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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

BOSWELL PARK
SATURDAY, JUNE 19
8:30AM TO 3:00PM

8:30-9:00am Bike Parade at the murals
9:00am Classic Cars line up across from Laclede
Electric on Route 66
10:00am Parade begins
11:00am Color Guard Presentation of Arms,
National Anthem by Christina Ruble, Invocation
by John Stowe, Mayor's Welcome, Bicentennial
Presentation, Heritage Bank Welcome
11:00am-12:00pm Sign up for Cornhole Tournament
11:45am Parade Marshall's Welcome
12:00pm Hourly Giveaway
12:00pm-2:30pm The Bucket Band
1:00pm Hourly Giveaway
2:00pm Hourly Giveaway
2:30 pm The Bucket Band
2:30-3:00pm Hourly Giveaway

MUNGER MOSS MOTEL
SATURDAY, JUNE 19
4:00PM TIL 9:00PM

4:00pm Hog Roast
with Centennial Cake
4:00pm Blue Collar Band
4:00pm Inflatables

LEBANON



FESTIVAL



14th annual Route 66 Festival kicks off Friday



LCR file photo

This 1955 Chevy truck owned by Leland Townsend was one of the eye-catching classics that was on display at the last Route 66 Festival.

STEVE SMITH SSMITH@LACLEDERECORD.COM

The Lebanon-Laclede County Route 66 Society is getting ready to celebrate the Mother Road with the 14th Route 66 Festival this weekend.

Highlights will include three classic-car cruise-ins, a parade and lots of live music over the two-day event presented by Heritage Bank June 18 and 19.

Jessica Rodden is festival chairman for a committee that is turning the annual festival into a multi-day event located at several locations.

"This committee has put in a year's worth of time and energy to make sure that our community has an event that will be around for years to come," Rodden said.

"This year we've added a Friday

evening portion to the event, which actually occurs downtown, it's the kickoff for the festival," Rodden said. Saturday will be a full day of events, including a parade.

"We wanted to make sure we brought the festival feel back," Rodden said. "It's more than just a four-hour event, it starts Friday evening and it's all day Saturday with different locations as well. That brings everybody down Route 66 and incorporates our downtown as well."

The kick-off event is a cruise-in on Friday evening from 5 to 10 p.m. in downtown Lebanon.

Commercial Street will be blocked off at 4:30 p.m. on Friday. Classic Cars will enter at Jackson and Washington to park along Commercial Street starting at 5pm.

See 'FESTIVAL' page 5

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Festival _____

_____ from page 4

There will be food trucks and craft vendors at the Market from 5-8pm. EMJ DJ will be at Adams and Commercial from 6-9 p.m.

Phat Mike and the Bartenders will be performing at Madison and Commercial Street from 5-10 p.m.

In addition to the entertainment, custom souvenir T-shirts and passports will be available at Adams, Madison and at the Market. T-shirts will be available in two colors for \$20.

Passports are available for \$5. The passports include 15 stops at Downtown businesses that are representing a historic site along Route 66 in Laclede County.

Stop in each business to get a stamp. Turn your passport in at the end of the night for the chance to win prizes.

CONTINUED on next page

Route 66 Festival Schedule of Events

DOWNTOWN FRIDAY, JUNE 18 – 5:00- 10:00PM

4 p.m. Commercial Street is closed to traffic
4 p.m. Classic Cars enter Downtown and are parked in all 3 blocks of Commercial for the car show

5 p.m. Route 66 T-shirts go on sale at the T-shirt table

5 p.m. Downtown Passport Programs go on sale at the T-shirt tables

6 p.m. Food trucks in the Farmers Market Pavilion

6-10 p.m. Phat Mike and the Bartenders on main stage located at Commercial and Madison sponsored by The Rail 1868

6-9 p.m. EmJ Event DJ plays Sock Hop 50's music sponsored by Lebanon Publishing Company

6-9p.m. Dance lessons every 30 minutes sponsored by Rewind Fast Forward Boutique

6-9 p.m. Popcorn and other refreshments in front of Vintage Flower Market

6-9 p.m. Fake tattoos for the kids from Rebel Ink

6-9 p.m. Kids activities sponsored by Realty Executives

7 p.m. Hula Hoop Competition every 30 minutes sponsored by Falcon Floor Covering (various age categories)

ACTIVITIES WILL BE ADDED

BOSWELL PARK

SATURDAY, JUNE 19 8:30 A.M. TO 3 P.M.

