

2020 Convention

by John Weinhoft

This year's convention will be a bit different. And the details listed here are still subject to change.

The dates are Wednesday night, June 10th through Saturday night, June 14th.

We are going to start out in Pontiac, IL on Wednesday night. At this time, I haven't finalized a hotel. Thursday morning we will visit the Illinois RT-66 Association Museum, the associated military museum, and the nearby Oakland-Pontiac Car Museum. If conditions permit, there may be a trolley tour of the various downtown murals painted by a number of wall-dogs. All these events will be free; the museums do accept donations.

After these events, we will be driving about 100 miles down portions of old US RT-66 to Springfield, IL, possibly stopping in a couple of small towns along the way for photo ops. The drive will be somewhat free form and it is suggested you stop as desired for photo ops and other activities. There will be a guide / map provided. Or you can skip all that and proceed directly to the hotel in Springfield via I-55.

When we reach Springfield, we will be staying at the Hilton Garden Inn. It is a convenient location just off the I-55 Stevenson Drive exit, mile marker 94. It can be a bit tricky finding the entrance when coming from the north you have to go past the hotel to their parking lot. I have arranged a group rate, hospitality room, Saturday night banquet, etc. all at the hotel. There will be plenty of parking, including a large grassy area that can be used for trailers. Lots of restaurants are nearby, and I will also have recommendations for various local ones. For those that are not too tired, there is a local RT-66 Drive-in on either Thursday night or Friday night. At this time I do not know what movies are scheduled.

Friday morning we will take a 25 mile drive to New Salem State Park. Admission is free but they do accept donations. There will be a bit of walking involved. This is where Lincoln first came to Illinois and lived for a few years as a shopkeeper before moving to Springfield, becoming a lawyer, and entering politics. About noon we will return to Springfield, where there will be a number of options.

The Friday afternoon options will include free time. Some of your options are a visit to Lincoln's

Tomb (free), the Lincoln Presidential Library (admission charge) for those who did not see it in 2011 or want to see the changes, an early prairie design Frank Lloyd Wright designed Dana-Thomas house (donations accepted), maybe a neon sign museum, and some shopping options either downtown or elsewhere. At some point, we will visit Motorheads Bar and Grill which also has a RT-66 museum similar to Shea's Gas Station that we visited in 2011.

Saturday again has a number of options. I currently am planning most of Saturday as free time. All of the Friday afternoon options will also be available for Saturday. In addition, during the day, there is a car show on the square in Jacksonville, IL about 30 miles west of Springfield. Or there is a Chevrolet Museum (admission fee) in Decatur, IL about 40 miles east of Springfield. Saturday evening a local car club, the Route-66 Cruisers will be having a cruise-in near the hotel at Rock n Roll Hardees. Last time we attended one of these and I think everyone had a lot of fun. The traditional banquet will be at the hotel starting at 7 PM.

Hotel details in Pontiac are as follows:

Quality Inn
1823 W Reynolds Avenue
Pontiac, IL 61704
Phone: 815 844-4444

King or 2 Queen rooms are available at \$80 plus tax. Be sure to mention the Checker club.

Hotel details in Springfield are as follows:

Hilton Garden Inn
3100 s Dirksen Parkway
Springfield, IL 62703
Phone: 217-529-7171

Booking Link: <http://group.hiltongardeninn.com/CheckerCarClub>

you must enter '6CHECK' in the group code box

King or 2 Queen rooms are available at \$99 plus tax

Both room rates are only available until May 10th.