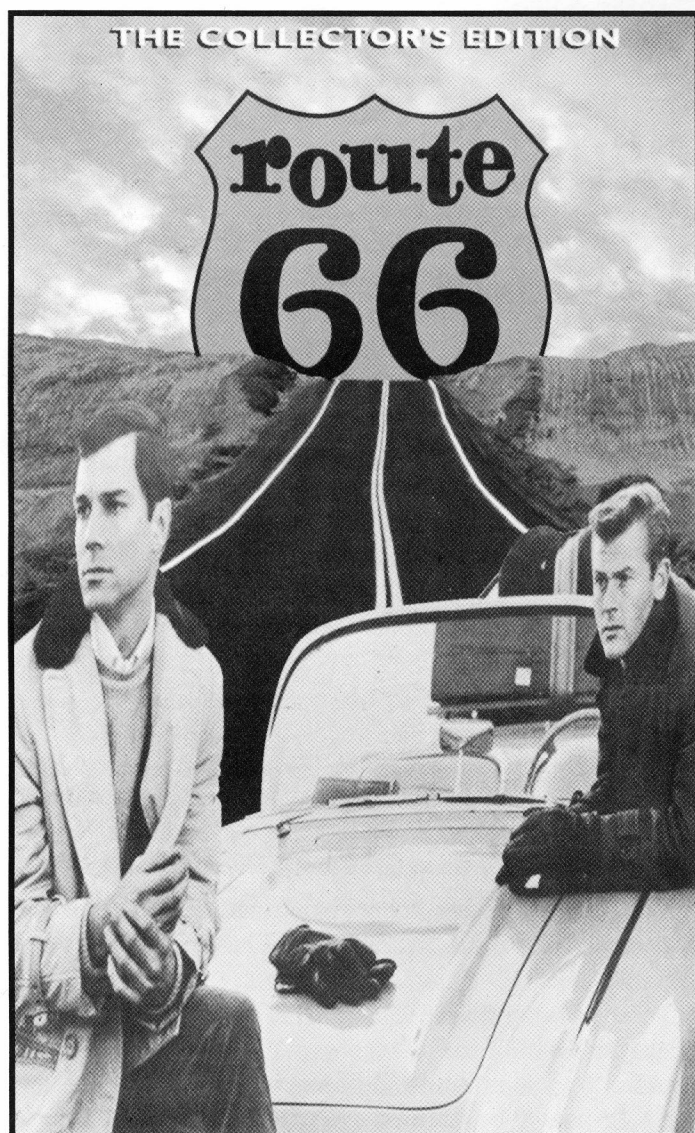


between. Later this year it will be shown in Joplin and in Fullerton, California. In 66 color or black and white photographs with text, it takes visitors on a pictorial journey through the highway's history--its forgotten towns, roadside diners, motels and people. Graham, who probably isn't even 30 yet, has a long future ahead on Route 66.

### Route 66 Series on Video

The legendary *Route 66* TV series of the early '60s is now available on videotape from Columbia House. Martin Milner and George Maharis starred in the series. It was created by Herbert Leonard and Stirling Silliphant. Fans can get the tapes by joining the Route 66 section of Columbia House.

The first tape costs \$4.95 plus \$2.91 for shipping and handling. Subsequent tapes are \$19.95 plus shipping and handling and come every four to six weeks. Any can be returned after a preview. Each contains two episodes from



the series. The first tape has "First Class Mouliak," which aired October 20, 1961. It co-stars Robert Redford and

Martin Balsam and was directed by William Conrad. The other episode, "Black November," aired October 7, 1960.

Critical opinions of *Route 66* vary. Jim Datsko, president of the former National Route 66 Fan Club, calls it an artistic portrayal of traditional American values. Others call it simplistic and melodramatic. Maybe both judgments are true. Whichever you settle on, don't expect to see much of 66 on the show. Only one or two of the series' episodes were filmed along 66. "First Class Mouliak," for example was set in Cleveland. But that's okay, too. Route 66 was not just concrete. It was also metaphoric.



