



Route 66 – August 2014

Calypso Meets the Open Road



Dedicated to my Mom
The woman who inspired me to obtain my dreams.
And my first passenger.

My Route 66 Trip started with the delivery of my C7 Z51 Laguna Blue Stingray at the factory in Bowling Green Kentucky. This story of my dreamed about road trip starts there.

Picking up Calypso at the factory.



The first leg of the trip to Route 66 included a visit to the Great Smoky Mountains - The Tail of the Dragon.



The next stop was to visit the family in Richmond Virginia. My sister met me at my Mom's place and a trip to their house followed. Deirdre (my niece) admired her choices.



After the visit with family and friends in Virginia. It was off to Chicago and the start.

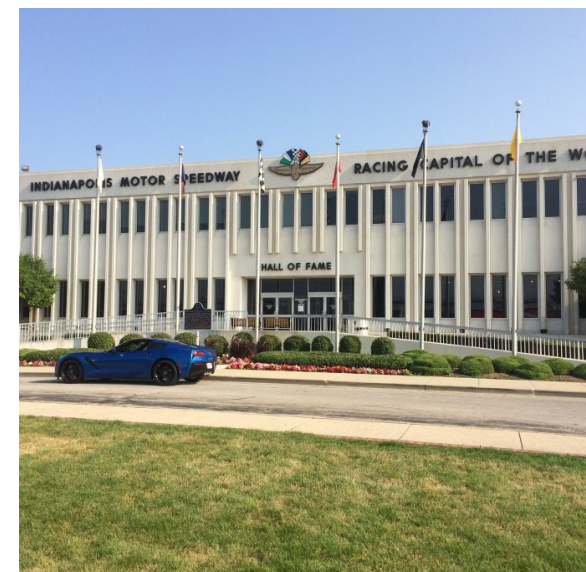
First stop was at the Green Brier Resort



Meeting up with Mike and Sharon Cope in West Virginia was also a must do.



The final stop before Chicago was in Indianapolis IN. and the home of the Indianapolis 500. A visit to the museum and a photo op. Then on to **Chicago**.





The beginning of Route 66 is on Adams between Wabash and Michigan Ave. in Downtown Chicago, just a few short blocks from the Chicago Tribune building.

