



Iowa Lincoln Highway Association

Spring 2020 Newsletter | Volume 25, No. 1

President's Corner

by Mary Helen Preston

Spring should be springing and activity picking up along the Lincoln Highway. Garry and I are certainly looking forward to the weather breaking to begin scavenger hunts at Preston's Station. So much history in the buried treasures. We are looking forward to greeting travelers who have gotten off the interstates and are traveling along the Lincoln Highway.

I want to address the elephant in the room - The Herring Hotel. The City of Belle Plaine worked for a number of years with The Herring Hotel to make certain it could be restored to be economically viable for the community. Through a number legal proceedings, the City of Belle Plaine received title to The Herring Hotel in December. The City has always wanted The Herring to be successful. In a recent letter from Mayor Fish to the Citizens of Belle Plaine, "The city is looking for someone to come up with a development plan that makes sense for our community. The city would like to come into an agreement with a group to complete some type of Urban Renewal Development project. Making it into another city-owned parking lot does not improve the tax base of Belle Plaine, nor does it bring more revenue into the community." Mayor Fish goes on to say, "This project is only limited to what a private entity is willing to propose and finance." More to come.

In January, we lost our friend Bev Winkie. Ms. Winkie was the president of the Belle Plaine Historical Society where she led the efforts to establish the Belle Plaine Area Museum. Ms. Winkie befriended Garry and I after daddy's passing and always encouraged us with our efforts

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Recreational Vehicle (RV) Readiness

by Jan Gammon

Recently, Kevin Broom from Go RVing presented a webinar about "RV Readiness for your Byway". Go RVing is a division of the RV Industry Association, but is also an independent organization. They have collected some data on people who buy and use RVs (Recreational Vehicles). According to research, outdoor recreation is 2.2% of the nation's GDP and that equates to \$114 billion in economic impact last year.

RVs are growing in popularity. Forty million people go RVing, which translates into 10.5 million households that have an RV. Eighty-eight percent are towable. The average age of an RV owner is going down from 50 years of age

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to preserve and restore Preston's. Before I knew Ms. Winkie, she would have Grandpa visit her classes to talk about the history of Lincoln Highway and Belle Plaine. I know someplace somewhere in our treasures I have a syllabus from Ms. Winkie and a picture from the Belle Plaine paper showing Grandpa in her classroom. It amazes me how paths cross and re-cross as we go along our journeys.

While the summer of 2019 was packed with special activities with Centennial Tours, Convoys and Celebrations; and community dedications, there is no lack of activities this year. Car shows and community festivals

are being planned and scheduled. To touch on some highlights - Lincoln Highway Bridge Festival is scheduled for May in Tama. June will be a busy month for conventions, conferences and summits. The Jefferson Highway Convention (which our own Sandii Huemann-Kelly and Mike Kelly are coordinating) in Mason City, Iowa on June 3 - 6. Preserve Iowa Summit in Dubuque, Iowa on June 4 - 6. The Lincoln Highway Association Convention in Joliet, Illinois on June 22 - 25.

Let's make this a great spring in getting out and sharing the history of the travel across the Lincoln Highway.

Mission Statement

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.

ILHA Officers, Board of Directors, County Consuls, and Staff

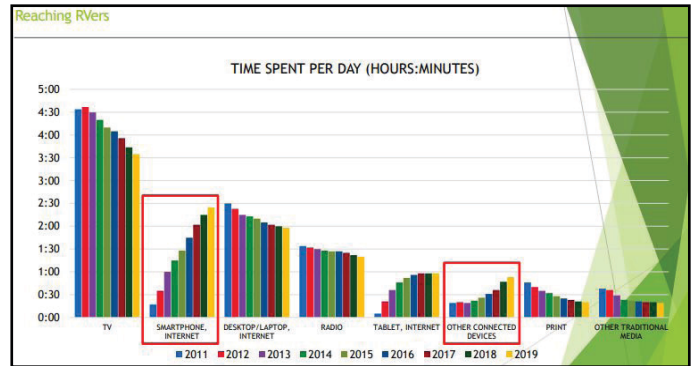
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(2000) to 45 years of age (2017). Millennials are traveling more than any other generation and are purchasing RVs. They aren't waiting to take big vacations, they are going now. Millennials purchase RVs as a way to save money, but with their adventurous spirit it allows them authentic experiences in places off-the-beaten path.

