



News From the Road

April 21, 2023



THE ROAD AHEAD PARTNERSHIP

Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership Provides Activity Updates in 2023 Spring Report

The Route 66 Road Ahead Board of Directors held its annual, face-to-face meeting in Albuquerque, NM, on March 30, 2023. The following day, members of the Road Ahead Board who were able, attended part of the annual meeting of the Research Route 66 group. Their new report, available on their website, <http://www.route66roadahead.org> (by clicking on the "News" or "Resources" tabs), covers January 2023 through March 2023 and includes the following highlights.

The Road Ahead continues to focus on five outcomes: increased collaboration, effective promotion, purposeful preservation, increased economic vitality, and quality research and education. The outcomes are supported by a variety of goals designed to advance Route 66 as an American historic and economic treasure.

The Route 66 State Associations Advocacy Working Group collaborates with each other and the Road Ahead Board of Directors to share common interests, opportunities, and support. They are currently working with AAA to create an experience that best supports each state. Plans are underway to help promote the AAA RoadFest during the International Mother Road Festival to be held in Springfield, Illinois in September of 2023.

The Research/Education Working Group supports professional and amateur educators and researchers in their efforts to inspire and renew public understanding of Route 66. The largest part of their first quarter efforts focused on setting up a summer training session for teachers using a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to train 72 teachers in developing a Route 66 curriculum for middle and high school students. Professor Gretchen McAllister of Northern Arizona University is directing this effort. Dr. David Dunaway, the chair of the Research & Education Working Group is its principal consultant. Additionally, the long-awaited bibliography of Route 66 will be published this year. Researching Route 66, a 150-page collection of what has been written about Route 66 over the years, was reviewed this quarter and there are plans for publicity and outreach to introduce the bibliography to a national audience.

Under the direction of Pam Bowman with the National Trust, the National Historic Trail Designation Task Force plans to help ensure introduction of new legislation in the 118th Congress to designate Route 66 a National Historic Trail. The Road Ahead is assisting by recruiting Congressmen/women to be original co-sponsors of the legislation.



Rt 66 Road Ahead Partnership Board of Directors with Nat'l Park Service, Nat'l Trust for Historic Preservation, and UNM Route 66 Research Center.

The Road Ahead has done extensive preparatory work for the upcoming Route 66 Centennial, but action remains on hold, pending the outcomes of the National Commission's initial meetings.



Rt 66 Road Ahead Partnership Research Route 66 group with Nat'l Park Service and UNM Route 66 Research Center.

Established in 2015 with the support of the National Park Service and the World Monuments' Fund, The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership's mission is to revitalize and sustain Route 66 as a national and international icon through partnerships focused on promotion, preservation, research and education, and economic development. Bill Thomas, Chairman, Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership rt66theroadahead@gmail.com, 217-648-5077.

Update from Melissa Lea Beasley-Lee, Board of Director for the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership & President of the New Mexico Route 66 Association, as it relates to Route 66 State Centennial Commission in New Mexico:

(As posted in previous issue: In addition to this National Centennial Commission, each of the eight Route 66 States are to form its own "State" Centennial Commission composed of members who reflect the interests, history, and importance of the communities along Route 66 in their state. Then it's off to getting things ready statewide to celebrate 100 years of Route 66!)

During this years legislative session, The New Mexico Route 66 Association introduced a bill to set up the New Mexico State Centennial Commission with Senator Pete Campos. Unfortunately, after several attempts over a two-month period, our attempts to communicate and get the bill passed were ignored. The NM Rt66 Association is currently regrouping, along with the Rt66 Road Ahead Partnership, to try and find a solution to the situation. We are disappointed that this simple organizational bill could not get passed. As of this printing, Senator Campos has not replied to any communications with the association.