

Road Ahead/Harvest Host Partnership Attracting More Tourists to Route 66

“We’ve been members of [Harvest Hosts] for 4+ years, travel a moderate amount, and Mother Road Brewing Company is among the top three stays we’ve ever had. Definitely visit if you can!” is just one review you can find about Mother Road Brewing Company in Flagstaff, Arizona, on the Harvest Host members site. Mother Road has accepted 15 reservations for their two locations since becoming Harvest Hosts in March, 2019. As a result, they have this positive endorsement and six others to help promote their Route 66 business to other RV travelers across the US and Canada.

The City of Pontiac-Tourism Office also became a Harvest Host in March, when the Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership announced its strategic partnership with the Harvest Host organization. According to Pontiac Tourism Director Ellie Alexander, they received their first reservation just 16 days after receiving their welcome letter. And, in four months, the City has taken a total of 19 reservations.

“We use the City Hall parking lot and reserve their spot with cones. If their arrival is going to be after hours, we also put a welcome sign and a goodie bag with all the information on attractions, tours, restaurants, etc.” explained Alexander.

Though they have no way of tracking exact dollars spent by the Harvest Host RVers, they do see the travelers all around town – especially in the downtown area. The guests have been seen in restaurants, going to the movies and concerts, carrying shopping bags from local vendors, and purchasing groceries from the local supermarket.

To emphasize the benefits of being a Harvest Host, Alexander said, “We’ve had several people who have told us they had never heard of Pontiac and are so glad they decided to stop and stay.”

Other Route 66 Harvest Hosts include the City of Atlanta, IL (Palms Grill Café, Hawes Elevator Museum, Atlanta Public Library), the Missouri Route 66 Association (Missouri Route 66 Welcome Center in Conway), Baxter Springs (Kansas) Heritage Museum, and the Blue Swallow Motel (Tucumcari, NM).

The Road Ahead Partnership would like to expand the experiences of RV travelers to include as many Route 66 attractions as possible, introducing more and more retirees, families, business professionals, bloggers, and explorers to the unique adventure of traveling historic Route 66.

RV members are prequalified as guests through an annual program fee and a code of conduct guide which outlines how to make reservations, when to arrive, and suggests how much to spend at each location. If you are interested in becoming a Harvest Host site, email rt66theroadahead@gmail.com for information and details.

Established in 2015 with the support of the National Park Service and the World Monuments Fund, The Route 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.

Sidebar/Photo and caption:



Casey and Waltraud Leser, of Frisco, TX, reserved their Harvest Host spot by the J.H. Hawes Grain Elevator Museum in Atlanta, IL, in July 2019. The Lesers selected the Atlanta site because of their passion for history and its proximity to their Morris, Illinois, family reunion destination.