RVers want to disconnect and enjoy nature, but at the same time the #1 amenity they look for at a campground is Wi-Fi connection. (#2 is toilet paper.) Pets travel with 66% of RVers and 92% of those pets are dogs. Many RVers work from the road or take mini-vacations over long weekends.

How can your community attract more RVers or make their stay more pleasurable? Most RVs are 10 ft. or taller. They like hard surfaced roads and need a radius of 50 feet to make turns into parking lots. Parking spaces should be at least 12 ft. wide and an ideal camping spot 18 ft. x 48 ft.

RVers often find businesses (restaurants, gas stations, attractions, grocery stores, etc.) through Google Search or on YouTube. Make sure your businesses and attractions are up to date on those sites by claiming your business on Google. Include the state you are in on all your social media platforms. Take your information out to campgrounds. Many



contained units (those that have the vehicle and living space on the same chassis) do not want to negotiate downtowns or congested locations. All RVers look for gas stations with pull-throughs and high enough canopies or no canopies. If possible, your attractions could develop a shuttle service from the camping or parking area to the amenity. Even towable rigs do not always want to unhook and re-hook-up and drive their own vehicle. (Casinos are good examples of the shuttle service.)

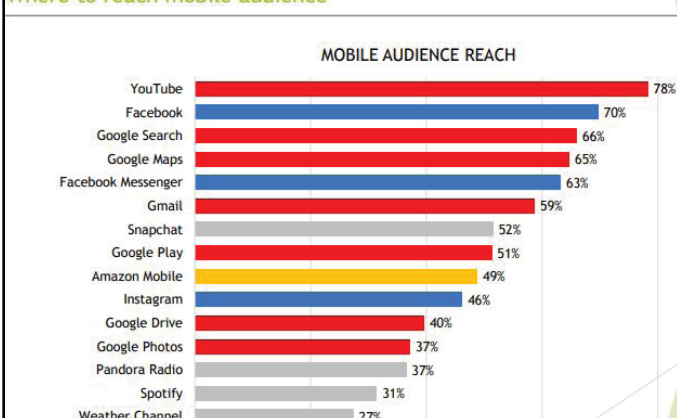
Perhaps take itineraries out to campers or post ideas on a campground bulletin board for them to have easier access to your information.

RVers report that RV usage would increase if they:

- 1) had more free time
- 2) had more places to go
- 3) had parking lots and roads that were more friendly
- 4) had better campgrounds
- 5) felt more welcomed as patrons

This is all food for thought as the Department of Natural Resources celebrates 100 years of the Iowa state park system in 2020. How can your state, county, or even a local park be more RV friendly? What local or area information can you share with campers? How can we make the Lincoln Highway the friendliest road for these types of vacationers? Send your ideas you to Jan Gammon at jgammon@prrcd.org.

Where to reach mobile audience



Lincoln Highway Monuments and Boy Scouts

by Joe Goodlove

Below is an excerpt of speech given by Joe Goodlove, LHA Cedar County Consul, at the 91st Anniversary of the installation of Lincoln Highway Monuments by the Boy Scouts in Lowden, Iowa.

(This is Part 2 of the speech. Part 1 was a recap of how the Lincoln Highway came about. Joe used information from the book "The Lincoln Highway" by the Lincoln Highway Association, 1936)



*Metal Lincoln Highway sign,
taken by Jan Gammon*

SIGNAGE:

Road signs? Not many. A lot of times directions were word of mouth, based on landmarks, such as: "turn left at the red barn, go three miles and turn right at the oak tree." Or, "follow this mountain range 80 miles to the south to a stick in the fork of the road with a

paper tied to the top. Take the ruts that lead off to the right." But, since a mediocre road, perfectly marked, is preferable to a perfect road on which a traveler is always in doubt as to his direction, road markings of all types came about.

