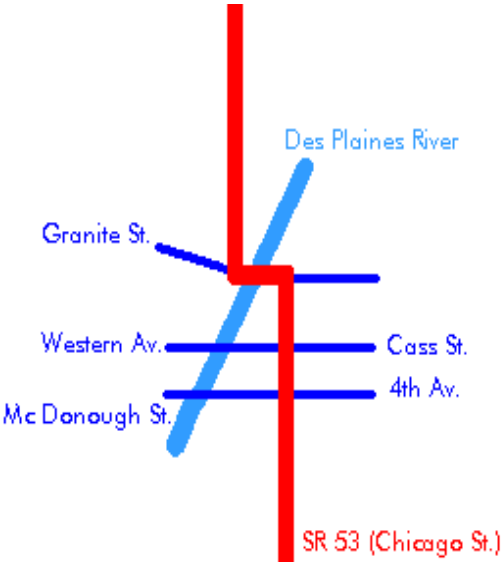



A business route from Lake Michigan to the Pacific Ocean was the idea of businessman, Cyrus Avery, who proclaimed Route 66 the ‘Main Street of America’. John Steinbeck in Grapes of Wrath named Route 66 the ‘Mother Road’. Route 66 intersects US30 in Joliet. US30 was the first road to cross the continent. In Illinois, many town main streets were connected by the Pontiac Trail, a 2-lane truck path built in 1918 connecting Chicago to St. Louis.

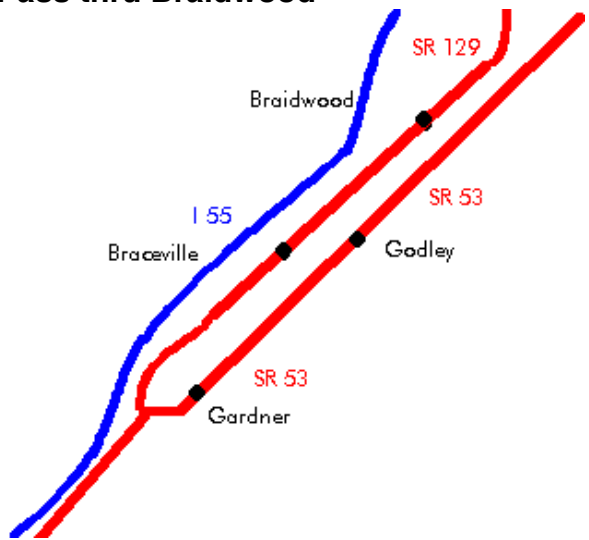
In the 1920’s Illinois paved a ‘hard road’ using the Pontiac Trail and existing concrete and brick main streets and roads to make highway travel more efficient. Thus Illinois was the first to claim ‘slab all the way’.

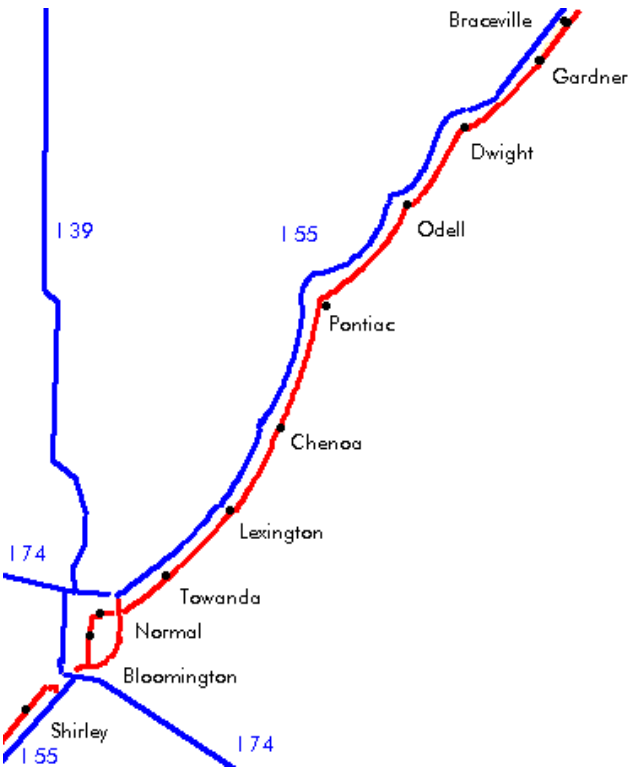
Over the years, Illinois has run a great program to sign Historic Route 66. You should find historic markers, not just for the latest version of the road, but also for older, almost forgotten alignments.

