



# Along The Lincoln Highway



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Spring 2018

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE IOWA LINCOLN HIGHWAY ASSOCIATION

## President's Corner By The Fitzsimmons Trio Co-Presidents of ILHA

This is the last hurrah for the Fitzsimmons trio as your Iowa Lincoln Highway Association Presidents. Before we begin our farewells, John, who serves as Boone County Chair, wanted to touch on a challenge that is happening in Boone.

One of the major historic attractions in the area, the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Birthplace, is currently in trouble. While it does not sit directly on the Lincoln Highway itself, this attraction draws tourists into the local area and brings awareness to other historical sites. Right now, however, the museum might be closing. Due to a lack of funding and visitors, the Boone Historical Society is discussing this closure. While this is no fault of the Society itself; it is concerning, as it is always is when a historical attraction becomes threatened. There is some hope, though, as there is a coalition in town that wishes to assist with funding and taking over the museum. John sincerely hopes that the museum will keep the doors open for as long as possible in the time to come.

As mentioned, the time has come for the Fitzsimmons Trio to end our joint presidency. It has been a pleasure serving the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association for the last two years. What a time it was! Sean greatly appreciated the opportunity to serve as President first. He enjoys being a member and sincerely regrets that his increased responsibilities at work prevented him from acting as the solo president during his term. John stepped in to assist and called on Amber to help with technology, to complete the trio as we stand today.

Thank you to all who have made these last two years such a success and we look forward to seeing the Association grow and continue to spread awareness of the Highway we love so dearly!

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## Table of Contents

<b>Pg. 1</b> President's Corner Smithsonian Salute	<b>Pg. 5</b> "Crazy" Carl Cont. Herring Hotel Update
<b>Pg. 2</b> Officer List	<b>Pg. 6</b> LHHB Update
<b>Pg. 3</b> Smithsonian Salute Cont. Interpretation Project	<b>Pg. 7</b> Motor Tour Update Spring Tea Information Mystery Place
<b>Pg. 4</b> "Crazy" Carl Fisher	<b>Pg. 8</b> Meeting Information

## Greene County Smithsonian Salute to Sports

By Greene County News

The Smithsonian Institute's "Hometown Teams" traveling exhibit will be at the Greene County Historical Museum and Jefferson Matters: Main Street and the Historical Society are getting their playbooks ready.

The "Hometown Teams" exhibit is sponsored through Main Street Iowa. Six communities were selected to host the exhibit in 2018 through a competitive application process. Jefferson will host the exhibit Aug. 11 through Sept. 23, 2018.

All are invited to an informational pep rally Monday, July 24, 2018, at 7 PM at the museum on E. Lincoln Way in Jefferson. Organizers are looking for sports enthusiasts and community-minded individuals, as well as individuals with ideas on how to promote and participate in the event.

"Hometown Teams" will be a six-week opportunity for residents and visitors to experience an actual Smithsonian exhibit on a topic everyone loves – local sports. "This museum exhibit helps us explore our love of sports in our home towns. If we're not playing sports, we're watching them. No part of American culture so colorfully and passionately celebrates American ideas as does

*Continued on Page 3*

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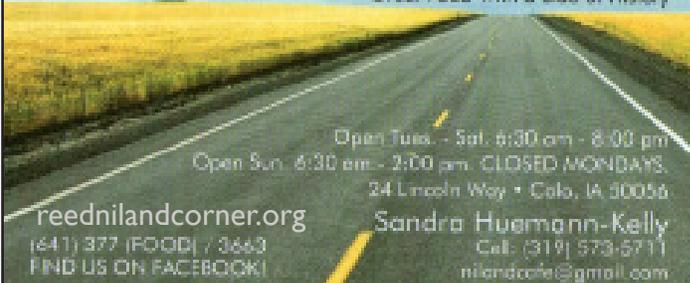
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**The Lincoln Highway Association shall identify, preserve, interpret and improve access to the Lincoln Highway and its associated sites, pursue the appropriate measures to prevent further deterioration, destruction or alteration of the remaining sections, publicize and seek public awareness of its goals and activities for preserving and developing the LH, facilitate research about the LH, and publish a magazine for articles and news of activity relevant to the LH, work with local communities and businesses to promote the LH as a tourism destination, and be exclusively charitable and educational within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code.**

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**The James H. Andrew Railroad  
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**November 1 through May 22**  
Monday - Friday 10 am - 4 pm  
Saturday Noon - 4 pm  
Closed Sunday

**May 23 through October 31**  
Sunday - Thursday 10 am - 4 pm  
Friday and Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

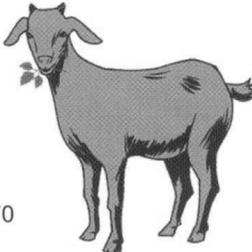


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sports,” stated an invitation to the pep rally.

