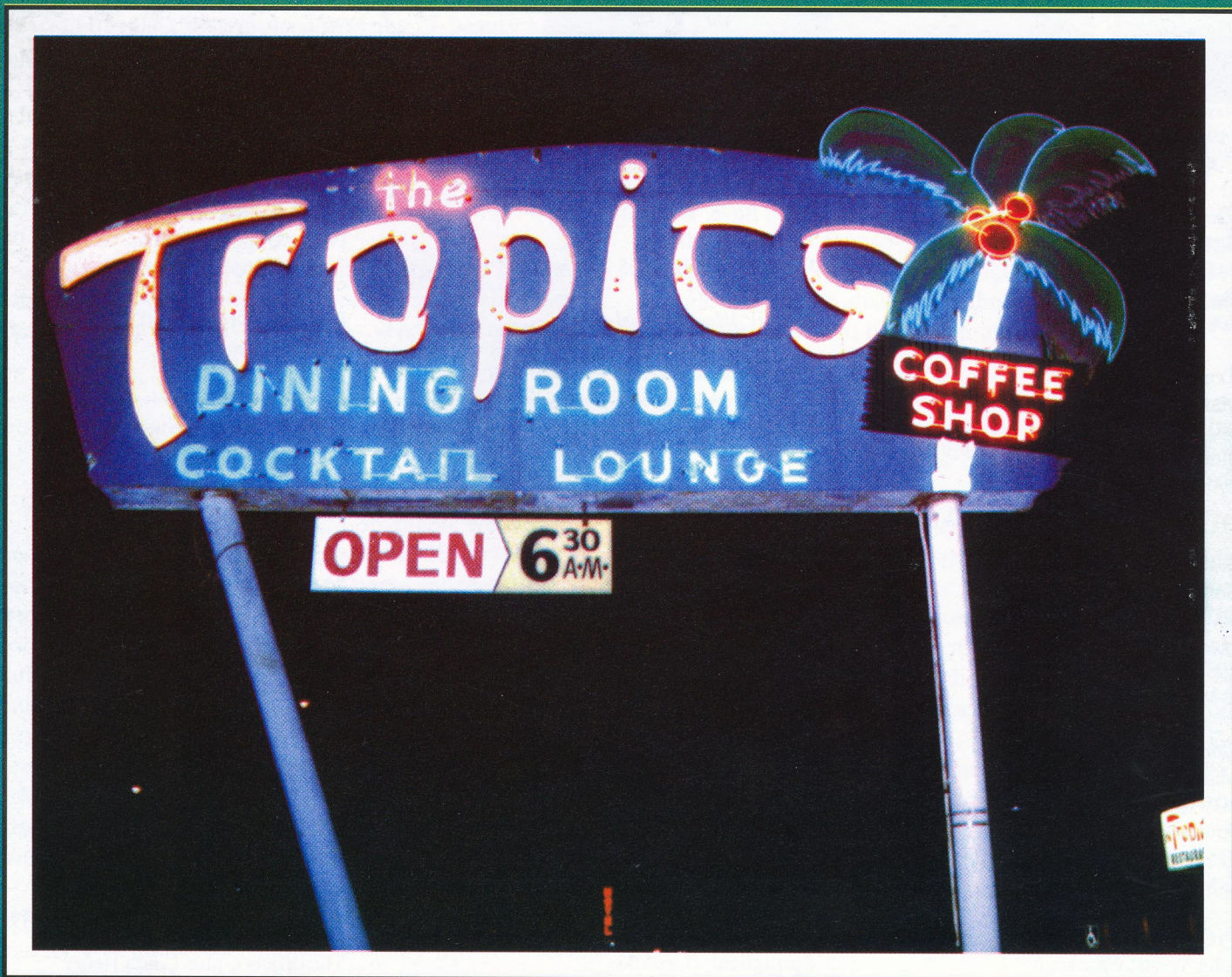


ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

THE NEWS

Spring 2001



Tropics to Be Warm Again (p.3)

Little Nanny Goats (p.4)

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN

Officers and Board Members

The Route 66 Association of Illinois is a not-for-profit organization. Its purpose is to preserve, promote and help people enjoy the road in this state. Officers and board members are available at most reasonable times to answer questions and hear comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them when you need to. The date to the right of each person's name is when their term expires.

President

Jeff LaFollette, 10-01
2351 Highway 130
New Liberty, IA 52765
319-893-6653
E-Mail: Ajon66@aol.com

Vice President

Bill Przbylski, 10-02
24156 S. Kings Rd.
Crete, IL 60417
708-672-7937

Treasurer

Martin Blitstein, 10-02
3033 Bob-O-Link Rd.
Flossmoor, IL 60422
708-957-4598
E-Mail: blitz66@chicagonet.net

Secretary

Cathie Stevanovich, 10-01
3033 Bob-O-Link Rd.
Flossmoor, IL 60422
708-958-4598
E-Mail: cathies@juno.com

Corresponding Secretary

Marilyn Pritchard, 10-01
601 W. Reynolds
Pontiac, IL 61764
815-844-6937
E-Mail: durelle@fcg.net

Preservation Committee

John Weiss, Chairman
21149 Hillside
Frankfort, IL 60423
815-469-5219
E-Mail: KAYO66@aol.com

Newsletter, Co-Founder

Tom Teague
1208 W. Edwards
Springfield, IL 62704
217-787-8839
E-Mail: teague66@eosinc.com

Board Members

Jeff Geisler, Cook, 10-01
814 W. 61st St.
LaGrange Highlands, IL 60525
708-354-8746
E-Mail: Route66Railfan@aol.com

Lynn Bagdon, DuPage, 10-02
P.O. Box 313
Aurora, IL 60507
630-531-4577
E-Mail: lulupic66@aol.com

Larry Boyd, Will, 10-01
733 Fairlane Dr.
Joliet, IL 60435-5155
815-725-2457
E-Mail: Boydgrt@aol.com

Marty Bilecki, Grundy, 10-01
4200 Bargo Lane
Morris, IL 60450
815/941-3312

Margaret Hettwer, Livingston, 10-02
318 E. Elk St.
Odell, IL 60460
815-998-2219

C.J. Beeler, McLean, 10-02
2 Canterbury Court
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-874-2832

Bob Borowiak, Logan, 10-01
711 Broadway.
Lincoln, IL 62656
217/732-3121

Buz Waldmire, Sangamon, 10-02
2935 S. 6th St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-525-1992

Rich Henry, Montgomery, 10-01
Old Rt. 66 & Madison Ave.
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-5655
E-Mail: route66@midwest.net

Oliver Schwallenstecker, 10-02
Macoupin
620 E. Warren St., Box 477
Bunker Hill, IL 62014
618-585-3081
E-Mail: ollie@internet-stat.com

Linda Henry, Madison, 10-02
Old Rt. 66 & Madison Ave.
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-5655
E-Mail: route66@midwest.net

Wilton Rinkel, St. Clair, 10-02
5539 State Rt. 157 North
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-656-1625

At-Large Board Members

Louis Vargo, 10-01
14911 Richmond Ave
Posen, IL 60469
708/339-3640

Duke Cartwright, 10-02
407 Pasadena Ave.
Crest Hill, IL 60435
815-726-3574
E-Mail: dukecartwright@Mediaone.com

Chester Henry, 10-01
910 N. East St.
Leroy, IL 61752-1231
309-962-5361
E-Mail: nhenry@leroy2.k12.il.us

Marie Jibben, 10-02
215 Lawnridge Dr.
Creve Coeur, IL 61610

John Miller, 10-01
14828 San Francisco Ave.
Posen, IL 60469
708-389-3823
E-Mail: kixonrte66@hotmail.com

Executive Committee:

The officers, plus Linda Henry and Jeff Geisler

Association Website:
<http://www.il66assoc.org>

Publication Information: The Association publishes *The 66 News* around the first week of March, June September & December as a service to its members, other people and related organizations. Contributions are welcome, but we do not pay. However, authors retain all copyright privileges. Submit all stories, photos and ads at least six weeks prior to publication. Address contributions and inquiries to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704. **Advertising Rates:** \$100 for a whole page, \$60 for a half page, \$40 for a quarter page and \$25 for a business card ad. Send camera ready copy only.

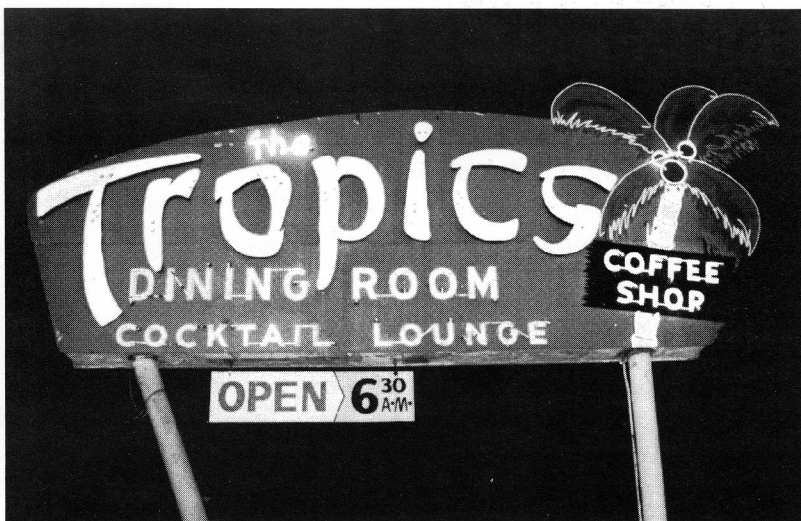
Tropics Heating Up

The Tropics Restaurant in Lincoln, a Route 66 fixture for more than half a century, will reopen soon. Its landmark neon sign will shine again.

Under longtime owner Lewis Johnson and his family, the Tropics became a community cultural center as well as a prime dining spot. Countless clubs held their meetings there. The local radio station often broadcast from the Tropics. And in the '50s, the restaurant even sponsored a series of beauty pageants.

Johnson retired in 1997 and leased the business to James Letsos, owner of Baby Bull's Restaurant on Route 66 in Pontiac. This agreement soured after two years due to lack of business and Letsos' alleged use of illegal immigrants on staff. The building had stood empty and silent since October 1999.

On December 27, though, the Lincoln *Courier* reported that the Tropics will reopen this spring. Sam Dalipi, who ran a restaurant in Sullivan for many years, will operate it



with his sons Tim and Tefik. Renovations and refurnishing are now underway.

Dalipi told the *Courier* that he and his sons were committed to the Tropics "for a long, long time." He said the menu would include such longtime staples as steaks, seafood and Italian dishes. But he also promised "What we're doing now will be something Lincoln never had."

66

Membership News

The Route 66 Association of Illinois welcomed 15 new members during the final quarter of 2000. They come from four states and include one business and one sustaining member. We extend a right hand in fellowship and greeting to: Robert Brickman of Antioch; Carmen Chidichimo of Tinley Park; Robert Heath of Bushnell; Bob Kalicki of Hoffman Estates; Robert Klopfer of Riverwoods; Corky Lahey of the Bronx, NY; Jack McKenzie of Rock Island; Robin Smith of Rensselaer, NY; Rebecca Stoker of Elgin, Sylvia's Cards, Gifts & More of Staunton; **Trailnet Inc. of St. Louis** (sustaining); Allan Tyndell of Livonia, MI; Stan Vorgias of Union; Rod Wiethop of Effingham, and Nicholas Zekich of Chicago.

Good news for families! The Association has reinstated its family membership status. For a \$25 annual fee, \$10 more than the general membership fee, a family will get a second decal and a second membership card. Perhaps most important, a second member will be eligible to vote in Association elections.

Elsewhere in this issue:

Ernie's Little Nanny Goats, p. 4
Waldmire Dispatch, p. 8
Preservation News, p. 11
Minutes, p.12
Motor Tour Details, p. 10

Next Meetings

The Association's next general and board meeting will be held April 22, 2001, at Gillespie Civic Center in Gillespie. The center is behind the police station, so you can't miss it. Lunch will be buffet style and cost \$8 per person. To guarantee enough food for us all, we recommend that you make reservations in advance through Olli Schwallenstecker, our Macoupin County board member. Just photocopy the form below.

The day will start with the general meeting at 10:30. We'll break for lunch at noon, then get on with the board meeting at 1 p.m.

The next motor tour meeting will start at noon, March 11, at Mount Hope Township car in McLean. Just look for all the cars with Route 66 license plates.

The next Preservation Committee meeting begins at 6 p.m., at Feddersen's Garage in Dwight.

I, we _____, will attend the meeting luncheon April 22, 2001.

There will be _____ for lunch at \$8 a person.

Total enclosed is \$_____.

Make checks payable to Route 66 Assn. of Illinois

Please send checks to Ollie Schwallenstecker, 620 E. Warren St., Box 477, Bunker Hill, IL 62014.

Ernie's Little Nanny Goats

by Ernie Edwards

The Pig Hip's Ernie Edwards is one of Route 66's most gifted and proficient storytellers. With 54 years in business and a decade of retirement, he's certainly had plenty of practice. The end of one story is never enough for this Murphysboro native. A tale may end on a matter-of-fact tone, but look Ernie in the eye and you'll always see hint or invitation to another. A few years ago, he sat down with a tape recorder to preserve some of his favorite stories. Following is a sample of what came out. Instead of anecdotes, he calls them "Ernie's little nanny goats."

Taking Care of the Competition

The pig hip was made of the left hip of the pig. And how this story came out—we were at the Hall of Fame. I was being honored with Mr. Geske of Dixie Truckers Home. And for something to say, he said he'd served many a ham sandwich and he didn't know what Edwards had on his that made it so special. So I explained to him that we only used the left hip. And the reason for that is when a hog scratches, he has a tendency to raise the right leg and scratch. And that made it tough. And we let all the competitors like the Dixie have those.

That's how that story got started. Now if you don't believe it, if you have an itch, you take and check which hand you scratch it with and you'll reach over from the right to the left to scratch ever'time.

Modern Communication

Years back, we had the bus stop, the little café, the garage, service station. And we had outhouses in back. We didn't have modern plumbing. One day I had to go to town to get parts. Western Auto or Gamble's was about the only places you could buy parts for cars in those days. So we went into Western Auto and this young fellow who waited on us quite a bit, he said "I just gt a new gadget in you oughtta have—a loud speaker system. You can put a speaker in the restaurant, one in the service station, one in the garage and one in the outhouse. When a bus gets ready to come in or leave, you can announce it."

Now that sounded pretty good. So we bought it and took it home. He hooked one up in the restaurant. We tried it. It

worked fine. He hooked one in the garage and one in the service station. And he put one out in this restroom.

And it was a nice restroom. It was ...an outhouse, but it was all white, you know. We had a white picket fence going out to it and a nice gravel lane and a big tree that could give you shade. It was real nice and we kept it clean.

So anyway, here come in the bus and this great big lady. Now she wasn't fat, but she was pretty huge. And of course she made a beeline for the outhouse. She went in. The door was a little narrow for her, but she squeezed through. About the time she turned around and got squatted, this young fellow got on the microphone. He said, "Madam, could you get over

in the other booth? I'm painting down here." And that door flopped open. We never did find it. It knocked all the bark off that big tree, put a hole in the fence. And we haven't seen her since.



Ernie and long-time customer Virgil Crumpler

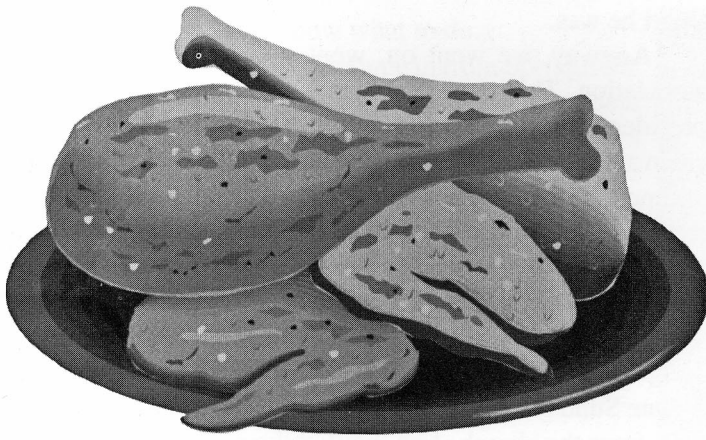
Feeding Colonel Sanders

One day this '35 Plymouth coupe pulled in. And there was a man in it and he came in and we had a cup of coffee. We got to talking. He wanted to sell me a franchise how to fry chicken. And he told me about his herbs and spices and so forth. I listened. Of course, I was selling franchises on the Pig Hip and I rebutted by trying to sell him a franchise. We couldn't even swap.

Anyway, about 4:30, 5 o'clock, he said, "Boy you go get a chicken out, I'll go get my pot and I'll show you how to fry chicken." Well okay, I said. So I went and got a chicken out. He went and got his herbs and his pans. He went back in the kitchen and he fried it up. He came out with a platter of chicken and we sat there and ate that chicken. And boy it was delicious, good.

We sat there and talked a little longer. Pretty soon, he says, "Boy, I got to get going." And so he left. Then I got to thinking after he left, "You know, that sucker was hungry. That was his supper. He ate my chicken!"

Years later, he became famous. They started building chicken houses all over. So I went to the national restaurant show up at McCormick Place in Chicago. And here the Colonel was. So we started to talking. He loves to talk as well as I do. I said, "Remember the time you stopped and showed me how to fix a chicken?" "Yes, I believe I do." I said, "You was hungry, wasn't you?" "Yup, I sure was. I was



starved to death.”

So we got to be real good friends. We met once a year that way for about eight, ten years. Finally he got really famous and old and went back to Louisville. I think he married his old sweetheart. The last I heard, they had a 40-pound cake for him for his birthday. He was 90 years old. Now I would loved to have went, but I had other commitments. I couldn't go.

Ernie Burgers

The other night I went to the funeral home to say good-by to a good neighbor and friend. And I run into a young fellow there and he said, “Oh yes, I remember the Ernie burger. My folks used to bring me down to your place for Ernie burgers. But why did you put the sesame seeds on the buns?”

What happened, years ago when I first started, the Stokes Bakery, which now is Butternut, made our buns. And all buns in those days were great big, four-inch buns. We couldn't sell a hamburger for a dime and a Pig Hip for 15 cents on a four-inch bun, so they got new pans and made us three-inch buns. And oh we done just a terrible business. In fact, on the weekends, my bread man had to use a special trailer to carry my buns in. That was quite a treat. It thrilled him and it thrilled me because he was on commission.

We went back to the bakery. We had seen sesame seeds on buns and we wanted to know if they'd do that. “Oh sure, that's simple.” So they put sesame seeds on the buns and they just went over big. And then people started to complaining. What I didn't realize is that half of the people in the world have partials or dentures that those seeds get under. So we had to go back to the plain buns.

But this Ernie burger, I'd never heard it called that. We'd always called them steak burgers because it was 85 percent pure ground beef and that made it a good sandwich. And for a dime that was good.

Early Franchising

Now this is one on Gus Belt, the Steak 'n' Shake. Before I went into business in 1937, in 1936 I was working for Bee's Ice Cream in Springfield. That was a soft freeze ice cream. That was the first one that I ever heard of. We made giant

malted milks for a dime and double dips for a nickel. And we just done a tremendous job. In fact, I made most of it at night and dipped it all the next day. For \$9 a week.

We was doing real well and the boss decided he wanted to put on hamburgers. Well, there was a place that had three sisters run it. It was a drive-in out on 5th and South Grand in Springfield. So I went out and asked them for a job. And I got a job. I was toasting buns. I could see their whole layout and how they done it. And Gus Belt was on the outside looking through the window. He was much older than I was. Too old to get a job, so he tried to figure it out from the outside.

In the meantime, I came home and started this place in Broadwell. He had started his place in '36 in the Shell service station he had there on North Main Street. On the one hand, he sold Shell gasoline. On the other hand he sold schooners of beer for a dime. Well, he wasn't selling any gasoline. He sold quite a few schooners of beer to the college kids. Then Normal went dry, so that put him out of business. And he come up with the jumbo shake, the steak 'n' shake, and so forth. And he started and done real good.

Gus went to people like oh, people with money—bankers, insurance companies. He got a thousand dollars from ten of them. I was only 20 years old and the bank wouldn't even look at you if you didn't have a farm as collateral.

So anyway, he started three places, one in Springfield and two in Bloomington and he was doing alright. Then the war came along. He went to one of the fellas [investors] and said this thing looks rough. We're going to run out of meat, this, that and the other. Rather than you to lose your money, would



Ernie also had this Pig Hip in Lincoln for several years

you take your thousand dollars and be happy, no interest? And of course the guy took it. About every month Gus went back to another investor and bought them out with no interest. So he used their money for about a year and a half, got started.

Later he spread out, bought his own commissary. Then he bought a couple of farms around Bloomington, raised Black Angus. He used those in his commissary. And that's one thing about Gus. He always used good products. He always had a



The Broadwell Pig Hip in the early 1990's

clean, neat place. And he always only had 13 items on the menu, which was very good.

We went on and on. Finally he got a little bigger. He had a little family trouble. And he got to drinking. Well I was established here in Broadwell and in between the military highway and the two-lane, there was four trees out here. My brother had a wrecker. He run the service station for me. About once a month, we'd pick Gus Belt out from those trees. But he was still a nice guy. He died young.

Trade Agreements

In 1947 we decided we had to raise the price of coffee. Coffee was going up. Cream was going up. And we used good cream then. Sugar was going up. We got together—all the restaurants in Lincoln and myself—we decided we'd raise it from a nickel to eight cents. But each one of us at the meeting was going to take two restaurant men that wasn't there and explain to them what we'd done. So I picked out two and the first one I went to happened to be a Greek. He said, "I'm not a-raising mine. You raising yours, you run your business, I running mine." So I says, fine. I went on down to the second one. And I went in, started to explain to him what we'd done. "Oh, I'm not going to raise mine," he says. "I'm making money." I said how do you know? He says, "I got money in the bank. I got a new Terraplane sitting out in front." So that tells you how



smart he was.

Anyway, we went on, went on. We even started an association. This one neighbor of mine, we put him in as president 'cause we thought he'd be the weakest link in the chain and make him have to stay. So anyway, all my customers and neighbors, I watched them. They kept going down the street to his place. Couldn't figure out why. "Well, we're not going to pay you eight cents when we can get it for five cents down there."

Keeping the Sabbath

One Sunday morning I noticed all the people was coming over from the church. And they set there and spend a couple of hours drinking coffee and eating donuts. Pretty soon one of them said, "I'm just waiting for my wife and kids to get out of Sunday School." Well, here my kids were going to Sunday School—and my wife—and I couldn't go. So I said "Nuts to this" and I started closing on Sunday morning and went to church with my family. And enjoyed it.

I figured out that I should have a family day. I didn't want to take Monday because all the business people were running up and down the road and that was a busy day. But Tuesday was a slack day. The reason I picked it is because they came and told me I had to close my restaurant on election day because I had beer. That kind of made he unhappy, so I said I'll do better than that—I'll close very Tuesday. Sure it made people unhappy. But we found they always came back to tell us they were here on Tuesday.

The night before last, my oldest son called me. He's 43, 44. He says, "Dad, you know what? In a Sunday School class the other day, they were talking about the Sabbath. You always did say that Tuesday was our Sabbath." He says, "You know it doesn't say that Sunday has to be the Sabbath. It can be any day." Give that one day to rest and to the lord.

Unexpected Company

One day—it was probably in '37 or early '38—gas was 26 cents a gallon or less. There were so many filling stations, if you were selling a hundred gallons of gas a day, you was making a living. So anyway one day here come this big ton and a half truck. It had a canvas over the back end of it. And they wanted it filled up.

Boy, that just thrilled me to death. I rubbed my hands together and went around, filled it up. The man paid me and I thanked him. He just pulled up three or four feet, not enough even to get away from the pump. And he went around and let the tailgate down and here come out 40 Mexican people. There were families and groups. And they went around, all over the drive there, around the pumps and started little bon fires and they were fixing their dinner.

And oh that really upset me, so I jumped up and down, probably swore a little about it. I didn't get anyplace. I even went over and kicked out one fellow's fire. He looked at me. He just got up and picked up his sticks and started the fire

over again. So I didn't know what to do.

About that time, my uncle came in from Springfield. He had lived down in Amarillo for years and he could speak some Spanish. He went around saying, "Who's the boss? Where's the boss man? You the bossman? Finally he got a hold of one who said he was the boss man. He said something in Spanish to him. The man waved his hand, they all kicked out their fires and cleaned up their mess and got up in their truck and away they went.

Taking Time Off

In the early years when I was young and innocent, I'd like to take a vacation, but I didn't know how. So I asked the undertaker and he said just hang a wreath on the door. They won't bother you. When you come back and they see you're still alive, they're too embarrassed to ask you who died. And that took care of it for some years. Then my family got to complaining. So then I'd put a ladder in front of the door with a paint bucket on it and put a sign on the door: "Remodeling." And everybody accepted that. One day not long ago I saw a lady at a meeting.



Ernie and his wife Frances visit the Cozy Dog

She says, "I was there one day and saw the sign, but I never did get back. I was wondering how you'd changed the place."

Joliet Welcome Center on Way

by John Weiss with Lynn Bagdon

Some fantastic plans are underway in Joliet that will tremendously affect Route 66. Here is just a sample:

Joliet will soon be working on two historic structures. One is the Renaissance Center on Route 66. It was built in the 1920s and designed by famed Chicago architect Daniel Burnham. Currently, it houses the culinary department and banquet hall of Joliet Junior College. The other is the fabulous three-story United Methodist Church building. It is located at the crossroads of America by virtue of being on the corner of Lincoln Highway and Route 66 (also known as Cass & Ottawa Streets or US 30 West and Illinois 53 South.

The Philadelphia design firm has proposed ambitious plans for these structures. An overwalk will connect the two buildings. There will be a café. On the lot between them will rise a Route 66 Welcome Center. The culinary department and banquet hall will remain at the Renaissance Center.

The church's congregation sold it to the city a decade ago, pipe organ and all. For several years, the historical society operated a transportation museum there. It already has more than 20,000 artifacts for display. Plans are to replace the wood that surrounds the pipe organ with glass. That will give visitors an idea of how this magnificent instrument works.

The City of Joliet has already committed \$7.1 million to the project. Most of that will come from revenues generated by the Empress and Harrah's Casinos. The city also hopes to get a \$1.4 million grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation. A grand opening is expected around March of 2002. Look for details in future editions.

Note: The Association summer meeting is July 15 at the Renaissance Center. We'll provide more information about this exciting project at that time. Plan on attending!

Hall of Famer Burt Parkinson on the Riviera

as told to Ted and Marilyn Giovanazzi

Frequented by the famous such as Gene Autry and Pat Buttram, as well as the infamous Al and Ralph Capone, the Riviera became known to all who traveled the Mother Road. It was built in 1928 between Braidwood and Gardner. Though somewhat altered since its glory days, it still proudly stands. A Jim Girot built and originally operated the Riviera. He took an old warehouse and tavern from South Wilmington and an old grade school from Gardner and moved them to their present location. He made a few exterior changes and joined the three structures to make one Riviera. There was later a gas station in front, but it no longer stands.

The restaurant and kitchen were upstairs and the tavern was in the basement. The tavern was notable for its man-made stalactites which gave the feeling of coolness in the summer. The restaurant was known for its excellent food, especially frog legs, lobster and chicken.

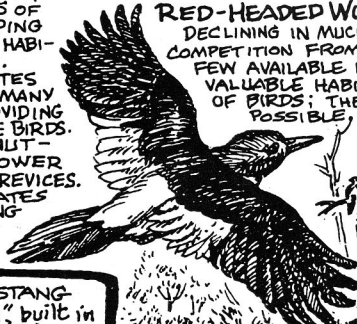
Fashion shows were held in the summer on the Riviera's wraparound porch. The dumbwaiter, which is still in use, was once part of their security system. A loaded pistol was always kept in it and a buzzer system was used to signal it up and down. The waiter's main use was moving food and drinks, but in case of emergency it had this other cargo.

OLD 66 DISPATCH, Dec. 2000-Jan. 2001

Issue #8
Free while they last.



IN DEATH AS IN LIFE, THE TRUNK & LIMBS OF THIS GRAND OLD WEeping Willow Tree Provide HABITATS FOR MANY SPECIES. DECAYING WOOD INVITES COLONIES OF FUNGI & MANY KINDS OF INSECTS, PROVIDING A SMORGASBORD FOR THE BIRDS. WOODPECKERS AND NUT-HATCHES CACHE SUNFLOWER SEEDS IN THE BARK'S CREVICES. AS THE BARK SEPARATES FROM THE LIMBS, NESTING SITES ARE CREATED FOR THE RARELY-SEEN BROWN CREEPER.



RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) DECLINING IN MUCH OF ITS RANGE, DUE TO HABITAT LOSS AND COMPETITION FROM THE MORE AGGRESSIVE STARLING FOR THE FEW AVAILABLE NEST HOLES. STANDING DEAD TREES PROVIDE VALUABLE HABITATS FOR WOODPECKERS & OTHER SPECIES OF BIRDS; THEY SHOULD BE LEFT STANDING WHENEVER POSSIBLE. THIS BIRD WAS SKETCHED ON A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW I DREW OF CARPENTER PARK (FALL, 2000). THE PARK IS THE CLOSEST THING TO A WILDERNESS AREA IN CENTRAL ILLINOIS & IS THREATENED BY A PROPOSED STRIP MAINT. ALONG ITS BORDER. A LOCAL GROUP, "FRIENDS OF CARPENTER PARK" IS TRYING TO PURCHASE THE THREATENED AND TO ADD TO THE EXISTING PARK.

SOME OF MY "CONSTANT COMPANIONS": JUNCOS, CHICADEES, TITMICE, CARDINALS, BLUEJAYS, WOODPECKERS, TREE SPARROWS, GOLDFINCHES & DOVES. THEY ALL KNOW WHENEVER I'M HERE THE FEEDER IS KEPT FULL, & WHEN I'M GONE IT STAYS EMPTY.

AS I BEGIN THIS DISPATCH, DEC. 11th, 2000 THE INCH OF RAINFALL THAT FELL THROUGHOUT THE NIGHT IS QUICKLY FREEZING, AS THE TEMPERATURE PLUMMETS FROM THE LOW 30'S TO NEAR ZERO. A COLD FRONT IS BLOWING IN FROM THE NORTHWEST, WITH DANGEROUS WINDS CREATING A "WIND CHILL" OF 35 DEGREES BELOW ZERO.

THIS IS THE ILLINOIS I LOVE TO HATE! BUT DESPITE BEING FACED WITH MY THIRD STRAIGHT ILLINOIS WINTER SINCE MOVING BACK HERE FROM HACKBERRY, I'M GRATEFUL FOR THIS YEAR'S MANY BALMY, SUNNY DAYS, & I DID MANAGE TO MAKE 2 TRIPS TO THE DESERT SOUTHWEST — ONE IN THE SPRING & ONE IN THE FALL, FROM WHICH I ONLY RECENTLY RETURNED.

AS 2000 RACES TO A CLOSE, THE TWO "BIG STORIES" IN MY LIFE THIS YEAR ARE THE ONGOING PROGRESS ON MY BOOK & "THE SAD SAGA OF TWO WESTERN DIAMONDBACK RATTLESNAKES" — WHICH IS ALSO ONGOING.

THOSE 2 "BIG STORIES" ARE DETAILED ON PAGE TWO.

I AM BEGINNING TO BE ANNOYED BY MY OWN WORDINESS & PROPENSITY TO FLOURISH UP EVERYTHING & BE OVER-SENTIMENTAL. SO I WILL TRY TO BE BRIEF & NOT TOO FLOWERY IN SUMMING UP THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR — WHICH, AS AN ARTIST WITH A LONG MAILING LIST, IS THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF THIS DISPATCH.

AS FILLER I'VE PASTED UP BITS & PIECES OF WORK I DID THIS YEAR; MOST ARE FROM MY LOST BRIDGE TRAIL MAP, WHICH I DREW BECAUSE — DURING WARM WEATHER — I RIDE THE TRAIL FREQUENTLY.

IN A NUTSHELL, THE YEAR'S HIGHLIGHTS:

FIRST TRIP WEST, MARCH/APRIL — THIS WAS A "WORKING-SELLING TRIP"; VISITED OLD STAMPING GROUNDS & RENEWED OLD FRIENDSHIPS IN SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO & S.E. ARIZONA; SPENT A MONTH AT MY PLACE, HAD PHONE LINE PUT IN; CREATED ROCK GARDEN.

2ND ANNUAL "ED WALDMIRE MEMORIAL PANCAKE DAY" IN MAY AT THE COZY DOG.

THE 11th ANNUAL ILLINOIS 66 MOTOR TOUR: DROVE THE VAN DOWN TO CHAIN-OF-ROCKS BRIDGE, CAMPED, THEN VENDED IN EDWARDSVILLE. THEN PARKED VAN & SWITCHED TO MUSTANG FOR REST OF TOUR. VENDED OUT OF THE MUSTANG IN JOLIET — ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE RIALTO THEATRE.

ALSO CAMPED 2 NIGHTS IN THE 'STANG, HAVING MADE CURTAINS FOR ALL THE WINDOWS & REMOVED THE CONSOLE (JUST LIKE IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS WHEN I TRAVELLED "CAMPED" IN MY FIRST MUSTANG (1967-1972)).



THIS IS THE "LOST BRIDGE" FOR WHICH THE TRAIL IS NAMED. ORIGINAL RAILROAD BRIDGE WAS REMOVED "SURREPTITIOUSLY." THE NEW TRAIL BRIDGE WAS BUILT ON ORIGINAL LIMESTONE PILLAR. SUGAR CREEK IS HOME TO MANY SPECIES, INCLUDING BEAVERS, MUSKRATS, HERONS & KINGFISHERS.

MY CLASSIC MUSTANG (1965 Fastback 2+2, built in Dearborn, Michigan) NOW HAS A CLASSIC, ONE-OF-A-KIND STRAPLESS BIKE RACK @

(WHICH I PLAN TO PATENT). USING PARTS OF A GRABER BIKE RACK, GIANT "11" BRACKETS & AN OAK PLANK ATTACHED TO THE CAR'S VALANCE, THE RACK CAN CARRY 2 BIKES & CAN BE REMOVED QUICKLY. THE RACK SLIDES INTO THE TUBES WHICH ARE BOLTED TO THE BUMPER & ATTACHED TO THE OAK PLANK. IT ONLY TOOK A FEW LABORIOUS EXPERIENCES OF LOADING THE BIKE INTO THE BACKSEAT (FOLDED DOWN) TO INSPIRE THE IDEA FOR A BIKE RACK — WHICH HAS PAID OFF IN MY DOING A LOT MORE RIDING.