The first markings on the LH were simply red, white, and blue bands painted on a pole, rock, or other convenient object. Later the LHA designed its official insignia to ensure uniformity but the actual painting was done by good road enthusiasts, clubs, civic bodies, and public spirited individuals. In June 1916 painters started in Jersey City and worked west

to the NE-WY line until weather forced them to stop. More than 8,000 markers averaging five to a mile were placed. In the state of Nevada, donated worn out boiler tubes were cut to four foot lengths, pointed, and driven



*Boy Scouts taking a break in Illinois,
University of Michigan Lincoln Highway Archives*

into the ground. The advantage was they were permanent. Cattle, seeking something on which to scratch their necks, broke down the high wooden posts, but never learned to get down on their knees to lean on the boiler tubes. Handsome enameled metal signs were introduced. For rural areas eight-foot redwood posts were used. In cities, the signs were placed on poles of public utilities, lightings, etc. Completed in 1921, it was thought they would last many years. Yet, in 1924 it was noted that over 1,570 poles and 2,150 signs needed to be replaced.

REASON:

Wooden poles rot, are handy for prying cars out of the ditch, and readily end up in the farmers' chicken yards.

Enameled steel signs are ideal targets—they react with a distinctive ping when hit by a rock or a bullet. Once chipped, the metal rusts. This mortality of signs was especially noticeable where there was much hunting or when in the vicinity of country schools.

One LHA executive wrote that “this damage was obviously the work of boys. What we need are more Boy Scouts.” An executive in the Boy Scouts read this and said the Scouts are ready to participate. In fact, they would dig the holes for a concrete marker, obtain volunteer local transportation to place of erecting, AND set them all from New York to San Francisco IN ONE DAY.

WORKING:

A great idea—everyone was for it. But first the LHA had to design, manufacture, and transport these monuments. By the end of 1927, things began to move. While the monuments were being manufactured a Lincoln Highway Association and a Boy Scout executive drove across country from New York to San Francisco specifying locations, telling exactly where each was to be set, how far from the edge of the road, how deep to dig the hole, and everything else to ensure accuracy. By the end of August the monuments were shipped and the holes dug.

On September 1, 1928, on official word from headquarters, the Boy Scouts placed the monuments. Many groups set at least 100 miles; one in the state of Nevada set 175 miles. Approximately 3,000 were set: two each at important cross roads, one at each minor

crossing, and others at sufficient intervals to assure the motorist that he was traveling the right road.



*Boy Scouts with marker from Lincoln Highway
National Museum and Archives*

CLOSING:

There are not many markers left, although Cedar County has three: this one, one in the Clarence City Park, and the third at the Cedar County Historical Museum in Tipton. The monument you see here, although missing a couple feet of its original seven, is an original marker, still in good shape for 91 years.

Today we commemorate this anniversary by dedicating this monument and saluting the Boy Scout organization on their achievement.

The James H. Andrew Railroad Museum and History Center

at the Boone and Scenic Valley Railroad

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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Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway Update

By Jan Gammon, Coordinator

Boy, have I been busy writing grants this winter! Community Foundation grants have been submitted to Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Harrison, and Marshall Counties. We have yet to write to Clinton and Benton. The grants are all to create interpretive panels to tell the Lincoln Highway History. Fingers crossed they all are funded!

We also applied for a Paint Iowa Beautiful grant to help Bob and Joyce Ausberger with the Quirk's Cabin project in Jefferson.

The City of Tama and the University of Iowa are continuing to work together on a Comprehensive Plan for the City. Jan has been on some of the Zoom calls on the internet with both groups. The Comprehensive Plan will be completed by the end of the school year.

The Byway received funding for two 2-minute videos about breweries, wineries, and distilleries. One video will feature the Clinton area and the other, the Cedar Rapids area. We will be working with the University of Iowa Cinematic

Department's grad students to create the videos. Once completed, the videos will be shared on the Byway website and Facebook, Travel Iowa's sites, and with the National Scenic Byway Foundation Facebook Page. They will be available for the businesses to post as well. Work should begin in earnest in the spring.