The July 24 pep rally will begin with a short video of the Hometown Team Smithsonian Institute exhibit. All those at the pep rally will brainstorm ideas for local exhibits, events and activities leading up to and during the exhibit. Next, the project team (Peg Raney, Debra McGinn, Roger Aegerter, and Dianne Piepel) will share the “teams” needed to organize the project and get commitments of involvement. “This project should be fun, exciting, and as sports do—bring people together,” says the invitation.

Several ideas have already surfaced, including a movie week at the theatre with sports-themed movies, a style show of sports/band/cheerleading uniforms through the decades, book talks, concession stand food, a tailgating event, promotion of local sports manufacturers, an exhibit from each community in Greene County about its own sports history, and more.

Hometown Teams is part of Museum on Main Street, a collaboration between the Smithsonian Institution and Iowa Economic Development Authority’s Main Street Iowa program. The pep rally is free and open to anyone who wants to attend.

**L**



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**Interpretation Project Approval  
By Jan Gammon, LHHB Coordinator  
Prairie Rivers of Iowa**

Bob and Joyce Ausberger and Jan Gammon recently attended a Montour City Council meeting to request permission to install an interpretive panel in the Maple Hill Cemetery.

This is near the location where Henry C. Ostermann, Field Secretary for the Lincoln Highway Association, lost his life due to an auto accident in 1920. He was driving an official Packard and his tire left the road on a curve just east of the town of Montour.

The City Council approved the installation and the ILHA and Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway will work with the city as the project moves forward.

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**Due to space constraints, January’s meeting minutes are available on our website.**

## **“Crazy” Carl Fisher**

**By Cory Schouten**

**Republished from Money Watch**

As you watch the Indy 500 this coming May, think about Carl Fisher, the man who started this race prior to his idea for the Lincoln Highway. The following is from an article written by Cory Schouten for Money Watch on May 27, 2016.

“The salesman, showman and visionary who dreamed up the Indianapolis 500 would be proud: The 100th running this weekend (2016) will host the first official sellout and one of its largest crowds to date.

But “Crazy” Carl G. Fisher—an Elon Musk-level innovator of his era, mostly forgotten by history—wouldn’t have been satisfied. He was always searching for the next big thing.

Fisher was a driving force behind the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, and later the construction of the first interstate highways -- the Lincoln and the Dixie -- which opened large swaths of the U.S. to travel by car. And he went on to develop Miami Beach out of swampland and the resort town of Montauk on Long Island, seeing his fortune swell as high as \$100 million.

Fisher lost most everything when the “Great Miami” hurricane hit in 1926, and the stock market crashed in 1929. He died at 65 in 1939.

“He was going 100 miles per hour all the time, but never seemed to stay with anything for long,” said Donald Davidson, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway historian. “Fisher was an idea guy. He had a fire burning in his stomach.”

He also was one of the greatest salesmen of his time: “He could take Death Valley and turn it into a sunken garden,” Will Rogers was quoted as saying in a 1925 newspaper account, according to the Indiana Historical Bureau.

Fisher was 17 when he opened his first business, a bike shop in Indianapolis, at a time when bicycles had a reputation as a risky toy rather than reliable transportation. He had a knack for marketing stunts, like riding a bike across a wire between two buildings to promote his shop -- and presumably show off the bicycle’s road-worthy stability.

Naturally, he procured the first gasoline-powered vehicle in Indianapolis—a motor tricycle, Davidson said. “He drove it around town, and



© US Library of Congress

everyone thought he was a nutcase,” Davidson said. “It would scare all the horses. Then he put those vehicles in the bicycle shop for sale.”

His next lark was inspired by a trip to the first U.S. Auto Show, in New York in 1900. Fisher was hooked, for a while at least. Like bicycles earlier, cars needed advocates to persuade a public worried about safety and reliability. Fisher again turned to marketing gimmicks at the fledgling Fisher Automobile Co., one of the nation’s first car dealers.

In one such promotion that reinforced his “Crazy Carl” nickname, Fisher ferried a Stoddard-Dayton across town using a hot-air balloon, according to an account by the Indiana Historical Society. In another, he pushed a car off the roof of a downtown building (its tires underinflated to prevent it from toppling over) and had his brother drive it off, still running like a champ.

After securing access to a French patent involving the use of compressed gas in headlights, Fisher and business partner James Allison launched Prest-O-Lite, which expanded with manufacturing facilities in five other cities. Union Carbide paid \$9 million to acquire the company in 1911.

In 1905, Fisher began ruminating about his biggest idea to date, telling newspaper reporters of his plans for an automobile proving ground to test out new features, help American car companies compete with European rivals, and capture the imagination of the masses. At the time, Indianapolis was as much of a car hub as Detroit.