8:30-8:45 a.m. Registration for Bike Parade at the murals

9 a.m. Bike parade starts

9 a.m. Classic Cars line up across from Laclede Electric on Route 66 for parade

10 a.m. Parade begins

11 a.m. Color Guard Presentation of Arms, National Anthem by Christina Ruble, Mayor's welcome, Heritage Bank welcome, presentation of decorated bike trophies

11 a.m.-3 p.m. Elks Lodge cornhole tournament

11 a.m.-3 p.m. Camp Joy cabin open for visits

12, 1, 2 and 3 p.m. - Hourly giveaways

12 p.m.-2:30 p.m. The Bucket Band performs



MUNGER MOSS

SATURDAY, JUNE 19 4 P.M. TIL 9 P.M.

4-9 p.m. Cruise-in

4-9 p.m. Funnel cakes by Laclede County Shrine Club

4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Hog Roast (while food lasts)

4:45 p.m. presentation to Ramona (owner of Munger Moss Motel) for 75 years in business

5-7 p.m. Music by Blue Collar Kings

4-9 p.m. Inflatables for kids

6 p.m. Presentations recognizing 75th anniversaries of Orchard Hills and Munger Moss.

WRINK'S MARKET

SATURDAY, JUNE 19 4:00PM TO DARK

4:00pm Classic Cars, Great Food, Petting Zoo, Pony Rides, Randall's Water Works, Inflatables, Live Music, Yard Games, Hay rides and more

4:00pm Burn out pit hosted by Tires, Brakes and more

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The first 25 to turn in their passport with 10 of the 15 businesses will receive two tickets to enter to win a custom Route 66 pendant necklace made and donated by Layla's Fine Jewelry and Repair and/or a one-night stay for two people at the Guest Apartment by Commercial Street Studio.

The first 25 will also receive a Downtown Lebanon tumbler. Each participant will also receive an entry for every 5 stops to be entered to win one of three gift baskets valuing over \$150 each. The items in the gift basket are donated by the participating Downtown Businesses.

Downtown businesses will be hosting fun events Friday evening. There will be a hula hoop contest at Falcon Floor Covering, swing dance lessons at Rewind Fast Forward, free temporary tattoos for kids at Rebel Ink Tattoo, snacks and more at Vintage Flower Market, kids' activities at Realty Executives, a

kissing booth with Hershey Kisses at Shades of Gray Boutique, live art demonstrations on the sidewalk along with craft booths inside of the Lebanon Art Guild, a sidewalk market at The Cowlick Dry House until 7 p.m. Many retail stores are having special sales for the event.

Ashton Light, Downtown Business District Executive Director, thanked the presenting sponsor, The Rail 1868 Restaurant and Tavern, for their support of this event.

"We would also like to thank our supporting sponsors, Lebanon Route 66 Society and Mercy Hospital of Lebanon for their support. We would also like to thank our Board and Committee members for putting in the hours it takes to plan these large events, as well as the City for their constant support and cooperation. This is truly a community event and it takes the whole community coming together to pull it off," Light said.

CONCLUDED on next page



LCR file photo

Lebanon Mayor Jared Carr speaks the dedication of the Camp Joy cabin at the 2019 Route 66 Festival.

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"This is a great opportunity to bring tourist traffic and locals alike into our Downtown," Light said. "There has been so much progress made lately, and we cannot wait to show it off. We hope that this is an event and partnership that can grow each year. Bring your cars, bring your family and friends, and get ready for a fun night for everyone."

Day two of the festival begins at Boswell Park, hosted by the Lebanon-Laclede County Route 66 Society in partnership with Lebanon Parks and Recreation and Lebanon Tourism. In case of rain, events will be moved indoors to the Cowan Civic Center.

Activity begin at 8:30 a.m. Saturday at Boswell Park with a bike parade and decorated-bike contest for kids at the murals at 9 a.m.

At 9 a.m. cars will line up at Wyota Drive across from Laclede Electric for the annual parade. The parade starts at 10 a.m. and travels to Utah Street to enter Boswell Park, where the festival is held, for a cruise-in until 3 p.m. Each parade vehicle receives a ticket for the \$66 drawings to be given away at the festival.