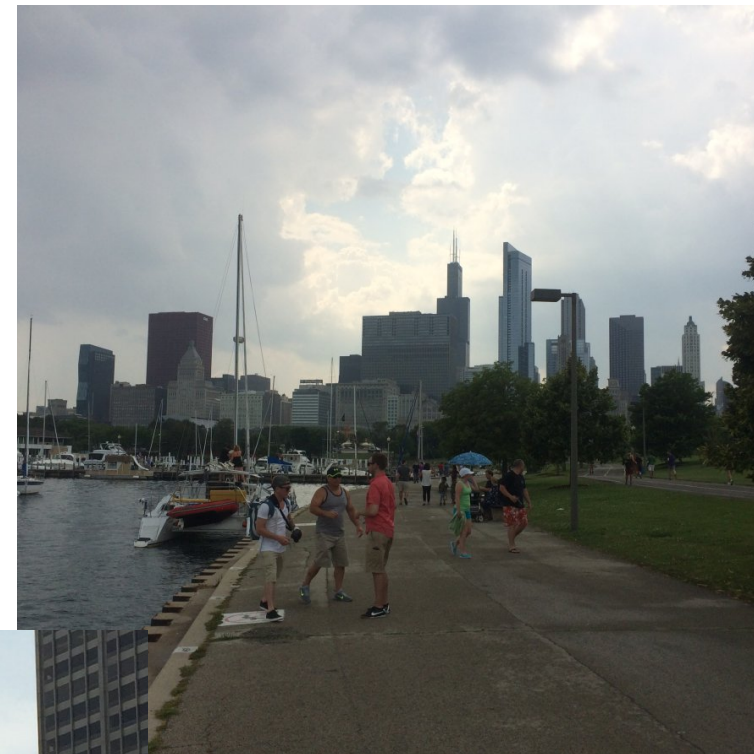
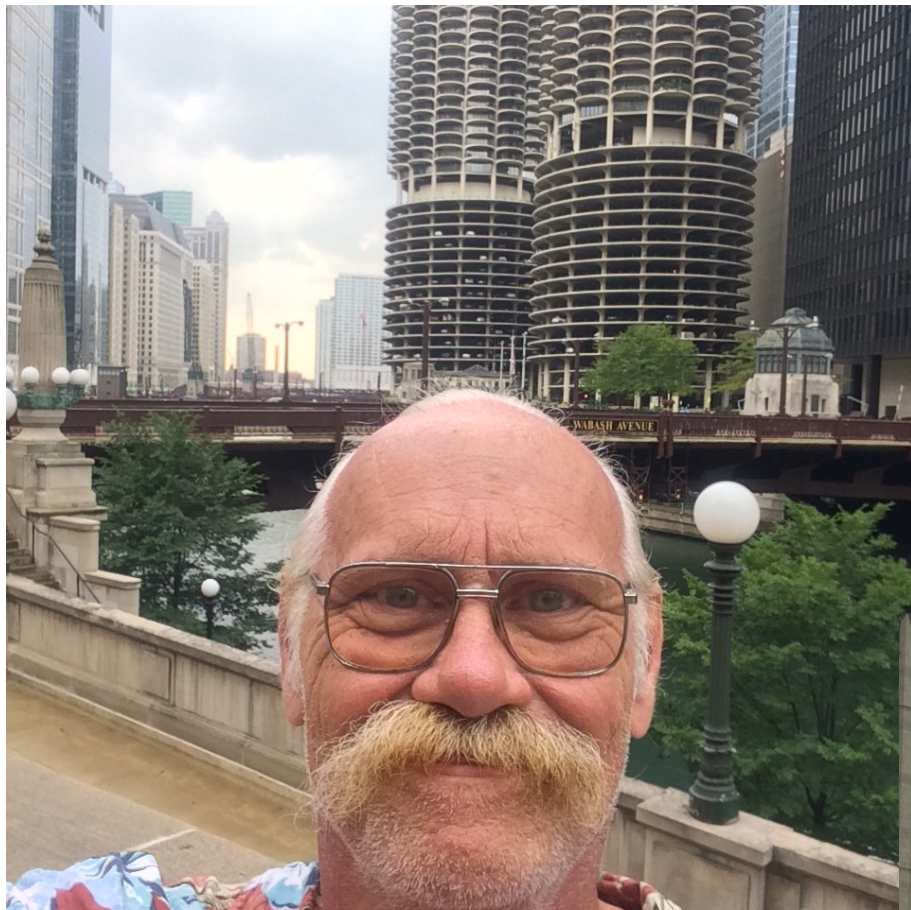
The end is in the vicinity of the Santa Monica Pier in Santa Monica California with about 32 hours and over 2000 miles squeezed in between.

There are countless stories of this historic Highway that has been for the most part covered over with the U.S. Highway system of the Eisenhower era.

This is just one story, my story, of my first cross country trip with the car of my boyhood dreams. At the age of 14 when my love of Corvettes began, I could never have dreamed fifty years ago of all the technology that goes into the 2014 C7 Corvette that I specified.