Fisher bought farmland for the track on the west side of Indianapolis in 1909 and incorporated with fellow local investors James Allison, Frank Wheeler and Arthur Newby (whom Fisher met years earlier as fellow members of the Zig-Zag Bicycle Club) to build the track at a cost of about \$3 million.

*Continued on Page 5*

Continued from "Crazy" Carl

The first races ran on a surface of crushed stone to deadly results: Six people were killed, including two spectators, in wrecks blamed on the poor surface. So Fisher and his team ordered 3.2 million bricks to pave the course, creating what became known as the Brickyard, and the first Indianapolis 500 ran on Memorial Day in 1911.

For the Indy 500's 100th running this year (2016), the Indianapolis Motor Speedway completed \$100 million in improvements to the track and grandstands, funded by a state loan set to be repaid by tax revenues generated at the facility. IMS generates \$510 million annual economic activity for Indiana, according to a 2013 study by the Indiana University Public Policy Institute. This year's winner (2016) is expected to collect about \$2.5 million of a total purse of about \$14 million.

The current, private owners of the IMS have never provided official attendance figures, but CEO Mark Miles gave a strong hint a few days before the 100th running. He said the facility this weekend (in 2016) will host the equivalent of the entire population of Indiana cities Fort Wayne and South Bend—about 350,000 people.

It will be the largest crowd in at least 20 years to see a race at Indianapolis Motor Speedway and possibly one of the largest ever, said Robin Miller, a veteran motorsports journalist who covers the IndyCar series for NBC Sports Network and Racer Magazine.

Given that the average ticket price (face value) is about \$135, a gate of more than \$40 million is likely for a crowd of 300,000. Tickets available on the secondary market range from about \$135 for general admission to \$9,800 for a penthouse suite with one of the best views of the track.

Plenty of people helped make the track and race what it is today -- among them Tony Hulman, the Terre Haute businessman who revitalized the facility after it fell into disrepair during World War II, and whose family owns it today.

But without "Crazy" Carl Fisher, it's hard to imagine the world's highest-capacity sports venue and largest single-day sporting would reside in Indianapolis. "He was the driving force," Miller said. "The guy was amazing."

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### **Herring Hotel Update By Jan Gammon, LHHB Coordinator Prairie Rivers of Iowa**

The Herring Hotel in Belle Plaine has been abuzz with activity lately. The Herring Hotel received an emergency Historical Resource Development Program (HRDP) grant to help put a temporary roof covering on the Hotel. Thanks to Dan Friedman's crew and Freidman Farm Supply for completing this high roof cover.

At the last ILHA meeting, the group voted to apply for a national Lincoln Highway Association Endowment Fund grant to help with structural repairs in anticipation of putting on a new roof in 2019. The application has been sent in and we will find out at the national conference in June if this ILHA project will be awarded funds.

Bob Ausberger and Allan Richards are committed to help and advise on the project. They have spent a large amount of time in Belle Plaine to help clean out debris in anticipation of Spring. They plan to do more structural repairs as the weather gets warmer.

You can follow the progress on the Herring Hotel website, [www.herringhotel.org](http://www.herringhotel.org), or their Facebook page. Be sure to attend their fundraising event, "The Swellest Little Spring Tea on the Lincoln Highway" on Saturday, April 28 at 2 PM in the First Lutheran Church.

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## LHHB Update

### By Jan Gammon, LHHB Coordinator

### Prairie Rivers of Iowa

I am excited for spring to get here! We recently completed an interpretive panel for Westside's new Eugene Kock Memorial Park and can't wait for it to be installed. It actually was delivered Feb 23rd. The residents in the city of Vail are looking to create a similar park and they might want a similar panel created. The Byway is working with the Ausbergers and the City of Jefferson to add interpretation at the city's east entrance. Interpretive signs will also be added to the Lion's Club Tree Park near Grand Junction to tell the history of a steel beam that was one of the main beams and was salvaged from the old overpass that took travelers on Highway 30 over the Lincoln Highway on the west side of the park. A new overpass has just been completed and is visible from the park.

The Byway loop requested in State Center has been approved. We are waiting for the DOT order LHHB signs as the DOT sign shop is completely out now. We continue to work with the City of Tama to secure funds for the restoration of the Lincoln Highway Bridge. We have written several grants and are looking for other funding sources. We are also working on grants to pursue the interpretation, restoration, art, oral histories, and repurposing project at old gas stations at Youngville in rural Benton County, Preston's in Belle Plaine, and Reed-Niland in Colo. In the coming months, the Byway will hear on several grants and we will share the outcomes as we hear.

Winter has been full of planning and preparing and we are ready for Spring!

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### Westside

#### History of Westside

Iowa became part of the United States in 1805 as part of the Louisiana Purchase, and was admitted to the Union as the 29th state on December 28, 1846. The Railroad Telegraph road was built from Boone to Council Bluffs in 1866, and by 1867, the first railroad crossed the state, from the Mississippi River to Council Bluffs.

