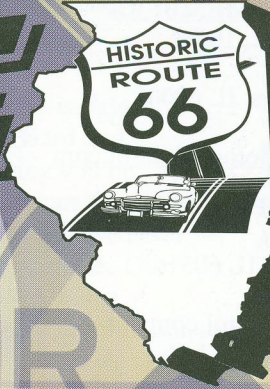


ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

THE NEWS

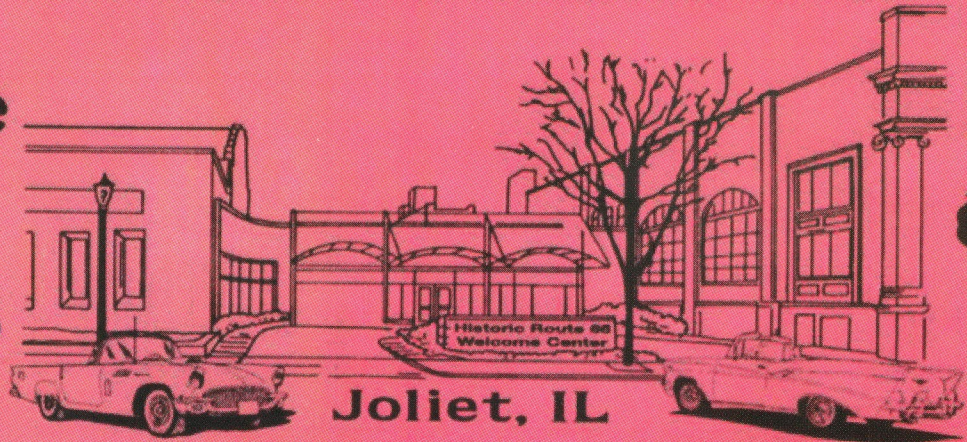
SPRING 2003



2003 ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR

"Illinois Route 66 Welcomes You"

**June
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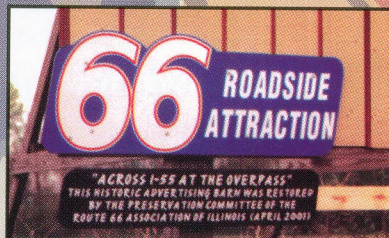
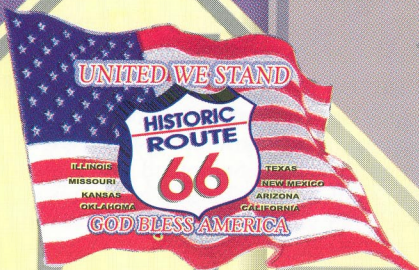
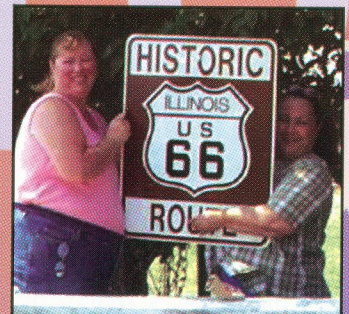


"Illinois --- Where the road began"

Sponsored by the Route 66 Association of Illinois



**MEET THE
RT. 66 ASSOCIATION
OF MISSOURI**



DID YOU KNOW?

**AN
EXCELLENT
ADVENTURE**

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, educate 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.

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Magazine designed by
Creative Images Center, Geneseo, IL

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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**

NOTE DATE CHANGE

Since April 20 is Easter Sunday and April 13 is Palm Sunday, we have decided to move the April Board and General Meeting to April 6, 2003. This meeting will be conducted in Joliet at the Louis Joliet Renaissance Center on 214 N. Ottawa St. (Historic Route 66). If you have never been there, you have missed out on some great meals. Our rate will include the room, tax and tip. It is \$16.30 for adults, \$15.30 for seniors 55 and over and \$8.80 for children.

The Board meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. and we will break for lunch at 12:00. Then the General meeting will convene at 1:00 p.m. This will be a field trip type session because the Route 66 Welcome Center and Joliet Historical Museum right next door will be open, and we will utilize this as our general session. There is no charge to visit the Welcome Center. All the displays are not in place yet as of this notice. They may be in place by meeting time but if not, you will still find it fascinating. To visit the museum, there is a fee of \$4.00 for adults and \$3.00 for seniors over 60.

Directions to the Renaissance Center are as follows:

FROM THE NORTH: From I-55, exit at Joliet Road. Follow IL 53 (Historic 66) directly to the Renaissance Center. (Currently with a detour at this writing)

FROM THE SOUTH: Following I-55 northbound, take the I-80 exit eastbound. Exit off I-80 at IL 53 (Chicago St. & Historic 66) Follow IL 53 to the street under the viaduct (Washington St.) Turn left. Go two blocks to Joliet St and turn right. Go four blocks (past Harrah's) to Webster St. and turn right. The Renaissance Center is at the end of this street. Use the parking lot on your left.

▼ **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK**

By Jeff LaFollette

Do you know how many states along Route 66 have a section of the road designated as State Route 66? I'll give you time to think about it and tell you at the end of this article. For your information most of you probably know that Illinois is not one of them. One of my goals that I stated last October is to work with the State Department of Transportation to get this changed. I recently mailed a letter to our new Illinois Secretary of Transportation, Mr. Timothy W. Martin. I outlined three proposed sections of Historic Route 66 that could be designated as State Route 66. One is the IL 53 section from Romeoville to Gardner. Another is the section of IL 4 from South of Springfield to Staunton and the third is the section of IL 157 from Hamel to south of Edwardsville. Of course, one letter is not going to get the job done. This will not happen overnight. It will take a lot of communication between the association, the Department of Transportation,

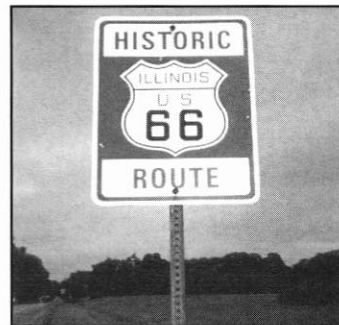
▼ **NOTES FROM THE DIXIE**

By C.J. Beeler

Nine Japanese teachers are part of a three month young teachers educational study team for Illinois. The purpose of this program is to promote understanding of Japanese culture, not to teach their subject matter. This program was established as a result of a memorandum of understanding between former President Bill Clinton and Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto signed April 17, 1996.

The host family in Bloomington is Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Breitweiser. Their Japanese teacher is 28 year old Mitsunori Akaoka from Monou-qun, Miyagi Japan. After spending a three week orientation that provides them with an overview of education in Illinois, he is now spending his three weeks observing eighth graders in the Bloomington area. Mrs. Breitweiser talks about Mitsunori's two greatest desires while being here. The first was to travel on and experience Route 66; the second was seeing the Hall of Fame in McLean. Recently the Breitweiser family fulfilled Mitsunori's wishes and he was impressed.

I relate this story to illustrate how far reaching our promotion has been. I'm sure many of our Route 66 members have had similar experiences. How gratifying it is to all of us to know we each have had a part in making our association the success it has become.



and possibly a recommendation from the General Assembly. Letters of support from all of you would be most helpful in getting this initiative implemented. If you would like to support this initiative, please write or call your state representative in the area you live in and also send a letter to Timothy W. Martin, Secretary of Transportation, Illinois Department of Transportation, 2300 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, IL 62764. Ideally all of Route 66 in Illinois signed as "Illinois 66" would be the perfect scenario. But for now, if we take small steps and get a section signed as such, it could lead to bigger things down the road, so to speak. Then Illinois could join the ranks of five states Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arizona and California who have a section of old US 66 designated as State Route 66. Only Illinois, Texas and New Mexico are lacking this description. Let's work together to achieve this goal for Illinois Route 66!

Fred's SportTime Clocks

A small business that loves Route 66 presents the most unique product for the old car and truck enthusiast. If your ride sits in the garage with everything done and ready to drive, how about a clock with your ride's picture on it.

Clock size 10 1/2"
case colors
red, white
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with AA battery



All 8 Rt. 66
state symbols
available
or
your car club logo
*Be sure to
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10% of all sales
through your club
will be donated to the
Route 66 Association
for the restoration
and preservation
of Route 66.*

Send a quality photo of your ride
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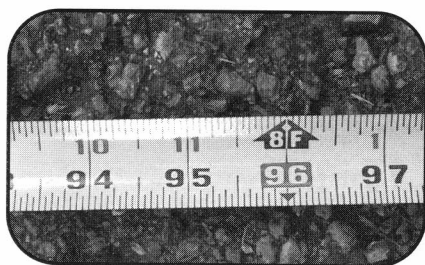
JEFF & ANNETTE AND JOHN & KATH'S EXCELLENT ADVENTURE



Meramec Caverns Barn near Hamel

SUNDAY

Rising before dawn fully rested and refreshed we were eager to continue our adventure. We had planned to erect signs at the Coliseum in Benld, Our Lady of the Highway Shrine near Raymond, Rich Henry's Rabbit Ranch in Staunton, and last but not least the Hamel Barn oddly enough in Hamel. Of course the first thing on the agenda is food, so we enjoyed a long leisurely breakfast, loaded up the vehicles and off we drove.



**Eight foot wide section
near Lake Springfield.**

There is a spot in Springfield where the old Route 66 goes straight into Lake Springfield and ends in the water. Of course we had to investigate this.

Careful of avoiding anything poisonous such as poison ivy or poison oak, snakes and spiders we climbed, hiked, and trekked our way down the closed road. We found a state road marker to confirm this historic piece of road. I felt like Christopher Columbus when he discovered land. Jeff measured the width of the road, a tremendous eight feet wide. After another hour or so we departed and officially started this day's adventure.

First stop of the day the Our Lady of the Highway Shrine. The family of Francis Marten who is now departed are now the owners of this icon and were unaware of our intentions. Nobody was at the Marten farm, so we poked around, Route 66 Roadies do that kind of thing. We found a cement slab that had hand and foot prints of the entire family that grew up on

OR HOW TO TURN A FIVE HOUR TRIP INTO THREE DAYS: PART 2

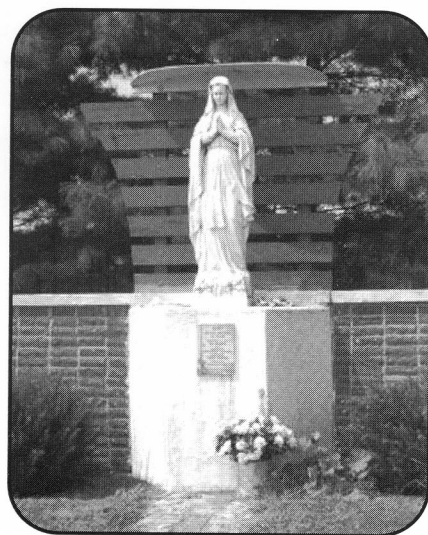
by Kathy Miller

that farm. Jeff decided to visit with neighbors of the Marten farm to possibly obtain phone numbers so he could call and return on Monday. So the official first stop was the Coliseum in Benld.

The Coliseum is said to be haunted and has the most wonderful collection of antiques. This was not a fast stop. After erecting the sign we shopped. And we shopped and shopped and shopped. After every antique was browsed we waved farewell and proceeded to Rich Henry's Rabbit Ranch.

Ah, the Rabbit Ranch, named that for more than one reason. First, Rich and Linda Henry play mom and dad to several bunnies, cute little furry bunnies everywhere! Plus, they own several VW Rabbits.

Rich plans on planting several VW Rabbits into the ground similar to the Cadillac Ranch in Texas. Rich also is collecting license plates that he will use as siding on a new structure. Rich,



**Our Lady of the Highway
Shrine near Raymond**



Jeff and Johnny with Rich Henry

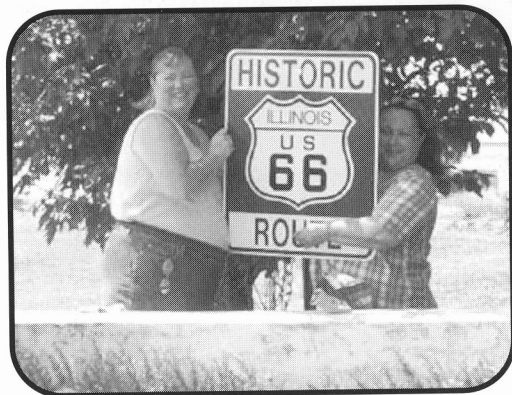
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Old Route 66 that runs into Lake Springfield.

John, and Jeff, talked for hours upon hours. Oh, ok, maybe not hours but it sure seemed like hours. It was hot and humid and there they stood talking and yapping. Finally they put up the sign. Rich made a comment on what great wives Annette and I were after all we let them go on and on. I think they got the hint it was time to leave when Annette and I climbed into our vehicles and just sat there waiting patiently. (Adjusts my wifely halo!)

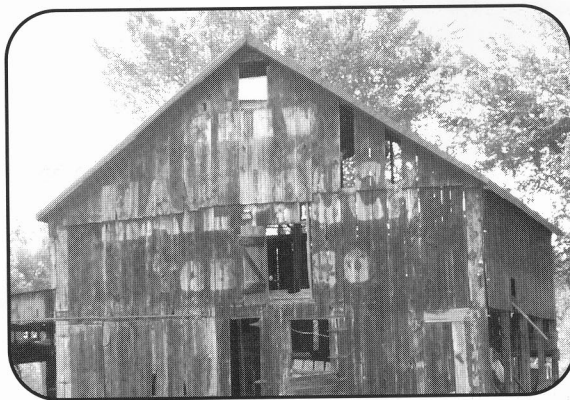
We climbed into our vehicles and headed off to Edwardsville via Hamel. Yes, the nice cool comfort of a motel and a nap was calling me, but first we needed to erect the sign in front of the Award winning Meramec Cavern Barn in Hamel, Illinois (the second Meramec Barn in as many days). Annette and I roamed around the beautiful gardens that surround the barn. The boys erected the sign with no problem and off we zoomed. Heading for Edwardsville, we followed Jeff and Annette. Upon arriving in Edwardsville Jeff called our cell phone (the modern day walkie-talkie) to ask about lunch. We decided lunch would be great since we hardly ate at all that day. You would think we'd still be full from Saturday, but no, all this driving builds up an appetite. Lunch and then check in at the hotel and then our much wanted/needed nap.



Our ladies posting the last sign at Our Lady of the Highway.

Later in the day, Bob Gehl and family from Missouri invited the four of us for a concrete at Ted Drewes. Can you ever pass that up? Off we drove the four of us in our car, my taste

buds hungry for a chocolate concrete. I think I was drooling a bit. While driving I received a call from a friend in Texas. He and his wife happened to be on a casino boat in Louisiana on the Mississippi River. We just happened to be crossing over the Mississippi at that moment. He went on to explain he had driven 300 miles and it took him six hours. Novice! I told him we just drove 300 miles and it took us two days! Is there something wrong with my math calculations? We reached Ted Drewes and had a great time with the Gehl family. Of course the concrete served as a great dinner. After much friendship, stories passed, and laughter we headed back to the hotel for a sound nights sleep.



An old Mail Pouch Tobacco barn near Edwardsville

MONDAY

Another breakfast and off we sped. Jeff and Annette showed us a Mail Pouch tobacco barn just north of Edwardsville on 66 leading out of town. We stopped in Hamel to take pictures of their new welcome sign. Then off we drove to the Our Lady of the Highway Shrine. Jeff and John were so gracious. Since this was the last sign to be erected they decided it would be most fitting to allow Annette and me to install this one. How wonderful was that? Two women, installing the sign before Our Lady of the Highway Shrine, very appropriate. As we were busy installing this sign, it dawned on me this was the end of our excellent journey. A tear came to my eye, hidden by my sunglasses. Jeff and John were ready to take our picture next to the sign, when Jeff said, "Kath, take off your glasses!" (I had told him this for every picture he took), he laughed. We all laughed but beneath my laughter trickled a small tear down my cheek. A tear of joy, for what a wonderful five-hour trip I had? Or was it regret that these joyous three days were over? I think it was a little of both. Nonetheless, if you head out on a five-hour journey, try to make it in three days. You won't regret it!

The Mother Road Widow



MEET THE ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

by Jeff LaFollette

*This is the second installment in the series
about our sister associations.*



Postcard of US 66 at Hooker Cut in Missouri

In the fall 2002 Edition of "The 66 News!", we introduced you to the National Historic Route 66 Federation. In this installment we present to you our neighbors to the west, the Route 66 Association of Missouri. Answering the questions is Missouri Association President, Tommy Pike of Springfield, Missouri.

- 1) When was the Route 66 Association of Missouri formed?
"The Route 66 Association of Missouri originated in the fall of 1989 through the efforts of a small group of dedicated volunteers and became a reality in early 1990."
- 2) How many members does your association currently have?
"458 Members — including both business, family and individual members."
- 3) What is the mission statement of your association?
"It is to preserve, promote and develop Old Route 66 in the State of Missouri."
- 4) What in your opinion is a "must see" site along Route 66 in Missouri?
"The Devils Elbow area and the area from Halltown, Missouri through Paris Springs and Spencer. These areas both have truss bridges and sections of the original road."
- 5) Tommy, you attended the Route 66 Corridor Act meeting in Albuquerque last year. What is your assessment of the Corridor Act to date?
I think the Corridor Act is a good thing for Route 66. However, in a nutshell, the biggest drawback is the funding. It will need more money to make an impact on the things that need to be accomplished."

- 6) What projects will you be working on to secure Corridor Act funding for fiscal year 2003?
"To complete the Historical Survey and to get more properties on the National Register. The Association's newly formed Conservation and Continuation Committee will be trying to decide which items and projects should come first."
- 7) What do you see as the biggest challenge or project that desperately needs to be saved along Missouri Route 66?
I feel that one of the biggest challenges is to convince many property owners that their property needs to be saved and included on the National Register. And then to apply for the funding to do so."
- 8) You attended the Route 66 Summit in Springfield, Illinois during the festival. Do you think the idea of having annual meetings with leaders of all the associations will benefit the road as a whole?
I think communication and cooperation between the State Associations is very important. Although, geographically, we may have different situations, we still

Continued on page 8





St. Louis Missouri Postcard

face many of the same problems. I think face to face meetings with the leaders help everyone to become more aware of the total road. Talking together about the different areas, problems and possible solutions helps everyone."

- 9) Name a couple of your favorite old Route 66 spots to get a good meal along the old road in the "Show Me State".
"For a complete meal its Big Chief Dakota's in Pond, which is near Manchester, or Zeno's in Rolla. For a hamburger and shake, it is Steak-N-Shake on St. Louis Street here in Springfield. Our all time favorite was Wilder's in Joplin before it changed owners a few years ago. The restaurant is still there but it is not the same. For new to the road restaurants, it is the Feed Lot and Sweet Water BBQ at Waynesville. Then there is always Elbow Inn at Devils Elbow, Red Cedar Inn at Pacific, and the Bell Cafe and Wyota Inn in Lebanon."
- 10 How can people get information on becoming a member of the Route 66 Association of Missouri?
"By mailing for information at: Route 66 Association of Missouri, P.O. Box 8117, St. Louis, MO 63156 or visiting our website at www.missouri66.org.



US 66 Scenic Missouri postcard

ROUTE 66 TOUR OF DOWNTOWN CHICAGO PLANNED

By Dave Clark

This year's Motor Tour begins in the Chicago area. Any Association members who are interested should make plans to get into Chicago early on Friday, June 6th, to participate in walking tours hosted by Windy City resident and Road Geek, Dave Clark.

Some of the highlights will include:

THE TALLEST BUILDING ON ROUTE 66

The tallest building in the world with weight-bearing walls. Stunning architecture by Meis van der Rohe, Daniel Burnham, John Root, and many more! A stop at a restaurant on 66 that has been doing business continuously since the 1890s. (Great food, brewing their own beer long before the term "micro-brewery" was invented, real draft root beer, private label bourbon). The site of the world's first skyscraper. The site where Standard Time was adopted.

THE ART INSTITUTE

THE SANTA FE RAILWAY BUILDING

Anyone interested in this urban adventure should contact Dave directly. The exact time and itinerary of our walk will be up to the people who respond, but tentative plans are to have a tour at noon, and another around 2 p.m. There is no charge for these tours.

Contact Dave Clark, Windy City Road Warrior, as follows:

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 Website: <http://www.windycityroadwarrior.com>
 Phone: 312-432-1284
 Address: 843 W. Adams Street #312
 Chicago, IL 60607-3017

See you in Chi-Town in June!

DID YOU KNOW?

By John Weiss
Preservation Committee Chairman

Illinois can take credit for the Roadside Attraction signage program.

It all began in 1998. John Weiss had the idea for the program, but needed someone with artistic talent. So he discussed it with his preservation volunteer Randy Wierzgac. Randy designed and made the first Route 66 Roadside Attraction sign. It was installed in 1999 at the restored Meramec Caverns barn in Cayuga.

This sign became the sample. The association was approached to allocate some funds for additional signs to promote Illinois attractions. Limited funding was approved.

The next sign was made by Ye Olde Sign Shoppe in New Lenox. It was made using Randy's original design. Soon sign number 2 was installed at the Odell station.

In 2000, the preservation committee successfully negotiated with Hampton Inns for involvement with Route 66. Hampton Inn's first Route 66 project, in 2001, was to aid the Odell Standard Filling Station. This was extremely successful. While there, they noticed our Roadside Attraction sign located at Odell. They felt it was a good idea and asked permission of the Illinois Association to use our idea and permission was also given by Randy Wierzgac to use his design.

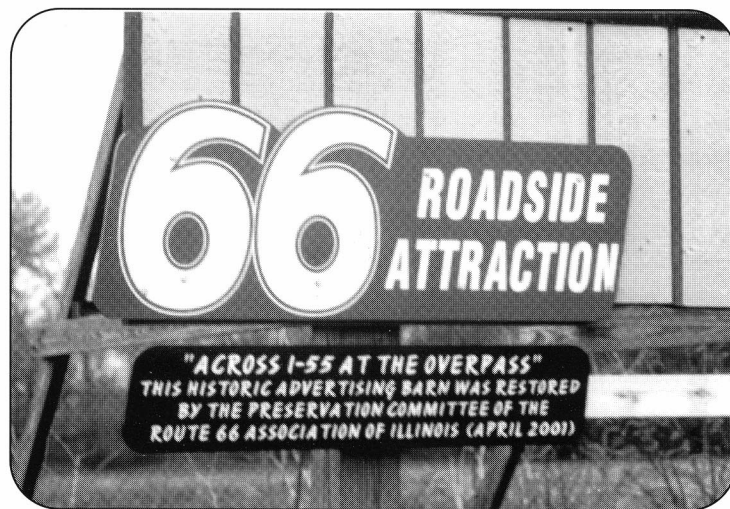
Hampton decided to slightly modify the design to distinguish it from our original. It is easy to see the difference. Theirs has a shield with 66 inside it. Ours is a large 66 without a shield. Close up you will see ours are made out of wood and theirs are made from metal. Hampton Inn negotiated with our sign maker, Ye Olde Sign Shoppe, to produce a total of 66 signs, with custom wording on each one. These will be distributed along Route 66 from Illinois to California. Ten of Hampton Inn's signs will be displayed in Illinois.

Our 66 Roadside Attraction signs will also continue. At this writing, the Illinois Association signs can be seen at seven locations. Little by little we will add more.

Our state will again lead the way. With the help of Hampton Inns, other states will mirror what Illinois has begun. This program successfully links all eight states.



Hampton Inn Version of Sign



Rt. 66 Association of Illinois Roadside Attraction Sign

ROUTE 66 NAME BADGES AVAILABLE

They're back.

RT. 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS



Now you can get an official Route 66 Association of Illinois name badge. Association members can order them for \$5.00 each, which includes shipping. The badge will be engraved with your name on it. You can wear it proudly to Association events, car shows or wherever you go and want to show that you are a proud member of the Route 66 Association of Illinois. To order your badge, send a check or money order for \$5.00 payable to the Route 66 Association of Illinois to Jeff LaFollette, 2351 Highway 130, New Liberty, Iowa 52765. Please include with your check exactly how you want your name on the badge. The badges will be mailed out as soon as I receive them from the manufacturer. Get yours in time for this year's motor tour!

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL SUPPORTERS OF ROUTE 66

Written By Fred Cain-Topeka, Indiana

Dear Route 66 Supporters,

Thank you very much for all your efforts, and for just plain being out there. It's great to know that there are others out there that care about the future of Route 66. I'd like to say up front that in our feelings towards promoting and preserving the Mother Road, it's obvious to me that we are all basically on the same page.

It's truly wonderful everything that you have all done, each in your own way to keep the memory and life of this truly greatest of highways alive. Unfortunately, there is just one major problem, one missing link. Legally, on the books U.S. Route 66 doesn't really exist! Nor has it existed since it was decommissioned in 1985!

I want to say here that it is my true conviction that it was a mistake to have decommissioned U.S. 66 in the first place. To me, that's a little bit like "decommissioning" Mount Rushmore, Plymouth Rock or the Empire State Building. There are some segments of American life that are just too important to simply cast off. We identify with these things. They are at the very center of our cultural sphere and are an integral inseparable part of our heritage.

If all this weren't enough of an injustice, there is the added problem that "roadies" and aficionados of Route 66 come from all four corners of the earth to see, drive and experience the Route, but cannot even find it on their atlases. Why not? Because, as stated, the route really doesn't exist as far as our government bureaucracy is concerned. This is an injustice that needs to be set right again. There can be only one remedy: Re-commission U.S. Route 66.

The backbone of my proposal is to decommission all those segments of interstate highways between Chicago and Santa Monica and replace them with a new re-certified U.S. Route 66. Only I-15 would remain, co-signed with U.S. 66-Barstow-Ontario. These interstate numbers may be important, but compared with the most famous highway in the world, they are expendable. So this action is more justified. I would also like to point out that this would involve a change in signage only and would not involve any major freeway change in infrastructure or any new highway construction. The new U.S. 66 would be a freeway from Chicago to Santa Monica.

Most of the skeptics see re-commissioning as such a complete and totally hopeless impossibility and they'd prefer not to waste any time or scarce resources pursuing what they perceive to be a pipe dream. I firmly believe that the skeptics are just plain flat out mistaken. From all the research I've don so far, I can assure you it is possible. Then again, nothing in life really worth doing comes easy, or so it seems.

So where do we go from here? Many of us do not live in a Route 66 state, so we're at a loss when it comes to contacting our state representatives. We need to find, reach out to and inspire those who would like to get the Route back again. We need to assist and help them contact the legislatures in the state where they live. If the governments from the eight Route 66 states begin hearing from us en masse, then something will begin to happen.

I hope this inspires some of you to action. For those of you who live in a Route 66 state, I can't urge you strongly enough to write or call your state representative. The goal is lofty, but it is within reach, so let's "just do it"!

Sincerely,
Fred M. Cain

(Editor's Note: Due to the length of this letter, some of its contents were edited out. I tried to keep the most significant content of his letter intact. He makes some excellent points and suggestions.)

WHY I WENT TO THE ROUTE 66 FESTIVAL

By Tex Kirwan

In the late 1950's I was an apprentice motor mechanic listening to the music while repairing cars and reading motor magazines

American cars seemed to be all the rage by being large, while English cars were small compared to what I was seeing on the films at the flicks. At the time I said I must drive in the U.S.A. Diners, open roads, bars and the people.

After many trials and tribulations, I was able to make my dream come true. The drive into Joliet was without problem, all my information was supplied by John & Lenore Weiss who are now more than just organizers but friends. The convoy out of Joliet was the start of the Dream.

Customized cars, Harleys, myself and a lot of other people as well. I was glad I was not the front driver. I soon found out that everyone drives at the speed limit, too fast for me. I wanted to see as much as I could, so I fell behind and absorbed the feeling of Route 66.

The first diner, the Launching Pad Drive In and the Gemini Giant, my first burger on Route 66. Back on the road, so many towns and villages to see and stop at like Odell. I met the mayor, bought a t-shirt. It was going very well. In Bloomington, I got lost. And what can you say about Funk's Grove, it is everything I

thought of in an American old town, and do not forget the SIRUP. Then to Springfield. I arrived at the hotel, showered and changed. It was very hot for me. I liked the air conditioner and the cold beer. I met John & Lenore again, and then started my walk around downtown. It was very well organized. I hit the sidewalks, all the stalls (booths), and the markets, and visited some of the main buildings.

The parade at night was great; you could put some U.K. cars in the boot of U.S. cars. Night life was great; I met so many people and made so many friends. I am keeping in contact with most of them. It was the trip of a lifetime. I wished it did not have to end. The welcome I got from everybody I met will be with me until the day I drive Route 66 in the sky. I have not been able to put all my memories in this short letter because there was so much I had done and seen.

(Editor's Note: Tex Kirwan lives in England and attended the Route 66 Festival in September of 2002. This story came from an e-mail sent to John and Lenore Weiss as to why he came across the ocean to Springfield, Illinois.)



**DON'T FORGET
TO ORDER YOUR
ROUTE 66
MOTOR TOUR LICENSE
PLATES!**

It's not too late to get a set of the 2003 Motor Tour License plates.

So far, close to 140 sets have been ordered by the time this went to press. We have sold out of plates the previous four years, and this year looks like no exception. If you would like to get a set of plates, contact Jeff LaFollette at the phone, address, or e-mail on page 2.

The plates are \$35 and can be legally displayed for 60 days, prior to and through the motor tour.

They will be collector's items, like most anything Route 66 is nowadays.

So DON'T be left out! Contact Jeff and order your set of plates today.

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

MOTEL LIST FOR THE 2003 MOTOR TOUR

**ALL MOTELS HAVE ROOMS BLOCKED FOR THE ASSOCIATION
BE SURE TO MENTION THAT YOU ARE WITH THE ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR**

FRIDAY JUNE 6,

Hampton Inn
6251 Joliet Road
Countryside, Illinois
708-354-5200
\$85.00 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by May 22, 2003

Red Roof Inn
7535 Kingery Highway
Willowbrook, Illinois
1-800-733-7663
\$72.99 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by June 2, 2003
Use confirmation number B167000615

Baymont Inn
855 W. 79th Street
Willowbrook, Illinois
630-654-0077
\$70.00 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by May 24, 2003

Ramada Inn
300 South Frontage Road
Burr Ridge, Illinois
630-525-2900
\$73.00 a night plus tax
40 rooms blocked
Book by May 11, 2003

Internet web site
www.il66assoc.org

Fairfield Inn
820 W. 79th Street
Willowbrook, Illinois
630-789-6300
\$79.00 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by May 6, 2003

SATURDAY JUNE 7,

HALL OF FAME BANQUET at HOLIDAY INN NORMAL

Holiday Inn
#8 Trader Circle
Normal, Illinois
309-452-8300
\$70.00 a night plus tax
Includes complimentary breakfast buffet,
(2 coupons per room)
60 rooms blocked for Route 66 Motor Tour
Reservations must be made by May 23, 2003

Best Western
#6 Trader Circle
Normal, Illinois
309-454-4070
\$62.50 a night plus tax
(includes continental breakfast)
50 rooms blocked
Book by May 16, 2003

SUNDAY JUNE 8,

HOLIDAY INN
1000 Eastport Plaza Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-345-2800
\$66.00 Plus tax
100 Rooms Blocked

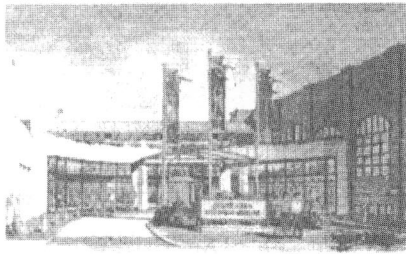
SUPER 8
2 Gateway Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-345-8008
\$59.00 plus tax
20 Rooms Blocked

HAMPTON INN
7 Commerce Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-346-4400
\$66.00 Plus Tax
45 Rooms Blocked

BOOK SUNDAY NIGHT ROOMS BY May 23

"ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS"

JUNE 6 - 8, 2003 ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR



AND HALL OF FAME BANQUET "Illinois Route 66 Welcomes You"

CHICAGO TO COLLINSVILLE

SPONSORED BY THE ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT J C's PUB ... McCOOK

NEW ROUTE 66 WELCOME CENTER ... JOLIET

ROUTE 66 INDUCTION CEREMONY AT THE HALL OF FAME BANQUET

I-55 FUNKS GROVE REST AREA ... ROUTE 66 DISPLAY

DIXIE TRUCKERS HOME ... HALL OF FAME DISPLAY

I-55 HAMEL REST AREA ... ROUTE 66 DISPLAY

CAHOKIA MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE

WITH STOPS AT:

LOU MITCHELLS RESTAURANT

WHITE FENCE FARM

DWIGHT

ODELL STANDARD GAS STATION

PONTIAC

DIXIE ROUTE 66 HALL OF FAME

COZY DOG DRIVE-IN

ROUTE 66 DRIVE IN THEATRE

LITCHFIELD SESQUICENTENNIAL

SOULSBY SHELL GAS STATION

CAHOKIA MOUNDS HISTORIC SITE

More Tour Information:

OLLIE SCHWALLENSTECKER Tour CoChair 618-585-3081
JOHNNY MILLER Tour CoChair 708-389-3823
JIM JONES 815-844-5657
TONYA FLANNERY 217-324-5253
JEFF LaFOLLETTE 563-893-6653

Hall of Fame Banquet Menu

"Southern Buffet"

Southern Fried Chicken

Deep Fried Baby Catfish

BBQ Spareribs

Assorted Salads, Corn on the Cob,

Baked Beans, and Relish Tray

Dessert, Coffee and Ice-Tea are included.

Cash Bar, Liquor & Soft Drinks extra

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

MAIL TO:

MOTOR TOUR

Route 66 Association of IL

2743 Veterans Parkway #166

Springfield, IL 62704

REGISTRATION FORM

ANY VEHICLE * ANY MODEL * ANY MAKE

Motor Tour Registration Fee: IL 66 members \$25.00 _____

Motor Tour Registration Fee:

(includes membership for non-members) \$40.00 _____

Hall of Fame Banquet _____ tickets @ \$15.00 each _____

Please Print or Type

Total enclosed _____

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ **Sorry, No Refunds. Rain or Shine**

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Please patronize our business members.

And when you do, tell them that you are also a member of the Route 66 Association of Illinois

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Chicago, IL 60634
773-589-9315

Amoco Fence Company
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Springfield, IL 62704

Ariston Café
Old Route 66 & IL 16
Litchfield, IL 62056

Atlanta Public Library District
P.O. Box 568
Atlanta, IL 61723
217-648-2212

Auto Lifters
1451 S. Spencer
Newton, KS 67114

Becker's Hot Rod BP Inc.
10 E. Northbrook Dr.
Dwight, IL 60420
815-584-2189

Bob Green Auto Service
1847 New Salem Church Rd.
New Berlin, IL 62670

Bob's Shell
P.O. Box 30
Williamsville, IL 62693
217-566-2151

Box & Go
2743 S. Veterans Parkway
Springfield, IL 62707
217-862-2060

Branham Body & Paint
4125 Peoria Rd
Springfield, IL 62707

Burris & Son Trucking
2831 S. Whittier
Springfield, IL 62704

C&A Custom Kitchen
3500 Clear Lake Ave.
Springfield, IL 62702

Calhoun County Ford
Main St. Box 388
Hardin, IL 62047

Casey's Garden Shop
1505 N. Main St.
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-828-1424

Champion Garage Inc.
820 Black Ave.
Springfield, IL 62702

Coliseum Antique Mall
520 S. Hard Road
Benld, IL 62009

Comfort Inn
3080 S. State Rt. 157
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Country Classic Cars LLC
2149 E. Frontage Rd
Staunton, IL 62088
618-635-7056

Cozy Dog Drive In
2935 S. 6th St
Springfield, IL 62703

Creative Images Center
726 S. Oakwood Ave.
Geneseo, IL 61254
309-944-4299

CrisTa Bears Inc.
302 Cravens Rd.
Springfield, IL 62707
217-522-8380

DeCamp Junction Inc.
8767 S. State Rt. 4
Staunton, IL 62088
618-637-2951

De-Ja-Vu Route 66
113 E. Baltimore Ave.
Wilmington, IL 60481
815-476-7774

Dell Rhea's Chicken Basket
645 Joliet Road
Willowbrook, IL 60521
630-325-0780

Ev's Cottage Collectibles
9430 Joliet Rd. # 300
Hodgkins, IL 60525
708-485-3210

Fedderson's Pizza Garage
309 S. Old Rt. 66
Dwight, IL 60420
815-584-1166

Finch & Esper
45 Linden Lane
Springfield, IL 62707

First National Bank of Dwight
P.O. Box 10
Dwight, IL 60420

Greg's Motor Sales
1021 W. Mishawaka Ave.
Mishawaka, IN 46545

Henry's Old Rt. 66 Emporium
1107 Historic Rt. 66
Staunton, IL 62088
618-636-5655

Joliet Historical Museum
214 N. Ottawa St. Room 500
Joliet, IL 60432
815-280-1500

Launching Pad Drive In
810 E. Baltimore St.
Wilmington, IL 60481

Lincoln Printers
711 Broadway St.
Lincoln, IL 62756
217-732-3121

Lindsey Electric Inc.
260 Terminal Ave.
Springfield, IL 62707

Lou Mitchell's Restaurant
525 W. Jackson Blvd,
Chicago, IL 60661
312-939-3111

Mann's Energy Systems
3445 S. 6th St.
Springfield, IL 62703

American Travel Masters Inc.
410 N. Monroe
Litchfield, IL 62056

Maverick Steak House
1104 W. Reynolds
Springfield, IL 62702

Mid Illinois Caliper
2803 N. Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL 62707

Midwest Digital Mapping
P.O. Box 105
Cantrall, IL 62625
217-487-7213

Moscardelli Moving & Storage
709 N. Lincoln
Springfield, IL 62702

Motor Car Memories
4111 N. Illinois St. # A
Belleville, IL 62226
618-398-7001

Mustang Corral Inc
5446 Chain of Rocks Rd
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-656-5428

National Route 66 Museum
2717 W. 3rd St.
Elk City, OK 73648

Niehaus Cycle Sales
Old Route 66 North
Litchfield, IL 62056
217-324-6565

Northend Illini Bank
2120 Peoria Rd
Springfield, IL 62791

O'Halloran & Reinhold
8268 Twombly Rd.
DeKalb, IL 60115
815-758-3085

Oldham Graphic Supply
2056 Republic
Springfield, IL 62702

Original Route 66 Accessories
P.O. Box 145
Western Springs, IL 60558
708-246-1543

Patterson Brothers Oil
141 S. Pine
Williamsville, IL 62693

Polk-A-Dot Drive In
222 N. Front St.
Braidwood, IL 60408

Pour Richards
210 Tremont St.
Odell, IL 60460
815-998-2556

Rialto Theater
15 E. Van Buren St
Joliet, IL 60432

Route 66 Auto Body
P.O. Box 385
Hamel, IL 62046

RUB Olds, Chevy, Buick
200 S. Franklin St.
Dwight, IL 60420

Scotty's Route 66 Bar & Grill
P.O. Box 426
Hamel, IL 62046
618-633-2228

Seguin Services Inc.
3100 S. Central Ave.
Cicero, IL 60804
708-863-3803

Shea's Truck Covers
2075 Peoria Rd.
Springfield, IL 62702

Springfield Overhead Doors
421 N. Lincoln
Springfield, IL 62702

State Farm Insurance
2702 Ireland Grove Rd.
Bloomington, IL 61709

Trailnet Inc.
3900 Reavis Barricks Rd.
St. Louis, MO 63125
314-416-9930

Tri-City Ramada Limited
5105 Highway 111
Pontoon Beach, IL 62040

VFN Fiberglass Inc.
501 Interstate
Addison, IL 60101

Victoria Tyme Inn
511 E. First South St.
Carlinville, IL 62626
217-854-8689

Watt Brothers Drug Store
9th & N. Grand Ave. East
Springfield, IL 62704

What's Your Hang Up?
129 W. Main St.
Carlinville, IL 62626
217-854-7979

DONATIONS TO PRESERVATION

By John Weiss, Preservation Chairman

Just as important to the volunteers are the folks who provide donations to our preservation projects.