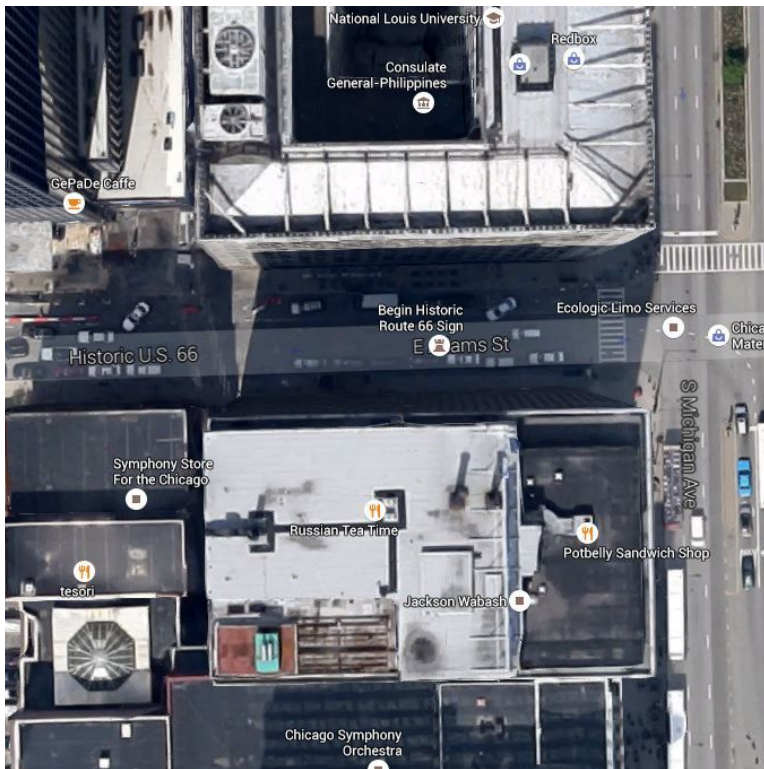
Yet with the car, the dreams, and the highway my biggest take away from this trip were the people I met and the stories I heard along the way.

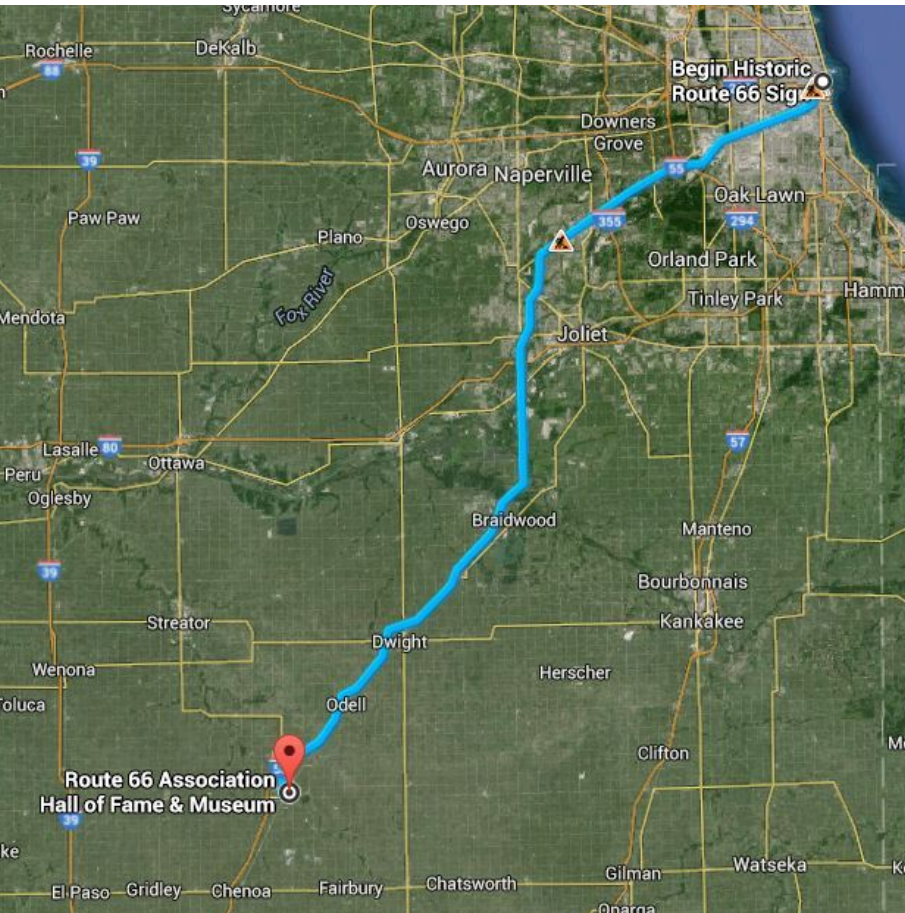
As Billy Connolly says - Route 66 - You should do it.