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Two starting points: Meet in Romeoville or Joliet south of I-80. ☞ See step #1 or #8 	
	Follow the brown signs for Rt. 66 throughout this trip.	Marlene 630-469-5688 Tracy 630-220-1960
1	First starting point in Romeoville <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ at the Burger King, 304 N Independence Blvd., Romeoville, IL ☞ Next door to a Mobile gas station on the SW corner of Rt. 66 (IL-53) and 135th (Romeo Rd) <p>!! LEAVING AT 9AM SHARP !!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Historical note: Originally Romeoville was called Romeo, but the love affair with Juliet seems to have ended when Juliet was renamed to Joliet. ☞ Side trip: Isle a la Cache Museum, 501 E. Romeo Rd. From the French and Native-American fur trade era to the historic I & M Canal, find out how cultural history shaped the region.
2	Turn right (South) as you leave Burger King.	
3	Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53) southbound	
4	Pass thru Crest Hill	
5	Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53) southbound	

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
<p>6</p>	<p>Many turns thru Joliet</p> <p>Caution: You will take a sharp left onto Ottawa St., which is just before the second bridge.</p> <p>Yes we will get separated but will regroup south of Joliet - just keep following the Rt. 66 signs (IL-53).</p>  <p style="text-align: right;">Joliet</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Side trip: Rt. 66 Park has a twelve-foot Joliet Kicks sign. Rich and Creamy Ice Cream served all summer long in a historic parlor made famous by the life-size figures of Jake and Elwood Blues dancing on the roof. Stroll the path to an overlook where you'll see the historic Joliet Prison, where The Blues Brothers was filmed, and more recently, the television show Prison Break. ☞ Stateville Penitentiary. ☞ We drive over the Ruby Street Bridge over the Des Plaines River. ☞ Route 66 Welcome Center in the Joliet Area Historical Museum at 204 N. Ottawa St. (Has a nice gift shop.) ☞ Rialto Square Theatre at 102 N. Chicago. Built in 1926 (restored to original magnificence in 1980); the oldest continually running theater in the US. ☞ Lincoln Highway, the first coast-to-coast highway designed for car travel built in 1915, later known as US-30. ☞ Side trip: The Olde Keg at 20 W. Jackson St. (US-30). ☞ Side trip: Joliet Iron Works on Columbia St. 815-727-8700. Take a fee, naturalist-led tour of blast furnace ruins. ☞ Side trip: Union Station at 50 E. Jefferson St. (US-30). There only two Union Stations in Illinois: Chicago & Joliet
<p>7</p>	<p>Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53) southbound</p>	
<p>8</p>	<p>Second starting point to pick up more cruisers!!!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Rt. 66 Food n Fuel at SW corner of Rt. 66 (IL-53) and Laraway Rd. (2401 S. Chicago St, Joliet) ☞ from US-80 take exit 132 (US-52; IL-53 south) Go south about 3 miles on IL-53 (Rt. 66) <p>LEAVING AT 9:30AM SHARP !!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ We are across the street from Rt. 66 Raceway ☞ Note: Blues Brothers car mounted on a pole
<p>9</p>	<p>Continue on Rt. 66 (IL-53) southbound</p>	