Recently we received a donation from Richard Lee of a 1916 hand painted stage curtain from the original Opera House in Gardner.

Another generous cash donation came from preservation supporter, John Ruh. Also a cash donation came from Fred & Pat Etchill who own Fred's SporTime Clocks in Spaulding, Illinois

Ernie Heinrich from Ye Olde Sign Shoppe has donated three of our Route 66 Roadside Attraction signs complete with custom text.

Leece Neville of Crete, Illinois, is retiring from the auto repair business. He has donated all of his 1950s garage equipment and manuals. This is a huge truck load. It fills the bay area at the Odell Filling Station nicely.

Dale Johnson of the Ace Hardware Corporation has helped with many projects. This year he is promising paint and technical advice for this year's projects. They are the Atlanta Wall Dog Jam, a facelift for the new Pig Hip restaurant and mini museum, and the renovation of the Soulsby Station.

It is impossible to orally express our appreciation to all who support the preservation of Route 66 here in Illinois. But it is important that we try.

A sincere, standing ovation THANKS to all of you.



Now available...
Highly detailed maps of
Route 66 from Chicago to
St. Louis...with additional
states on the way!



- ★ 48 Pages of maps & photos showing Route 66 Landmarks
- ★ Contours
- ★ Georeferenced Photos
- ★ Latitude/Longitude/GPS Grid
- ★ Great for use in your car, with your GPS receiver, or your armchair!
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Preservation Committee hearing plans for 2003.



Randy Wierzgac does touchup painting at Cayuga barn.

ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP IN SPRINGFIELD

By Jeff LaFollette

Collecting oral history on Route 66 is the focus of training offered by the National Park Service through the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program.

On April 26 and 27th, 2003, The Route 66 Association of Illinois and the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Corridor Project will co-sponsor an Oral History Workshop. The workshop will be conducted by English professor and oral historian David Dunaway of the University of New Mexico. Dr. Dunaway is conducting workshops in seven sites along the Mother road. The Illinois workshop will be held at the Hampton Inn Springfield Southwest at 2300 Chuckwagon Dr. right off Veterans Parkway (IL Rt. 4) and will be Dr. Dunaway's fifth workshop.

The workshop is limited to 20 participants and will cost \$20 per person to attend. The cost of the workshop will include a free oral history handbook and lunch for both days of the workshop. The times of the workshop will be from 9-5 both days. The workshops offer tips on recording, how to prioritize and organize interviews, and sources for basic research.

Dunaway, co-editor of the classic "Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology" spent three years documenting Route 66's overlooked stories and forgotten places for the 75th anniversary of Route 66 in 2001 for National Public Radio's "Morning Edition" and Public Radio International.

Registration is on a first come, first served basis limited to the first twenty paid individuals. For more information, contact Jeff LaFollette at 563-349-6638 or by e-mail at ajon66@aol.com.



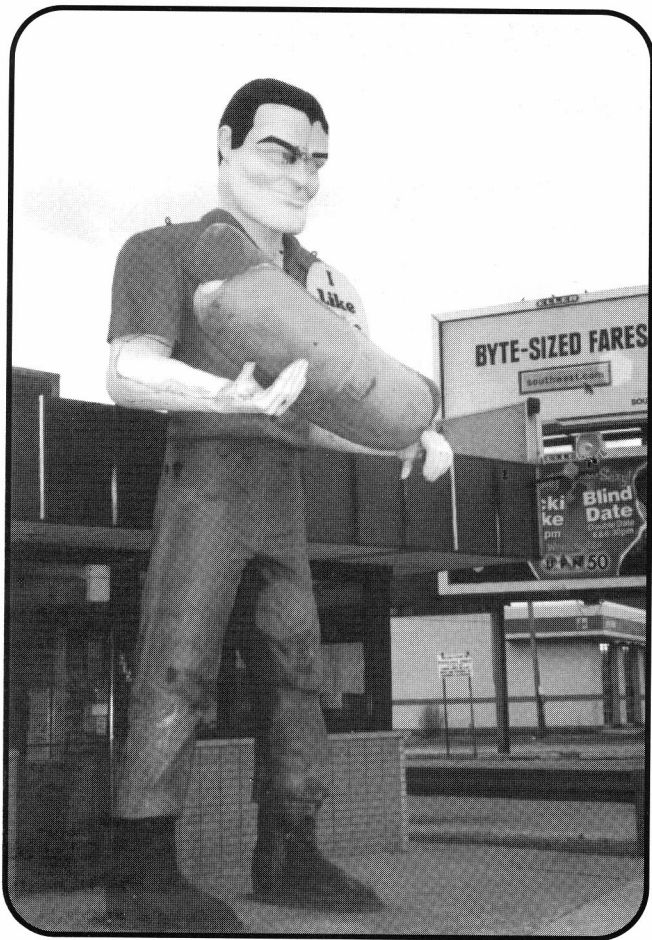
A "GROUNDSWELL" OF SUPPORT FOR ROUTE 66

By Jeff LaFollette

In this issue of *THE 66 NEWS!* is a letter from Fred Cain of Topeka, Indiana. I have been in communication with another gentleman who wants to see Route 66 placed back on the map. His name is George Kemberling Jr. from Rogers, Arkansas. What is unique about these two gentlemen? Neither one of them live in a Route 66 state, but they are working to try to get Route 66 back on the maps. Does it sound like it might be an impossible task? Not to these two men, and they are working hard to reach the right people within the state associations, and other organizations to hopefully get Route 66 back on the map and the US 66 shields back on the road. George recently sent me a copy of a letter he received from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The AASHTO letter was from Anthony Kane, Director of Engineering and Technical Services. There is one particular paragraph in this letter. I'd like to share with you.

"In the past ten years, several states have erected signing designating the existing portions of the old alignment as "Old Route 66" or "Historic Route 66". However there is currently no request from the State DOT's to recommission Route 66 as a continuous facility along its previous alignment. If a groundswell of support from our state DOT members emerges for redesignation, we would be happy to broach the issue with the AASHTO Special Committee on Route Numbering."

AASHTO has issued a challenge to Route 66 supporters. They will at the very least take a look at reinstating Route 66 as an official U.S. Highway if there is a "groundswell of support". Unfortunately a groundswell of support is not well defined. Nevertheless, the challenge is out there. Whether it be letters of support from every member of every Route 66 organization from Illinois to California, and/or a flood of support letters to reinstate Route 66 to every state DOT, whatever it may take. It's not going to happen overnight, but if nothing else, support letters will catch their attention, especially if they get a lot of support from Route 66 states and some from other states as well. If you'd like to get in touch with the Illinois Department of Transportation and send a letter supporting the recommissioning of Route 66, mail it to: Illinois Department of Transportation 2300 S. Dirksen Parkway, Springfield, IL 62764. This is just the start. This is a project that will be a definite grass roots effort in order for it to succeed.



Bunyon's Giant - One of three in Illinois

The giant was purchased in 1965 for \$1,900.00 to be in place, on the roof, for the grand opening on January 8, 1966. They closed 37 years later on January 25, 2003. In 1970 the giant was relocated onto the ground in front of the famous restaurant.

Lenore and I stopped in to say good-bye to the founder, Hamlet "Art" Stephens and his two daughters. They could not get over all of the publicity they were getting. Television crews, radio shows, and many newspapers.

Art said, "Everyone wants to shake my hand. I'm like a celebrity." We had never met this wonderful family before. They were a delight to talk with. The next day they would turn over the keys and the building will become a Mexican foods carry out establishment.

Art told us that in its heyday, they would open at 11 a.m. A line of customers would already be waiting. It was nonstop business until midnight. He said they would sell over 250,000 hot dogs a year. That does not account for their famous beef sandwiches made with the families secret sauce. Many other treats were also on the menu. Yes, millions and millions of sandwiches were served. Art's motto was, "Quality first, speed second."

GOOD-BYE BUNYON'S

By John & Lenore Weiss,

*This roadside attraction on Route 66
in Cicero is now closed.*

*The famous Paul Bunyon giant
must also be removed from the property
by the end of April at the latest.*

He was always too busy to notice if any famous person ever came in. Everyone received the same first class food and service.

At this writing, Lenore and I are working directly with the Stephens family to keep the giant in Illinois, along with his two brothers, on Route 66 if possible. Offers to purchase it have come from all over the country. Even the original builder of the 120 statues wants it. Seems he broke the mold but never kept one for himself. We hope the next issue of "The 66 News!" will be a pleasant report on where Paul Bunyon has found his new home.

Art did apologize for some holes in the body of the mighty giant. It seems someone shot eight arrows into it one night. When he saw this, he removed them and realized they were quality arrows, so he sold them. Someone did call to flaunt the arrow damage. Instead of acting upset, he thanked the caller for the free arrows, and told him how he made money selling them. The caller hung up.

Art is now 80 years old and feels it is time to retire. The business has slowed in recent years due to so many franchise businesses and a lack of some large factories that once flourished in the town of Cicero.

It will seem strange to not see the gentle giant watching over the travelers on Route 66. After reading this, you may still have time to get one last photo. Paul Bunyon, the statue, was located at 6150 Ogden Avenue (Route 66) in Cicero.

A Bunyon hot dog came with fries, mustard, relish, onions, sport peppers and a pickle. But, ketchup would be applied only ON REQUEST.

Thank you Stephens family for your years of service on Historic Route 66.

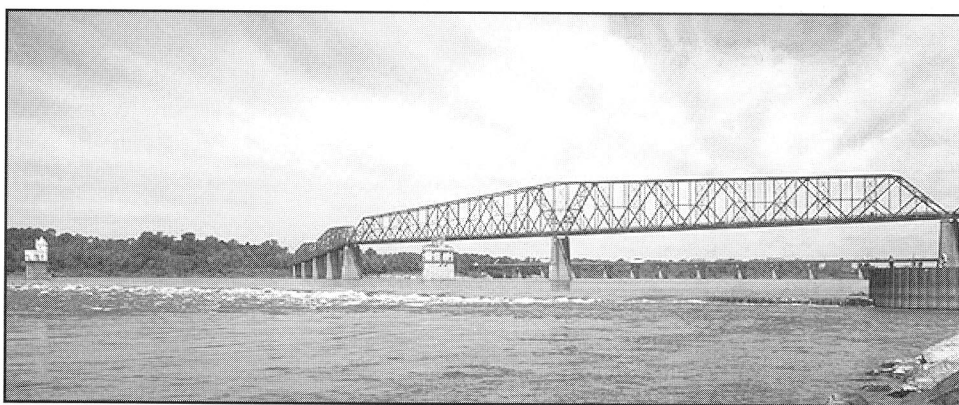
ILLINOIS AND MISSOURI ASSOCIATIONS



TO HAVE A PICNIC

CHAIN OF ROCKS BRIDGE

In November of 2002, Illinois Association President Jeff LaFollette contacted Missouri Association President Tommy Pike about the possibility of conducting a joint association event in 2003. On January 11th 2003, Jeff attended the board and general meeting of the Route 66 Association of Missouri and offered a proposal that both states conduct a joint event on the Chain of Rocks Bridge in 2003. The Missouri Association unanimously agreed to the proposal. At the Illinois Association board meeting the following week, the plan for an event was approved as well. So mark this date on your calendar. July 26, 2003 will be the first Illinois/Missouri Association Picnic on the grounds of the Chain of Rocks Bridge on the Missouri side of the river. Some details have to be worked out yet, but the plan is to have food set up on the grounds either by vendors or having a catering service provide food which will be provided by both associations. There are plans to have a kids' area of games and fun. Raffles, Route 66 displays and merchandise are in the works as well. Of course, the bridge will be open to walk across. And for those who want to venture into Missouri on Route 66, Ted Drewes will be open to get a frozen custard treat. More detailed information will be printed in the summer edition of this newsletter. If you are interested in attending this picnic, please contact Jeff LaFollette by e-mail, regular mail or phone, and let him know how many would be attending so we can get an idea on how much food to order. This will be a chance to meet Route 66 aficionados from Missouri and get to know some of our neighbors to the west.



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

\$15 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

IN OTHER NEWS

A letter from George Kemberling from Rogers, Arkansas arrived after the Winter 2002 edition went to print. So I have included it in this issue of "The 66 News".

I've wanted to make a statement about old US 66. It should not just be a memory in our hearts, minds, and the travel involved. US 66 should be resurrected back on the US Highway system as a regular route.

US 66 is "America" like baseball and apple pie. It's a part of us that should continue on forever! We should make an effort to establish a new US 66 with old and new alignments. Make the Mother Road whole again. If interested, contact your state D.O.T. or write to A.A.S.H.T.O. at 444 North Capitol NW, Suite 249, Washington DC 20001."

Thank you George for your fine letter. It's the hope of every Route 66 enthusiast that someday US 66 will regain its rightful place back on the roadmap. Your letter and current efforts are possibly the catalyst that may result in getting this task done.

The city of Madison, Illinois is considering building a replica of the toll booth that was originally on the Missouri side of the Chain of Rocks Bridge. This toll booth won't collect tolls, but will have an interpretative center on the first floor and meeting rooms on the second. This is part of the Chouteau Island Project which will create a large park on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River. The goal is to have the toll booth opened in 2004, in conjunction with the 200th Anniversary of the beginning of the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Here is a marvelous way to experience the magnificent Rialto Square Theater in Joliet, Illinois. It is considered to be one of the ten most beautiful theatres in the nation. It is located on original Route 66 and has been honored to be inducted into the Route 66 Hall of Fame.

On April 8 at 7 p.m., they will show a film titled "**ROUTE 66: A ROAD TO REMEMBER.**" It is a 1997 documentary by film producer, Charles Hartman. The cost is \$7.50 - Seniors, over 55, \$5.50.

It should be interesting to watch a film made in 1996. So much has changed since then.

The major attraction is the Rialto, a vaudeville theatre built in 1926 as a "Palace for the People." Don't miss this interesting opportunity.

Approximately 200 "Letterheads / Walldogs," a group of professional sign painters from across the country, will converge in Atlanta, Illinois July 11-13, 2003 for "LetterRip on Route 66".

The public is invited to attend the event and watch as the Walldogs paint several Rt. 66 related murals on the sides of buildings lining Old Rt. 66 in downtown Atlanta. The main project will be a 70' x 20' Rt. 66 themed mural to be painted on a brick building that borders the Atlanta Rt. 66 Park. Four other murals will be painted that depict advertisements for former cafes and gas stations that used to be along Old Rt. 66 in downtown Atlanta.

In addition to all the mural projects, the Letterheads / Walldogs will be putting on a series of professional development seminars for their members, including how to do pin-striping. The public is invited to watch as some of the country's best pin-strippers show off their work. The Letterheads / Walldogs will even be holding "pin-striping races" throughout the day. Exact times for the seminar and races will be announced closer to the actual event date.

"**LetterRip on Route 66**" festivities kick off at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, July 11 and continue throughout the weekend until approximately Noon on Sunday, July 13. Everyone visiting the event is encouraged to drive his/her old car as the Letterheads / Walldogs are looking forward to seeing as many antique cars in town as possible.

It's OFFICIAL! Tulsa, Oklahoma will host a Route 66 festival in 2004. The festival will happen from June 10-13, 2004. This would coincide with the usual Illinois Association motor tour weekend, but plans are already in the works to reschedule the Illinois motor tour in 2004. The John Steinbeck Awards Banquet will be conducted in conjunction with this event as well. More information on the Tulsa event will be forthcoming in future issues.

On March 22, 2003, Romanian paraplegic athlete Vasile Stoica will attempt to become the first person to travel Route 66 from Los Angeles to Chicago by manual wheelchair. He is undertaking this amazing 66-day feat to raise awareness for disability issues in his home country as well as help gather funds for the Romanian nonprofit Association for the Physically Disabled of Lugoj (AHF Lugoj), which recently lost its central headquarters and one of his friends, Costica Bardan, to a fire. Any contributions he raises will go toward the purchase of a new building, as well as replace computers and medical and sports equipment lost in the blaze.

Stoica's goal is to travel Route 66 in 66 days, covering 5-7 miles per hour, which will allow him to spend a little time visiting local communities, disability organizations, and others enroute to help fuel attention, understanding, and sponsorship toward his cause. Stoica is well known for facing amazing challenges. In October 2001, he beat a world record for going the farthest distance in a wheelchair in 24 hours, covering 82 miles at the College of the Canyons sports track in Valencia, CA. Stoica's world record was captured in an episode of Broken Wings, a documentary series on people with disabilities being distributed by Chip Taylor Communications. In 1999, he became the first Romanian to travel around the world by manual wheelchair, crossing parts of Europe, Canada, the United States, Australia, North Africa, Turkey, and Bulgaria, powered only by his hands. As with all his trips, Stoica will be traveling the road alone, without any personal or medical support.

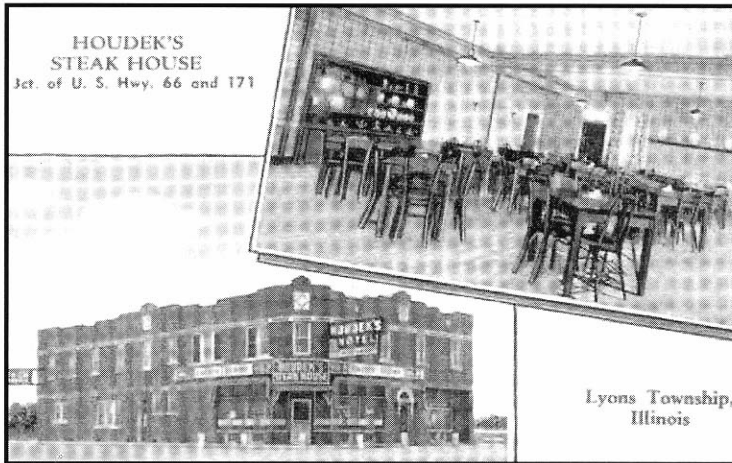
I have always traveled by myself, carrying everything in a bag on my wheelchair," says Stoica. "Fortunately, people are always very helpful and offer me meals and lodging along the way. Of course I would like a good sponsor, but I plan to do this trip with or without money to begin it. Stoica is encouraging others with or without disabilities to join him for portions of his Route 66 Tour. More information about Stoica's remarkable trip can be found at

http://www.geocities.com/vasile_stoica/66.htm

REDISCOVERING IT—HIDDEN ROUTE 66

EARLY ROUTE 66 THROUGH LYONS, ILLINOIS

By Carl Johnson



Houdeks Steakhouse, Lyons, Illinois

A few months ago, I proposed to Jeff LaFollette a series of articles detailing obscure or forgotten sections of Illinois Route 66: How to find these sections and how to drive or walk them. With Jeff's enthusiasm kindled, I now write this first column; but I am not claiming ownership of this column — I heartily encourage others to share their own Illinois finds under this new heading, *REDISCOVERING IT—HIDDEN ROUTE 66*.

Yet I am obliged to start this initial offering with an aside, for I must thank Rich Henry, of Henry's Rabbit Ranch fame (Staunton, Illinois), for his inspiration. On a warm afternoon this past summer, Rich Henry and I were having lunch together at the Crossroads Restaurant in Mount Olive, Illinois. While awaiting our burgers, Rich asked me a blunt question, "What do you enjoy most about Route 66?" "Finding it," I replied.

"I thought you'd say something like that," Rich responded. So thanks, Rich. Thanks for getting me thinking. So on now to the gist of this very first article. . . .

Our nation's earliest automobile highways did not bypass downtowns. No, they drove straight through them, quite often right down Main Street. The apt-named Main Street of America was no exception. Nascent Highway 66 through Lyons, Illinois, was no

exception, either.

Here is the earliest alignment (the S.B.I. 4 - State Bond Issue 4 - alignment) straight through downtown Lyons:

Heading southwest through Berwyn, Illinois, Ogden Avenue is both Historic U.S. 66 and U.S. 34. At the intersection of Harlem Avenue (IL 43), bypass 66 (Historic U.S. 66) departs U.S. 34 by turning south. This was not the original departure of early 66, however. Original 66 continued southwest on Ogden Avenue through this intersection.

Just past this intersection, the Village of Riverside is to your right and the Village of Lyons is to your left. So Riverside can now be recognized as a Route 66 community. The next stoplight is Pershing Road. Once past the Pershing Road intersection we are completely in Lyons. Then just past this intersection, the Des Plaines River will be crossed. This 4-lane bridge is dated 1938; so--although this is original alignment--this is not the original Route 66 bridge (which was most-likely 2 lane).

An evocative and nostalgic highlight is now to your left: Cermak Woods of the Cook County Forest Preserve District. These picnic grounds (and swimming pool) have changed little since the 1920's, a wonderful place to take a stroll.

Just past the forest preserve--also on the left-hand side--is the Lyons Village Hall. Downtown Lyons now begins. Three-and-a-half blocks past the village hall, you will come to a stoplight. This is Joliet Avenue.

To your right (about a block past this intersection) is the symbol of the Village of Lyons: The Hoffman

Tower, overlooking the Hoffman Dam on the Des Plaines River. This 7-story tower was built in 1908 for George Hoffman, Jr. in a style fashioned after European castles. It was built with reinforced concrete, a new technique only recently introduced by Frank Lloyd Wright. This tower is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and houses the Hoffman Tower Museum. I've not toured this museum yet; but Johnny Miller (our association's vice president) assures me It's well worth the gander.

To your left is Joliet Avenue—a 2-lane road that ends over a mile from this intersection at Joliet Road, Historic U.S. 66. This road has all of the markings of an early alignment of the Mother Road; but it never was. I am deeply indebted to David G. Clark for setting me straight on this one. David has thoroughly researched this Lyons alignment for his upcoming Chicagoland Route 66 Guidebook and he both generously and graciously shared the results of his research with me as I prepared this column. David has taught me an invaluable lesson: You need more sources than just old maps.

So no—at this stoplight early 66 (and original S.B.I. 4) went through this intersection along Ogden Avenue for another 0.3 miles. After this intersection, the road will make 2 quick veers to the left. We have now left downtown Lyons. At this point you will want to ease into the left lane.

The next stoplight is Lawndale Avenue. And here is the place where early Highway 66 (following S.B.I. 4) left U.S. 34 by turning south. There are also two wonderful highlights at this intersection. To the left is the Snowflake Drive-In, a late 1940's/early 1950's candidate for recognition by The Society of Commercial Archeology (a group dedicated

to twentieth century roads and roadside architecture). To the right is a very old garage, probably dating to the twenties.

After turning left, we are on Lawndale Avenue, a major road in its time, a very major road. But you'd never guess it now. Not much old survives on this road. There are no old gas stations. There are no old restaurants. There are some old buildings; but they are all very nondescript. There are really no old structures of interest until you get to 47th street (which will be the next stoplight).

But I will mention one thing of interest between Ogden and 47th street. And it is not a building. When you pass the William G. Smith City Park on your left, look to your right. There you will see the Material Service Corporation. This is a corporation that excavates quarries. And behind their buildings exists a huge stone quarry. This is the first of six large stone quarries Route 66 will touch upon between here and just south of the city of Joliet.

You hardly notice these holes in the earth from the road; but it is amazing how huge these holes actually are (I've seen the aerial photographs).

Now arriving at the 47th street intersection, look across the road to the left. You'll see an old roadhouse (probably 1920's), now called Georges Too, a 24-hour hash house and probably not 24-hour lounge.

Once crossing this intersection, we enter the village of McCook to our right. 0.1 miles past this intersection, we enter the village of McCook to our left. So we have now left Lyons. At the next stoplight (0.3 miles past the 47th street stoplight) is the intersection with Joliet Road, Historic U.S. 66. But I need some time here. I need to point out some highlights at this final intersection.

To our left is another old roadhouse and lounge (probably also 1920's), The Turn-N-Time, now closed. Right behind it is a 1940's motel, the Skyline Motel (and on clear Chicago days you can indeed see Chicago's skyline from their front yard).

To our right is a once-upon-a-time place, the home of the Whoopee Coaster. This late 1920's to 1938 attraction is well described in Thomas Arthur Repp's book, Route 66: The Empires of Amusement. Just turn to page 6. Basically it was a severely undulating plank road you drove your own vehicle over. And you paid to do this. You've got to read Mr. Repp's book to believe it.

Ahead continues pre-October, 1926, S.B.I. 4 (which I won't get into—it is a column by itself). To the right continues post-October, 1926, S.B.I. 4, (just-completed and the new-alignment S.B.I. 4 (which I also decline to get into—another column by itself)). So to the right continues original Route U.S. 66 (born November 11, 1926). Thus turning right the oldest alignment now merges back with Historic U.S. 66 onto Joliet Road.

You have just driven (just witnessed) 2.3 miles of the earliest alignment of U.S. Route 66 through Lyons, Illinois.

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FOLLOW UP ON THE FRENCH TRACBAR ROUTE 66 THANK YOU AMERICA TOUR.

*(See THE 66 NEWS, Winter 2002,
titled AWESOME DAY.)*

By John Weiss

A book has been produced about their exceptional Route 66 Tour. It is a slick publication that has devoted 24 pages to Illinois, more than any other state.

Some quotes from the book about Illinois:

"This final leg of Route 66 will remain unforgettable. We were received everywhere like knights of the road."

"At midday, we live out a significant leg in our approach towards the Veterans, in Atlanta. We are welcomed there as heroes for an imposing ceremony put together by a young history professor, very moved by our arrival. The population takes great care of us, having prepared a superb lunch served under the trees. It's the most beautiful and moving ceremony of the journey."

"After that, we come together again after the village of Lexington, because a local association is opening, especially for us, the most ancient trunk of Route 66 - dating from 1926, normally closed to traffic. With total enthusiasm, we motor along these few hundreds of metres, encouraged by the children from a neighboring school waving their panels with messages in French "Salut", "Bienvenue", "Vive la France"..."

"That's not all. Soon we have been stopped again, at the Standard Gas Station restored by Odell, soon after the village of Pontiac. Again a delightful welcome from local population coming with whole crates of cakes, fruit juices or other delicacies. Such hospitality in Illinois."

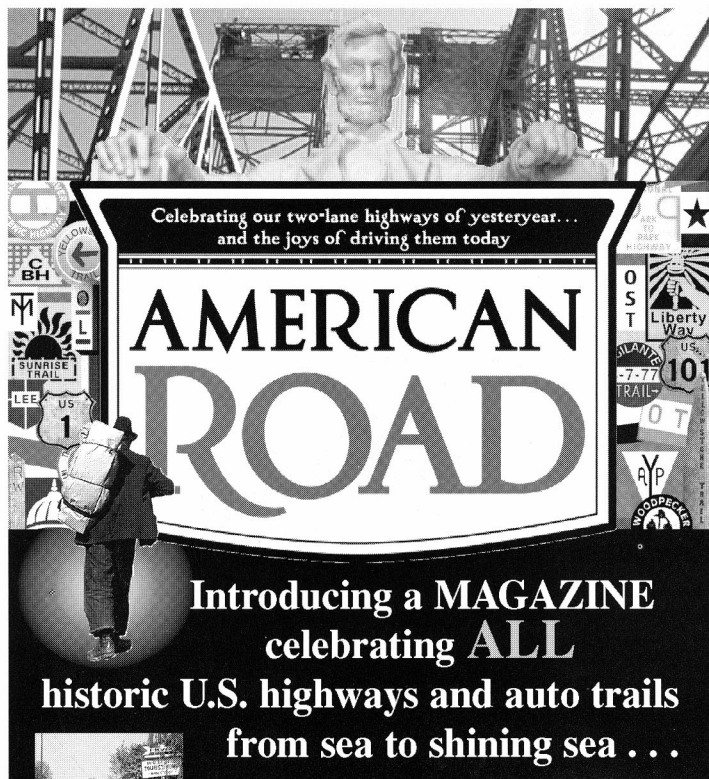
Of the over 1,000 veterans who received medals from the French, one was chosen to represent them all. He is Dal Estes of Pontiac, Illinois. It seems that 84 year old Dal was looking at photos the French had with them from 1944. Sure enough, Dal's picture was there. What a wild coincidence. As a result, two pages of the tour book are devoted exclusively of Dal, then and now. (We are very proud of you Dal, and all your veteran friends.)

Another interesting story:

"During another ceremony in Illinois, a slightly bent old gentleman was crying in front of one of our Tractions. "You cannot know what it has done for me to see this car again...I was a fighter pilot and when I was shot down by flack, landing by parachute, I had the luck to fall alongside a Traction-Avant of the FFI, one with 6 windows and a flat boot just like this one....And it's to this car that I owe my life, because the Resistance took me away at high speed on those little country lanes, out of range of the enemy company which had started to look for me..."

This group will also release an educational documentary film in France about the tour.

Lenore and I believe that this International Tour will bring great publicity to Illinois Historic Route 66. Our pledge is to educate and promote. Well, we certainly did. This entire event did not cost the association anything. **It is a result of our volunteer efforts. Illinois, you won again!**



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and the joys of driving them today

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The Woodpecker Route. Dixie Highway. Lonesome 50. Golden 99. The Lincoln Highway. Yellowstone Trail. Teddy's International. And majestic Route 66.

These roads—and others like them—crossed our country when the motorcar was young. They were the auto trails that taught a nation to vacation. The two-lane thoroughfares that carried America's early dreams.

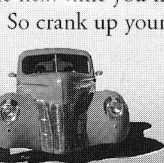
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through *your* state, and the dandy historic drive you've seen us pausing sipping coffee in a neon-lot of time curbside, you see,



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What's more fun than a game of Twister, Hi-Ho Cherry-O and a runaway Slinky?

The International Route 66 Mother Road Festival &
Car Show in Springfield, Illinois!

Remember when you could trust your car to the man who wore the star? ("The big, bright Texaco star!") Or, when you'd walk a mile for a Camel? Relive those days in downtown Springfield, Illinois again this year at the **International Route 66 Mother Road Festival & Car Show, September 26-28.**

- * **Non-stop FREE entertainment all weekend long - including Martin Milner**
- * **Hundreds of Hot Rods, Classics, Corvettes & more line the downtown streets**
- * **Route 66 Authors & Artists - including Michael Wallis**

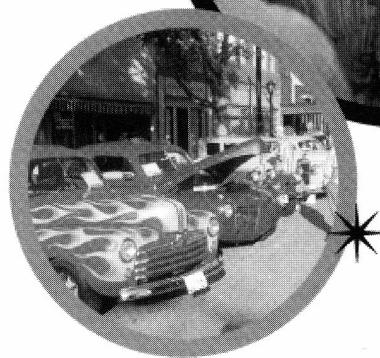
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To order Sock Hop tickets:

www.ticketmaster.com

(enter <http://www.route66fest.com/sockhoptickets>)



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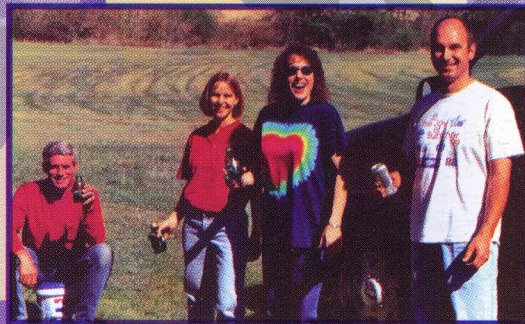
PRESERVATION AT WORK

By John Weiss

Volumes could be written on the many hours our preservation volunteers devote to our Route 66 Association. Here are but a few scenes of some of the folks who work so hard.



Ted Giovannazzi works on the interior of the streetcar.



The Wendt's and Panzcuk relax after a preservation project.



Lou Vargo painting the streetcar diner.



Rosie Vargo, a two-fisted painter.



Tami Panzcuk & Gretchen Wendt making repairs at Cayuga barn.

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS

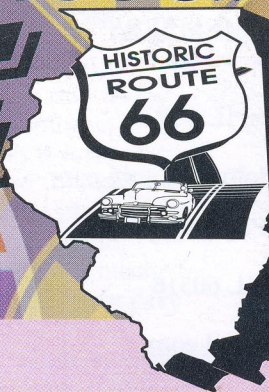
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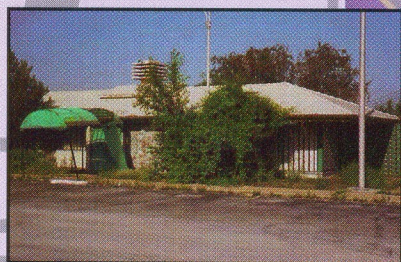
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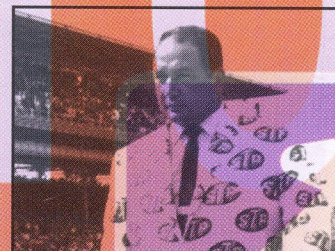
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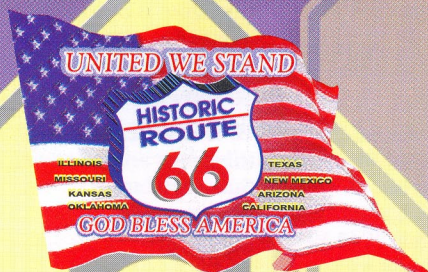
◀ **REDISCOVERING IT
COLLINSVILLE'S
ILLINOIS
ALIGNMENTS**



◀ **2003
HALL OF
FAME
STORY**



▲ **GRANATELLI
INDUCTED
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OF FAME**



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, educate 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.

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Magazine designed by
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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**

The next meeting of the Route 66 Association of Illinois will be conducted in Litchfield, Illinois on Sunday July 13, 2003 at Cordani's at the Gardens Restaurant located at 413 W. Columbian Blvd. Cordani's is located just off old Route 66 south of the intersection of Old 66 and Illinois Route 16. Lunch will be \$13.25 per person and will include broasted chicken, roast beef, tossed salad, green beans with bacon and onions, buttered corn, mashed potatoes and gravy, dinner rolls, coffee, tea and carrot cake for dessert. It has the makings of a feast!

The board meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m. and we will break for lunch at 12:00 noon. The General Session will convene at 1:00 p.m. with a presentation and speaker. This meeting will focus on a recap of this year's motor tour, the Springfield Festival and an event in Bloomington in August with the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. The meetings are open to ALL Association members. And if you are planning to run for a board member or officer position within the Association, this meeting is your last opportunity to declare your candidacy. So come and share some great food, and learn what is going on in your Route 66 Association. For further details about the meeting, contact Montgomery County Board Representative Tonya Flannery at 217-324-5253.