Currently, I am working on an application for National Scenic Byway status. The bill to "Revive America's Byways" was signed in 2019 and the program to accept nominations has been reopened. The application is due May 15th.

This year is the 100th anniversary of Iowa's State Parks. Not sure if we will get involved in the celebration efforts, but wish them well on this historic event.

I will be attending the Iowa Tourism Conference in Des Moines in March and the Heartland Byway Conference in Leavenworth, KS in April.

Clues for Mystery Photo



Answer to last the last Mystery Photo:

Cecil's on old Hwy 30 in Marshalltown.
The reference to the Hawk was the Chicago based term for north wind.

1. Why are they all laughing?
2. The photo was taken at last meeting hosted at Youngville.

Herring Hotel Update Urban Renewal Development Proposal

The City of Belle Plaine, Iowa is the owner of real estate located at 718 13th Street, Belle Plaine, Iowa 52208. The City acquired the parcel pursuant to a 657A Petition and is seeking a Development Proposal to renovate and or restore the existing structure. Interested developers should submit a proposed plan for redevelopment along with a financial plan and bank letter showing availability of funds to complete the project.



Property is located in an Urban Renewal Area with potential real estate tax rebates available. Property has been listed on the National Historic Registry (#08001250) and there may be tax incentives through the IRS and federal and state preservation credits available.

RFP's are due to City Hall at 1207 8th Ave, Belle Plaine, Iowa 52208 by 5:00 p.m. on May 1, 2020. City reserves the right to reject all proposals.



Nancy & Ronny Hauser

Hours:
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Sat 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
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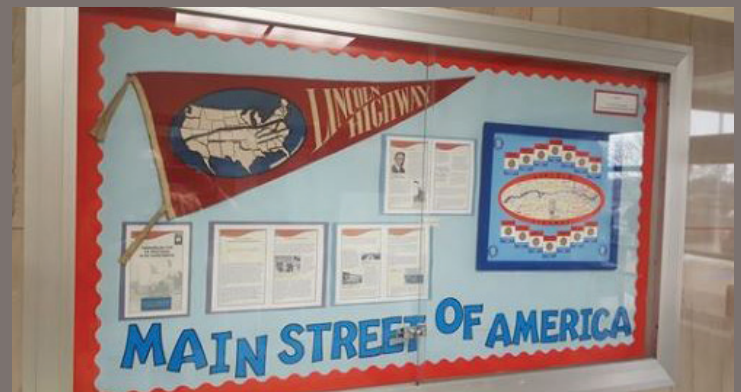
Welcome new members of the Iowa Lincoln Highway Association!

Wendi Winkie and Dusti Winkie, Belle Plaine

Nick Glenn, Huxley

Bell Tower Community Foundation, Jefferson

Benton County Historical Preservation
Commision, Vinton



Carroll County Courthouse

Pictured is a bulletin board display in the Carroll County Courthouse. They used the Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway's "Celebrating the 1919 U.S. Army Convoy" brochure that was developed this past summer. If you didn't get a copy yet, but want to read it go to <http://www.prrcd.org/lincoln-highway-heritage-byway/lincoln-brochure/> Photo above is by Mike Bolton.

Thank you Carroll County for sharing the Lincoln Highway history with the public!

The next ILHA meeting scheduled for April 11, 2020 at the Family Table in Carroll has been canceled due to COVID-19.



Future ILHA events, aside from the canceled April 11th event at the Family Table in Carroll, are still scheduled as planned. However, any upcoming ILHA Meetings are subject to change in response to any future COVID-19 developments.

Upcoming Iowa LHA Meetings

April 11, 2020: Family Table Restaurant

July 11, 2020: Location TBD

October 10, 2020: Location TBD

FIRST CLASS

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Iowa Lincoln Highway Association
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Grand Junction, Iowa 50107