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
10	<p>Pass thru Elwood</p> <p>Think: Blues Brothers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Notice on your left the fencing with barbed wire top. All this land was the Joliet Arsenal. After driving about 4 miles you will see a sign on the fence stating that it is the Joliet Arsenal. IL-53 crosses through the Joliet arsenal, a former ammunition plant and storage facility, now being returned to nature, Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie. (makes a nice side trip) ☞ Side trip: After Hoff Rd on your right is Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery
11	Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53)	
12	<p>Pass thru Wilmington</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Gemini Giant mascot at the Launching Pad Drive-in, on 810 E. Baltimore St at East St. Surely the guardians of the Mother Road throughout Illinois are the Muffler Men, their hulking bodies leering over any who would do Route 66 harm. The most famous of the statues resides outside the Launching Pad restaurant on the north end of Wilmington, where the Gemini Giant hangs on to his spaceship and watches over this Route 66 landmark. ☞ Just past the Mobile Station: <u>Look up</u> on your right to see the Dinosaur on roof of the G&D tire shop that was an old Sinclair station. ☞ Eagle Hotel: white building at 101 N Water St., dating from 1836 and 1845. No name is on the building but it is at the SW corner of Water (IL-102) and IL-53. Catered to riverboat & stagecoach travelers. ☞ Side trip: Water St. has many antique shops for those who want to browse. ☞ Side trip: Mar Theater opened June 15, 1937. At 121 S. Main St. Still a privately owned operating movie theater. ☞ recommend eatery: Hayden’s Crossing, 107 N Water St. Family dining.
13	Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53)	

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
14	<p>Pass thru Braidwood</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Abandoned coal mines in the area ☞ Polk-a-Dot Drive-in, a roadie classic at 222 N. Front St. in Braidwood opened in 1956 and maintains its 50's decor. Great cheeseburger!!! See Elvis, James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, the Blues Brothers and Betty Boop. ☞ Old depot and art deco ceramic tile station.
15	Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The Braidwood Reactor is a large nuclear plant just beyond the town on the left.
16	Pass thru Godley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Abandoned coal mines in the area
17	Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53)	

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
<p>18</p>	<p>Pass thru Braceville</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ After crossing the Mazon River, on the left is the site of once was the Riviera Restaurant (5650 highway 53), an old roadhouse opened in 1927 (burned down June 2010). It had stalactites made of plaster on the ceiling, which are part of the original ambiance. We spoke with the elderly owner (Sept. 2008) and he would tell us many stories. Such as--Al Capone would frequent this restaurant. Capone would hide the hooch (bootleg booze) in the safe. The police would search the place and never ask to look in the safe so Al never got caught with the illegal liquor. It never occurred to the police that the safe was unusually large. ☞ Behind the Riviera Restaurant was a streetcar diner. We believe it is somewhere in Gardner now. ☞ side trip: On IL-129 across the tracks the Rt. 66 alignment will dead-end in less than 2 miles from downtown. When you are forced to turn west onto Huston Rd., away from the railroad, there is a short piece of overgrown road straight ahead, leading to a small hilltop overlooking a long gap where once an arch bridge stood that connected over the railroad joining from the north.
<p>19</p>	<p>Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53)</p>	
<p>20</p>	<p>Pass thru Gardner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ side trip: Gardner has a two cell historic jailhouses, restored by the community, since 1910.
<p>21</p>	<p>Follow Rt. 66 (IL-53)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Many times as you look at the pavement on the west side of the road, you can see where the original Route 66 was covered over by gravel and paved over to become the northbound lane of Interstate 55. ☞ Many patches of the original pavement show through the new blacktop. ☞ Watch for the roadside messages and Berma Shave signs!!!