DIRECTIONS TO CORDANI'S ARE AS FOLLOWS:

FROM THE NORTH:

*Follow I-55 to the Litchfield exit. (Exit 52-Illinois16)
Turn left onto Illinois 16 traveling east until you get to the intersection of four lane Route 66. Turn right (south) on 66 and go a short distance until you see Cordani's on your right.*

FROM THE SOUTH:

*Follow I-55 to the Litchfield exit. (Exit 52-Illinois 16).
Turn right and follow the directions above.*

▼ **OCTOBER ELECTIONS ARE COMING**

The elections are a little more than five months away, but now is the time to get involved if you wish to run for an officer or board member position. The Nominating Committee has created rules and guidelines for the upcoming election meeting in October in Bloomington. These guidelines will be outlined in this issue of "The 66 News!". The officers whose terms expire this year are President, Secretary and Corresponding Secretary. County board positions that expire are: Cook, Will, Grundy, Logan and Montgomery, as well as three at-large positions. If you wish to run for any of the above positions, you need to contact Jeff Geisler, Nominating Committee Chairman, by the summer meeting in Litchfield which will be conducted on Sunday July 13, 2003. That is the last date that you may declare as a candidate for any of the above offices. All candidates will be offered the opportunity to post a position statement in the fall edition of "The 66 News!". You may contact Jeff at 708-354-8746, or by e-mail at Route66Railfan@msn.com. If you do not wish to run for an officer or board position, exercise your right as a member, and vote in our elections in October. Check the fall newsletter for more information about the October meeting and the elections.

▼ **2003 ELECTION RULES**

Jeff Geisler, Nominating Committee Chairman

These rules were approved by the entire Nominating Committee at a meeting on November 10, 2002.

- 1) All persons voting must qualify as described in the Bylaws of the Route 66 Association of Illinois.
- 2) All candidates for the positions scheduled to be elected must declare their candidacy by the Summer General Meeting. The candidates will be allowed to have a "position statement" or other descriptive text published in the fall issue of "The 66 News!".
- 3) The ballot will have the known candidates for President, Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and At-Large Board Members pre-printed on a single form. There will be no write-in spaces on the ballot.
- 4) All persons voting must check in at the ballot table to receive an official ballot and sign in on their corresponding county form. All ballots will be issued in numerical order.
- 5) Ballots will not be issued once the election portion of the General Meeting has begun. The Nominating Committee chairman or his designee will make the announcement.
- 6) If during the vote tally a ballot is found to have an illegible, blank, inappropriate name combination, or other undeterminable vote for a candidate, only that particular portion of the ballot will be considered as void. All other valid votes on the ballot form shall be counted.
- 7) To win an elected position, a candidate must possess a simple majority. In the event of a tie vote total for a single position, a run-off election will be held between the tied candidates. In the event of a tie vote for a multiple position, run off elections will be held only if there is a tie in the third highest vote total. The run-off elections will repeat until a simple majority is received by a candidate.
- 8) The elections for the individual County Board member positions will be conducted with a voice vote/show of hands while the ballots are being tallied. Rule 7 above will apply if needed.





Route 66 Association of Missouri

14TH ANNUAL MOTOR TOUR

"CRUISE TO THE CAVERNS"

JOPLIN, MO TO MERAMEC CAVERNS

SEPTEMBER 5TH, 6TH, & 7TH, 2003

- OPEN TO EVERYONE
- ANY TYPE VEHICLE
- 3 FUN-FILLED DAYS ON MISSOURI'S HISTORIC ROUTE 66

FRIDAY, 09/05

SATURDAY, 09/06

SUNDAY, 09/07

REGISTRATION AT THE HOLIDAY INN, JOPLIN, MO

PICNIC DINNER AT THE CITY PARK, WAYNESVILLE, MO

TOUR CONCLUSION AT MERAMEC CAVERNS, STANTON, MO

DASH PLAQUES -- WINDOW DECALS

INFORMATION--Phone: Diane Warhover at (314) 965-5751; Email: DiWarhover@hotmail.com

-----**(tear off)**-----

REGISTRATION FORM (Please print or type & mail by August 30, 2003)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: (9 Digit) _____ Phone: (____) _____

I / We will attend the Saturday dinner...Yes _____ No _____ Number _____ @ \$12.00 each \$ _____

Motor tour registration fee(s) enclosed..... Number _____ @ \$25.00 per vehicle \$ _____

Grand Total amount enclosed for meals and tour registration fees.....\$ _____

Make check payable to: ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF MISSOURI

Mail To: Route 66 Association of Missouri - P.O. Box 8117 - St. Louis, MO 63108

WAIVER (Must be signed by all registrants)

The undersigned by signing below hereby agree(s) that the Route 66 Association of Missouri and/or its officers, directors, and representatives shall in no way be responsible or assume any liability, in whole or in part, for any loss, damage, injury to person or property, or any negligent act or omission resulting from, arising out of, or occurring at or during any activities, programs, tours, meetings, transportation, meals or other services and facilities furnished or supplied during and/or in conjunction with the Annual Motor Tour.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____

The Main Street of America

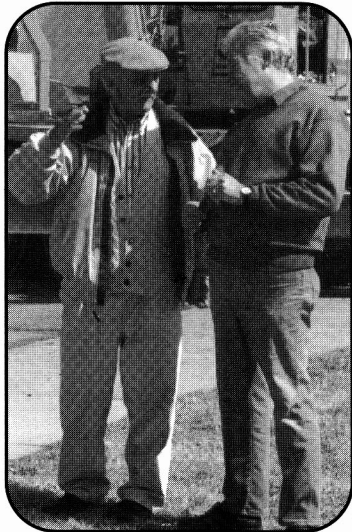
THE BUNYON GIANT: PART 1

by John & Lenore Weiss

As most of you know, this giant is located on Illinois Route 66 in Cicero, Illinois. Recently the owner, Mr. Hamlet Stephens closed the drive in restaurant with plans to retire.

His famous giant went up for sale on E-Bay. Bids came in from all over. The highest bids were over \$10,000.00

Of course, we in Illinois did not like the idea of losing this famous icon of Route 66. John and Lenore Weiss approached the new Route 66 Welcome Center and Historical Museum in Joliet with the idea of displaying the giant at the new \$9.2 million facility. The administrator and curator liked this whimsical idea.



Art Stephens, owner of Bunyon's with John Weiss.

Next, when Lenore and John met with the Stephens family, a special friendship developed. The Stephens family agreed to offer the giant to the museum at no charge. The only obstacle still remaining was to convince the fifteen member governing board of directors of the museum. They pondered the idea of displaying the giant outside the new welcome center to attract more tourism. Many friendly debates were held. The main concern was "Would

this 19 foot tall fiberglass object diminish the esthetics of this multi-million dollar facility?" Finally a vote was held. The majority of the board voted no. This meant the giant would be sold to the highest out of town E-Bay bidder. By now the Stephens family had been looking forward to the new Joliet location, even though it meant losing thousands of dollars.

Lenore and John asked Mr. Stephens' daughter, Elise for a couple of days to figure out if any other location would be appropriate. She said she trusted our judgment and did agree.

The criteria were this: Tall Paul Bunyon could not go to a private ownership that operated for a profit. (It would have had to be purchased, not received at no charge.) He had to remain on Route 66 in a safe and



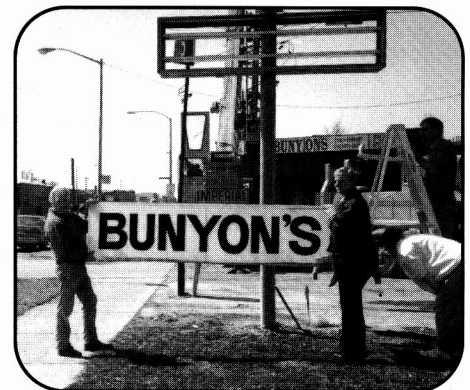
A GIANT LOAD!

secure location. A not-for-profit organization or community would need to take the responsibility and provide insurance. He needed a location that would enhance the tourism experience and provide potential tourism dollars to surrounding small towns and communities. We had two days to find this special location and make all the arrangements. This was because the giant had to be completely removed from his original location within two weeks or it would become the property of the new owner who wanted it off the property.

The location we selected is the Route 66 town of Atlanta. Bill Thomas and the mayor were extremely excited about this once in a lifetime opportunity! It would be located in the fenced area of the new Route 66 City Park. This location will be receiving a complete transformation with

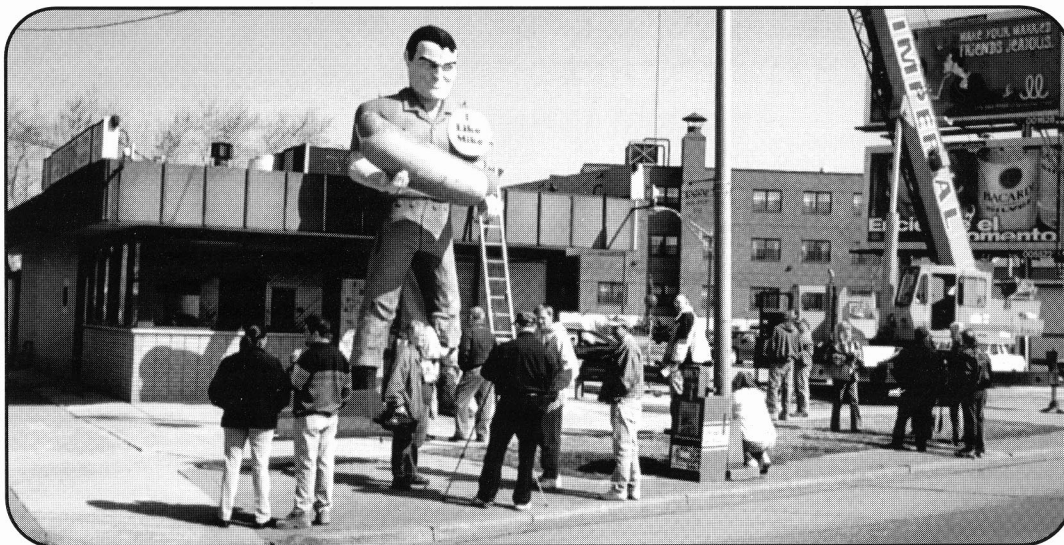
the new wall murals in July. (200 artists are coming to Atlanta to donate their time and talents to complete this work of art.) The Route 66 Park is across the street from the famous octagon library and clock tower that is on the

National Register of Historic Places. Across the other street (Route 66) is the current museum. Next to it is a building recently obtained by Atlanta. It once housed a



Saving the Bunyon sign.

Continued on page 6



Paul overlooking Route 66 in Cicero one last time.

café. It too will be restored. A block away is the beautifully restored historic grain elevator. This progressive community is perfect as a new attraction and home for our beloved "Tall" Paul Bunyon. Lenore likes to refer to Atlanta as "Mayberry RFD." She feels this is a town that truly represents Route 66 in the heyday of its active role as the Mother Road.

One of the reasons this town is exploding as a tourist

destination is local resident Bill Thomas. In February, he was awarded the "Governor's Award, Individual Friend of Tourism." Bill was selected from more than 100 nominees.

The Stephens family is in full agreement. A special unveiling will take place some time this summer, most likely in August. More information on this festive occasion will be in a future issue of "The 66 News!"



ROUTE 66 COLLECTION

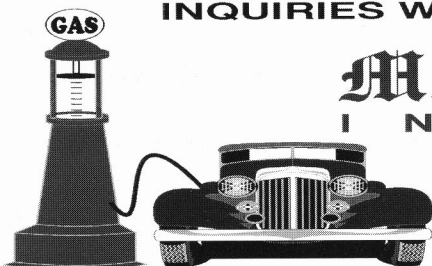


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THE CREW AFTER A JOB WELL DONE!

THE MOVING OF THE BUNYON GIANT PART 2

MARCH 23, 2003 • 10:00 A.M.

The Preservation Committee has faced many challenges, but never one like this.

But as always happens, professional people came forward to donate their time, talent, equipment and services. Our heroes of the day were not even members of the Route 66 Association of Illinois. They just wanted to help. For example, Imperial Crane Company donated the use of a forty ton unit. Operator Jim Miller donated his talent. Greg Gifford of Route 66 Construction Company in Joliet donated his transportation equipment and a fellow employee. The participation list is long and all will be recognized.

The weather was absolutely perfect for giant moving, cool and no wind. It was decided to remove it in two pieces. Everyone was apprehensive as to what would happen when the fiberglass giant was lifted after being mounted in one spot for over 35 years.

The crowd of spectators grew and cars drove by honking their horns. The crane straps were attached, and the rusted bolts were carefully cut loose. We held

our breath as one half of the giant separated. Paul (the giant) Bunyon had a smirk on his face as he traveled in mid air confidently holding his precious hot dog. His legs soon followed billowing ever so slightly against a beautiful, wind free sky.

The destination was 53 miles away in Wilmington for repair of some bullet holes, shot gun holes and arrow damage. Then a fresh coat of paint would be applied before delivery to his new Route 66 home in Atlanta.

At this printing, "Tall" Paul has become a very affectionate part of the Weiss family. He resides in their new building, and every time the large door is open to give him some fresh air, he has that special smile on his face. His bullet holes have faded into fiberglass and repair once more, and as his bottom torso was turned over, his bright blue true colors came shining through.

Those in attendance on that beautiful, memorable day were:

From the Route 66 Association

John & Lenore Weiss
Bill Gwodz
Jeff Geisler
Larry Scinto
Joe & Lynn Martinek
Jeff & Annette LaFollette
Marty Blitstein
Cathie Stevanovich
John & Kathy Miller
Lenny & Delores Scinto
Dorothy McMullan
"Blue" Lou & Rose Vargo
Shelley Scinto

Volunteers not from the Association

Rick Zarr
Greg Gifford
Ike Widner
Jim Miller
Todd Orr
Dave Kinst
Larry Libersher

Volunteer Companies

Imperial Crane Company
Bridgeview, Illinois

Route 66 Construction
Joliet, Illinois

And Paul's gracious owners

Art Stephens,
and daughters
Elise, Star, and Linda,
and grandson Joey



**What's more fun than a game of Twister,
Hi-Ho Cherry-O and a runaway Slinky?**

**The International Route 66 Mother Road Festival &
Car Show in Springfield, Illinois!**

Remember when you could trust your car to the man who wore the star? ("The big, bright Texaco star!") Or, when you'd walk a mile for a Camel? Relive those days in downtown Springfield, Illinois again this year at the **International Route 66 Mother Road Festival & Car Show, September 26-28.**

- * **Non-stop FREE entertainment all weekend long - including Martin Milner**
- * **Hundreds of Hot Rods, Classics, Corvettes & more line the downtown streets**
- * **Route 66 Authors & Artists - including Michael Wallis**

The World's Largest Sock Hop

We'll kick the night off with **Danny & The Juniors** performing their number one hits, including "At The Hop"...followed by **The Shirelles** crooning such hits as "Soldier Boy." Then we'll cap off the evening with **The Buckinghams** singing tune after tune of hits such as "Kind of a Drag" and "Mercy, Mercy, Mercy." There's oodles of dance floor space and plenty of concert seating too for those who simply want to relax and reminisce. **Order your tickets today!**

To order Sock Hop tickets:

www.ticketmaster.com
(enter <http://www.route66fest.com/sockhoptickets>)



ILLINOIS
RIGHT HERE. RIGHT NOW.

September 26-28, 2003

**Pre-register your car today by calling toll-free 1-866-RTE-66IL (866-783-6645)
or for more information visit route66fest.com.**

WELCOME THE CLASS OF 2003 ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

*This year's new members of the Route 66 Hall of Fame
highlight the road's rich immigrant heritage in Illinois.*

*They are Andy Granatelli of Chicago, the Wishing Well Motel of LaGrange,
the Union Miners Cemetery in Mount Olive and the Fassero Oil Company of Benld.
Please join us at their induction banquet June 7 at the Holiday Inn in Normal.*

ANDY GRANATELLI CHICAGO

Nominated by Tom Teague

Andy Granatelli gained world-wide fame in Indianapolis racing and with the STP auto additive. But the former Chicagoan cut his racing and entrepreneurial teeth on and near Route 66 in Illinois.



Andy Granatelli

Andy's father, Vincent, emigrated from Sicily to America at age 18. For many years he ran a successful grocery business in Dallas. Andy was born in 1923. When the stock market crash sent the grocery business into bankruptcy, the family drove to Chicago to live with relatives.

Andy and his brothers, Joe and Vince, helped out by delivering bags of coal up the steps of tenements. They sold vegetables door to door from the trunk of a Buick. The trio also became expert mechanics. Often they would fix cars right on the street. If they needed to use a power tool, they'd just knock at the door of a first-floor apartment and ask to pass a cord in.

When a housing shortage hit the west coast early in World War II, Andy and Joe set record after record for towing house trailers from Chicago to Glendale, California, on 66. Joe drove a 1940 Mercury and Andy had a 1940 Ford. Both had souped up engines and could hit 100 miles an hour with a trailer in tow. For a few extra dollars the brothers took on soldiers and other people as passengers. But Andy can't remember any of them lasting past St. Louis.

Shortly after the war, the Granatellis opened a speed parts store in Chicago. There they'd work until 3 a.m. and then go drag racing on Illinois Highway 83. In 1947 they brought hot rod racing down Route 66 to Soldier Field. For several years they ran two races a week there. And when Soldier Field wasn't available, they'd lead racing caravans to Springfield, St. Louis, or anyplace else with a good track.

Today Andy lives near Los Angeles. A citizen of the world, he's been inducted into twenty Halls of Fame. But like anyone else who's ever set wheel to pavement along its way, he'll never forget his adventures on the Main Street of America.

WISHING WELL MOTEL LAGRANGE

Nominated by John Miller and Kathy Miller

The Wishing Well Motel is in LaGrange, about halfway between Chicago and Joliet. It was built in 1941 and has had only three sets of owners. The first were the Blackburn family, followed by the Bronson family. In 1958, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Vidas, their son Charles and his wife Zora bought it. Zora has worked there almost every day since then. And since her husband's death in 1985, she has been the manager, too.

Originally the Wishing Well properties consisted of 10 cabins, an office and a small house located behind the cabins. While Charles was still alive, he and Zora

built a new house adjacent to the office and converted the small house into nine guest rooms. The cabins have been joined together and the passage of time has made repairs and remodeling necessary. Still, Zora has kept many of the original or early features from the golden age of early motels.



**Wishing Well Motel,
LaGrange, Illinois**

continued on page 11



"Get Your Licks on Route 66" TM

Concretes

Sundaes

Cones

Splits

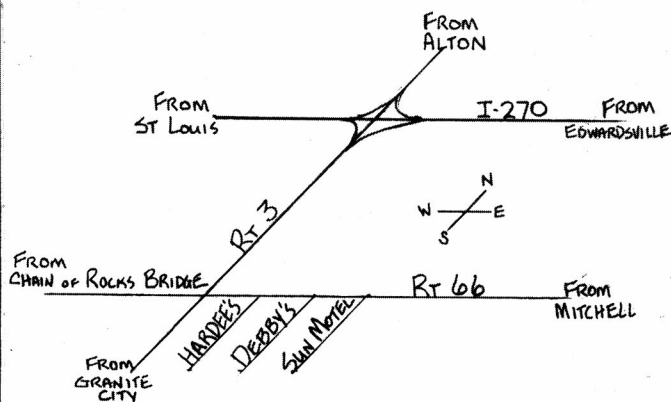
Malts

Floats

Shakes

Smoothies

Mention this Ad and receive a 25% Discount throughout the 2003 Season!



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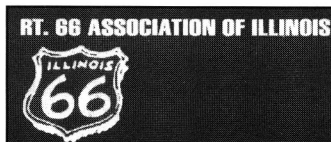
Granite City, IL 62040

618-797-0721

Closed Mondays

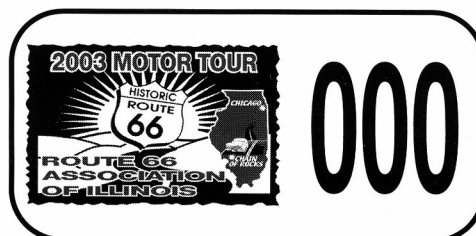
ROUTE 66 NAME BADGES AVAILABLE

They're back.



Now you can get an official Route 66 Association of Illinois name badge. Association members can order them for \$5.00 each, which includes shipping. The badge will be engraved with your name on it. You can wear it proudly to Association events, car shows or wherever you go and want to show that you are a proud member of the Route 66 Association of Illinois. To order your badge, send a check or money order for \$5.00 payable to the Route 66 Association of Illinois to Jeff LaFollette, 2351 Highway 130, New Liberty, Iowa 52765. Please include with your check exactly how you want your name on the badge. The badges will be mailed out as soon as I receive them from the manufacturer. Get yours in time for this year's motor tour!

DON'T FORGET TO ORDER YOUR ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR LICENSE PLATES!



*It's not too late to get a set of the
2003 Motor Tour License plates.*

*So far, close to 140 sets have been ordered by the
time this went to press. We have sold out of plates
the previous four years, and this year looks like no
exception. If you would like to get a set of plates,
contact Jeff LaFollette*

at the phone, address, or e-mail on page 2.

*The plates are \$35 and can be legally displayed for
60 days, prior to and through the motor tour.*

*They will be collector's items,
like most anything Route 66 is nowadays.
So DON'T be left out! Contact Jeff
and order your set of plates today.*

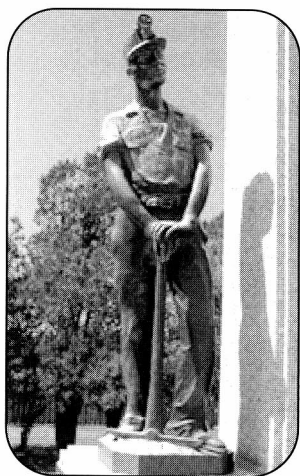
The Wishing Well is still serving travelers. It is half full on most nights. Many famous guests have chosen its quiet and anonymity over the hustle and bustle of nearby Chicago. They include Guy Lombardo, Tex Beneke, and the group Chicago. Recently one couple that spent their wedding night at the Wishing Well returned to celebrate their 40th anniversary.

Zora and Charles raised two sons at the Wishing Well. Both are doctors now. They suggested once to their mother that she retire and relax. Her response was, "I'll never retire. Where else in this world can I meet so many wonderful and exciting people reliving their past and searching for a future every day of my life?"

UNION MINERS CEMETERY MOUNT OLIVE

Nominated by Nelson Grman

The Union Miners Cemetery lies between City 66 and Bypass 66 in Mount Olive.



**Union Miners Cemetery
Mount Olive, Illinois**

With its induction, it becomes the Hall of Fame's first mining-related member. It honors those miners — primarily Italian, Slavic and Scotch-Irish immigrants — who helped Illinois once be the nation's second largest coal producer.

Among the people laid to rest there are Henry Soulsby, father of Hall of Famer Russell Soulsby, and Russell's sister Ola. Its most well-known

decendent, however, is Mary Harris Jones. Ms. Jones, an Irish immigrant, became known as

Mother Jones when she turned to union organizing in her later years. This name and the cemetery's serenity belie the passion and fire with which she fought her case. Her opponents may well have considered her a "mother" in the most modern sense of the word. When she died in 1930, a motor caravan carried her body up Route 66 from St. Louis to Mount Olive. Some 30,000 people attended her funeral. When her monument was dedicated in 1936, 50,000 attended the ceremonies. The cemetery gained placement on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972.

FASSERO OIL COMPANY BENLD

*Nominated by
Ollie*

Schwallenstecker



Early last century, Ben Fassero left his hometown near Turin, Italy, to seek his fortune in the mines of America. After stints in Central America, then Montana, the abundant coal fields of southern Illinois drew him to Benld. Before long, though, he went back to Italy to be married. On his return to Benld, all he remembered having was "Five bucks and a wife."

Soon Ben became a check weighman at the mine — the man trusted to weigh each miner's production at the end of the day. When he lost a close election for a third term in 1919, he decided to go into business on his own. First he sold feed and coal. But Illinois had just started building a system of hard roads the year before. The growing number of motorists needed gasoline. So Ben bought a storage tank on a siding north of town and ordered a tank car full of gasoline from Wood River. He emptied the car with a hand-cranked pump — all 8,000 gallons. Later, he delivered the gas to customers in a horse-drawn tank wagon. Fassero Oil Company was born.

By 1920, Ben had his own gas station on Illinois Route 4. This would soon become the first path of U.S. Route 66. When that happened, business got even better. One day, former miner Henry Soulsby asked Ben to deliver gas to a station he and his son Russell were building by the new highway in Mount Olive. Several other stations on 66 sold Fassero, but Henry and Russell's 8,000 gallons a month made them the company's biggest customer.

Ben never retired, but eventually his sons Tony, John, Elvio and Arthur took over the business. In time, the sons' sons would take over. At its height, the company operated eight of its own stations and delivered to many more. For a time in the '40s and '50s, they also had car dealerships in Benld and Gillespie.

But competition from bigger companies and the sales drift toward interstate-based stations finally forced the hard decision. In 1996, Fassero Oil Company closed all its stations and stopped delivering gas. At the time, they were the oldest Shell distributor in the country.

TALES FROM THE ROAD

By Ted Giovanazzi & Larry Scinto

In this installment of "Tales from the Road" we have more Route 66 stories told to our two oral historians Ted & Larry by D.H. (Harvey) Hodges and Paul Lawrisuk. These are stories of their own Route 66 experiences from their youth. If you have some Route 66 stories from your past you'd like to share, please write to Newsletter Editor, Route 66 Association of Illinois 2743 S. Veterans Parkway #166, Springfield, IL 62704 and I'll get you in touch with Ted & Larry.

EXCERPTS FROM A STORY BY D.H. HODGES OF CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

From an early age, Route 66 has been a part of my life. I grew up in Ottawa, Illinois, but my family had friends and relatives living in Bloomington and Springfield so we traveled Route 66 many times when we would visit them.

Late in 1934, my mother was invited by relatives to ride to Southern California and visit for an extended stay. My father could not leave his work so it was decided that I, a third grader would go with my mother. What an adventure! We traveled in a brand new 1934 Chevrolet two door sedan. My uncle was the driver. My aunt, cousin, mother and I were passengers. We took the northern route to Los Angeles and after a stay of several months, in the spring of 1935 we returned via Route 66 to Illinois. It was a wonderful experience for a young boy. We visited the Grand Canyon, the Painted Desert, and the Petrified Forest. Overnight stops were motor courts and cabins. Evening meals and breakfast were usually taken at hotel restaurants. I remember some sections of New Mexico still had gravel instead of cement on Route 66.

For a while when I attended college, I actually lived on Route 66 in Bloomington. As a music student, I became a member of a dance band and traveled Route 66 on many occasions to Springfield for engagements. The "Dixie" in McLean was also a regular stop for late night snacks or early morning breakfasts on the return trip.

In the 1950's I made the trip to California a number of times – once in my 1951 Ford Victoria and several times driving new Fords to the west for dealers, which was a common practice at that time. Route 66 truly became a road of necessity for me and after I was married in 1956, my wife took her first trip on the Mother Road and I was excited to be able to show her all the sights that I had enjoyed for so many years.

STORIES FROM PAUL LAWRIKUSK

FUNKS GROVE

I remember buying maple sirup at Funks Grove in the 1960's and 1970's. At that time the sirup was sold off of the back porch of the house that still exists there today. When I went back a few years ago, I expected to do the same. I found that a nice gift shop had been built directly across the parking lot from the house. My wife Shirley always thought it was nice that such good maple sirup was for sale adjacent to a town that had her name.

HENRY'S DRIVE IN

Henry's Drive In is located at 6031 Ogden Avenue in Cicero, Illinois, which was Route 66. The sign in front of the restaurant is as it was in the 1950's. It features a three dimensional large hot dog covered with French fries and proclaims "A meal in itself." I first went to Henry's with friends in 1953. The delicious hot dogs were sold through a side window on the west side of the building and cost 25 cents. No car hops were employed, as one might expect at a drive in restaurant of that time. We each had a hot dog with all the trimmings which included very hot peppers. One of the young children in my friend's family thought the pepper was a pickle and received a real surprise. During cold weather, people were served by going inside. The side window for summer time sales is gone now. The hot dogs are still the

signature item of the business. I believe the current price for "a meal in itself" is nearing two dollars. I have not been there for three years.

TOPS DRIVE IN

Tops Drive In was located at the corner of Ogden and Wisconsin Avenues in Berwyn, Illinois. This is just east of Harlem Avenue on Route 66. The site is now occupied by a Harris Bank. Tops employed car hops and was the destination of choice for young people from near and far in the 1950's. At that time, hamburgers were 35 cents and fries were 20 cents. A 55 cent Big Boy hamburger was introduced in the late 1950's and caused some concern about its high price. The reasons for going to Tops were more social then gastronomical. Boys went to meet girls and girls went to meet boys. Groups of teens went to see other groups of teens. An important part of this was the showing off of souped up cars and many a drag race resulted from a disagreement as to whose car was faster. My wife Shirley, who I was dating at the time, would feel a sense of disinterest when my friend Moe would get into our car with us and overwhelm us with talk of camshafts and carburetors. Visiting with others in their cars was common. A police officer named Roy was assigned to keep the peace. The most violent thing that I remember happening was excessive horn blowing. Roy was a man in his 50's and spent most of his time socializing with the teens, including sitting in their cars with them. I believe the movie "American Graffiti" tries to capture this aspect of our culture and manages to portray some of the things that happened on Route 66.

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Located on historic Old Route 66

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE 2003 JOHN STEINBECK AWARDS EVENING

By David Knudsen, Director National Historic Route 66 Federation

**Each year, the National Historic Route 66 Federation presents
two awards for Route 66 preservation achievement.**

The John Steinbeck Award is presented to individuals who have contributed significantly to the preservation of the Mother Road. The winner is chosen by the Federation's Board of Directors and The John Steinbeck Foundation.

The Cyrus Avery Award is presented to individuals or groups for outstanding Route 66 preservation projects. The winner of this award is chosen by the Federation and a blue ribbon committee comprising the previous John Steinbeck Award winners. The list of honorees reads like a who's who of Route 66 notables. In fact, the Illinois Route 66 Association has the very distinct honor of having three winners of the Steinbeck as well as an Avery.

Tom Teague, the co-founder of the Illinois Route 66 Association, John & Lenore Weiss, who won the Steinbeck for their tireless preservation work, and the association itself won the Avery for its work restoring the Odell Filling Station.

This year, the gala Evening will be held downtown at the Springfield Hilton, Friday, September 26 during the big International Route 66 Festival. This is the one event that draws virtually all of the Route 66 notables, and always offers plenty of surprises. This year, the Federation is planning an international buffet with "food stations" featuring cuisine from around the world. The festivities will be preceded by a reception and followed by a press conference. The Evening is \$39 per person which includes the buffet, tax & tips and all entertainment. Reservations can be made on your Visa, MC or Discover by calling toll free 888-339-0794. Final deadline for reservations is September 15. No one will be admitted without advance reservations.

The International Route 66 Festival will be staged from September 26-28 and promises to be even bigger and better than last year. This year they expect more cars, more events, more vendors, more 1950's acts and everything is staying open a lot later. Check out their ever-growing website at www.route66fest.com.

2003 INTERNATIONAL ROUTE 66 FESTIVAL PLANS COMING TOGETHER

The 2nd International Route 66 Festival is coming together. The event promises to be just as spectacular as last year's. The car show is on tap again as well as the live music, entertainers, and the Travel Illinois Expo. The Route 66 Associations from Illinois to California will be represented as well. Route 66 Authors and Artists Expo will be in full swing, Vendors, selling Route 66 merchandise will be there too. The John Steinbeck Award evening will be on Friday evening September 26. And the World's Largest Sock Hop returns to the Prairie Capitol Convention Center on Saturday September 27, featuring Danny & the Juniors

performing their number one hits, including "At the Hop" followed by the Shirelles singing such hits as "Soldier Boy" and Chicago's own Buckingham's singing hit after hit like "Kind of a Drag" and Mercy, Mercy, Mercy." Tickets for the Sock Hop range from \$15 to \$50. To receive a brochure of events including a listing of hotels and rates, and a form to register your car for the car show if you want to show off your "classic ride", call the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau at 1-800-545-7300 and ask for the foldout brochure, or check out their website www.route66fest.com for updated information.

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

MOTEL LIST FOR THE 2003 MOTOR TOUR
ALL MOTELS HAVE ROOMS BLOCKED FOR THE ASSOCIATION
BE SURE TO MENTION THAT YOU ARE WITH THE ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR

FRIDAY JUNE 6,

Hampton Inn
6251 Joliet Road
Countryside, Illinois
708-354-5200
\$85.00 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by May 22, 2003

Red Roof Inn
7535 Kingery Highway
Willowbrook, Illinois
1-800-733-7663
\$72.99 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by June 2, 2003
Use confirmation number B167000615

Baymont Inn
855 W. 79th Street
Willowbrook, Illinois
630-654-0077
\$70.00 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by May 24, 2003

Ramada Inn
300 South Frontage Road
Burr Ridge, Illinois
630-325-2900
\$73.00 a night plus tax
40 rooms blocked
Book by May 11, 2003

Internet web site
www.il66assoc.org

Fairfield Inn
820 W. 79th Street
Willowbrook, Illinois
630-789-6300
\$79.00 a night plus tax
20 rooms blocked
Book by May 6, 2003

SATURDAY JUNE 7,

HALL OF FAME BANQUET at HOLIDAY INN NORMAL

Holiday Inn
#8 Trader Circle
Normal, Illinois
309-452-8300
\$70.00 a night plus tax
Includes complimentary breakfast buffet,
(2 coupons per room)
60 rooms blocked for Route 66 Motor Tour
Reservations must be made by May 23, 2003

Best Western
#6 Trader Circle
Normal, Illinois
309-454-4070
\$62.50 a night plus tax
(includes continental breakfast)
50 rooms blocked
Book by May 16, 2003

SUNDAY JUNE 8,

HOLIDAY INN
1000 Eastport Plaza Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-345-2800
\$66.00 Plus tax
100 Rooms Blocked

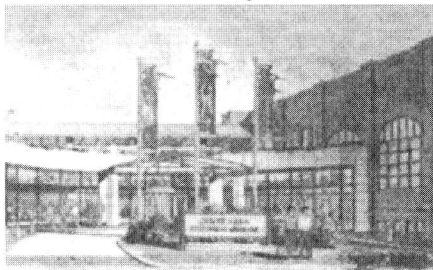
SUPER 8
2 Gateway Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-345-8008
\$59.00 plus tax
20 Rooms Blocked

HAMPTON INN
7 Commerce Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-346-4400
\$66.00 Plus Tax
45 Rooms Blocked

BOOK SUNDAY NIGHT ROOMS BY May 23

"ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS"

JUNE 6 - 8, 2003 ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR



AND HALL OF FAME BANQUET

***"Illinois Route 66
Welcomes You"***

CHICAGO TO COLLINSVILLE

**SPONSORED BY THE ROUTE 66
ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS**

FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT J C's PUB ... McCOOK

NEW ROUTE 66 WELCOME CENTER ... JOLIET

ROUTE 66 INDUCTION CEREMONY AT THE HALL OF FAME BANQUET

I-55 FUNKS GROVE REST AREA ROUTE 66 DISPLAY

DIXIE TRUCKERS HOME ... HALL OF FAME DISPLAY

I-55 HAMEL REST AREA ROUTE 66 DISPLAY

CAHOKIA MOUNDS STATE HISTORIC SITE

WITH STOPS AT:

LOU MITCHELLS RESTAURANT

WHITE FENCE FARM

DWIGHT

ODELL STANDARD GAS STATION

PONTIAC

DIXIE ROUTE 66 HALL OF FAME

COZY DOG DRIVE-IN

ROUTE 66 DRIVE-IN THEATRE

LITCHFIELD SESQUICENTENNIAL

SOULSBY SHELL GAS STATION

CAHOKIA MOUNDS HISTORIC SITE

More Tour Information:

OLLIE SCHWALLENSTECKER Tour CoChair 618-585-3081

JOHNNY MILLER Tour CoChair 708-389-3823

JIM JONES 815-844-5657

TONYA FLANNERY 217-324-5253

JEFF LaFOLLETTE 563-893-6653

Hall of Fame Banquet Menu

"Southern Buffet"

Southern Fried Chicken

Deep Fried Baby Catfish

BBQ Spareribs

Assorted Salads, Corn on the Cob,

Baked Beans, and Relish Tray

Dessert, Coffee and Ice-Tea are included.

Cash Bar, Liquor & Soft Drinks extra

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

MAIL TO:

MOTOR TOUR

Route 66 Association of IL

2743 Veterans Parkway #166

Springfield, IL 62704

REGISTRATION FORM

ANY VEHICLE * ANY MODEL * ANY MAKE

Motor Tour Registration Fee: IL 66 members \$25.00

Motor Tour Registration Fee:

(includes membership for non-members) \$40.00

Hall of Fame Banquet _____ tickets @ \$15.00 each

Please Print or Type

Total enclosed _____

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ **Sorry, No Refunds. Rain or Shine**

SUMMER 2003

15 **ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS**
THE NEWS

UNSUNG HEROES KUDOS AND ACCOLADES

By Kathy Miller

*We all know and are aware of the men and women
who are instrumental in the preservation and promotion of Route 66.*

They work tirelessly and give of themselves endlessly to promote, preserve and educate the rest of the world about Route 66. We are lucky enough to have the best right in our own backyard here in Illinois. We can proudly brag that Illinois has the Weiss's of the world working diligently for us. They spur emotions in us, direct, guide and inspire us. But there are also others. These others are less prominent, less seen, but they are there. They work just as hard, they are just as proud of Route 66, and give of themselves just as endlessly as our mentors do. These other men and women devote their spare time to reach a common end, to preserve and promote Route 66. This is for them, about them. To thank them, to applaud them, to lay accolades before them, for their wonderful efforts to preserve, promote, educate and enjoy Route 66, The Mother Road.