Mrs. Norma Bledsoe who has lived on Route 66 for more than half a century will lead the parade as grand marshal.

Any classic or unique vehicles, including motor-

cycles, are welcome to join the parade.

Other activities at Boswell Park include opening ceremonies at 11 am, hourly give-aways, live music by The Bucket Band, food trucks, a cornhole tournament, inflatables, face painting and more. The Bucket Band, from Kansas City, performed at the 2019 festival and is being brought back by popular demand.

The new Boswell Park amphitheater is scheduled to be completed in time for Saturday's events.

At 4 p.m. the festivities move to the Munger Moss Motel on Route 66. The Munger Moss is celebrating 75 years in business with a hog roast, live music by the Blue Collar Kings, inflatables and more.

Across the road at The Vintage Cowgirl and Wrink's Market, activities include a cruise-in, a petting zoo, pony rides and a burn-out pit sponsored by Tires, Brakes and More.

The festival is an official Missouri Bicentennial event with the theme of "200 Years of Missouri, 95 Years of Route 66."

This is Lebanon's 14th Route 66 Festival since 2001 and the fifth year that events have been held at Boswell Park in partnership with Lebanon Parks and Recreation.

In case of rain, Saturday's daytime events will be moved indoors to the Cowan Civic Center.



LCR file photo

Sean Bailey with Eastbound and Down of Branson portrays Buford T. Justice from "Smokey and the Bandit" fame at the 2019 Route 66 Festival.

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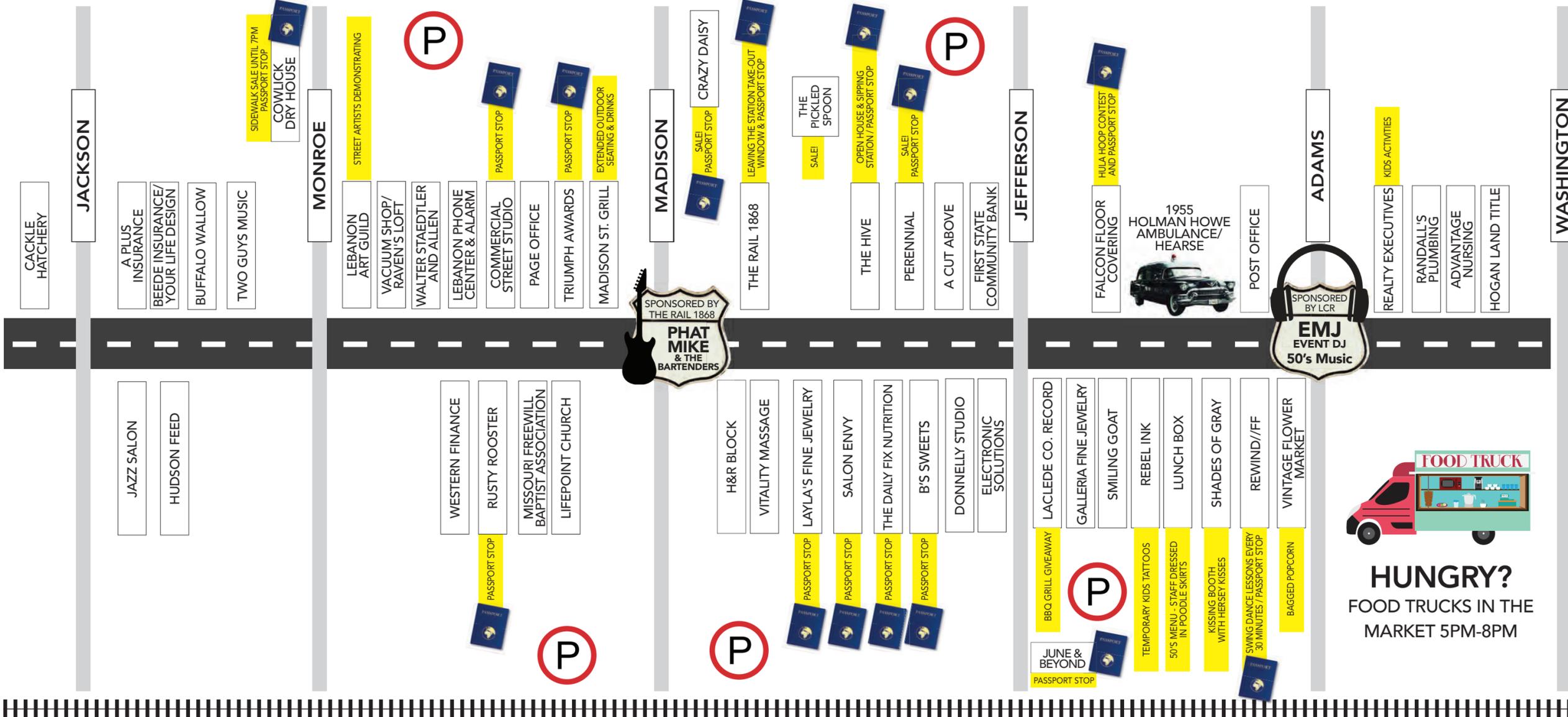