Chicago

And it starts here.





The start of the trip was at hand. Under the advisement of the CPD; I awoke early, checked out, and got to the "start" by 7AM. The spotty rain and drizzle of the previous day was gone. The sudden downpours that had chased me into store entrances were gone. Blue skies were coming to light in the morning sun, but the high-rises and my desire to "get going" prohibited a pass by the lake front. From the parking garage, to the front of the hotel, to this spot was all I had on my mind. Fortunately I did find a Chicagoan that was willing to take a picture or two.

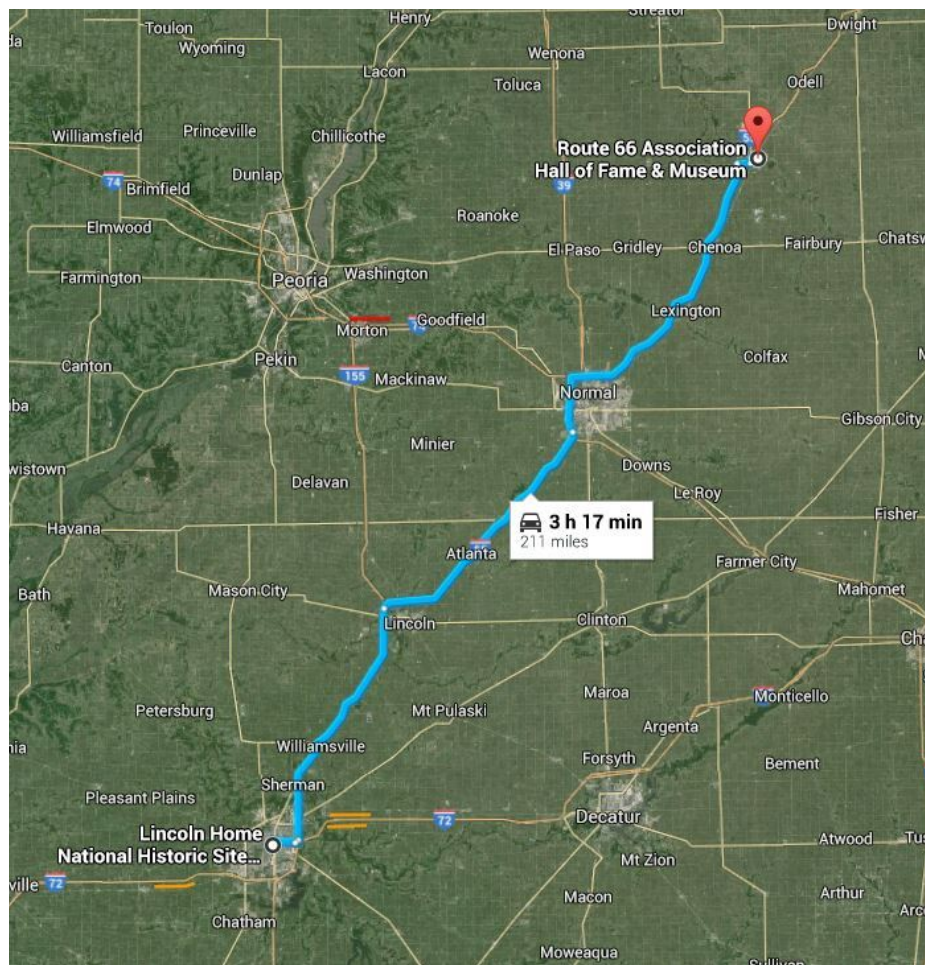


Billy Connolly spent almost 20 minutes talking about this museum in his four hour special on "the road". It was worth a stop and a good place to meet up with an old friend from Imperial Beach; Patrick (Pat) Ryan.