Those of us involved actively in preservation through the Illinois Route 66 Preservation Committee have an inkling of who "they" are. Here in Illinois we have varied age groups that include senior citizens, middle age people and younger adults all involved in the preservation of Route 66. Illinois has men who after having heart attacks still climb ladders at the Odell Station to make needed repairs. People that have traveled more than 250 miles, paying for gas, food and lodging on a weekend to go to Hamel, Illinois to help restore a Meramac Cavern barn. These same people continue helping to restore the trolley car in Gardner, Illinois the preservation committee's current project.

Ted and Marilyn Giovanazzi travel Illinois interviewing business owners or anyone who has a story to tell.

This couple authors many of the stories you read in the association's quarterly newsletter. Another senior, Lou Vargo who is always willing to do whatever needs to be done. Dorothy McMullen, a woman who was instrumental in managing to get the Odell Gas Station on the National Registry of Historical Places. She spent much of her time devoted to the restoration of the Odell Station. She physically painted and repaired whatever was needed. Greg Anderson an electrician who has worked spending his free time on restoration projects. We have sign painters like Randy Wierzgac. Randy's talents can be seen when viewing our barns, the Odell Standard Station and the Roadside Attraction signs, which are so good Hampton Inns used his design when they created their own signs for their preservation projects along Route 66 nationwide.

There are also others not on any specific committee or on any committee at all who work behind the scenes to achieve the aforementioned goals. The Illinois Association has a strong membership of people who are generous, giving freely their time and effort. From the very top such as the Association Officers, the Board Members, Motor Tour Committee Members, Hall of Fame Committee Members, to the general membership. We can be proud of what we have achieved so far, and of the goals we have set before us for the future. There are so many people that work diligently side by side to promote, preserve and educate Route 66. To all of you and to those of you whose name has not been mentioned, we thank you and we applaud you.





WISHING WELL POSTCARD CIRCA 1955

*I recently had the pleasure of interviewing
Mrs. Zora Vidas*

Mrs. Vidas is the fun loving, spirited woman who owns the Wishing Well Motel which is located at Joliet Road and Brainard Avenue in La Grange, IL 60525. The phone number is 708-352-3615. Mrs. Vidas has owned the Wishing Well for a whopping 45 years. She hardly looks old enough to own a business that long.

The Wishing Well Motel is conveniently located only 15 miles from the Chicago loop on Historic Route 66. You can see the Sears Tower from Route 66 in front of the motel. You can enjoy Chicago without paying Chicago lodging rates, and we know that is always a good thing. Across the street is a Forest Preserve where you can walk, run or bicycle, if you're so inclined. For me that sounds like EXERCISE, ooh that's a bad thing! Close by is the Flame supper club always fun, and Tone's (an old fashioned road house diner) mmm food!

The Wishing Well was built 1941. There have been three owners of the Wishing Well. The original owners were the Blackburn family, followed by the Bronson family. In 1958 the third and final owners purchased the motel, father and son, Charles and Emil Vidas and their wives. Mr. and Mrs. Emil Vidas and Charles have since passed away, the motel remains in ownership by Charles wife, Mrs. Zora Vidas. Mrs. Vidas worked side by side with her family in the daily operations of the motel and took over as manager when Charles passed away in 1985. Mrs. Vidas while running the motel also raised her children and continued to further her education. I'm thinking some kind of superwoman, don't you agree?

Originally the Wishing Well properties consisted of 10 cabins, an office and a small house, which was located behind the cabins. In the years that have gone by Mrs. Vidas has made changes to improve the motel,

LIVING LIFE ON RT. 66 OR HOW TO MEET PEOPLE AND MAKE A LIVING DOING IT

by Kathleen J. Miller aka The Mother Road Widow

but always keeping the integrity of the motel. When Charles was still living, they built a new house that is adjacent to the motel office. The house also includes a small apartment that the senior Vidas couple lived in. The small house that was in the back has since been converted into guest rooms. The cabins have been joined together as one and along with the house conversion make a total of 19 guest rooms. Although the passing of time has given cause to remodel and make necessary repairs, Mrs. Vidas has kept many of the antiquated features that make this truly a Route 66 icon.

The Wishing Well has stood the test of time. The motel is still serving travelers. Remaining in operation the Wishing Well is half full on most nights. The motel reminds travelers as they drive along Route 66 of the past of this great Mother Road and the wonderment of the future.



THE WISHING WELL

continued on page 20



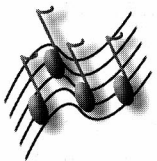
11th
Annual

Oldies Cruise 2004

a b o a r d t h e m v A t l a n t i c a

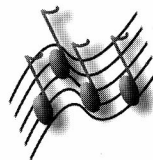
February 8 - 15, 2004

Sail with us on the mvAtlantica as we explore the Eastern Caribbean while enjoying the Rock 'n Roll music of:



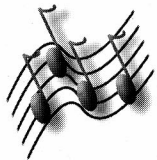
Paul Revere and the Raiders

Kicks, Hungry, Just Like Me,
Indian Reservation, Him or Me



Bill Hailey's Comets

Rock Around the Clock,
Shake Rattle and Roll, Rock this Joint,
See You Later Alligator



Tommy Roe

Sheila, Dizzy, Sweet Pea, Everybody,
Jam Up and Jelly Tight



The Buckingham's

Kind of a Drag, Don't You Care, Susan,
Hey Baby, They're Playing our Song,
Mercy, Mercy, Mercy

Nightly entertainment including dance music by Frankie Faucet and the Drips, plus Stacey Wayne as Elvis

Ports of Call include:

Fort Lauderdale, San Juan, St. Thomas, Nassau, Catalina Island, Casa de Campo

DON'T MISS THE BOAT!

*A \$50.00 donation will be made to the Route 66 Association of Illinois for Preservation for each member that books a cabin on the 11th Annual Oldies Caribbean Cruise.

1529 W. Washington St.
Boise, Idaho 83702
208-388-3000

**HARMON
TRAVEL**
WWW.HARMONTRAVEL.COM



WWW.OLDIESCRUISE2004.COM
1-866-8OLDIES
1-866-865-3437

ROUTE 66 FESTIVAL TOURS

In 2003, the Route 66 Association of Illinois will sponsor two cruises of Route 66 as it did last year. There will be a cruise from the north to Springfield as well as one from the south to Springfield. These cruises will be conducted on Friday September 26, 2003 beginning at approximately 9:00 a.m. at both locations. For more information on these cruises contact the following individuals:

NORTH TOUR: Marty Bilecki 815-941-3312
E-Mail: Coral57@aol.com

SOUTH TOUR: Ollie Schwallenstecker
618-585-3081 E-Mail:
mt_ollie@madisonelco.net

NEW FOR 2003: Jeff at 563-843-3666,
563-349-6638
E-Mail at ajon66@aol.com.

Jeff LaFollette will be conducting a "Lost Alignments of 66" tour. Jeff will take you to sections of the road that are no longer in use, have been reclaimed by nature, or have been basically abandoned. This tour will include some walking, so comfortable shoes are in order, and you might think about

wearing long pants instead of shorts when we go walking through areas of the old roadway where nature has overgrown over the pavement. This tour will start at the Dixie in McLean, and continue through the McLean, Logan, and Sangamon County sections of Old Route 66.

Come join us on one of these tours and see how we get our kicks on Route 66 in Illinois.

FROM THE TRAVELING BILECKI'S

By Marty & Geri Bilecki

Keep "Kruzin" – That's been our motto since joining in the fun and enjoyment of Route 66 and other car clubs.



Marty & Geri Bilecki on their cruise ship.

Geri and I have been blessed with many new things in our lifetime and these groups have given us many new and cherished friends. Recently we had an opportunity to cruise – I should say "Kruze" without a 57 Chevy or even a roadway for that matter. Imagine a seven day Caribbean Cruise with six top groups of entertainment from our wonderful growing up years. Yes, a midwinter's cruise with sock hops and rock & roll and music of those wonderful years by the original artists. On board were Paul Revere and the Raiders, Lovin' Spoonful, Dodie Stevens, The Chiffons, Peggy March and a young Elvis impersonator. Plus Frankie Faucet and the Drips, for dancing 50's style. Also regular cruise ship entertainment and great food daily with four ports of call.

We will have another opportunity by doing the 11th annual Oldies Rock & Roll Cruise, leaving on February 4, 2004. We are in negotiations with Harmon Travel Agency to get a cruise package to present to the membership for this event. If you want more information call me at 815-941-3312. When brochures and more information are made available, I will send these out on request. Have a safe 2003 and Keep "Kruzin".



Updated for 2003...
Based on the Illinois Department of Transportation maps from 1928 to 1978
Chicago to St. Louis




- ★ 52 Pages of maps & photos showing Route 66 Landmarks
- ★ Contours
- ★ Georeferenced Photos
- ★ Latitude/Longitude/GPS Grid
- ★ Great for use in your car, with your GPS receiver, or your armchair!
- ★ All photos and maps are in color.

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GOT YOUR SHIRT YET? DON'T MISS OUT!



RT 66 SPECIAL EVENTS

Two of our Route 66 communities in Illinois are celebrating sesquicentennials in 2003. And both of these communities are celebrating their 150th birthdays on the Fourth of July weekend. First off, Williamsville is celebrating their sesquicentennial from July 3-6, 2003. There are many activities planned in town. For more information, contact Tom at Williamsville Antiques at 217-566-3442.

And at the same time, Litchfield is celebrating their sesquicentennial on the Fourth of July weekend as well. Litchfield also has many activities planned, and they are looking for anyone interested in being a part of their 150th birthday parade, whether you have an old classic car, or an antique tractor. For more information on Litchfield's event, contact Tonya Flannery at 217-324-5253.

On July 11-13, 2003 in Atlanta, the "LetterRip on 66" Walldog Jam will converge on Atlanta, as over 200 walldogs (painters) come into town and paint several Route 66 related murals. The main project for 2003 will be a 70 foot by 20 foot Route 66 themed mural to be painted on a brick building that borders the Atlanta Route 66 Park. The fun starts Friday evening and ends on Sunday. For information on this festival, contact the Atlanta Public Library District at 217-648-2112.

And for a festival later in the summer, Lexington will hold their 17th annual Illinois Route 66 Reunion on September 7, 2003. Events include a car show, a parade, and 50 years of Corvettes on display. Saturday and Sunday also include the Taste of Country Festival with lots and lots of great food, arts and crafts, antiques, free entertainment and more. For more information about this event, contact Fran Turgeon at 309-365-9006.

Come on out and show your Route 66 spirit, and support these great Route 66 events. These small communities put on great events and it will be worth your while to check them out this summer.

LIVING LIFE.continued from page 17

The Wishing Well has served as a comforting home away from home for many famous people, who wanted the quiet and anonymity, away from the hustle and bustle of the big city. Entertainers, business people, and other celebrities would make the Wishing Well their home, as they would perform in nearby Chicago. Probably three of the most famous people to stay at the Wishing Well are Guy Lombardo, Tex Beneke, and the group Chicago.

Mrs. Vidas told me, "When I saw those kids with that long hair I almost didn't rent a room to them, they scared me!" She also had a missed opportunity to rent to a movie star. The then famous movie star Dale Robertson entered her lobby looking for a safe haven. Mrs. Vidas was busy, busy, busy, and was having a very hectic day. Overworked and underpaid she sent him away, not wanting to be bothered anymore that day.

Later she talked to the hotel manager where Mr. Robertson ended up staying at and was surprised to find he was a star!

Recently one couple that had spent their honeymoon at the Wishing Well returned to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary as they did their wedding night all those long years ago. They were thrilled that the hotel was still in operation. There is a rich history in this establishment.

Mrs. Vidas along with her husband raised two sons within the walls of this motel and adjacent home. The sons are both doctors now, married with families of their own. They suggested to Mrs. Vidas she sell the motel to be able to retire, and relax. Mrs. Vidas responded by saying, "I'll never retire, where else in this world can I meet so many wonderful and exciting people reliving their past and searching for a future every day of my life."

REDISCOVERING IT—HIDDEN ROUTE 66

THE COLLINSVILLE, ILLINOIS ALIGNMENTS

By Carl Johnson



**Crossing into St. Louis
via Martin Luther King Bridge**

Route 66 through Collinsville, Illinois, is an excellent example of this conundrum.

Collinsville has a beautiful downtown, both charming and quaint. The main street through downtown is chockfull of old gas stations and early restaurants (along its outskirts). Yet U.S. 66 never (in its entire lifetime) traversed Collinsville's downtown.

Those old gas stations and early restaurants exist because an entirely different federal highway traveled downtown Collinsville at one time: U.S. 40 (and its predecessor, The National Road).

From their inception, U.S. 40 and U.S. 66 have always headed toward (and through) St. Louis, Missouri. But it was not until the late 1950's that they began sharing a common alignment as they made their ways to St. Louis. This shared alignment began in Collinsville, Illinois. And it was a 4-lane bypass alignment to the west of Collinsville's downtown.

At least that's how it started.

Within a few years, the alignment changed then changed again. Before it was over (for U.S. 66, anyway — but not for a luckier U.S. 40), the alignment had become Interstate 55 as we know it today. U.S. 66 rode atop the interstate for awhile. And — to this day — U.S. 40 still does.

Patty Kuhn, Project Manager of the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, Inc., submitted an inquiry to the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) concerning the Collinsville, Illinois, U.S. Route 66 alignments. This was IDOT's concise response (and in IDOT's precise words):

*In trying to find alignments of U.S. Route 66,
it is very easy to become convinced of an alignment
which simply was never U.S. Highway 66.
Roads can be deceiving. Maps can be deceiving.
Even our hearts can be deceiving.*

"1956: US 66 did not go through Collinsville.

"1957, 1958, 1959: Starting from the North, US 66 was marked over US 40 along Vandalia Avenue to Belt Line Road, Belt Line Road to Illinois 157, Illinois 157 to Collinsville Road and then west on Collinsville Road.

"1960, 1961: The present alignment of I-55 was completed south to Illinois 157 and US 66 (and US 40) was removed from Vandalia Avenue and Belt Line Road. It was still marked from essentially where I-55 now intersects with Illinois 157 along Illinois 157 to Collinsville Road and then west on Collinsville Road.

"1962: Even though the present alignment of I-55 was completed into East St. Louis, US 66 (and US 40) continued to be marked along Illinois 157 to Collinsville Road and then west on Collinsville Road.

"1963: US 66 (and US 40) marked along present alignment of I-55.

"While US 66 was marked over US 40, the maps never show that there were any Bypass, Business or Alternate US 66 markings on the Business and Alternate US 40 routings through the city."

That last sentence above is important: U.S. 66 was never marked as a highway (even as an alternate highway) through downtown Collinsville, Illinois.

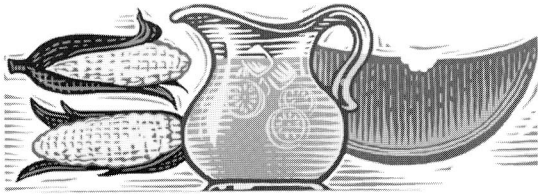
And the last alignment mentioned in this IDOT report, the 1963 alignment, was U.S. 66 through Collinsville (atop I-55) until U.S. 66 was decommissioned (in the late 1970's) in the State of Illinois.

So how do you follow these routings now?

In Hamel, Illinois, get on I-55 southbound at Entry/Exit 30 off of Illinois 140. You are now on the last incarnation of Route U.S. 66 heading toward St. Louis. Notice how narrow the median is. 4-lane 66 was upgraded to Interstate standards without the road changing alignment one iota — the only change was from accessed divided 4-lane to limited-access divided

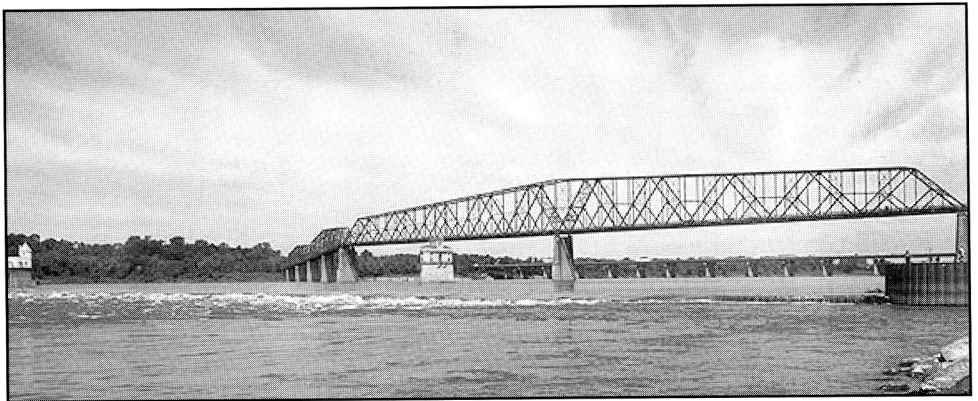
continued on page 24

ILLINOIS AND MISSOURI ASSOCIATIONS



PICNIC UPDATE

In the last issue of "The 66 News!" we told you about a picnic that was going to be conducted by the Route 66 Associations of Illinois and Missouri. Well, this picnic is getting closer to reality as the planning is coming along smoothly. The date of the picnic is going to be Saturday, July 26, 2003 on the Missouri side of the Chain of Rocks Bridge. The time is yet to be determined, but it is tentatively set to begin at 12:00 noon. Food will be provided by Associations as well as drinks and table service. Just bring yourself, and maybe lawn chairs if you wish, and plan to have a day of fun. You'll be able to walk across the Chain of Rocks Bridge. If you have a classic car, bring it and we'll park them in a special section to have a "show and shine" of cars from both associations. If you have a Route 66 hobby or collection you'd like to show off, bring some of your collection along to display. And as a special treat, we have arranged to have a drive across the bridge at some point of the day. We hope to have Route 66 merchandise available for sale as well. This picnic is open to members of the Illinois and Missouri Associations only. There are always people riding bikes, walking or jogging across the bridge, and we want to make sure that only those folks who are members of either or both associations receive their meal. If you plan to attend this event, please contact Illinois Association President Jeff LaFollette at 563-843-3666 or 563-3349-6638, or Missouri Association President Tommy Pike at 417-865-1318. We would like to get an accurate count of how many are planning to attend. Come join this first ever event and meet your Route 66 neighbors from Missouri.



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

\$15 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

IN OTHER NEWS

The Rusty Bolt Souvenir Shop in Seligman, Arizona invites everyone to stop by and listen to a live performance of the Rusty Bolt Band on your next visit to Seligman at 119 E. Historic Route 66. They are located on I-40 between Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon. The band plays live on Sunday, Monday and Wednesday through Friday between 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. & every Friday & Saturday night from 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. from April 1st through September 30th. The band plays a wide variety of music including contemporary hits and nostalgic favorites. Call ahead and they will arrange to have the band playing when you and your guests arrive. A special treat to add to the charm of any tour. Call 928-422-0106 for more information.

On March 22, 2003 Vasile Stoica, a Rumanian paraplegic athlete left Santa Monica Pier in California to begin a 66 day journey by wheelchair across Route 66. Stoica's goal is to traverse the entire route in 66 days, covering 5-7 miles per hour. In 2001, Stoica set a world record by going the farthest distance in a wheelchair in 24 hours, covering 82 miles at the College of the Canyons sports track in Valencia, California. He also became the first person to travel around the world in a wheelchair. Stoica's trek is to raise awareness for disability issues and raise funds for an organization in Rumania for the disabled that recently lost its central headquarters to a fire. Funds for the non-profit organization will be used to purchase a new building, as well as computers, medical and sports equipment. Stoica plans to be in Illinois from May 18 to 28 & travels alone, without medical or other support. If you would like to help out in any way you may call 661-260-1135, or e-mail vasile_stoica@yahoo.com or contact Jeff LaFollette and he can get word to his staff. Let's give him a warm welcome & show him our support & Illinois hospitality when he arrives in May.

Hampton Inn has kicked off their "Explore the Highway" program for 2003 with a Route 66 Caravan that left Santa Monica Pier on April 29 and will conclude in Chicago, Illinois on June 24. The caravan is being hailed as "66 days on Route 66" as the object of the caravan is to place the 66 point of interest signs on Route 66 from California to Illinois in 66 days and promote the route in all eight states as they travel. In the last issue of "The 66 News" there was an article written by John Weiss about how the Route 66 Association of Illinois preservation committee started this project in 1999, and Hampton has expanded on it on a national level. The caravan will be in Illinois from June 14-24, with the last sign being placed in Grant Park on June 24. A complete story will be included in the Fall 2003 issue of this newsletter.

Shellee Graham recently opened a photo exhibit at the Route 66 Welcome Center and Museum in Joliet. Many Association officers and board members volunteered their time to greet the public on opening day, March 3, 2003. They included John & Lenore Weiss, Lou & Rose Vargo, Jeff Meyer, Cathie Stevanovich, Ted & Marliyn Giovanazzi, and Bill & Barb Gwodz. At the end of the day, WJOL radio was broadcasting live from the Welcome Center for two hours highlighting the exhibit, Route 66 Welcome Center and our Mother Road. Assisting Shellee the evening before a private presentation to museum members only were John & Kathy Miller, Lynn Bagdon, and Barb Nicholson.



**Bill & Barb
Gwodz
on WJOL
Radio**

The Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism was held on March 5, 2003. At this important event, one individual is selected to receive the "Friend of Tourism" award. This year 100 people were nominated, but only one person could win. This year, **BILL THOMAS of ATLANTA** was the winner. Bill heads up what Atlanta calls the A-TEAM. Every Tuesday, they meet to discuss ways to promote their small town. With imagination and enthusiasm they show the big towns how it is done. Now everyone in Illinois knows what we on Route 66 already knew. Atlanta, Illinois is a real grass roots all American Route 66 town. Visit there often. It is always changing and improving.

On June 1, 2003 The Pig-Hip Restaurant Museum in Broadwell, Illinois is scheduled to open its doors to the public for the first time since the restaurant closed for good in 1991. Owner Ernie Edwards, along with the help of the Preservation Committee has worked to restore the exterior and interior of the former restaurant and turn it into a museum. Association President, Jeff LaFollette has also submitted a grant application to the National Park Service for the Pig-Hip Restaurant Museum requesting \$5000 in Route 66 Corridor Act funds to further the restoration to the historic building. The museum will be open during the Motor Tour and is scheduled to be a tour stop on Sunday, June 8. More about the Preservation Committee's workdays at the Pig-Hip will be reported in the next edition of "The 66 News". Also when you are driving through Broadwell, be sure to stop and take a look at our newest Route 66 museum attraction.

INTERESTING MOTOR TOUR SIDE-TRIP

The 2003 Illinois Route 66 Motor tour begins in the Chicago area. Anyone who is interested should make plans to get into Chicago's Loop early on Friday June 6th, to participate in walking tours hosted by Windy City resident and Road Geek, Dave Clark. Some of the highlights include, the tallest building on Route 66, the site of the world's first skyscraper, the site where standard time was adopted, the Art Institute, the Santa Fe Railway Building, and much, much more. The tours will begin at 12:15 PM and 2:30 PM and will start at the South Lion Statue in front of the Art Institute at Michigan and Adams. Anyone interested in this urban adventure should contact Dave directly. There is no charge for these tours. Contact Dave Clark, Windy City Road Warrior as follows:
E-Mail: dave@windycityroadwarrior.com
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Address: 843 W. Adams # 312
Chicago, IL 60607-3017

On August 23, 2003 the Route 66 Association of Illinois will partner with the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation-Bloomington-Normal, Illinois chapter to help them with their annual fund raiser. Association President Jeff LaFollette was approached by the Bloomington group with their idea of a Route 66 themed fund raiser, and agreed to offer the support of the Association. There will be a dance on Saturday evening August 23, 2003 at the Interstate Center in Bloomington. The Route 66 Association will assist in the fund raiser by conducting a poker run. The planning for this is in the very early stages. And a car "show and shine" featuring Association Members vehicles at the Interstate Center is in the works, too. A letter will be mailed out to the membership as soon as details are worked out. Please keep this date open on your calendar as we want to make this event a success. The Komen Foundation National Office in Dallas, Texas will be looking at this event closely, with the hopes that similar events can take place in all the Route 66 states. Let's all help to make this event a success.

And one more tidbit... The solar cars are returning to Route 66 in 2003, and our own Ollie Schwallenstecker from Macoupin County will be traveling with the cars from Chicago to California as they make their way down Route 66 on a two week journey. Ollie has assured me that this trip will definitely be the source of another in the series of "Crusin' With Ollie" stories. Look for his solar car adventure in a future issue. Good Cruisin' Ollie...I wish I was going with you on this journey. I can't wait to read your story!



OLD HOWARD JOHNSON'S IN COLLINSVILLE.

4-lane. *(A great rest stop dedicated to Route 66) is off the next exit ramp (I never pass without stopping.)*

For the first alignment through Collinsville, drive on to Exit 15A, Illinois 159 — you'll be exiting south. At St. Charles Drive (the first stoplight you'll come to), you can find the original 4-lane Route 66 (Vandalia Street) if you turn left. If you've chosen to do this, turn left again at the first road you come to (a 4-lane road). You are on original 1950's 4-lane U.S. 66 at this point. It only lasts a quarter of a mile or so; but, turning around and returning south, you can see how this alignment lines up with what is now Illinois 159 (and the upcoming and merging Vandalia Street).

Returning to Illinois 159, turn left. Follow Illinois 159 (Vandalia Street) to Beltline Road. Turn right. Beltline will meander then go under I-55. Get into the left lane after the I-55 underpass. At the tee (Illinois 157 (Bluff Road)), turn left. Once again you'll go under I-55. After a sharp curve right, notice the closed Howard Johnson's restaurant to your right (and a closed IHOP to your left).

After curving left, we'll soon see a sign for Collinsville Road to our right. Exit now onto Collinsville Road heading west. We'll pass (to our right) Fairmount Race Park (a place to wager on the ponies); we'll pass to our left (and then to our left and right) Cahokia Mounds (a

must-see attraction — more on this later); we'll pass (to our far right from the intersection of Illinois 203 and Collinsville Road) Gateway International Raceway (a major Indy Car and NASCAR racetrack).

We are now entering East St. Louis, Illinois.

Continuing on Collinsville Road, we'll quickly curve southwest. Collinsville Road will soon become 9th Street. The 1957 original alignment *(at a downtown intersection in East St. Louis)* turned right at St. Louis Avenue, then headed for the Veteran's Memorial Bridge and entered St. Louis, Missouri. But that's not possible now — St. Louis Avenue is blocked by Interstate.

To get to the Veteran's Memorial Bridge nowadays, the fourth Route 66 bridge to cross from Illinois into St. Louis *(and now renamed the Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge)*, you'll need to take a different path. Right before downtown East St. Louis begins, you'll come to the Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Drive intersection. Turn right at this intersection and follow this meandering road to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge. This was once a toll bridge; but now it's free. This is a very fun alignment to drive: I must admit — I truly enjoy this routing.

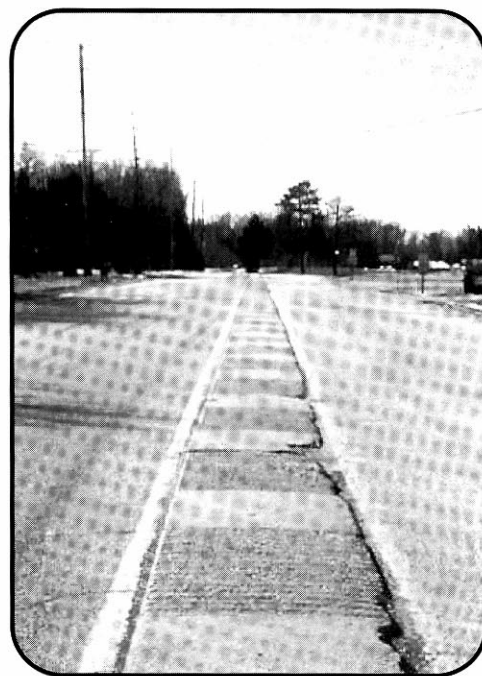
For the second alignment, once again, get on I-55 southbound at Entry/Exit 30 off of Illinois 140. This time pass the Illinois 159 exit and exit instead at Illinois 157 south on Exit 11. Turn right onto Illinois 157 (south) and then follow what I've described in my previous paragraphs beginning with my description of Illinois 157.

For the third (and last) alignment, get on I-55 southbound at Entry/Exit 30 off of Illinois 140 and simply drive I-55 all the way into St. Louis, Missouri. You will cross the Mississippi River on the Poplar Street Bridge *(the fifth and last*

and interstate crossing of U.S. Route 66). You'll be on 66; but you'll be bored out of your mind.

So as I end, let me return to a promised description: The Cahokia Mounds. One paragraph cannot do this place justice — but here's my thumbnail effort:

This Illinois State Park is a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site. These 2,200 acres contain the remnants (small mounds, large mounds and one huge mound — Monks Mound) of the most sophisticated prehistoric Indian civilization north of Mexico. If the recently-opened Interpretative Center existed simply by itself, it alone would be worth the visit, just for its first-class museum. One could easily spend a day just wandering this museum. An amazing place is the Cahokia Mounds and Route U.S. 66 literally splits the park into halves. A must-see attraction, a World Heritage Site, right along our beloved Mother Road.



**Vandalia Street in Collinsville,
An old 66 Alignment.**

REMEMBER WHEN . . .

(Editor's Note: *This came to me in a letter recently. Unfortunately I can't remember who sent it to me, so I can't give the proper credit to the one who mailed it to me. But whoever you were, thank you very much for making us smile and remember a part of our childhood!)*

Remember when the last out was made and the baseball season ended for the Cubs? We heard those famous words delivered by the legendary Ernie Banks as he had year after year, "Wait until next year". Our White Sox almost hit pay dirt but ran out of steam in the playoffs. The Bears and the Bulls, well that's another story. And the Blackhawks continued to fade as their season ends. But hey that's life. We can still enjoy a little humor and look back remembering not the frustrations of the present but the joys of the past. I hope the following article brings a little smile to your face as it did to mine.

"CLOSE YOUR EYES. . . AND GO BACK IN TIME".

Before the Internet or the Mac, before semi-automatics and crack, before SEGA or Super Nintendo. Way back — I'm talking about hide and seek at dusk, the Good Humor man, red light, green light. The corner store, hopscotch, butterscotch, double dutch, jacks, kick ball, dodge ball, Mother may I? Red Rover and Roly Poly, hula hoops and running through the sprinkler.

The smell of the sun and licking salty lips. Wax lips, and mustaches, an ice cream cone on a warm summer night. A cherry Coke from the fountain at the corner drug store. Watching Saturday morning cartoons, short commercials, Fat Albert, Road Runner, He-Man, The Three Stooges, and Bugs, or staying up for Gunsmoke or back further, listening to Superman on the radio. When around the corner seemed far away and going downtown seemed like going somewhere.

A million mosquito bites, sticky fingers, cops and robbers, Cowboys and Indians, Zorro, climbing trees, building igloos out of snow banks, walking to school no matter what the weather. Running until you were out of breath. Laughing so hard that your stomach hurt. Jumping on the bed. Pillow fights, spinning around, getting dizzy and falling down was cause for giggles. Being tired from playing — remember that?

The worst embarrassment was being picked last for a team. War was a card game. Water balloons were the ultimate weapon, baseball cards in the spokes transformed any bike into a motorcycle. I'm not finished just yet — Eating Kool-Aid powder — Remember when there were two types of sneakers for girls and boys? (Keds and PF Flyers) And the only time you wore them at school was for "gym". It wasn't odd to have two or three "best friends". When nobody owned a purebred dog. When a quarter was a decent allowance and another quarter was a miracle. When you got your windshield cleaned, oil checked and gas pumped without asking for free every time. And you didn't pay for air. And you got trading stamps too!

When laundry detergent had free glasses, dishes or towels hidden in the box — Decisions were made by going "Eenie-meenie-minie-mo". Mistakes were corrected by simply exclaiming "Do over!"

Race issues meant arguing about who ran the fastest. Money issues were handled by whoever was the banker in Monopoly. Having a weapon in school meant being caught with a slingshot. Taking drugs meant orange flavored chewable aspirin.

Abilities were discovered because of a "double dog-dare". Older siblings were the worst tormentors, but also the fiercest protectors. Didn't that feel good — just to go back and say, Yeah, I remember that! If you can remember most or all of these then you have LIVED! Pass this on to a friend who needs a smile.

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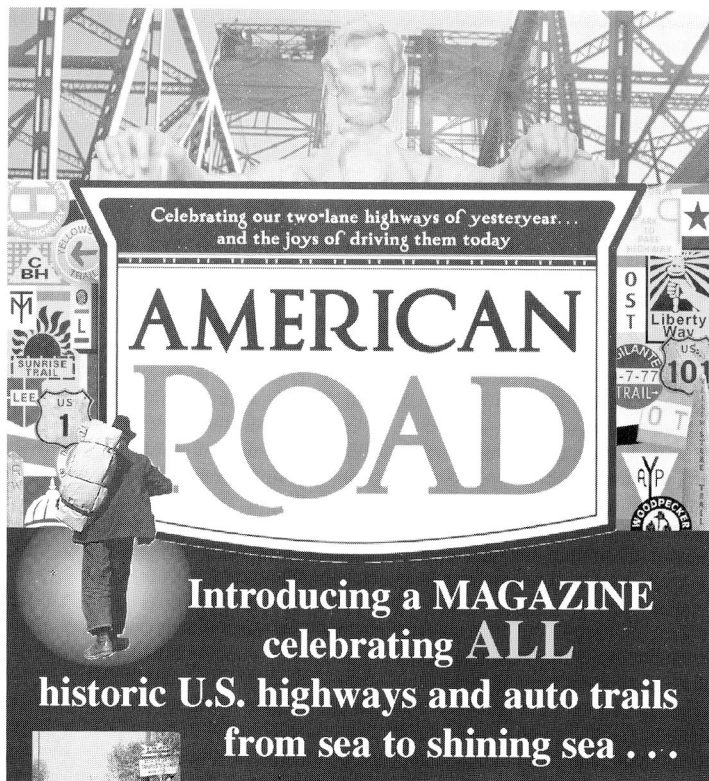
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SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW

By Bill & Barb Gwodz and John & Lenore Weiss



Celebrating our two-lane highways of yesteryear...
and the joys of driving them today

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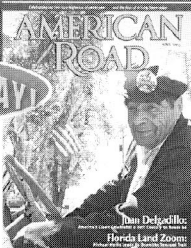


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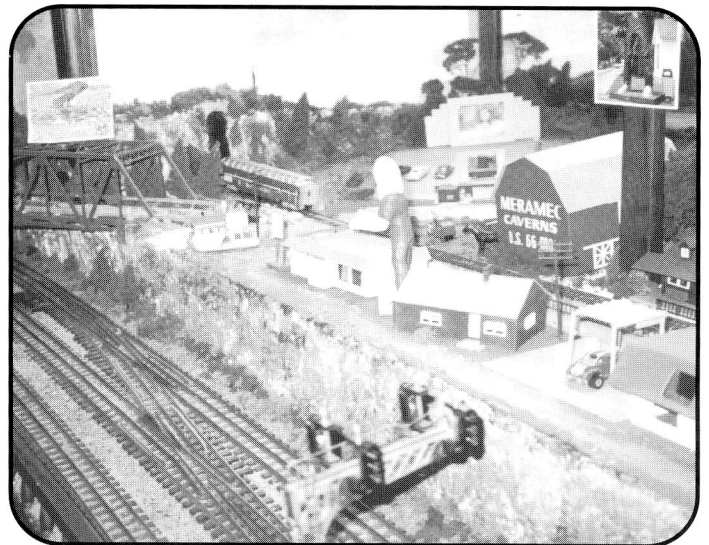


Recently we had the privilege and pleasure of visiting the home of John Ruh and his lovely wife. This delightful couple has a fascinating display of their hobby.