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Bledsoe gets her kicks on Route 66

Norma Bledsoe has been named the parade's grand marshal

GARY SOSNIECKI • LEBANON-LACLEDE COUNTY ROUTE 66 SOCIETY

Not many can say that Route 66 runs in front of and behind their house.

Norma Bledsoe is one of the few.

That oddity alone would qualify her to be grand marshal of the 2021 Lebanon Route 66 Festival Parade.

But there is so much more to Norma's story. For example, as a teen in 1961, she was the first carhop Bernie Bollig hired at Lebanon's legendary Big Wig Drive-In on City Route 66.

She began a 39-year career as a machine operator for H.D. Lee in Lebanon at age 17, convincing boss Jim Prime that she could do the job.

Today, the widow and mother of three adult children is known for producing large quantities of baked goods — "I bake

everything," she says — often giving away as much as she sells.

"She's the genuine article," parade coordinator Leland Townsend says.

Norma will lead the Route 66 Festival Parade in a 1965 Mustang convertible at 10 a.m. June 19 as classic vehicles roll west on Route 66 from the Lebanon Industrial Park to the festival grounds at Boswell Park. Lineup starts at 9 a.m.

Back to Norma's unusual geographic connection to Route 66: Her home, about a mile east of Lebanon, fronts Route 66. But an early alignment of Route 66, probably dating back to when it was unpaved State Road No. 14, separates her back yard from Bledsoe family farmland.

CONCLUDED on next page



Photo by Gary Sosniecki

Route 66 Parade Grand Marshal Norma Bledsoe stands on a piece of old Route 66.

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The old, dirt highway is easily identifiable from the built-up roadbed and the ruts from the farm vehicles that still traverse it. Jimmy Bledsoe, Norma's son, points to rocks at the end of a century-old culvert that still drains.

Norma has lived on Route 66 since marrying Jerry Bledsoe in March 1964. Jerry's father, Haskel, better known as "Hack," bought the land in the late 1930s or early 1940s.

"I'm glad to say I live on Route 66," she says with pride. Norma remembers the years after Route 66 was decommissioned when the segment in front of their house was renamed Pecos Drive. "I did not like that. If Haskel had been living, he would have thrown a fit about it." She was pleased when the name reverted to Route 66.

Norma was one of 14 children — eight boys, six girls — born to Lowell and Velma Barker. "I helped Daddy with his sawmill," she remembers. Lowell Barker also dealt with cars. "He did everything. The hardest worker."

Husband Jerry died last year, nine days before what would have been their 56th anniversary. Suffering from dementia, he spent his last eight years in a nursing home. "It was horrible, a horrible thing," Norma says of the disease. She recalls getting so attached to the elderly residents at the nursing home that she

started baking for them.

"I thought, Lord, let me take things to them. The kids ask me, 'Mom, why do you do this?' The Lord needs me. It makes me feel so good. ... I love doing that."

Some days, Norma gets up at 4:30 a.m. to start baking. "I only made eight dozen (cookies) this morning," she says with a laugh. These cookies were destined for graduation parties. She recently baked eight dozen hot rolls for a party. "The next big batch of cookies I'm making, they're going to Kansas City."

The baking keeps her busy. "A lot of times I'm not making money, but that doesn't matter."

Norma met Jerry while working at the Big Wig. "I'd seen him out there, but I didn't know who he was. I wouldn't pay any attention to him." That changed — not in a good way — when Jerry and his friends let a raccoon out of their car at the drive-in. "I told Bernie, 'I'm not going to wait on that car again.' And I wound up marrying him!"