### 66 on Paper

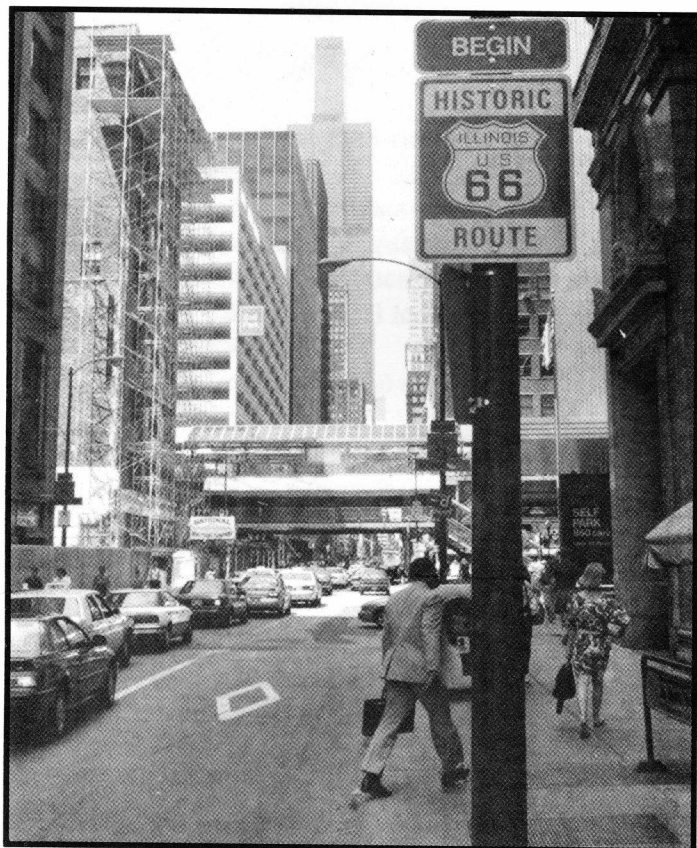
When mills tout a new line of paper, they pull out all the stops. Sample portfolios, printed on the new product, have beautiful pictures, dramatic photography and graphics to die for. There is no better art in advertising. Using Route 66 as its theme, Weyerhaeuser showed just that recently when it introduced its Cougar Opaque line. The 24-page, oversize booklet features an accordion of replica postcards attached to the cover and a fold-out of Cadillac Ranch inside. Called "A Traveler's Guide to Cougar Opaque," it's part of the company's American Artifacts series. It's not generally available to the public, but if you have a printer in town, stop by and ask about it.

### Teague Talks

Former Association president Tom Teague will give free public talks about Route 66 January 14 at the Barrington Library, January 24 at the Clarendon Hills Historical Society, February 19 at our Lady of Peace in Darien, and March 26 at the Mount Prospect Library. He will also give day-long bus tours May 13 for the Lemont Park District and May 22 for the Niles Park District. These usually run \$40 a person. Call the sponsoring organizations for more information. Teague will also present his fourth week-long Elderhostel program on Route 66 next September 9-13 at Lincoln Land Community College in Springfield. Call LLCC at 217-786-2432 for info on that.

### Wilt Photographs

Terrence Moore of Arizona and Missourians Shellee Graham and Qinta Scott lead the way among modern photographers of Route 66. Illinoisan John Wilt bids to join them now with his "Artistic Images" series on his state's part of the road. His photo of the Adams Street beginning of Route 66 in Chicago is featured in this issue. For information on John's work, write to him at Artistic Images, 1909 46th St., Moline, IL 61265. Affordable photos and lithographs are available.



## Route 66 Museum Opens in Oklahoma

The most ambitious museum yet dedicated to Route 66 opened in Clinton, Oklahoma, in September. Built as part of the Western Trails Museum, it features a room for each decade of the road, as well as the archives of Jack Cutberth, former executive secretary of the U.S. Highway 66 Association. Most of the financing for the exhibit came from ISTEA moneys, the federal funding which also paid for the Historic Route 66 signs which were posted in Illinois earlier this year.

## Motor Tour Survey

*by John & Lenore Weiss*

The results of the 1995 Motor Tour Survey are in and tabulated. Some 67 sheets were returned--about 25 percent of all who took the tour. Sure, there were some minor complaints and criticism. But there was much more praise and compliments. Many gave some very good ideas for upcoming tours. Much thought and effort was apparent. We also had 17 people who volunteered to help on next year's tour. This kind of commitment, ideas and positive input will surely lead to an even better program for upcoming years.

It would be impossible to list each comment or idea, so here is a sampling of the results:

Most cars had two people

Two-thirds of the people were already Association members

Most folks like group stops

The most requested future stop is Springfield

Half of the people wanted a Poker Run. Others didn't know what one was.