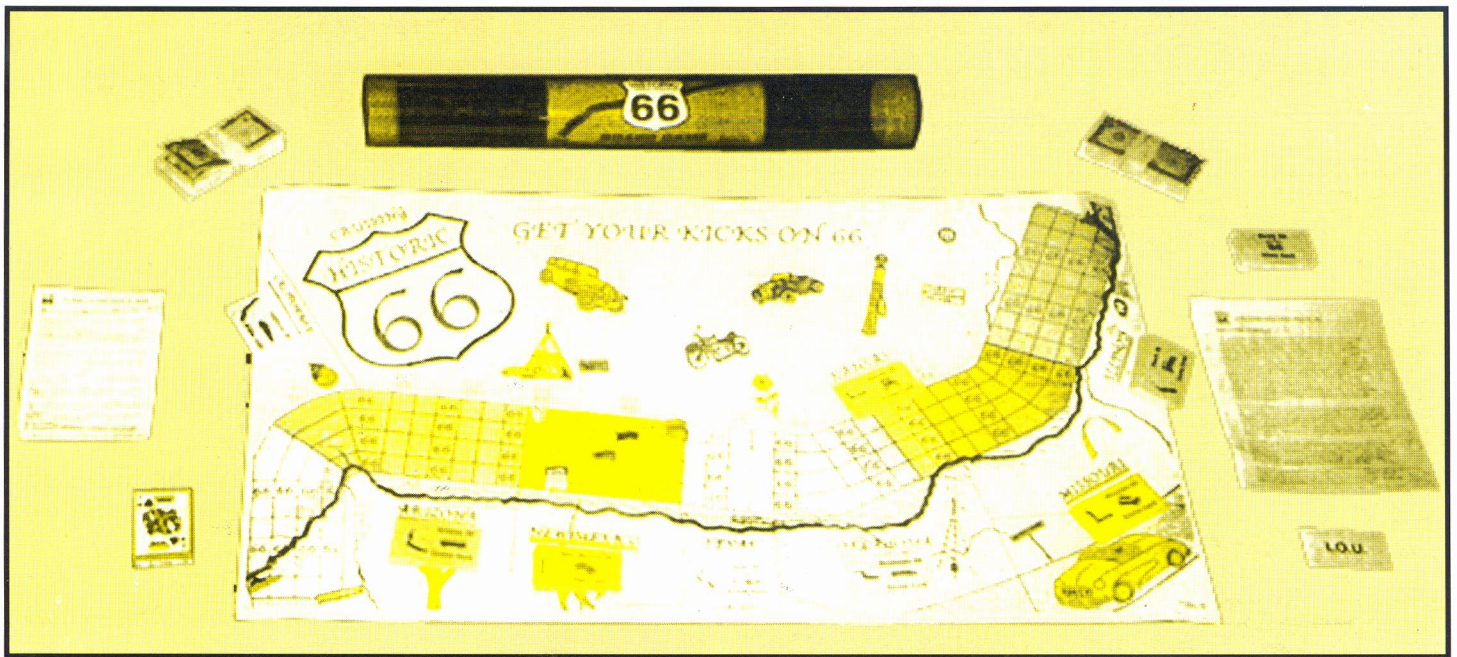
The cozy home is a time capsule and history lesson. Inside is a wonderful diversified collection of their various interests. But it was the train display in the basement that we came to see. As we took our first step, we knew the four of us were in for a wonderful journey. We were lost in time, once again feeling like teenagers, while enjoying Mr. Ruh's authenticity of his project. He travels to various locations along Route 66, takes photos, and then recreates them in miniature for his model railroad. All eight Route 66 states are recognized. Currently with some outside help, he is creating scenes from out west that caught his eye. The Grand Canyon is truly amazing.

In the Illinois portion, we saw the Gemini giant, and the restored Meramec Caverns barn. Also a working drive in movie theater, showing a Route 66 film of course to represent the Sky View Drive In Theater in Litchfield. He also has the Chain of Rocks Bridge. Many other familiar landmarks are also represented. And all the bells, whistles, lights, gates, etc. worked like an active city. Needless to say, we were all transformed back to our childhood by our very gracious hosts.

Look for the Ruh's on the motor tour. They drive a 1966 Mustang convertible. Meeting people like these are one of the true advantages and privileges of belonging to the Route 66 Association of Illinois.



**John Ruh's Display
Meramec Caverns Barn
& Chain of Rocks Bridge**



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MEMORIES OF MOVING THE BUNYON GIANT

Here are just a few more scenes of the Bunyon Giant being moved from his Cicero, Illinois home of 37 years.

Again, a special thank you to all of those who helped out on this wonderful day, and especially to Art Stephens and his family for their generosity in allowing their giant to keep his feet planted in Illinois.



Lower half of Paul being moved

Upper half of Paul in flight.



Paul on his way to Wilmington on I-55



Unloading Paul's legs at John Weiss'



After the giant was removed

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS
THE NEWS

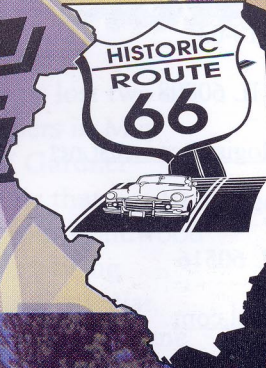
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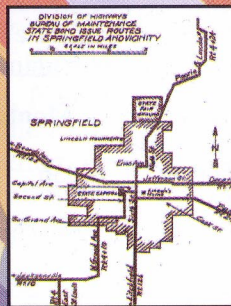
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THE NEWS

FALL 2003



MOTOR TOUR VISITS NEW PIG HIP MUSEUM

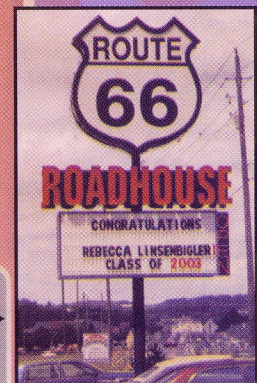


**REDISCOVERING
IT**



**SOULSBY'S
RESTORED**

**WHERE IN
THE WORLD?**



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, educate 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.

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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.

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS



FALL 2003

ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 HALL OF FAME

MOURNS THE PASSING OF TWO MEMBERS

The Route 66 Association of Illinois lost two of its distinguished Hall of Fame members in May and June. In May Burt Parkinson of Gardner passed away. Burt was part of a family that published newspapers in Illinois in both Braidwood and Gardner. These newspapers began being published shortly after the end of the Civil War. He continued that heritage and eventually became editor, publisher, reporter, painter and chief washer of presses (not to mention bottles), before the paper was sold in October of 1988 to the Dwight Star. Burt also wrote a weekly column in the Gardner Chronicle entitled, "*The Window and its Pain on Wednesday*". He often joked that it should have been called "The Pain in the Window". Burt was inducted into the Route 66 Association of Illinois Hall of Fame in 1995.

Also the Association mourns the passing of John Geske of Bloomington. Mr. Geske was co-founder of Shirley Oil and Supply Company, currently known as Dixie Truckers Home. Mr. Geske was the father of C.J. Beeler, former owner of the Dixie.

Mr. Geske along with his father-in-law and co-founder of the Dixie, J.P. Walters, was inducted into the Illinois Route 66 Association Hall of Fame in its inaugural year of 1990. In addition to his time along Route 66, John Geske was very active in the Bloomington-Normal community as a past master of the Shirley Masonic Lodge and the Bloomington Kiwanis Club. Mr. Geske was also active in the McLean County Shrine Club, was a 50 year member of the Mohammed Shrine of Peoria, and was also a member of Elks Lodge 281 in Bloomington.

We thank these two gentlemen for their contributions along Illinois Route 66 over the years, and we extend our deepest sympathies to the families of Burt Parkinson and John Geske. They are both now as author Michael Wallis would say, "Angels of the Mother Road".

Editor's Note: *Thanks go to Ted Giovanazzi and Marilyn Pritchard for submitting information about Burt Parkinson and John Geske respectively for this story.*

INTERNATIONAL ROUTE 66 MOTHER ROAD FESTIVAL UPDATE

Following is a list of some of the things festival goers can expect from this year's Mother Road Festival in Springfield, Illinois on September 26-28, 2003.

- A car lover's paradise with hundreds of the coolest and hottest vehicles from across the United States and Canada
- Continuous live FREE Music on five stages, Friday evening from 6 p.m.- 11 p.m., all day Saturday from 11 a.m.- 8 p.m., and Sunday from 11 a.m.- 3 p.m. Country Blues and Rock and Roll
- FREE constant roving street entertainers and celebrity look alikes
- FREE Route 66 City Nights Parade of Cars along Springfield's own Route 66 alignments
- FREE Route 66 workshops hosted by TV star, Martin Milner, and best selling author and historian, Michael Wallis
- Travel Illinois Expo, showcasing 60+ Illinois towns and attractions along the Mother Road.

- Route 66 Authors and Artists Expo, featuring quirky characters of the Mother Road eager to share their stories and crafts.
- FREE Kids' Lane with special activities, kiddie rides, and demonstrations all day on Saturday and Sunday

The "World's Largest Sock Hop" is back by popular demand on Saturday night, from 8:30 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. Rock n Roll is here to stay with Rock n Roll Hall of Famers Danny & The Juniors ("At the Hop"), The Shirelles ("Soldier Boy") and the Buckingham's ("Kind of a Drag"). Guests can shake, rattle and roll on the dance floor or simply relax and reminisce. Tickets range from \$15 to \$50 and can be purchased through TicketMaster at 217-544-9400 or at the PCCC Box Office.

Once again, the prestigious annual John Steinbeck Awards

Evening will be an important part of the festival. This evening gala, on Friday September 26th takes place at the Hilton Springfield, and is produced by the National Historic Route 66 Federation and the John Steinbeck Foundation. Tickets for the dinner and awards ceremony are available by calling 888-339-0794.

No event is complete without food and drink. Scores of specialty vendors will be on hand throughout the festival grounds — guaranteed to satisfy a hungry palate and quench a dry mouth. And we didn't forget the knick-knacks, doo-dads and other cool stuff. There will be all kinds of Route 66 memorabilia and souvenirs — from hats, t-shirts, signs — you name it. Plus a swap meet as well. For more information about the festival and updates go to www.route66fest.com or call 866-RTE66IL (866-783-6645).

ASSOCIATION MEMBER TO THE RESCUE

By Dan Kerns, Chatham, Illinois

I was coming back to Springfield from Peoria on a Wednesday at about noon, when I got off the interstate at Lincoln and hopped on Route 66. I noticed three people on motorcycles up ahead, and I caught up with them as we pulled into Williamsville. It was fairly obvious that they were Route 66 travelers, and all three wore the same motor clothes and had the same packs on the bikes. They took the "Spur 66" south on the south edge of Williamsville. I turned right toward the I-55 interchange, and then waited along the side of the road for them to come back up to the interchange.

When they got back up from the detour down the spur, they turned the wrong way, heading back into Williamsville. That didn't seem right to me, so I turned around and headed back into town myself. I caught up with them on a side residential street. They had parked the motorcycles, and they appeared somewhat lost. I pulled along side, rolled down my window, and asked if they were looking for "66." "YA, YA, 66," was the reply, in a thick German accent. I introduced myself, told them that I was a member of the Illinois Association, and asked if they needed some help.

One of the three spoke fairly good English, another was very limited in English, and the third one apparently could not speak English at all. Still, all three were much better at speaking English than I was at speaking German. It turns out that they rented the three Harley Davidson motorcycles in Chicago, and they were taking 14 days to ride out to Santa Monica.

I offered to escort them into Springfield, and they gladly accepted the offer. I explained that from Springfield on south toward St. Louis that there are basically two alignments that are well signed: the original alignment, and one from around the 1960's. I suggested that they travel the original alignment so that they could get a better feel for the small towns along the way. They agreed. I was asked if there was a diner in Springfield on Route 66, and, of course, I recommended the Cozy Dog Drive In.

They followed me, getting on I-55 at Williamsville and getting off at Sherman. I took them on the old alignment (they thought seeing the State Capitol building was great), and turned off the old alignment onto South Grand Avenue to 5th Street. I dropped them off at the Cozy at about 1:30 p.m. They offered to buy me lunch, but I had to get back to work. I gave them an Illinois highway map, showed them how to get to Chatham, and mapped out the old alignment down to Hamel. They seemed very grateful. I gave them a business card and asked them to send me a postcard from Santa Monica. We'll see if I get one. I wish I could have gone home, gotten on my Harley Sportster, and ridden with them at least into St. Louis. Anyway, I thought you may enjoy hearing about this encounter. I'm sure there are a lot of 66 travelers (even a lot of foreigners) that come through on a daily basis, but it was nice to talk to three of them and help them out for a little while.

A TWO PERSON STORY

By John Weiss

A fellow by the name of Geores Bittner was enjoying himself by traveling Route 66 in a very unique way. By himself he was running Route 66 in one direction and bicycling it in the other direction, while driving it in both directions all at the same time.

This 66 year old man drove from California to Chicago. His plan was to then each morning drive 6 miles and drop off his bicycle, then drive back. He then ran the 6 miles and rode the bicycle back to his van. He would do another 6 miles in this same way each evening. This left the afternoons open for sightseeing and visiting.

I learned of Geores when I got a phone call from Pat Swisher. She is the daughter of Hall of Famer, Burt Parkinson. I went to the Parkinson's new home to meet Geores and visit with the Parkinson family. We had a fun and interesting visit. Little did I know that this would be the last time I would ever talk to Burt. Two weeks later he passed on due to a lingering illness.

If it had not been for Geores, the Route 66 traveler, I never would have had the opportunity to enjoy the company of Burt Parkinson one last time. I am so glad I did! Thanks Geores, and keep on enjoying your tour.

REDISCOVERING IT — HIDDEN ROUTE 66

Finding the Original Springfield, Illinois, Alignments

By Carl Johnson

A PRELUDE

When I began this series of articles, I felt I could find old pavement and simply direct an interested reader on how to travel that neglected patch of pavement. I thought that would suffice. I thought a neglected piece of pavement would speak for itself. Well, I was wrong.

Just because pavement exists does not mean it was onetime 66; it is more complicated than that. I learned this lesson with my very first article. Three issues ago, I submitted to Jeff La Follette an article about early 66 through Lyons, Illinois. He accepted it. Through a fluke, early alignments were discussed at the end of our Illinois Association meeting in Lincoln, Illinois. Jeff then mentioned (as an aside) my upcoming Lyons, Illinois, article. After that meeting, Johnny "Moo-Moo" Miller (our current Vice President) told me he had someone I just had to meet — someone who was also exploring Lyons, Illinois.

Upon returning home to a western suburb of Chicago (Hillside) from that meeting, I was greeted with two e-mails: The first was from Johnny Miller telling me he had made contact with David Clark, the person I should be meeting (who had spent the previous year and a half studying 66 in Lyons, Illinois); the second was from David Clark himself, introducing himself and then mentioning, "I think you and I have something in common — we have both been studying Lyons, Illinois."

It was late, so I didn't e-mail David Clark until the following evening, after work. I didn't send him my article; but I did send him a detailed description of my understanding of Route 66 through Lyons, Illinois. David read my e-mail carefully and then e-mailed me back a question: "Did you say Joliet Avenue versus Lawndale Avenue?" I e-mailed back an affirmative. David then e-mailed me the following: "I thought early 66 through Lyons, Illinois was Joliet Avenue myself until I came upon proof through Route Bulletins that it was Lawndale Avenue."

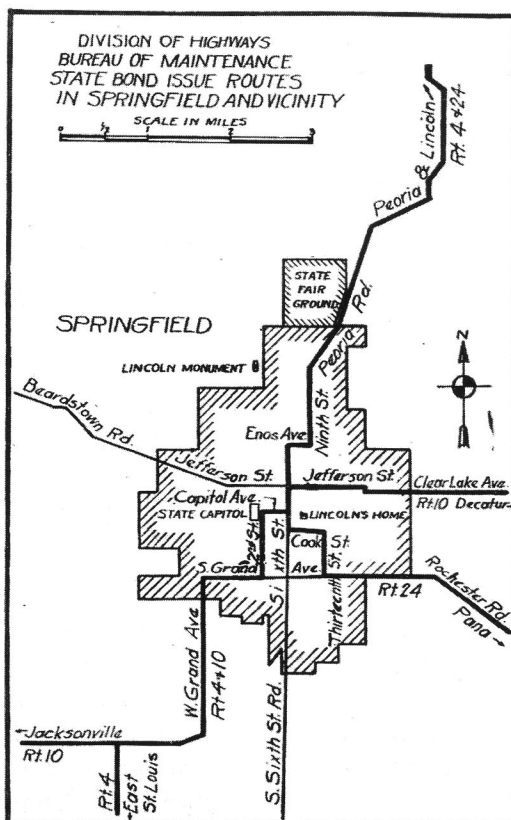
Well, I had never heard of Route Bulletins, so I asked Dave for proof. He then e-mailed me the Route Bulletin proof. I was flabbergasted. He was right and I was wrong. I telephoned Jeff La Follette and told him my Lyons, Illinois, article was in error. I told him not to publish it. Luckily, through the generosity of both Jeff La Follette and David Clark, I was given time to correct my article and make it right. I almost ate an amazing amount of humble pie with my very first article on Route 66. I owe David Clark, Johnny Miller and Jeff La Follette a lot of thanks. So thanks, deeply thanks.

WHAT ARE ROUTE BULLETINS?

On Tuesday, April 22, 2003, I was in the Illinois State Library researching those old Route Bulletins. David Clark had taught me a lesson: Get your dates and alignments straight. I felt, if I was to write articles for our Illinois Association, I had better have my facts straight. But I never expected my research to lead to a bombshell, but it did.

The best way to describe those old Route Bulletins, I have already done: In an e-mail to Patty Kuhn, Project Manager of the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project, Inc., I described the Route Bulletins and IDOT and Annual Highway Reports with the following four paragraphs:

"I don't think IDOT needs to be embarrassed. I would doubt they even have Route Bulletins left in their offices. The hardbound Annual Highway Reports seem to have begun in 1932 — at least that is the first year they appear in the Illinois State Library. They (IDOT) probably had long forgotten about those Route Bulletins and relied on the Annual Highway Reports instead (then assumed all was the same from 1932 backward to 1926). It was a bad assumption — but I am sure that is what happened. "I would not have known about these Route Bulletins if it wasn't for David Clark. He found his first one at the Chicago Historical Society.



Map 1 - 1927 Map of Springfield Alignments

Continued on page 6

He then went down to Springfield to the Illinois State Library and found more (he has also found more at the University of Illinois at Champaign). He introduced them to me while I was writing my Lyons, Illinois, article

— proving Lawndale was the early alignment. He told me they also included maps of other cities (but David's primary interest has always been the Chicago area — so, obviously, he didn't notice the Springfield discrepancies).

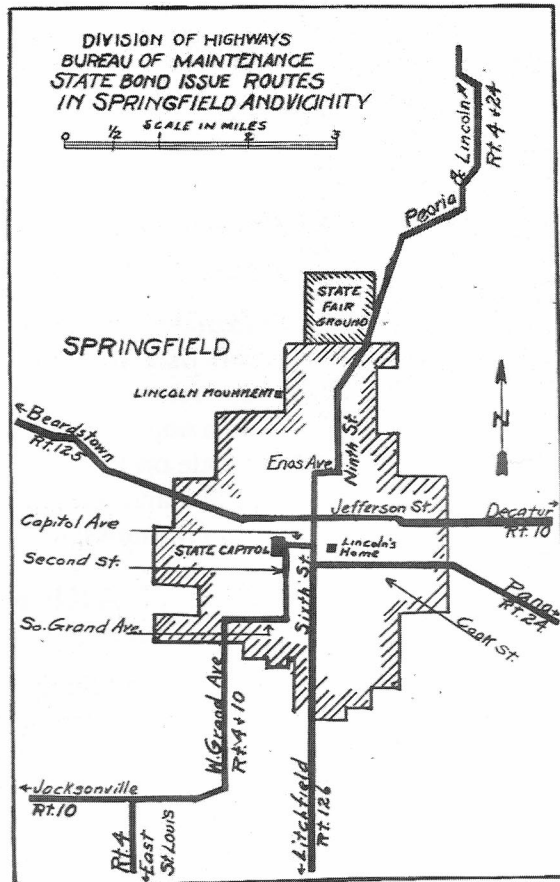
"I was also lucky to have a very fine gentleman take care of me at the Illinois State Library. I accompanied him down to the catacombs to get the Route Bulletins (he had never heard of such a thing which surprised him — I think he has worked there for quite sometime, but he did find them on his computer). So — to make a long story short — I think these Route Bulletins are forgotten little gems.

"As I told you, they certainly weren't published with permanence in mind — they are printed on a type of newsprint and so now are very, very fragile. Hard roads in those days (1924 thru 1932) were still novelties (as were state roads). The public would have had a hankering to keep up with the state's road building at that time. That is why these things were published — to satisfy the public's curiosity (and to exemplify on a nearly monthly basis the progress in road building the state was accomplishing). What wonderful forgotten gems."

THE BOMBSHELL

Here is my description to David Clark in an e-mail I made to him after finding the true routings of early 66 through Springfield, Illinois:

"But — and here is the gist of this e-mail I send to you now. I went to the Illinois State Library on Tuesday. I went down to the catacombs with a librarian and found every Route Bulletin in their collection (dating from 1924 thru 1932). I then began looking at them (and photocopying anything to do with Route 66 — a very fragile business) of those



Map 2 - 1930 Map of Springfield Alignments

Route Bulletins. Finally, in May of 1927, the Route Bulletins began including maps of other cities besides Chicago and the greater East St. Louis area. One of those cities was Springfield.

"Well, guess what — the route shown in the Route Bulletins in 1927 (both May and August) is entirely different than the route marked as 1926 thru 1930 Route 66 in Springfield — from the state fairgrounds all the way to the State Capitol building. The 1926 thru 1930 route they have marked at this point was never Route 66; it was a 1932 realignment of State Route 4 (which a 1932 Route Bulletin confirmed for me). But it was never Route 66.

"Then, in 1930, Route 66 followed another route never displayed in Springfield. It followed the same 1926-1930 route (I discovered) into

downtown on 6th Street but then just stayed on 6th street exiting south of town (and now heading to Litchfield). The originally planned Route 66 (instead of the Route 4 T66). Finally, as you'll see, the 1932 Route Bulletin has pretty much the alignment we see now — all the way down 9th Street bypassing downtown. But, once again, there is a discrepancy — as it heads over to

6th Street south of town it does not utilize either of the marked one-way streets now proclaimed Historic 66 in Springfield — it stays slightly north of those streets and uses 2-way South Grand Street.

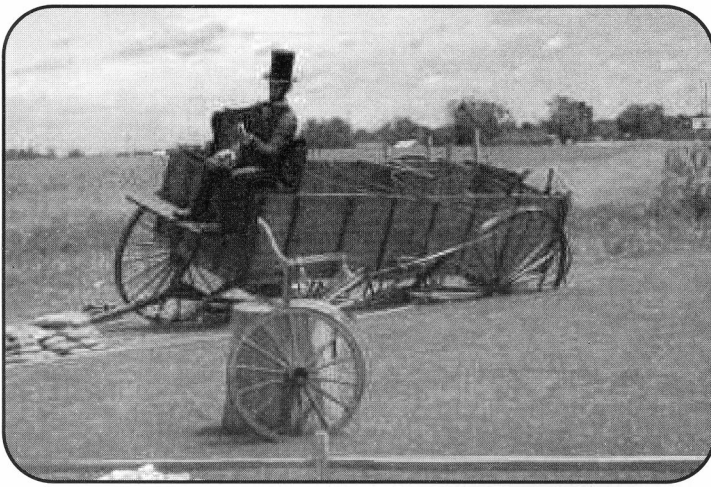
"Well, when I showed these maps to Tom Teague, I literally watched his jaw drop. The same is true when I showed them to Patty Kuhn, but they are truly excited down there. . . .very excited that original 66 went by almost every major tourist attraction in downtown Springfield: The old State Capitol, the new State Capitol, and the Lincoln-Herndon law offices (and it even goes by the currently under construction Lincoln Library). With your help and guidance, you helped me uncover a bombshell. I owe you a lot of thanks."

2003

MOTOR TOUR NOTES

By Ollie Schwallenstecker

Expectations are always high when the Illinois Route 66 Motor Tour week arrives. This year even more was expected because of the great effort given by the 2003 Motor Tour committee.



**Storm damaged the Lincoln Covered Wagon
near Divernon**

Board members from shore to shore of our beloved highway have shared the word that the 2003 Tour would be better than ever, and it was! Thanks are due to all who worked so hard to make the 2003 Route 66 Association of Illinois Motor Tour occur. In Bunker Hill, Friday morning found the sky gray and overcast as we backed the Mustang out of the garage. Judy and I discussed whether to leave the top down, but decided it was too cool. So up came the top and off we went on another year's Motor Tour.

Word was out that Ernie and Frances Edwards would be receiving guests this morning at an open house for their Pig Hip Museum. We arrived about 9:30 a.m. in time to meet the State Journal Register Chief Photographer, Bill Hagen, who was burning ones and zeros with his digital camera. Ernie and Frances were greeting everyone with a big smile and Ernie was hugging all the ladies. Their stepdaughter, Sandy Cook of Lincoln, assisted with the greetings. By 10:00, Patty Kuhn, Sue Waldmire and family, Tom Teague, Thressia Usherwood, a Springfield TV crew and others were bumping into each other. Outside a chilly rain fell in a steady drizzle. Inside was as warm and cozy as Ernie and Frances' smiles. They have amassed a dining room full of memorabilia detailing the history of the Pig Hip and the surrounding countryside. Their museum is a credit to the "Mother Road" and their years of service.

At 6:00 it was over to J.C.'s Pub. Jeff & Annette La Follette, Johnny & Kathy Miller, Marty Blitstein, Cathie Stevanovich, and Lou Vargo were selling Motor Tour shirts and registering roadies. It wasn't raining, but the atmosphere was as wet as a baby's bottom in a wet diaper. The humidity was about 99.8 percent. Marty Bilecki, Bill Gwodz, Duke Cartwright, Lynn Bagdon, Rose Vargo and Jeff Geisler were offering advice and information to anyone who would accept it.

And it was very good. Carl Johnson stopped by and we looked at Phil Wilson's new map book. Carl had met with Phil Wilson and Patty Kuhn earlier and they shared info on some newly discovered alignments. Phil's book is the most up to date resource for finding Route 66 in Illinois.

Saturday morning at sunrise was cloudy, cool and dry. It was off to 2003 Hall of Fame "Lou Mitchell's" for coffee and donut holes. Traffic was light and the sun broke through the clouds at about 6:30. Johnny Miller, Jeff Geisler and Jeff Meyer were directing traffic on Jackson Ave. We pulled into the #2 slot and parked. John & Janice Murphy, Marty & Geri Bilecki, Dave & Kay Jostes, Frank & Roxane Lozich, and many, many others were checking out Lou Mitchell's and visiting. Another treat this year was the arrival of the Santa Fe Chief, a replica of a Santa Fe Chief Locomotive built on a late 40's Dodge truck chassis. People would be startled when the air horn was sounded. Others would grab their camera and burn some film. Over 60 cars were assembled and awaiting President Jeff's call to begin the Tour and cruise at 7:30 a.m. sharp.

Jeff Geisler led the flow of colorful machines east on the floor of the canyons of Jackson Ave. to Michigan Ave. then doubled them back to Adams, and then on to Ogden Ave. and through the towns of Cicero and Berwyn. Lyons & McCook disappeared in the rear view mirror as we toured down Joliet Road. Over a hundred magic carpets awaited our arrival at White Fence Farm. Two lines of clean, polished, bright and shiny vehicles were lined up along the north side of the parking area. Durelle and Marilyn Pritchard were directing the traffic as we arrived from downtown. We immediately formed a third line inside the other two. It appeared that more than 200 vehicles were present. The first vehicle to catch our attention and the many

Continued on page 10

FALL 2003

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS
THE NEWS

THE 1926 THRU 1932 ROUTES THROUGH SPRINGFIELD

From 1926 thru 1930, the original Springfield alignment follows: Sixty-six enters Springfield (on the east side of the Illinois State fairgrounds) on Peoria Road (it does not exit onto Taintor Road — that was a 1932 realignment of S.B.I. 4, not Route 66). It stays on Peoria Road as it slightly angles left and becomes 9th Street. At Enos Avenue (a stoplight, today), it turns right. At 6th Street it turns left (impossible today — 6th is one-way north nowadays — to head south take 5th instead). Then in downtown Springfield, turn right at Capitol Avenue and then left onto 2nd Street in front of the State Capitol building (from this point on all 1926-1930 signs in Springfield are correct). (MAP 1)


From 1930 thru 1932, the original Springfield alignment follows: Sixty-six enters Springfield (on the east side of the Illinois State fairgrounds) on Peoria Road. It stays on Peoria Road as it slightly angles left and becomes 9th Street. At Enos Avenue (a stoplight, today), it turns right. At 6th Street it turns left (impossible today — 6th is one-way north nowadays — to head south take 5th instead). Stay on 6th (or on 5th heading south) all the way out of town. (MAP 2)

For the original 1932 bypass, take the following: Follow 66 as it enters Springfield (on the east side of the Illinois State fairgrounds) on Peoria Road. It stays on Peoria Road as it slightly angles left and becomes 9th Street. It will stay on 9th Street bypassing downtown all the way to South Grand Avenue. At South Grand Avenue, it will turn right and then turn left at 6th Street. Follow 6th out of town (impossible today — 6th is one-way north nowadays — to head south take 5th instead). (MAP 3)

A POSTLUDE

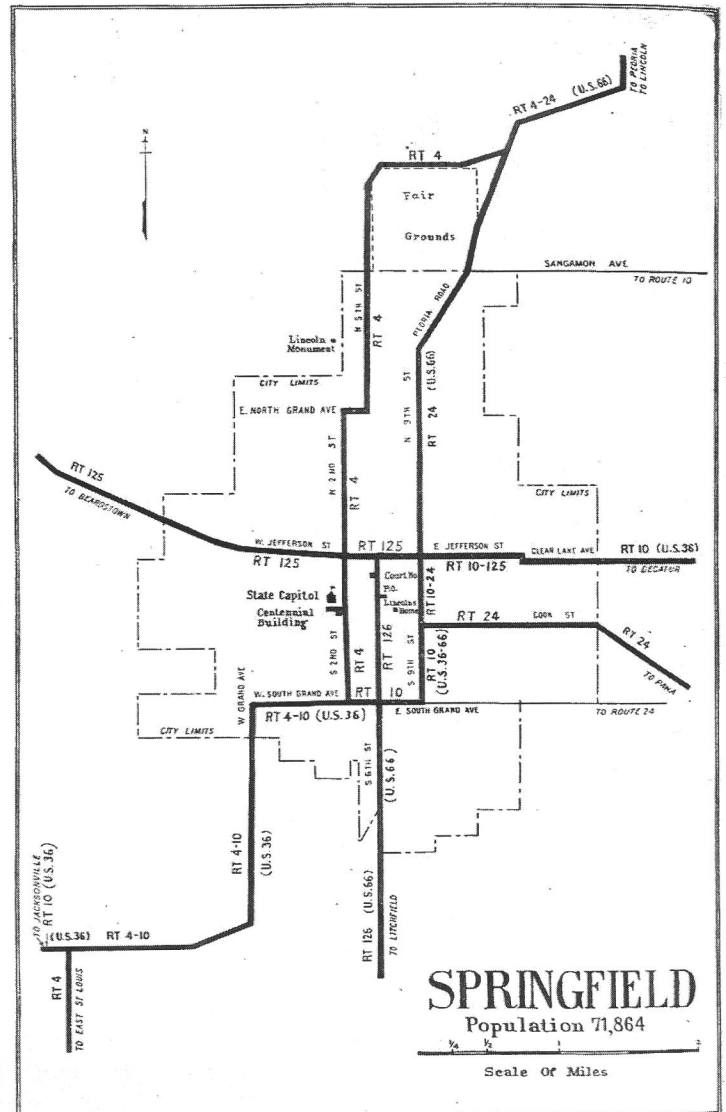
I cannot describe what it feels like to discover new routings of old 66, especially when it was purely a fluke. I never went down to Springfield expecting to find what I found, never. But I found it and so I'll take the credit, purely fluke or not. But if you ever give me credit, remember it was purely a fluke. And remember also: I would never have found it without David Clark, Johnny Miller or Jeff La Follette, never.

So let me end with David Clark's e-mail reply to me: "Anyway, congratulations once again on THE BOMBSHELL, and enjoy this — whoopee coasters' moment you're riding right now. I've been there, and I know how it feels." A whoopee-coaster moment indeed. I never expected to be rewriting history, never. But — I must admit — it certainly is fun.

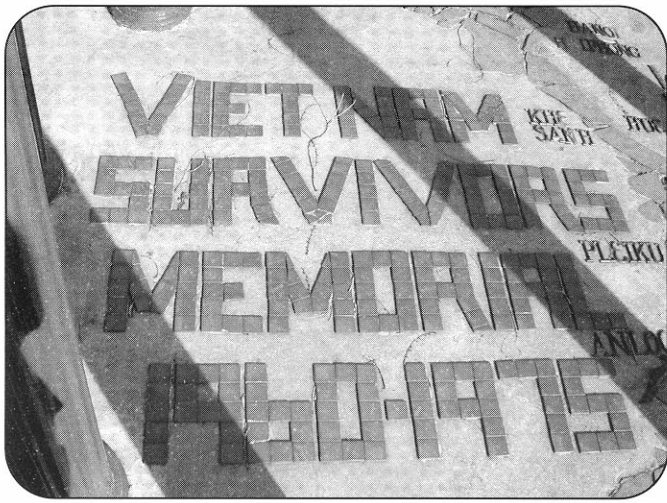


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Map 3 - 1932 Map of Springfield Alignments



Memorial Script in Brick

VIETNAM VET MEMORIAL NEAR 66 IN CHICAGO

By David G. Clark

Any association members who are looking for an interesting destination should consider taking a look at the Vietnam Survivors Memorial located just blocks off of Route 66 in Chicago's Tri-Taylor neighborhood.

This gentrified neighborhood near the Illinois Medical District is also the location of some wonderfully maintained vintage buildings that are worth a look.

Vietnam War Vet William Lavicka built a memorial to honor his fellow surviving veterans on a 25-foot-wide lot that he owned near the corner of Polk and Oakley. The memorial was dedicated on Nov. 7, 1987. In 1989 he succeeded in convincing Governor Jim Thompson to have the state deed the adjoining lot to the memorial as well. The Illinois Medical District had wanted to use the lot for parking, but Lavicka and 400 other vets were persuasive.

The 50-foot wide grass-covered lot now features flagpoles with flags of the U.S., as well as the Army, Navy, Marines, and the MIA/POW organization. There are gargoyles from a demolished west-side church that guard a concrete slab on which crimson tiles spell "A Vietnam Survivors Memorial. 1960-1975. America's Longest War." There are marble stepping stones just behind the concrete slab that lead to

10 blood red cast-iron columns. The marble was part of a discarded load from the Amoco Building, and the columns were originally a part of the Page Brothers Building at State and Lake in Chicago's Loop. The columns surround a granite map of Vietnam with city names marked in gold letters.

To explore the Tri-Taylor neighborhood and visit the Memorial, Take Historic 66, Ogden Avenue, to Taylor Street, located south of I-290,

the Eisenhower Expressway, between Damen Avenue on the east, and Western Avenue on the west. (Lu-Lu's, a great fast-food joint, is located at the corner of Taylor and Ogden). At Taylor and Oakley, turn south, then west on Gresham, then north on Claremont Street. The 900 block of Claremont is home to Queen Anne brick cottages, very unusual to anyone used to Chicago's "bungalow belt." These 1884 homes feature projecting gables, dormers, and overhanging eaves.

Continue north on Claremont to the 700 block to see some nicely maintained Queen Anne 2 flats. The buildings on this block date from 1886-7 and feature deep red face brick. The tops of the walls — the "cornices" — are unusual in that they are made of pressed metal instead of terra cotta or brick. Turn right (east) where Claremont dead-ends, then south on Oakley, followed by a left turn to the east on Polk Street. Take Polk to Leavitt, turn south, then east on Bowler. This is a very unusual block for Chicago. Most apartment buildings from the 19th century are

free-standing 2 or 3-flats separated from the buildings on neighboring lots by gangways. Row houses are prevalent in eastern cities such as New York and Boston, but are rare in the Windy City. The buildings on this block are Italianate with neo-classical detailing and were built between 1881 and 1886.

At the end of Bowler Street, turn west on Polk, then south on Oakley. The



The Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Continued on page 10

**Apartments in
Tri-Taylor
Neighborhood**



Vietnam Survivors Memorial is near the middle of this block on the east side. Also, take a look at the buildings at 801 and 811 S. Oakley, just north of the Memorial on the same block. These were moved here from their original site two blocks to the north — hard to believe because they look just like the buildings in between them!

And if you're hungry, there are several inviting restaurants in the

neighborhood along Taylor and also along Western Avenue featuring sandwiches, Italian, and Asian food. For fast food, there is a White Castle at Roosevelt and Western, Lu-Lu's at Taylor and Ogden, and Dexter's at Western and Ogden.

For more information on Tri-Taylor or for information on architecture in Chicago in general, check out the AIA Guide to



**Cottages
in Tri-Taylor
Neighborhood**

Chicago, a book by the American Institute of Architects and the Chicago Architecture Foundation. It is available at most area bookstores and travel stores. I also encourage any Association member with questions about 66 in Chicago to contact me as follows:

David Clark
dave@windycityroadwarrior.com
843 W. Adams Street #312
Chicago, IL 60607-3017

MOTOR TOUR 2003.continued from page 7

others present, was the restored 1951 Ford State Police cruiser. Sgt. Dave Jung, Sgt. Larry Ball and Sgt. Chic Depper had brought it from Collinsville to lead the 2003 Motor Tour back south. The black and white cruiser was the belle of this day's ball. Dave Jung was the pilot and was dressed in his Trooper dress uniform. Dave would be retiring with 38 years service at the end of June.

Wagon master Jeff Geisler was checking on road conditions ahead and was concerned about a diesel fuel spill rumored to be blocking our Route 66 somewhere south of the farm. Dave, Chic and Larry got on their State Police radio and determined there was indeed a spill, but it was located in the north bound lane and not causing any blockage south bound. President Jeff again addressed the waiting crowd with wishes for a safe and fun weekend. The black and white restored 1951 Ford State Police cruiser fired to life on all cylinders. When Sgt. Jung had the cruiser restored he was careful to have 50's type glass pack mufflers installed. Following behind him this morning we listened to the sweet sound of the flathead V-8's cackle when Sgt. Dave got off the gas.