She adds: "I got into one of the best families I could have. They just treated me like a queen."

Jerry was a car dealer. "He had some of the cleanest cars I've ever seen," Norma says. The Bledsoes had three children: Jimmy, Janet King and Jennifer Hite. Norma takes pride in her six grandchildren. "They're all very successful."

She tells a story about the time Jerry was breaking in a pair of new boots, a gift, when he was approached by an older man coming off the highway. The man appeared destitute, and Jerry realized the man needed the boots more than he did.

"He gave him the new boots. That's the kind of guy Jerry was."

Norma loves her family, her neighbors — "they just feel like family" — and her church, Heritage Baptist, where she's been a

member for 50 years.

She points to a sign hanging on the wall of her sunroom.

It reads: "It's a wonderful life."



Bledsoe

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Munger Moss Motel will celebrate 75th anniversary

STEVE SMITH
SSMITH@LACLEDERE.COM

The Route 66 Festival will be a time of big anniversaries for the Munger Moss Motel.

It's the 75th anniversary of the motel and Ramona Lehman's 50th year as the motel's owner.

Lehman said the 50th anniversary of she and her late husband Bob buying the motel was June 1.

"I say I was destined to be here," she said. "Bob and I are from northeast Iowa. We both grew up on a farm."

They married in 1957 and went on their honeymoon in St. Louis.

"We stayed in the King Brothers Motel on Route 66, my first encounter with Route 66," she said.

The couple had four children. Bob farmed with his father and Ramona was an LPN, working in a doctor's office. She said they decided to look into a lifestyle change after a severe Iowa winter storm in January 1971.

"When it stopped snowing and Bob got home the next day, his first words were 'we're moving south,'" she said. "We talked about it."

She said they traveled to Springfield to visit a realtor and she remembers coming through Lebanon. They decided against doing business with that realtor, but on the way home they stopped in Lebanon and met Tim Compton, a local realtor.

"We were gassing up and he told



Ramona Lehman gives a tour of one of the rooms at Munger Moss Motel. She purchased the hotel with her late husband Bob in 1971.

LCR photo/Steve Smith

us about this place that was for sale," she said. "He brought us over here, showed us around."

She said they talked it over, then made an offer and Compton accepted.

"The first of June, 1971, we were

in Lebanon, Mo. signing papers," she said. "Fifty years ago, Bob and I came here and signed a contract for this place, that's a long time ago," she said.

She said she has seen interest in Route 66 increase greatly over the

years with work of the Route 66 Society.

"For many years, Route 66 didn't mean anything to a lot of people but then all of a sudden, Lebanon has taken to Route 66 and I'm very proud of it," she said. "Our goal is to preserve it and keep it."

She said COVID-19 has cut back on travel worldwide, but she is looking forward to restrictions being lifted so people can resume visiting the Mother Road.

"There's a lot of USA people too driving the roads," she said. "They've been penned up with this COVID for so long, they're ready to get out and go."

Now, she said Route 66 is recognized as a historic highway in every state.

She said they get visitors from all over the world.

"I remember I had a woman register, she wrote she was from Moscow, Russia," she said.

Lehman said she has enjoyed life in Lebanon, operating the motel.

"I honestly feel very blessed, I loved what I did, I liked meeting people, talking to people, I learned from a lot of people," she said. "I learned there were a lot of countries I didn't know. You treat them decent, they are good people, they enjoy what they're doing. Some of them save for years to come to America. They love America."

See 'MOTEL' / page 15



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BREAKFAST, LUNCH, AND DINNER



Orchard Hills Package Store on Route 66 turns 75

GARY SOSNIECKI
LEBANON-LACLEDE COUNTY ROUTE 66 SOCIETY

Five years ago, when Woodrow and Veronica Carpenter were looking for a business to call their own, it was an easy decision after friends told them that Orchard Hills Package Store was available.

"We like that it's on Route 66," Woody (Woodrow's nickname) recalls. "We always wanted to have a business on Route 66. And this one has been here longer than most."

In fact, Orchard Hills Package Store is one of two Lebanon businesses on Route 66 celebrating 75th anniversaries this year. Orchard Hills and the Munger Moss Motel both will receive plaques from the Lebanon-Laclede County Route 66 Society on June 19 at the Route 66 Festival recognizing the achievement.