"DON'T LAUGH — IT'S PAID FOR"

THE MUSTANG AND I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY ON RT. 66, COMING UP IN THE SPRING OF 2004.

I PLAN TO LEAD A "MUSTANG CARAVAN" FROM CHICAGO TO L.A. TO HELP COMMEMORATE THE 40th ANNIVERSARY OF THE MUSTANG, WHICH WAS INTRODUCED ON APRIL 17th, 1964.

THIS EVENT WILL BE MY "GREAT RETIREMENT ADVENTURE" — & LIKE I HAVE REFERRED TO THE CAR ITSELF, MY "REWARD" FOR HAVING FINISHED THE BOOK.

MORE ON THIS EVENT IN UPCOMING DISPATCHES.

(HIGHLIGHTS Cont.)

IN AUGUST I DROVE THE VAN UP TO ODELL TO VEND DURING "ODELL DAYS" SET UP RIGHT BESIDE THE BEAUTIFULLY-RESTORED ODELL GAS STATION. DURING A "SAVE THE STATION" CELEBRATION & FUNDRAISER. THEN SET UP THE NEXT DAY BY THE TRACKS IN DOWNTOWN ODELL.

DID LOTS OF BICYCLING DURING WARMER MONTHS, MOSTLY ON THE 5-MILE-LONG LOST BRIDGE TRAIL, WHICH RUNS BETWEEN ROCHESTER & SPRINGFIELD ON THE OLD B&O RAILROAD ALIGNMENT. IT IS A REGULAR & WELL-USED TRAIL, SO I DECIDED TO DRAW A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW MAP OF THE TRAIL — DID LOTS OF THE SKETCHING ON-LOCATION, ON MY BIKE.

THE VILLAGE OF ROCHESTER BOUGHT A QUANTITY OF THE PRINTED MAPS & ALSO GAVE ME PERMISSION TO PUT UP BLUEBIRD NEST BOXES ALONG THE TRAIL; I PUT UP FOUR — BUT TOO LATE IN THE YEAR TO BE USED. SO I WILL BE MONITORING THEM THIS COMING SPRING.



VIEW BELOW (FACING NORTHWEST) SHOWS APPROACH TO "TRAILHEAD" AT ROCHESTER. RT. 29 RUNS PAST THE TOWN'S ORIGINAL 1937 HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING.



WILD CARROT — "Queen Anne's Lace"

(HIGHLIGHTS Cont.)

OF COURSE THE GREATEST HIGHLIGHT WAS SPENDING TIME WITH MY MOM, GIN, WHO WILL BE 84 IN MARCH, 2001. WE DO THINGS TOGETHER & HELP EACH OTHER WITH OUR RESPECTIVE PROJECTS. WE SHARE MANY MEALS TOGETHER & I TAKE HER SHOPPING, WITH OCCASIONAL STOPS AT THE COZY DOG, BARNES & NOBLE TO LOOK AT BOOKS, ETC. SHE IS STILL MY BEST CRITIC, PROOFREADER & SOLACE-GIVER.

I ALSO ENJOYED VISITS FROM A NUMBER OF 66'RS WHO "LOOKED ME UP" — VIA BUZ AT THE COZY DOG — INCLUDING A TOUR GROUP OF EUROPEAN MOTORCYCLISTS LED BY SANDY KOECKRITZ, WHO USED TO BRING GROUPS TO THE VISITOR CENTER.

MY 2nd TRIP WEST, late SEPT. through NOV., ALTHOUGH DELAYED A MONTH BY THE RATTLE-SNAKE INCIDENT, WAS AN EVENT-FILLED & SUCCESSFUL TRIP. LOTS OF VISITS, SALES & SKETCHING, SOME AS COMMISSIONS, SOME ON MY OWN. SPENT ONLY 2 WKS. AT MY PLACE THIS TIME — GOT TO SEE THE WASHES' FLOW, DURING UNSEASONAL RAINS IN OCT.

DON PEASE INSTALLED A SMALL SOLAR PANEL ON THE TRAILER'S ROOF, CONNECTING IT TO A BATTERY & LIGHTS INSIDE — A LUXURIOUS SUPPLEMENT TO THE 12V. BATTERY TO THE OIL LAMPS.

SPENT LOTS OF TIME IN BOTH BISBEE & FLAGSTAFF, DOING LOTS OF DRAWING. SKETCHED 5 POSTCARDS ALONG THE WAY ON THE LONG, COLD TRIP BACK TO ILLINOIS. I ARRIVED JUST IN TIME TO ENDURE THE COLDEST DECEMBER ON RECORD.



FOXGLOVE

EASTERN BOX TURTLE

SKETCHED FROM A PHOTO I TOOK ON MARCH 16th, 2000,
THE DAY I DISCOVERED THEM, WHILE GATHERING ROCKS
FOR A "ROCK GARDEN", I WAS CONSTRUCTING.
WHEN I SPOTTED AN FBI AGENT

WHEN I SPOTTED AN ESPECIALLY NICE ROCK, STREAKED WITH PURPLE & PINK, ABOUT WATERMELON-SIZED, I NOISTED IT UP & THERE THEY WERE, COILED SIDE BY SIDE. THE SUDDEN LIGHT MAY HAVE SHOCKED THEM, BUT THEY REMAINED CALM, MOTIONLESS, & STILL A BIT SLUGGISH IN THIS COOL EARLY SPRING WEATHER.

AFTER GATHERING THEM INTO A BUCKET, I SAW BITS OF
 SHED SKIN IN THEIR COZY "DEN FOR TWO" & FIGURED
 THEY HAD SPENT THE WHOLE WINTER THERE - A PERFECT
 SPOT, BENEATH A ROCK THAT WOULD BE WARMED BY THE
 SUN & WOULD RETAIN SOME HEAT THROUGH THE COLD
 NIGHTS. AS PER MY ROUTINE, I TRANSFERRED

WOULD REMAIN SOME HEAT THROUGH THE NIGHTS. AS PER MY ROUTINE, I TRANSFERRED THEM TO A BARREL, WHERE I "CONFINED" THE RATTLE. I CATCH ON THE PLACE, TILL I'M DONE WORKING. READY TO LEAVE THE PLACE. THEN I RELEASE THEM, USUALLY IN THE SPOT WHERE THEY WERE CAUGHT. SO I LEFT THAT ROCK IN PLACE.

WHEN IT WAS TIME TO LEAVE MY PLACE -
APRIL 18TH - I INSTEAD OF RELEASING THEM, I
BROUGHT THEM WITH ME TO ILLINOIS, INTENDING
TO DISPLAY THEM AT THE COZY DOG DURING
SUMMER, THEN BRING THEM BACK TO ARIZONA
ON MY FALL TRIP. LITTLE DID I KNOW WHAT LAY
IN STORE FOR THE 3 OF US.

THERE IS NO WAY TO MAKE THIS LONG STORY SHORT, SO I WILL ABBREVIATE IT: AFTER BUILDING A LARGE, RATHER ELABORATE TERRARIUM (WITH MOSTLY RECYCLED WOOD & A 1/2" THICK FLEXIGLASS FRONT), I DID GET THE SNAKES TO THE COZY DOG. THEY WERE DISPLAYED THERE FOR 6 WEEKS, WITH INFORMATIVE SIGNS & A PHOTO-PANEL. THE SNAKES WERE QUITE A HIT & RATTLED FREQUENTLY TO THEM. THE NOT FROM BEING AGITATED, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE, THESE 2 YOUNG DIAMONDBACKS (3 & 3 1/2 FEET RESPECTIVELY) NEVER STRUCK—NOT WHEN I CAUGHT THEM, NOT AT THE COZY DOG, NOT EVER WHILE THEY WERE MY CAPTIVES.

ON SEPTEMBER 2nd — JUST ONE DAY BEFORE I WAS TO DISMANTLE THE EXHIBIT & BAG UP THE SNAKES FOR THE TRIP BACK TO ARIZONA — THEY WERE SEIZED BY THE ILLINOIS DEPT. OF NAT. RESOURCES (DNR). IT WAS A HUMILIATION, BUT A VALUABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR ME. I AM STILL FACING A POSSIBLE FINE (WHICH I WILL CONTEST IN COURT) BUT IT'S LIKE A WRIST-SLAP COMPARED TO WHAT THE POOR SNAKES GOT: A LIFE SENTENCE IN CAPTIVITY IN AN ALIEN PLACE. EVEN IF I COULD GET THEM BACK — LEARNED THAT THEY COULD NOT BE LEGALLY RELEASED IN ARIZONA — EVEN ON MY OWN LAND — BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBILITY THEY COULD HAVE "PICKED SOMETHING UP" WHILE IN CAPTIVITY THAT COULD BE SPREAD TO OTHER RATTLESN. A HIGHLY REMOTE POSSIBILITY — BUT POSSIBLE.

SO MY EFFORTS NOW ARE TO FIND A LICENSED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN THE SOUTHWEST THAT WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE NOT ONLY THE 2 RATTLESNakes BUT OTHER DESERT REPTILES (INCLUDING GILA MONSTERS) SEIZED & HELD BY THE DNR. SO THEY COULD AT LEAST LIVE OUT THEIR LIVES IN A DESERT CLIMATE, & DIE IN THAT DESERT CLIMATE, RATHER THAN IN AN ALIEN, HOSTILE, HUMID CLIMATE... More on this, next Dispatch...

LASTLY & MOST IMPORTANTLY, PROGRESS ON THE BOOK ON THE LIFE OF ED WALDMIRE CONTINUES, AT A SLOW BUT SURE PACE. I HAVE NOW OUTLINED — CHAPTER BY CHAPTER & SECTION BY SECTION — THE ENTIRE CONTENTS OF THE BOOK. EACH CHAPTER FEATURES A SUMMARY OF ITS CONTENTS ON AN ILLUSTRATED "CHAPTER TITLE PAGE." THESE SUMMARIES ALLOW ME TO "SEE" WHAT WILL BE WRITTEN ABOUT FOR EACH CHAPTER — A MAJOR BREAK-THROUGH FOR MY "WRITER'S BLOCK."

THE 11 CHAPTERS ARE FOLLOWED BY AN "INTERLUDE" SECTION, CONTAINING MISCELLANEOUS TRIBUTES & REMINISCENCES. AND FINALLY, AFTER THE INTERLUDE, COMES "HIS BOOK": HIS CHOSEN SELECTION OF CLASSICS:

THE AGE OF REASON By THOMAS PAINE
CAPT. STORMFIELD'S VISIT to HEAVEN by MARK TWAIN

5 The FAREWELL ADDRESS by DWIGHT EISENHOWER.

IN THE COMING MONTHS I WILL BE LEARNING IMPORTANT DETAILS FROM THE PRINTER & THE BINDERY. BOTH ARE LOCATED NEARBY. THIS BOOK WILL BE "LAVISHLY ILLUSTRATED" (BY ME), MOSTLY IN "LIVING BLACK" & "WHITE" BUT WITH SOME COLOR. IT WILL INCLUDE MANY PHOTOS TAKEN THROUGHOUT ED'S LIFE, OF HIM & OTHERS & PLACES THAT FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN HIS LIFE. "ADDED ATTRactions" WILL BE HISTORIC PROFILES OF ORGANIZATIONS & "CAUSES" ED SUPPORTED & A GENEROUS SPRINKLING OF GREAT QUOTES OF SOME OF THE GREAT THINKERS WHOM ED ADMIRRED.

IN SPITE OF ONGOING DIVERSIONS & DISTRACTIONS I AM COMMITTED TO HAVING THE BOOK DONE & AT THE PRINTER BEFORE THE END OF 2002.

SO I WILL NEED TO CONCENTRATE MOST OF MY
TIME & ENERGY ON THE BOOK FROM HERE ON, IN-
STALLING WHEN I AM "ON THE ROAD." I WILL NEED TO
MIT THE DISTRACTIONS & DIVERSIONS, AND TO PICK &
HOOSE WHICH ONES TO PURSUE — ALAS, THERE ARE
AND TO DO! BUT TO CALL MYSELF A "WORKING ARTIST"
NEED TO CONTINUE "PRODUCING" NEW ARTWORK.

AND AS FAR AS DRAWING GOES, THIS HAS BEEN A VERY PRODUCTIVE YEAR. I HAVE NOT LACKED FOR SUBJECTS! DURING THE YEAR (2000), I ADDED 13 NEW POSTCARDS TO MY "66 SCENE" SERIES. THESE WERE ALL SKETCHED ON LOCATION, DURING MY 2 TRIPS WEST (EXCEPT THE PONTIAC ONE, WHICH WAS SKETCHED ON SHORTER ILLINOIS TRIPS). AS OF NOW, 9 ARE INTD & OTHER 4 WILL BE PRINTED SOON.

I STARTED A NEW POSTCARD SERIES: "OLD U.S. SCENES." EVEN CARDS ARE IN THE WORKS SO FAR. AND I ADDED NOTECARDS TO MY "BISBEE STREET SCENES" SERIES. MANY OTHER DRAWING PROJECTS WERE FINISHED.

SOME OF THEM COMMISSIONS, INCLUDING A
COLOR T-SHIRT DESIGN COMMEMORATING THE
75th ANNIVERSARY OF RT. 66 (DONE FOR
THE MUSEUM CLUB IN FLAGSTAFF).

AND I'M WORKING ON SEVERAL DRAWINGS FOR THE BOOK, INCLUDING ONE OF THE HOUSE MY DAD WAS BORN IN, WHICH I SKETCHED IN PETERSBURG LAST FALL.

SO IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR. MY BUS
SOLAR SYSTEM IS NOT "ON LINE" YET, BUT THE
INVERTER IS INSTALLED INSIDE THE BUS, READY
TO RECEIVE WIRING FROM THE BATTERIES. THAT
12 VOLT CURRENT GOES IN ONE END OF THE IN-
VERTER & COMES OUT THE OTHER END AS 110
CURRENT.

I WILL BE HERE IN THE SPRING & ONE OF THE PROJECTS IS TO BUILD FRAMES (2) FOR MY 4 SOLAR PANELS & TO MOUNT THEM, HINGED, ON THE ROOF OF THE BUS.

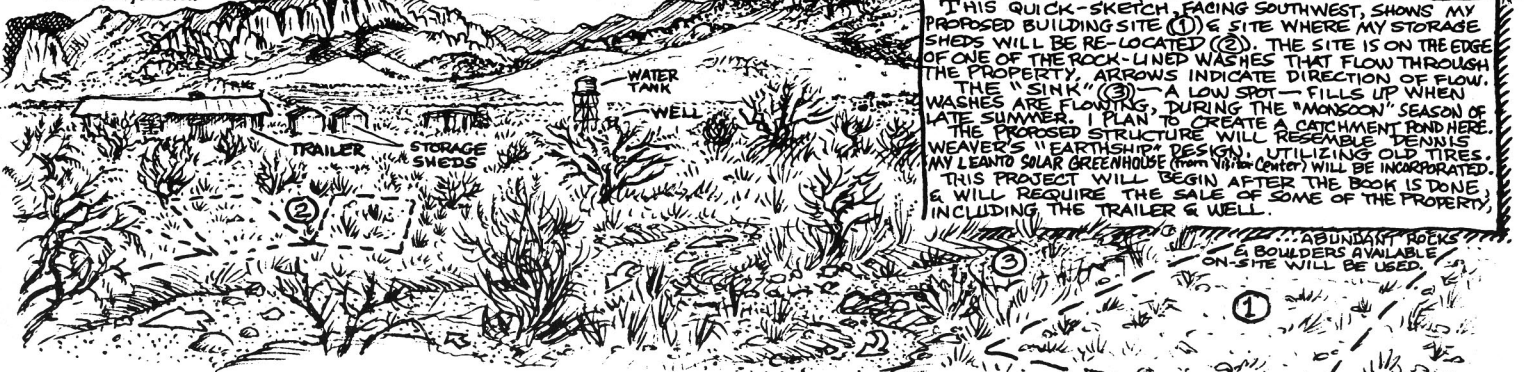
I WILL BE WEST-BOUND BY MID-SUMMER*
I WILL BE A VENDOR AT THE GREAT RT. 66
75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION IN ALBUQUERQUE,
JULY 20th-22nd, 2001. THEN ONWARD, TO MY
PLACE FOR ANOTHER "WORKING REST"

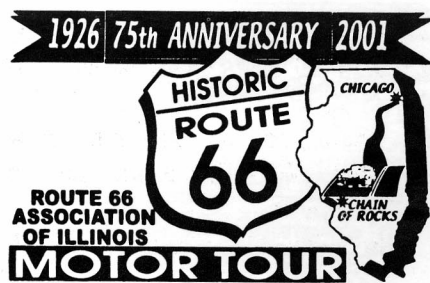
PLACE FOR ANOTHER WORKING REST.
A HEALTHY & HAPPY 2001 TO YOU ALL, &
IF YOU PLAN TO MOTOR WEST, TAKE THE
HIGHWAY THAT'S THE BEST, & WATCH FOR ME
ON 66.

Sincerely,
Bob Walden

THIS QUICK-SKETCH, FACING SOUTHWEST, SHOWS MY PROPOSED BUILDING SITE (1) & SITE WHERE MY STORAGE SHEDS WILL BE RE-LOCATED (2). THE SITE IS ON THE EDGE OF ONE OF THE ROCK-LINED WASHES THAT FLOW THROUGH THE PROPERTY. ARROWS INDICATE DIRECTION OF FLOW. THE "SINK" (3) - A LOW SPOT - FILLS UP WHEN WASHES ARE FLOWING, DURING THE "MONSOON" SEASON OF LATE SUMMER. I PLAN TO CREATE A CATCHMENT POND HERE. THE PROPOSED STRUCTURES WILL RESEMBLE DENNIS WEAVER'S "EARTHSHEDS" (FROM THE BOOK) UTILIZING OLD TILES. MY LEANTO SOLAR GREENHOUSE (FROM THE BOOK) WILL BE INCORPORATED. THIS PROJECT WILL BEGIN AFTER THE BOOK IS DONE, & WILL REQUIRE THE SALE OF SOME OF THE PROPERTY, INCLUDING THE TRAILER & WELL.

...ABUNDANT ROCKS
E Boulders AVAILABLE
ON-SITE WILL BE USED.





75 YEARS OF KICKS ON ROUTE 66 *Come join Us On A Route 66 Cruise*

From Chicago To The Chain

WITH STOPS IN:

Chicago
Romeoville
Diamond
Pontiac
McLean
Atlanta
Springfield
Auburn
Carlinville
Benld

DeCamp Junction
Edwardsville
Chain of Rocks

**12th ANNUAL ROUTE 66
MOTOR TOUR OF ILLINOIS
June 8 - 11, 2001**

See Where Route 66 Begins in Chicago

Celebrate the Diamond Anniversary of Route 66
in Diamond, Illinois

Visit the Hall of Fame at the Dixie

Lincoln Sites and the Cozy Dog in Springfield

Drive on the Red Brick Road near Auburn

Cruise on Historic Illinois Route 4

See the Famous Coliseum in Benld

Join the fun at Festival 66 in Edwardsville

Travel across the Chain of Rocks Bridge

SPONSORED BY THE ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

Please print or type

REGISTRATION FORM

ANY VEHICLE • ANY MODEL • ANY MAKE

Registration Fee: \$25.00 for members per vehicle • \$40.00 for non-members per vehicle

You may join or leave the tour at any point or at anytime.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

We plan to attend the Hall of Fame Banquet _____

Add \$7.50 per person to accompany registration (includes dinner, soft drink and tax).

Mail to:

Motor Tour

Route 66 Association of Illinois

2743 Veterans Parkway #166

Springfield, IL 62704

Sorry, No Refunds.

Rain or Shine

More Tour Information:

Jeff LaFollette, Tour Chair319-893-6653

Jeff Geisler708-354-8746

Ollie Schwallenstecker618-585-3081

Marilyn Pritchard815-844-6937

Route 66 Association of Illinois is not responsible for any participant injury or misconduct.

Preservation Committee Minutes

Submitted by Lenore Weiss

Chairman John Weiss called the meeting to order at 6:05 P.M. Some 41 members and two out of state guests attended.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved. John mentioned the Odell Station poker run earned a profit of slightly over \$4,000. He also passed around a front page story from the travel section of the Chicago Sun Times about the Odell Station. It mentioned that Hampton Inns will help us restore the station next spring and also give us some money to help with the project.

John said preservation members Marge and Jack Hettwer received a check for \$275 from a Mr. Vital for 3 picnic tables at the Odell Station. John will get the materials at discount from preservation member Roe Absire, who works for Menard's. Marge has arranged for students at Pontiac High School to assemble the tables. John will deliver the materials to the school and the Mayor of Odell will have the finished tables picked up.

Macco Auto Repair has painted the Odell gas pump for \$50. John will finish it as needed. Bill Prysbylski agreed to make a reproduction of the station's unique heating unit.

Jeff LaFollette talked to the owner of the Meramec barn near Hamel. He would like to see it restored. Many members volunteered to do the job. We will plan on a weekend in April next year. John will make all the arrangements.

Jeff also mentioned the work being done by the Rt. 66 Federation. He also mentioned he will suggest to our associations finance committee that \$2000 be presented for our Preservation work.

John passed around a photo of an early 1950's camper. It is being offered free to us for display at the Odell station. Mrs. Sandra Gray wants to donate it in memory of her father who many years ago worked at the Odell station. A vote was taken and agreed upon to accept the camper and move it to Odell. Bill Pryzbylski volunteered to tow it.

There was a discussion about Francis Martin. The concern is who will maintain the Our Lady of the Highways shrine. Jeff LaFollette will look into its condition and find out if they need our assistance with the shrines maintenance and expenses.

The film from the Japanese film crew that we helped has not yet arrived. The owner of the original Inn of the Lamp Lighter in Springfield is thinking about building a theme motel at the original site.

Mayor Ed Seal said he has a good chance of a grant for Odell. He needs a contractor's estimate. Paul and Gretchen Wendt will help out with their construction business.

Jerry Jacobson from IDOT sent word that bids have been received for demolition of the bridge near Gardner. This is an original, award winning Route 66 structure.

Chester Henry has picked up two original Steak and Shake booths. Dorothy Seratt suggested we eventually could put

them into the area of the Odell station. (Discussion followed)

Artist Joyce Wimer had an Odell display at a car show in British Columbia, Canada.

The Riviera street car is being considered for the new transportation museum in Joliet. We will put our plans to restore it on hold until we know more.

We all took note that today, Nov. 11, 2000 was the 74th Birthday of Rt. 66.

Trailnet Inc. wanted an Illinois sign at the Chain of Rocks Bridge. President La Follette contacted Jerry Jacobson of IDOT. Results - a 3ft. x 3ft. sign will be installed dated 1935 to 1965. Jeff also mentioned the A & W Drive-In in Edwardsville has closed, and that President Clinton signed into law the Preservation bill to release funds. He also said, that Bill Watson of Delevan, IL. will be donating to us an original Delco sign.

John announced that the 2 bridges of Rt. 66 crossing over Rt. 17 in Dwight will be torn down in 2001. Even though we hate to see these historic structures eliminated we realize it is necessary for the town. This will then make the Marathon Station more predominate. Plans are to turn the station into some sort of welcome center for Rt. 66 in Dwight.

John Stonecipher found a photo that showed a relative of his next to a Rt. 4 sign. This was before Rt. 66 existed. Paul & Tami Panczuk donated an original 1932 Standard map (the year the Odell Station opened) It will be encased in plastic. Dorothy Seratt asked for a permanent brochure holder at Odell. (discussion followed)

Member John Herder plans to ride his horse across Illinois Rt. 66 to help promote the next motor tour. He plans to arrive just as the tour ends. He'll need our planning help.

Marty suggested we support Hampton Inn by ordering a free card they offer and mentioning the Preservation Committee on it.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.



The Meramec barn near Hamel by Ed Hickey

Board Minutes

Submitted by Cathie Stefanovich

President Jeff LaFollette called the meeting to order at 10:40 a.m., January 16, 2001, in Lincoln. The first order of business was board members. Gretchen Wendt has resigned her Grundy County position. The board elected Lynn Bagdon to replace her. Marty Bilecki of Morris, in turn, was elected to replace Lynn as the Grundy County representative. Louis Vargo will replace Roger Berta as an at-large member and Bob Borowiak will take over from Paul Gleason as the Logan County representative. Roger's place on the Executive Committee was assigned to Jeff Geisler of Cook County.

President's Report: Jeff handed out a recap of the activities of his position. He also thanked Rich and Linda Henry for checking on the Trailnet signs. The board accepted his notes as submitted.

Treasurer's Report.: Marty said as that day, the treasury balance was \$ 15,675.78. No known bills were unpaid. A bill for a member's mileage expenses to a meeting in Springfield was presented, but not accepted because it did not have prior board approval. Marty then reported that Patty Waszak had closed her store in Joliet. The Association may still have up to \$5,800 worth of Association inventory at her place. At the last meeting, the Dixie had expressed in this merchandise. Any money received for it could be used to pay the cost of dinner at the upcoming Motor Tour. But we do not know its condition. Marty will pick up the merchandise and store it until a decision is made.

Membership: Marty and Cathie will be sending out the renewal membership applications this year. He discussed making the form clearer and more concise and passed around a sample. Most of his suggestions are reflected in the form on p. 15 of this newsletter and in the Membership News article on p.3. Renewing general members will get a static cling window sticker and business members will also get a decal. Hall of Famers will get membership cards and decals. In addition, the family membership category will be reinstated for a trial period of one year.

Motor Tour: Jeff passed out a Motor Tour progress report. He asked that other magazines and web sites put out info on our Tour.

The non-member fee for the Motor Tour this year will be raised from \$25 to \$40. Hopefully people going on the tour will see that by joining (\$15) they can go on the tour for \$25.

The banquet will be \$7.50 per person this year. The Association will pay the balance. This is a one-tour only price to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of Route 66.

The Macoupin County group in Carlinville will sell bricks from the town square this year. Blackburn College will be an official stop and there may be a tour of some Sears catalog homes.

The Benld Russian Orthodox Church will also be open.

Police for traffic control and parking are set. The Chamber of Commerce is all a "go," per board member Ollie Schwallenstecker.

The sample license plate is in. With the postage rate increase it will cost \$4 to mail this year - about 75 cents more than last year because of the postage increase. Jeff LaFollette noted that all the artwork was donated. He traded two sets of license plates and two t-shirts for it.

The tour will start at Grant Park. The board authorized John Miller to submit the application and pay the \$35 fee.

Finance Committee: Marty said now that we have money our focus should be on giving it back to those who need it. John Weiss submitted a letter requesting pins for Preservation Committee members as well as several items for the Odell station: a globe for a pump, signs, a second pump and station signs. He also asked that the Association help Odell pay off its debts related to the station and help the Towanda High School project on Route 66. After a lively discussion it was decided to give \$250 to Odell, \$600 to the Towanda project, and to purchase five signs at \$75 each, 100 pins at \$2.16 each, and the pump globe for \$85. However, the Finance Committee did not feel a second pump was needed at this time.

Meramec Caverns has sent \$500 to the preservation committee for work on the Hamel barn this April.

Newsletter: Tom Teague will edit and design the Spring and Summer issues. Jeff LaFollette will take over after that. Lincoln Printers will handle the mailing as well as the printing. Tom is aiming for a 16-pager. When possible, he asked that articles be sent to him by e-mail.

Jeff thanked Randy Smith for his 18 issues and four and a half years as newsletter editor.

Motor Tour Motels!

The following motels have set aside blocs of rooms for Association Motor Tour participants. For rates and addresses, call the motels or send a note to the Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Box 166, Springfield, IL 62704. Make your reservations early!

Friday Night, June 8

Red Roof Inn, Willowbrook, 800-733-7663
Fairfield Inn, Willowbrook, 630-789-6300
Baymont Inn, Willowbrook, 630-654-0077
Best Western-Burr Ridge, 630-325-2900

Saturday Night, June 9

Renaissance Hotel, Springfield, 217-544-8800
Hampton Inn, Springfield, 217-529-1100

Sunday Night, June 10

Comfort Inn, Edwardsville, 618-656-4900
Ramada Inn, Pontoon Beach, 618-797-2727
Best Western Camelot, Pontoon Beach, 618-931-2262
Holiday Inn Express, Pontoon Beach, 618-797-1200
Super 8, Pontoon Beach, 618-931-8808

Mother Road Dispatches

Hampton Inn to Pitch In

The Hampton Inn hotel chain has told Preservation Chairman John Weiss that it would like to help with the restoration of the Standard filling station in Odell. Hampton representative Melissa O'Brien said that word went out for nominations of historic sites the chain could help with. The program is called "adopt-a-landmark". Ms. O'Brien said that the Odell station was mentioned more than any other project nation wide.

In May, representatives of Hampton Inn will come to Odell to spend a day doing physical restoration work. They have also pledged a financial gift of between \$7,500 to \$10,000.

66

Hall of Famer to Pass Century Mark



Metha Jensen will become the first Hall of Famer to turn 100 with a party April 28 at Dwight Catholic Church parish hall on Route 17 in Dwight. The Tony Barron Orchestra will play from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Cards may be sent to Metha in care of Heritage Manor, East Mazon Ave., Dwight, IL 60420.

66

66's Diamond Jubilee in Albuquerque

Albuquerque promises Route 66 enthusiasts the royal treatment July 20-22 as the Duke City celebrates the road's Diamond Anniversary.

Most events will take place on the state fairgrounds on Old 66. The fun begins Friday, July 20, with an art show, a mariachi concert, a drive-in movie, Indian Village activities, a car and motorcycle show and a synchronized performance by Hardly Angels, a group of middle-aged women on Harley-Davidsons.

Saturday will also feature a Route 66 poetry reading, movies at the restored KiMo Theater, an authors and artists fair and the John Steinbeck Award Dinner and Dance. The sponsor for the last two events is the National Historic Route 66 Federation, David Knudson, executive director. Also that evening, *Route 66 Magazine* will sponsor a buffet and social for 66 fans.

July 22 events will include a 6.6 mile walk-a-thon, an arts and crafts fair and another performance by Hardly Angels.

Advance tickets will not be necessary for most events. However, people wishing to attend the Steinbeck Banquet should contact the Route 66 Federation at P.O. Box 423, Tujunga, CA 91043, phone 888-339-0794, or go online at www.national66.com. Tickets are \$39 a person. To pre-register for the *Route 66 Magazine* dinner, write to 326 W. Route 66, Williams, AZ 86046, call 520-635-4432, or go online at www.route66magazine.com. Tickets are \$10 a person.

66

Missouri 66 Picnic

Spend a leisurely afternoon and enjoy an old fashioned picnic April 21 at Route 66 State Park in Eureka, Missouri. Bring a blanket and a basketful of goodies and join the Route 66 State Park crew from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. This second annual event will feature live music, volleyball, marbles, gunny sack races and more. There will also be antique cars on display from area car clubs. For more information about the picnic, phone 636-938-7198.

66



Speaking in Plates: On John Weiss's new pick-up

Made in America: HOG Cruise on 66

by John Weiss

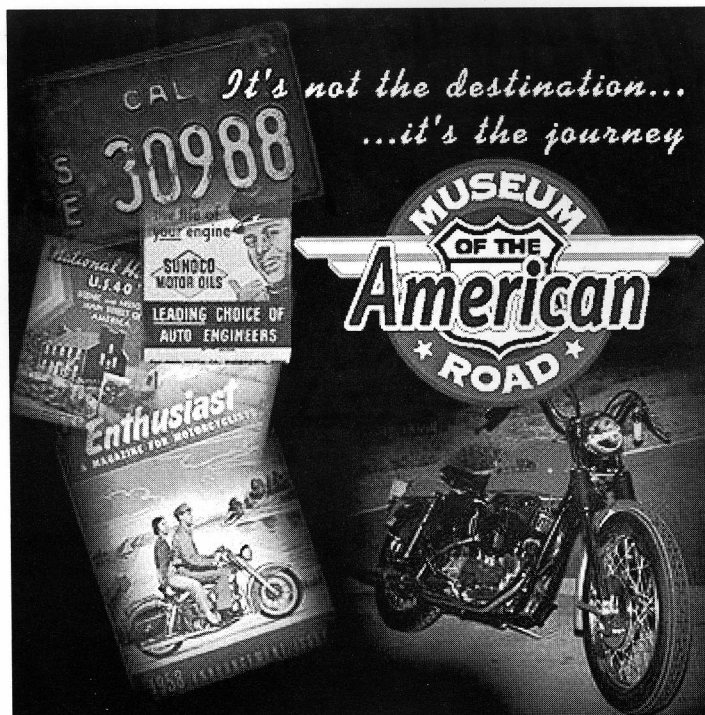
When 1,500 Harley-Davidson motorcycles cruise the Mother Road June 25-July 8 from Chicago to California, it will be the largest tour of all time along Route 66.

The Harley-Davidson Owners Group is sponsoring the run. Michael Wallis, author of *Route 66: The Mother Road*, and his wife, Suzanne, will lead and organize it. It will be their second Harley cruise on 66.

Harley owners from around the world will start gathering June 22 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois. On June 24 at noon, they'll hear a talk by Michael Wallis. He is calling this event the "Ultra-Stories" time. No one can tell a Route 66 story like Michael. He has a way of putting your imagination in high gear.

Representing Illinois at this event will be John and Lenore Weiss. John is the author of *Traveling the...New, Historic Route 66 of Illinois*. At 5 p.m. there will also be the first of daily mapping seminars.

The run itself begins on June 25. Riders will spend two days in Illinois. In this state and others, they will have the option of attending recommended events or striking out on their own. Various Route 66 notables will be on hand at each stop to speak and to help participants plan the next leg of their journey. In St. Louis on June 26, these notables will



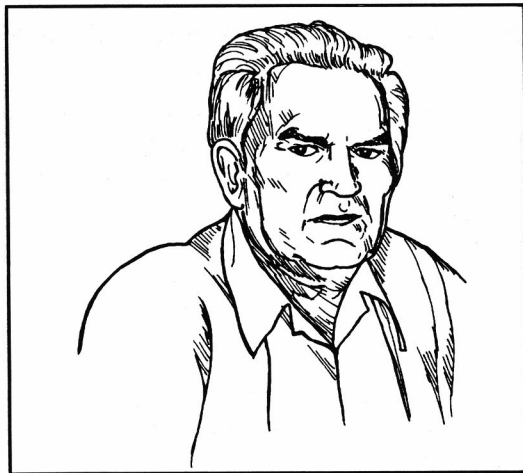
Harley-Davidson Road Museum in Delaware! Mike's Famous Harley-Davidson, a motorcycle dealer near Wilmington, Delaware, has opened a museum dedicated to the Harley and the American highway. Donations are being sought. Contact Jan Bell, museum director, at museum@mikesfamous.com

include author/photographer Shellee Graham and Jim Gilbert.

This is merely one of the many events taking place this year on Route 66 celebrating its 75th anniversary.