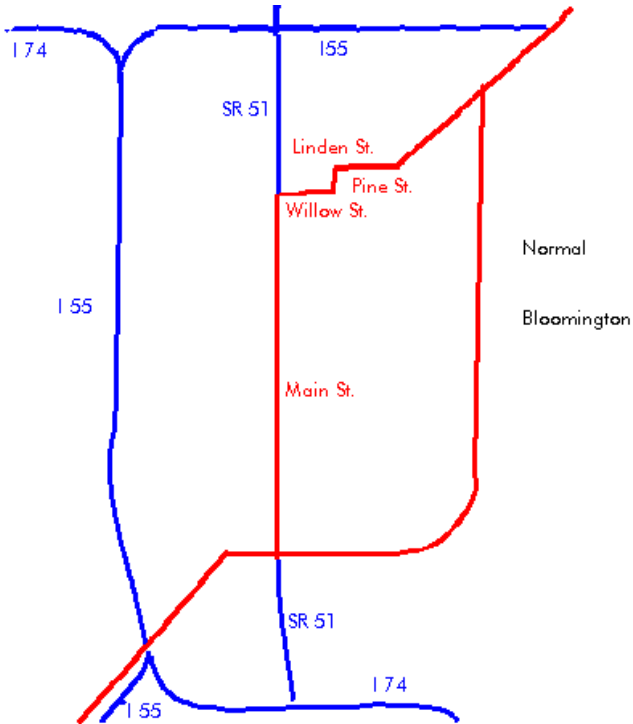
	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
22	<p>Pass thru Dwight</p> <p>☞ Dwight was bypassed when Route 66 was built in 1926, as such most roadside businesses started on Route 66 a bit out of town. Pre Route 66 road ran through town, and even some state makers from the era are rumored to be found near the cemetery.</p>	<p>☞ Ambler-Becker Texaco, 417 W. Waupansie St.; constructed in 1932. The longest-operating service station on Route 66, this north-Central Illinois business was in operation from the early days of the highway (1933) until long past its decertification in Illinois, closing its doors in 1999. To be more accurate, the business moved out towards the interstate and is still open today serving the people of Livingston County and travelers speeding past just out of - or getting ever closer to - the Windy City.</p> <p>☞ The Feddersen's Pizza Garage was a car dealership that's been converted to a pizzeria. It's located at 309 S. Old Route 66.</p> <p>☞ The Carefree Motel is now a private residence.</p> <p>☞ Side trip: The former Keeley Institute (134 W. Main St.)-for treating alcoholics and drug addicts- was located in downtown Dwight and is known for it's stained glass windows featuring the senses. Currently, the building is the William W. Fox Development Center.</p> <p>☞ Side trip: Dwight has a stone railroad depot built in 1891. It is beautiful.</p> <p>☞ Side trip: The First National Bank building was designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1905, located at 122 W Main St.</p> <p>☞ Side trip: Bank of Dwight 132 Main St. is the oldest business in the village. The Greek classic designed building has an original mural painted by Viennese artist, Oskar Grass, displayed on the dome.</p> <p>☞ Side trip: The Country Mansion is listed on the National Register of Historic Sites, was built in 1891. Used as a private home by John Oughton, one of the founders of the Keeley Institute. It is a restaurant today. <u>Nice place to eat</u> and stretch your legs in the garden walk to see the windmill built in 1896 to supply water to the Keeley Institute. 101 W. South St. 800-892-5969.</p> <p>☞ Side trip: Pioneer Gothic Church, 201 N. Franklin St. Built in 1858, restored in 1968, was visited by the Prince of Wales, the Future King Edward II.</p>