As far as the Carpenters know, they are only the fourth owners of Orchard Hills Package Store. The business was founded on Route 66 by the late Dean Elmore in 1946. Its first home was a rock building east of today's Crow Paint and Glass. The site now is part of Ed Morse Ford.

Elmore moved the business to its present location at the northeast corner of Route 66 (Elm Street) and Washington in 1971.

See 'ORCHARD HILLS' / page 15



Dean Elmore stands in front of his business, Orchard Hills Package Store, on Route 66 in the 1950s. It was originally located just east of today's Crow Paint and Glass. LCR file photo

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Orchard Hills

from page 13

That brick building has historic significance as the first of two Lebanon gas stations built in the 1930s by O.E. Carter and Ed Lawson. The station featured Barnsdall gas but later converted to Phillips 66.

The gas station's garage door now is the Orchard Hills entrance and front window, and the garage where Carter and Lawson serviced cars is retail floor space today. Bulk anti-freeze cans that Woody found in the attic now are on display atop a cooler. A second garage on the east side, now a walk-in cooler, was added in the 1960s.

Elmore still was running Orchard Hills when he died in 2003 at age 86. He had been in business on Route 66 for 57 years. Snapshots of Elmore at the old store in the 1950s and his original light-and-water deposit receipt from 1946 hang on an inside door.

"I still have customers come in who remember him," Veronica says. Elmore's grandson, David Wheeler, succeeded him as Orchard Hills owner. The Carpenters bought the business in September 2016 from Dean and Phyllis Evans and are in the process of buying the building from Wheeler.

"Neither one of us was born here, but we've lived here quite some time," Veronica says, adding that her children never went to school anywhere but Lebanon.

The Carpenters have a son and a daughter, and Woody has another son.

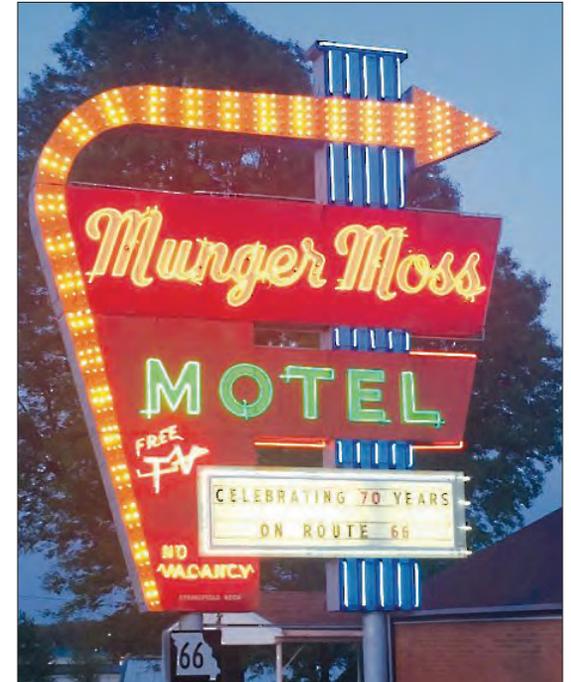
Business has been good, and they look at Orchard Hills as a long-term commitment.

"We want to keep it in our family," Woody says. "Maybe it can stay here another 75 years. That would be nice."



Submitted photos

Top, Orchard Hills Package Store as it is today on Route 66. Bottom, the original O.E. Carter and Ed Lawson service station that was built in the 1930s. Orchard Hills relocated there in 1971.



Motel

from page 12

The motel's name, Munger Moss, referred to a sandwich shop with that name in Devil's Elbow built in 1936 by Nellie Munger and her husband, Emmitt Moss. The couple relocated to Lebanon after U.S. 66 bypassed Devil's Elbow. They opened the Munger Moss Motel in 1946.

The motel's history will be celebrated at this year's Route 66 Festival. From 5 to 7 p.m. on June 19, the Blue Collar Kings will perform on the Munger Moss Motel patio as the Lebanon Route 66 Festival celebrates the 75th anniversary of the motel from 5 to 7 p.m. on June 19.

Other events will include a cruise-in, a hog roast, funnel cakes by the Laclede County Shrine Club and an inflatable slide and bounce house.

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