How Not to Cruise on 66

by Burt Parkinson as told to Ted & Marilyn Giovanazzi



Rossi's Park in Braidwood was the scene of a gangland shooting in the 1940s. It was located where the Com Ed power plant entrance now stands on old 66 Route 66 was known for

its houses of ill repute and slot machines controlled by men of shady character. A traveler coming up from the south pulled into Rossi's one night and rented a cabin. Next morning he headed out going north. Then suddenly from out of nowhere a car pulled up alongside his. There was machine gun fire. The

driver was killed. His car rolled over in a ditch. When police searched it, it was full of coin slugs with wire tied through holes in the middle. The driver had apparently been "slugging" the slots all the way from St. Louis. The men in the other car had come demanding their own peculiar kind of justice. A friend who occasionally slugged local machines gave up the pastime forever upon news of this.

Farewell to Friends

Hall of Famer Arline Winterland of Lexington passed away January 26 at her home. She and her husband Elmo were hosts of the Oasis Drive-In in Lexington.

Earlier in the month, Dorothy Schroeder passed away after a short illness. Her husband Ray is an original board member of the Association. He now lives at the Manor Care Center, 600 West Ogden Avenue in Hinsdale.

Hall of Famer Marian Rodino, whose family ran Rodino Square in Pontiac for many decades, took leave of this life recently, too.

We also regret the recent passing of Gladys Cutberth of Clinton, Oklahoma. Gladys' husband was Jack Cutberth, longtime president of the US 66 Association.

66 New Heritage Corridor

by John Weiss

On December 13, 2000, Governor George Ryan declared Route 66 to be the state's eleventh official Heritage Corridor. With this new title, Route 66 will receive at least six years of grant opportunities with technical and administrative aid from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.

The purpose is connect various attractions along the way to create a virtual strong of pearls effect—in essence, a linear community. Towns along 66 can help develop incentives and develop their own attractions. This program will not do the work for any given town. But it will give a great boost and opportunity for any and all who take advantage of it. If other states see the benefits and initiate their own heritage corridors, we can all join together for a Route 66 national heritage tourism destination.

Route 66 in Illinois has so much to offer tourists. I feel

confident in saying that we have more attractions of interest per mile than any other state. The problem is that not enough people are aware of this. The Illinois Route 66 Heritage program offers the opportunity to change all that.

When Route 66 began in 1926, it didn't take long for it to develop a personality of its own and actually become the attraction. Postcards would exclaim, "Here we are on Route 66!" The corridor program should help create this excitement once again.

The Route 66 Association of Illinois strongly supports the heritage program. I am proud to have represented the Association on the program's steering committee, along with Rich Henry. But the credit goes to numerous people and tourism organizations in many cities along the way.

Note: In 1927, the Rialto Theater in Joliet showed its first talking film, *The Jazz Singer* with Al Jolson. The first words the audience heard were, "Wait a minute, wait a minute! You ain't heard nothing yet!" Could it be that Al was referring to the road out front, Route 66? I bet he was!

66 Also Road of Charity

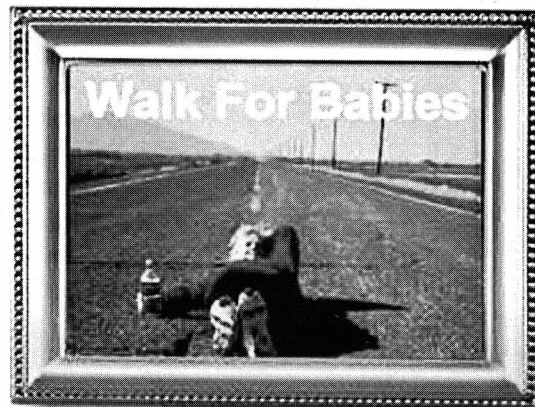
For a Michigan grandmother and a Tennessee truck enthusiast, Route 66 this year is the road of charity.

Billie Gardner started from the Santa Monica Pier on New Year's Day on a walk to Chicago. She'll finish her journey in early June. Her goal is to raise money to prevent and treat child birth defects. Our association's corresponding secretary, Marilyn Pritchard, reports that Billie will be in Litchfield May 22, Springfield May 24, Lincoln May 25, Bloomington May 29, Pontiac May 31, Joliet June 5 and Chicago June 7.

Taking the opposite tack, Scott Sensing plans to spend six weeks driving a restored 1952 Chevy pick-up from Chicago to San Bernardino. He'll start around August 1. He drove the same truck last year to Alaska and back for the American Cancer Society. This year he's driving for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. He plans to reach California in mid-

September.

Both travelers have personal reasons for their trips. Billie's grandson was born with spina bifida. Scott's father died of cancer. Both have wonderful websites. Billie's, at <http://www.walkforbabies.com/main.htm>, features pictures and her daily journal. Scott's, at <http://www.bigstep.com>, has great pictures and a radio interview.



Route 66 Association of Illinois Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Illinois County (if applicable): _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Interests in Route 66: _____

How I can help: _____

Send address changes and questions to Membership at the address above or e-mail changes to teague66@eosinc.com

Annual Dues

General: \$15

Family: \$25

Business: \$30

Foreign: \$35

Sustaining: \$100

U.S. funds only, please

\$10 fee for returned checks

Send to:

Membership

Route 66 Assn. of Illinois

2743 Veterans Pkwy., Room 166

Springfield, IL 62704

Membership runs May 1 - April 30

Odell Station Memories

by Gerte Close as told to Ted and Marilyn Giovanazzi



When Bob and I owned the station, it became the local drop-off point for all unwanted cats and dogs. It was like an unofficial animal welfare league. The animals would take up residency inside as well as in autos behind the station. When cat litters became excessive, local farmers would usually take them and use them for pest control. I remember drive one particular mother cat and her litter to a farm over two miles away. The next day they were all back at the station. The mother cat had worked all night, carrying her kittens back one-by-one.

At one time the station also had a pony. We purchased it from a local farmer for \$1. It was a present to our daughter Lynn. She named it Firefly. We kept it on a long tether at the rear of the station when Lynn and her friends were not riding her. Once during a bad hailstorm, I brought the pony into the work area of the station and tied her to the workbench. During the night, she apparently became frightened and tore the bench loose from the wall. In the morning we were greeted with quite a mess. Soon after that we returned Firefly to the farmer.

Digital photo by Ed Hickey

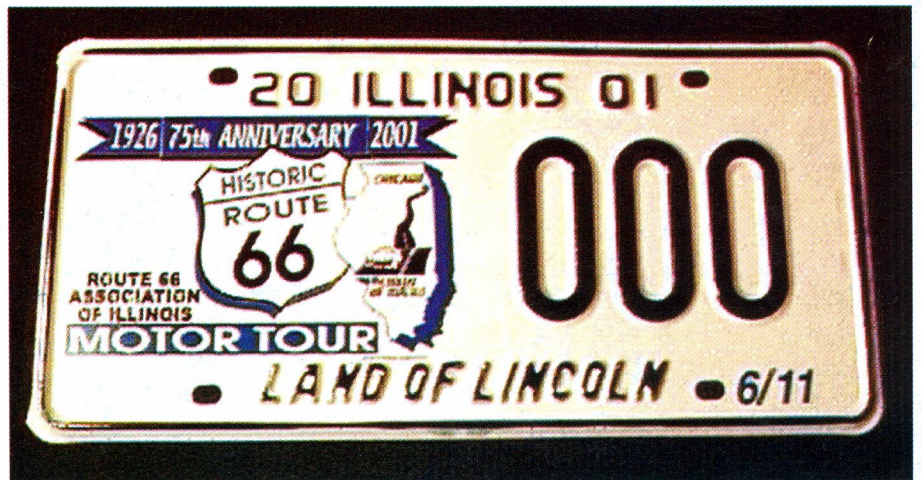
Get Special Motor Tour Plates

You still have time to purchase a set of Special Event License Plates for the 2001 Motor Tour, commemorating the 75th Anniversary of Route 66. There are still sets available to reserve. But don't wait too long; when they're gone, they're gone!

If you're interested in purchasing a set of license plates, please send me a check or money order for \$30 payable to the Route 66 Association of Illinois. Use my address from page 2 of this newsletter. If you wish to display your plates, you also need to send a copy of your CURRENT vehicle registration, and write your driver's license number on the registration copy. These are legal license plates and can be displayed from April 13 to June 11, 2001. You can display them on passenger cars and B-Trucks, but not on cars with antique plates. If you decide

not to display them, then include a note that says "not for display."

Don't miss out! Get your set of 75th anniversary Route 66 Association of Illinois commemorative license plates. If you have any questions, please write or send an e-mail.



Route 66 Association of Illinois
2743 Vetertans Parkway, #166
Springfield, IL 62704

Presorted Standard U.S. Postage PAID Lincoln, IL Permit No. 66

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

THE NEWS

SUMMER 2001



FOUR BROTHERS, ONE PROFESSION P. 4

HAMEL BARN SIGN RESTORED, p.8

RANDY SMITH TAKES THE ELEVATOR P.12

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN

Officers and Board Members

The Route 66 Association of Illinois is a not-for-profit organization. Its purpose is to preserve, promote and help people enjoy the road in this state. Officers and board members are available at most reasonable times to answer questions and hear comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them when you need to. The date to the right of each person's name is when their term expires.

President

Jeff LaFollette, 10-01
2351 Highway 130
New Liberty, IA 52765
563-893-6653
E-Mail: Ajon66@aol.com

Vice President

Bill Przbylski, 10-02
24156 S. Kings Rd.
Crete, IL 60417
708-672-7937

Treasurer

Martin Blitstein, 10-02
3033 Bob-O-Link Rd.
Flossmoor, IL 60422
708-957-4598
E-Mail: blitz66@chicagonet.net

Secretary

Cathie Stevanovich, 10-01
3033 Bob-O-Link Rd.
Flossmoor, IL 60422
708-958-4598
E-Mail: cathies@juno.com

Corresponding Secretary

Marilyn Pritchard, 10-01
601 W. Reynolds
Pontiac, IL 61764
815-844-6937
E-Mail: durelle@fcg.net

Preservation Committee

John Weiss, Chairman
21149 Hillside
Frankfort, IL 60423
815-469-5219
E-Mail: KAYO66@aol.com

Newsletter, Co-Founder
Tom Teague
1208 W. Edwards
Springfield, IL 62704
217-787-8839
E-Mail: teague66@eosinc.com

Board Members

Jeff Geisler, Cook, 10-01
814 W. 61st St.
LaGrange Highlands, IL 60525
708-354-8746
E-Mail: Route66Railfan@aol.com

Lynn Bagdon, DuPage, 10-02
P.O. Box 313
Aurora, IL 60507
630-531-4577
E-Mail: lulupic66@aol.com

Larry Boyd, Will, 10-01
733 Fairlane Dr.
Joliet, IL 60435-5155
815-725-2457
E-Mail: Boydgrt@aol.com

Marty Bilecki, Grundy, 10-01
4200 Bargo Lane
Morris, IL 60450
815/941-3312

Margaret Hettwer, Livingston, 10-02
318 E. Elk St.
Odell, IL 60460
815-998-2219

C.J. Beeler, McLean, 10-02
2 Canterbury Court
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-874-2832

Bob Borowiak, Logan, 10-01
711 Broadway.
Lincoln, IL 62656
217/732-3121

Buz Waldmire, Sangamon, 10-02
2935 S. 6th St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-525-1992

Rich Henry, Montgomery, 10-01
Old Rt. 66 & Madison Ave.
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-5655
E-Mail: route66@midwest.net

Oliver Schwallenstecker, 10-02
Macoupin
620 E. Warren St., Box 477
Bunker Hill, IL 62014
618-585-3081
E-Mail: ollie@internet-stat.com

Linda Henry, Madison, 10-02
Old Rt. 66 & Madison Ave.
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-5655
E-Mail: route66@midwest.net

Wilton Rinkel, St. Clair, 10-02
5539 State Rt. 157 North
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-656-1625

At-Large Board Members

Louis Vargo, 10-01
14911 Richmond Ave
Posen, IL 60469
708/339-3640

Duke Cartwright, 10-02
407 Pasadena Ave.
Crest Hill, IL 60435
815-726-3574
E-Mail: dukecartwright@Mediaone.net

Chester Henry, 10-01
910 N. East St.
Leroy, IL 61752-1231
309-962-5361
E-Mail: nhenry@leroy2.k12.il.us

Marie Jibben, 10-02
215 Lawnridge Dr.
Creve Coeur, IL 61610
309-694-4141
MAJ66@earthlink.net

John Miller, 10-01
14828 San Francisco Ave.
Posen, IL 60469
708-389-3823
E-Mail: kixonrte66@hotmail.com

Executive Committee:
The officers, plus Linda Henry
and Jeff Geisler

Association Website:
<http://www.il66assoc.org>

Publication Information: The Association publishes *The 66 News* in March, June September & December as a service to its members, other people and related organizations. Contributions are welcome, but we do not pay. However, authors retain all copyright privileges. Submit all stories, photos and ads at least six weeks prior to publication. Address contributions and inquiries to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704. Advertising Rates: \$100 for a whole page, \$60 for a half page, \$40 for a quarter page and \$25 for a business card ad. Send camera ready copy only.

Priming the Pump at Odell

By John Weiss

The gravity flow visual pump donated by Bill Shea of Springfield is now installed at the Standard Oil Station in Odell. After some delay, the job of restoring the 12-foot relic became my responsibility. I had absolutely no idea of how to do it. But this is how you learn.

I began last fall, cleaning and painting one piece at a time. Throughout winter, I made some missing parts, repaired others and located two other parts at swap meets. I did not want to use any more reproduction parts than necessary—or spend unnecessary money.

Come Spring, I was anxious to see what the pump was going to look like. Up to this point it was just a pile of pieces that needed to be assembled.

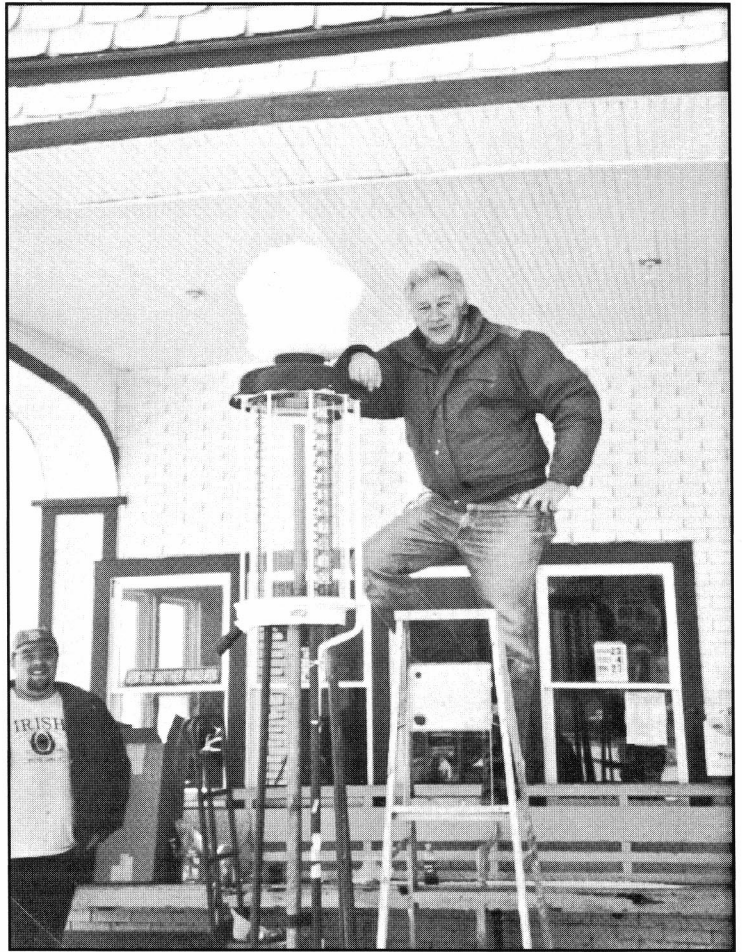
On March 10, Dorothy Seratt met me at the station. Together we ran the necessary electrical wiring. It was extremely cold and windy, but we were determined. Some tourists stopped by and that kept our enthusiasm up.

The weather was predicted to be pleasant on March 17. So on the 16th I loaded up all these parts to take advantage of the nice weather, but it snowed instead. That wasn't enough to stop me and my dedicated crew, though. They consisted of my wife Lenore, Dorothy Seratt and her son, Nate.

With the wind chill about zero, Lenore and Dorothy kept Nate and me working with encouraging words from inside the heated car. This cold would not keep us from our goal, they would tell us.

When we were about halfway finished, a truck hauling a car on a trailer pulled up. Just by luck, it was our trusty sign painter, Randy Wierzgac. Soon we had him working, too. He mentioned how cold it was, but we pretended not to hear him.

In spite of the weather, we completed our task. The pump is a Bennett 810. It is topped off with a lit-up crown and light that also shines down into the glass cylinder. The pump lights up when the string of lights on the building are turned on. That is



John Weiss aloft, Nate Seratt down to earth

how it was so many years ago.

My thanks go to Bill Shea for the donation, and to Nate and Randy for their help. And let's not forget the cheerleaders, Lenore and Dorothy.

When you get the chance, come see our newest addition.

Welcome New Members

The Route 66 Association of Illinois welcomed 18 new members through March of this year. They included one lifetime member, one family member, two business members, and three from other states. Together, they bring our total membership to 822. We extend a right hand in greeting and fellowship to: Steve Bowne of Kingstwe, VA; Donald Clark of Batavia; Dzinea Transportation Systems of Matteson; Gerald Dnwonkiewicz of Evergreen Park; Philip Edwards of Normal; James Fleischman of Palatine; Don Ford of Pontiac; **the Village of Hamel (lifetime)**; John Henske of Litchfield; Robert Killackey of New Lenox; Tim Masinick of Elburn; Robert McClurg of Towanda; Wayne Newman of Deerfield; Jay Parchman of Memphis, TN; Carol and Buzz Roettger of Orland Park; the Southwestern

Illinois Tourism and Convention and Visitors Bureau of Fairview Heights; James Thole of Manchester, MO, and Ralph Tosti of Hinsdale.



Historical Road House

Est. 1928
8767 St. Rt. #4
Staunton, IL 62088
(618) 637-2951



Biker Friendly

From St. Louis:
take I55 North to Rt. 4
Left on Rt. 4
Approx. 2 miles on left

Homade Pizza Salads Appetizers
Shaded Beer Garden Rural Location
Softball Volleyball Billiards Darts

Four Brothers, One Profession

New Hall of Fame Members for 2001

To celebrate the road's Diamond Anniversary, the Association will induct a bumper crop of new members into its Route 66 Hall of Fame this year. They are the Watt Brothers Drug Stores in Springfield, the Standard Oil Station in Odell, the Coliseum Ballroom in Benld and DeCamp Junction near Staunton. Each has been family-owned and operated. Three are still in business while the fourth, the Odell station, is under restoration. All tell their stories of hard work, ingenuity and human character. Some are darker than others, but they're all on Route 66.

Induction ceremonies will take place June 9 following the motor tour banquet. The Hall of Fame, located at Dixie Truckers Home in McLean, will also have displays honoring the new members.

Watt Brothers Drug Stores, Springfield

Nominated by Susan Watt

John Watt III still remembers where terramycin was kept in his father's first drug store at Ninth Street (Route 66) and North Grand.

"You had to go in the restroom, sit down on the stool, and reach for it," he said. "Otherwise you'd never find it."

That's why the work and storage area in the elder Watt's new store, which he built across the street in 1961, took up half



Bob Watt receives his certificate from Noble Puffer of the state Department of Registration. Watching on are his brothers and fellow pharmacists--David, Val and John Watt Jr.

the floor space. Light wood counters with pink tops and a bank of windows up front made the new place look even more expansive. Watt would enjoy all that elbow room until his death in 1997. His son, John III, now owns and runs it. The old store, which he'd opened in 1938, became a KFC.

After John Jr., his three brothers also opened pharmacies. Val bought an older store at South Grand and Pasfield in 1944. This is on the original 1926-1930 alignment of Route 66 through Springfield. Dave came home from pharmacy corps service in World War II and opened a store in an old Shell Station at 11th and Ash in 1947. Bob was the last to go into business for himself, opening at Fifth and Laurel around 1951. This was on the longtime city route of 66.

Each store was independently owned. But they had the same name: Watt Brothers. And they shared a common approach to business, as voiced by John Jr.: "Know your medicine and know your customers."

Unlike their brothers, neither Val nor Bob ever expanded. They both had soda fountains, but they always stayed small. Maybe that's why Bob's store, the smallest of all, was the first to go. The most sensitive to changing traffic patterns and one-way streets, he had to close in the early '60s



Plenty of work space and modern equipment marked John Jr.'s new store in 1961

when 66 was widened to become Business 55. People could pull into his parking lot, but the traffic wouldn't let them back out. He spent the rest of his career as a hospital pharmacist, retiring about five years ago.

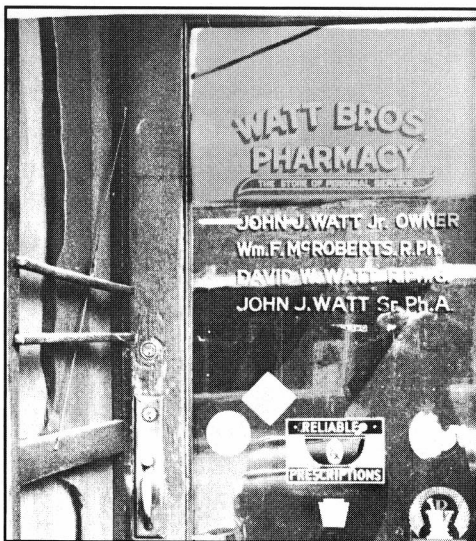
As a teen, John III had worked part time at his father's store. At college, he studied pharmacy. Then he came home around 1963 to join his dad.

"I never really considered doing anything else," he said. "It seemed interesting. And I enjoyed working with my father."

John and his dad would work together for most of the next 34 years. Val retired and sold his store in the 1970s. Dave retired, but still works parttime for John III at the 9th & North Grand store. It is the only Watt Brothers left.

"We have a fine, loyal customer base," John said. The store still has his father's first customer, Noble Bannon. And when Dave's store closed, all but a few clients took their business north, too. Chain store expansion has raised pharmacists' salary in general and created a talent drain. But John III's remarkably stable work force shields him from this trend. His Uncle Dave is 87. His youngest pharmacist, cousin Barbara Christiansen, is in her fifties. Red Camp, a pharmacy technician, is 82.

Competition has the independents scrambling. John said—looking for angles and niches. One of his is an inventory of drugs that few other outlets carry. He gets several calls a week for them from hospitals, as well as from chain stores that don't carry them. His wife Kay manages a line of bulk herbals,



Front door of John Jr.'s original store



Interior of John Jr.'s new store in 1961

such as St. John's Wort, for the store. For the past three years, he's rented out a front corner of the store to an antique dealer. As in his father's days, he has several racks of magazines whose subjects range from organic gardening to varmint hunting. And he offers delivery service—something the chains don't. Today he says his drivers deliver as many as 25 orders every afternoon in Dave's old neighborhood alone.

John could sell out nicely to a chain, but he'd rather service be a lifestyle than a product. Until further notice, that means business as usual. But he wonders how long service and a loyal customer base can carry any independent. Every Monday through Saturday at 9 p.m., though, he adds another day to the total.

The Standard Oil Station, Odell

Nominated by Jeff LaFollette

In 1932, Patrick O'Donnell bought a small plot of land on the southwest side of Odell and built a Standard Oil Gasoline Station. He used a Standard design called "house with a canopy" so he would blend in with the neighborhood. But there were ten gas stations in Odell at that time. Situated on a curve and a rise,



the Odell's station had a natural advantage over the others. But to attract even more attention, O'Donnell had "Standard Oil Company" painted on the roof shingles. In the late thirties, he also added two repair bays on the north side of the station.

Over the years, O'Donnell leased the station to a succession of managers. They sold Standard, then Phillips, then Sinclair products. This is how that distinctive Sinclair sign came to hang from the canopy. When O'Connell died in 1957, Robert Close, who'd leased the station since 1952, bought it at auction for \$1,550. He continued to sell gas there until 1967. But he'd already been bypassed by a four-lane version of Route 66. Before long, I-55 would put him even further off the mainstream. So he stopped oil and gas sales and operated the station as an auto repair shop until he retired in the mid 1980s.

Over the next dozen years, the station gradually deteriorated. The roof leaked badly. The southwest corner sunk into the ground. Architecture experts declared it not worth fixing. But with its distinctive profile and location, station remained one of the most visited and photographed gas stations on all of 66—decrepit or not.

Finally, with the leadership and elbow grease of our association's Preservation Committee, the station's fortunes took a turn. In 1997, committee members got it listed on the National

Register of Historic Places. In 1998, in a perilous operation, they put a large blue tarp on its roof to slow down the leakage. They also helped arrange the station's sale to the Village of Odell. The Village, in turn, created a not-for-profit corporation to manage the station. It also contributed \$10,000 so repairs could begin.

The Preservation Committee organized poker runs in 1999 and 2000 that raised more than \$14,000 to refurbish the station. With all volunteer labor, its members repaired and re-shingled the roof last year. They even painted "Standard Oil Company" on the roof again. Next they repaired and repainted the station's shingled siding. This year's project is the interior.

Like Route 66, the Standard Oil Station in Odell has simply refused to die. That's because, like the highway, it encapsulated its time and place so well. Through a blend of government, corporate and robust popular support, it will continue to stand proudly for many years to come.



The Coliseum Ballroom in Benld has survived a storied, often notorious past and is now aging gracefully as an antique mall. Brothers Ben and Dominic Tarro built it in 1924 on what would become Route 66's early path through the area. It had a 10,000-square foot dance floor, a balcony around three sides of the interior and—even though it was Prohibition—three bars. A federal grand jury indicted Dominic in 1930. But before his trial, fishermen found his body in a river near Springfield, weighed down by concrete blocks.

Dominic's widow Marie and his daughter Joyce continued to operate the Coliseum for many years. Tommy Dorsey, Guy Lombardo, Wayne King, Benny Goodman played there many times, often favoring it over St. Louis. Later the Tarros tried booking national acts such as Fats Domino, Louis Armstrong and Chuck Berry. Finally they settled into a stable practice of booking mostly local bands. Joyce Tarro was a hard-nosed businesswoman who often acted as her own bouncer. She often took the ballroom receipts home on Saturday night and kept them there until the bank opened on Monday. That may explain why she was murdered at her home early one Sunday in 1976.

After Joyce's death, the Coliseum stood vacant for many years. In the late 1990s, however, it reopened as an antique mall. Inside and out, the building has changed little over the years. The balcony and dance floor are still intact, but now they are filled with antique booths. So are the former bar areas. And on the stage where so many bands used to play, decorations now hang.

DeCamp Junction Roadhouse

Nominated by Several

DeCamp Junction was originally a small settlement south of Staunton. Nearby were a small coal mine and a rail switching location. All that's left now is the roadhouse. Originally, it was a private home built from a Montgomery Ward kit. It stood on the other side of 66 from where it is now. But in 1931, Alois and Elnora Duda bought it and moved it across the road. There



Clockwise, from top left: the Ballroom today, DeCamp Junction then, DeCamp today, Odell Station today. Pix by Ollie Schwallenstecker.

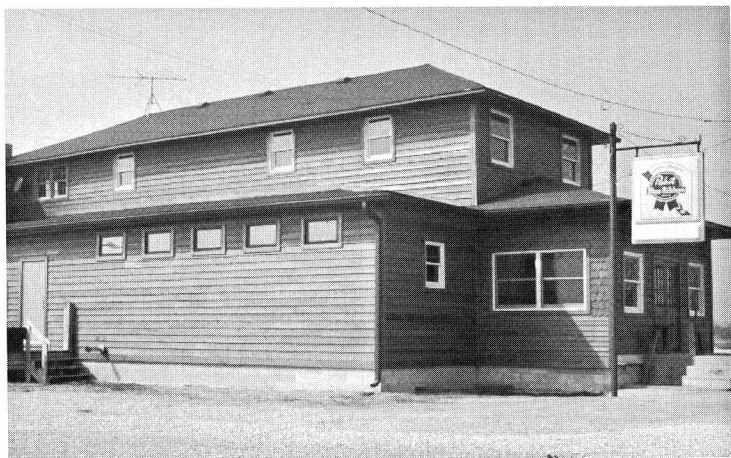
they added a north wing, a south wing and upstairs living quarters. In the original home, they removed partitions to create a dance floor. Then they re-opened as a restaurant.

Alois' brother-in-law, Faust Godio, installed the roadhouse's original bird's-eye maple booths. He may also be the person who installed a secret compartment behind the trim of one of the doors. Alois' brother, Melvin Duda, opened a gas station north of the roadhouse in the late 1930s. In time, they also built two tourist cabins.

The Duda family operated the roadhouse until 1953. It has

since had several other owners. The current proprietors, Jim and Pat Moultrie, have refinished the booths, cleaned the tin ceiling and done other work to retain the building's original character.

One of the roadhouse's most memorable moments came in the 1930s when a large black sedan rolled up out front. Several gangsters burst in, guns drawn, ordered everyone outside and told them to lay spread eagle on the ground. The thieves took cash, slot machines, and the Dudas' private gun collection.



Fortunately, they harmed no one. This included five-year-old Leroy Duda, who hid under a feather mattress upstairs.

Elnora Duda, now 91, lives with Leroy in Staunton. Her niece Helen Rademacher, who worked at the roadhouse for many years, lives in Mt. Olive.

Motor Tour Itinerary

There's still time to be part of the 2001 motor tour—just join us anywhere along the way. To get a passport, goody bag and the other benefits of full participation, look for the registration table and sign up.

Friday, June 8

Pre-Tour Event and Registration- J.C.'s Pub and Ristorante 6550 Joliet Road, McCook, IL , 6:00-9:00 PM. Register, pick up your goody bag, and purchase motor tour shirts here. Order off the menu.

Saturday, June 9

Chicago- Depart from Grant Park at 7:30. Passport Stop.

White Fence Farm- Registration, goody bag pick up and motor tour shirts on sale here. Arrival time from Chicago at 9:00. We will depart as a group at 9:30. Passport Stop.

Diamond- 10:30-11:00. Passport Stop

Pontiac- 12:00-1:30. Lunch Stop in the downtown area. Passport Stop

McLean- 2:30-3:00. Route 66 Hall of Fame. Passport Stop.

Atlanta- 3:15-4:00 . Passport Stop.

Springfield- Check in at your motel by 5 p.m. The Hall of Fame banquet is at 7:00 in the Grand Ballroom of the Renaissance Hotel, 7th and Adams. Passport Sticker here. Hall of Fame Ceremonies at 8:00. **NO ADMITTANCE WITHOUT BANQUET TICKETS! They must be purchased in advance.**

Sunday, June 10

Springfield- Breakfast on your own. Depart from Heritage House Smorgasbord, 3861 S. 6th St at 9:30. No sticker

Auburn- Red Brick Road. 10:00-10:30. Passport Stop.

Carlville- 11:15-12:00. Passport Stop.

Benld- 12:30-2:00 Lunch Stop. Tour the Coliseum Ballroom, and Russian Orthodox Church. Passport Stop.

DeCamp Junction- 2:30-3:00. Passport Stop.

Edwardsville- 3:30-? Post-Tour festivities in the downtown area during the Festival 66 event. Passport Stop.

Monday, June 11: Suggested Side Trips

Chain of Rocks Bridge- 9:00-11:00. Walk or drive across the bridge.

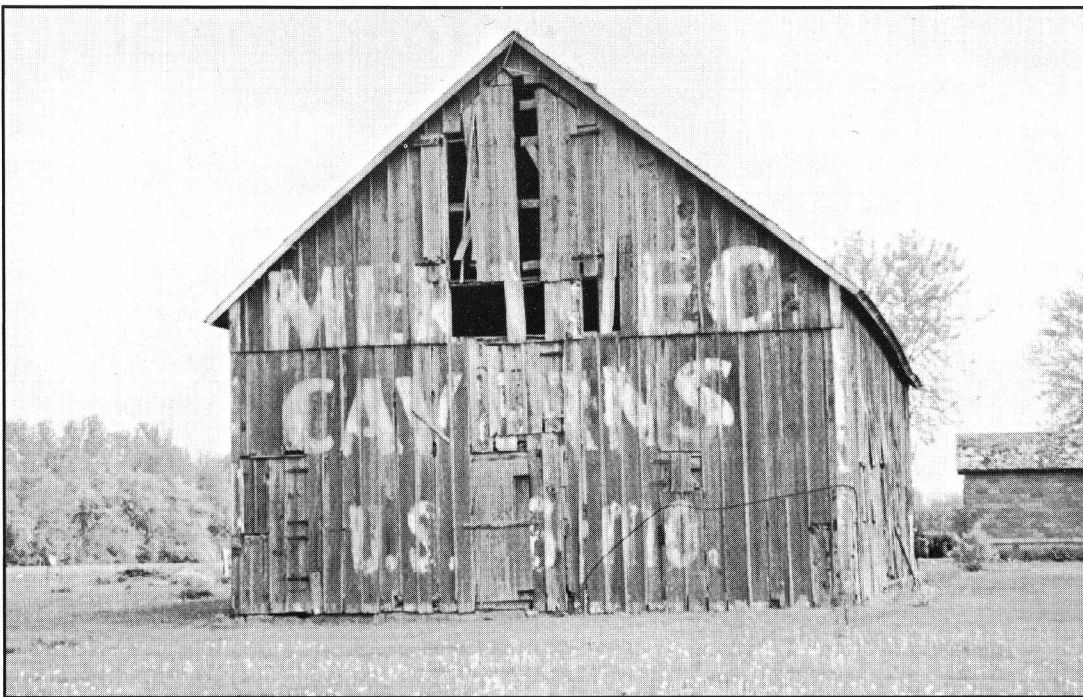
Shell Oil Museum in Wood River- Museum will be open from 8:00-12:00.

Route 66 State Park off I-44 near Eureka, MO- Open at 10:00AM.

Ted Drewes Frozen Custard 6726 Chippewa Ave St. Louis, MO- Open at 11:00 AM.

Please drive carefully and try to stay on the general schedule!