More thought about restroom facilities is requested

Many want a tour director during the cruise to point out what to do and say each day (Currently, this information is included in printed form in the goody bag).

Many people want to do more down south

Several suggested taking the 1926-1930 alignment.

For a complete copy of the results, come to the next meeting. If you have a question, suggestion or comment, please call John or Lenore Weiss at 815-469-5219.

## Back Issues Ahoy!

Back issues of this newsletter are available and worth collecting. Issues published through Fall 1993 are \$1 apiece, including postage. Those published since then are \$2 apiece. Here the available issues: July '90, September '90, December '90, March '91, May '91, October '91, January '92, Summer '92, Winter '92, Spring '93, Summer '93, Fall '93, Winter '93, Spring '94, Summer '94, Fall '94, and Winter '94, Spring '95, Summer '95 and Fall '95. Order by writing to Merchandise, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704.



## Route 66 Association Merchandise

**CLOTHES**--All Association clothes feature black, white and red shield by Bob Waldmire. Available in S, M, L, XL, XXL unless noted. Add \$2 for XXL.

Association nylon Jacket, polyester-lined	\$22.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Sweatshirt	\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association T-Shirt--choice of black or white	\$10.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Fanny pack (black)	\$8.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Association Cap (black)	\$6.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Association Embroidered patch	\$4.00 + \$.50 p/h
Glow in the Dark Shield T-Shirts	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Neon 2-sided T (specify Chevy, 'Vette, Mustang or T-Bird)	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Too Kool collar	\$8.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Price Cut! 1995 Motor Tour T-shirt	\$8.00 + \$1.50 p/h
New! Betty Boop Hitchhiking Route 66 T-Shirt	\$12.00 + \$1.50 p/h

### COLLECTIBLES

New! 12-oz drinking glass with Historic 66 Illinois sign, "Get My Kicks)	\$4.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Illinois Historic Route 66 sign, 13 x 16, just like signs the state is putting up!	\$25.00 + \$6.00 p/h
8" x 8" Illinois US 66, shield-shaped rubber car magnet	\$11.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Pair	\$20.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Large Letter State Postcards by Bob Waldmire, set of 8	\$2.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Historic Illinois 66 refrigerator magnet (looks like new signs)	\$2.00 + \$.50 p/h
Route 66 shield metal refrigerator magnet	\$4.00 + \$.50 p/h
Set of 42 Bob Waldmire Postcards--scenes of 66	\$8.50 + \$1.00 p/h
Hall of Fame Postcards (set of 15)	\$3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 ceramic salt & pepper shakers	\$5.00 + \$2.00 p/h
Illinois US 66 hat pins	\$3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Mother Road Route 66 metal license plate frame	\$6.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Route 66 earrings (specify post or dangled)	\$5.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Reproduction sign--shield shape, full size, 16-gauge steel)	\$40.00 + \$5.00 p/h
Ceramic mug--black	\$5.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Pewter Route 66 belt buckle	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Prism bumper sticker--Corvette	\$2.00 + \$.50 p/h
Greetings from the Mother Road! postcard book by Michael Wallis	\$8.95 + \$1.50 p/h
Land of Lincoln "Route 66" license plate key chain	\$2.00 + \$.50 p/h

## BOOKS, MAPS, VIDEOS AND MUSIC

Guide Book to the Mother Road, Bob Moore & Patrick Grauwels. Great photos and mile-by-mile detail	\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Missouri fold-out map of Route 66 by Jim Ross and Jerry McClanahan	\$3.00 + \$1.50 p/h
It's Here! Full set of eight state maps by Ross & McClanahan	\$20.00 + \$3.00 p/h
Bob Waldmire map--10 pages, plus 6-page legend	\$5.00 + \$.50 p/h
Searching for 66 by Tom Teague	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h
Route 66--The Mother Road by Michael Wallis, paperback	\$19.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Route 66 Roadside Companion by Tom Snyder	\$10.95 + \$1.50 p/h
A Guidebook to Highway 66 by Jack Rittenhouse (reprint of '46)	\$7.95 + \$1.50 p/h
Route 66: The Highway and Its People by Quinta Scott and Susan Kelly. Large format paperback	\$19.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Main Street series by Susan Kirby: Lemonade Days, Home for Christmas, Home Front Hero & Good Bye, Desert Rose. Paperback	\$3.50 + \$1.50 p/h each
"A Journey Down Route 66," 90-minute video narrated by Michael Wallis	\$19.98 + \$2.50 p/h
"Route 66: An American Odyssey" video (formerly Route 66, The Video Road Trip) featuring famous 66-ers	\$24.95 + \$2.50 p/h
Route 66 Cookbook by Marian Clark (folklore & recipes)	\$24.95 + \$2.00 p/h
Route 66 Fun Book (for kids of all ages)	\$3.50 + \$1.00 p/h
New! The Mother Road audiotape, Michael Wallis	\$17.95 + \$2.00 p/h
"Route 66" music album by David Williams	\$15.00 + \$1.50 p/h for CD
\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h for cassette	
"The Feeling of Jazz" by Bobby Troup	\$12.00 + \$2.00 p/h CD only
New! "The Songs of Route 66," by David Sanger et al	\$10.00 + \$1.50 p/h cassette