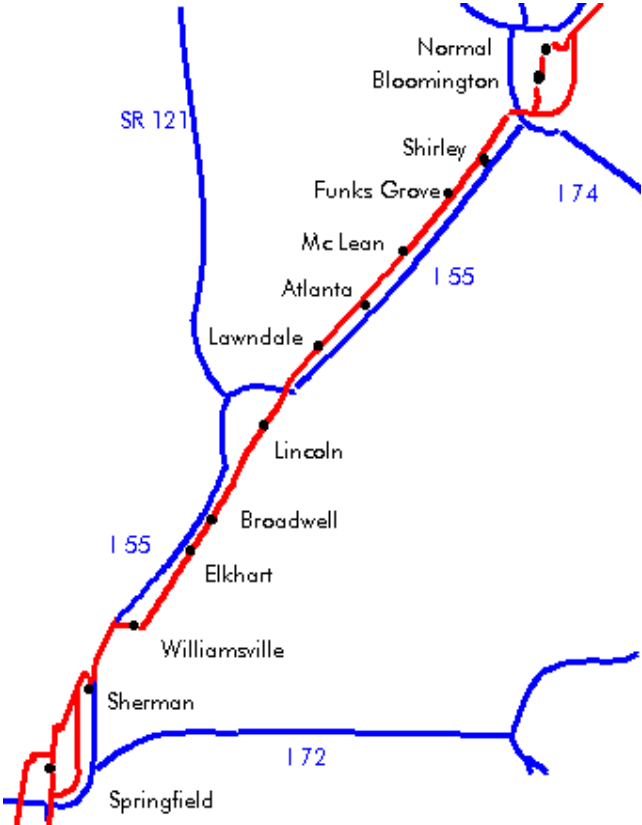
	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
23	<p>Follow Rt. 66 signs only. We will be leaving IL-53.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ From Dwight to south of Chenoa, you will find many old cement bridges original to Route 66; some of the bridges are ‘bridges to nowhere’ hidden in a copse of trees. Most can be seen on your right! ☞ Watch for the roadside messages and Berma Shave signs!!! ☞ Many patches of the original pavement show through the new blacktop.
24	<p>Stop in Odell - 30 minute stop</p> <p>PHOTO of cars</p> <p>Park where you find a spot and enter the old gas station/museum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Old restored Standard Sinclair gas station also known as the Odell Station located at 400 S West St. The award winning station acts as information center but was built in 1932 and served travelers on Route 66 till it eventually closed in 1975. The Illinois Route 66 Association and their preservation committee have restored it. The architectural style is known as the ‘house with a canopy’ and more information is available at Odell Village Hall at 214 S. Front St. <p>Note for Bobbie: Port-A-Potty is outside in the back ;-)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Along the east side of the old two-lane highway in Odell and across of the Saint Paul's Church you can find one of the most unique, fascinating and telling artifacts literally unearthed along the Mother Road. The entrance to a 1937-built pedestrian tunnel under Route 66, known locally as the "subway". The entrance was filled up in the 1950's but the first 3 steps and the Illinois Route 66 Association replaced the railing in the spring of 2006. With most of the town on the east side of the highway and the school on the west side, a pedestrian underpass was built so children could safely walk to school without having to brave the ridiculous amount of traffic on Route 66. Lost for decades after the road moved west of town to the bypass, John Weiss and loads of volunteers dug out the east side entryway to the tunnel in 2006 and installed a guardrail and signage to show off this amazing relic of a busy time in this small Central Illinois community.
25	<p>Follow Rt. 66</p>	
26	<p>Pass thru Cayuga</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ On your right: Meramec Caverns Barn 44/66 on the right hand side, about 0.5 mile after the road becomes a 4-lane road, turnout available. It's also known as the Cayuga Barn. An almost hidden treat just north of Pontiac in Livingston County, this barn sits back several hundred feet from Route 66 between the old US highway and Interstate 55. Freeway travelers are denied the gorgeous view of this classic rural homestead atop a rolling meadow that leads down to the Mother Road, while those cruising Route 66 are supplied a turn-out on the old southbound lanes in order to stop and partake in the beauty.

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
27	<p>Follow Rt. 66 to Pontiac</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ At the first stop light go straight to cross Howard St. ☞ Turn right at Water St., the third stop sign ☞ Turn right on Mill St., the first stop sign ☞ Park anywhere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Old Log Cabin Inn, at the intersection of Pontiac Rd. (2 lane 66) and the 4-lane 66 on the north edge of town at 18700 Old Rt. 66 This building wasn't always facing this side; it originally faced the much older Route 66 alignment behind the building, but was lifted and turned 180 degrees when the alignment changed.
28	<p>In Pontiac - total time of 1 hour!!</p> <p>Walk to the Route 66 Hall of Fame and Museum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • walk North on Mill St. • walk East on Madison • walk North on Main St ☞ group photo under wall mural on outside wall ☞ visit museum & receive goodie bag 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ The Illinois Route 66 Association preserved an old bridge. The bridge features an old painted sign designating it as part of IL-4 as well. ☞ Ladd St. dead-ends but was Route 66. ☞ Rodino Sq. Building used to be a Pontiac attraction till 1989. ☞ The old police headquarter, built in 1941, was located just south of Pontiac. The remarkable thing about the building is its shape: a pistol. ☞ Side trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pontiac Oakland Automobile Museum, 205 N. Mill St. ○ Dargon Park Sculptures, Madison & Fountain. Humiston Woods Nature Preserve is 400 acres on the Vermillion River with woods and 15 acres of restored prairie. ○ The Jones House at 314 E. Madison St. is Gothic Revival brick house built in 1858; the oldest brink home in Pontiac. ○ Lincoln Statue on the lawn of the Livingston County Courthouse. (courthouse built in 1875 ○ The city has three swinging bridges, one built in the early 1900's. ○ Mural walk