**Be sure to visit
The Route 66 Hall of Fame
at Dixie Truckers Home in McLean
"The museum that never closes"**

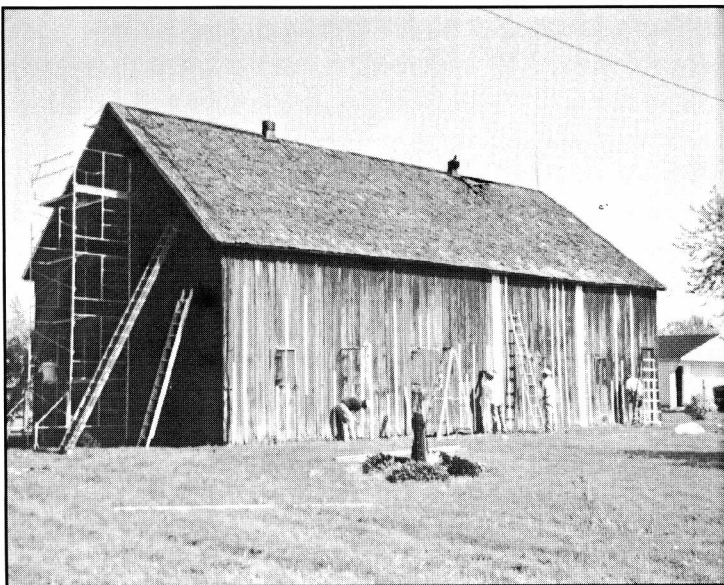


Committee Holds Barnraising

by John Weiss, Preservation Committee Chairman

It was raining at 8 a.m. as my crew of preservation volunteers arrived at the barn. "Oh my God!" was the first comment I heard, followed by "It can't be done" and "Not in just one weekend." Up to this point my crew had only seen the photos I had furnished. Reality set in when faced with this enormous 100-year-old structure.

My Saturday crew of 20 consisted of a pregnant woman, two fellows who've had heart operations, a few folks in the 30's age bracket, but most were over 50 and 60. Many had taken off work on Friday to be sure to be there on time. I never had any doubts about what this group could accomplish. I had seen them in action in the past. We had all traveled over 200 miles to get here. We were not about to turn back now.



Two extremely important people to this project were Paul Wendt, the master carpenter whose job it was to figure out how to do this, and Randy Wierzgac, our extraordinary sign painter. Who needs Bob Willa or Rembrandt when you have these two!

Our scaffolding and ladders had been delivered and were ready for assembly. Piece by piece, Paul showed us how to assemble this stack of metal. Soon it was ready.

We had to completely renaill all the old brittle boards and replace all the missing pieces. The structure is about 30 feet wide, 100 feet long and 35 to 40 feet high. Within an hour the sun was shining and we were all busy working. There was no stopping us now. Our plan was to do all the structural repairs on Saturday and paint the black

background for the sign. That would leave Sunday for lettering the sign and painting the side of the barn.

Cars and trucks on I-55 would beep and people would wave as they went whizzing by. Some local newspapers came to see what we were doing. One reporter said he didn't even know this barn existed. He returned in the afternoon to check out our progress.

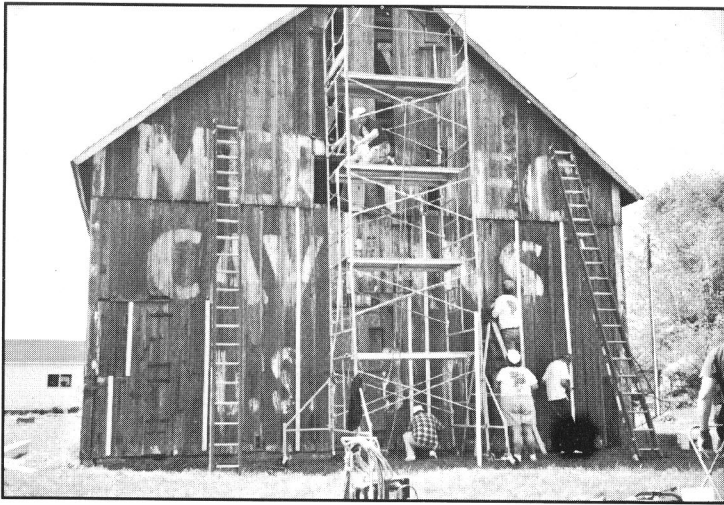
Soon lunch arrived. It was donated by DeCamp Junction of Staunton. But by now everyone was into their designated project. No one wanted to stop. "I'll be there in a minute," they would say. "I just want to finish this part." Finally all were relaxing and enjoying the fabulous buffet.

Now we could stand back and see what had been accomplished so far. "By gosh, maybe we can do this!" As I looked around, I couldn't help feeling so very proud about this group of people. Instead of sitting around or playing golf, they were preserving history for the enjoyment of others.

A few more people arrived to help, such as Randy's brother, Doug. He drove a couple of hundred miles, got out of the van and began working immediately.

We did it! By the time we stopped on Saturday, all the carpentry had been finished. Randy and Doug decided to stay and do a little lay out work of the lettering. It was important to Randy that the letters be exactly as they were originally. Many of us then headed to DeCamp Junction for a well-deserved cold one. We were also invited to stay and have dinner for free. Many of us took them up on this generous offer.

Lenore and I drove back to the barn to see how it looked. Surprise! Randy and Doug had painted the first letters on the barn. It now read CAVE.



Sunday morning started clear and bright. Many folks went to church to give thanks and pray for the strength to do one more day.

A few more volunteers showed up to help. Those that couldn't make it on Saturday were eager to help on Sunday. One was only 13 years old. She and her mother made the 200-mile trip to give six generous hours.

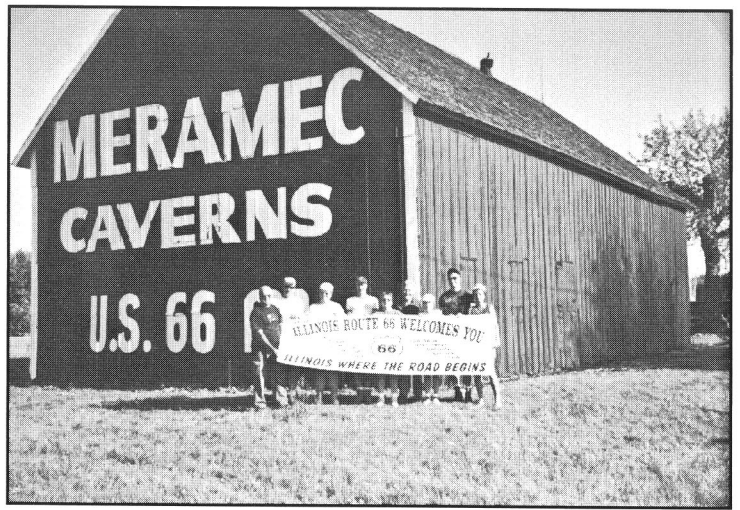
We painted the barn with a spray gun, but the letters had to be painted by hand. The barn board was so dry that even over the black base coat the letters required three coats of white paint. Adding to the problem were the old batten strips between each board. This was a slow, tedious part of the project. Not everyone was able to climb the scaffold to fill in the high letters. Those that could, went up to do the top. All other workers were invited to fill in the lower letters and numbers. Now everyone could brag that they helped paint.

By 5 p.m. on Sunday the job was completely finished. Randy dated the lower left corner while we all went to get our cameras.

At this point I cannot come up with a word that clearly explains what it looked like. "WOW!" says it all. It was only yesterday that some thought were were crazy. But look at it now!

It's amazing how the aches and pains disappear after such an accomplishment. I did not hear one person say they regretted volunteering. For those of you who did not participate in this project, you have missed out on a feeling of great pride. Contact me if you would like to be part of the Route 66 Preservation Committee.

Our thanks go to the **Rental Service Corporation** of Edwardsville for furnishing thecaffolding and ladders. **Wendt Construction Company** of West Chicago furnished the paint spray equipment and the power nail



gun. Without their support, we could not have succeeded. We also thank **DeCamp Junction** for the fabulous food on Saturday. Many others provided soda, water, coffee and snacks. We thank them all for their generous support.

The Workers—Be sure to pat each of these people on the back. I am very proud to have them as my friends. They are Marilyn and Ted Giovanazzi, Lenny and Dolores Scinto, Paul and Gretchen Wendt, John and Kathy Miller, Dorothy Seratt, Roe Abshire, Lenore Weiss, Jeff and Annette LaFollette, Randy and Doug Wierzgac, Marge and Jack Hettwer, Lou and Rosie Vargo, Jennifer Brown, Amber Szejman, Shellee Graham, Ron Warnick, Emily Priddy and yours truly, John Weiss.

The Association's **NEXT BOARD AND GENERAL MEETING** are on Sunday, July 8, at the Renaissance Center on Old 66 in downtown Joliet, starting at 10:30. Expect plenty of reports on all the exciting tours heading down the Mother Road this summer.



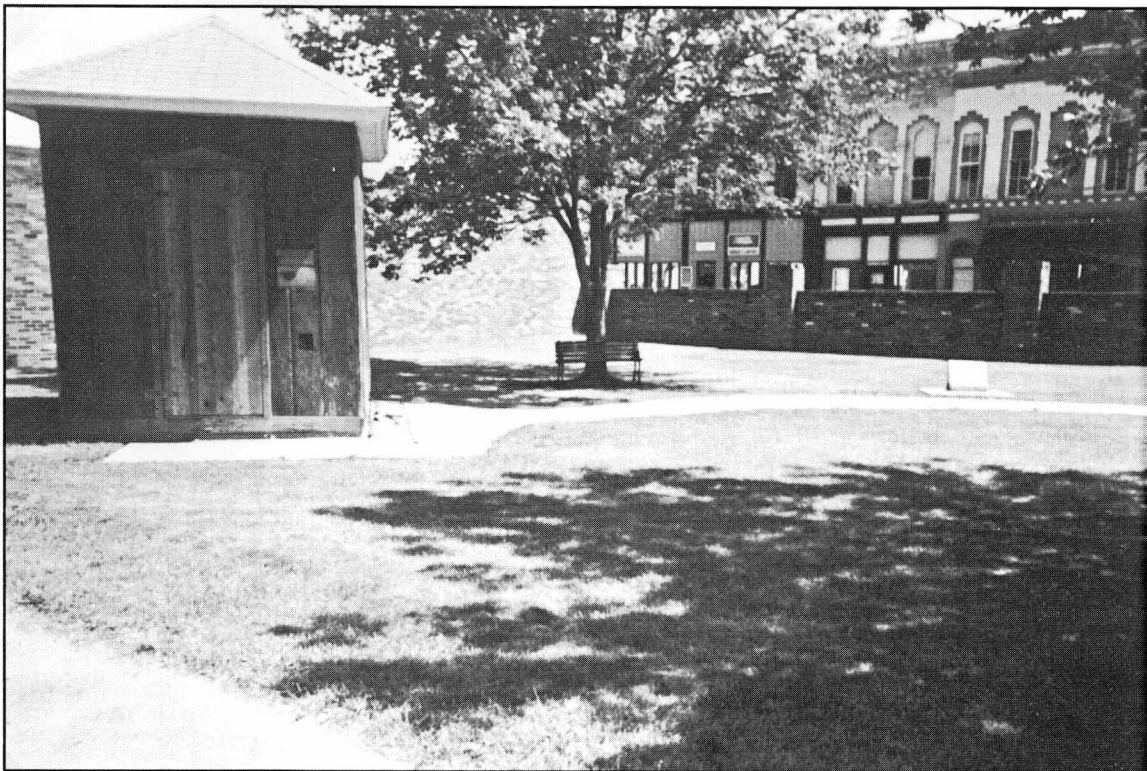
Mother Road Dispatches

New 66 Park in Atlanta for Tour

The brick-walled lot at the northwest corner of Arch (Old 66) and Race Streets in Atlanta has been donated to the city and is now called Atlanta Route 66 Park. A new walk has been poured and the old ticket office building from the Atlanta Fair has been placed on grounds. The Atlanta Fair was held from 1860 through 1929 and was considered one of the best in Illinois. Volunteers are repairing and painting the office. Hopefully, when it becomes the Atlanta Information

Center, volunteers will also staff it. Other plans call for a mural featuring Route 66 and old Atlanta buildings to be painted on the side of Charles and Mae's Tavern, which forms one boundary of the park.

The park is directly north of the Atlanta Library and west of the library annex. This is where the Association's 1998 motor tour stopped. It will be a stop this year, too, from 3:15-4 p.m.



on Saturday, June 9. The Atlanta Band will be on hand to entertain. Refreshments will be served and other attractions and businesses will be open. We also hope to have a couple of other surprises for 66-ers.

Be sure to stop and visit with us during the 75th anniversary tour of Route 66. More information will be in the tour passport. Atlanta is looking forward to seeing you on June 9!

Illinois Motor Tour Motels

These motels have set aside blocs of rooms for Association Motor Tour participants. For rates and addresses, call them ASAP!

Friday Night, June 8

Red Roof Inn, Willowbrook, 800-733-7663
Fairfield Inn, Willowbrook, 630-789-6300
Baymont Inn, Willowbrook, 630-654-0077
Best Western-Burr Ridge, 630-325-2900

Saturday Night, June 9

Renaissance Hotel, Springfield, 217-544-8800
Hampton Inn, Springfield, 217-529-1100

Sunday Night, June 10

Comfort Inn, Edwardsville, 618-656-4900
Ramada Inn, Pontoon Beach, 618-797-2727
Best Western Camelot, Pontoon Beach, 618-931-2262
Holiday Inn Express, Pontoon Beach, 618-797-1200
Super 8, Pontoon Beach, 618-931-8808

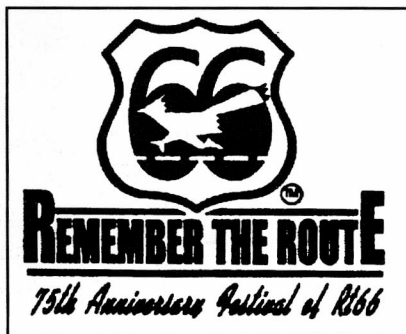
PAGE 10 ROUTE 66 NEWS SUMMER 2001

Albuquerque Jubilee

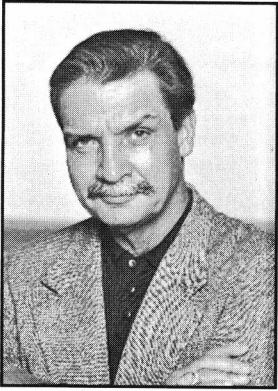
More and more Illinoisans are planning to motor west this summer to help Albuquerque celebrate Route 66's Diamond Jubilee. The Duke City promises pilgrims the royal treatment July 20-22. Combined with events during the week in other New Mexican towns, this festival of the folks promises to be 66's biggest and best-attended birthday fete.

Most Albuquerque events will take place on the state fairgrounds on Old 66. The fun begins Friday, July 20, with an

art show, a mariachi concert, a drive-in movie, Indian Village activities, a car and motorcycle show and a synchronized performance by Hardly Angels, a group of middle-aged women on Harley-Davidson motorcycles. In the evening, there will be a hospitality room for Route 66 e-listers.



Wallis Reads from New Edition



Author and three-time Pulitzer Prize nominee Michael Wallis will read from and sign his newly updated classic *Route 66: The Mother Road* on Thursday, June 21, from 7-8 p.m. at Hit The Road travel store, 3758 N. Southport Ave. in Chicago. It will be Wallis' first appearance in Chicago for the new book, whose release observes the highway's 75th anniversary. Admission is free and open to the public.

Wallis' *Mother Road* first appeared in 1990. It is widely considered the leading account of its legendary subject. It also is a pictorial journey, embellished by 300 photographs and illustrations of the highway's history and its people.

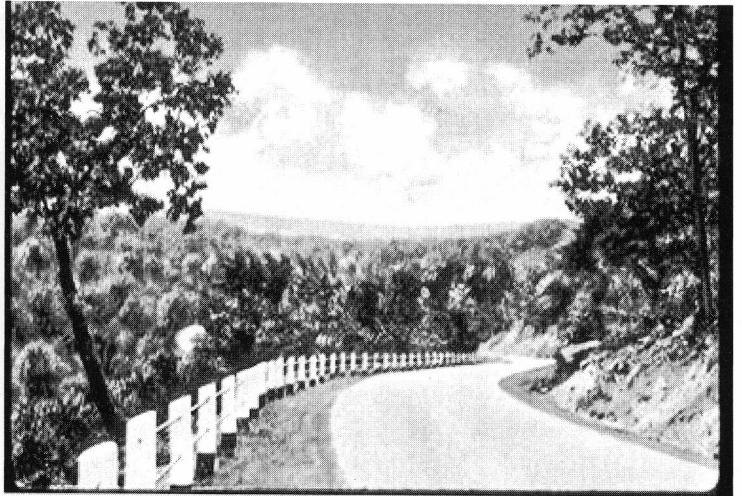
Wallis has written 10 best-selling books, including *The Real Wild West: The 101 Ranch and the Creation of the American West*; *Pretty Boy: The Life and Times of Charles Arthur Floyd*, and *Oil Man: The Story of Frank Phillips and the Birth of Phillips Petroleum*. His articles have appeared in *Time*, *Life*, *People*, *Smithsonian* and *The New York Times*. He has also appeared on CNN, ABC's *Good Morning America* and *Nightline*, and *48 Hours*. And with his deep, distinctive voice he has narrated programs for the Discovery Channel, the History Channel and A&E's *Biography*.

For info, e-mail hittheroad@roadtripstore.com or call (773) 388-8338. Twice named best travel store in Chicago, Hit the Road celebrates the American travel experience, particularly the great American road trip, offering travel-themed guidebooks, accessories, home accents, memorabilia and gifts.

Besides repeats of some of Friday's fun, Saturday will feature a Route 66 poetry reading, movies at the restored KiMo Theater, an authors and artists fair and the John Steinbeck Award Dinner and Dance. The National Historic Route 66 Federation, led by David and Mary Lou Knudson, is sponsoring the latter two events. This will be the fourth Steinbeck Banquet. Also that evening, *Route 66 Magazine* will sponsor an informal buffet and social for 66 fans.

On Sunday, July 22, events will include a 6.6 mile walk-a-thon, an arts and crafts fair and another performance by Hardly Angels.

Advance tickets will not be necessary for most events. However, people wishing to attend the Steinbeck Banquet should contact the Route 66 Federation at P.O. Box 423, Tujunga, CA 91043, phone 888-339-0794, or go online at www.national66.com. Tickets for the evening are \$39 a person. To pre-register for the *Route 66 Magazine* dinner, write to 326 W. Route 66, Williams, AZ 86046, call 520-635-4432, or go online at www.route66magazine.com. Tickets for the buffet are \$10 a person.



Missouri Tour Knows the Way

Even traditionally skeptical Missourians have to admit that their Route 66 association's 2001 Motor Tour, *Searching for Will*, is the real thing. After all, their state has the route's most beautiful roadside. Starting in Sullivan, Missouri, on September 7, the fun will spread over three states. It will start with a leisurely cruise through the Ozarks on the two-laner. On Saturday, September 8, the Rail Haven Motel in Springfield, Missouri, will host a barbecue dinner. Eisler Brothers store in Riverton, Kansas, will host lunch the next day. A ceremony at the Will Rogers Memorial in Clare, Oklahoma, will conclude the day.

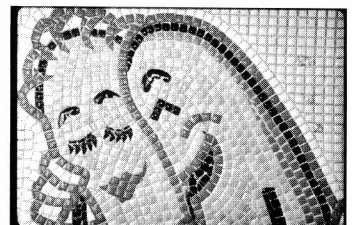
Landmarks in between will include Memoryville, Devil's Elbow, the Rail Haven Motel, Powers Museum, 66 Drive-In Theatre, the Marsh Arch Bridge and more.

The tour registration fee is \$25 per vehicle. Saturday dinner is \$13 a person. The Eisler Brothers lunch is \$7 a person. Paid reservations are highly recommended. Make checks payable to the Route 66 Association of Missouri, P.O. Box 8117, St. Louis, MO 63156-8117. For more information, call Gary Adkins at 314-832-2536.

Ownership Change Likely at Cozy Dog

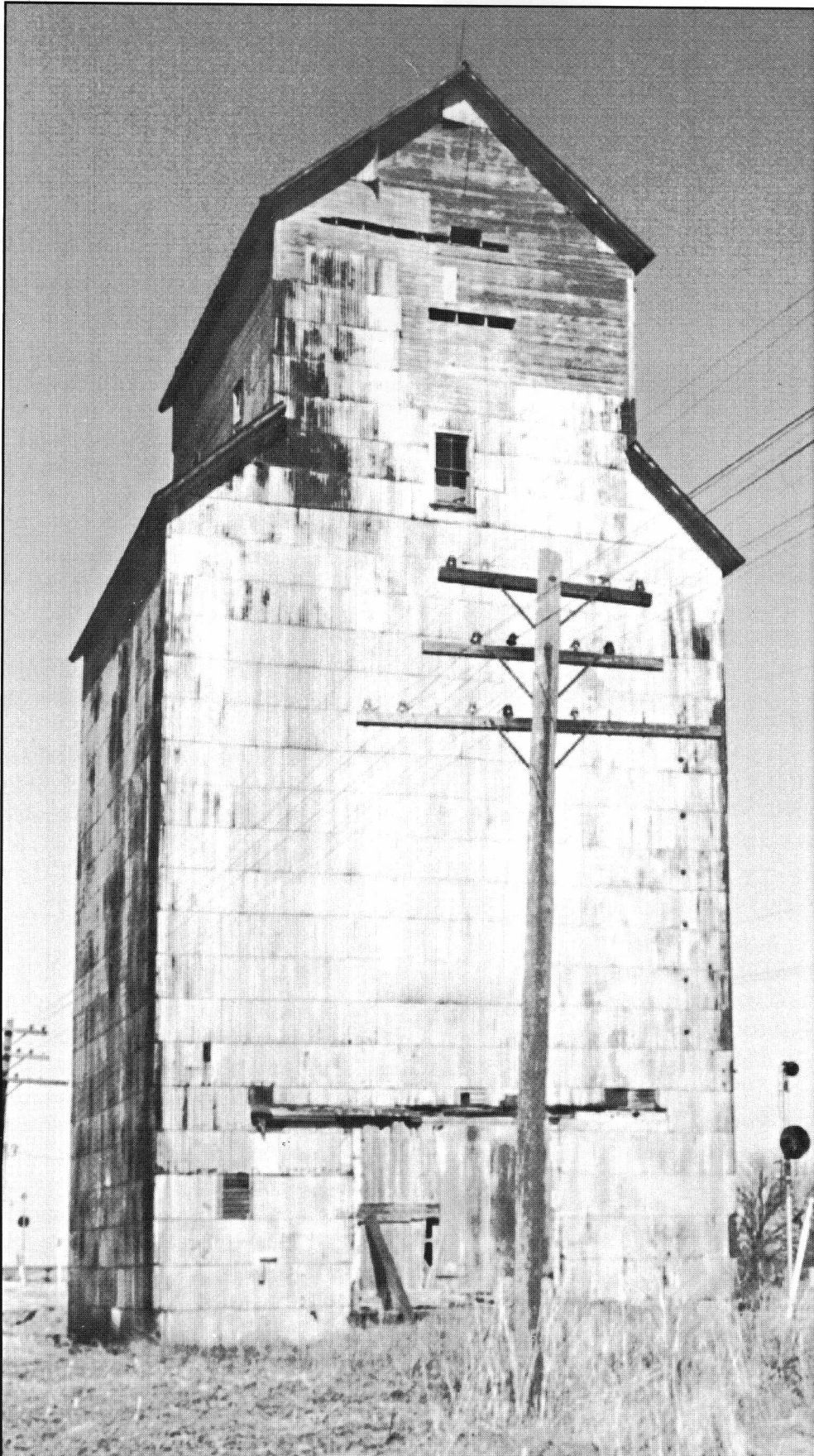
After nearly half a century at the Cozy Drive In in Springfield, Buz Waldmire is turning over the keys. The divorce settlement with his wife Sue called for Sue to get the restaurant. April 30 was to be Buz's last day as proprietor. His future plans are uncertain. He planned to leave most of his father's memorabilia behind, so—except for his absence—customers will notice little immediate difference.

Having spent most of her adult life there, Sue Waldmire is no stranger to the Cozy Dog. For many years, she sold her handmade ceramic crafts alongside Buz's handguns. And her and Buz's sons Tony and Ed will continue to work at the business. So, as strange as it may seem, the Cozy Dog will still be in the Waldmire family.



Scaling the Ballard Elevator

by Randy Smith with help from Marie Jibben



Ever since my Route 66 trip with Shellee Graham back in November 1999, I have wanted to scale the top of this Route 66 icon, which is called the Graham & Hennioni elevator. It is a 250 foot high grain elevator which stands tall and proud along Route 66 between Lexington and Chenoa. It has been there since the early 30s as far as I know. Ballard is the name of its population-less town that it is in, and that name has been vacant from Route 66 roadmaps since the 40s.

I had a major setback in my plans to climb this structure last Fall, due to an unfortunate roller skating accident. So on a very windy, dangerous Saturday on April 7, 2001 I had plans down pat to climb this structure to see what was up there, as I know that it has been nearly 50 years today since anyone has.

I arrived about 2 in the afternoon, and was met with the most unfavorable conditions. The wind gusts were around 60 miles per hour. I was looking to get my ropes up through the top window on the west side, but the structure was more unstable than it looked. The wind was making it impossible to do this stunt, even on the east side. I started to study the structure, looking for other feasible alternatives. I found a board at its base missing, and fortunately for my light 150-pound frame, was able to squeeze inside it. Marie was along with me for the photo shoot, but also had her cellular phone in case I screwed up, which happens sometimes.

If it weren't for the sun being out, it would have been pitch black inside. I was standing in one of the four silos, but could not get into any of the others. I found what looked like a shaft about 24 inches square with a heavy steel cable going clear up to the very top. I did see light up there at its end, so I sighed deeply, and told myself the same thing I've told myself for a long time—that I am getting way too old for these climbing stunts, especially this one!

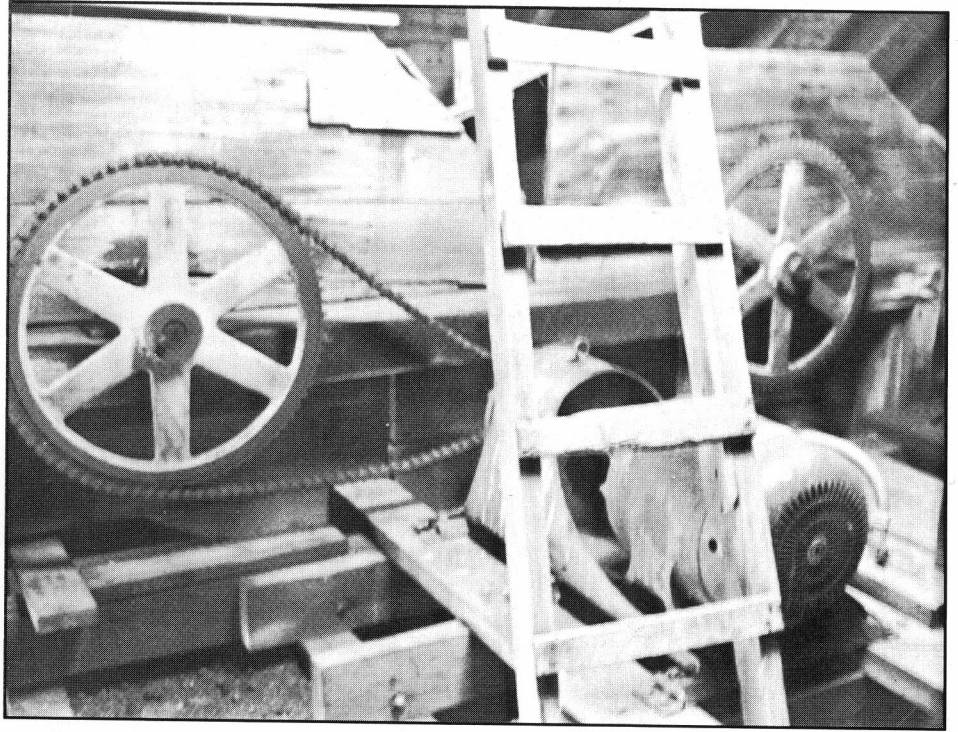
I put on my tight-fitting leather gloves,

and put my weight on the cable. It was not loose, so up I started, a few feet at a time, and was able to spread my feet against the shaft walls to keep from falling down. By the time I got halfway up there, the wind was so strong that the structure did start to sway, bumping me against the shaft wall. It seemed like an eternity to get up this dark shaft, but I did finally get close to the top and it started to get lighter. I smiled, and finished my last eight feet of an estimated 180-foot climb. Once on the top floor, I laid down for awhile, getting my breath together. And boy, did the wind kick in! The entire structure swayed about twelve inches, and each time I had to watch my footing.

Down below, on the safe ground of Earth stood Marie, wondering where the hell was. I carefully edged my way to the open door on the east side, holding on tight. She was relieved to see me, and wasted no time in running film off with the Minolta. I told her to stick around, and I'd holler from time to time since I planned on spending some time up there after going through all this trouble.

So what did I find? It seemed deserted, save for two huge electric motors that looked like 440-volt types, with huge chain sprockets going around some gears to turn some kind of mechanism. I maneuvered to the west side to lean out the window for another glorious photo shoot, and then went about studying this upper floor. There were more stairs going up to the very peak of the roof, but they were not very stable. I went on up, and finally got a good look at how this structure was built.

The elevator had four silos and it looked like a possible fifth silo in the middle. There were huge steel tubes going to some of them, and something that turned in the middle. There were cutouts here and there in the floor so I had to watch where I stepped. I didn't see any old grain left. The entire structure was made out of wood, except for the metal sheeting covering the outside. I also noticed it seemed to be all nailed together as I didn't see any bolts or nuts in its construction, and no steel beams for any kind of support. Furthermore, I did not see any termite damage or other, but a ton of heavy dust. A banner of some kind used to hang on the outside, but the wind had blown it inside, so I untied it and left it there. I checked back in with Marie to take some more photos, then climbed



Motors and ladders near the elevator's top

back up on the balcony to view the huge dual motors again.

Then I saw a small, rickety ladder leading to the very peak of the roof, with one panel already off, showing the sunlight coming in. I climbed even higher and finally got to the very peak and leaned out for more collectible photos. There were two of those old style lightning rods on each end of the roof, and the panel I leaned out was facing the northeast. I saw miles of beautifully tilled farmland, which looked ready for Spring planting. It was SO beautiful up here that I forgot about the

Looking north from the elevator



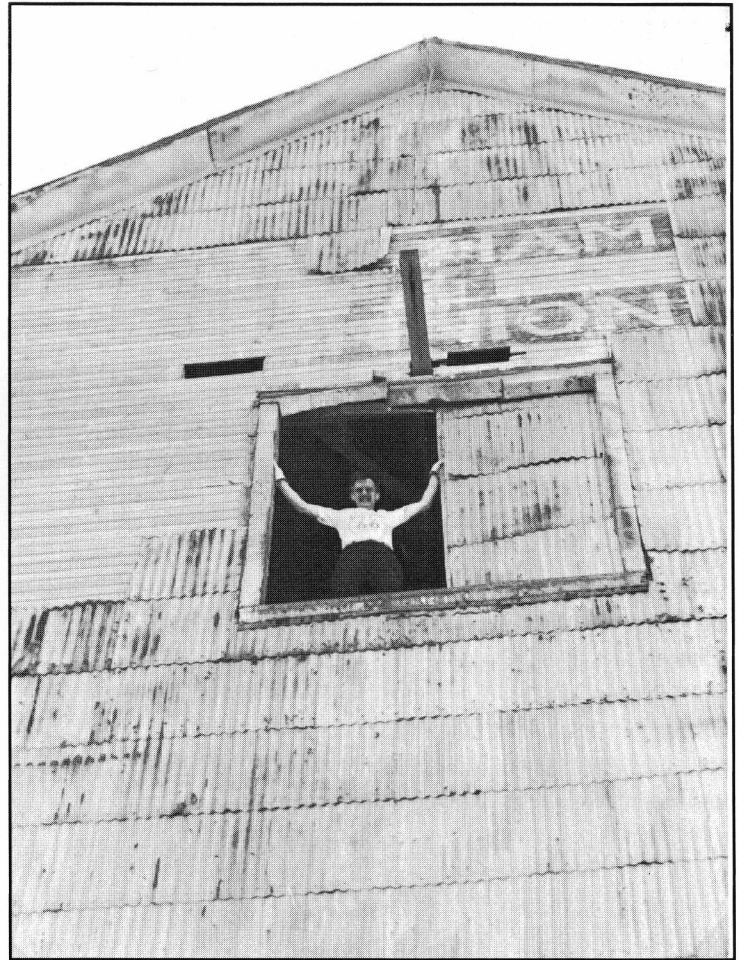
terrific wind that still swayed me a foot back and forth!

Once I started down the stairs, I noticed the sway was getting bad. The west wall was actually blowing in and out six inches like it was going to fall right in! I started to get nervous, and looked around for some valuable keepsake to take back to remember my adventure by, and I found one—an old round 10 inch jelly jar light cover that I don't see too often anymore, so I unscrewed it. It was coated with heavy dust. I tucked it in my camera bag, thinking it was the perfect thing to put in the Hall Of Fame Museum one of these days if they'll accept it.

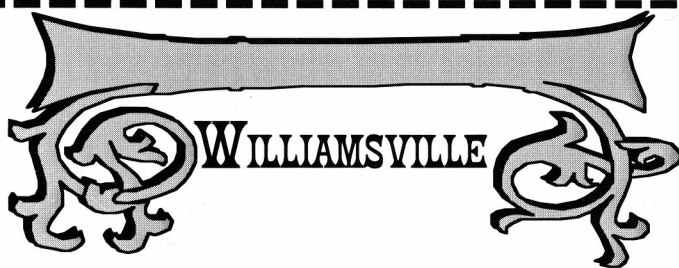
I did find an easier way back down. There was a narrow stairway, but it was very small and unstable. I couldn't tell from its condition how much weight it would hold. I decided to chance it. It's a good thing I took a flashlight along because it was pitch black dark in the middle section, and with the wind, it kept creaking and groaning.

Marie was relieved to see me again. She said that at times, so much time had passed since I had signaled and she almost dialed 911.

Back in the safety of my brick home in Creve Coeur, I pondered my next plan of attack on Route 66, just enjoying my old habit of thrill and adventure. It felt great getting something accomplished, but now my left hand was hurting like hell again. A word of caution: It is not advisable for any of you to try these same things, as they carry risk that may not be worth it. But with my stubbornness, I just can't get over my craving for adventure. So stay tuned for more later on as I continue my travel to unknown destiny on Route 66.