Jeff Geisler directed traffic as we pulled out of the White Fence Farm and powered down our beloved

Route 66. We passed the spill area and noted that a sedan had hit a Semi-tractor and knocked one of the saddle tanks off, resulting in the spill. We next arrived at the newly finished "Historic Joliet Route 66 Welcome Center". The 1951 Ford Police Cruiser and several other classics were placed in the horseshoe drive right in front of the center. Jeff Geisler directed incoming traffic to parking nearby. Everyone was delighted with the displays and newly decorated "Welcome Center". Route 66 roadies have another icon to brag about on our "Mother Road". Traveling through Elwood, Judy noticed the abundance of garage and yard sale signs. Did you ever notice that distractions have a way of tempting you when you can't stop? Now the tour would find traffic a bit congested entering Wilmington and continuing a little past the Polka Dot Drive-In. We waved at roadies as we passed the Launching Pad "Giant". Turning right on Kankakee St. we stopped at the Mill Town Market for a passport stamp. A quick tour inside resulted in finding a two gallon stoneware crock missing its wire handles. It was a bargain at \$10.00, so it was added to our collection.

Outside we noticed the historic Railroad Depot up the street. The Santa Fe Chief was parked nearby on

Continued on page 12

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AWARDS 2003

ROUTE 66 CORRIDOR GRANTS

By Michael Taylor, Program Director Route 66 Corridor Act



**The Pig Hip
Museum,
Broadwell,
Illinois**

Question:

What do four roofs, 15 concrete tepees, a building named after a pig's hip, metal palm trees, a bath house, a cottage-style gas station, two movie theatres, a building dedicated to Roger Miller, the capturing of old-timer's memories, and a collegiate theatrical group have in common?

Answer:

They all have just been awarded financial assistance from the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program in 2003.

Congress passed the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Act in 1999, directing the National Park Service to manage the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program, which was to be administered by the National Trails System Office in Santa Fe. The Program is intended to provide technical assistance; cost-share and grants for rehabilitation, restoration, and preservation projects; interpretive planning; information clearinghouse management; and other services.

The Program distributes cost-share funds to eligible preservation and research projects through a competitive process. Over the first three years of the Program's existence, 39 projects have been funded in the eight states through which Route 66 passes. In 2001, the first year of the program, \$410,000 was awarded to 16 projects. In 2002, with reduced appropriations, \$151,226 was awarded to 10 recipients for Route 66 preservation, oral history, and education outreach projects.

Thirteen projects have recently been selected

to receive cost-share grants in 2003 totaling approximately \$133,000:

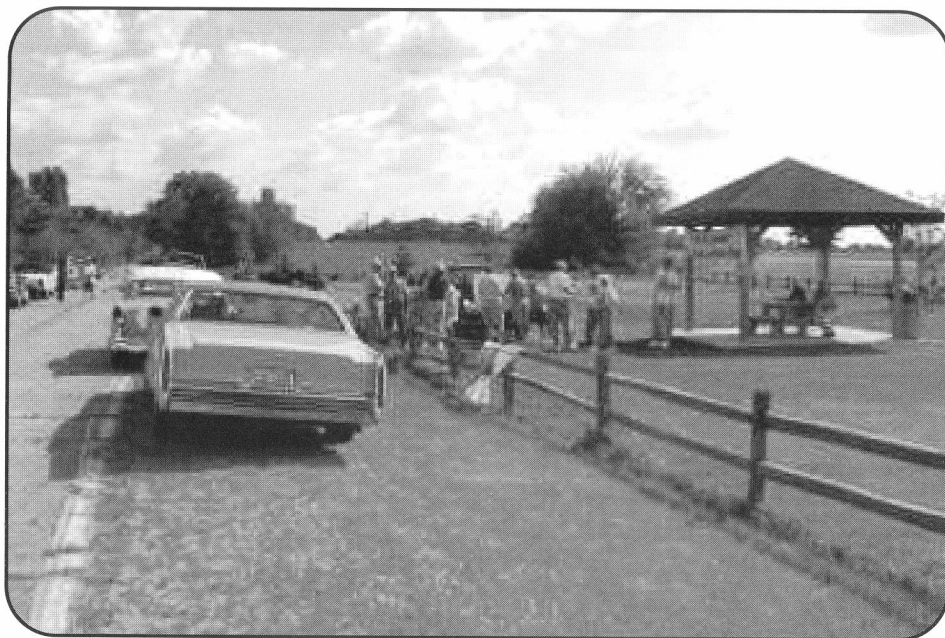
- The quintessential Wigwam Motel in Holbrook, Arizona, has been awarded funds to assist in preserving the concrete motel units and to repair the neon sign on the office.
- In Wilmington, Illinois, the historic Eagle Hotel will receive funds to replace the roof over the 19th - century building.
- Also in Illinois, the former venerable Pig Hip Restaurant in Broadwell will receive funds to replace the roof and gas furnace in collaboration with the Route 66 Association of Illinois.
- The City of Tucumcari, New Mexico, will receive funds to stabilize the WPA bathhouse at the Five Mile Park where Route 66 travelers used to camp and soak their weary bones at the largest swimming pool in the state.
- The classic El Rancho Hotel in Gallup, New Mexico, has been awarded funds to repair and seal the wood shake roof over the 1937 hotel where movie stars such as Ronald Reagan, Spencer Tracy, Katherine Hepburn, and Kirk Douglas used to stay while making Western movies in the area.
- The popular Route 66 Oral History project managed by David Dunaway and administered through the New Mexico Route 66 Association has been funded for a second year. This year, the oral history project will provide follow up technical assistance to those who participated in the 2003 oral history workshops; locate and catalog existing interviews; and develop a guide for collecting Route 66 oral histories.
- The New Mexico Route 66 Association will also be administering a preservation plan for the Pecos Theatre in Santa Rosa, to address serious moisture problems in the historic theatre, which dates to the 1920's.
- New Mexico Route 66 Association will also be administering the restoration of the neon sign at the El Rey Theatre in Albuquerque.
- In Tulsa, Oklahoma, funds will go to the Tulsa Foundation for Architecture to assist in the restoration of the classic Meadow Gold neon sign built in the mid 1930's.
- Also in Oklahoma, Preservation El Reno, Inc., has received funds for the restoration of the Oasis Drive-in neon palm-tree sign that greets travelers at the east end of town.
- In Chandler, Oklahoma, the restoration of the vintage 1930 Phillips gas station will be completed by the owner with cost-share assistance from the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program.
- The soon-to-open Roger Miller Museum in Erick, Oklahoma, will receive funding assistance to repair or replace the windows and doors in its 1929 building, which once served as a cafe and corner drug store.
- And the Northern Arizona Department of Theatre has been awarded funds to produce a short promotional film highlighting its highly successful theatrical presentation Route 66: A Celebration of America's Mainstreet (you have to see this production, it's great!).

Please visit our web site at www.cr.nps.gov/rt66 to learn more about the Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program and how you can help in furthering the preservation of Route 66's icons.

FALL 2003

the old tracks and was drawing an admiring crowd. This was an opportunity to go inside the Chief and learn of its history. The Chief has a limited amount of seats by design. Two tables, one on either side sit over the rear tire humps and each conceals a spare tire. The late 40's Dodge Chief had been rescued from a weed patch several years ago and updated with a 460 Ford engine and C-6 transmission. She's a sweetie and attracts the attention she deserves. No self-respecting roadie would pass up a chance to be looked upon by Marilyn or Elvis as they make their pit stop at the Braidwood 2002 Hall of Fame "Polka Dot Drive-In". It's a pleasure to wait in line for such a chance. A cold frosty and thick malt replenishes the energy and it's off to the Hall of Fame "Rivera Roadhouse". By now the sky was nearly cloudless and the temp near perfect. A stiff breeze moved the freshly cleaned Illinois air across the open countryside. It's amazing how wonderful the air is after a cool spring rain.

In Dwight we arrived near the middle of the tour. As we grabbed a narrow parking place in front of Dwight's historic bank, John and Lenore Weiss hailed us. John told us to be sure and go inside the bank and check out its interior architecture. I tell Judy, it's better to be lucky than smart. As we jumped out of the Mustang, the bank president was just getting ready to lock the door. Instead he invited us to come in and leave some money. He really didn't of course, but he wanted to show off the leaded glass ceiling and the beautiful woodwork that John was alerting us to. This historic bank was designed by famed Chicago Architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. What an experience, when near Dwight. It's a must see stop.



Memory Lane, Lexington, Illinois

Equally as beautiful is the Dwight Amtrak Depot located just across the wide main street.

Motor Tour roadies were at Dwight treated to a tasty lunch of beef or pork bar-b-que sandwiches, chips, cookies and a pop. Picnic tables shaded by the south carport of the main stone depot building buzzed with roadies' tales of their mornings travels. The 2001 Hall of Fame "Standard Oil Station" at Odell was swarming with roadies as we pulled up front. This Association preservation project is a great source of pride to Hampton Inns, our group and the Odell community. It's agreed by all. It's one of the brightest jewels that sparkles along our "Mother Road". John and Lenore Weiss were beaming with pride and showing our roadies its many distinctive features.

South of Pontiac we followed an old alignment we heard about. It was marked for the tour, but is unmarked by the IDOT. Chenoa, a prominent stop in 2002, was bypassed on the later alignment. Lexington's "Memory Lane" was open again this year. Fran Turgeon

and company greeted us with cold drinks and big smiles. This community preservation project has preserved over a mile of original pavement. Burma-Shave signs give the traveler some safety reminders. "Hardly a driver, who passed on, a hill at 75, is now alive. Burma-Shave. Thanks Lexington!

One of the most amazing and unique projects under way on our "Mother Road" is the Towanda High School Route 66 recognition display. Starting with Illinois, displays are being built on an unused lane at the Towanda intersection of old Route 66 and the P.J. Keller Highway. The Illinois display is complete and Missouri was under construction the day of the tour. Teacher Fred Walk has inspired youngsters to research Route 66 history and interpret that history into displays for each of the eight states Route 66 traveled through.

Arriving at Normal, I didn't believe my own directions to get into the Holiday Inn parking lot. After three tries we made it in. It must be old-timers creeping up on me. As we unpacked, the phone

SOULSBY'S RESTORED

By Tom Teague

Owner Mike Dragovich and two dozen volunteers have restored Soulsby Service Station in Mount Olive. Illinois' most enduring Route 66 icon now looks just as it did in its heyday of the late '40s and early '50s. By next year's motor tour, the group hopes to have a Soulsby museum inside.



**The Restored Soulsby's Station
Mount Olive, Illinois**

The Dragovich family had been neighbors of the station for many years. When Russell Soulsby finally decided to sell it in 1997, Mike bought it at auction. Witnesses say the effort to restore the station began about one minute later when members of the Route 66 Association politely surrounded Mike. They told him what a treasure he had. They offered their help in maintaining it. About six weeks later, they invited him to dinner at the Ariston Restaurant in Litchfield to talk about it some more.

Mike didn't have any immediate plans for Soulsby's. He said he bought it primarily to prevent any unsightly development in the neighborhood. For several years, he used the station as an office. But he also let the front rooms be used to display Soulsby and Shell memorabilia. In addition, he bought two picnic tables that volunteers painted Shell red and yellow. On motor tours and other special events, Soulsby's was also open to visitors.

Restoration was always on Mike's mind. Some day he wanted the station to win listing on the National Register of Historic Places. But with his brother he ran an engineering business that kept him out of town too much. Restoring Soulsby's would mean removal of the vinyl siding that Russell had put on in the late '70s or early '80s. No one had any idea about the condition of the original wood siding underneath. But the vinyl covered two of the station's original five doors. To meet National Register standards, it had to go.

Last year Mike landed a job with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. This gave him more time at home and we started talking more seriously about what it would take to restore the station. But it took a person that neither of us knew to really get the ball rolling. On a business trip last December, I stopped by Rich Henry's Rabbit Ranch in Staunton. Rich said a local gentleman, Nelson Grman, was interested in restoring Soulsby's. We called and asked him to come by the ranch for a visit.

Nelson is a retired pressman for the Edwardsville Intelligencer. A Mount Olive native, he'd grown up

around the station. Fixing up the station wouldn't just be a nice thing to do, he said. It would be the right thing — an honor that Russell had earned several times over. I liked the way this man talked. Besides, he said he could recruit local help. We agreed to have a second, larger meeting at the station on January 11.

Nine people attended that gathering. Besides Nelson and Mike and myself, they included: Tom Spears, the mayor of Mount Olive and Nelson's stepson; Mary Gajewski, owner of a local gift shop; Emily Priddy and Ron Warnick from Belleville; Ollie Schwallenstecker from Bunker Hill, and Gene Peters from Wood River. We talked about logistics. We talked about funding. We talked about finding volunteers. Then we sketched out a simple plan: restore the exterior this year and the interior next year.

Our goal this year was to be done in time for the motor tour. To reach it, we decided to work every Saturday, starting in April. This must have made the gods of showers and cold weather smile. They rained us out our first Saturday. But we found a way to get something done on all the rest.

Our first step was the easiest, but also the most suspenseful — removing the vinyl siding. Fortunately, the original wood siding underneath was in remarkably good shape. Even though the station didn't have guttering for at least its first 11 years, there was virtually no water damage. Ditto for termites. We had to replace only 120 feet.

The problem was finding the replacement siding. It was a pine tongue-in-groove called Dutch lap with a distinctive scallop along the tongue side. John Murphy of Pawnee helped me check for it at several area lumberyards. No luck. A couple said they could mill it, but for \$4 a foot. Nelson Grman found our solution. He drove by an old garage in Staunton that was about to be torn down. It had Dutch lap siding identical to Soulsby's. The owner let us have all we

Continued on page 14

needed so long as we hauled away all the rest.

Before this happened, though, Mike had put me in touch with Don Lee, a retired shop teacher and expert woodcrafter from Waggoner. Don had agreed to mill the replacement siding for the cost of the wood. He'd even bought a new attachment to achieve the Dutch lap scallop. Then Nelson struck gold and I had to tell Don plans had changed. He responded by taking charge of fixing all the doors and windows instead — including their sills, frames and trim. We were able to save all original doors and windows. To meet National Register standards, however, we did replace the aluminum storm door at the front of the station. We used a pine door identical to the original four. Nelson had found it on his area travels.

Dale Johnson of Mokena, a division manager for Ace Hardware, offered to do a spectrographic analysis of the station's paint. This showed that its original finish coat was aluminum. But two subsequent coats had been light tan. For our new finish coat, we chose the light tan. Around the base, we planned bands of Shell red and yellow to match the station's heyday look. Ace donated everything we needed.

First, though, we had to remove all the original lead-based paint. When scraping proved futile, we turned to heat guns. These were fun, but slow.

Everybody was working and everything was going our way — except the passage of time. Ollie Schwallenstecker lost a couple of Saturdays when he had a kidney stone removed. But toward the end he started coming in on weekdays. So did Don and Nelson. Mike set up shop lights and worked at night. He also recruited Charlie Dragovich, his father's cousin, to help with the painting. In all, about two dozen people worked on Soulsby's restoration. One happy Saturday we were even joined by the cheer-leading squad from Mount Olive High School. Together, we got the job done.

The Soulsby Station Society, which formed seven years ago, contributed \$1,000 toward the restoration. So did the Route 66 Association of Illinois. Nick Adam of the Ariston donated \$150 and Carl Johnson gave \$100. Other donations were smaller, but appreciated just as much. Mike bore the rest of the expenses himself. When the motor tour came through, we were ready. And along the way, we'd all made a lot of new friends.

By this time next year, we expect to have the inside done. Already we have a line on some display cases in northern Illinois. And a gentleman in Litchfield has offered to install an alarm system. It looks like we'll get this job done the same way we did the first one — together.

JACK HAMMER, THE GIANT

By John Weiss

Joliet now has its own Muffler Man giant. It is in the new baseball park known as Silver Cross Field in downtown Joliet. The entrance is on Jefferson Street across from the Union Train Station that is on Route 66 (at Route 53 north).

To see it without going into the ball park, drive around the park. On Van Buren you can see into the site. The giant is located at the same spot. The only trouble is, you will only be able to see his back side.

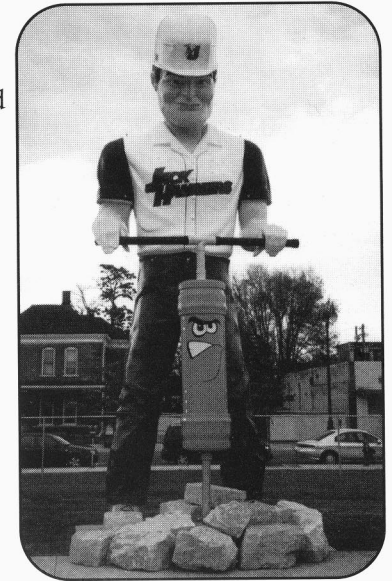
It is an interesting story how he ended up in Joliet. There were a lot of

newspaper stories and radio talk shows about our Bunyon giant possibly coming to Joliet. Then more stories when it was refused by some folks on the museum board of directors. The owner of the Joliet Jack Hammers baseball team was out of town when all of this was going on. When he returned and learned of the Bunyon giant, he immediately called us to try and obtain him. By then it was too late, Paul Bunyon was promised to Atlanta. He was so determined to get a giant of his own. He had one of his staff start locating giant owners. They started alphabetically at A. They tracked down all giants by states. When they finally got to M, Minnesota, they located someone willing to sell his giant.

He was purchased for \$10,000.00, and spent an additional \$2,000.00 to ship him to Joliet. He went to an auto body shop for restoration. His one arm was cut off and turned over. He now holds the handle of a rock jackhammer. When his team hits a home run, fog shoots out the handle.

This new mascot of Joliet is not the Paul Bunyon giant, but it is there because of him.

It is interesting to note that the Joliet Area Historical Museum thought the giant was not suitable for Joliet. Now, three blocks away, a new giant smiles at the Joliet baseball fans. One of the owners, Pete Ferro, says it is wonderful for the kids and an educational attraction. When I was there, families were having their photos taken at the base of Mr. Jack Hammer, the Silver Cross Baseball Field giant. **WELCOME TO JOLIET, JACK!**



**Jack Hammer
Mascot of the Joliet
Jackhammers**

PRESERVATION UPDATES

By John Weiss, Preservation Chairman

DONATIONS TO PRESERVATION

Cathie Stevanovich and Marty Blitstein donated substantial funds for the streetcar floor. This was done in memory of Cathie's son. Tom Perkins once again donated his time, talent and tools to help with the installation.

Another cash donation was received from John Ruh. He is a constant supporter of our preservation projects.

Lou Vandiver has been our biggest and most consistent donor. She is always furnishing items to be raffled or auctioned off. Two of her donations earned \$390.00 at the auction held at the Motor Tour Banquet. In addition she has furnished signs, pillows, a vest, shirts, jewelry and much, much more. Thank you, Lou, for your continued generosity and support!

Dale Anderson personally donated all the Ace paints and primer needed to refinish the Bunyon giant.

Carl Johnson provided a nice cash donation to be applied to the Save the Giant campaign.

A nice letter and a very generous check was received from Sue Waldmire of the Cozy Dog. She requested it be used exclusively for preservation.

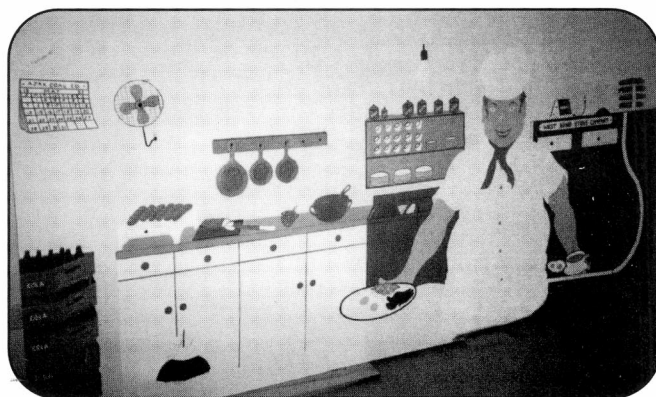
We sincerely thank all who do what they can to help preserve Route 66.

the tongue in cheek impression of looking into the long gone kitchen.

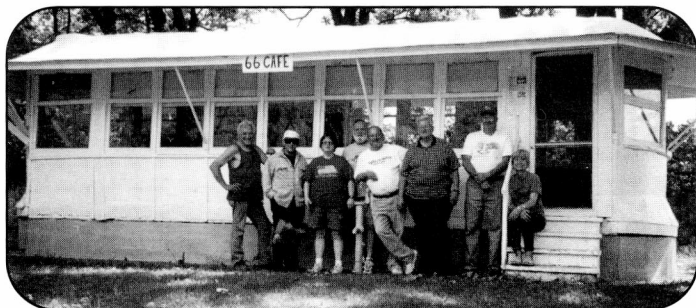
The floor is over 100 years old. So a new one was added on top of the old floor just to play it safe. The funds for the materials were donated by Cathie Stevanovich and Marty Blitstein in memory of Cathie's son. John Ruh again sent funds to also be used for the streetcar.

This is the only streetcar/diner renovation anywhere on Route 66. Please stop and see this interesting, historical icon.

It is located behind the Hall of Fame Riviera Restaurant in Gardner right on Route 66 (Route 53). And don't forget to ring the original bell!



Streetcar Mural painted by Ted Giovanazzi



Preservation Committee Workers at the Streetcar Diner

STREETCAR

The work is progressing nicely. The newest projects have made some dramatic changes. At one time, when it was a diner on Route 66, it had a small room attached to it. This functioned as a kitchen. Instead of adding on a room, preservation member, Ted Giovanazzi, had an idea. He painted a whimsical mural where the original kitchen pass through was located. It now gives

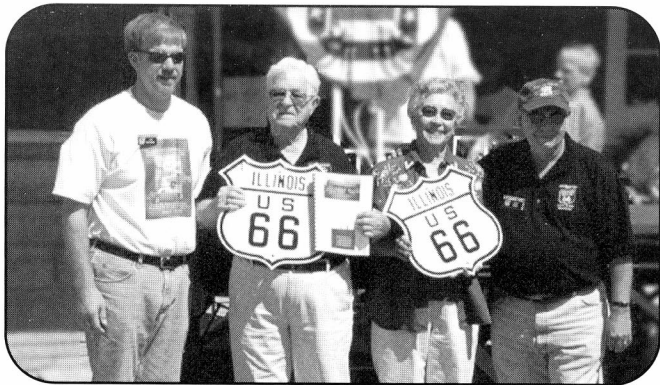
PIG HIP RESTORATION - PART TWO

On April 19, another 24 volunteers arrived at the Pig Hip in Broadwell. We were there to finish the work that began on March 15. Several new faces joined in. Work began immediately. Our goal was to make the entire front section ready for the Motor Tour and tourist season.

This time we completely repaired the leaking roof and painted the previously primed outside walls and windows. (Note: Ernie said the outside walls had not been painted since 1947.) It now looks like new. Inside, the new walls were perfortaped and other areas and windows were painted. The sign outside was restored and many, many minor jobs were accomplished.

There is still more work to be done, but it is now ready to greet tourists.

Our president, Jeff La Follette, wrote a grant request for the Pig Hip. It contains the fact that volunteer labor has exceeded 300 hours so far.



Ernie & Frances Edwards receiving Route 66 Shields

This dedication to preservation should have a strong impact on whether the grant is awarded.

On June 8, the annual Route 66 Motor Tour stopped at the Pig Hip. It was obvious that folks were impressed. Many displays are on exhibit for you to enjoy.

When you do stop at the reborn Pig Hip, take a look at the poster under the wall air conditioner. It contains a collage of photos of the volunteers who worked to make it all possible.

I proudly present a list of those who worked on the April 19 date. They include: Bob Borowiak, Larry Boyd, Lynn Martinek, Bill Gwodz, Connie Miller, John Weiss, Kathy Miller, Rose Vargo, Marilyn Giovanazzi, Randy Smith, Marty Bilecki, Patty Kuhn and her 2 daughters, Andy Hari, Joe Martinek, Jeff La Follette, Bob Killacky, Lynn Bagdon, Lenore Weiss, Lou Vargo, Ted Giovanazzi, Larry Scinto and Geri Bilecki.

It is interesting to note that most of these volunteers traveled over 100 miles to participate.

Another thank you, also, to Theresa Usherwood of Logan County Tourism. She furnished funds to purchase food that was prepared by the Edwards family, and the 7-Up company in Iowa for the soda.

HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT ON ROUTE 66

The Lady of the Highway Shrine located south of Waggoner needed a little sprucing up. The white wash on the concrete fencing was a bit faded and peeling.

At the last preservation meeting I asked for a volunteer to take care of this worthwhile project. Immediately two hands shot up. Larry Scinto and Lou Vargo said they would drive the

160 miles to the shrine and spruce it up.

On July 2nd, they left early to work on this project. They returned late that evening, and reported the mission was accomplished. But they did say it was 100 degrees that day and terribly humid.

They also said, "It took less time to get back because both of us lost at least 20 pounds!"

It is because of the fabulous dedication of folks like Lou and Larry that we in Illinois have so much to be proud of. Do you realize how much more you and others enjoy the Route 66 experience because of the preservation projects occurring all along our piece of the Mother Road in Illinois?

So, if you see a dirty, sweaty, haggard looking individual or two, who is covered in paint on Route 66, do not ignore them. They are probably not tramps, nor are they up to no good; they are probably preservation volunteers out trying to save a piece of Americana.



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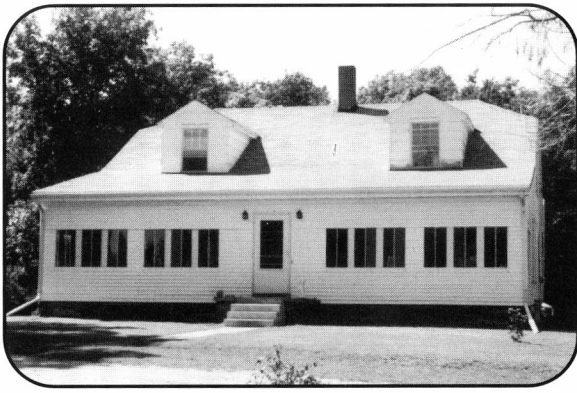
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I'LL BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW!

I SURE DIDN'T!

By Jeff La Follette



**The former Hilltop Restaurant
near Lexington**

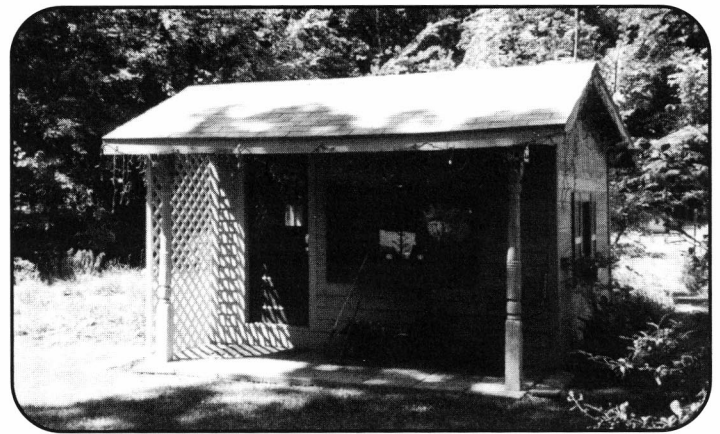
On a warm June day while traveling with the Hampton Inn Route 66 Caravan to the Preservation Meeting in Dwight, I had the opportunity to show our guests Jim Conkle, Guy Randall, and Kevin Hansel some of our Illinois Route 66 attractions.

We stopped to eat a late lunch at the Filling Station Restaurant in the town of Lexington, where Jim was going to drive his motor home on Memory Lane. While eating lunch with McLean County Board Representative Fran Turgeon, the talk got into Route 66 sites in Lexington. A gentleman in a corner booth told us of an old tourist cabin that was once on the property of an old restaurant just off of the four-lane alignment. Tourist Cabins!...That piqued mine, and especially Kevin's interest since he was here from California and was hoping to see as many Illinois sites as possible. So while the rest of the group took the ride on Memory Lane, we went to see this old cabin.

The gentleman, a local man named John Lindenbaum who has lived in the Lexington area all of his 72 years, drove us to the cabin which is currently on his property. The cabin was one of three that used to sit on the site of the former Hilltop Restaurant. This grand structure is now a two story home, but the cabin is basically the same, a small 12 by 12 foot cabin just big enough for a bed and a small area to wash up. The Hilltop Restaurant was owned by Chuck and Carolyn Goliday and the couple operated the business from 1938 to 1952. Between the former restaurant and Mr. Lindenbaum's home if you look closely to the left in the trees, you'll see the remnants of an old sign pole and frame, possibly the billboard sign for the Hilltop. Mr. Lindenbaum got possession of one of the old cabins, and kept the outside pretty much intact except for the addition of some lattice and did a nice job on the inside restoring the cabin. The cabin is currently a playhouse for his grandchildren. He told us the cabins were rented for \$1.75 per night and were only used in the spring, summer, and early fall as they had no heat source available. One other point of interest was when he showed us the foundation where upon one of the cabins had sat, just a 12 by 12 square of cinder blocks. I took photos of these, but did not print them in this article because it was even hard to see them on the

photo as they are buried too deep in the ground and you can barely see the top of the block.

To get to the old Hilltop Restaurant and cabin, cross west over the four-lane alignment of 66 and go past the Lexington neon sign. Turn left at the frontage road and go south. Go down about a quarter mile, and on your right will be the former Hilltop Restaurant. The cabin is on private property, so please respect Mr. Lindenbaum's privacy and ask permission to see the cabin for yourself. I'm sure he'll be glad to show it to you and tell you a story or two about it. This is a neat preservation story as well. Mr. Lindenbaum has preserved a treasure of the road, which I sure didn't know existed, and I wonder, how many of you outside of Lexington and McLean County know it did? Who knows how many other "roadside treasures" you might uncover just by spending some time in a roadside eatery talking Route 66 with the locals. That's what makes the Route 66 experience so great. You always seem to find something new every time you travel the "Mother Road"!



Old Roadside Tourist Cabin near Lexington



Entering the Towanda Route 66 Murals

rang. It was the new Hall of Fame inductees, the Fassero family. We had talked to Art Fassero a week earlier and he and his wife, Emma, were undecided if they could attend the ceremony. His older brother, Anton, age 92, had been in a three car collision about a month earlier. He was still in the hospital, although making excellent progress. Art asked if I could receive their award for them. I suggested that maybe one of their children might like to represent the family. A couple of days later Art called to share that their daughter would come from Kansas City, Missouri and represent the family. Well, Marilee and Mike Collins, and Art and Emma had checked in and wished to meet us before the banquet. Thanks to Bud and Lou we had the two extra seats needed at the Banquet.

The Fassero family is very private and unassuming. Marilee remarked how she and her sister, as well as the other members of her generation, had received the fruits of their parents' labor. Her grandfather, Ben, and his four boys, Anton, John, Elvio and Arthur worked at least six and a half days in the business every week and seldom took vacations. In the past week she was surprised when her father, Art, began to be more open and share more of the family history with her. The Fassero family was most humbled by receiving their "Hall of Fame" award.

Our compliments to Johnny and Kathy Miller, Marty Blitstein, Cathie Stevanovich, Marilyn and Durelle Pritchard on arranging the dinner and dining hall. It is unanimous that the food, service and

Continued on page 20

PONTIAC RESIDENTS GETTING THEIR KICKS ON ROUTE 66

By Marilyn Pritchard

In the month of April, the residents and staff at Evenglow Lodge in Pontiac, Illinois had Adventures Month. We had speakers each week as listed by the following: April 3- Early history of the Pontiac Trail and Route 66 Highway by Jim Kenney of Streator. April 15- Students' Projects on Route 66 by Don Cavallini of Lexington. April 23- Jones' Family history and the Automobile by Jim Jones of Pontiac. April 29- U.S. Postmarks on Route 66 by Dick Thompson of Pontiac. May 1- The Grand Finale Party with root beer floats.

Each floor represented a state and presented the history of their state plus wore their paper sign to win the popular attendance award. An 85 year old school teacher portrayed Abraham Lincoln, and read the poem of Abraham Lincoln walks at midnight and the Gettysburg Address. Various songs such as "Illinois", "Oklahoma", "Yellow Rose of Texas", and "California, Here I Come" were sung.

The program was performed by fifteen residents from the ages of 80 to 98 years of age plus fifteen staff members. This was planned to be on the second floor health center, but with increased enthusiasm, the program was moved to the basement. The office personnel could not believe the reminiscing the residents were discussing about Route 66. Marilyn Pritchard, activity assistant, commented that Route 66 was the main highway they traveled in their younger days. Getting your Kicks on Route 66 lasted for days at Evenglow Lodge. The community was invited by newspaper and radio.

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VASILE STOICA

CRUISIN 66!

*By Kathleen J. Miller
aka The Mother Road Widow*

On May 28, 2003 Vasile Stoica, a Guinness World Record holder and the first Romanian to travel around the world by manual wheelchair, became the first paraplegic to travel Route 66 from Los Angeles to Chicago, journeying completely on his own and powered only by his hands in 66 days.

He undertook this 66-day feat to raise funds for disability issues in his home country, as well as for the Association for the Physically Disabled of Lugoj in Romania. They recently lost the central headquarters and one of its members to a fire. If you wish to donate to Vasile's cause you can find the information on his website at:

<http://www.angelfire.com/on4/66/66d.htm>

At the end of May a reporter called my home and interviewed me about Vasile for an article in the Joliet Herald Times. I told her how my husband Johnny "Moo Moo" Miller made contact with Vasile and helped to arrange rooms for him as he trekked his way up Route 66 in Illinois.

Memorial Day weekend Vasile reached Wilmington, Illinois. Arrangements were made to meet him at the Launching Pad Drive-In. As we waited we were joined by Marge Hettwer, another Route 66 Association of Illinois member. Marge had spent most of the day with Vasile as he made his way north. A small group gathered to welcome Vasile. Memorial Day, Johnny headed towards Wilmington to find Vasile sitting on the side of the road repairing a tire for his wheelchair. Mr. Independent (Vasile) allowed nobody to help. Vasile had already changed these tires more than 8 times on this journey. When the tire was repaired, Johnny led the way for Vasile, occasionally driving ahead to get water.

They reached Romeoville, Illinois where Johnny secured lodging for Vasile. We had plans to meet Vasile for dinner later that evening where we would be joined by Lynn "LuLu" Bagdon, Barb Nicholson of the Route 66 Association of Illinois and Fred Zander from the Kansas Association. Vasile called as we were



Celebrating with Vasile at the end of his journey

on our way to meet him. I swear he is tireless. Vasile was already at the OTB Bar and Restaurant waiting for us. We shared food, imbibed in spirits and celebrated while we got to know this amazing young man. We had FUN!

Vasile invited us all to join him at Buckingham Fountain in Chicago to end his journey. It was a horrible day, raining and chilly. The effervescent Bilecki's in their 1957 Chevy Sedan were there to greet Vasile, and were joined by Dave Clark and his wife Carol, LuLu, myself, Vasile's wife Sarah, his brother-in-law, and friends. The weather didn't dampen the celebration. We hailed this incredible young man and realized his accomplishment is an inspiration to all.

Later on at the official party to celebrate Vasile's accomplishment he told me he wants to wheel his way from California to South America! IMAGINE? I told him there are no roads only mountains, rain forests, and wild animals. He said to me in his Romanian

accent, "Kath, you only make me want to do it more!"

**GO
VASILE
GO!**



John and Kathy Miller with Vasile Stoica

set-up were the greatest ever. Hall of Fame chairman, Tom Teague, again hosted the awards ceremony. Congratulations to Andy Granatelli, Fassero Oil Company, Union Miners Cemetery and the Wishing Well Motel on receiving their most deserving awards from the 2003 Route 66 Association of Illinois "Hall of Fame". Many wonderful door prizes were handed out. A beautiful "Route 66" quilt sewn and donated by Judy Schwallenstecker was raffled off and won by Nelson Grman, who had previously accepted the "Hall of Fame" award for the Mt. Olive Union Miners cemetery. Lou and Bud Vandiver donated a complete set of Association newsletters as well as a complete set of association Motor Tour passport books. They were auctioned off and proceeds earmarked for future preservation projects.

Sunday morning dawned, windy and cool. A rain shower had passed over the motel and Motor Tour vehicles were still wet when we loaded our luggage back in the Mustang. This gave me a chance to wipe off our Mustang and clean the windows. We had raised the top for the overnight stay and decided to travel a while with it still up. We bypassed both the I-55 Route 66 display at the Funks Grove rest area as well as the Sugar Maple forest and country church at the grove. A lot of Motor Tour roadies were already at the "Dixie", home of the Route 66 Association of Illinois, "Hall of Fame".

C.J. and Chuck Beeler, Jeff & Annette La Follette, Marty Blitstein, Cathie Stevanovich, Johnny and Kathy Miller were greeting everyone at the Passport table with stickers and fresh donuts. Martin and Becky Lathrop had left their passports on the counter in the "Dixie" while shopping. Judy happened by and the clerk gave them to her to find out who had lost them. Later at the "Pig Hip" Judy was asking if anyone had



A Mount Olive Welcome

lost their passports, when Marty reclaimed them. Becky also had misplaced their camera and was asking if anyone had found it. It later turned up in their Mustang between the console and a seat. Good luck, for Martin and Becky.