The railroad named many of Iowa's towns; however, Isaac Patterson is credited with naming West Side because of its location on the "west" side of Iowa's Mississippi/Missouri divide. West Side was established in 1869, and the name was officially changed to Westside on July 1, 1900. By the 1970s, the West Side area saw a large influx of Civil War veterans and railroad workers.

#### Other Important Westside Dates

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1879 First newspaper, the <i>West Side American</i>, published</li> <li>1893 General Lewis (lost general) established in 1897</li> <li>1902 Westside Independent established and operated</li> <li>1906 Westside and supplies</li> <li>1918 Civil War veterans returned with the 1st Light &amp; Cavalry</li> <li>1926 Westside Home Show began</li> <li>1929 New brick schoolhouse built</li> <li>1955 Westside, Missouri, school re-dedicated school was destroyed on Aug. 28th</li> <li>1969 Church rededicated</li> <li>1974 United Church of Christ &amp; United Presbyterian Church consolidated the United Church</li> <li>1983 First American Legion building built</li> <li>2002 New fire station completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1873 West Side's first school</li> <li>1889 First public school, Westside High School</li> <li>1899 Lincoln Park Open House</li> <li>1904 First public school through the Transportation Highway</li> <li>1913 Transportation Highway</li> <li>1923 Original charter of the United State Service Band</li> <li>1927 Westside Public Library opened</li> <li>1942 "Plymouth" named by the city, Inc</li> <li>1957 Highway Park developed by the city</li> <li>1971 Historical Community Building built on Main Street</li> <li>1982 New Veterans Home (West) is completed at Main Street</li> <li>1994 Westside rededicated to the 100th anniversary of the 22nd</li> <li>2003 The Chamber expanded office space in Westside</li> </ul>
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Westside Main Street as it appeared in the 1870s. Photo by the Register and Democrat, 1870.

The Robert H. Johnson was captured at Ansonia, Mo., November 19, 1862 and all of Westside was in the hands of the Confederates.

#### Honoring Westside Veterans

On October 10, 1919, American Legion Post 196 was chartered. In 1944, it was renamed the Alfred R. Rossman American Legion Post 196. The Westside American Legion Auxiliary was formed in 1921.

The Eugene Kock Memorial Park was dedicated in 2018 and honors all who have served and sacrificed in the military from the Westside area. It is also a historical record of past and present residents, businesses, and organizations who have made the Westside area their home.

**Motor Tour Update**  
**By Bryan and Caron Osberg**

We are going to mix it up a bit from the traditional and try something different for this year's tour. We will still have our pre-tour and Friday through Sunday tour, however we will be executing it differently. We will begin our tour in the Urbandale area (a suburb of Des Moines) and stay in the same location each night of the entire tour/pre-tour. We will use this location as a hub for the entire weekend, driving different routes each day, but circling back to the hotel, which is secured.

I am working on confirming our stops and places of interest and will send out the registration form around soon. In the meantime, mark your calendars!

**Pre-Tour: August 16, 2018**  
**Motor Tour: August 17-19, 2018**

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*The 4th Annual*  
***Sweldest Little Spring Tea***  
***On The Lincoln Highway***



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**Mystery Place**  
**By Mike Kelly**



**This Issue's Mystery Place**

In August of 1928, one month before the Boy Scouts planted markers, a baby is born in a town along the Lincoln Highway. Many years later, the now grown man is a world-famous artist residing in New York, NY. A well-known hotel in the city is often associated with the man and his entourage.

This photo of a long-abandoned signpost in Iowa *could* have sported the same name as the above big city hotel. What Iowa town is the post located outside of?



**Last Issue's Mystery Place**

This is the outbuilding at the Crawford County Home just a mile north of Arion on Old County Home Road, which is a gravel section of the Lincoln Highway.

If you think you can identify the Mystery Place, send an email to [lincolnhighway@prrcd.org](mailto:lincolnhighway@prrcd.org) or call 515-232-0048. Call with the correct information and we will take your name and contact information. We then will hold a random drawing for a winner to receive a 2013 Iowa Lincoln Highway Map Pack! This is to accommodate for the varying time and travel the postal system can take and to give all a fair try.

**The next ILHA meeting will be  
April 14, 2018 in Lowden, Iowa at 3/30 Golf & Country Club.  
Refreshments at 9:00 AM general meeting to follow.**

Driving from east or west on Highway 30 to Lowden, turn north at flashing yellow light. Cross railroad tracks into town. At STOP sign and Lincoln Hotel turn right (east). At next STOP sign and 3/30 Club rock and golf course turn left (north) to top of hill.

Upcoming Iowa LHA Meetings

April 14, 2018: Cedar County, General  
July 14, 2018: Location TBD, Business  
October 13, 2018: Location TBD, General

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