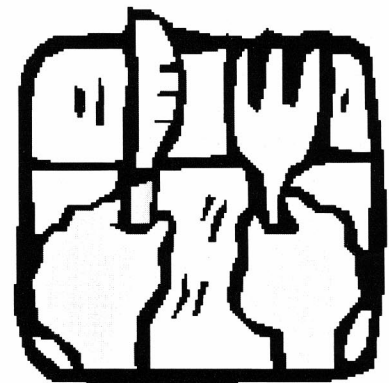
The intrepid climber



Route 66 Antiques
Antiques and Collectibles
Open Seven Days a Week 10-5
Over 9,000 square feet

Booth and Cabinet Space Available!
Only 10 minutes north of Springfield

Easy Access: Exit 109 off I-55
P.O. Box 428, Williamsville, IL 62693
PHONE: 217-566-3442



Annual Association Picnic
NOON, SEPTEMBER 16, 2001
K-MINE PARK
GODLEY, ILLINOIS

Meat, Drink & Table Service Furnished
Bring a covered dish!

Route 66's Master Signpainter

by John Weiss

Patrick O'Donnell built the little station in Odell in 1932 to sell Standard gasoline. In later years, it sold Phillips gas, then Standard. Since the Association and the Preservation are restoring the station to its 1932 heritage, we removed the Sinclair sign that so many people have seen hanging there. It is now at Bill Shea's petroleum museum in Springfield.

This presented us a two-fold problem: First, find a 1932 vintage Standard sign. Second, find a way to pay for it. Even if we could find one, we knew it would be very expensive. We tried, but had no luck in finding any sign at all. But just in case, we kept the original arm and circle ring that held the other signs for all those years.

To the rescue came our Preservation sign painter, Randy Wierzgac. We've seen Randy's talent with paint and brush in many other places. He did the replica sign for Soulsby Station. He led the work on both Meramec Caverns barn signs (Cayuga and Hamel). He also did the roof for the Odell station and the Roadside Attraction signs for the station. But what he did this time was a true work of art. He hand-painted a two-sided sign that is an exact replica of the Standard original. It is now hanging where the old one did. Be sure to come to Odell and see Randy's fantastic new addition!

Randy Wierzgac, Master Signpainter



Preservation Digest

by Lenore Weiss

Chairman John Weiss opened the meeting at 6:10 p.m. Forty people attended. Dave and Mary Albright brought their hand built replica of the Odell station for the committee to see. The picnic benches are completed and stored in the station. Frank Lozich reported that Carl and Lee, sons of Francis Marten, said they will keep up their father's Lady of the Highways Shrine.

The state's Heritage Tourism program will have grant money available for 66 for six years. Odell has received a \$13,000

grant. In addition, Hampton Inns is pledging \$7-10,000 to the Odell Station. John explained how we were going to redo the doors. He said Maaco had painted the pump for only \$50. We decided to get a solid milk glass crown for it.

The Route 66 Association has donated \$1,500 for the preservation committee. We'll use it for the Towanda High School Route 66 Project, items for the station and Preservation ID pins. The Association has also agreed to five "Roadside Attraction" signs for the station. Frank Lozich volunteered to be in charge of this project. The meeting adjourned at 7:35. After it, we watched a 12-minute Japanese video about Route 66.

Route 66 Association of Illinois Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Illinois County (if applicable): _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Interests in Route 66: _____

How I can help: _____

Annual Dues

General: \$15
Family: \$25
Business: \$30
Foreign: \$35
Sustaining: \$200
U.S. funds only, please
\$10 fee for returned checks

Send to:

Membership

Route 66 Assn. of Illinois

2743 Veterans Pkwy., Room 166
Springfield, IL 62704

Membership runs May 1 - April 30

Send address changes and questions to Membership at the address above or e-mail changes to teague66@eosinc.com

Hampton Inns Help Save a Landmark

by John Weiss, Preservation Committee Chairman

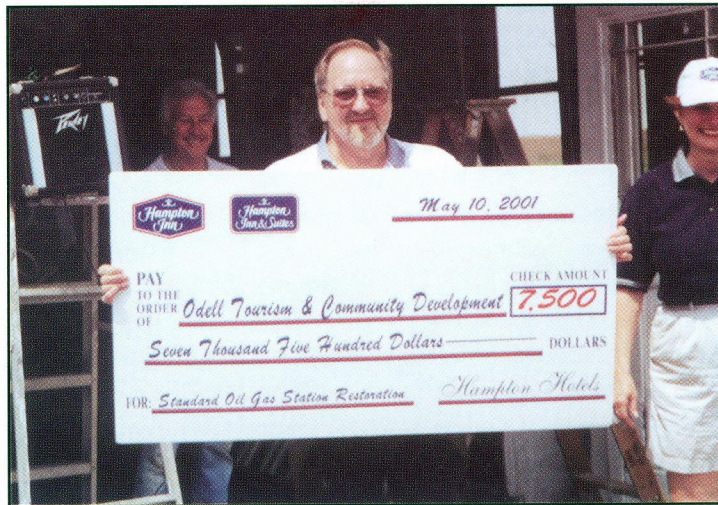


On May 10, volunteers from six different Hampton Inns, along with staff from the motel company's corporate headquarters in Tennessee, came to Odell, Illinois. They were there to fulfill Hampton's promise to help with exterior restoration of the village's landmark Standard Oil Station. Joining them were members of the Association's Preservation Committee, Odell village employees and other local residents. All together, well over 50 people were ready to work.

Trees and other landscaping materials from Turf Specialists of Manhattan provided plenty of muscle-aching opportunities. Volunteers also began to stain the picnic tables, while others started painting. Soon several people were busy nailing shingles on a rear wall. Under the guidance of professional electrician Greg Anderson, still more ran in new electric lines. All expenses were covered with funds donated by Hampton Inns.

Honored guests began to arrive. They included past owners, staff or customers of the station. They provided lots of great information on how it looked and functioned so many years ago.

At a brief ceremony before lunch, Judy Christa-Cathey of Hampton Inns presented Ed Seal, the mayor of Odell, a check



for \$7,500. This will be used as matching funds for an additional state grant. With the combined amount, the town of Odell can pay off its bank loan for the station and begin restoration of the interior.

An afternoon thunderstorm shortened the day, but not before plenty got done. That wonderful feeling you get when helping someone else was evident on the faces of all who had joined together. Projects like this demonstrate what can be accomplished. It just takes people who care.

Melissa O'Brien, a Hampton Inns executive, said they would like to help with a Route 66 project in every state. For additional information, go to any Hampton Inn and request a free *On the Road* magazine. Look for the Odell article on pages 28 and 29. Preservation is the responsibility of every one of us. On Route 66, our slogan is "Preparing the past for the future."

Besides Hampton Inns, we also thank Casey's General Store in Odell for donating all the donuts we could consume, 7-Up for all the free soda, and Menard's for nail aprons. Special thanks go to Wendt Construction Company of West Chicago. They can always be counted on when needed.

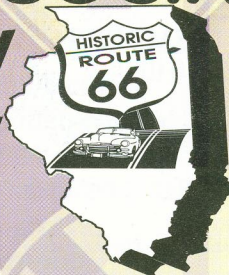
Route 66 Association of Illinois
2743 Veterans Parkway, # 166
Springfield, IL 62704

**Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lincoln, IL
Permit No. 66**

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

THE NEWS

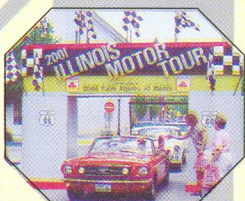
FALL 2001



THE CYRUS AVERY AWARD



CRUISIN' WITH OLLIE



MOTOR TOUR 2001

TALES ALONG RT. 66

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

The Route 66 Association of Illinois is a not-for-profit organization. Its purpose is to preserve, promote and help people enjoy the road in this state. Officers and board members are available at most reasonable times to answer questions and hear comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them when you need to. The date to the right of each person's name is when their term expires.

PRESIDENT

Jeff LaFollette, 10-01
2351 Highway 130
New Liberty, IA 52765
563-893-6653
E-Mail: AJon66@aol.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Bill Przbylski, 10-02
24156 S. Kings Rd.
Crete, IL 60417
708-672-7937

TREASURER

Martin Blitstein, 10-02
9280 Drummond
Tinley Park, IL 60477
708-957-4598
E-Mail: blitz66@chicagonet.net

SECRETARY

Cathie Stevanovich, 10-01
9280 Drummond
Tinley Park, IL 60477
708-958-4598
E-Mail: cathies@juno.com

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Marilyn Pritchard, 10-01
601 W. Reynolds
Pontiac, IL 61764
815-844-6937
E-Mail: durelle@fcg.net

PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

John Weiss, Chairman
22550 W. Rt. 113
Wilmington, IL 60481
815-458-6616
E-Mail: KAYO66@aol.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jeff LaFollette
2351 Highway 130
New Liberty, IA 52765
563-893-6653
E-Mail: AJon66@aol.com

BOARD MEMBERS

Jeff Geisler, **Cook**, 10-01
814 W. 61st St.
LaGrange Highlands, IL 60525
708-354-8746
E-Mail: Route66Railfan@msn.com

Lynn Bagdon, **DuPage**, 10-02
P.O. Box 313
Aurora, IL 60507
630-531-4577
E-Mail: lulupic66@aol.com

Larry Boyd, **Will**, 10-01
733 Fairlane Dr.
Joliet, IL 60435-5155
815-725-2457
E-Mail: lgboyd@mediaone.net

Marty Bilecki, **Grundy**, 10-01
4200 Bargo Lane
Morris, IL 60469
815/941-3312

Margaret Hettwer, **Livingston**, 10-02
318 E. Elk St.
Odell, IL 60460
815-998-2219

C.J. Beeler, **McLean**, 10-02
2 Canterbury Court
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-874-2832

Bob Borowiak, **Logan**, 10-01
711 Broadway.
Lincoln, IL 62656
217/732-3121

Buz Waldmire, **Sangamon**, 10-02
2935 S. 6th St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217-525-1992

Rich Henry, **Montgomery**, 10-01
Old Rt. 66 & Madison Ave.
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-5655
E-Mail: route66@midwest.net

MACOUPIN

Oliver Schwallenstecker, 10-02
620 E. Warren St., Box 477
Bunker Hill, IL 62014
618-585-3081
E-Mail: mt_ollie@madisontelco.net

Linda Henry, **Madison**, 10-02
Old Rt. 66 & Madison Ave.
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-5655
E-Mail: route66@midwest.net

Wilton Rinkel, **St. Clair**, 10-02
5539 State Rt. 157 North
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-656-1625

AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS

Louis Vargo, 10-01
14911 Richmond Ave
Posen, IL 60469
708/339-3640

Duke Cartwright, 10-02
407 Pasadena Ave.
Crest Hill, IL 60435
815-726-3574
E-Mail: dukecartwright@Mediaone.net

Chester Henry, 10-01
910 N. East St.
Leroy, IL 61752-1231
309-962-5361
E-Mail: nhenry@leroy2.k12.il.us

Marie Jibben, 10-02
215 Lawnridge Dr.
Creve Coeur, IL 61610
309-694-4141
MAJ66@earthlink.net

John Miller, 10-01
14828 San Francisco Ave.
Posen, IL 60469
708-389-3823
E-Mail: kixonrte66@hotmail.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The officers,
plus Linda Henry and Jeff Geisler

Association Website: <http://www.il66assoc.org>

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

The Association publishes *The 66 News* in March, June September & December as a service to its members, other people and related organizations. Contributions are welcome, but we do not pay. However, authors retain all copyright privileges. Submit all stories, photos and ads at least six weeks prior to publication. Address contributions and inquiries to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704. **Advertising Rates:** \$100 for a whole page, \$60 for a half page, \$40 for a quarter page and \$25 for a business card ad. Send camera ready copy only.

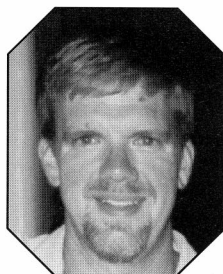
▶ UPCOMING BOARD MEETING

Our next meeting will be held on Sunday October 21, 2001 in Normal at the Old Country Buffet in College Hills Mall. The board meeting will begin at 10:30 AM. The meeting will adjourn for lunch at noon, and then we will reconvene for the general meeting at 1:00. This session will consist of the annual elections. If you are interested in running for an officer or board member position, please contact Nominating Committee chairman Jeff Geisler at 708-354-8746 and he will put your name on the ballot for the position you wish to run for. We're always looking for individuals who want to help the association continue to grow and prosper. And if you do not want to run for an office, then as a member of the association you are entitled to come out and vote. Either way this is an important meeting coming up, so make plans to attend if you can. If you have questions, please contact Jeff LaFollette at 563-893-6653.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Because of the membership drive that ended right after the Summer 2001 newsletter came out, and with the Motor Tour offering memberships to those non-members who participated, and the deadlines in trying to get this edition to layout and print, there won't be a listing of new members. But In the winter issue, I will have a complete list of new members from May 1, to October 21, which is the deadline for submissions for that issue. We currently have over 850 members, including Hall of Famers and Sustaining memberships. If you know of someone who is interested in Route 66, have them write to us and we'll send out maps, tour guides and a copy of the newsletter, if available, and let them see what the Association is all about.



Jeff LaFollette

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems like only a few weeks since I became President of this Association. It is funny how time flies and now I'm almost at the end of my term. But a lot has been accomplished

in my two years. We have continued to build up the treasury and keep costs down, therefore using the money for preservation projects such as the Standard Station in Odell, the Meramec Caverns Barn near Hamel and the current project, the streetcar behind the Riviera north of Gardner. Also for those who attended the motor tour banquet this year, the participants paid \$7.50 for their meal this year and the Association picked up the rest of the cost. And the motor tour showed a profit as well. The motor tour was a record with 245 cars registered. We have printed new tour guides with the help of a state grant which covered 50% of the cost. We have also reinstated the membership window decal, which I have seen proudly displayed on car windows and businesses. The Association has also donated money to deserving causes, such as the new Joliet Historic Museum, Billie Gardner and her Walk for Babies charity. And, Route 66 is back on the official Illinois road maps for the first time since 1976. The Association is giving back to the road in many different ways.

But with all the successes, there also come new challenges. We have to continue work to get sites in Illinois eligible to get funding from the Federal Route 66 Corridor Act, which will appropriate \$1,000,000 in fiscal 2002.

Also there are grants available from the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project. There are stretches of the road in danger of being destroyed or rebuilt to lose their historic significance. And where there are challenges that we know about now, there will be more that are unknown and unseen now that we must be ready for.

As president, I have overseen the current happenings with the association and would like the opportunity to continue to lead this association for the next two years. As most of you know, I have been Motor Tour Chairman for the last four years, which has averaged 225 cars per year, and am currently in the position as Newsletter Editor as well, something I have always wanted to try and I hope that I do well in this endeavor. I feel that I successfully handled the two positions as Motor Tour Chairman and President capably, and I am confident that I can do the same as Newsletter Editor.

Ultimately you, the association member have the say so as to whom will lead our association for the next two years. I feel that I have proven myself to lead this organization with dignity and honor, and I would like to have the chance to continue for another two years. If the membership decides otherwise, then I thank them for giving me the chance to lead this great association for two years! Our elections will be conducted at the General meeting on Sunday October 21, 2001. Please come out and vote for officers and board members who will lead this group for the next two years. Come and exercise your vote, which is a part of your being a member of this association.



THE CYRUS AVERY AWARD

By John & Lenore Weiss

It is with great pride that we announce that the Route 66 Association of Illinois, and especially the Preservation Committee has received the Cyrus Avery Award.

The National Route 66 Federation at the annual Steinbeck Award Banquet presented this honor to our association. This huge event was held on July 21 in Albuquerque, New Mexico during the 75th Anniversary Celebration of Route 66. It was awarded to us for the most successful preservation project on Route 66 of all eight states. The project that brought this most prestigious honor to Illinois is the Standard Oil Gasoline Station in Odell.

The award is named for the person who virtually created Route 66, Cyrus Avery. In the 1920's Mr. Avery devised a numbering system to mark highways of the day and for the future. He also sponsored the concept of a road that started

in Illinois and went directly to California. This alignment was to be called Route 60. But for political reasons it ended up being designated Route 66.

The award was received by Jeff & Annette LaFollette along with John and Lenore Weiss. The Illinois Association received a standing ovation from the huge crowd. President Jeff LaFollette then said a few words to thank all in attendance, especially the large contingent from Illinois who made the trip. John Weiss, Chairman of the Preservation Committee, then gave a short acceptance speech.

We may have received this award, but it does not belong to us. **IT BELONGS TO YOU!** It belongs to those who so unselfishly donate their time and

physical efforts. It belongs to those who donate funds to help us. It belongs to those who appreciate these accomplishments and give much needed encouragement and praise. We accepted this honor on your behalf and for your dedication to preservation.

The Odell project is a reality because of so many people. They are a diversified group of individuals who have pride and a strong sense of history. When others said we were crazy to even try this, you simply said, "Get out of our way, we have work to do."

We are so very pleased to present to you, the membership of the Route 66 Association of Illinois, the very first **CYRUS AVERY AWARD**.

CRUISIN' WITH OLLIE

The 2001 Motor Tour sparkled like a diamond in the Illinois sunlight. Liquid sunshine, a worry of at least the past five years of our "Motor Tour" stayed away all 4 days of this years Diamond Jubilee celebration.



The 75th anniversary of the "Mother Road" was enjoyed without a trace of rain. What better way to observe the anniversary of the "Mother Road" than to follow along all of the original alignment first traveled in 1926? Wheels and chrome sparkled and flashed as hundreds of motorized magic carpets sailed down America's main street.

John Miller & company got us started at the very beginning of "Route 66", shooting us down through the Chicago canyons. We then burst out into the green grass prairie and passed through the heartland villages of America. How could we not swell with pride in the celebration of one of the world's most beloved thoroughfares? Lyons, McCook, Hodgkins, Countryside, Indian Head Park, and Romeoville. A stop to catch our breath at "Hall of Fame" member, White Fence Farm. Last minute registrations by Annette and Kathy swelled our multitude. Jeff Geisler led us on to Joliet, Route 66 Raceway, Elwood, Wilmington, and Braidwood and on a detour, where Diamond helped us commemorate the 75th. Then off to Godley, Braceville, Gardner and the "Hall of Fame" member, the Riviera Roadhouse, Dwight and then to Odell where our preservation group has been fitting and polishing a new diamond, the Odell Standard gas station. Many Oohs and Ahhs were heard as roadies viewed the new signs and marveled at the progress of the restoration. Near Cayuga we caught a glimpse of the 1998 preservation project, the "Meramec Caverns" barn. Just before lunch we cruised into Pontiac through the State Farm "Arch" looking for another passport sticker and the diamond to be given by the Pontiac Tourism bureau.

After lunch, Jeff LaFollette helped a lucky group of roadies

meet up with some of the visiting members of the International Press. Journalists and Radio personalities from Germany, the United Kingdom and France joined with Motor Tour drivers to experience first hand the sights and sounds of our beloved "Route 66". My great-great grandfather, Adam Schwallenstecker immigrated to the U. S. from Hessen, Darmstat, Germany in 1850. A quick check of the German contingent discovered that a radio journalist in the group lived within 25 miles of this old settlement. A deal was soon struck, as Andreas Horchler found he would be riding in an all red 65 Mustang convertible. I was thrilled to meet and visit with Andreas, and he was thrilled to ride with Judy and me in the Mustang.

We gassed up the Mustang at the edge of Pontiac and headed south to the purr of the dual exhaust pipes. Andreas started his tape recorder as soon as we moved to capture the sounds of "Route 66". We chatted about his home area, as I was hungry for information on my great-great grandfathers homeland. Andreas was also hungry for information on "Route 66". Of course at every opportunity Judy and I puffed up to brag on our "Mother Road". Andreas has visited America on numerous occasions. In fact he and his family has vacationed in the New England area. Of course, due to talking and not watching the road, I had to turn around and go back after missing about 3 turns on the route. We detoured to Funks Grove to stop at the country church and at the cemetery in the Sugar Maple forest. It was quiet and serene and Andreas requested an interview with Judy and me. We talked about our love of the "Mother Road" and the freedom of touring in our Mustang. We talked

about the wonderful friends we have met while traveling the highway. Driving through the cemetery, we noted the many ethnic names of the early settlers.

Going back across the highway, we next stopped at the Funks Grove farm, of "Hall of Fame" members, Steve and Glaida Funk. Andreas visited with and recorded an interview with Glaida at the Store, and afterwards did the same with Steve, who was working on a tractor and sprayer at the barn. He was very excited to meet with some of our "Hall of Fame" members at work at their business.

Traveling on to the Dixie, we gave Andreas a special tour of the "Illinois Route 66 Hall of Fame". We pointed out with pride the new Macoupin county "Hall of Fame" members, the Coliseum Ballroom and DeCamp Junction, both of whom would later in the evening be inducted by chairman Tom Teague and the members of the Route 66 Association of Illinois.

At Atlanta, we make a quick stop for refreshments. On leaving we were treated to having our picture taken from the rear platform of the Santa Fe Chief. The Chief was a wonderful part of this year's tour. Kodak stock had to raise after all the film that was burned on the Chief and all the other vehicles and sites on the tour. We had to hustle the Mustang down the road to arrive in time for the "Hall of Fame" banquet at the Renaissance Hotel in Springfield. We wished Andreas good traveling for the remainder of his American tour and exchanged cards with e-mail addresses to continue our friendship. The next day he would rent a car at St. Louis and

continued on page 6

take another week cruising up the Mississippi to its beginnings.

Sunday started at the car wash two blocks south of the Cozy Dog, another "Hall of Fame" member. A quick chamois rub down for our pony and then over to the Cozy Dog for breakfast. We met Noriko Yamanaka and her friend traded cameras for photographs and exchanged cards with e-mail addresses. Thanks to the Cozy Dog for providing a roadie type meal experience. The early morning was uneventful as we visited an old favorite, the Auburn red brick road.

I'm especially partial to the original 16' wide road in Macoupin County. We have many miles of road that was built in the early 20's and never widened or repaved. Much of it is broken and rough, and is a challenge to keep a modern auto between the centerline and the edge, especially on the corners. We discovered some unique things on this alignment.

First, about 31/2 miles south of Nilwood, I was shown some turkey tracks in the original pavement. The legend is that a farmer's turkeys ran loose or maybe even wild turkeys walked on the pavement while it was still soft. I apologize to many of the early birds, as I thought the local Nilwood roadies were going to show everyone coming by the tracks. Later arrivals were shown the tracks and many stopped to photograph the tracks and hear the legend.

Second, upon coming into Carlinville on the original alignment we were treated to the restoration of an old and rare two story log cabin on the grounds of a long closed amusement part. Although the City and the local Chamber of Commerce look with disdain on places like this, many Roadies find the old and decaying interesting. The owner was present and encouraged roadies to stop, look and visit. He even gave a talk on the history of the cabin.

We along with others were amazed at the history and beauty of the Blackburn College campus. Most were amazed that all students are required to contribute work in the construction of all new campus buildings. I hailed Carolyn Carillo of the Carlinville Chamber of Commerce to purchase a bottle of water. After chugging a bottle of water, two original "Route 66" bricks were added to our collection. Carlinville has been and continues to be a major stop on the original 1926 alignment.

Third, about 21/2 miles south of Carlinville, we discovered a newly uncovered "MAIL POUCH TOBACCO, TREAT YOURSELF TO THE BEST" sign on the roadside of an old barn being dismantled. The sign had been covered by a lean to addition a short time after being painted. This has contributed to the excellent condition of the sign and the siding. Your writer only learned of the sign the first day of the tour. John and Lenore Weiss supplied this picture of the barn on Sunday. Since the tour, the barn has been completely dismantled. A little farther down the road are a couple of original 1920's bridges over Honey creek. This alignment is dangerous to travel, as visibility is bad crossing over the newer route.

The Coal County Chamber of Commerce of the Gillespie-Benld area was especially excited this year. They hosted the Association's April board meeting and generated a lot of enthusiasm and publicity for the 2001 tour. 17 new "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" telephone pole banners greeted us from East Gillespie to the Coliseum Ballroom in Benld. Excellent signage with balloons to catch each roadies attention helped all to follow our "Mother Road" to the Benld lunch stop. Chamber President Jeff Wisdo and past president Patty Ambrose served large plates of Bernhardt's special sauce spaghetti to the tour roadies. Live music was provided throughout the lunchtime. A copy of the Area news, with news of the motor tour coming to the area, was presented with each passport sticker.

Your writer was impressed with the history, beauty and hospitality of the Benld Russian Orthodox Catholic Church. This small church is struggling to exist and maintain its parish. In the 1930's Father Nikita Gress wrote Icons and decorated the Holy Temple. The very reverend Archpriest, Father Paul Waters, Pastor gave several very wonderful talks on the churches history. The beauty of the Icons and paintings on the walls and ceilings are beyond belief.

What a crowd! When we arrived at the Coliseum ballroom, it was packed. Roadies were autographing special "T" shirts to be placed on display in the new "Coliseum Route 66 Museum" being planned by the newly inducted "Hall of Fame" owners David, Ruth, David and Cheryl Hammond. A new attraction being built to the south of the building is a

"Route 66" putting course. Painted wooden caricatures of entertainers who have played at the Coliseum ballroom will greet players at each hole. The last hole will require players to hit through a miniature model of the Coliseum ballroom.

While at the Coliseum, I was asked where the original "Route 66 of Illinois" shield sign that I was carrying had come from. This story was told. While traveling south of Carlinville, Judy and I stopped at one of the old bridges on Honey creek. While tramping through the weeds below the bridge next to the creek, I didn't find the sign. Didn't really stop at the bridges either. It was found at the lunch stop in Benld. Bruno Barra, whose brother I had worked with at the Shell Oil refinery, was offering it for sale. Lucky for me, it remained unsold until my arrival. Bruno wanted an offer, so \$100.00 was offered. Bruno looked over at Marilyn Pritchard, who was seated nearby and stated that she had offered much more. I looked at Marilyn and she just smiled. I offered \$150.00 and Bruno declined. "How much do you have to have?" he asked. Bruno figured the sign was worth at least \$200.00. I called him a robber. He lowered his price to \$175.00. "Sold" said I. He remarked "If I'm a robber, you must be a fool to pay \$175.00". We shook hands, visited and talked about his brother who had died a couple of years earlier. The sign was dated July 8, 1956.

The ride from Benld to Staunton was a breeze. We crossed over our route that had started just two days earlier. It was nearing 600 miles with the top down in the warm Illinois sunshine since leaving home at 9:00 AM on Friday morning. Judy and I were starting to look like a couple of pieces of burnt toast. DeCamp Junction was overflowing with cars. New "Hall of Fame" members, Loren Kovally, Jim and Pat Moultrie greeted others and us at the 1930's roadhouse. They proudly displayed their "Hall of Fame" plaque at the back bar. A vendor was selling "Historic DeCamp Roadhouse" pin backs to the crowd. Very few buildings still exist with original historic tin pan ceilings. The birds eye maple booths, the old signs and the area memorabilia make DeCamp a Diamond on our "Mother Road."

We admired the newly restored "Meramec Caverns" barn located across the double nickel from the

Continued on page 12

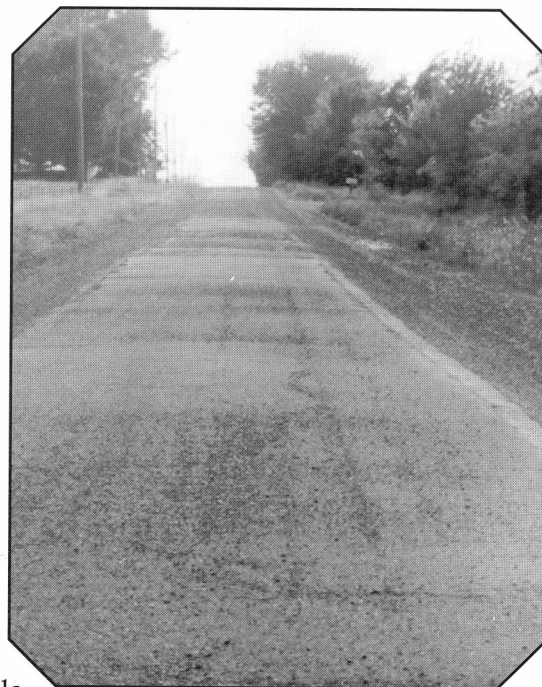
2001 - A ROUTE 66 ODYSSEY

*traveled by Jeff & Annette LaFollette
and Frank & Roxane Lozich*

This is the first part of a two part journal of our Route 66 Trip beginning on July 15, 2001 in Chicago and ending on July 25, 2001 at Santa Monica Pier. The title of this article was christened by Frank Lozich just before we departed his home in Tinley Park on the morning of the 15th.

SUNDAY JULY 15

We left Frank & Roxane's home at 8:00AM. We were traveling in style, a rented 2001 Cadillac Deville rented in Moline and driven by Annette & I the day before. We were originally going to get a Buick LeSabre, but the lady at the car rental place got us a better deal. We actually got a larger car for a lower price. Go figure! When we pulled in the drive, Frank looked and said "That's no Buick". But he and Rox were happy about the larger car and the lower price nonetheless. Unfortunately, due to the volume of traffic due to the NASCAR Race south of Joliet we did not take Route 66 until we got to Wilimington. From there the odyssey began. The first stop was in Odell to see Dorothy Seratt. Our plan was to drive through Illinois, since we just did the motor tour the month prior. We drove the old road through Illinois, stopping only for a few pictures and drinks. We did enjoy a nice lunch at the Ariston Cafe in Litchfield. We got on I-55 by



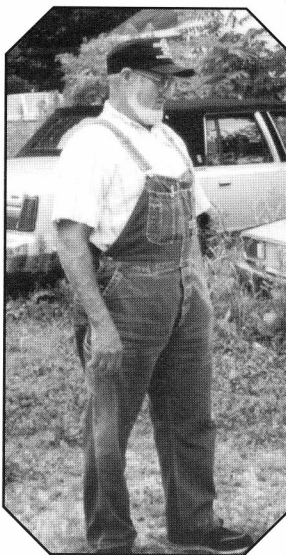
Edwardsville and returned to 66 on Gravois Ave.

**1 Lane Pavement 9 ft. wide
Miami, OK**

in St. Louis. We followed the old road to Ted Drewes and had custard, then got back on the road and continued west. We made a stop at Route 66 State Park, the site of the old Times Beach resort town, to see the park and stretch our legs. We continued on 66 through Missouri, stopping for the night in Rolla.

MONDAY JULY 16

We departed Rolla at 8:45 AM. We got just west of town and were inspecting an old bridge when a man pulled up and offered to show us an old 66 landmark. The man's name was John McCash - a local who took the time to show us an old log cabin which was known as the Homestead Tavern, and down the road a little he showed us the site of Nick's Modern Cabins. One cabin remained, but it was hidden in the trees and overgrowth. Up the hill we discovered Aaron's Boat & Motors. Devil's Elbow was the next stop for pictures. Frank & Rox had never been to the older section of two lane road, so this was a real treat for them.



**John McCash
Rolla, MO**



**The four
of us at
Ted Drewes**

continued on page 8

Frank has spent most of the time taking pictures, while Roxane has been the "chauffer" for this morning. We cruised old 66 through Missouri and stopped in Lebanon at the Munger Moss Motel to meet owner Ramona Lehman. Ramona gave us the keys to two rooms, 18, which is the Shellee Graham/Coral Court room and 24, which is the Route 66 room. Both of these rooms were recently remodeled.



**Munger Moss Motel
Lebanon, MO**

The trek continued westward through the scenic Ozark country and we stopped for lunch in Springfield at the Last Great American Diner along 66 of course. After a good meal at a great price, we continued on to Carthage. Along the way, ruins of old gas stations, and tourist cabins were there waiting to be photoed. We drove the old alignment through Carthage and got to the 66 Drive in Theater for a photo op. We then took an older alignment into Joplin and crossed the border into Kansas for that grueling 13 mile stretch. In Galena, we stopped for a picture at the Historic 66 sign and Roxane happened to see a wayward turtle and returned it to a safe spot off the road. In Riverton, we stopped at Eisner Bros. store for a quick look and a cold drink, the

temps were hovering in the upper 90's. Scott Nelson, Kansas Route 66 Association President owns this store, but had already left for the day. Onward to the Rainbow Arch Bridge just east of Baxter Springs, a fine example of a bridge saved by the Kansas DOT and the Route 66 Association of Kansas. Something that the Illinois DOT could learn a lesson from, like the now departed 1939 arch bridge north of Gardner. After the long Kansas trip we moved into Oklahoma and drove through Quapaw, then stopped in Commerce to visit Mickey Mantle Field. Commerce is the birthplace of the former Yankee great. Then onto Miami where we took a quick tour of the Coleman Theater, then onto the section of Route 66 that Oklahoma is famous for. Between Miami & Afton are two sections of nine foot wide single lane concrete pavement which was built in 1924. Frank's reaction was "how awesome". Nightfall was descending, so we stopped overnight in the hometown of Will Rogers-Claremore.

TUESDAY JULY 17

We departed Claremore at 9:00 AM. The first stop was at the J.M. Davis Gun Museum. We dropped the girls off at Wal-Mart to pick up a few essentials. Frank and I were a bit late getting there to pick them up and Annette & Rox were almost picked up by a local man. He asked if he could sit with them. But when the girls said they were waiting for their husbands, he said his fishing worms were going to dry up so he had better go. When we picked up the ladies it was onward to Catoosa, home of the Blue Whale! We stopped there for photos then it was on to Tulsa. Tulsa showed us many old classic motels, the Route 66 diner, Desert Inn Hotel, plus our first signs of Southwest architecture. Traveling west of Sapulpa, we discovered an old alignment of Route 66 which had an old steel truss bridge with brick decking. Just down the road a piece was the

remains of the old Tee-Pee Drive in Theatre. Lunch was at the Rock Cafe in Stroud, and who happened to pull in while we were eating but our old Illinois friend Bob Waldmire. Bob was delivering his merchandise to the Rock and several other places along 66 on his way to Albuquerque. While at the Rock, Frank tried a buffalo burger. He described it as tasty like hamburger, not as greasy and satisfying. At 3:00 Roxane announced that the outside temperature was 102 degrees. Thanks a lot!! We stopped at the red round barn in Arcadia. We all purchased bricks to help with the restoration effort. Finally we arrived in Oklahoma City after a long drive on a hot day. The traffic wasn't too bad but it sure was HOT!!! By then it was about 105 with a heat index of 110-115 degrees. We all agreed it would be too hot to live here. Once we got west of El Reno the land flattened out and the scenery was mainly farm fields, pastures and such. The old gas stations were no longer in view to photo, save for Lucille's near Hydro. Lucille passed away in August of 2000

and it was only fitting that we stopped to pay homage to her memory. We continued through Weatherford and called it a night in Clinton, OK.