### Clearance Sale! Price Cuts!

Fuzzy Dice with Illinois U.S. 66 shield	\$3.00 + \$1.00 p/h
Two-in-One beverage holder	\$1.00 + \$1.00 p/h

Send orders to:  
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Illinois residents please add 8 percent sales tax!

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All product purchases benefit the Association!  
Prices good through 12-31-95*

## Other Route 66 Associations

Looking for information about Route 66 in other states or countries? Contact these people for help:

Route 66 Association of Missouri  
P.O. Box 8117  
St. Louis, MO 63156  
Jim Powell, 314-539-5500, 314-367-2418

Kansas Historic Route 66 Association  
P.O. Box 169  
Riverton, KS 66770  
Scott Nelson, 316-848-3330

Oklahoma Route 66 Association  
901 Manvel  
Chandler, OK 74834  
Ron Burden, 405-258-0008

Old Route 66 Association of Texas  
P.O. Box 66  
McLean, TX 79057  
George Rook, 806-354-9716  
(sponsors a Route 66 museum in McLean)

New Mexico Route 66 Association  
1415 Central NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87106  
Dave Nidel. 505-843-7185, 505-246-0211

Historic Route 66 Association of Arizona  
P.O. Box 66  
Kingman, AZ 86402  
Shirley Bellmore, 602-753-5001

California Historic Route 66 Association  
263 S. Cypress  
Orange, CA 92666  
Geoffrey & Joanne Willis, 714-639-2911

Route 66 Territory Visitors Bureau  
Thomas Winery Plaza  
7965 Vineyard Ave., Suite F-5  
Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730  
Bob Lundy, 909-948-9166  
(museum only--not a membership organization)

Dutch Route 66 Association  
Postbus 2012  
1620 EA Hoorn  
The Netherlands  
Hans Stuijbergen, Tel. 02290-18318



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Route 66 Association of Belgium  
Georges Moreau Street 172  
1070 Brussels  
Belgium  
Patrick Grauwels, 32-2-6402635

Association Francaise Route 66  
88 rue de Chateau  
F.92600 Asnieres  
France

## Get Ready to Tour!

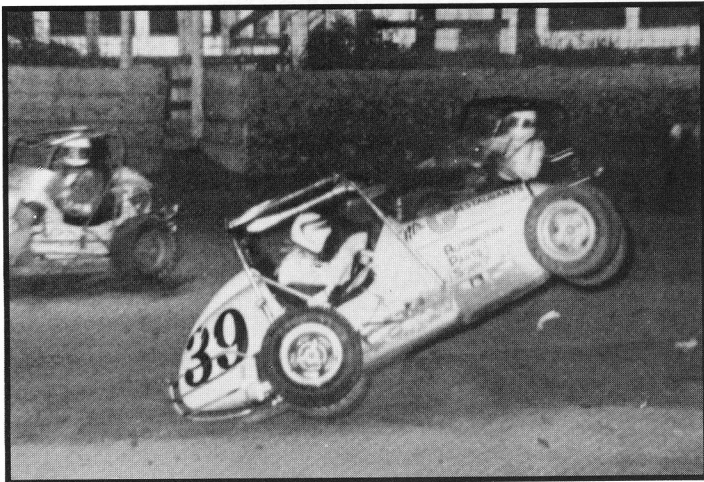
Our seventh annual motor tour is scheduled for next June 8 and 9. Since '96 is an even-numbered year, we will be starting from the southern end of Illinois' part of the route. Watch for details in coming issues!