Atlanta is an enthusiastic Route 66 icon. Two of the smallest towns we pass through, Atlanta and Hamel never fail to welcome and greet us as we pass. Today was no different. Their one block business district is being decorated with authentic building advertising art by the "Wall Dog Paint Jam" group of traveling artists. We enjoyed the latest paintings as well as Atlanta's old favorites, the J.H Hawes elevator, the Clock Tower, park and city library. Good Job, Atlanta!

We hustled the double nickel from Atlanta to Broadwell to make sure to get to the "Pig Hip" and help give Ernie and Francis Edwards a special celebration ceremony for the opening of their historic restaurant "museum". A large crowd of roadies were on hand for the awarding of two new "Route 66" shield signs for display there. President Jeff made the presentation for the Association.

We again hustled the double nickel to South Sixth Street in Springfield, home of the Hall of Fame "Cozy Drive-In". By now the sun was shining warm and bright. We found an open space right in front of the door. We were warmly greeted by Bob Waldmire, a fellow Mustang fancier. Down came the Mustang's top for the rest of the tour. While I was dropping the top, Judy was standing in line for our Cozy Dogs. Smear with mustard, a Cozy Dog sure hits the spot.

Just then Sgt. Jung pulled up in front with the 1951 Ford State Police Cruiser. I walked over and asked how the 1951 Ford was running. He smiled and remarked that she was performing beautifully. He remarked that he had just made a stop and issued a



Ernie Edwards Greeting Guests at Pig Hip

LATEST ON THE DIXIE TRUCKERS' HOME AND THE ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS HALL OF FAME

By Jeff La Follette

It is with much sadness to report that the Dixie Truckers' Home has been sold by owners Chuck and C.J. Beeler to Phoenix Financial LLC from Providence, RI. After a successful 75 year run, an era has come to an end. The business was started in 1928 by C.J.'s father and grandfather, John Geske and J.P. Walters, respectively. Only one day since then has the business been closed, and that was in 1965, when a fire struck the facility. But the day after, the place was open and humming again. Countless gallons of gasoline, diesel fuel, and oil were sold over those 75 years, not to mention the number of meals served as well. Chuck and C.J. took over the operation in 1982. When the Route 66 Association of Illinois was formed in 1989 and the idea of a Hall of Fame to honor those who made their livelihood on Route 66 in Illinois was conceived, Chuck and C.J. offered to house the Hall of Fame at their place of business not charging the Association for rental of the space for thirteen plus years. This was a gentleman's agreement between the Beeler's and the Association — just like in the old days when a handshake and a man's word were good enough to close a deal.

At the Association's last board meeting on July 27, 2003, the board gave approval to Association President Jeff La Follette, Hall of Fame Director Tom Teague, and Chuck and C.J. Beeler to work with the new owners to try to keep the Hall of Fame where it is currently. The situation at the Dixie is this: The fuel facility and store will be leased out to one party; the restaurant will be leased out to another party; but it is unclear at this time to whom the hallway will be leased since it is considered a "common area". That is yet to be determined. Jeff has spoken with attorneys for Phoenix Financial, and Tom and Jeff have spoken to Hal Panciera who is the principal of the new ownership taking over. Tom has spoken in the past with Mr. Panciera, most recently in 2001. In talks with Mr. Panciera of Phoenix Financial, he has expressed a desire to keep the Hall of Fame where it is. Jeff and Tom are planning a meeting with Mr. Panciera and the new owners of the Dixie in August to discuss the future of the Hall of Fame at the Dixie. A report to the board will be presented at the next Route 66 Association of Illinois board meeting on October 19, 2003 in Bloomington. Several places along Route 66 in

Illinois have offered to house the Hall of Fame, such as Joliet, Bloomington, Atlanta, and the recently opened Pig-Hip Museum in Broadwell. So there is no reason to ever think the Hall of Fame would be homeless.

We cannot begin to thank Chuck and C.J. Beeler enough for the sacrifices they have made over the years to keep their business thriving — from the heyday of Route 66 to its decommissioning in 1977 when I-55 became the main north-south route; to the present with the I-55 trucker stopping in for fuel and food; to the new traveler, the "Route 66 Roadie" stopping to buy gas, eat dinner, visit the Hall of Fame and marvel at the business that has been there for 75 years. We will miss their enthusiasm and smiling faces that greeted us on so many motor tours, and how they so graciously contributed a section of their building to house the Hall of Fame. They have unselfishly been there for the Association, the trucker, the roadie and anyone else who passed through their doors. Route 66 is ever changing, and some say change is good while others say that change is not. We must keep in mind that every time one travels on Route 66, it is always evolving and changing, and one sees something new whenever he travels. One thing that will never change is our feelings, Chuck and C.J. We love you and thank you for your support of Route 66, the Association and most of all the Hall of Fame. May God bless you both, and don't ever forget your "family" on Route 66 — not only in Illinois, but all the way to California.



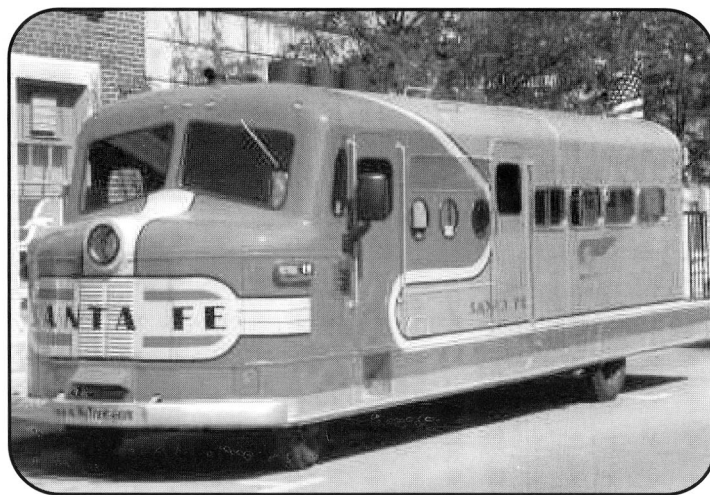
Dixie Truckers' Home Sign

warning on the north side of Springfield. Sgt. Jung had just stopped and picked up a replacement flag for the cruisers window to replace the one that broke north of Pontiac. A young fellow sped out in front of the cruiser and cut him off. Sgt. Jung threw on the cherry and pulled the young fellow over. Can you imagine the surprise of being pulled over by a 1951 Ford Police Cruiser? Sgt. Jung admonished the driver and explained that this was an operational vehicle and he could cite the driver for a moving vehicle infraction. I'll bet the good Sergeant chuckled to himself as he downed a couple of Cozy Dogs.

We again hustled the double nickel to Exit 82 to view the damaged Lincoln covered wagon there. A micro burst of wind that damaged the roof of the western boot store there, also damaged the covered wagon. A couple of quick pics and off to the double nickel again. We stopped at the "Our Lady of the Highways" shrine near exit 63 to get another pic.

Then off to the 1998 "Hall of Fame" Skyview Route 66 Drive-In theatre in Litchfield. There, Montgomery County board member, Tonya Flannery and her helpers were arranging Motor Tour vehicles in a giant "66" for an aerial photograph of the tour. Judy and I were joined by our daughter, Pamela Monetti, our grandson and his friend. Grandson, Mike Monetti, and his friend, Timmy Pickerell, would travel with us for the rest of the tour. Mike was among the many helpers working on the restoration of the Soulsby Shell gas station in Mt. Olive. Rich and Mary Lou Showalter, from Staunton also were present for the picture. Absolutely this stop was one of the highlights of this year's tour.

Tonya Flannery had another treat awaiting us in



Charles Tiemann's Santa Fe Super Chief

downtown Litchfield. She had many helpers there directing traffic and organizing a car show and a free lunch for us at Litchfield library square. More than a hundred classic and custom vehicles lined both sides of State Street. We cruised between row after row of beautiful bright and shiny vehicles. Their owners were standing beside the cars and cheering us into Litchfield. This was one of the greatest welcomes I can remember. Tonya was responsible for organizing Litchfield's Sesquicentennial celebration this year. Happy 150th Birthday Litchfield!! Good Job, Tonya!!!

I'm proud to report that Mt. Olive had four Route 66 events on this year's tour. Sheri Albrecht of the Macoupin County Economic Development Office, and her committee have been awarded a \$24,000.00 grant to prepare plans for the development of a bicycle trail on the 10 mile segment of unused four lane old Route 66

Continued on page 24

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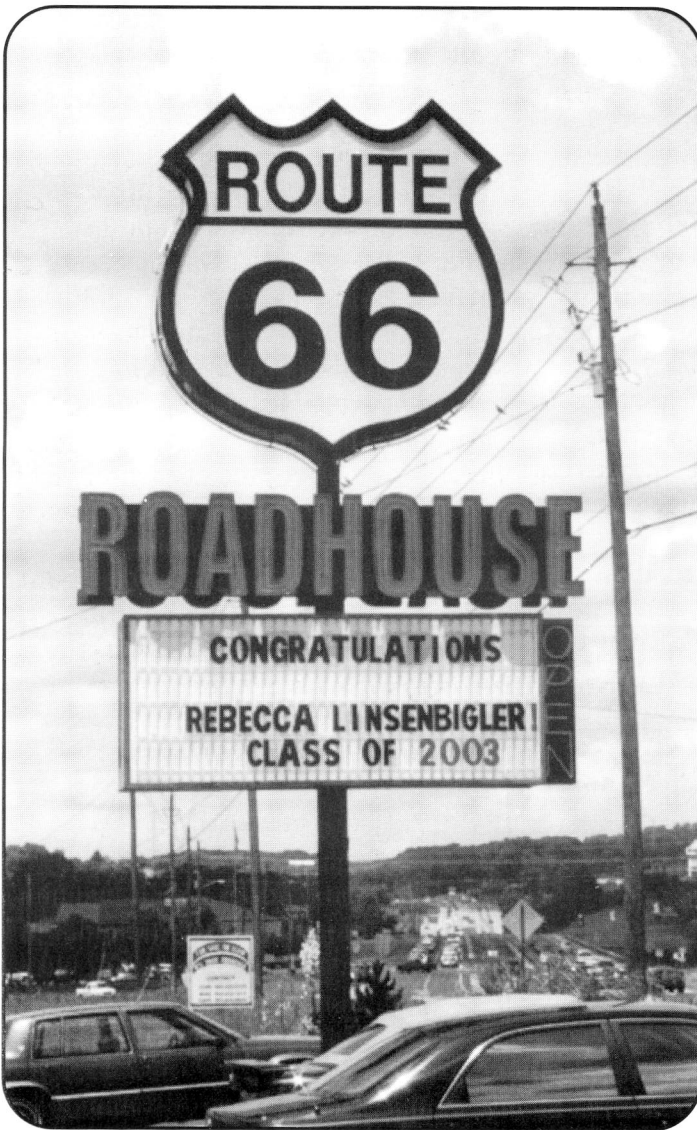
Membership runs May 1 - April 30

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

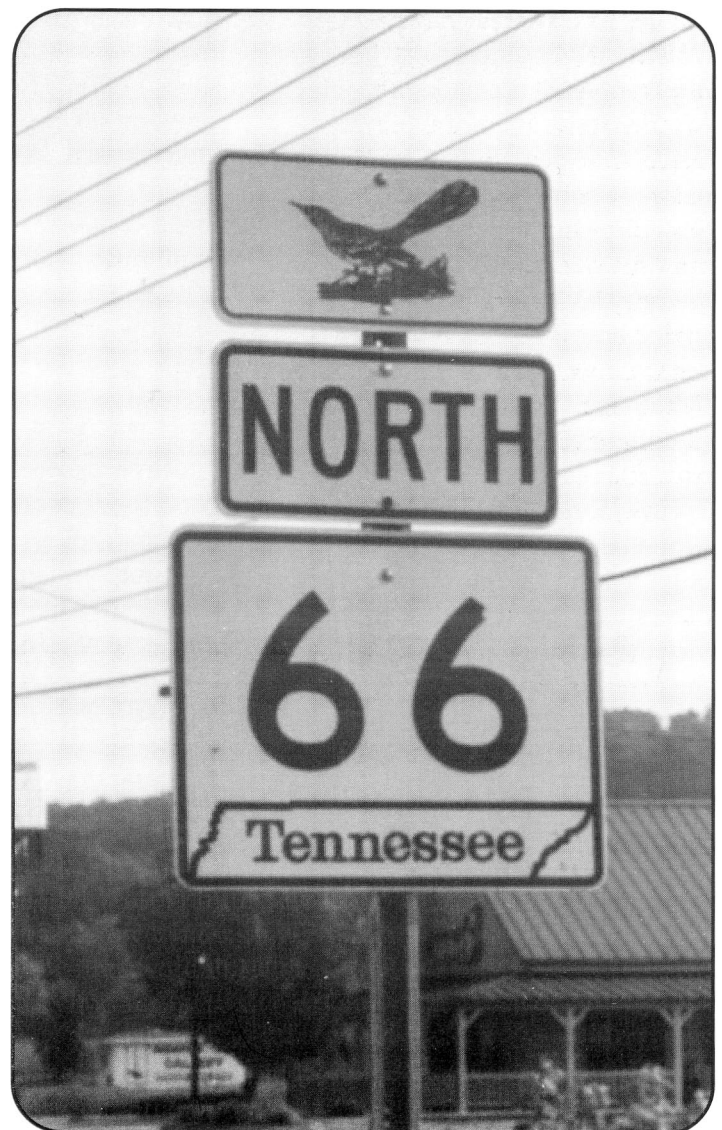
WHERE IN THE WORLD?

By Jeff La Follette

I wanted to use these pictures like our previous newsletter editor Randy Smith used to do, and ask our readers where this 66 spot is. OK...OK it is not a spot on our beloved Route 66 as indicated by the Tennessee State Route 66 sign. However, upon departing Knoxville, Tennessee after a successful two days at the ABC National Bowling Tournament, Annette and I along with her parents, Chuck and Marge Gipson, decided to travel to the Great Smoky Mountains and visit Pigeon Forge and Gatlinburg, Tennessee. I found State Route 66 on the Tennessee map and decided to drive it since it was a somewhat direct route to the Great Smokies. That is where I discovered the Route 66 Roadhouse, with a shield sign just like the ones we used to see on the road or still do on the historic brown signs. I thought our readers would get a kick out of seeing that Route 66 is an American icon, not limited to our eight state corridor. Please continue to send in your 66 sightings — wherever in the world they may be.



Route 66 Roadhouse in Tennessee



Tennessee State Route 66 Sign

between Mt. Olive and Litchfield. At the west side of Mt. Olive we passed the 2003 "Hall of Fame" Union Miners cemetery. It's the only private, Miner owned cemetery anywhere. In earlier times, some cemeteries refused to accept the bodies of immigrant miners for burial. Many stopped to view the solemn and impressive monument to the many coal miners who lost their lives upholding their quest to improve safety and working conditions in all coal mines.

Next Mt. Olive welcomed roadies to visit their newly constructed city library. Although not completely finished, a display of Mother Jones memorabilia was available to see while getting your passport book stamped. Main Street in Mt. Olive was lined with hundreds of people in lawn chairs to view the Motor Tour.

The best icon of Mt. Olive was yet to come. Tom Teague, Mike Dragovich, Nelson Grman, Charlie (Dundee) Dragovich, Don Lee, Emily Priddy, Ron Warnick, Tom Spears, Tom Gajewski, Mike Monetti, Gene Peters, the Mt. Olive High School cheerleaders and many others have spent the last four months planning and renovating the exterior of the 1990 "Hall of Fame" Soulsby Shell Gas Station. Old pics of the station beginning when it was built in 1926 to today's date were found and studied. Owner Mike Dragovich liked the Shell station decor of the 50's. Everyone agreed the fresh paint and cleanup of the site are a great improvement. It's hoped that in the future the Soulsby Shell station can be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

We chose not to stop at the Country Classic Cars lot and continued to Henry's Rabbit Ranch



Sargeant Dave Jung and his 1951 Ford Police Cruiser

Museum and roadside Campbell's 66 Express display. 1996 "Hall of Fame" Wilton Rinkel was greeting everyone with tales of Route 66 in Madison County. Rich was stamping passports and Linda was showing off their rabbit collection and visiting with old and new friends. It was off to the 2001 "Hall of Fame" DeCamp Junction roadhouse. Loren Kovaly and Pat Moultrie were greeting roadies. We took the occasion to have a "cool one". For the best pizza you've ever eaten, their sausage pizza is tops. The Italian salad & cheese muffin is excellent also. Stop by for good food, cool refreshments and a fun time.

Hamel was greeting roadies with cold water bottles with a neat insulated sock and belt attachment. Hamel always greets us when we come through if on a planned stop or just passing through. They just won't let you get through without a greeting and a treat. South of Hamel on the double nickel we stopped at the southbound Route 66 rest area. This rest area and the one across I-55 are decorated with Route 66 artwork.

We tried to gather as many roadies together a couple of miles short of the Cahokia Mounds State historic site. The idea was to have Sgt. Jung and Sgt. Chick lead us into the Mounds site. The good

Sargeants had contacted several local St. Louis TV stations and had been promised coverage if everything else in the area was quiet. We followed the classic 1951 Ford State Police cruiser into the Mounds, but no TV crews were available. Carla and the Cahokia Mounds crew welcomed us to the site.

The museum has an awesome display of Native

American life in an earlier time. We've been informed that the Cahokia Mounds site is the oldest recorded settlement on Route 66. The movie was exceptional and the site should be visited whenever it can be planned.

After visiting the Mounds, we followed our planning and stopped at Ramon's Restaurant for dinner and refreshments. It was nice to sit, relax, eat and visit with our Motor Tour comrades. Our table was graced by many old friends and we met a new couple heading for Australia. What a way to finish the best Motor Tour ever. The Mustang ran perfectly as we motored up Route 66 on the way home. Wait until next year. It'll be better than ever.

Adios Amigos



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Cookbook

FALL 2003

▼ SPEAKING IN PLATES

Two license plates were submitted for this issue. The first one is from Bernard and Debby Birger who own Debby's Route 66 Frozen Custard, a proud Association business member on old Route 66 near Granite City. This plate reminds Bernard that this is Debby's car and he has to ask her permission to drive it. If you are down in the Mitchell/Granite City area, by all means, stop in and have a frozen custard treat. They are cool, creamy and really great.

Our second submission is from 2003 Hall of Famer Zora Vidas from the Wishing Well Motel. Zora is proud to let everyone know that she is the owner of the famous Wishing Well, and it is a great way to advertise the motel, too.

Thanks to both businesses for your submissions. Please keep those plates coming in. I have a couple already mailed to me for the winter edition.

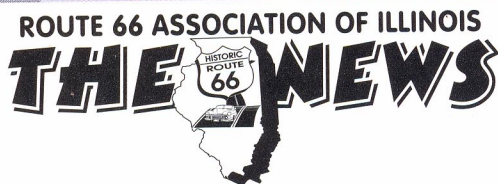


Debby's Route 66 Frozen Custard Plate



Zora Vida's Wishing Well 66 Plate

ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS



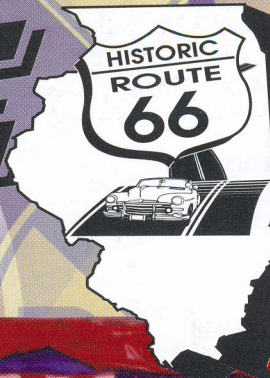
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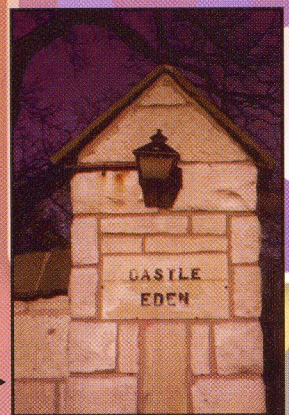
CONGRATULATIONS JEFF MEYER
2003 STEINBECK AWARD WINNER

REDISCOVERING
IT
A SIDEWALK
HIGHWAY



2004
MOTOR TOUR PLATES

THE CASTLE
ON ROUTE 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, educate 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.

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and James R. Jones

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

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Publication Information: The Association publishes The 66 News in March, June, September and 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.

Photo Credits this issue:

John Weiss, Ray Rueck, Annette LaFollette,
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Magazine designed by

Creative Images Center, Geneseo, IL

EX-OFFICIO BOARD MEMBERS APPOINTED

By Jeff LaFollette

At the October Board Meeting in Normal, Illinois, Association President Jeff LaFollette brought his proposal to the board for appointing ex-officio board members to the Route 66 Association. The four selected were Tom Teague, John & Lenore Weiss and Jeff Meyer. "This is an important way for us to honor our four John Steinbeck inductees," Association President Jeff LaFollette pointed out. The board voted unanimously to accept the proposal. These are the first ex-officio board members appointed in the history of the Route 66 Association of Illinois

Ex-Officio board members are defined in the by-laws as follows: "An Association member whose record of service and dedication to Route 66 and to the Association is exemplary, but who cannot or chooses not to assume the full responsibilities of regular board membership. Such an appointment shall be honorary and shall be for the lifetime of the appointee, but shall not be a voting position."

RT 66 HALL OF FAME SEEKS NOMINATIONS

Nominations of new members to the Route 66 Hall of Fame are now welcome. Please submit them by February 28 to:

Attn: Hall of Fame, Route 66 Association of Illinois,
2743 Veterans Parkway, #166, Springfield, IL 62704.

This year nominations may be also sent by e-mail to kixonrte66@hotmail.com or to Kathleen708@hotmail.com. Put Hall of Fame in the subject line of the e-mail. Induction ceremonies will take place June 5 in Springfield at the Crowne Plaza Hotel as part of the Association's Motor Tour honoring the 78th anniversary of Route 66.

The Illinois Hall of Fame, located at Dixie Truckers Home in McLean, remains the most visited attraction on all of Route 66. It honors people and businesses whose careers or experiences along the road helped give it such special flavor in this state. Its 56 members to date include truck drivers, waitresses, farmers, a newspaper editor, several mom-and-pop businesses, a movie palace, a drive in theater and the Chain of Rocks Bridge.

Anyone can submit a nomination. It should include a short, but fact-packed essay about the nominee's history along the highway. Photos, news clips and other memorabilia are welcome, but not required. A panel of historians and Hall of Fame members will judge nominations.

The honor of winning a John Steinbeck award is showered only upon a select few, and the fact that Illinois has four out of the seven winners so far is remarkable. These four individuals have indeed shown exemplary service and dedication to Route 66. Their appointment as ex-officio board members to the Route 66 Association of Illinois is one more way to express our appreciation for their hard work and dedication to Route 66. Congratulations Tom, John, Lenore and Jeff!

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ROUTE 66

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Michael Taylor, *Program Manager*
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E-Mail: michael_taylor@nps.gov

JEFF MEYER WINS JOHN STEINBECK AWARD

By Jeff LaFollette

Congratulations go to Jeff Meyer of Rolling Meadows, Illinois, who won the coveted John Steinbeck Award at the International Route 66 Festival in Springfield. The ceremony was conducted on September 26, 2003 at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Springfield.

Jeff becomes the fourth person from Illinois to win the award. Illinois leads the way with four winners, followed by Oklahoma with two, and Arizona with one. Previous winners of the award are Michael Wallis of Oklahoma, Tom Teague of Illinois, Angel Delgadillo of Arizona, Jim Ross of Oklahoma and John & Lenore Weiss of Illinois.

I have always considered Jeff to be an ambassador of Route 66 because of his many frequent travels west and visits to the people along the road. In the presentation given by Mary Lou Knudsen of the National Historic Route 66 Federation she also spoke of Jeff being an ambassador of Route 66.



L - R: Tom Teague, Jim Ross, John Weiss, Lenore Weiss, Michael Wallis and Jeff Meyer with award.

Jeff is one of the founders of the Route 66 Association of Illinois and served as its first vice-president. Jeff has been an integral part of the organization since its formation, and his award is well deserved. Congratulations again Jeff for all you do for the Mother Road!

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Jeff LaFollette, President, Route 66 Association of Illinois

It's been a while since I last sat down and wrote one of these columns to our membership. So I thought that with the cold winds of winter upon us that now would be a great time to update you on happenings along Route 66 here in Illinois. Many changes are going to take place in the next year with the association. I believe that they will all be positive changes. No one likes change, but change is a constant in order to keep an organization strong and vibrant.

In 2003, the Association reached an important milestone as it crossed the 1,000 member mark. Officially as of the October board meeting, our membership total stood at 1,021. We are by far the largest association in terms of membership. My thanks go out to all of you because without your support, and I've written this many times over, we cannot do the things we do for Route 66 without you. Also in 2003 I was honored to be elected to another term as your president. I thank you all for your support. The notes and letters I receive from some of you telling me to keep up the good work and offering support keep me going. Little things like this do a lot for one's confidence.

As we surge forward into 2004, please note that the Association is a teenager now. We are turning fifteen this year. Route 66 will turn 78 this year. So we are fifteen years strong into the revival of Route 66.

There will be a new, grand museum opening in Pontiac this summer, hopefully in time for the motor tour. This museum was the old fire station in the heart of Pontiac, and only a block off the original route through the city. The city of Pontiac and the Association are working together to fill this museum and make it a new successful site to see on Route 66 in Illinois

Speaking of the motor tour, the tour takes a new twist in 2004. Because of the Tulsa Route 66 Festival being conducted on our normal motor tour weekend, the tour has been moved back a week to be from June 4-6, 2004. New dates, new stops, same great tour! This is only a temporary change in dates. In 2005, we will return the tour to its traditional date.

Preservation has a new look, too. John Weiss, Preservation Chairman, has stepped down after seven years on the job. Now don't be alarmed. John will still be doing preservation work. He and his wife Lenore will just be doing it independently. They will offer help and support to the Association in preservation efforts. A group is also being formed to focus on preservation needs in the southern half of Route 66. The Preservation Committee will continue to work on projects as a new chairman will be appointed and take the reins. It will be tough to fill the shoes that John & Lenore wore as "chairs" of the

committee. But we will forge ahead and continue to lead the way in preservation. We thank both John & Lenore for their tireless work in these past seven years.

A new committee also has been formed. The Public Relations Committee, a group whose main task is to help promote the Route 66 towns, inform members of festivals in those towns, and line up people to work booths in the towns to spread the word about Route 66. Also, they will work with media outlets to PROMOTE and EDUCATE about Route 66 in Illinois. Marty Bilecki is the chairman of this committee and any events you wish to promote in your county or town, please get in touch with him. Marty is the Grundy County Representative.

*I look forward to the challenges of the next two years. Every member, whether you serve as an officer or board member, a committee chairman, committee member, a preservation volunteer, motor tour volunteer, someone who attends the tour every year, or just the one who sends in their dues every year and reads the newsletter is extremely important to the success of this organization. I work for you and try to do what myself and the board think is best for this Association, but we'd like to hear your concerns and comments as well. You pay the membership fees. This is your association. The officers and board are your representatives. I hope that all of you will continue to support our great Route 66 corridor here in Illinois. **We've got a good thing going—let's keep it moving forward.***

REDISCOVERING IT — HIDDEN ROUTE 66

A Sidewalk Highway in Lincoln, Illinois

By Carl Johnson

In Illinois we, too, have a Route 66 sidewalk highway; it is not nearly as dramatic or long as those two wonderful sidewalk highways in northeastern Oklahoma; but we indeed have one, one-half mile long and on the north side of Lincoln, Illinois.

And I pondered, as I thought through this article — should I put the description first of our ten-foot wide one-lane roadway or should I put the proof first that this was indeed onetime Highway 66. I opted finally for the latter approach.

But, if you, as a reader, simply want to trust me, the description of this original alignment begins at paragraph 13 of this article (*I've marked it with an asterisk*).

In the 1924 7TH Annual Report (on Illinois roads), Frank T. Sheets, Chief Highway Engineer, reported: "During 1924 there was completed on the State bond issue system 1018.2 miles pavement, and on the county system under section 15d, 211.3 miles; a total of 1229.5 miles. With a few exceptions, this entire mileage was Portland cement concrete, 18 foot wide." The exceptions, later reported, were asphalt, brick or gravel. Those exceptions were never the width of the pavement (by 1924, 18-foot wide pavement was the standard in Illinois).

In the 1927 10TH Annual Report (on Illinois roads), Frank T. Sheets, Chief Highway Engineer, reported: "The width of graded roadway on all State bond issue routes was increased. On important roads a roadway forty feet wide is provided; on less important roads a thirty-four foot roadway is provided. The width of the shoulders on the forty foot roadway is eleven feet for eighteen foot pavements and ten feet for twenty foot pavements. The thirty-four foot roadway section is used only where the pavement is eighteen feet wide, giving eight foot shoulder width." So, by 1927, we have two typical pavement widths: 18 foot and 20 foot. I mention this only to refute a 1924 thru 1927 paving of any 10-foot wide Portland cement road in Illinois (any paving of this sort (I'm arguing), must have been done prior to 1924).

But why do I argue such a point? Because of an error, a typographical error, in the Route Bulletins beginning in 1927. Route Bulletins began in 1924; but they were never acknowledged until the 1927 10TH Annual Report (on Illinois roads). Here is the acknowledgement: "During 1927, the Bureau determined the length of all State Bond Issue Routes. This information was published in periodical route

bulletins, issued from May to December. These bulletins give a detailed description of each route, distances, kinds and condition of pavements or road surfaces and in a general way indicate the population of towns and the location of tourist camps. This bulletin is offered free to auto clubs, hotels, filling stations, garages and other places where it can be put into practical use."

So now I come back to one-lane 66. From 1925 thru 1926, here is the description (in the Route Bulletins) of one-lane 66 (then State Bond Issue 4 (S.B.I. 4)) heading south to Lincoln, Illinois:

163.4 Shirley	.....139.6
Funks Grove	.....18' concrete pavement.
154.5 McLean	.....148.5
149.6 Atlanta	.....153.4
145.8 Lawndale	.....57.2
	18' concrete pavement, 1/2 mi.
	10' pavement north of Lincoln with
	dangerous curves. 1500' shale detour. 1/2 mi.
	south of Lincoln.
139.2 Lincoln	.....163.8

But the May 4, 1927, Route Bulletin suddenly changes this description to:

165.6 Shirley	.....137.7
161.7 Funks Grove	.....141.6
156.7 McLean	.....146.6
154.0 McLean-Logan County Line	.....149.3
	26.8 miles 18' concrete pavement.
151.8 Atlanta	.....151.5
	0.5 mile 10' concrete pavement.
148.0 Lawndale	.....155.3
	0.2 mile cinders.
141.4 Lincoln	.....161.9
	3.0 miles city pavement, rough.

But notice the distances between Atlanta and Lincoln have not changed at all: 10.4 miles on both descriptions (and in either direction). My conclusion is the road did not change from 1926 to 1927. In other words, Atlanta did not suddenly gain a new 10-foot wide section while Lincoln suddenly lost one. No, my

Continued on page 6

conclusion is the Route Bulletin (while being updated) made a typographical error (and then introduced that error into later Route Bulletins). This 10-foot wide section remained in Lincoln and it remained in Lincoln after S.B.I. 4 became Route 66 (in late 1926).

And here is the December, 15, 1928, Route Bulletin description:

164.6 Shirley	137.2
160.5 Funks Grove	141.3
17.9 miles 18' concrete pavement	
155.7 McLean	146.1
152.8 McLean-Logan County Line.	149.0
150.3 Atlanta	151.5
0.1 mile city pavement, good.	
146.5 Lawndale	155.3
8.8 miles 18' concrete pavement.	
0.5' mile 10' concrete pavement.	
140.1 Lincoln	161.7
3.2 miles city pavement, rough.	

This doggone 10'-wide piece of concrete (1/2 mile long) just seems to keep on moving between Lincoln and Atlanta; but—believe me—it hasn't moved at all. And, believe me or not, most of it's still there.

We, in Illinois, have a half-mile long sidewalk highway still extant, a Route 66 sidewalk highway. It exists on the north side of Lincoln, Illinois; and, although, broken up by roads and businesses, it is still there. So let's go explore it (let's go walk and—even drive some of it): Let's go explore it now.

*Driving south into Lincoln from Lawndale, 66 becomes a divided 4-lane then crosses under I-55.

Next we'll pass a large grain elevator to our right (and along the railroad tracks, also right). Then a speed-limit sign reduces our travel to 50 m.p.h.

We'll next pass a sign: "WELCOME TO LINCOLN, Named for and Christened by Abraham Lincoln." Just past this sign, Business 55 departs to our left. Then just past this Business 55 departure, 4-lane divided 66 veers left. At this swing left, look straight ahead: There you'll see an old 2-lane still paralleling the railroad tracks. Pull off onto this old road and park at the access gate. We are on original 66 now, 18' wide.

On page 2 of Route 66: Images of America's Main Street, by William Kaszynski, a recently-published tome to the road, there exists a wonderful photograph credited to the Illinois Division of Highways, circa 1952. The caption reads: "Four-lane bypass north of

Lincoln, Illinois. . . ." This is a 52-year old photograph of where we've just parked our ride. On the right side of this photo is the old road we've just parked ourselves on (long bypassed even then), on the left side is the 1929/1930 2-lane which made our upcoming 1-lane obsolete and, in the middle of this photo, is a brand new divided 4-lane bypass (which, as you'll soon see, destroyed a good section of the original 1-lane road). Just a fascinating photograph.

But, leaving my aside, you'll need to get out and walk now. And we'll have to walk about a quarter of a mile. But I must warn you of something first: Dead animals and the stench of road kill! After negotiating the access gate and walking due south, you'll be walking 18'-wide Portland-cement concrete.

Unfortunately, the city of Lincoln has decided that along this stretch of abandoned concrete exists the perfect place to bury any dead animal found within the city's confines. And it's a Lincoln two-step process. Step one: Make a trench and throw the carcass(es) into it. Step two: Cover the trench. But the making of the trench and the covering of the trench seem to be performed by two separate, incommunicative branches of the city of Lincoln government, because you'll find some very old road kill just rotting away in quite open trenches along this abandoned stretch of road. So the olfactory wretchedness can become quite obscene—be forewarned.

So walk on and walk on fast. Near the end of this quarter-of-a-mile jaunt, you'll find a culvert. And, just past this culvert, a one-lane road merges with our roadway. This one lane has come into our roadway from the northeast (lining up with present-day Airport Road). As this 10'-wide Portland-cement concrete road curves quickly left to parallel the railroad tracks, our 18'-wide concrete road diminishes at the juncture, accepting a 10'-wide stature: Their merger makes a 10'-wide road. One lane 66, north of Lincoln, has begun.

But so, immediately, has begun a modern-day breach of the road. To facilitate the flow of water, the old road's been gouged out. But look straight south across this gouge and there you'll find it, one-lane 66, not much of it but there it is, between the gouge and present-day 4-lane divided Historic U.S. 66. So let's head quickly back to our vehicle now; let's find what's left of this one-lane road on the south side of 4-lane divided Historic U.S. 66.

Returning to our car, let's get back onto divided 4-lane 66 headed south. Immediately get into the left-hand lane. Then at the first exit (Kickapoo Street), turn left. At the quick stop sign, turn right (and now you are on actual Kickapoo Street, a 1929 (or, at the

THE CASTLE ON ROUTE 66, ILLINOIS

By John Weiss

In 1903, Congressman Madden built a beautiful home for his wife as a 25th wedding anniversary gift. It was a 1/10th scale model of the White House in Washington D.C. as it appeared at that time. They called it Castle Eden.

It was constructed on the site of Mrs. Madden's childhood home. This area was originally known as the community of Cass Village. Nothing remains of Cass Village except the 1836 cemetery. This area is now known as Darien.

In 1926 the road in front of the Castle Eden became Route 66. During the time the Maddens resided here, one very significant piece of history took place. It was here in the East Room of this White House that the plans for the Panama Canal were discussed and finalized. It is said that President Theodore Roosevelt visited here to support this project. Even today, this room is known as the Panama Room.

Congressman Madden died in 1928. Mrs. Madden died in 1934. They are buried side by side in the original, historic Cass Cemetery. It is located about a quarter mile from the Castle on Route 66, now known as N. Frontage Road.

The property remained in the name of the Maddens and their descendants until 1952. In the late 1930's the White House was rented to a family from Hinsdale who opened it up as an upscale restaurant known as Castle Eden. It was located on the now popular Route 66 with easy access.

World War II and gas rationing caused a decrease in highway travel. This ultimately led to the closing of the Castle Eden as a country restaurant. From 1942 to 1950 it was rented as a residence. Interestingly, in 1952 it was sold to an anonymous group under various assumed names. Its use for a brief amount of time is unknown or not discussed.

It sat vacant until 1959. It

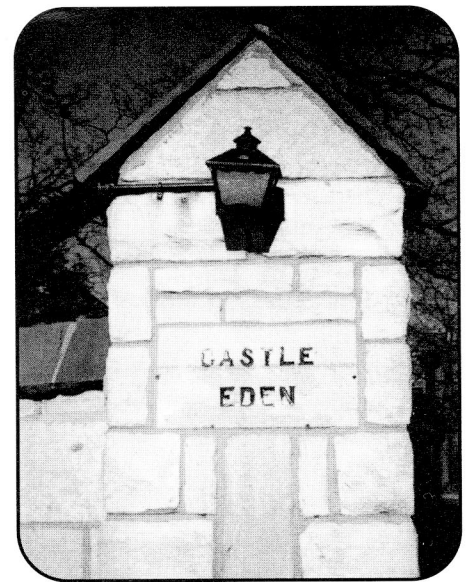
was then that a religious order known as the Carmelites purchased the entire estate. They renamed it AYLESFORD.