WEDNESDAY JULY 18

Departed the motel at 9:00 and went to have a good sit down breakfast. We dined at the Route 66 restaurant in Clinton, just across from the Route 66 Museum. At the



**Lucille's Hydro
Oklahoma**

continued on page 9

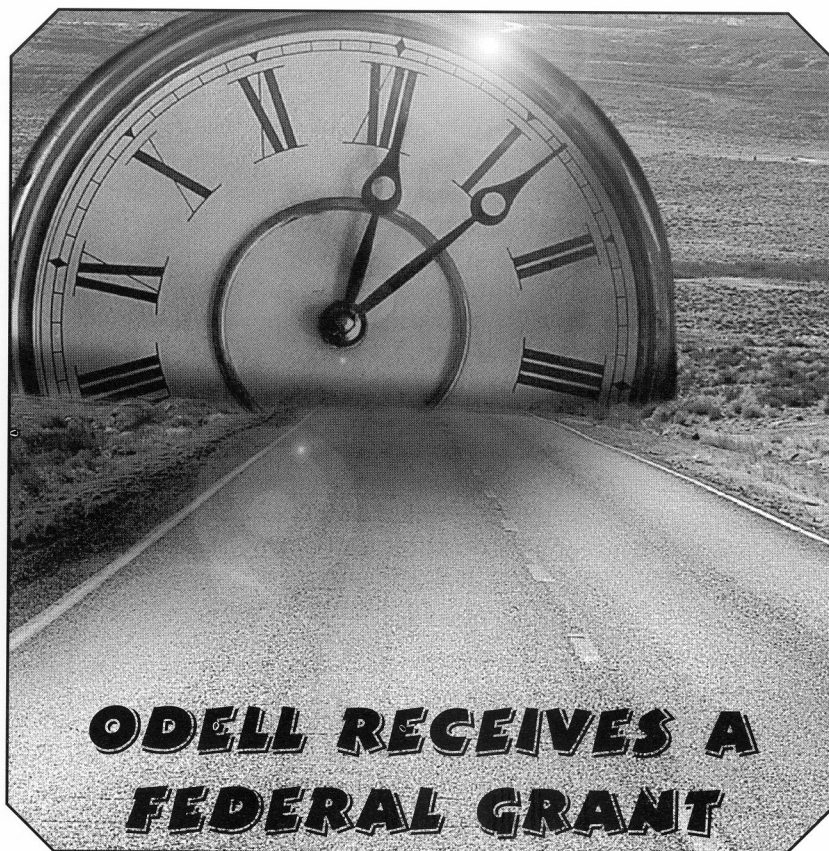
museum we encountered another Waldmire sighting, not to mention Illinois Association board members John Miller and Louie Vargo, who were on their way to Albuquerque as well. We all went in to tour the museum. We saw many interesting displays and at the end was a video where we saw George and Sharon Leone in their 1961 Olds Starfire for a brief instant. Departing the museum at 11:30 I was relieved that we were only going as far as Amarillo, so there wouldn't be an overly long day of driving. We drove on and stopped for more pictures, and made a stop in Elk City to see the other Route 66 museum in Oklahoma. At the door I was surprised, but very happy to see an Illinois Route 66 Association membership decal on the entry door! Annette & I took the museum tour, while Frank & Rox took a walking tour of the town in the city park, which had lots of ponds and geese. Again it was a hot day with temps expected over 100. We continued through Sayre, Erick and Texola. Texola was the first 66 ghost town we encountered. Frank & Rox got an eerie feeling as the wind was blowing, they described it as the sound of traffic passing on the road. Could they have heard the ghosts of old flivvers fleeing the Dust Bowl of Oklahoma in the 30's? We'll never know for sure. We crossed into Texas around 3:00 and stopped in Shamrock for photos of the U Drop Inn and lunch. The temp was 108!!! but it was a dry heat. We left Shamrock with full stomachs, ready for more picture taking. We finally saw our first solar car between Shamrock &

Alanreed. Then we saw another one being shut down for the day in Groom. The cars look like futuristic vehicles for sure. Finally, we arrived in Amarillo at the Inn of the Big Texan. Although neither Frank or I tried to eat the 72 ounce monster steak, we both had a 12 ounce ribeye and walked away from the table satisfied. Soon after, we called it a night at the Big Texan Motel, right next door.



**Big Texan
Steak House
Amarillo,
Texas**

continued on page 11



ODELL RECEIVES A FEDERAL GRANT

By John Weiss

The much talked about National Route 66 Corridor Preservation Act is finally in operation.

That is the \$10,000,000 in ten years program that is being funded by the federal government. The full story can be found the winter 2000 edition of The 66 News.

Instead of one million dollars being available to all eight states, the first year was allocated only \$500,000. The majority of that will be used for administrative expenses. But some funds will find their way to help projects on the Mother Road.

The first in Illinois to receive some of these federal grant dollars is the Standard Oil Gasoline Station in Odell.

On July 18, 2001, John & Lenore Weiss and Ed Seal,

Mayor of Odell met with Ted Hild of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. He was happy to inform us that \$7,500 of matching funds have been designated to the Odell station. Mr. Hild was extremely helpful with instructing us on what paperwork needs to be completed. He made it an easy painless process. He furnished us with names of people to contact if we need their services and seemed eager to keep Odell progressing with its restoration.

This is the first of many dollars we hope to secure for preservation projects on Route 66 in Illinois. We are really excited about this!

RIVIERA STREETCAR UPDATE

By John Weiss

Work has begun! It looks great, but there is a lot more to do. As reported in the winter 2000 edition of The 66 News!

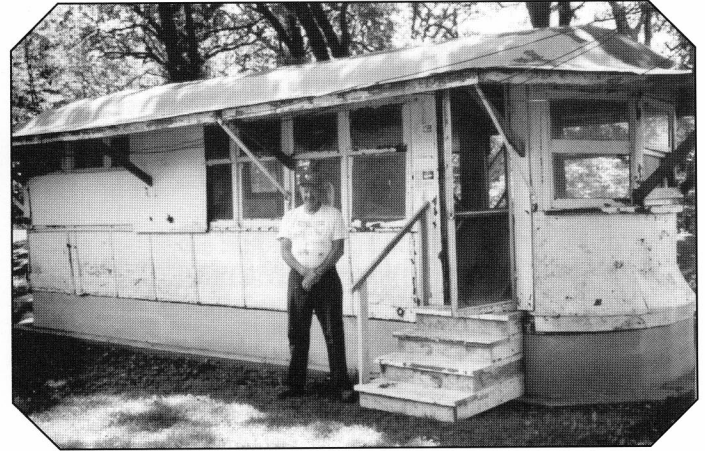
The original streetcar was once a diner on Route 66 in Gardner. The tentative plan is to restore it similar to how it appeared at that time. The little structure has a very fascinating history.

Mr. Tom Perkins, long time resident of Gardner has been the leading force in starting this project. When Tom heard about the Preservation Committee plan to do some work on the old streetcar, he contacted me. He said that he was a retired contractor who still had many tools available. He volunteered to do the hardest job of all - that is to jack up the

structure and put a footing and foundation under it. I asked why he was willing to do this for us, and he said, "Bob & Peggy Kraft, who own and run the Riviera Restaurant (Hall of Fame Member) have always treated my sons with respect. They provided part time jobs for them as they grew up." Tom wanted to return the favor. Tom is heavily involved as a Boy Scout leader and appreciates when adults help children. So Tom and his three sons virtually got on their hands and knees and went to work. Tom said the streetcar was very unstable due to the old heavy canopy that is attached.

Before Tom and his sons started, we discussed finances. Tom said he would provide all labor free; he just needed the necessary materials of concrete, concrete blocks, etc. The estimated cost was \$800.00-\$1,000.00. I said go ahead, preservation donations would be able to cover it. When the job was finished I asked Tom what the expenses were. He said he was able to get many things donated. As a result the whole job cost just a little over \$300.00. When you see what he did for that amount you will be amazed.

This winter Tom plans on restoring the rotted windows. The Preservation Committee plans on replacing the floor and scraping and painting the interior and exte-



Tom Perkins at Riviera Streetcar

rior. The original streetcar bell rings loud and clear. It just needs a new foot pedal. We will definitely restore it all for you.

The purpose of a preservation project on Route 66 is to save a piece of historic nostalgia and help communities and businesses. This will be another pearl in the string of pearls we are creating to draw tourists off the interstate and onto our beloved Mother Road, Route 66.

I personally thank Mr. Perkins and his sons for their tremendous assistance to our newest roadside attraction. Stop and see it. Tom even built a set of stairs, cleaned out the interior, then stayed up most of the night before the Motor Tour to repair the original screen door. So wander around inside and use your imagination just a little bit of what it might have been like in bygone days. It has a lot of stories to tell.

If you want to be a part of the Preservation Committee, please call me at my new phone number, 815-458-6616.

Traveling the ...NEW, HISTORIC ROUTE 66 OF ILLINOIS

proudly presented by John Weiss

The newest ••UPDATED 4TH EDITION•• is now available.

Many new places to discover & taste treats to enjoy!

Considered the **BIBLE OF ILLINOIS ROUTE 66**

\$14.95 plus \$4.00 shipping. IL residents add .87¢ tax

Mail to: **Historic 66, P.O. Box 616
Wilmington, IL 60481**

**TALKS & GUIDED TOURS AVAILABLE
PHONE (815) 458-6616**

THE CHANGING FACE OF ILLINOIS ROUTE 66

Since the first edition of the guide book,

*Traveling the ...NEW, HISTORIC ROUTE 66 OF ILLINOIS,
many changes have taken place.*

*It is fascinating to compare the 1997 edition with newest 2001 edition.
Listed here are some of the sites that are no longer in existence or unavailable.
Also listed are some of the new or newly discovered places to visit and enjoy
that can be found in the 2001 edition.*

GONE FOREVER

Crosley Museum • Double Nickel Drive In • Creamy Delight • Several Bridges
A&W Restaurant • Original Steak & Shake • Mail Pouch Tobacco Barn
Stefanich's Restaurant • Beich Candy Tours • Lamplighter Inn Tower

WHAT'S NEWLY ADDED

5 Tiffany style windows, & skylight at the top of a grand marble staircase
Site of the Murphy's Restaurant • The domed ceiling of the oldest bank in town
NASCAR racing facility • 300 plus antique cars to see & purchase • Route 66 Welcome Center
Iron Works hiking, biking, walking tour & trail • Phone booth on a roof • & more
Please support all of our wonderful businesses on Rte 66 or the Gone Forever list will grow!

WALKER AND RUNNER MEET ON ILLINOIS ROUTE 66

Billie Gardner, who was walking Route 66 from California to Illinois, and David Williams who runs the website Route66.com and is currently running from Illinois to California, crossed paths north of Lincoln on May 15, 2001. Billie was walking for her charity, Walk for Babies, while David is recreating the Bunion Run, which was run in 1928 from California to New York, and followed Route 66 from Los Angeles to Chicago before turning east to New York. Both were in very good spirits when I caught up with them a few miles north of Lincoln. They met, shook hands, talked for about an hour comparing notes and then they went on their ways. Billie finished her walk on



Billie Gardner and David Williams

May 27, but before she finished, she attended the motor tour meeting on May 20 and helped with the preparation of the goody bags. David arrived in Odell on May 10, during the Hampton Inn workday at the Standard Station. Hampton Inns took an interest in his trek and agreed to sponsor him by giving him free lodging on his journey. Both Billie and David stated that the Illinois Association and its members were most helpful on their journeys. Billie's travels are complete, but David will keep running until he arrives in Santa Monica on September 5. Come back and visit us anytime Billie and David. You both are most welcome here.

ODYSSEYcontinued from page 9

THURSDAY JULY 19

Ate a satisfying breakfast at the Inn of the Big Texan with Frank & Roxane. George and Sharon Leone joined us as they also stayed overnight in Amarillo. When we departed Amarillo, our first stop was the Cadillac Ranch for more photos and such. This is where ten Cadillacs are buried nose first into the ground. While the rest of the gang took pictures, I climbed up on the shell of a 1959 Cadillac and reflected. My grandmother passed away on June 15 and today would have been her 85th birthday. The 1959 Cadillac was symbolic because I remember her and Grandpa having a 59 Caddy Deville when I was a youngster. Only fitting that we were making the Route 66 trip in a Deville now. I also wrote a message in a tribute to her on the top of that car. After we left, the landscape can be best described as FLAT!! We drove on into Vega and met Dot who operated Dot's Mini Museum, best described as an old building on her property with

articles from the past and some Route 66 things as well.. Then it was on to Adrian, where we met Fran and JoAnn, the proprietors of the Adrian Cafe and the braintrust behind the Midpoint Monument. Adrian is the official midpoint of Route 66 between Chicago and Santa Monica. They are selling bricks that are to be used in the building of the monument. You can have your name inscribed on them or whatever you want to say. Each Association has a brick already made and on display in the cafe. Immediately after Adrian, the landscape began to change, as we were entering the high plains. We had to jump on I-40 for about 18 miles as this portion of 66 is buried underneath. Then we exited to see the ghost town of Glenrio. As was the case in Texola, the same eerie feeling was there, the wind sounded like passing cars, maybe the ghosts of travelers who wanted a room at The First/Last Motel in Texas. The old water tower had water running out of a leaky pipe, the water table must be

pretty deep here, hard telling how long water has been running out of there. This town left quite an empty feeling, especially since it was a booming town just a scant 35-40 years ago before I-40 came in. Straight west into New Mexico we traveled on an old gravel section of 66 to San Jon (pronounced hone)-quite a scenic stretch. From San Jon we pulled into Tucumcari around 2:30 Mountain time. This was a short day of driving, a day to unwind and relax. We did stop at TeePee Curios first before checking into the Blue Swallow Motel. A large 66 contingent enjoyed dinner at a Route 66 landmark in Tucumcari, the Pow Wow Inn. It was Frank & Rox, Annette & Jeff, Bob, Yvonne, Brendan and Allison Gehl, Jeff Meyer and Lynn Bagdon. Afterwards we returned to the Blue Swallow and revived a 1940's tradition where we just sat outside and enjoyed a few drinks on a cool evening and just visited with each other. The funny part of the evening was when artist Jerry

continued on page 12

McClanahan arrived and got to sleep on a pullout couch in the lobby of the motel. Ahhhh, that's the spirit of Route 66!

FRIDAY JULY 20

Up and at 'em early I was, and I went out to buy donuts for breakfast for everyone in our overnight group at the Blue Swallow. This would be a short driving day as well, about 175 miles to Albuquerque. We all said our goodbyes at the Blue Swallow and left there about 9:30. We followed Jeff & Lynn



**Blue Swallow Motel
Tucumcari, NM**

down old 66. From Tucumcari we continued west through Palomes, Montoya and then into Santa Rosa, where we caught up with another Illinois Association member, Cook County Board Member Jeff Geisler. Jeff took a train to Albuquerque and rented a car to do some sightseeing. We decided to have lunch in town, but we stopped to see a couple of sights first, most notably the Blue Hole, which is an 81 foot hole of clear spring fed water which is a divers dream and a swimmers delight. First we went to the swimming area where Frank decided to take a mid morning dip in the 61 degree water. "Quite refreshing" he exclaimed, then we drove down to the diving area. The water was so clear there you could see where a blue circle was roped around on the bottom of the hole. After this, we stopped at Joseph's Cafe for lunch. We would have loved to try the Club Cafe, but it has been closed since 1992. But Joseph's didn't disappoint us. Started in 1956, the menu features many excellent Mexican and Southwestern dishes. Just west of Santa Rosa, NM we had to get on I-40 for an unavoidable 70 mile stretch of interstate driving. This is the longest section of interstate driving along the old Route 66 corridor. We got off the highway for a quick break and looksee at Cline's

continued on page 13

SPEAKING IN PLATES



Plate on Bob's 1966 Mustang

In keeping with the long standing tradition of this publication, I will continue the Speaking in Plates section as long as there are people that are willing to show off their plates or send in what their plate reads. I will create an updated list of plates and print them in a future issue of "The 66 News". This issues entry; MVN ON 66 comes from Bob and Barb LaFollette of Galesburg, Illinois, which they proudly display, on their 1966 Ford Mustang convertible. I will christen the new and updated list with Tom Teague and his Illinois version and my Iowa version of KIX ON 66 to start the list. Please submit your plate entry to Newsletter Editor, 2743 S. Veterans Parkway, Springfield, IL 62704. If you send photos, and want them returned, please send a note stating so. Depending on the volume of mail I receive, some photos may not be used but your plate will be acknowledged in future issues. Let's have some fun, and keep your eyes peeled for plates with a Route 66 theme, especially those from outside of Illinois.

SPECIAL EVENT PLATES FOR 2002



The 2001 Special Event Plates are barely a memory and yet its time to start planning for plates for 2002. So therefore I am asking those who had plates in 2001 to send in a note a phone call, or e-mail to me to get on the list for next years plates. We may do 150-200 again depending on the demand, but we need at least a minimum of 50 names before I send the request letter to Springfield. Send the info to Jeff LaFollette, whose address, phone and e-mail appear on page 2 of this newsletter. So please get your name on the list soon, and if you want the same plate you had previously, then please indicate the number and I will save it for you. Thank you all for the huge success of the 2001 plate and I'm sure that the 75th Anniversary edition of the Illinois Route 66 plate will become a cherished collectors item.

OLLIEcontinued from page 7

Hamel Lutheran church as we breezed by. Hamel citizens were giving ice cream bars and memorabilia at their unofficial stop at the intersection of State route 140 and the "Mother Road". Their "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" banners were proudly displayed on telephone poles through the village. Between Hamel and Edwardsville, we passed the home and proud display of "Route 66" signs in the front yard of "Hall of Fame" member, Wilton Rinkel. We would find Wilton in Edwardsville at the "Festival 66" in the city Park. He was helping his daughter and son-in-law, Linda and Rich Henry selling memorabilia recently purchased from the Association.

After visiting at Edwardsville's "Festival 66" Judy and I started

continued on page 13



Albuquerque Festival

Corners. I expected an older building type truck stop, but it was huge and very modern. It was an oasis for sure. When we exited off I-40 at Moriarty to rejoin 66, I saw a man walking along the road, and to our surprise, it was David Williams, who runs the website route66.com. David is running the length of 66, and he began his journey in Illinois on May 5 in Chicago. We chatted with him, shared some water and grapes with him, and also some encouragement. Frank & Rox made plans for to help him run his section from Moriarty to Albuquerque on Saturday and Rox decided she'd run about 6-8 miles with him. From Moriarty we continued toward Tijeras, which is Spanish for scissors. The name was derived from the cuts in the mountains as we approached the eastern edge of Albuquerque. Beautiful, majestic scenery to say the least. We then entered the city on Central Ave. which was the main Route 66 artery. We took in the sights on Central then headed to our hotel to check in and relax. That night Frank & Rox went to see David at his hotel and make plans to run with him and Annette & I went on the Neon bus tour of all the old neon signs still lit up in ABQ at night. After the tour we went back to the hotel for a nightcap and then to bed because Saturday promised to be a busy day.

SATURDAY JULY 21

Annette & I slept in a little while Frank & Rox went to run with David Williams on the portion of the road from Moriarty to Albuquerque. We hitched a ride with Jeff Geisler to the fairgrounds. Meanwhile Rox ended up running 10 miles with David. I think it truly wonderful that Frank and Rox, 1400 miles from home helped David in New Mexico on his trek! We saw a female motorcycle show called the Hardly Angels then worked our way to the antique car

continued on page 14

MERAMEC CAVERNS BARN

The Preservation Committee would like to publicly thank Mr. Lester Turilli Jr.

He is the owner of the Meramec Caverns in Missouri.

When we restored the first barn in Cayuga a couple of years ago, he immediately sent a check to cover our expenses. When he was contacted, to be made aware that the committee was going to do the impossible Hamel Barn, he immediately sent a check for \$600.00 and offered technical assistance. Having the support of businesses along Route 66 is extremely important for our continuing success.

Next time you visit Meramec Caverns, be sure to personally thank Mr. Turilli Jr. for his continued support.

WELCOME NEW MOTOR TOUR CO-CHAIRS

The motor tour will take on a different look in 2002.

Jeff LaFollette, chairman of the tour from 1998-2001 will be moving on to do other things so we would like to take this opportunity to welcome Ollie Schwallenstecker of Bunker Hill and Bill Przybylski of Crete as our new motor tour co-chairs for the 2002 event. Bill will be handling the duties north of wherever the banquet will be conducted and Ollie will be handling the duties in the south. Bill is the current Vice-President of the Association and Ollie is Macoupin County board representative. If you went on the 2001 tour you got a taste of Ollie's experience working on the motor tour as he organized the Macoupin County stops in Carlinville, Benld, and DeCamp Junction. Bill has also worked to set up events in the north like helping to organize the stop at White Fence Farm and was handing out passport stickers on the Brick Road near Auburn. If any of you have suggestions for the 2002 tour, or would like to be a part of the planning for the event, contact Bill at 708-672-7937 or Ollie at 618-585-3081. I know that Bill & Ollie will appreciate your help in making the 2002 another showcase event.

OLLIEcontinued from page 12

back to DeCamp Junction for dinner. But before we could leave the parking lot a couple in a yellow 73 Mustang convertible had an engine flame out. The engine stopped and refused to start. Lucky for them, Bill Przybylski and his wife were standing on the sidewalk nearby. Bill pulled a can of ether from his Mustang and gave the 73 a shot in the air cleaner. No good! The Mustang suffered from lack of a spark. I stated, "I have the fix". Mustangs and other early Fords are prone to suffer from a failed condenser. I carry a spare condenser and the tools to change one in my glove compartment. In about 5 minutes the Mustang's distributor cap was removed and the defective condenser was replaced. A happy 73 Mustang driver was soon on his way home. Bill and I discussed who was going to take the 2002 motor tour chairman. We decided that we could make a good team. I suggested to Bill that if he would take the north end of the "Motor Tour". I would take the south. He said, "I'll think about it".

show. I knew that once we got here we probably would be here most of the day because people would see me and want to ask me about Illinois and how they could sell their products there, or ask about the road sights there. I finally got to meet Michael Wallis, what an honor! I purchased his 75th anniversary edition of his Route 66-The Mother road book and decided that only his autograph was going in this one. Many other Route 66 authors were there as well, including Illinois' own John Weiss. Jeff Meyer & Lynn Bagdon had a table set up with Route 66 postcards, plus tour guides and maps from the Association. As I stated earlier, we hung out there most of the day. Then that evening was the prestigious Steinbeck Awards. Senator Pete Domenici and Rep. Heather Wilson of New Mexico were there to greet everyone, as well as Albuquerque Mayor Jim Baca. Outgoing New Mexico Assn. President Rich Williams and new incoming president Johnny Meier spoke to the group as well. Several items were auctioned for a fund raising effort. Then came the awards, first the Cyrus Avery Award, which was given to the state that demonstrated the best preservation effort and it was given to the Route 66 Association of Illinois. What an honor to go up on stage to receive the award with my wife, Annette by my side, and also with my Preservation Committee Chairman and friend John Weiss and his lovely wife Lenore, and to see the crowd giving us a standing ovation, especially the large Illinois contingent that was there. It was a moment to be proud of for sure! And the Steinbeck Award was presented to Jim Ross of Oklahoma for his work along the highway with his book and maps as well as his work in discovering lost stretches of the Mother Road. And Association member Bob Gehl's daughter Allison won the costume contest and received a trophy. This was an evening none of us will ever forget as long as we live.



Allison Gehl wins the costume contest

(To be continued in the Winter 2001 edition)

IN OTHER NEWS

One of the Association's original board members passed away recently. **Ray Schroeder** of Hinsdale formerly of Dwight died on May 31. Ray was one of the original members of the Association and attended the meetings that formed the group in 1989 and was a board member from Livingston County until 1997. His wife Dorothy, who passed away in January, preceded Ray in death. They will both be missed and remembered fondly by those that knew them.

Sue Waldmire is the new owner of the Cozy Dog in Springfield. The Cozy opened on Sunday June 10 for a motor tour breakfast and they got quite a crowd that morning. We wish Sue the best in her business and hope everyone will stop for a Cozy Dog while visiting Springfield. Oh yes, and don't forget to order fries and a side of chili too. That's good eatin'!!

Association at-large board member **Johnny (Dave) Miller**, his wife **Kathy** and daughter **Nikki** celebrated the Fourth of July in an unusual way. When the craving hits, the only thing to do is satisfy it. The three of them took a drive from their home in Posen to St. Louis for a Ted Drewes frozen custard treat. John reported that it was a twelve hour round trip, including time to savor the treats and catch a few Route 66 sights along the way, but it was well worth it. Sad to say, but Johnny didn't get enough extra to pass around at the board meeting the following Sunday. Well, I suppose if you want a Ted Drewes, you have to travel Route 66 yourselves and satisfy your cravings.

The National Historic Route 66 Federation will be conducting the John Steinbeck and Cyrus Avery award ceremony in Springfield, Illinois in 2002. Representing the Association were **John & Lenore Weiss** at the press conference. Author Michael Wallis was in attendance to help publicize this event as well. The dates for the event are Sept. 27-29, 2002. Plans are already underway for a large scale event like the one held in Albuquerque, New Mexico this year. More information will be forthcoming

in future issues of The 66 News, and also on our association website. You can get more information on the event at the website address www.route66fest.com or by calling 1-866-RTE66IL (783-6645).

INTERESTING NOTE:

During the Steinbeck Awards banquet, Senator **Pete Domenici**, gave a brief talk. He did mention that he challenged Illinois next year to top what New Mexico did this year. Later, your association president Jeff LaFollette announced "Senator, we respectfully accept the challenge."

At the Motor Tour Banquet, one of the winners of the \$100.00 drawing walked immediately over to John Weiss and gave him \$40.00 of his winnings. He said, "Use it for preservation." After the banquet, John received another check for \$50.00 from **John Ruh**. His note also instructed John to use the funds for preservation. We succeed thanks to people like them.

CORRECTION: Accidentally omitted from the list of volunteers that worked so hard on the Hamel Barn restoration were **Larry & Ann Scinto**. The 66 News apologizes for this error.

Due to space limitations, the Preservation Committee minutes of April 7, 2001 will not be printed in this issue. They are available to anyone who would like a copy of them. 38 were in attendance. Contact John Weiss if you have questions.

On April 20, the mayor of Gardner, **Tom Wise** presented to John Weiss, a symbolic key to the village. It was the mayor's way of thanking John for all the tourists he brings to town by way of bus and auto tours. The main attraction is the historic two cell jail. The mayor always personally greets all groups who come to explore the jail. A new brick sidewalk has recently been installed with more walkway planned. This is a wonderful Route 66 roadside attraction. Visit it soon. While in town enjoy some of the other local attractions and their great restaurants.

TALES ALONG ROUTE 66

By Ted & Marilyn Giovanazzi

(Ed. Note Ted & Marilyn are regular contributors and have traveled along Route 66 in Illinois and collected many great road tales, as told to them by the people who lived and worked along the road)

ENTERPRISING

During the heyday of Route 66 in Odell, Illinois there were, beginning at the north end where the railroad crossed south to where the restored Standard Station stands, no less than eleven service stations, two lunch rooms, and several cabins. A fellow started the most interesting station with a 55 gallon drum, a few quarts of oil, a length of hose and a hand pump. The enterprising individual who began this way later built a shack and stayed in business from approximately 1936-1938.

John Stonecipher • Odell, Illinois

PROMOTIONS

Promotions to sell gas along the Odell section of Route 66 were sometimes misleading. Once a month on a Saturday the stations advertised what they called "Premium Saturday". They offered eleven gallons of gas for one dollar or a free quart of oil with an eleven gallon purchase. The gimmick was that most autos of that time had only a ten gallon capacity gas tank. Considering you had to have some gas left in your tank, or you pushed your car in, the eleven gallon deal wasn't often taken advantage of.

John Stonecipher • Odell, Illinois

CONGESTION

The church one block north of the Odell Standard Station also had an elementary school and high school on the same grounds. The "Famous Tunnel" which was located on the north corner of the church grounds was built to help students and other pedestrians cross Route 66 safely. Imagine the congestion that took place in this short stretch of approximately six blocks. The remains of the tunnel can still be seen on both east and west sides of Route 66 and are now marked with an information sign on the east side of the road. We are told that the city of Pontiac also found it necessary to have one of these tunnels, but no one is sure exactly where it was located.

John Stonecipher • Odell, Illinois

THE COAL MINE

Gardner had a short history of being a coal mining town. There was once a mine located about a block away from Burt Parkinson's print shop. Across the tracks where a residential area is now located, stood the main shaft and a sixty foot mountain of waste material (slag) which was sorted from the coal. The mine was closed after a few years of operation and after a bad accident resulting in the death of two miners. The waste material was put to good use. The material was used by the railroad to help elevate its overpass viaduct, which became part of the Route 66 bypass

Burt Parkinson • Gardner, Illinois

DID YOU KNOW?

Our own Burt Parkinson of the Hall of Fame in addition to being the owner, publisher, editor, reporter, and printer of the long time family owned Gardner newspaper was also a flyer, radio talk show host, deputy sheriff, amateur archaeologist, and a promoter of amateur shows. The shows were staged in many of the small towns in Illinois. In association with a local resident of Gardner, and the old Chicago WLS Barn dance, he gave many potential "Opry Stars" a start in show business. Gene Autry and Pat Buttram appeared with him on stage many times before going to Hollywood to become famous. Pat Buttram, the famous sidekick of Gene Autry, and also the man who played "Mr. Haney" on the television show "Green Acres" was a hog farmer for a number of years at a location just east of Gardner.

Ted & Marilyn Giovanazzi
Frankfort, Illinois

BUSINESS INTERESTS

The infamous Al Capone and his brother Ralph were frequent visitors to the Route 66 stretch between Dwight and Gardner. It wasn't so much that Big Al liked the country air or any of the establishments along the route, but strictly business. Many of the farms along the way housed the "stills" that produced his product.

Burt Parkinson • Gardner, Illinois

Route 66 Association of Illinois Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Illinois County (if applicable): _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Interests in Route 66: _____

How I can help: _____

Annual Dues

General: \$15

Family: \$25

Business: \$30

Foreign: \$35

Lifetime: \$200

U.S. funds only, please

\$10 fee for returned checks

Send to:

Membership

Route 66 Assn. of Illinois

2743 Veterans Pkwy., Room 166

Springfield, IL 62704

Membership runs May 1 - April 30

Send address changes and questions to Membership at the address above or e-mail changes to blitz66@chicagonet.net



MOTOR TOUR MEMORIES



Photos Courtesy of Bob Gehl

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGAN

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS
THE NEWS

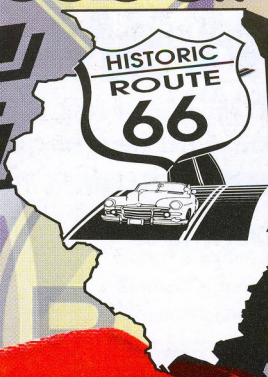
2743 Veterans Parkway, #166
Springfield, IL 62704

Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lincoln, IL
Permit No. 66

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

THE NEWS

WINTER 2001



UNITED WE STAND

HISTORIC
ROUTE
66

ILLINOIS

MISSOURI

KANSAS

OKLAHOMA

TEXAS

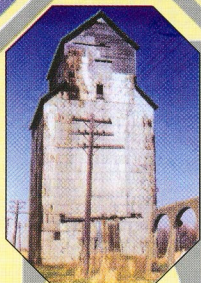
NEW MEXICO

ARIZONA

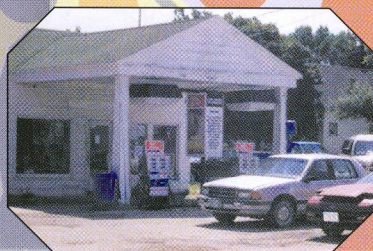
CALIFORNIA

GOD BLESS AMERICA

WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS



HISTORY OF
BALLARD ELEVATOR



BECKER'S
MARATHON

TALES
ALONG RT. 66

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS

OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

The Route 66 Association of Illinois is a not-for-profit organization. Its purpose is to preserve, promote and help people enjoy the road in this state. Officers and board members are available at most reasonable times to answer questions and hear comments about Route 66. Please feel free to contact them when you need to. The date to the right of each person's name is when his or her term expires.

PRESIDENT

Jeff LaFollette, 10-03
2351 Highway 130
New Liberty, IA 52765
563-893-6653
E-Mail: AJon66@aol.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Bill Przybylski, 10-02
24156 S. Kings Rd.
Crete, IL 60417
708-672-7937

TREASURER

Martin Blitstein, 10-02
9280 Drummond
Tinley Park, IL 60477
708-444-1312
E-Mail: blitz66@chicagonet.net

SECRETARY

Cathie Stevanovich, 10-03
9280 Drummond
Tinley Park, IL 60477
708-444-1312
E-Mail: cathiesb@earthlink.net

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Kathy Miller, 10-03
14828 San Francisco Ave.
Posen, IL 60469
708-389-3823
E-Mail: Kathleen7081@home.com

PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

John Weiss, Chairman
22550 W. Rt. 113
Wilmington, IL 60481
815-458-6616
E-Mail: KAYO66@aol.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Jeff LaFollette
2351 Highway 130
New Liberty, IA 52765
563-893-6653
E-Mail: AJon66@aol.com

Photo Credits this issue:

*Annette LaFollette, Randy Smith
John Weiss*

*Magazine designed by
Creative Images Center, Geneseo, IL*

BOARD MEMBERS

John Miller, **Cook**, 10-03
14828 San Francisco Ave.
Posen, IL 60469
708-389-3823
E-Mail: kixonrte66@hotmail.com

Lynn Bagdon, **DuPage**, 10-02
P.O. Box 313
Aurora, IL 60507
630-531-4577
E-Mail: lulupic66@aol.com

Larry Boyd, **Will**, 10-03
733 Fairlane Dr.
Joliet, IL 60435-5155
815-725-2457
E-Mail: Boydgrt@aol.com

Marty Bilecki, **Grundy**, 10-03
4200 Bargo Lane
Morris, IL 60450
815-941-3312

Margaret Hettwer, **Livingston**, 10-02
318 E. Elk St.
Odell, IL 60460
815-998-2219

C.J. Beeler, **McLean**, 10-02
2 Canterbury Court
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-874-2832

Ernie Edwards, **Logan**, 10-03
101 W. Oak St.
Broadwell, IL 62623
217-732-2337

John Murphy, **Sangamon**, 10-02
P.O. Box 500
Pawnee, IL 62558
217-625-7183

Tonya Flannery, **Montgomery**, 10-03
120 E. Ryder St.
Litchfield, IL 62056
217-324-5253
E-Mail: flannery94@hotmail.com

MACOUPIN

Oliver Schwallenstecker, 10-02
620 E. Warren St., Box 477
Bunker Hill, IL 62014
618-585-3081
E-Mail: mt_ollie@madisontelco.net

Linda Henry, **Madison**, 10-02
Old Rt. 66 & Madison Ave.
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-5655
E-Mail: route66@midwest.net

Wilton Rinkel, **St. Clair**, 10-02
5539 State Rt. 157 North
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-656-1625

AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS

Louis Vargo, 10-03
14911 Richmond Ave
Posen, IL 60469
708-339-3640

Duke Cartwright, 10-02
407 Pasadena Ave.
Crest Hill, IL 60435
815-726-3574
E-Mail: dukecartwright@Mediaone.net

Robert Gehl, 10-03
1667 Timber Ridge Estates
Wildwood, MO 63011
636-458-2244
E-Mail: rgehl@earthlink.net

Marie Jibben, 10-02
215 Lawnridge Dr.
Creve Coeur, IL 61610
309-694-4142
E-Mail: MAJ66@earthlink.net

Jeff Geisler, 10-03
814 W. 61st St.
LaGrange Highlands, IL 60525
708-354-8746
E-Mail: Route66Railfan@msn.com

Executive Committee:
The officers, plus Linda Henry
and Jeff Geisler

Association Website: <http://www.il66assoc.org>

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Association publishes *The 66 News* in March, June, September & December as a service to its members, other people and related organizations. Contributions are welcome, but we do not pay. However, authors retain all copyright privileges. Submit all stories, photos and ads at least six weeks prior to publication. Address contributions and inquiries to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois, 2743 Veterans Parkway, Room 166, Springfield, IL 62704. **Advertising Rates:** \$100 for a whole page, \$60 for a half page, \$40 for a quarter page and \$25 for a business card ad. Send camera ready copy only.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

As promised in the Fall 2001 Edition of The 66 News!, here is a complete list of 164 new members that have joined the Association from April 1 through October 1. We extend a warm welcome to all of you for joining our Association.