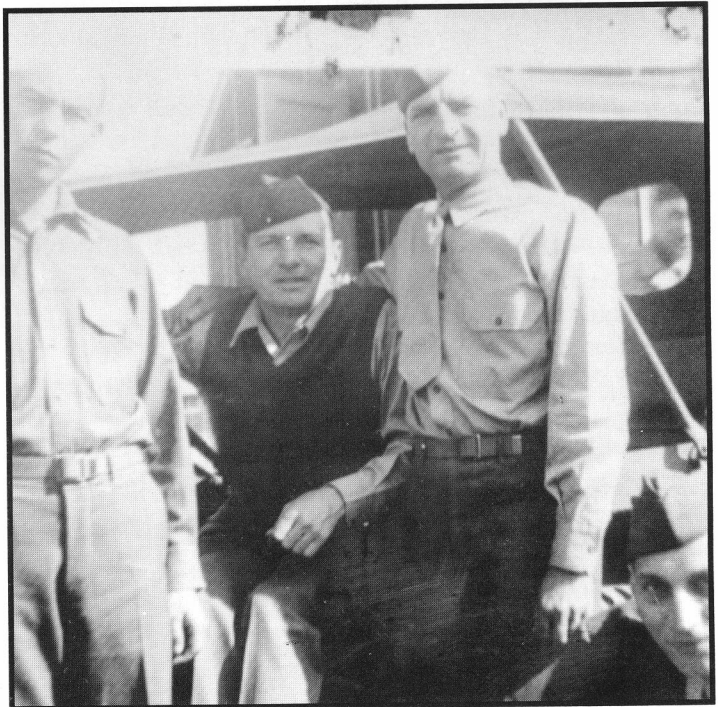
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bought the car, a midget, in 1946. It had a four cylinder Offenhauser engine and a chassis by Frank Curtis. Its first driver was Pete Roncevich. In the late '70s, Joe sold the car to a young Springfield man who thought it could still win prize money. When it didn't, George Boyd bought the car. George, who's driven quite a few laps on the Speed-

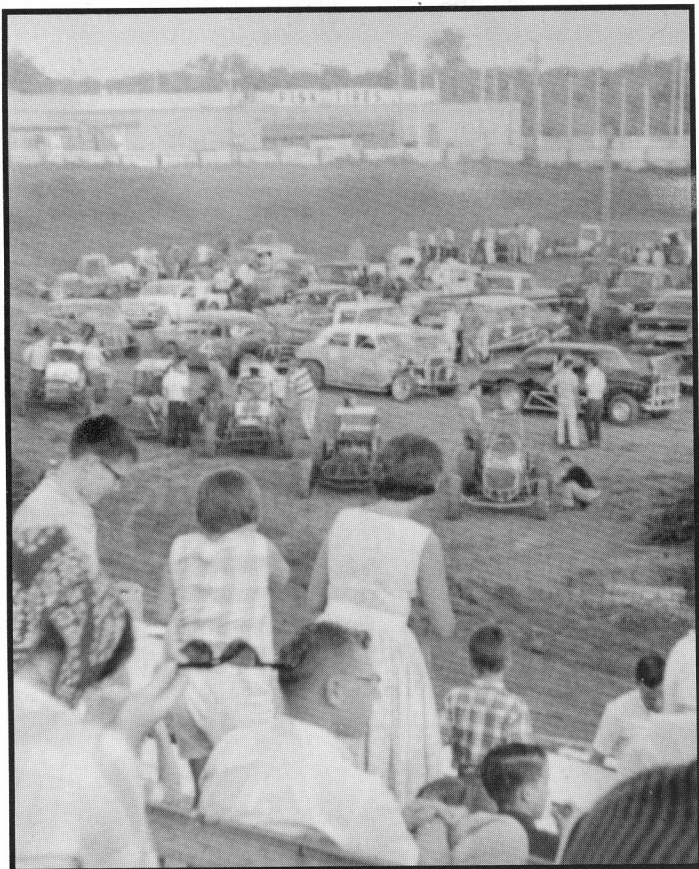
way himself, completely restored the old Offy. He did the mechanical work himself and farmed the body work out. Then, when his work was done, he sold it at an antique auto auction and bought another midget to restore. Although the car can take a turn as well as ever, its new owner drives it only for show.