By now the main White House and other structures were in various stages of disrepair. The Carmelites immediately began to repair and rebuild this important structure and its surrounding grounds. The main entrance to the property was moved off of busy Route 66 around a corner to Bailey Road, formerly known as Madden Road. This brought visitors to the moon shaped garden on the road that circled the White House.

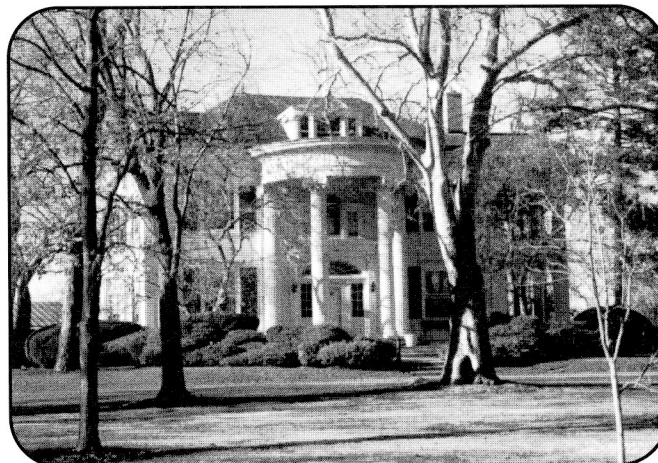
The grounds of Aylesford are magnificent. Many unusual trees that were originally given as a gift to Congressman Madden still flourish. These are nestled among the many oak trees that are 300 years old. One, the "Singing Oak" is said to be 400 years old.

Work progressed very quickly. Word spread so fast that the first year, 20,000 people visited or spent some time here for a religious retreat. During this time, Interstate 55 was being constructed. Engineers asked to purchase dirt that was needed for I-55. Interestingly,

that Carmelites had plans to create a lake on the estate, but could not afford to do so. This request for dirt was an answer to their prayers. The engineers agreed to not only pay for the dirt, but they would remove it according to plans. This included soil removal in the shape of an 'M'. A statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel could then be located in the center of the 'M'. A donated marble statue



Castle Eden Marker



The Illinois Route 66 White House

Continued on page 8

latest, 1930) alignment of U.S. Route 66).

Drive past the Budget Inn and the Citgo to the right, drive past the entrance to the East Lincoln Road District Highway Garage and then turn right into the parking lot for Coy's Car Corner, Inc. Drive west through the parking lot to the rear of Coy's Car Corner, Inc. and there you'll find Coy's Mini Storage. Find a place to park your car; because, we'll need to take a walk once again. To the north of the Mini Storage is the East Lincoln Road District Highway Garage—it is built directly atop old one-lane 66. To the south of the Highway Garage is Coy's Mini Storage. It, too, is built directly atop old one-lane 66. This Mini Storage is quite new; two years ago, it was not here (and the road was still apparent as it exited under the Highway Garage).

But, to the south of this Mini-Storage, the road indeed becomes apparent once again. Directly behind the Graue Chevrolet/Pontiac/Oldsmobile/Buick/Cadillac dealership is our wonderful 10'-wide road. But it quickly disappears south behind a grove of trees and then behind a privacy fence. This privacy fence heads north and south (more or less, as it parallels the railroad tracks). Go ahead and walk this fence line south and you'll soon find a break in the fence. Behind that break is private property (Lincoln Iron & Metal); but behind that break (and paralleling the fence) is our old 10'-wide U.S. Route 66. It's still there behind this wooden fence line. On a Saturday or Sunday, it's easy just to take a peek as you come to this break in the fence. But, on other days, I must warn you, this is private property.

So let's make another jaunt to catch the last remnant of this sidewalk highway still extant (and, at this last remnant, we'll even get a chance to drive a bit of it). Back at the car, exit Coy's Car Corner, Inc., south onto Kickapoo Street. Drive past the Graue dealership, past H & R Block and past Puritan Springs

Bottled Water (all to your right). Next you'll pass (on your right) Eagles Lodge (Aerie 2708). Just past the Lodge, turn right (as if turning into the Lodge's parking lot). And now you've just turned back onto our old sidewalk highway.

To the south of this entryway is a sign: Lincoln Iron & Metal/1210 N. Kickapoo. The sign points to the right. The Lodge and Lincoln Iron & Metal share a common entry.

But notice, upon turning in, there is a 10'-wide piece of concrete slightly curving and heading toward the fenced gate of Lincoln Iron & Metal; it then proceeds right through the fenced gate. This strip of concrete is surrounded by blacktop; but don't let all that blacktop fool you: Look at that concrete. This concrete is original Illinois U.S. Route 66, 10' wide. And you can drive a bit of it here, at least to the fenced gate of Lincoln Iron & Metal.

On weekends, the gate will be closed. On weekdays, the gate will be open. And, on those weekdays, semi-trailer trucks will be making deliveries in and out of Lincoln Iron & Metal. And those semi-trailer trucks will be following original sidewalk-highway Route 66.

I don't recommend (on weekdays) you drive past the open gate onto Lincoln Iron & Metal's property; but I do recommend (whether weekdays or weekends) you marvel that this 10'-wide ribbon of concrete is still here. Yes, still here and still being used. Used now as a driveway and run over by some seriously heavy trucks each and every business day, probably over 80 years after this 10'-wide road was originally laid down.

So what was the mix they used on this road laid prior to, but which then became, Route 66?

It was p.c., Portland cement, not p.c., politically correct. No, this road was built to last.

THE CASTLE ON RT 66.continued from page 7

from Italy is now located in place on the Mount Carmel Lake.

The construction of I-55 cut the Route 66 alignment in half. Only one abandoned gas station-restaurant structure still remains across from the Castle on original Route 66.

A visit to the White House Castle is a pleasant experience. You cannot enter the inside of the Castle, but you are welcome to visit the beautiful grounds and shop in the large religious gift shop. It is here that you can also obtain more information about the many

services offered by the Carmelites.

To find "Aylesford", which means people crossing, leave I-55 at Exit 271. Lemont Road or Cass Street, Exit 273. Locate the Frontage Road on the north side of I-55. It runs between these two roads. This is original but unmarked Route 66.

Information for this story was taken from material provided by Preservation Committee members, Bill and Barb Gwodz. They obtained it from a personal interview. Written historical text was the result of an article entitled "Aylesford in America at 40" written by Fr. Kevin Shanley, O. CARM



Jack Barker and John Weiss

METAL ART BY JACK BARKER

(SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW)

by John Weiss

He may not be on Route 66, but Jack Barker's hobby is making caricatures and objects from what others discard. He has become so proficient at this that Chicago and other schools send students for folk art lessons. This man's imagination and abilities are amazing. Add to this Jack's "Aw-shucks" personality along with his witty humor, and you have a must not miss attraction.

Jack's creations run from hand held to ten foot high objects that move, shoot water, resemble a person or a whimsical animal. Some are for sale.

Inside, Jack has collections of so many curiosities that it boggles the mind. Every inch is covered with objects of interest. This includes his workshop.

Route 66 has always been a road that provided folks with the opportunity to travel to other locations. These places do not have to be directly on Route 66. That is why I have numerous places I call recommended side trips in my Route 66 book, *Traveling the . . . NEW, HISTORIC ROUTE 66 OF ILLINOIS*.

Fortunately people from around the world who are following the book have found themselves in the tiny town of Essex.

The outside displays are always open and available. The inside is open when Jack is there. That is most evenings and weekends. He truly enjoys visitors and welcomes groups. Call ahead to see if Jack himself will be available (Phone 815-365-4045).

Directions from Braidwood, just south of the Polk-A-Dot Drive In on Route 66, at the stop sign of Route 113, turn left (east). Travel 1.3 miles to Essex Road. Turn right. Travel 5.5 miles. Metal Art by Jack will be on your right. You can't miss it.

On your way back to Route 66, you can visit another unique roadside attraction. Located on Route 113 just before the curve is a wild game farm. You will see it on your right. There is space to pull over and experience many deer and other more exotic creatures. This is not a tourist stop, so please do not disturb the animals or owners. But you are welcome to admire them from the road. Enjoy!

DONATIONS TO PRESERVATION

We find it ironic that donations and various forms of offers to help come from so many. We have received assistance from distant areas such as California, Oregon, Canada and Florida. Many members of the Illinois Route 66 Association eagerly offer help. Not once has anyone ever asked for recognition. They just want to help.

Recently I was at the Odell station doing some work. A car pulled up. I invited the driver in. He said his young son was asleep in the back seat, so he couldn't. We chatted a few minutes. He then asked, "Do you take donations?"

"Of course" I said. He then wrote a check to Odell for \$25.00. He wasn't even a Route 66 tourist. He just wanted to help so that children like his will have the opportunity to experience a place like this in the future.

We met Mr. Jim Middy and his father at the streetcar one day. His father, now living in Kentucky, was showing him Route 66. Jim's father is a member of the

Route 66 Association of Illinois. Jim lives in Peoria. Recently he called and asked if we would be home. He brought over a car load of items for the streetcar and Odell. He is now a member and just wanted to help.

John Ruh is a constant financial contributor. Without any fan fair, a check will arrive for preservation.

At the last preservation meeting, I mentioned it would be nice to have a brass plaque at the Odell station noting it is on the National Register of Historic Places. After the meeting, member Carl Johnson came up to me and said he would be happy to pay for it. He could have mentioned it during the meeting in front of everyone, but he waited. Again, no flag waving.

Long time Route 66 member, Lou Vandiver has quietly, for years, made so many donations of items that thousands of dollars for preservation has been the result. How many of you even know Lou and Bud?

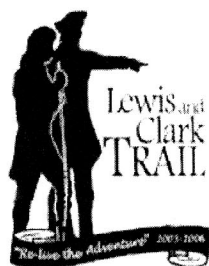
What else can we say but THANK YOU! We are proud and honored to call you all friends.

JUNE 4 - 6, 2004 ILLINOIS ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR

AND HALL OF FAME BANQUET

15th Annual Motor Tour

***"Celebrate, Discover
and Explore Route 66"***



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FRIDAY AFTERNOON AT EDWARDSVILLE, "FESTIVAL 66"

HALL OF FAME CHAIN-OF-ROCKS BRIDGE

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SPRINGFIELD CROWNE PLAZA HALL OF FAME AWARDS BANQUET

NEW PONTIAC ROUTE 66 HALL OF FAME MUSEUM

1939 PLAINFIELD ALIGNMENT

HOFMANN TOWER MUSEUM

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Web site at: www.il66assoc.org

Hall of Fame Banquet Menu

"Southern Buffet"

Southern Fried Chicken

Baked Cod Fish

BBQ Spareribs

Assorted Salads, Fresh Vegetables,

Potatoes, and Relish Tray

Dessert, Coffee and Ice-Tea are included.

Cash Bar, Liquor & Soft Drinks extra

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

REGISTRATION FORM

Please Print or Type

ANY VEHICLE * ANY MODEL * ANY MAKE

MAIL TO:
MOTOR TOUR
Route 66 Association of IL
2743 Veterans Parkway #166
Springfield, IL 62704

Entries must be postmarked
before May 15, 2004

Illinois member Motor Tour Fee: \$25.00 _____
Non member Motor Tour Fee:
(includes \$15.00 membership) \$40.00 _____
Hall of Fame Banquet tickets, Max. 2
must be registered on the Tour _____ @ \$15.00 each _____
Child's 12 & under HOF tickets _____ @ \$12.50 each _____
Extra Hall of Fame tickets _____ @ \$25.00 each _____

U.S. Funds Only

Total enclosed _____

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ Sorry, No Refunds. Rain or Shine

The Route 66 Association of Illinois is not responsible for any accidents or misconduct.

ROUTE 66 ASSOCIATION OF ILLINOIS

MOTEL LIST FOR THE 2004 MOTOR TOUR

ALL MOTELS HAVE ROOMS BLOCKED FOR THE ASSOCIATION

BE SURE TO MENTION THAT YOU ARE WITH THE ROUTE 66 MOTOR TOUR

FRIDAY JUNE 4,

Drury Inn Collinsville
602 North Bluff Road
Collinsville, IL 62234
800-378-7946 or 618-345-7700
\$65.99 plus tax
Free Continental breakfast
20 rooms blocked

Comfort Inn at Edwardsville
3080 S. State Route 157
Old Route 66
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-656-4900
\$66.00 plus tax
35 rooms blocked

Extended Stay Suites
6 Gateway Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-345-0800
\$45.00 to \$65.00 plus tax
Free Continental breakfast
20 Rooms blocked

HAMPTON INN
7 Commerce Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
800-426-7866 or 618-346-4400
\$66.00 Plus Tax
Free Continental breakfast
20 Rooms Blocked

Book all rooms by May 14

Route 66
Internet web site
www.il66assoc.org

HOLIDAY INN
1000 Eastport Plaza Drive
Collinsville, IL 62234
800-227-6963 or 618-345-2800
\$66.00 Plus tax
Free Continental breakfast
20 Rooms Blocked

SATURDAY JUNE 5,

HALL OF FAME BANQUET at CROWNE PLAZA SPRINGFIELD

Crowne Plaza
3000 South Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois
800-227-6963 or 217-529-7777
\$69.66 a night plus tax
2 complimentary breakfast buffet,
200 rooms blocked for Route 66 Motor Tour
Book by May 6, 2004

Holiday Inn Express
3010 South Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, Illinois
800-227-6963 or 217-529-7777
\$65.66 a night plus tax
Free Continental breakfast
50 rooms blocked
Book by May 6, 2004

SUNDAY JUNE 6,

Ramada Inn
300 South Frontage Road
Burr Ridge, Illinois
630-325-2900
\$66.00 per night plus tax
Free Continental breakfast
30 rooms blocked

Baymont Inn
855 West 79th St.
Willowbrook, Illinois
630-654-0077
\$66.00 per night plus tax
Free Continental breakfast
30 rooms blocked

Hampton Inn
6251 Joliet Road
Countryside, Illinois
708-354-5200
\$80.00 per night plus tax
Free Continental breakfast
20 rooms blocked

BOOK SUNDAY NIGHT ROOMS BY May 14

"ILLINOIS - WHERE THE ROAD BEGINS"

WINTER 2004

PRESERVATION NOTES AND UPDATES

By John and Lenore Weiss



The Streetcar Crew



Larry and Lou working on the exterior

PRESERVATION WORKDAY

On October 30, 2003, a crew of volunteers spent another day working on the Streetcar in Gardner. This time we painted the trim green and installed a new vinyl floor. It really turned out great!

We had a close call a few weeks ago. A very large oak tree fell over. Fortunately, it got caught on another tree limb. If it had fallen onto the little streetcar, it would have crushed it. We had a professional tree service come in to remove it. We were not able to do it ourselves.

A round of applause is in order for those who gave up their day to work. They are Ted Giovanozzi, Bill Gwodz, Larry Libersher, Lou Vargo, Ike Widner and John Weiss.


It seems we never have a shortage of volunteers to work on the streetcar. The reason is, Peggy from the historic Riviera Restaurant always treats us all to a full scale lunch. Yes, it's true folks, WE WORK FOR FOOD! Come see our project soon.

RIVIERA STREETCAR/DINER

Mr. Einor Sorenson used to help out in the diner as a child. He told us that at this time a strip of paint ran around the diner. So preservation members Ted Giovanozzi along with Lou and Rosie Vargo volunteered to do this project. While there, Rosie freshened up the stairs with another coat of paint.

Recently, Tom Perkins spent an evening painting a fresh coat of topping on the foundation wall that he and his sons originally put in. None of this would be possible without Tom's help.

All of us in preservation enjoy seeing that people from other states and countries take time to visit our whimsical project. They ring the 1800s original streetcar bell and sign our guest book. It is a simple moment that will be remembered for a lifetime.



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James & Kathy Thole check out Classic Illinois Route 66

AN IMPORTANT ROUTE 66 CORRIDOR ACT MESSAGE

National Park Service - Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program

By Michael Taylor, Program Manager

It is estimated that we have been losing 7% of our historic Route 66 properties every ten years. If this rate continues, there will be little left on the road to remind us of the authentic, historic Route 66 experience. Many people have asked our National Park Service program for assistance in keeping historic properties from being demolished, or from further falling into ruin. And we are certainly committed to do whatever we can to further the preservation and continued use of these important parts of our American heritage. But we can't keep up with every situation that arises. We estimate that there are over 4000 historic properties along Route 66, ranging from the classic gas stations, motels, cafes to the vernacular barns, residences and commercial strips, not to mention the great landscapes that make up the open road.

The real monitors, or watch dogs for preserving the historic properties along the route are you, the reader. Whether you live on Route 66 and are concerned about a particular building that may be flagged for demolition, or you live far from the route but understand the importance of preserving the historic vestiges of the road for the future, many times you are the ones that make the difference on whether a property will be saved or not. City councils, county commissioners, tourism officials, state representatives and senators, congressional staff, and a myriad of other offices and organizations, react and respond to their constituents' concerns, much more so than they would from a government office like ours.

There are good examples of how advocates like you have successfully lobbied decision makers, or simply taken matters into your own hands to preserve parts of the Mother

Road. For example, the De Anza Motel in Albuquerque, New Mexico was recently acquired by the City of Albuquerque in order to develop the property for continued commercial ventures. This preemptive move to protect the property from unsympathetic development or demolition was a joint effort between very active citizen groups and the City of Albuquerque.

Another example is a group of citizens known as the Friends of the Mother Road, who have taken the initiative to help property owners along the route repaint their neon signs and conduct other preservation projects. They have donated their own time, paint, and elbow grease to make this happen. Many of the Associations (*especially the Illinois Route 66 Association*) have preservation committees that do the same.

Residents of Seligman, Arizona have rallied together to get their Route 66 downtown district nominated to the National Register of Historic Places with assistance from our Program. This move may go a long way in helping their unincorporated town maintain its historic community character.

In Highlands, California concerned citizens noticed a business owner taking down a neon sign that he thought was blight to his business storefront. When they told him how much the sign meant to them and to Route 66, he ended up not only saving the sign, but restoring it to operating condition as well.

In Mount Olive, Illinois citizens have banded together to help restore the historic Soulsby's gas station. This has been an effort between the property owner, residents, volunteers from neighboring towns, and others, who have committed their time, skills, and collective resources to make it happen.

Others have been helping to protect the roadbed itself. By staying in communication with their highway departments, they have raised awareness about how proposed highway projects can negatively impact original sections of roadway. Then of course, there are the numerous business owners on the route who are doing everything they can to keep their properties alive and vibrant. These are just a few examples of citizens who have realized that they do make a difference.

If you want to be active in preserving Route 66 and aren't already a member, start by joining a state Route 66 Association, and/or the National Historic Route 66 Federation. These groups are strong advocates for preserving Route 66. They will direct you on how to lobby area decision-makers, or who to contact if a particular property is threatened. They will also let you know how you can be directly involved with hands-on preservation work. There are eight state associations and other non-profit organizations committed to preserving Route 66, and you do not have to be a resident of a particular state to join. In fact, you can be members of all of them. Their modest dues usually provide members with a regular newsletter and activities that are fun and productive for the Mother Road. These organizations are made up of great folks who love the road and are committed to using their volunteer time to keep the road alive. If you are interested in being members or subscribers to any of them, please access our web page at www.cr.nps.gov/rt66/links/index.htm to find links to each of the groups.

The passing of Burt Parkinson has left anyone who knew him with a void in their heart. Although my friendship with Burt was short in length of time, it was long in respect and pleasure. It was a privilege to have known him and he will not be forgotten.

Burt was part of a family that published newspapers in Illinois in both Braidwood and Gardner. These newspapers began being published shortly after the end of the Civil War. Burt continued that heritage and eventually became editor, publisher, reporter, painter and chief washer of presses (not to mention bottles) before the paper was sold in October 1988 to the Dwight Star. Burt also wrote a weekly column in the Gardner Chronicle called "*The Window and Its Pain On Wednesday*". He often joked that it should be called "*The Pain in the Window*."

The following column in this issue and future issues are taken from the *Gardner Chronicle* in 1939. Being an avid reader all my life, I have always felt that the definition of a true writer is one who can see the story through the writer's eyes. Although some may consider the columns "hokey stuff", when I read them, I feel as though I am standing next to Burt, looking through that window pane and seeing what he saw. I hope you will enjoy them as much as I do.

If there is a weekly newspaper being published "upstairs", I am sure Burt has already signed on and the angels made him chief editor. We will all miss him greatly.

THE WINDOW AND ITS PAIN ON WEDNESDAY

(Part 1 of 3)

By Burt Parkinson

January 19, 1939

Well, here I am again, the pest himself—before I even get started on this column, I see Frank McCarter pulling away from the post office in his blue and red striped Chevy to rattle down the pavement. It is 4 o'clock Tuesday afternoon, and maybe you can get an idea of the difference, as last week it was noon—the school kids are on their way home. Here comes Mrs. Ed Carter, she is driving Clarence Clover's car, Eddy must have his down at the shop. Weather report, snow is flaking down to old terra firma, the ground is covered, I hope you hope, we all hope, or do we? Miss Bernice Weber, I see is standing at the railway crossing and hollering down to the tracks, who to can't be seen. Sam Smith just coasted by in his Chevy with a lot of boards tied to the back. Here comes the Berlinski girl for the evening mail, I don't know her name or it would be in here. Does anyone know how to print a grunt? . . . It's snowing harder now. Lev Bicknell went by, also Annabelle and Arline. Mrs. Harlan Scott just went into the post office, woo! No mail! Here she comes out again. There goes Roger Bull in a '39 Chevy and following him closely going east is a '36 Ford V-8, who it is I don't know. Things just now makes one bored as a shoe salesman at a leg show. Dom Lionize just barreled it over the tracks in his pretty green Plymouth. I see that Perkins the lumber man has his

Buick parked up near the office when he usually keeps it near the tracks. Here comes Pat Boylan, his hands in his lumber jacket, there he goes into the depot. It's so cold out that it looks as if everyone is smoking. Here comes another Perkins, the young man this time is carrying a bag and eating all at the same time, quite a feat. There goes a farmer down the other side of the street with a walk that sometimes seem to slide and other times to rock. Well, well here comes one of the school mums, Mrs. Leone Mulvery. Heigh Ho Heigh Ho, it's home from work we go. Here comes a little man in a khaki shirt popping along as spry as he can be with a bundle under his arm. It's Johnny Barr. Allan McDonald just stopped out in front, you know, Allan had part of his foot taken off a few months ago and he is still rather lame. Here comes another bicycle, this time it's Doris Onsen. Well, what do you know, in the door walked Gordon Woodruff, the Wilton Theatre man. There goes the state truck just pulling away from the lumber yard. A little lady here says this column is silly. Do you? . . . and here comes Joe Blake home from work. There goes Duff Horrie with the mail for the limited. He also carries his little lantern for the trainmen to see the sack. Mrs. Ella Doud, the wife of Art Doud, the proprietor of the Royal Blue Store just stopped at the post office. Well no one has told me to shut up, so I'll shut up anyway. Goodbye

2004 MOTOR TOUR PLATES AVAILABLE

It's not too late to get your set of plates for the 2004 Motor Tour. These plates are the real thing. They are special event plates and can be displayed for 60 days prior to the Motor Tour beginning in early April. The design of the plates is shown to the right. The colors are orange and blue (Go Illini or Bears), and they will be on a white background with blue letters and numbers. The plates are back to a cost of \$30 per set, and we are ordering only 150 sets this year. With the advent of a permanent Route 66 plate, there is a possibility that the special event plate sales will not be as strong as in previous years. If we find that there is a demand to make 200 sets again, then we will consider doing so in 2005. To get a set of plates, contact Jeff LaFollette at 563-843-3666, or by e-mail at ajon66@netins.net.

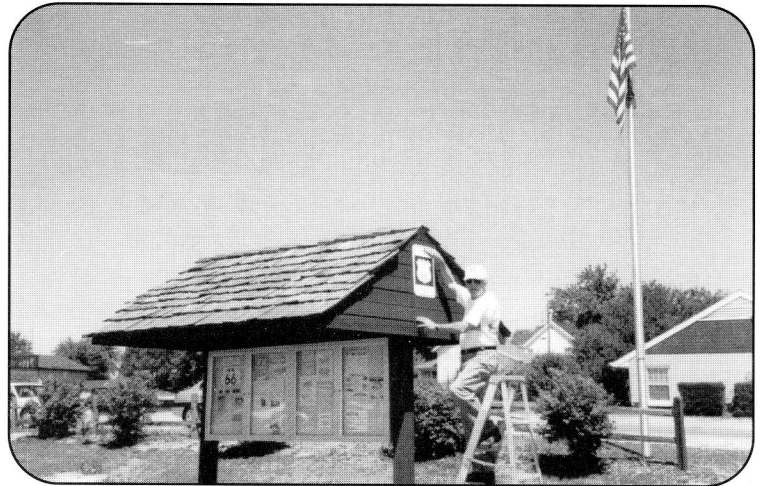


You can also send a check for \$30 to Jeff along with a note stating if you wish to display the plates or get them for souvenirs. Mail checks and inquiries to Jeff's address found on page 2 of this issue.

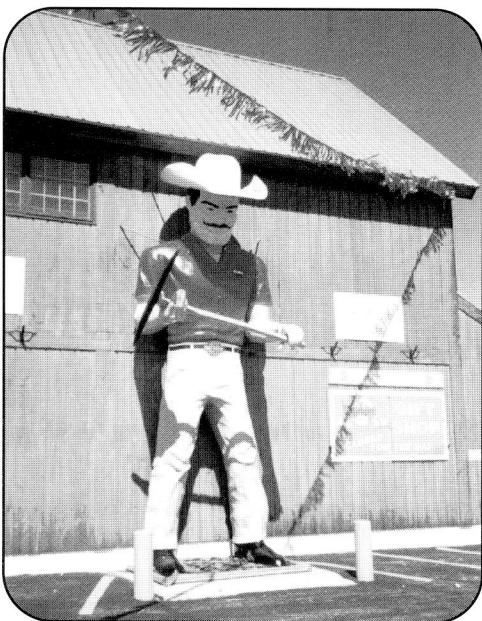
LEXINGTON ROUTE 66 PARK GETS FACE LIFT

By Fran Turgeon

McLean County Board member Fran Turgeon recently completed painting the park information shelter and installed new Lexington Route 66 Park signs. Also, bulletin boards were updated with current event information. Final phase calls for installation of another flag pole to fly the Lexington Route 66 flag designed by a local high school student. Park visitors are provided flyers listing Main Street businesses they may wish to visit.



Fran Turgeon posting a Route 66 sign



Giant in Rapid City, South Dakota

ILLINOIS GIANTS DISCOVER ANOTHER "COUSIN"

IN BLACK HILLS COUNTRY

From Association members Ray and Sheila Rueck of Onarga, Illinois comes this photo of a "Muffler Man" giant they discovered in Rapid City, South Dakota. This giant was spotted at a Stamper Black Hills Gold Store. Notice that he is ready to go looking for Black Hills Gold with his pick axe in hand. Thank you Ray and Sheila for this photo. And remember, when you spot one of these gentle giants anywhere in this great land of ours, take a picture and send it to "The 66 News" and we'll print your photo and story here.

**2004 CALENDAR
OF COMMUNITY FESTIVALS AND EVENTS
ON ROUTE 66 OF ILLINOIS
MARCH THRU JUNE**

MARCH

March 13 • St. Pat's Parade • Springfield

March 19 - 21 • March 26 - 28

Christian Musical • Zion Lutheran Church
Litchfield • Contact: Tonya Flannery 217-324-5253

APRIL

April 3 & 4 • Re-Enactment of life pre 1840
Lake Lou Yaeger • Rendezvous Camp • Litchfield
Contact: Tonya Flannery 217-324-5253

April 17 - 18 • Annual Redbud Festival • Auburn

April 24 • Earth Day Walk • Edwardsville

MAY

May 13 • Lewis & Clark Opening Ceremonies
Madison

May 14 - 16

3 day Motorcycle Show • Niehdus Cycle
Litchfield • Contact: Tonya Flannery 217-324-5253

May 15 • 4th Annual Heritage Days • Staunton

May 22 • Noon to 4 p.m.
Heller's Car Show • Pontiac

May 29-30 • Spring Festival • Carlinville
Contact: 217-854-8916 or 854-8500

May 30 • 1 p.m. • 100th Birthday J.H. Hawes Grain
Elevator Museum • Atlanta
Contact: Bill Thomas 217-648-2056

May 31 • 10:30 a.m. • Memorial Day event
Veterans ceremony • 1 p.m. Antique tractor parade
Atlanta • Contact: Bill Thomas 217-648-2056

JUNE

June 4 - 6 • Route 66 of Illinois Motor Tour
Chain of Rocks Bridge to Hoffman Tower, Lyons
Contact: Ollie 618-585-3081 or John 708-389-3823

June 5 • Hall of Fame Banquet
Springfield Crowne Plaza
Contact: Ollie 618-585-3081 or John 708-389-3823

June 4 • Black Diamond Coal Festival, Gillespie

June 6 - 13 • International Carillon Festival
Springfield

June 12-13 • International Horseradish Festival
Collinsville

June 12 - 16 • Heritage Tractor Adventure
Begins at the Chicagoland Speedway • Joliet

June 12 • Fine Arts Festival • Dwight

June 13 • Car Show • Wolf Pack Car Club
Library Park • Litchfield
Contact: Tonya Flannery 217-324-5253

June 13 • Historic Cemetery/House Walk • Dwight

June 17-20 • Corvette Classic Car Show
swap meet • cruise-in • Regional Airport (Old
Terminal) • Bloomington
Contact: Amy Watson 800-433-8226

June 18 - 20 • Come Home to Mt. Olive • Mt. Olive

June 18-19 • Chatham Homecoming • Chatman

June 18 • 5 p.m. • Cruise-in • Pontiac

June 19 • 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. • 50's-60's car show
Rustic Auto Club • Courthouse Square • Pontiac
Contact: Tom Dunham 815-844-7219

June 25-27 • Rt 66 Festival and car show • Litchfield
Contact: Tonya Flannery 217-324-5253

June 27 • Annual tractor show and games
Carlinville • Contact: 217-854-8916

June 27 • Chenoa Road Rally • Chenoa
Contact: City Hall 815-945-7619

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR COMMUNITY
EVENT ON ROUTE 66 OF ILLINOIS
LISTED IN THE NEWSLETTER
PLEASE SUBMIT INFORMATION TO:
Marty Bilecki • 4200 Bargo Lane • Morris, IL 60450**

KRUZIN' WITH THE BILECKI'S

IF YOU DON'T GO-YOU WON'T KNOW!!!

By Marty & Geri Bilecki

WOW! Where did 2003 go? Once again, our motto: "KEEP KRUZIN" has taken us and many of you on a nostalgic trip to many historic, beautiful and people friendly places. We are so blessed to have our Route 66 association of friends and even international new found friends, who travel our "Mother Road" in Illinois and our sister states.

Our year started, fortunately while the winter winds were still blowing through, with a great 50's Rock and Roll cruise to the western Caribbean with the real stars of the 50's and 60's on board performing. (This was not, unfortunately on Route 66.) Then when spring broke, our kick off car shows, cruises, car club meetings which led up to the great Route 66 Association of Illinois Motor Tour in June. Ollie Schwallenstecker and John Miller are to be commended, as well as all the workers for all of the thought, work, and enthusiasm that they presented to make it the success that it was. Hats off to them and all who participated and contributed to this event-you know who you are, and we include a salute to you.

Just imagine - week after week, a menu available to all with the following entries- Friendship, Car shows, Cruise nights, Fundraisers (including the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Poker Run on August 23rd in Bloomington), Route 66 Motor Tour, Roadrunner trips, seminars and lectures, visiting nostalgic towns and villages, working on preservation projects, visiting

senior centers, leading the north tour to the September Springfield Festival, plus introducing newcomers from other states and nations to our "Mother Road", and, greeting Vasile Stoica, who traveled from California to Chicago in his wheelchair. (Lest we ever complain about something trivial.) That's why we use the word "WOW" to describe a fabulous year in 2003. Also why we accumulated four full albums of pictures and memorabilia.

We will be starting 2004 with another Caribbean cruise on February 8th — this time to the eastern waters with some great stops and it's not too late to join your fellow Route 66ers. We will be entertained by such Rock & Roll stars as Paul Revere and the Raiders, Bill Haley's Comets, Tommy Rowe, the Buckingham's, and the ever popular Peggy March. Plus live sock hops, bands, and a great Elvis show. All especially for us on a special package. A portion of the cost will be donated back to the Route 66 Association of Illinois for our general fund. There's still time to join us: Call 1-866-3-OLDIES (365-3437). Mention the Route 66 Association of Illinois when you call.

P.S.: Our special thanks to our Preservation Committee Chairman John Weiss and wife Lenore, for their seven years of dedicated leadership of the committee and its endeavors. If you cross their paths, tell them thank you—it's well deserved. See you on 66 — KEEP KRUZIN'.

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

\$15 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

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE FORMED

A new committee was appointed by President Jeff LaFollette at the October 19, 2003 board meeting in Normal, Illinois. Members Lynn Bagdon, Martin Bilecki, Tonya Flannery, Emily Priddy and Louis Vargo were appointed. The objects and purposes of this committee are explained in their mission statement which was voted on at their first committee meeting on November 9 in McLean, Illinois. A copy of that statement has been sent to the Association's By-Laws Committee for their review and adoption.

Interested members and Board Members are urged to co-operate with this committee to further the causes of the Route 66 Association of Illinois and affiliated Route 66 groups. Each Board Member and all

members are requested to forward any information relating to activities in their area that may be of interest for participation by our Association to a committee member. You are asked not to send these to the Association President as previously requested by him in a letter to Board Members. This request has been approved by Jeff LaFollette

Our success and that of the Association's 2004 season depend greatly on input from all of us. We will try to set meetings for everyone's convenience after other Route 66 functions, so as to allow scheduling of same by interested members. For more information please contact committee chairman, Marty Bilecki at 815-941-3312 or by e-mail at Coral57@aol.com


ROUTE 66 CORRIDOR ACT GRANT INFORMATION FOR 2004

The National Park Service, Route 66 Corridor Preservation Program is dedicated to preserving the rich and diverse resources of the historic U.S. Highway 66. The program provides funding assistance to support the preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of the most significant and representative buildings, structures, and road segments in the eight states through which the route passes. Funding assistance is also provided to support research, planning, oral history, and education outreach projects related to Route 66.



The program will be accepting applications for the 2004 cost-share grant cycle February 2 - April 30, 2004. Notification of awards will be made in early July, 2004. Application packages will be available for printing directly from the website

www.cr.nps.gov/rt66,

or you may request an application directly from the program office at (505)988-6701. If you have any questions about the grant program, eligibility requirements, or the application process, feel free to contact the program staff at 505-988-6701.



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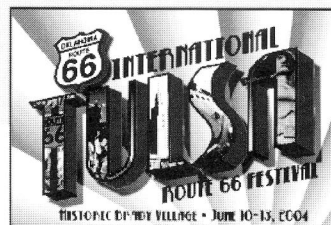
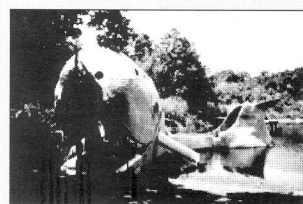
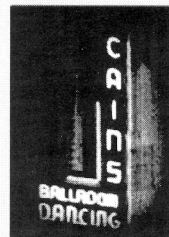
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Get Your Kicks at the 2004 International Tulsa Route 66 Festival

Take a Trip
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**The Will Rogers
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Days of History &
Nostalgia in Oklahoma**

- The Mother Road
- Native America
- Cowboys
- Oil Wells



Street Fair • Classic Cars • Route 66 Exhibits • John Steinbeck & Cyrus Avery Awards Celebration • Route 66 Tours • World-Renowned Museums • Art Deco Wild West • Indian Powwow • Western Swing

See Cyrus Avery • Thomas Hart Benton • Henry Ford Pawnee Bill • John Steinbeck • Bob Wills & More!

Experience the Sapulpa Route 66 Blowout, Catoosa Blue Whale, Claremore Will Rogers Memorial, J.M. Davis Gun Museum & More!

A Route 66 You Haven't Seen Before!!!

June 10-13, 2004
Tulsa, Oklahoma

**For Festival Facts & Information,
Route 66 Trivia & More, Visit:**

www.tulsa66festival.com

**Call Toll Free: 1-877-Tulsa66
or Local: 918-447-6405**

▼ SPEAKING IN PLATES

In another installment of this column, we have two new states to add to the "KIX ON 66" list. We can now add Kansas and Ohio to the mix now. These two beauties were spotted in the parking ramp of the Hilton Hotel in Springfield, Illinois during the Route 66 Festival. This list of states now includes Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, Arizona, Kansas and Ohio. Please continue to send pictures of your 66 plates.

By the way as a side note, no one has been able to top Rich Henry's six sets of 66 plates. That may be a record that will be around for a long time. Keep those plate submissions coming, and I'll keep printing them!



KIXON66 OHIO



KIXON66 KANSAS

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