ILLINOIS

Ron & Carol Aeschilmann, Elwood
Darrell Alleman, Magnolia
Donna & Dave Almon, Oak Lawn
Leone Anderson, Stockton
Frank Bartilotta Jr., Chicago
David Beranek, Burbank
Darrell Bergeron, Manhattan
Brian Bielarz, Mt. Prospect
Bill Blanchard, Frankfort
Ron Bohanek, Tinley Park
Mary Brancato, Springfield
Jennifer Brown, Romeoville
Ronnie Bruner, Cullom
Ed Busch, Middletown
Gerald & Mary Caldwell, Mason City
Arthur Carvajal, Chicago
Brian Cenek, Berwyn
Carmen Chidichimo, Tinley Park
David Clark, Chicago
Donald Clark, Batavia
Marty Clarkston, Indianola
John Cochonour, Tinley Park
Coliseum Antique Mall, Benld
Carlinville Comm. C of C, Carlinville
James & Catherine Cox, Rochelle
Jay Crites, Elk Grove Village
Dennis Davis, Normal
Anthony Dinovo, Roselle
William Dixon, Chicago
Joe Dolezal, Willowbrook
John Drake, Bartlett
Gerald Dzwonkiewicz, Evergreen Park
Philip Edwards, Normal
Larry Eslick, Woodstock
Jim Fleischman, Palatine
Don Ford, Pontiac
Anthony Freels, McHenry
Gardner Restaurant, Gardner
Jules Giannerini, Morris
Ann Marie Given, Woodstock
Rick Graham, Springfield
Greg Hill, Champaign
Steven Jaffe, Glenview
Frank Jannusch, Steger
Keith & Samantha Johnsen, Montgomery
Joliet Historical Museum, Joliet
Mary Ann Junkroski, Naperville
Tom & Corrinne Kaiser, Burbank
Rob & Lorie Kaiser, Tinley Park
Robert Kalicki, Hoffman Estates
Jack Kenzie, Rock Island
Robert Killackey Jr. New Lenox

Kenneth & Celeste Kirschner, Flossmoor
Robert Klopfer, Riverwoods
Kenneth Konecnik, Lake Forest
Ronald Konopasek, Cicero
Jerry Kracinski, Lockport
Blair Kuckie, Palos Park
Denise Kuczynski, Downers Grove
Sharon Lagestee, Crete
Harold Larsen, Woodstock
Roy LaRussa, Normal
Mark Lay, Joliet
Robert Lindvall, Machesney Park
Atlanta Public Library, Atlanta
Lindell Loveless, Gillespie
Luna Café, Mitchell
M R A Inc, Benld
Tim Masinick, Elburn
John McKelvey, Union
Robert McClurg, Towanda
AnnMarie McDermott, Tinley Park
Ruth Meyer, Chicago
Algimantas Mickus, Marengo
Melvin Miller, Westmont
Mike Miller, Tinley Park
Kathy Morris, McHenry
Richard & Dondi Morrissey, Brookfield
John Murphy, Pawnee
Rey Navarro, Riverside
Ernest Neely, Hillside
Wayne Newman, Deerfield
Niehaus Cycle Sales, Litchfield
Daniel Oberle, Edwardsville
James & Suzanne Paese, Des Plaines
Jim Pawlik, Hinsdale
Carol Peters, Hinsdale
The Picco Family, Dwight
Postal Annex, Springfield
Buzz & Carol Roettges, Orland Park
Kim Rosendahl, Springfield
Danny Sauer, Lincoln
Michael Schafer, Lee
Ed Schuman, Tinley Park
Jerri Seratt, Harwood Heights
James Sharp, Paxton
Shaw's Club 66 Bar & Grill, Litchfield
Brendan Sheehy, Oak Lawn
Frederick Smith, Pontiac
Suzanne Smith, Wabash
Howard Solotroff, Evanston
SW Illinois Tourism Bureau,
Fairview Heights
Rick Stang, Pontiac
Rebecca Stoker, Elgin

Nicky Stratton, Springfield
John Stremsterfer, Springfield
Sylvia's Gifts, Staunton
Dale Tammen, Ludlow
Charles Tiemann, Spring Valley
Adrian Tio, DeKalb
Ralph Tosti, Hinsdale
Ozinga Trans. Systems, Matteson
Linda Uebele, Mahomet
Edward Vehrs, Lockport
Stan Vorgias, Union
Larry Walsh, Midlothian
Paul Weese, Danville
John Weinhoeft, Springfield
Scott White, Chicago
Rod Wiethop, Effingham
Art Woolley, Bement
Nicholas Zekich, Chicago

OUT OF STATE

Steve Bowne, Kingstowne, VA
Mitzi Brownfield, Cloudfcroft, NM
Jean Bybee-Pierson, Seabrook, TX
James Datsko, Elk Rapids, MI
Drake Daum, Dayton, OH
Ray Davis, Fort Lupton, CO
Roger K. England Family,
Auburn, WA
Paul Haller, Englewood, OH
James Hattauer, Westerville, OH
Perry Hickman, Ann Arbor, MI
Hilton Hotels Corp. Memphis, TN
Jackie Kapeller, Overland Park, KS
Lance Llewellyn, Kirksville, MO
Jim Luikens, Hudsonville, MI
George Mahler, Pacific, MO
Elaine Mariolle, Tuscon, AZ
Steve Mattox, Wanatah, IN
Gerald & Colleen Mike, Eagan, MI
Frank Miller, Calhoun, GA
Julius Nabors, Boaz, AL
Jerrell Parchman, Memphis, TN
Michael Parkhill, San Diego, CA
John Phillips, Chapel Hill, NC
John Poisson, Auburn, ME
Jerry Rabe, LaGrange, IN
Steve Smelser, Lawrence, KS
James Thole, Manchester, MO
Allan Tyndell, Livonia, MI
Toni Welter, Oxford, WI
Tim Wollin, Blissfield, MI

UPCOMING BOARD MEETING

Our next meeting will be conducted on Sunday January 20, 2002 at the Heritage House Smorgasbord in Springfield. It is located at 3851 South 6th Street about a mile south of the Cozy Dog on the frontage road right before the I-55 interchange. The board meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m.. We will adjourn for lunch and eat there at the Heritage House. The dinner will be all you can eat buffet for \$10.00 per person. The General meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m. We hope to have a program for the general session of the meeting. There will be a lot to discuss at this board meeting, with the motor tour coming up in the summer, and also the International Route 66 Festival in Springfield in September 2002. Come and share ideas, and if you want to help with either of these events, this is the meeting to attend. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Jeff LaFollette at 563-893-6653.

SEEKING HALL OF FAME NOMINATIONS

The Association is once again seeking Hall of Fame nominations. This year's winners will be inducted during our annual motor tour in June. With them, membership in the Hall will top 50. It is already the most visited Route 66 attraction in the country.

The nomination process is intentionally simple. Any person, place, business or event that helped give Route 66 such special character in Illinois is eligible. Just write a short description of your nominee. Give as many details and dates as you can. Tell why you think they merit the honor. Old photos, newspaper clips and other documentation are welcome, but not necessary.

Please submit your nomination no later than February 28, 2002, to Tom Teague, Hall of Fame Chairman, 1208 W. Edwards, Springfield, IL 62704. The Hall of Fame Committee will meet in early March to consider this year's nominees. Committee members include the Association's officers, several Hall of Famers and historian, and Tom, who is executive director of the Illinois State Historical Society. Winners and their nominators will be notified by mid-March.

If you have any questions, contact Tom at teague66@eosinc.com or at 217-787-8839.

OCTOBER ELECTION RESULTS

Here are the results from the elections from the October 21st meeting, which was conducted in Normal. Your newly elected and re-elected officials to two-year terms are:

OFFICERS

President: Jeff LaFollette - New Liberty, Iowa
Secretary: Cathie Stevanovich - Tinley Park
Corresponding Secretary: Kathy Miller - Posen

COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Cook: John Miller - Posen
Will: Larry Boyd - Joliet
Grundy: Marty Bilecki - Morris
Logan: Ernie Edwards - Broadwell
Montgomery: Tonya Flannery - Litchfield

AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS

Louis Vargo - Posen
Robert Gehl - Wildwood, Missouri
Jeff Geisler - LaGrange Highlands

The board appointed the vacant Sangamon County Board position, and John Murphy of Pawnee will fill the term for one year.

The Route 66 Association of Illinois would like to thank the following people who have served with honor and dignity as board members or officers.

Marilyn Pritchard — Marilyn served as Recording Secretary for 6 years and Corresponding Secretary for 2 years. Marilyn served as an officer for a total of 8 years, and we thank her for her continued dedication and service to Route 66 in Illinois.

Rich Henry — Rich served the board in various positions, most recently as Montgomery County Board representative. For two years Rich served concurrently as Macoupin County Board representative and also Vice-President for two years. We thank Rich for his years of service to the Association on the board.

Chester Henry — Chester is a Hall of Fame member who served as an at-large board member since 1997. Chester has served in various committees as well, and we thank him for his service to the road long after his retirement from the Illinois State Police.

Bob Borowiak — Bob served as the board member from Logan County for two years. Bob also owns Lincoln Printers, which prints "The 66 News!" We also thank Bob for his service to the Association.

BECKER'S MARATHON IN DWIGHT ATTAINS NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS

By Larry Boyd

The case for registration of the old Marathon Gas Station in the National Register of Historic Places was made in Springfield by Larry Boyd, a member of the Route 66 Preservation Committee on

September 13, 2001. Following the presentation, the Illinois Historic Sites Advisory Council voted unanimously to accept the nomination.

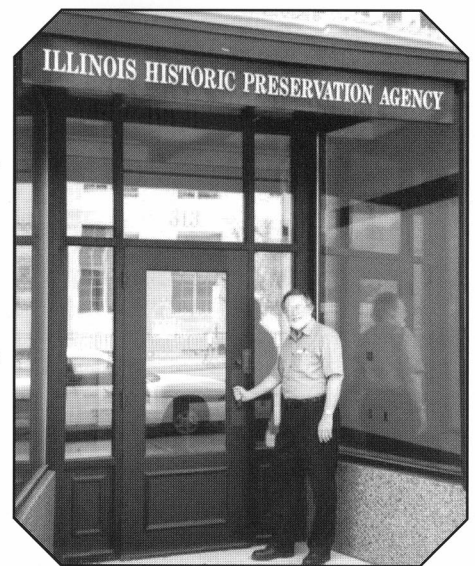
The Marathon Station is located at the corner of Route 66 and Route 17 in Dwight, Illinois. Jack Schore built the original structure and his son, Paul, on the Otto Strufe property in 1933. In 1936, Vernon VonQualen had the opportunity to lease and operate the station. Two years later, Mr. VonQualen sold the station to Basil (Tubby) Ambler and the property eventually became known as Ambler's Texaco Gas Station. Mr. Ambler sold the station to Earl Kochler in 1965 who, in turn, sold out to Royce McBeath sometime between 1965 and 1970. Since Mr. Ambler owned the property for the majority of the years of significance, the station has been registered under the name "Ambler's Texaco Gas Station".

While the station is known historically as a Texaco station, available pictures from the thirties and early forties indicate that it was affiliated with the old Indian Gasoline Company. The latter company eventually merged with Texaco and thus the station's identity changed to Texaco. A vestige of the old gasoline company can be found in the branded gasoline such as Fire Chief.

Phil Becker, current owner, began working at Ambler's in 1964, one year before Mr. Ambler sold the property to Mr. Kochler. On March 4, 1970, Mr. Becker took over the station from Mr. McBeath. About a year after purchasing the property, Texaco discontinued supplying the station with gasoline. Thus, Mr. Becker signed on with Marathon and the name of the station changed to Becker's Marathon Gas Station. Mr. Becker operated the station as Becker's Marathon Gas Station for over 26 years. Today, the building is leased out and used as an auto repair shop.

Referring to the station by its registered name, Ambler's Texaco Gas Station is a good example of the

house with canopy style with added bays. The original building is modeled after a design developed in 1916 by Standard Oil of Ohio which is commonly known as a house with canopy or domestic style gas station. As competition between gasoline stations increased and oil companies sought to minimize community opposition to the crudeness often associated with early gasoline distribution buildings, image became a selling point. Oil companies decided to hire architects to design stations that would look like a small house and blend into the neighborhood. The buildings were characterized by low-pitched roofs and were often based on traditional revival styles. Most house type gasoline stations included a small office, storage areas, and public restrooms. The canopy provided shelter for service attendants and customers from the inclement weather. The house with canopy style gas station was created to give travelers a comfortable feeling they could associate with home. It was thought that this association would create an atmosphere of trust in the commercial and recreational travelers of the time.

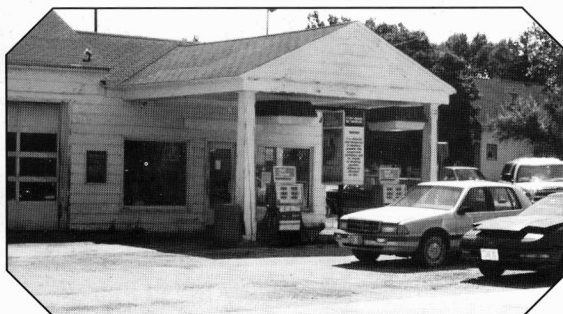


**Larry Boyd at the
IHPA Office in Springfield**

continued on page 6

While the addition of service bays to existing stations was common in the twenties and thirties, Ambler's did not add bays until the early forties. With the addition of the bay area, a variety of repair services could be offered throughout the year. The addition of the service bays to the Ambler's Texaco Gas Station created a house with bay type of gasoline station. It is one of the few remaining stations on Route 66 in Illinois that retains the integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association with gas stations along Route 66 during the period of significance. Today, the station is very cluttered but is in quite good condition. Mostly, only cosmetic repairs are needed. The building contains much of the original materials. Changes that have been made over the years primarily include windows in the office area and the piers supporting the canopy. Some lighting fixtures have been added as well.

Over the years, the station has drawn considerable interest from Route 66 fans. Since Phil Becker took over the property, he has been filmed for videos, documentaries, and a movie. Mr. Becker has been asked to pose for more pictures and sign more autographs than



Becker's Marathon in Dwight, A Route 66 Icon

he can count. One picture was even used on a Rand McNally map. Much of the interest in the station has come from Europeans who rent Harley Davidson motorcycles and cruise the old highway all the way to Los Angeles. While he ran the station, Mr. Becker kept an autograph book so he could keep track of his visitors. Signatures included tourists from all over the

United States as well as England, Australia, Japan, France, Brazil, Holland, New Zealand, and Switzerland.

Ambler's Texaco Gas Station has served the town of Dwight and the travelers along Route 66 for many years, not just as a place to purchase gasoline and repair cars, but as an important center for social gatherings. Mr. Becker understood the attraction of hanging out with the guys at the station. He grew up in a house across the street and remembered being at the station "all the time". Talk to the old-timers and you will hear numerous stories about the help provided people in distress.

One of the last of its kind, the old station no longer serves up gasoline. But, with its inclusion in the Registry of Historic Places, the way is open for rebirth as a place reminding us of the past and recalling cherished memories.

*** ROUTE 66 BUSINESS FOR SALE ***

ROUTE 66 SODA AND BOTTLING

Very well established business (5 years). Hundreds of satisfied customers, and probably one of the most viable products on the Route. Sells as a beverage and a collectible item. Sells every bit as good off Route 66 as it does on. We have many icon type customers on Route 66. Unlimited potential and marketing possibilities. You can do Route 66 Soda and make money! Purchase this business now and position yourself big time for the 76th anniversary festivities in Springfield, Illinois in 2002.

Sale includes customer base, formula, copyright, and reasonable production.

Serious inquiries only. \$99,000.00

☎ Larry Tarantolo ☎ (815) 744-9067

21607 SE FRONTAGE ROAD

JOLIET, ILLINOIS 60436

HISTORY OF THE BALLARD ELEVATOR

by Randy Smith

Featured in this article is the history of the Ballard Elevator, which I have not ever seen in any other Route 66 publication . . .until now.

What I refer to, as the Ballard Elevator is located on Route 66 in Illinois, between Lexington and Chenoa on the northbound side of Interstate 55 here in Illinois. In earlier newsletters, I had the name incorrect and it is called Graham & Bennion Elevator. It is not quite readable on the side of it now, as those letters were up there since at least 1918. The elevator was built sometime before 1910, and was constructed mainly of 2 by 6 and 2 by 8 boards all nailed together without any use of nuts or bolts in a cribbed design. Metal sheeting was added to make the structure more stable. The top part of the structure was referred as the head house, also known as the cupola. It was part of what was called the South elevator, as there was also a North elevator, closer to Chenoa whereas the South elevator was in Ballard.

On the side of the elevator were an office building and the weight scale, for the manager who stayed there all year long. That office was a great neighborhood loafing place for locals and farmers from all around that played cards there and shared stories. There was also a small house built across the tracks for the manager and his family to stay in.

The elevator was a flat bottom type design, during the times of the horse and buggy days, then also in the Model T Ford era. There were 6 square bins, with a possible middle one as well. They were at one time regularly filled and emptied 2 or 3 times a week. A big gasoline engine ran the mechanism, which was lit by a kitchen stick match while it cranked by hand to get it started. Once started, it fed grain through tubes and pipes to the various bins, which then later were taken out by large belts with cups on them called legs, which elevated the grain taken out to fill trucks or rail cars. Later after World War II, the machinery was modernized and upgraded with the current electric motor. It had the transmission drives attached with the big roller chain and sprockets, which also had a system of belts and more chains that went back and forth across the head house, to slow down the speed of the big electric motors and increase power at the same time. Before World War II, lighting was added to see at night, and the jelly jar light covers I mentioned in an earlier article that are referred to as fruit jars were used to cover the naked bulbs which were a fire hazard to the grain and dust that blew around from time to time. The fruit jar covers were ideal at the time because they made the light bulbs dust-proof and were easy to replace if broken from any local hardware or grocery store.

To get workers up to the top, there was the 3 foot square man lift housing which had a cable-winch type lift that carried workers up to the head

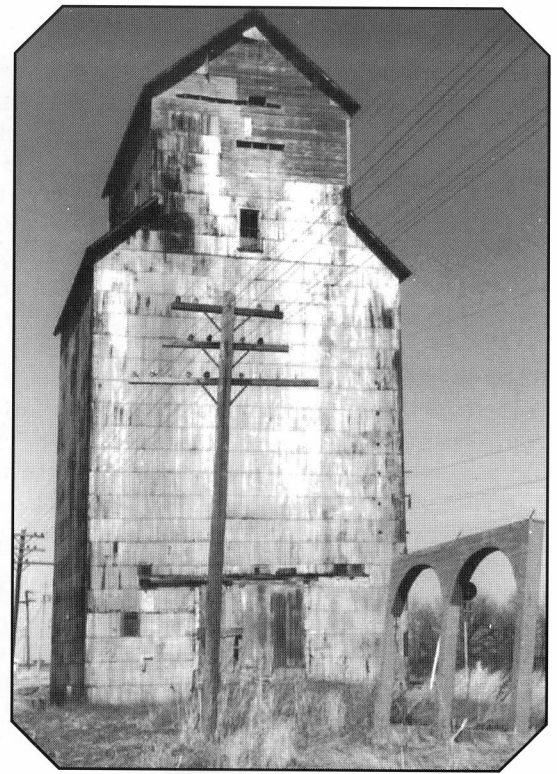
house. It was faster and safer to get workers up there via that cable lift system in the shaft.

The wind at times was a problem around the elevator, as any big building there on the plains created a wind disturbance on nearby Route 66 which caused many cars to go in the ditch. On some days, one of the garages would station a wrecker there and wait for business, which usually came.

The Ballard Elevator went through a series of owners from decade to decade. First known as Graham & Bennion, then went on through other owners and names...Boughton & Harlan, Chenoa Grain Company, Leonard Grain Company, then Prairie Central Co-op.

I am not sure when the Ballard Elevator last operated, but it was out of commission before 1968 sometime. In that year when the Leonard Grain Company owned it, they sent C. Merle Parry and a team of unskilled, Spanish speaking men to try to get the elevator up and running again after being shut down for some time. It turned out to be a completely hopeless case. Some grain that remained in some of the silos was rotten and caked as well as weevil infested. The lower part, called the pit, was flooded out with standing water. Some of the machinery supposedly did not function any more. Plus, it was still the old flat-bottomed type silos. This kind of elevator went out with the Model T Ford and the newer, more modern silos were mainly round and concrete that was free standing. The newer ones were usually filled and emptied once or twice a year. But the old Ballard Elevator had its days. So then in 1968, it was abandoned.

Later in time, Prairie Central Co-op tried planning with the railroad for two years to see about wrecking and removing the structure. The idea fizzled out when



The Ballard Grain Elevator

continued on page 8

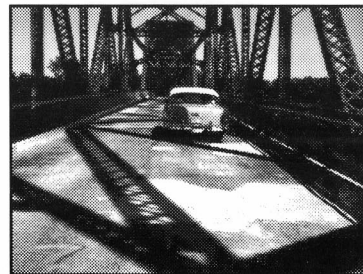
it became a problem with Amtrak as it would stop the fast moving train several times every day. Other times, when tornadoes were spotted, workers from Prairie Central would holler at them to come towards the elevator to take it down. That never happened, either. One last idea surfaced and Prairie Central offered to give the elevator to the Chenoa Historical Society, Inc. but they didn't have the funds to make an exhibit out of it. So then, it stood as an old white elephant for about 33 years and counting.

Today, the Ballard Elevator still stands as one of our treasured Route 66 artifacts here in Illinois, and is one of the most often photographed icons as well as one of the oldest remaining structures. It was built before the Chain Of Rocks Bridge came along, is also older than the McKinley Bridge, and is around the era of the Rialto Theatre in Joliet. I am also nominating it as a Hall Of Fame nominee for the year 2002, in care of the noted Chenoa historian, C. Merle Parry.

Credit for this article goes mainly to C. Merle Parry who sent me most of the information relating to the Ballard Elevator. He also supplied a lot of valuable information on all the grain Co-ops in the area of Chenoa and around. He grew up with Route 66 for many years and is still active in historical research in the area.

LOOKING TOWARD 2002 ROUTE 66 ACTIVITIES

Marty & Geri Bilecki of Morris, Illinois sent in a photo of their 1957 Chevrolet, "Geraldine", which was taken on the Chain of Rocks Bridge, crossing from Mitchell to St. Louis during the 2001 Motor Tour. With the advent of winter's cold and snowy weather upon us, they want to



The Bilecki's 1957 Chevy on the Chain of Rocks Bridge

remind us all that spring will come soon, and that the classic rides will come out to play again, and go on Route 66 cruises in 2002, such as the 13th annual motor tour from June 7-9, 2002. The picture is also to remind everyone that it will get warmer outside soon. Thank you Marty & Geri, for giving us a touch of springtime during this cold winter weather.

Traveling the . . . NEW, HISTORIC ROUTE 66 OF ILLINOIS *proudly presented by John Weiss* The newest ..UPDATED 4TH EDITION.. is now available.

*Many new places to discover
& taste treats to enjoy!*

Considered the
BIBLE OF ILLINOIS ROUTE 66

\$14.95 plus \$4.00 shipping.
IL residents add .87¢ tax

Mail to: **Historic 66, P.O. Box 616
Wilmington, IL 60481**

**TALKS & GUIDED TOURS
AVAILABLE
PHONE (815) 458-6616**

THE CHANGING FACE OF ILLINOIS ROUTE 66

*Since the first edition of the guide book,
Traveling the...NEW, HISTORIC ROUTE 66 OF ILLINOIS,
many changes have taken place.
It is fascinating to compare the 1997 edition with newest 2001 edition.
Listed here are some of the sites that are no longer in existence or
unavailable. Also listed are some of the new or newly discovered
places to visit and enjoy that can be found in the 2001 edition.*

GONE FOREVER

Crosley Museum • Double Nickel Drive In • Creamy Delight
Several Bridges • A&W Restaurant • Original Steak & Shake
Mail Pouch Tobacco Barn • Stefanich's Restaurant
Beich Candy Tours • Lamplighter Inn Tower

WHAT'S NEWLY ADDED

5 Tiffany style windows, & skylight at the top of a grand marble staircase
Site of the Murphy's Restaurant
The domed ceiling of the oldest bank in town
NASCAR racing facility • 300 plus antique cars to see & purchase
Route 66 Welcome Center • Iron Works hiking, biking, walking tour & trail
Phone booth on a roof & more

*Please support all of our wonderful businesses on Rte 66
or the Gone Forever list will grow!*

2001 - A ROUTE 66 ODYSSEY

PART 2

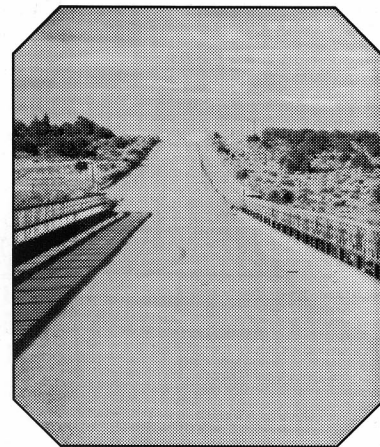
traveled by Frank & Roxane Lozich and Jeff & Annette LaFollette

This is the second part of a two part journal of our Route 66 Trip beginning on July 15, 2001 in Chicago and ending on July 25, 2001 at Santa Monica Pier. The title of this article was christened by Frank Lozich just before we departed his home in Tinley Park on the morning of the 15th.

SUNDAY JULY 22

Woke up to get ready to attend the "Breakfast with Michael Wallis" The event began at 8:00 a.m. Again, Frank and Rox and us were joined by the Gehl family and Jeff Meyer and Lynn Bagdon. I was asked to say a few words to the crowd on behalf of the Route 66 Association of Illinois and Springfield to promote the Route 66 festival in 2002. Michael Wallis is a captivating speaker, he really can hold your attention. After the program, we said our good-byes then departed Albuquerque continuing our westward journey. A huge thank you to Albuquerque for hosting us the last two and a half days. I woke up with a sinus headache this morning, (Really!! Not one from too much celebrating the night before.) so I wasn't feeling like getting out and wandering this morning, but Annette, Frank & Rox resumed their exploring and photography. At Rio Puerco we saw an old steel truss bridge that was saved by the New Mexico D.O.T. It is currently used as a hiking trail and historic site. Again, why couldn't Illinois do this with the arch bridge north of Gardner? The Gehl's caught up with us in Budville, as we had stopped at the trading post. Also, Jerry McClanahan stopped in for a short spell. After a 30-40 minute visit in Budville, we drove through Cubero, McCartys and San Fidel and then to Grants where we encountered a large group of Harley-Davidson motorcycles on a mini Route 66 tour from Grants to Albuquerque. We continued onward to Gallup, where we visited the El Rancho Hotel, a 1930's classic hotel which played host to many a movie star. Each room was named after an actor or actress who had stayed there. West of Gallup is the Continental Divide where at that point the elevation was 7275 feet. At the divide, water flows east from the the eastern edge of the mountains and west from the western side. 20 miles from here was the Arizona border. Chief Yellowhorse Trading post was near the border, but it was closed on Sundays so we couldn't go explore inside. Once we entered Arizona, we had to get on I-40 but not before we found an old dirt/gravel section of 66, which had an old 1930's bridge that spanned Quijero Canyon. From there we continued to the Petrified Forest National Park. It was close to the

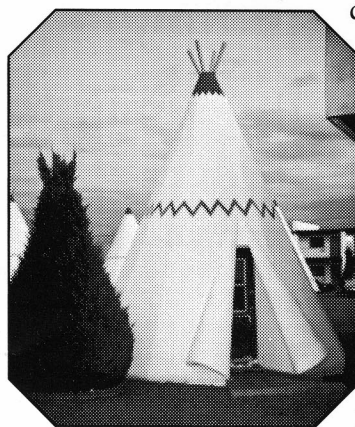
7:00 p.m. closing time so we decided to return the next day. We pulled into the Wigwam Motel in Holbrook, Arizona as the sun was beginning to set. It was dark so much earlier there because Arizona does not recognize daylight savings time. We met the owner, John Lewis, who graciously gave us Wigwams 5 and 6. After checking in we ate dinner and called it an early night, as we planned on an early departure in the morning back to the Petrified Forest.



**Quijero Canyon
and Dirt 66 Arizona**

MONDAY JULY 23

Departed the Wigwam Motel at 7:00 a.m. to travel back east to the Painted Desert and Petrified Forest. We spent a couple of hours there checking out the sights, it was a different view in the early morning as compared to the evening sunset. Many beautiful colors and sights to behold for sure. When we left we returned to Holbrook where we had breakfast or lunch depending on your mood or time zone at Joe & Aggie's Café. This is an old 66 favorite, which has been on the road since 1935. From there we continued west and arrived at the big sign that reads HERE IT IS... the Jackrabbit trading post. The big rabbit was outside waiting for us to ride on, as well as more photo opportunities and souvenir hunting. Frank, Rox and Annette told me I couldn't get back into the car until I had my picture taken



**Wigwam Motel,
Holbrook, Arizona**

continued on page 10



**HERE IT IS!
Jackrabbit, Arizona**

know..."Standin' on a corner in Winslow Arizona". Well, there was a statue of a man with a guitar Standin' on a corner. The corner to be precise was a Route 66 alignment which was Second and Kinsley Streets. There was a building with "a girl my Lord in a flatbed Ford slowin' down to take a look at me". Well, not me, but the statue...er the man...well you know what I mean...I hope. Well anyway after photos there and another chance to mail a package to myself at the Winslow Post Office we continued on and made a stop at Meteor Crater where many years ago...millions to be precise, a meteor made its final stop here in the Arizona desert and left a huge hole in its wake. From there we made sure that we didn't forget Winona, a small town not much to see there but we did not forget it as suggested by Bobby Troup. Flagstaff was next and although we didn't stop there, it was quite a nice town to drive through. It really was a pretty town out in the middle of the desert. We continued westward and made a late afternoon stop in Williams to visit Paul & Sandi Taylor at the headquarters of Route 66 Magazine. Frank, Rox, Annette & I spent about 45 minutes there and had a nice chat and picked up a few more souvenirs as well. It was getting late and we were hoping to get to Seligman to possibly have a snack at the Snow Cap. But when we arrived around 6:00, it was closed for the day. However we spotted a man at an old gas station across the street and asked where Angel Delgadillo, the barber of Seligman lived. Frank & I were told he lived around the corner. We went to his house and he invited us in where we talked for over an hour.



**Angel & Vilma Delgadillo
Seligman, AZ**

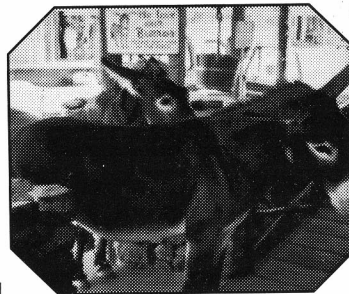
My only wish is that we had more time to spend with this amazing man. I consider Angel as the Cyrus Avery of our generation of Route 66. He was the one responsible for founding the Route 66 Association of Arizona, which led to the birth of the other associations. Angel is a remarkable man, if you get the chance to get to Seligman; I highly recommend a stop to speak to him. After we departed, we needed to find a place for the night so we stopped

on the rabbit. So I sat on it backwards facing west because I wanted to see where I was going and not where I had been. Then the four of us continued to Winslow, a town made famous by the Eagles in their song "Take it Easy". You

in Peach Springs at the Hualapi Motor Inn. We were on Indian land now. The motel was very nice and had a nice restaurant. A good night's sleep awaited us after a long but productive day.

TUESDAY JULY 24

We departed Peach Springs in the morning and stopped in Truxton at the Frontier Cafe for breakfast. Mildred Barker, owner of the cafe, greeted us, took our orders, cooked the meals and waited on us. One of the regulars refilled Frank & Roxane's coffee cups while Mildred took care of business. After we filled our tanks, it was time to fill the Cadillac's tanks so we drove across the street to an old station to fill up. Then it was off through Valentine then a morning stop in Hackberry at the Old Route 66 Visitor's Center. Lots of neat items here, we spent about 45 minutes here just looking around. This is the place that Bob Waldmire owned for a short time a few years back. Then we drove on to Kingman for more photos of old motels and such. Our goal today was to get well into California and we knew that we would have a lot of time to spend in Oatman and the four of us were looking forward to getting there. After Kingman we drove



**Burros at
Oatman, Arizona**

west and just before the 28 mile stretch of winding, curving roads, we found the ruins of an old service station. All that was left were the two pillars which once supported a roof, and another plank ramp for cars to drive upon to have their oil changed and undercar service done. Then we began the steep climb up to Sitegreaves Pass on our way to Oatman. Now I know why those Dust Bowl travelers in the 30's had white

knuckles driving on this stretch. 20-25 miles per hour was the top speed through here. but what a majestic view and beautiful sight. We then came to the top of the pass then headed down and arrived in Oatman after about an hour of driving this stretch. The four of us were looking forward to exploring this old west town. Roxane had a bag of carrots to feed the burros, and made friends of several of them while we were there. Frank stopped off to have a cold one at the Oatman Hotel, where Clark Gable and Carole Lombard honeymooned in 1939. Annette & I explored the shops and such. What a neat place! Again this is a definite recommended stop for the Route 66 traveler. We got back in the car and headed past Topock then what looked like an oasis was really the Colorado River basin where we saw greenery and trees for the first time in several hundred miles of Arizona desert. But as soon as we crossed into California and arrived in Needles, the barren desert scenery returned. We stopped in Needles for drinks, and Frank & I contemplated what was next but over 150 miles of

continued on page 11

STREETCAR DINER

By John Weiss, Preservation Chairman

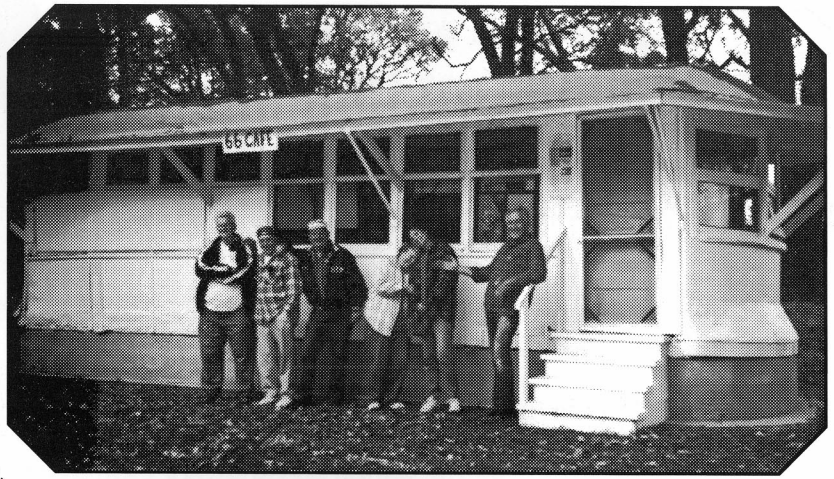
Work has progressed nicely on the old "66 CAFE" streetcar.

