

# Route 66 Resolutions for 2022

by Cheryl Eichar Jett  
January 15 2022 7:15 AM



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If you live in The Buzz coverage area, you're not far from the legendary Route 66. For that matter, if you live anywhere in Illinois, you're not far away from the iconic Mother

Road! In any case, you're located in just the right spot to enjoy a day- or weekend-trip along some of the 300 miles of the famous highway that stretches from Chicago to St. Louis.

Between those two major cities, there are many miles on several different alignments that are still drivable, and that boast charming small towns, great restaurants, museums, attractions, historic sites, shopping, and photo ops! There are also numerous Illinois Route 66 events planning to return in 2022.

This January, I have a short list, but with a nice mix, to recommend, including a brand new museum (the Illinois Rock & Roll Museum on Route 66), a beloved older attraction with new owners, and a new name (Doc's Just Off 66), two great annual Illinois Route 66 events (Red Carpet Corridor and Miles of Possibility), and a fantastic brand-new version of the Illinois Route 66 Visitors Guide (from Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway and Thin Tread Media)!

You can check all of these out online from your easy chair, and dream about getting out on our favorite road in the spring! Happy New Year, dear readers!



## **Illinois Rock & Roll Museum on Route 66**

Later this year, fans of Illinois' own rock music bands can visit their own special museum – the Illinois Rock & Roll Museum in Joliet, Illinois, downtown at 9 West Cass Street in a historic 1920s three-story building.

Inspired by rock and roll museums he's visited in Nashville and Cleveland, museum founder Ron Romero raised enough money in 2019 to buy the building and establish a nonprofit organization to support it. But over the past two years, the 20,000-square-foot terra cotta structure has been slowly transforming into the new museum, bolstered by about \$300,000 of in-kind donations from area contractors. When completed, the museum building will also include a radio station, gift shop, auditorium, and classrooms. The exhibit area will feature memorabilia collected from Illinois bands and musicians such as REO Speedwagon, Chicago, Styx, Cheap Trick, Muddy Waters, and Buddy Guy. ([www.roadtorock.org](http://www.roadtorock.org))

## **Red Carpet Corridor**

The 15th Annual Illinois Route 66 Red Carpet Corridor Festival will be held May 7, 2022. Sponsored by the twelve communities which make up the 80-mile linear museum from Joliet to Lexington, Illinois, the annual festival invites everyone to experience the good life in the slow lane.

Each community will produce its own events, so expect anything from antique/art/yard sales, car and motorcycle shows, to live entertainment and food stands. There are plenty of historic sites, free museums, and unique mom-and-pop businesses to help create a nostalgic journey for all to enjoy. Visitors can simply enjoy the drive through 80 miles of charming small towns, or stop and get out of the car to have their picture taken with Elvis or do a little shopping. <http://www.ilroute66redcarpetcorridor.com>





## **7th Annual Miles of Possibility Route 66 Conference at Pontiac**

The 7th Annual Miles of Possibility Route 66 Conference will be held Thursday through Sunday, October 20-23, 2022, in Pontiac, Illinois! Besides two full days of conference sessions presented by well-known authors, historians, and other experts, each annual event also offers social events, entertainment, networking opportunities, and a special keynote speaker. While there, be sure to tour downtown Pontiac, its shops and museums, and the Route 66 Association of Illinois Hall of Fame.

The inaugural conference was held in Edwardsville in 2015, and has since rotated among communities up and down Route 66 in Illinois. This is the only ongoing annual conference-format event anywhere that focuses on Route 66! Registration will be available late winter/early spring plus announcements of speakers, special guests, activities, and host hotels at <https://route66miles ofpossibility.com>.

## **Docs Just Off 66**

Doc's Soda Fountain and Deck's Pharmacy Museum in Girard has changed hands and has loving new owners who plan some additions to the popular Route 66 stop. Casey Claypool, Executive Director of Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway, and her husband Steve Claypool, have recently announced their purchase of the iconic attraction.

The soda fountain will remain, as will the Deck Brothers pharmacy collection, but look for some changes as well. In the cafe building, breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be

served. Breakfast will include grab-and-go items for area residents who travel through Girard on their way to Springfield for work. Three months of renovations are anticipated with an opening date sometime in April. The Claypools' adult daughters will manage the day-to-day operations. Look for the slight name change from Doc's Soda Fountain to “Doc's Just Off 66.” ([www.docsjustoff66.com](http://www.docsjustoff66.com)).

## **All-New Visitors Guide from IL Route 66 Scenic Byway**

Early in 2022, Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway is launching a brand-new Illinois Route 66 Visitors Guide with an all-new look! Completely reorganized and updated, the new Visitors Guide is being professionally produced by Thin Tread Media, publisher of the popular bi-monthly magazine ROUTE. Find out more at <https://illinoisroute66.org> (This author is proud to mention that she's a regular contributor and Associate Editor at ROUTE Magazine! <https://www.routemagazine.us>)

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*This story was originally printed in the January 2022 issue of The Prairie Land Buzz Magazine. Over 8,000 copies of The Buzz Magazine are distributed free each month to over 400 locations in 60 cities in the 11 IL counties of Bond, Christian, Clinton, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison, Monroe, Montgomery, St. Clair, and Sangamon. To read The Buzz or for more information visit <http://www.thebuzzmonthly.com>.*