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
	<p>To exit Pontiac</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Line up on Mill St., one-way going north ➤ Left turn on Howard ➤ Turn left on Rt. 66 (IL-23) 	
29	Follow Rt. 66	➤ old bridges on right
30	Pass thru Ocoya	
31	Follow Rt. 66	➤ old bridges on right
32	<p>Lunch in Chenoa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Turn left on US-24 ➤ Turn left into parking lot for Chenoa Family Restaurant, 508 W. Cemetery Rd., Chenoa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Former site of Steve's Cafe, established in 1918, gone. ➤ Site of the former Chenoa Motel. ➤ Ghost town of Ballard, IL. ➤ Former site of the Graham and Bennion Elevator, better known as the Ballard Grain Elevator, located in what used to be Ballard, 4 miles from Chenoa on the southeast side of the old road. It was demolished on Jan 20th, 2006.
33	Follow Rt. 66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ old bridges on your right ➤ As you get close to Lexington, look left to see Memory Lane, a large walkable & bikable original section of Route 66. Makes a nice side trip.

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
34	<p>Pass thru Lexington</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ At the stop sign look to your right: notice an old neon sign that says Lexington 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Lexington Motel (now apartments) at the intersection of Bypass 66 and Main. ☞ On your left is the Oasis Drive-In--<u>Only relics remain</u> from this McLean County hotspot that attracted teens and tourists from all over Central Illinois to the south side of Lexington. With the old two-lane alignment of Route 66 on the east side of the restaurant and the four-lane skirting by to the west, traffic flowed right to this classic drive-in for decades. Now the property sits in disrepair, the sign crumbling and old, broken down cars sitting helpless under the rusting canopy. A sad sight in an otherwise gorgeous Route 66 community. ☞ One of the toughest challenges for a small town along Route 66 in Illinois was attracting those hordes of travelers into the city itself. With the road skirting the edge of most communities, the business district was often not along the Mother Road itself. This is the case in Lexington, and in the late 40's the town started to let travelers how to find downtown by erecting a neon sign on the west side of the bypass to point the way east. The sign stands to this day and the neon shines at night, a relic of when this - not I-55 - was the busy stretch through Livingston County. ☞ Side trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Route 66 Park. ○ Patton Cabin 309-365-3091 built in 1829 with the help of local Native Americans
35	Follow Rt. 66	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ old bridges on right ☞ Berma Shave signs

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
36	<p>Pass thru Towanda</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On your right - Route 66 - A Geographic Journey: an abandoned stretch of old Route 66 with educational kiosks. ➤ For almost twenty-five years this small town just north of Bloomington/Normal played home to Eddie's Pure Truck Stop, later Eddie's Pure/ Union 76. Open twenty-four hours a day, the business offered cheap lodging for truckers, but as the road moved to the west of town business dwindled and at the end of May, 1976 the 76 was forced to close its doors. No relics of the old stop remain, but a plaque has been erected along the Geographic Journey in Towanda to celebrate its history.
37	<p>Follow Rt. 66; it will twist and turn</p>	
38	<p>Pass thru Normal-Bloomington</p> <p>Note: at intersection of 51, be in left lane</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Passing through the Illinois State University campus ➤ Cotton's Village Inn at 410 N. Main in Bloomington. ➤ Former site of the first Steak 'N' Shake on 1219 Main St, it all started here in 1934. ➤ Side trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Miller Park & Zoo, 1020 S. Morris Ave. Worth the stop but you will need a couple of hours to do it justice. ○ The Miller Park Pavilion War Memorial is impressive. ○ Beer Nuts factory store. 103 N Robinson St. ○ Daivd Davis Mansion, 1000 E. Monroe St. ○ Illinois State University Art galleries, 100 Center (in Normal) ○ McLean County Museum of History, 601 N. East Street ○ Prairie Aviation Museum at the Bloomington-Normal Airport includes a Lindbergh display.