As reported in other issues of the 66 NEWS!, this little structure has had a very interesting existence. It has been moved numerous times and is currently located behind the Hall of Fame, Riviera Restaurant in Gardner.

Bob & Peggy Kraft, owners of the Riviera, have promised to make the historic streetcar a gift to the Route 66 Association of Illinois Preservation Committee.

This is one of those projects that people look at in the beginning and say how crazy we in preservation are. Well, crazy or not, we have begun. Two work sessions have spruced up this historic structure. Many exterior repairs have been made, and it has been completely scraped and primed. The inside has been cleaned and vacuumed. The remaining original plate glass windows have been washed and the foot pedal bell has been restored. There is much more to do, but at least we have begun.

On the mid week work session, the volunteers received a great surprise. Owners Peggy and Bob



**John & Lenore
and their hard working crew**

Kraft prepared a huge, old-fashioned lunch for all of us. In true Route 66 fashion, we all devoured that fabulous feast at their kitchen table.

Soon a Roadside Attraction sign will be installed along Route 66 in front of the Riviera. It will direct travelers and tourists to our latest project.

Please stop by and see our historic streetcar/diner. It is always open for your inspection. Be sure to ring the bell. We also appreciate your comments.

The workers so far have been Tom Perkins and his 3 sons, Jeff & Annette LaFollette, Dorothy Seratt, Marilyn & Ted Giovanazzi, Lou Vargo, Larry Scinto, John & Lenore Weiss, and staff from the Riviera who cleared out the inside to help us prepare for this project.

ODYSSEYcontinued from page 10

desert driving. The temperature there was 109. This was by far the hottest day we had experienced, but it was a dry heat. We continued through the Mojave Desert, past the remains of Goffs, Fenner and Essex. In Essex we took a few pictures and continued on west. Along the road we saw rock graffiti, where people had spelled out messages in the rocks. Quite interesting! It was 33 miles to Amboy and it was flat, hot, and dry. When we arrived in Amboy the temperature was 116 degrees and it was about 4:00 in the afternoon. We took a look around Roy's Cafe, snapped some photos, let the hot desert sun beat on us for a few moments more, then hopped back in the Caddy for some cool air. Oh yeah, we did forget to pack a water bag. Good thing we didn't spring a



**Gas Prices
between
Needles &
Amboy
California**

leak. More desert driving and barren scenery until we made another quick break in Ludlow. We decided on Victorville as our stop for the night and continued through the desert. We drove the 43 miles to Barstow, the only major stop after departing Needles, took some more pictures then headed west and finished with the 31 mile trek to Victorville, where we camped out for the night in a nice air conditioned room.

WEDNESDAY JULY 25

Santa Monica Pier was in sight, well it was about 125 miles away anyway. We departed Victorville, and wondered how difficult the traffic would be. So we continued to San Bernadino, took a few pictures of the Wigwam Motel, then traveled west through the maze of traffic lights, and stop and go traffic. Unfortunately, things have changed much over the years here, and there are a lot of chain motels, restaurants, and superstores. This stretch must have been quite a sight to see in the 1930's and 40's but today it is so commercialized, with the exception of a few

continued on page 12

SOMETHING HAS BEEN ADDED

A 1953 camper trailer has been donated to the Standard Oil station in Odell.

This is a gift from Sandra Grey of Frankfort, Illinois. She has donated it in memory of her father, Frank O. Grey. It seems that many years ago her father worked at the Odell station and the Marathon (Texaco) station in Dwight.

This addition will add another element of interest for the station. In the 1950s, the station was still very active. A camper like this was a common sight to travelers of Route 66.

Our main problem was getting the camper from Frankfort to Odell. It had been stored in a back yard for over 25 years. It needed to be hauled on a trailer. As soon as Bill Elwell and Ken Koetzle heard about our dilemma, they immediately volunteered to do the job. They said it is their way to help the Route 66 Association. Because of them the little camper now has a new home.

During the October 20 work session at the station,



Sandra Grey with Odell mayor Ed Seal

a small crew immediately began its exterior rejuvenation. They painted the lower half blue to match the station trim. The inside doesn't need much more than a good cleaning.

There are a couple of parts we would like to repair and replace. If any of you know of a source for classic Winnebago parts, please let me know. We need a working door lock and handle.

We could also use a 1940s or 1950s era shell of a car in good condition to hook up to the camper to look as if it was pulling the trailer. Any offers?

This is a nice new addition to Odell. Thanks go out to Sandra Grey for the donation and Ken Koetzle and Bill Elwell for the pick up and delivery service.

ODYSSEYcontinued from page 11



**Signpost outside
of Essex,
California**

places like The Red Wing Motel in San Bernadino and the Rancho Inn Motel in Azusa. We decided that it would be best to keep driving and follow the directions in our trusty books until we got to the pier. I can honestly say that Los Angeles is a very congested city. And the traffic is bumper to bumper all the time even at 65 MPH which can be scary too. But after the traffic headaches we finally made it to our destination, the end of Route 66 at Santa Monica Pier. We got out and parked the car in a parking garage downtown and walked the three blocks to the pier. WE MADE IT!!!!!! 11 days and 2448 miles later we made it. Although

there were a lot of things we didn't get to stop and see because of time constraints, it was all in all a fantastic trip. We will have a lifetime of memories to share, lots of stories to tell and pictures to show to friends and families. Frank, Roxane, Annette & I feel like true roadies, now that we have traveled the entire route from Illinois to California. After some sightseeing along the Pacific Coast, and some walking on the beach, we found a hotel close to Los Angeles International Airport and prepared for the flight home the next day.

THURSDAY JULY 26

Well, this was it. We left for the airport about 10:00 to drop off our car and get ready for our flight home. It was a sad moment when we dropped off the DeVille at the car rental place...it was like saying goodbye to an old but faithful friend. That car was a special one. It traveled 2448 miles across the prairies of Illinois, the Ozarks of Missouri, the plains of Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas, the deserts of New Mexico, Arizona and California and ended up in the promised land of the Dust Bowl travelers of the 30's. Whoever rented that car next would get a special one for sure. Well, our flight left on time at 12:30 L.A. time and arrived at Midway Airport in Chicago at 6:15 p.m. Chicago time, 11 days by car and four hours by plane. The journey was over, but in our minds, we all know it was only the beginning. We will be back to travel that ribbon of highway again! Thanks Route 66, and to all of the folks that we met along the road for the wonderful memories!



**End of Route 66
Santa Monica,
California**

Didn't you always want to race Tod Stiles from "route 66"?

Now's your chance at the International Route 66 Mother Road Festival –
September 27-29, 2002.

Meet your heroes and get your kicks at the **International Route 66 Mother Road Festival, September 27-29, 2002 in Springfield, Illinois.** This premiere annual event will be attended by thousands of people from around the world and feature hundreds of classic vehicles, live entertainment and celebrities, dozens of food and drink booths, one-of-a-kind exhibits, the world's largest sock hop, and more. This event is the largest festival of it's kind in the world – a Route 66 Mecca. We invite you to come celebrate the love of the open road, the dream of a simpler time and the vitality of a bygone era. Oh yeah, and the chance to blow the doors off Tod's Corvette!



International Route 66 Mother Road Festival highlights:

- Join the National Route 66 Federation for their annual **John Steinbeck Awards Banquet** in downtown Springfield. **Martin Milner** of "route 66" television fame is scheduled to be the keynote speaker, and **Michael Wallis** famed author of "Route 66 The Mother Road" will also attend.
- National Route 66 Chili Cook-off
- Route 66 Artists & Authors Expo
- **Paul Revere & The Raiders**, **Bill Pinkney And The Original Drifters**, and **1964: The Tribute**
- Antique roadshow featuring rare collectibles from Route 66



For more information on the International Route 66 Mother Road Festival visit **route66fest.com**. If you're planning to make the trip with your car or motorcycle club, contact the Springfield Illinois Convention and Visitors Bureau at **1-800-545-7300** for special festival hotel packages, and premier club parking.



ILLINOIS
RIGHT HERE. RIGHT NOW.

PRINT SHOP MUSEUM

by John Weiss, Preservation Chairman

At the last preservation meeting, Hall of Fame recipient Burt Parkinson and his wife, Annabelle and daughter, Pat, were in attendance. They presented us with a fabulous challenge. The suggestion is to turn Burt's print shop into a museum. Everything is here and in working condition. For example, there is a complete set of hand laid type and a line-o-type machine. There are also various printing presses and even a large wooden camera just to mention a few of the items.

I have been in Burt's old shop many times in the past. Each time I discovered something fascinating. It is like a step back in time.

On the surface this seems like a win - win situation for Route 66 and the town of Gardner. The building appears to be in restorable condition and is only a short distance from Route 66 and the unique two cell jail. I believe the preservation committee would and could accomplish this one of a kind attraction. Of course a project of this magnitude has some stumbling

blocks. As a result, before we agree or reject this project, I will seek some outside suggestions.

I NEED YOUR HELP!

Here is the problem assuming we create this Print Shop Museum. It would contain very valuable artifacts. As a result an attendant would be required in order to open up for tourists and school groups. Where do the operating expenses come from? We also cannot rely on volunteers exclusively to be attendants. In other words, what good is the museum if it is locked up and inaccessible most of the time? Plus we need insurance and, of course, funds for utility expenses.

Several suggestions have been presented. All on the right track, but not the solution. I believe an answer is available, I just don't know what it is.

Put on your thinking caps and let me know your thoughts and ideas. An opportunity like this doesn't present itself very often. We cannot let it slip away.

Thank you for your time.

WAGON BUILT TO HONOR ROUTE 66

A police officer from Pawnee, Illinois is building a giant covered wagon with Abraham Lincoln as its driver to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Route 66.

David Bentley, the architect of the wagon plans to park it in front of his home which is close to the Mother Road in Divernon, Illinois, which is located about ten miles south of Springfield.

The wagon, which measures about 25 feet high and 40 feet long, will feature a 12-foot fiberglass likeness of Abraham Lincoln in the driver's seat, and a lighted sign that will hang on the side of the wagon. The sign will be visible from Route 66 as well as Interstate 55.

Mr. Bentley was inspired by an article he read about the designation of Route 66 as a heritage corridor, which highlights Illinois culture and history.

The significance of the wagon is to tie in the history of Route 66 with Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln traveled through Sangamon County during his days as a lawyer. Lincoln often traveled either by horseback or in a buggy.

Mr. Bentley plans to have a concession stand next to the wagon and he also plans to play oldies music there as well. He hopes to make it a Route 66 Attraction and create awareness of the history of Sangamon County as it pertains to Lincoln and Route 66.

ROUTE 66 ANNIVERSARY FILM COLLECTION RELEASED

The 75th anniversary of America's most famous highway will be marked with the release of a special collectors edition of award-winning Route 66 documentary films to the public for the first time.

The commemorative set, titled *Route 66: Diamond Anniversary Collector's Edition*, includes three different programs on the highway created by Pacific Communications (PACCOM). The company's Route 66 documentaries have garnered the most national and international awards from among the numerous films made about the famous 2448-mile road, which runs from Chicago to Los Angeles.

Included in the collection is *Route 66: Return to the Road with Martin Milner*, a video guide to planning a road trip entitled DRIVE 66; and PACCOM's original history of the highway *Route 66: An American Odyssey*. In addition to the three documentaries, a large full color commemorative poster and a separate colored map of Route 66 are part of the new set, which comes in a special collectors edition packaging.

The Route 66: Diamond Anniversary Collector's Edition runs more than four and a half hours, and will be available as a six-tape boxed set in VHS or as a multi-DVD set on September 10th. The special edition retails for \$49.95. The commemorative poster also retails separately for \$9.95. The programs can be ordered by calling PACCOM at 1-800-786-6695 or purchased online at www.66films.com.

TALES ALONG ROUTE 66

By Ted Giovanazzi & Larry Scinto

(Editor's Note: I first heard this story at our last Preservation Committee meeting in August being told by Burt Parkinson. I asked Ted & Larry to write this story to print in the newsletter. It is a fantastic story to say the least!)

There won't be a better time for this story to be told, considering the evil deed that was perpetrated against our great nation on September 11. The subject matter is actually the title of a book our own Hall of Fame member Burt Parkinson is in the process of writing. Some time ago, Burt related this story to Larry Scinto & I but we could not figure out how to write it without it losing some of its meaning. We will try to present a condensed version and hope that we will do it justice. Some of you may have heard or read this story before, that would not be surprising as it has been made into a motion picture a least two times with slightly different versions of what took place.

It seems in the early days of World War Two, the Axis forces under Adolph Hitler were trying to develop a process to produce the "heavy water" needed to build the atomic bomb. The allied forces were quite aware of this and in fact were in a race to develop it first. The laboratory or factory the Germans built to work on this project was located in Norway. Norway at that time was occupied by German forces under a government known as the "Quisling" This was the name of the man who led the government and in reality was nothing more than a puppet and sympathetic to the Nazi cause.

Norway is a country of many large and deep bodies of water that are called "fjords" The laboratory was built in the side of a cliff overlooking a fjord. It was practically bomb proof and inaccessible. Allied forces were aware of its location and many bombing raids were conducted to no avail.

There was an elderly preacher at the local Lutheran church on Jefferson & Pine in Gardner, Illinois named Reverend

Christianson. Reverend Christianson was born and raised in Norway in a town nearby this fjord and as a young man, later to become a sea captain, sailed that body of waters and knew it like the back of his hand. Reading the news releases at that time about the difficulty the allies were having trying to destroy the facility, he thought might have the answer.

Burt Parkinson was the editor of the Gardner Chronicle at that time and a friend of the preacher. Reverend Christianson approached Burt with his plan to strike the facility from the water below with a naval bombardment carried out by ships of a destroyer class size. He offered his services to the Allied forces to show them how to enter and navigate the fjord. Shortly after Burt's contact with the necessary people, a convoy of military and naval brass in their flag bearing limousines was seen coming down Route 66 and going to the home of the reverend. A meeting was held with Burt in attendance where a large naval map was placed on the living room floor and the military were shown how large naval vessels could carry out the bombardment from below with minimal risk.

The rest is history. The bombing was successful, the Axis forces were never able to develop the process and the Allied forces did. One can only imagine the outcome of World War Two if the Axis forces had been the first to develop the atomic bomb. Though the King of Norway later gave formal recognition to Reverend Christianson, the Allied Forces never gave him any acknowledgement. Burt did run a story on him in his newspaper in 1942, and the local church has the article framed and it is hanging in the Reverend's honor. Burt has always felt and tried to secure some local recognition for him, perhaps some sort of marker in the town or home in which he lived. Many people agree. In any case, when Burt has his book published, *The 66 News!* readers will be advised, and as Paul Harvey says, "We'll hear the rest of the story".

God Bless America!

Route 66 Association of Illinois Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Illinois County (if applicable): _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Interests in Route 66: _____

How I can help: _____

Annual Dues

General: \$15

Family: \$25

Business: \$30

Foreign: \$35

Lifetime: \$200

U.S. funds only, please

\$10 fee for returned checks

Send to:

Membership

Route 66 Assn. of Illinois

2743 Veterans Pkwy., Room 166

Springfield, IL 62704

Membership runs May 1 - April 30

Send address changes and questions to Membership at the address above or e-mail changes to blitz66@chicagonet.net



Preservation Committee on the job

ODELL WORK SESSIONS AUGUST 11 AND OCTOBER 20, 2001

By John Weiss, Preservation Chairman

Preservation volunteers are still hard at work on the award winning station in Odell.

Two work sessions brought out a total of 31 volunteers. Some came both days. A magnitude of much needed jobs were accomplished.

The 1890s bench has been restored, the rear of the building restored and painted and a dozen other small jobs. The dirtiest of all was removing the plastic from the bay area ceiling. This was a dreaded job, but eventually had to be done. It was disgusting and very unpleasant, but when removed we discovered an original tin ceiling. It is not in good shape, but for its age and history, it's not bad either. This ceiling is very unusual for a service station.

Thanks to some grant money we can now hire out some special work. Plans are for window replacement and repair of the original doors on the bay area. These are specialty jobs requiring a certain expertise ability. Since the station is on the National Register of Historic Places, it must be done in certain ways.

I am very proud to list here the fabulous volunteers who worked so hard on these two dates.

Saturday, August 11: Bill Gwodz, Bob Newberry, Dorothy Seratt, Jeff & Annette LaFollette, Ted & Marilyn Giovanazzi, Larry Scinto, Charlie O'Donnell, Eric, a local 14 year old, Jennifer Brown and Pat, Ed & Bev Seal, and John & Lenore Weiss. On October 20 we had Ed & Bev Seal, Lou & Rosie Vargo, Marilyn & Ted Giovanazzi, Ann & Larry Scinto, Delores & Lenny Scinto, Jack & Marge Hettweier, Dorothy Seratt, Charlie O'Donnell, Geri & Marty Bilecki, and John & Lenore Weiss. John & Loyce Stonecipher were also there.

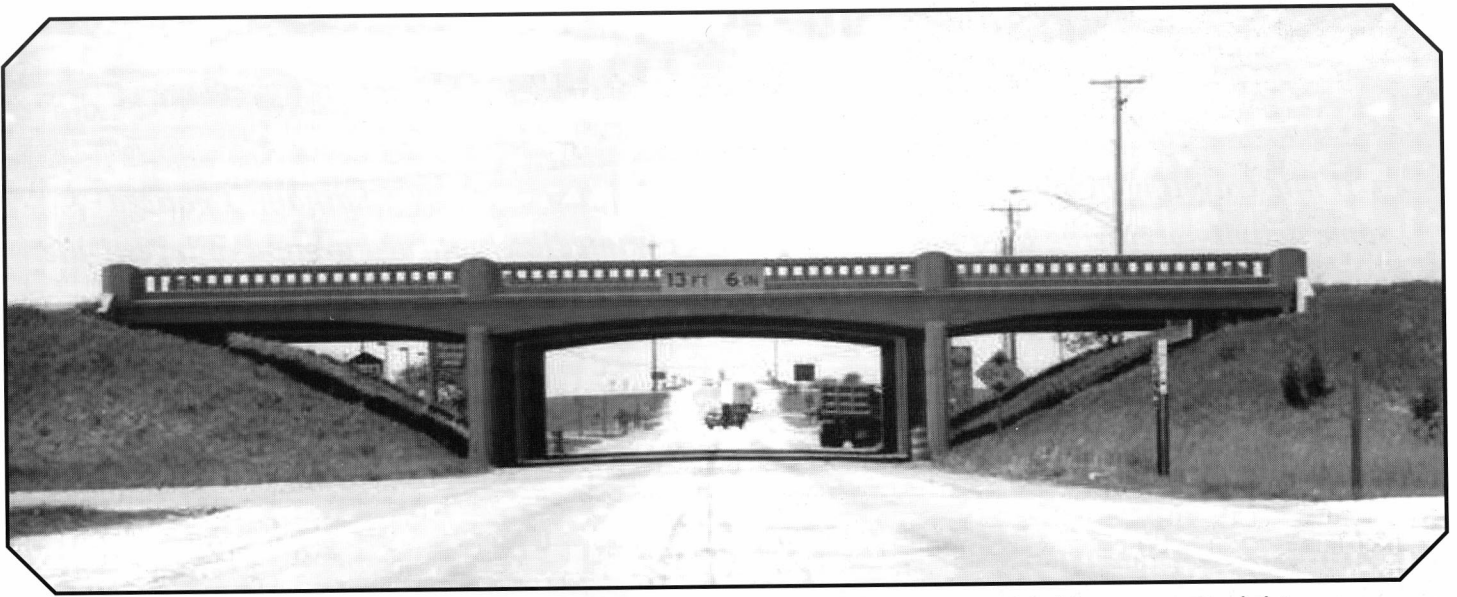


Restoring the 1890's bench

66 PLATE RAFFLE

Everyone always asks every year if they can get plate number 66. Well, the 1999 set is in the Hall of Fame, the 2001 set was given to Chuck & C.J. Beeler last year for their generosity in donating the space at the Dixie Truckers Home for our Hall of Fame display. And yet another one was raffled and won by John & Lenore Weiss in 2000. So since this is an even year, we are going to raffle off plate number 66 again. Here's how you can get a chance to win it.

Send \$1 for 1 chance, \$5 for 6 chances or \$20 for 30 chances to Route 66 Association of Illinois, Plate Raffle, 2743 S. Veterans Parkway, Springfield, Illinois 62704. Your name will be written on the back of each individual raffle ticket you purchase, and then put into the drawing. The more chances you have, the better your chance of winning. The drawing for plate 66 will be held at the April 21, 2002 board meeting, and you will be notified by phone after the meeting if you are the lucky winner. Deadline for entries is April 15, 2002, and the maximum purchase amount is \$20 per envelope. Money raised from the raffle will go toward the 2002 Motor Tour. If you have any questions about the plate raffle, please contact Annette LaFollette at 563-893-6653.



Route 66 bridges near Dwight now gone.

GONE FOREVER

by John Weiss

We recently lost three Route 66 bridges. All were distinctive structures and virtual icons of Route 66.

The award winning arched bridge outside of Gardner, over the railroad tracks and near the Mazon River had been closed to traffic for nearly seven years. Its deterioration was causing a hazardous condition to the trains that traveled below it. Prior to its closing, it carried Illinois Route 129 across it. Originally, it was a segment of Route 66 from Plainfield. Route 66A is only a few hundred feet to the east, on the other side of the railroad tracks. South of the bridge, Route 66 and 66A had rejoined just beyond Gardner. In its heyday, this bridge served an important function. But with the decrease of traffic, it became a non-essential alignment. Route 66A could serve the needs of the travelers. So, Route 66A once again became Route 66. The split alignment just wasn't necessary anymore. Sure, we tried to save it and we could, but we would have to maintain it. Try as we might, we just couldn't figure out a way to do this. So, safety came first, and on May 16, 2001 nostalgia lost. At the time of removal of the arch bridge, the crew also demolished the concrete bridge next to it.

The second set of bridges went over Illinois Route 17 in Dwight. These bridges also served an important function. Remember, Route 66 originally passed through these small towns on two lane roads. Traffic was horrendous. As a result, four lane bypasses were constructed around some towns to more efficiently move traffic. Dwight was a busy, vibrant town with

lots of traffic. So to avoid problems, two bridges were built to carry the heavy Route 66 traffic over the main road into town, which was Illinois 17. This worked very well. City 66 would take you directly into Dwight, and past the original Marathon Station. Bypass 66 was the equivalent of an expressway.

But times change. Now the bridges were carrying very few vehicles. The town decided that these structures were creating a virtual wall. Their deteriorating condition was a detriment to the entrance of the town. Once again, the argument was that these two bridges were serving no practical purpose. So they were torn down and an intersection will take their place.

It is impossible, and sometimes impractical to save all that is old. It must have tourist appeal, usefulness, or strong historical significance. If it were up to me, we would never tear anything down that has a link to the past. I believe that the past, present and future can coexist nicely. I also believe we must save some of the past for the future.

So now, Dwight has removed the historic bridges. Remaining on Illinois 17 as you enter town is the famous Marathon Station, currently looking in need of repairs and restoration. We have pledged to help save this historic station. A report on this will be in a future edition of *The 66 News!* I think the information will be good!

PRESERVATION ALONG THE ROAD

By John Weiss

While traveling along Route 4 (Historic Route 66) just north of Chatham, I noticed some activity occurring on a hill near the road. I immediately turned around to investigate.



Chatham High School Students preserving the past along 66

What I discovered was a group of kids, mostly teens, working extremely hard to restore an old neglected cemetery. They had already cleared the ground and located the head stones. This day they were installing a white rail fence around this hallowed ground.

I talked to the group leader, teacher Bob Holquist, and learned that this was a project sponsored by the **TECHNOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION** of the Chatham-Glenwood Junior High School as a community service project.

As it turns out, this was an original family plot known as the Cloyd Cemetery. As we talked, a descendent, Don Cloyd of this same family arrived. He pointed out the locations of many of his distant relatives.

Look for this on the west side of Route 4 (Historic 66) about 3/4 mile north of Chatham. Also watch the east side for another white fence. Here you will find another old restored cemetery, another group had previously worked on it.

These are just two more preservation projects along Route 66. We cannot take credit for these, but we can sure thank these wonderful people for their time, care and concern.

How about you? Can you organize a community project? Don't expect the preservation committee to do it all. We can't! I know of numerous school projects that have and are taking place on or near Route 66. Look around; maybe you too can see a small project that would provide big pride and lots of memories. You will be glad you did.

IN OTHER NEWS

ARIZONA'S ROUTE 66 GUIDEBOOK

At last, Arizona has it's own Route 66 guidebook. Richard and Sherry Mangum have written a comprehensive two-way guide for touring Route 66 through Arizona. This 112-page book from Hexagon Press has more than 100 color maps and photos and is 8.5 x 11 perfect bound. The book cost is \$21.95 and can be ordered at the following address: Hexagon Press, 300 E. Bennett, Flagstaff, AZ 86001 Phone orders can be placed by calling 520-774-8800.

BLUE LIGHT

A bill (H.B. 2270) has been introduced in the Illinois legislature that would allow antique vehicles to display a blue light of up to one-inch diameter as part of the vehicles rear stop lamps. The bill recognizes that blue dot taillights have no detrimental impact on safety. The bill also enables enthusiasts to modify their vehicles to recall in fine detail the glory days of the street rod era, and also follows the tradition of similar laws recently enacted in Minnesota and Montana. Contact your state legislators to support this legislation. This bill strives to protect vehicle enthusiasts and collectors in Illinois. If you need assistance in determining who your legislators are, please contact the Illinois Legislature's General Information line at 217-782-2000.

BRIDGE FUTURE BLEAK

The future survival of the McKinley Bridge, the original Route 66 crossing from Illinois into Missouri, is bleak as further restrictions have been placed on the aging structure. On March 15, 2001, an eight ton weight limit has been placed on traffic. This was needed to ensure public safety on the 91 year old bridge when cracks in the steel beams that support the bridge deck were found. The restriction would prohibit the approximately 650-800 semi-trailers a day from crossing. Effective March 9, 2001, the Bi-State city bus service would use new routes to bypass the bridge, which affected 1,000 passengers daily.

The City of Venice is in arrears to pay \$4.2 million in bonds and \$800,000 to the City of St. Louis in back taxes. The Illinois Department of Transportation will take possession of the bridge if the debt issue is settled. IDOT could refurbish the bridge in 12 months using Federal and State funds. To further compound the issue is the proposed new bridge to be built close by, rendering the McKinley Bridge obsolete.

UPDATE: As of October 31, 2001, the McKinley Bridge is closed. Due to the structural problems written about above, the bridge was closed by IDOT. More information will be forthcoming in the Spring 2002 edition of *The 66 News*!

DEEPEST SYMPATHY

We were saddened by the news of the passing of Evelyn Rinkel, the wife of Association Hall of Famer Wilton Rinkel, and the mother of Madison County Board Representative Linda Henry. She died on October 27, 2001. Wilton, and Rich & Linda Henry want to say thank you for the notes of encouragement and the cards and phone calls they have received from folks during their time of sadness.

DONATION

On the wish list for the station in Odell was a seven day electrical timer and funds for an outdoor kiosk. To the rescue come Route 66 members, Ron Warnick and Emily Priddy.

Their very generous donation has provided the timer and a substantial amount towards the much needed kiosk. As mentioned numerous times, we, in Route 66 preservation, keep succeeding thanks to wonderful people like them.

MERCHANDISE - LIMITED

Rich Henry wants to pass on that he has some winter and spring Association merchandise left. He has sweatshirts and association windbreakers in stock, but there is a limited supply. The sweatshirts are available in S-XL for \$16 and XXL for \$18. The windbreakers are in very limited supply with 2 small, 4 medium and 4 large available These are going for \$30 each. Contact Rich at 618-635-5655 if you are interested in purchasing some of these items.

MOTOR TOUR NEWS

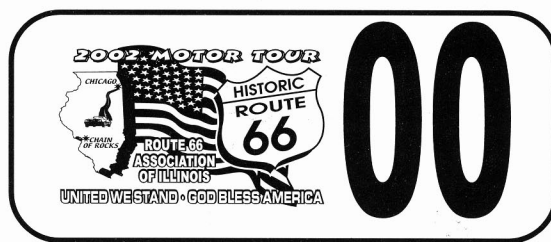
The Motor Tour Committee conducted its first meeting on Sunday November 18, 2001. Planning is well under way for the 2002 event, which will be held on June 7-10 2002. Co-Chairs Ollie Schwallenstecker and Bill Przybylski have an enthusiastic committee to help them organize the tour stops for 2002. But they can always use extra help, people to help out at the stops, or they will be looking for donated items to raffle, or businesses who might want to advertise in the passport book. If you'd like to help out in any way, Ollie & Bill would appreciate it very much. Ollie can be contacted at 618-585-3081, and Bill can be reached at 708-672-7937. Let's make the 2002 Motor Tour a success and also a fun event for all involved.

SEXY LITTLE SISTER

Tom McAvoy is an employee of IDOT and is also known as MAD MAC. He made a promise: If the historic Lincoln Highway became an official Scenic Byway, he would walk the entire 173 miles of the Illinois segment. Well, it became a Scenic Byway, so he had to keep his promise.

John & Lenore Weiss are charter members of the Lincoln Highway Association. They accepted his offer to walk along with him for a while. They joined him in Joliet at the intersection of Route 66 and Lincoln Highway. They discussed the plans for the Transportation Museum and the Route 66 Welcome Center currently under construction at this corner.

When they asked him what he thought about Route 66, he replied, "Route 66 is the sexy little sister of the Lincoln highway!" That's a neat expression, we hope it catches on.



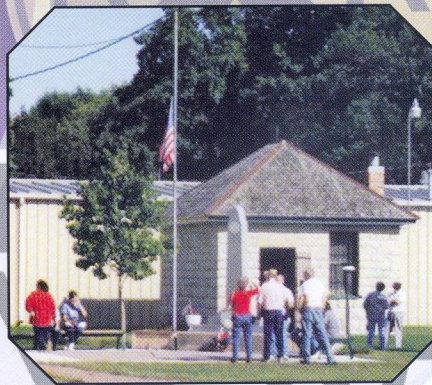
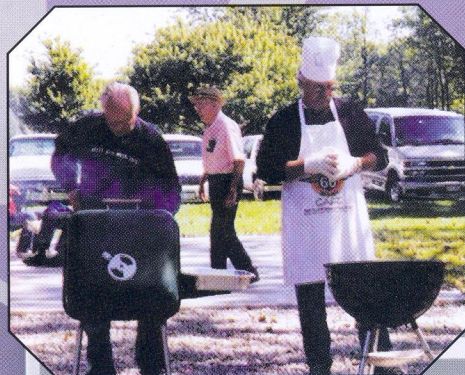
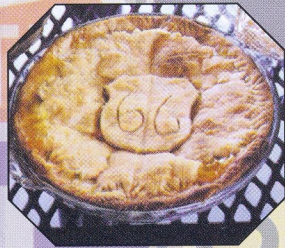
SPECIAL EVENT LICENSE PLATES

As of this writing, about 90 sets of plates have been reserved for 2002. That means there are 110 left, and if you haven't gotten your name on the list yet, you'd better do so soon. We have sold plates for the past three years and they have sold out each time, and we're on pace to do so again. If you'd like to be put on the list for plates in 2002, contact Jeff LaFollette at the address, phone number or e-mail listed on page 2. You will then receive a letter instructing you how much to send for the plates and what other items you'll need to send in so you can display them. These plates can be displayed for 60 days and will be collector's items. I have received calls from collectors who have wanted to purchase past sets, only to be told there aren't any left. So don't delay! Order your set of plates today.

ASSOCIATION PICNIC



*John Weiss & Dorothy Seratt
raise the flag.*

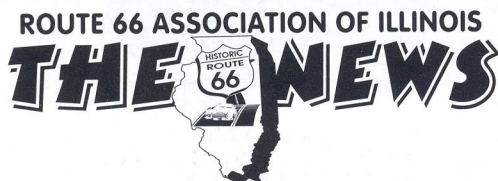


Sunday, September 16 was an absolute perfect day for a picnic. So about 100-125 folks gathered at K-Mine Park in Godley for the annual Association picnic. With the tragic events of September 11, fresh in everyone's mind, we all had a moment of silence to honor those who died, and sang "**God Bless**

America" before the meal. We'd like to thank the Association officers for their work in setup and cooking. A special thanks to Vice-President Bill Przybylski and Treasurer Marty Blitstein for manning the grills. We also received a visit from 36 cars of the Contemporary Historical Vehicle Association, which were beginning a two week cruise of Route 66 to Santa Monica, California. And, John & Lenore Weiss took a group on a mini tour of sites along Route 66 close to the park, namely the Riviera to see the work on the streetcar, Mazon State Park, and to Gardner to see sites there such as the old two cell jail, and Burt Parkinson's print shop. All in attendance had a great time. If you missed it this year, check out future issues of *The 66 News!* for the date of the 2002 association picnic.

*Photos Courtesy of
Annette LaFollette & John Weiss*

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS



2743 Veterans Parkway, #166
Springfield, IL 62704

Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
Lincoln, IL
Permit No. 66