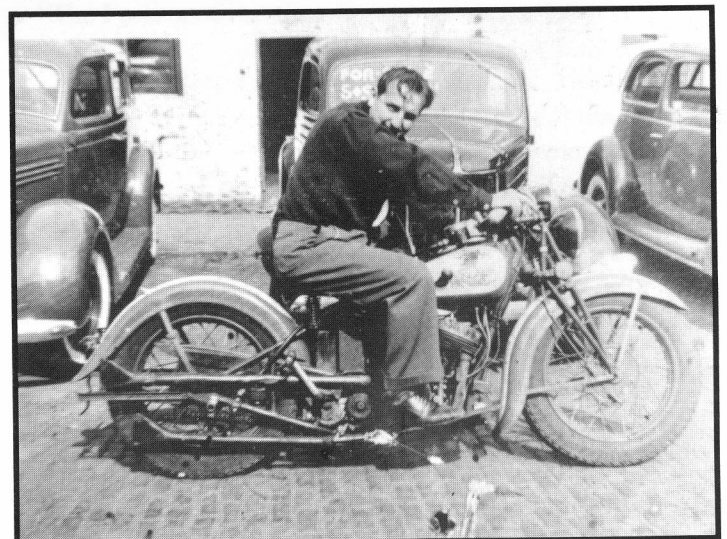
*Track action at the Speedway often went in both directions*



*Joe, second from the right, allegedly ran a craps game on his Army base*



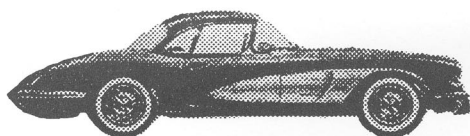
*The stands and the pit at Springfield Speedway*



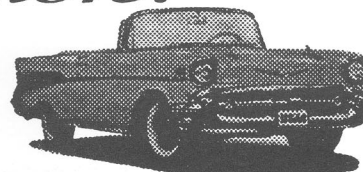
*Joe on his motorcycle, pre-World War II*

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HOW I CAN HELP \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNUAL DUES:** Individual-\$10, Family-\$15, Business-\$25, Sustaining-\$100 or more.

**TO:** Membership, Route 66 Association, 2743 Veterans Pkwy., Springfield, IL 62704

**Attention Motorcycle Fans!** If you would like information about a Route 66 Motorcycle Association, please check this box: ☐

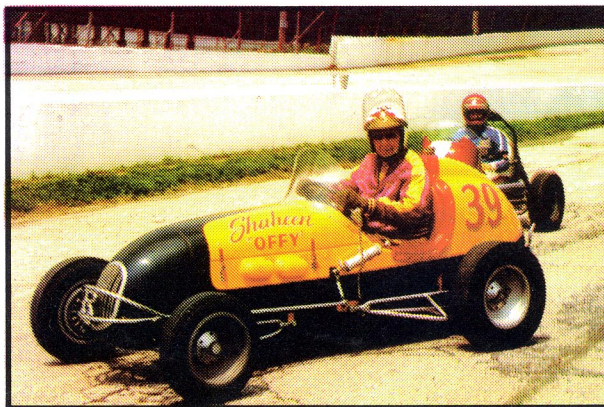


# Shaheen Car Races in Five Decades

by Tom Teague with George Boyd

Show me a man who's never put medal to the metal and I'll show you a man with no legs. Ever since Jean Lenoir wheeled that first horseless carriage down a dusty country lane a hundred-odd years ago, Americans have been trying to figure ways to make the trip go faster. From little deuce coupes to Z-28's. From crank starters to computer-controlled turbochargers. From zero to 60 in less time today than it took yesterday. We've always wanted more. Or less. And that's exactly what folks got at the Springfield Speedway.

The fertile prairie soil of Sangamon County has spawned two of our country's fastest dirt racetracks--both of them along Route 66. One, a mile oval, is at the Illinois State Fairgrounds. The other, three-eighths of a mile of continuous bank, was at the Speedway on Dirksen Drive. Its



*The Shaheen Offy, 50 years on*

owner and operator was Joe Shaheen, son of Lebanese immigrants. In a life that paralleled the saga of Route 66 and the automobile, Joe always liked to ride up front or on top. As flamboyant as any funny car, he challenged all odds. As shrewd and tough as an old Model T, he usually won out. He finally died in 1988 and the Speedway was razed. It is now a dreary mass of franchise restaurants and chain stores. But while it and Joe were both running, there was no more exciting place along 66.

I chronicled a number of Joe's exploits in my book, *Searching for 66*. I thought of him as a promoter and sometimes a driver. But until Association member George Boyd from Urbana told me, I didn't know that Joe owned a car once that ended up racing for nearly 40 years! He

*(continued on page 14)*

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