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
39	<p>Regroup, stay in your car-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ As you are leaving Bloomington we will be on Veteran’s Dr. ☞ Stay in right lane. ☞ There is a Casey’s on your right--pull in. ☞ 2017 Fox Creek Dr., Bloomington 	
40	<p>Follow Rt. 66</p> 	<p>Atlanta will be the cruize turn-around-point</p>
41	<p>Pass thru Shirley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Side trip: Funk Prairie Home and Gem/ Mineral Museum 10875 Prairie Home Ln., Shirley is a retored pre-Civil War era home
42	<p>Follow Rt. 66</p>	

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
43	<p>Pass thru Funk’s Grove</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Founded in 1825 by Isaac Funk, actually very small as the population never got above 50 people. ➤ Side trips: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maple Sirup (yes, it is spelled that way! Ask Marlene why.) at Funk's Grove: The Funk family has been making maple sirup since 1981. Stop for a free tasting, and if you like it, choose between the bottles for sale. 5257 Old Route 66. ○ Cemetery: If you visit the Funk's Grove cemetery, you'll see that a lot of the tombs have the name of 'Funk' on them. ○ General store ○ Train depot
44	<p>Follow Rt. 66</p>	
45	<p>Pass thru McLean</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At Dixie Truck Stop thee is a T in the road, turn right ➤ Do not follow the green Rt. 66 sign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Dixie Truckers Home: J.P. Waters and J.W. Geske founded the first truck stop here in 1928. It is always open, 365 days a year, 24 hours a day. It was closed only one day due to a fire. The Dixie Truckers Home also featured the Hall of Fame of the Route 66 Association of Illinois until the Hall of Fame was moved to the Route 66 Museum in Pontiac (in 2003).
46	<p>Follow Rt. 66</p>	

	Directions for Cruize	Notable sights along the way
47	<p>Stop and Visit in Atlanta</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ PHOTO at J.H. Hawes grain elevator near 2nd and Race St. ☞ look for large red square building <p>- Visit a total time of 1 hour!! before heading back to Braidwood for dinner at the Polk-A-Dot Drive-In</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Wall murals around town. Judy’s Grocer Mural on Race St. ☞ Old J.H. Hawes grain elevator, made of wood, built around 1902. Tours are available in June, July, August on Sundays 1:00-3:00 PM. ☞ The Bunyon Giant, aka Tall Paul, the fiberglass "muffler man" that used to advertise a restaurant in Cicero was restored and relocated to Atlanta (Dec 2003), located on Arch St. between Race and Vine. ☞ Atlanta Public Library & Clock Tower, built in 1908, is now a museum, located at the intersection of Arch St. and Race St. ☞ While not on Route 66, Hamblins Suprette, a mom and pop grocery at 107 Vine St. is a survivor from the Route 66 days, it's renamed to Atlanta Country Market in April 2004. ☞ Palm’s Grill Rt. 66 Café reopened in 2008, originally opened in 1934 to the late 60’s. It is housed in the Downey Building with the Atlanta Museum. The museum has local history exhibits, including ones dealing with Lincoln’s assassination. <i>Great home-made pie.</i>
48	<p>Turn around and Follow Rt. 66 back to Braidwood for dinner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ Polk-a-Dot Drive-in, 222 N. Front St., Braidwood, IL
49	<p>to go home from the Polk-A-Dot Drive-In</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☞ <u>Return via Rt. 66 (IL-53)</u> turning left out of drive-in ☞ <u>Return via US-55</u> turning right out of drive-in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At light, turn right on IL-113 to cross tracks ○ After crossing tracks, turn right onto Washington St. (IL-129) ○ IL-129 will merge with US-55 north