I am very fortunate in the friends I have. Separate from those that I grew up with, these friends like Pat and others have shared different parts of my journey. It was appropriate that this journey of my dreams include those along the way, as they have throughout my life. There were many more that I would have liked to have included, but logistics got in the way.

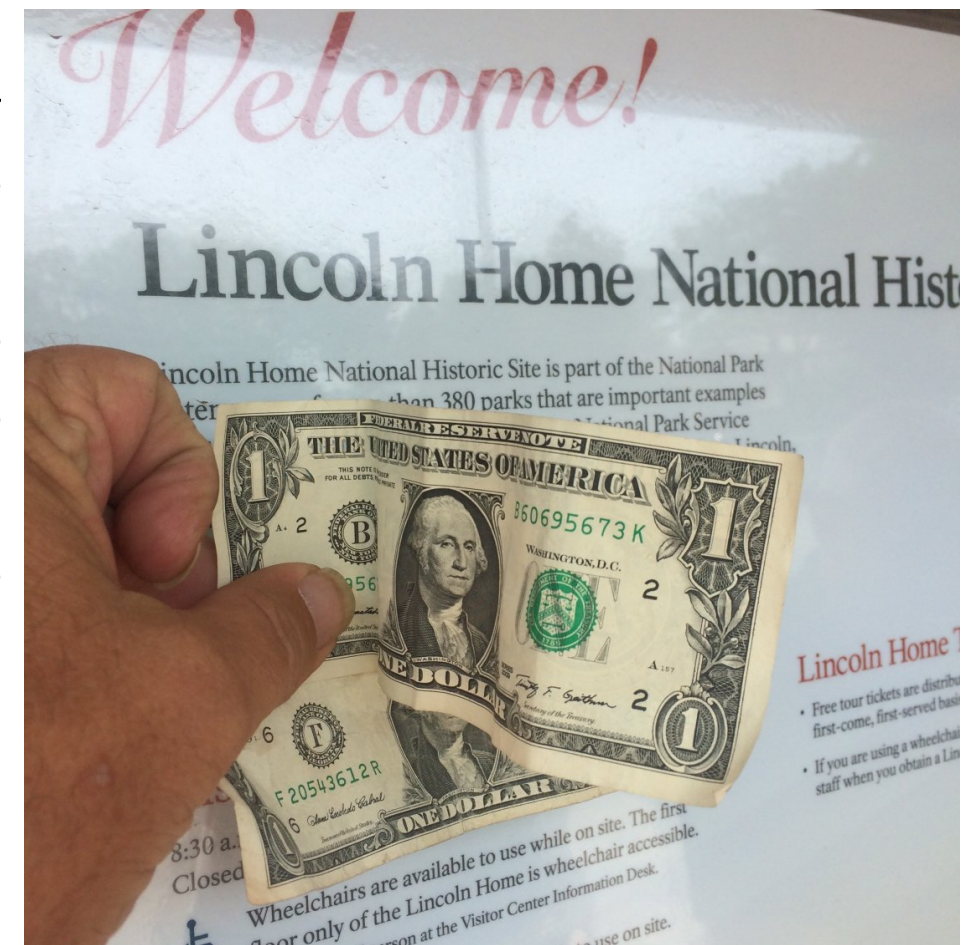




At the time it came time to pay for the parking I was considerably under the minimum. For the amount of time I had spent there I thought the price was a little steep.

I thought perhaps a couple of the coins with Lincoln's head on it would be more appropriate for the time I had spent there.

It cost me two Washington's. But I paid it, and then having the parking pass in my hand, I gave it to a passing family in a van. Somebody got my monies worth.



I had lunch with Pat in Peoria, and then I headed almost due south to Springfield Illinois, and the home of Abraham Lincoln.

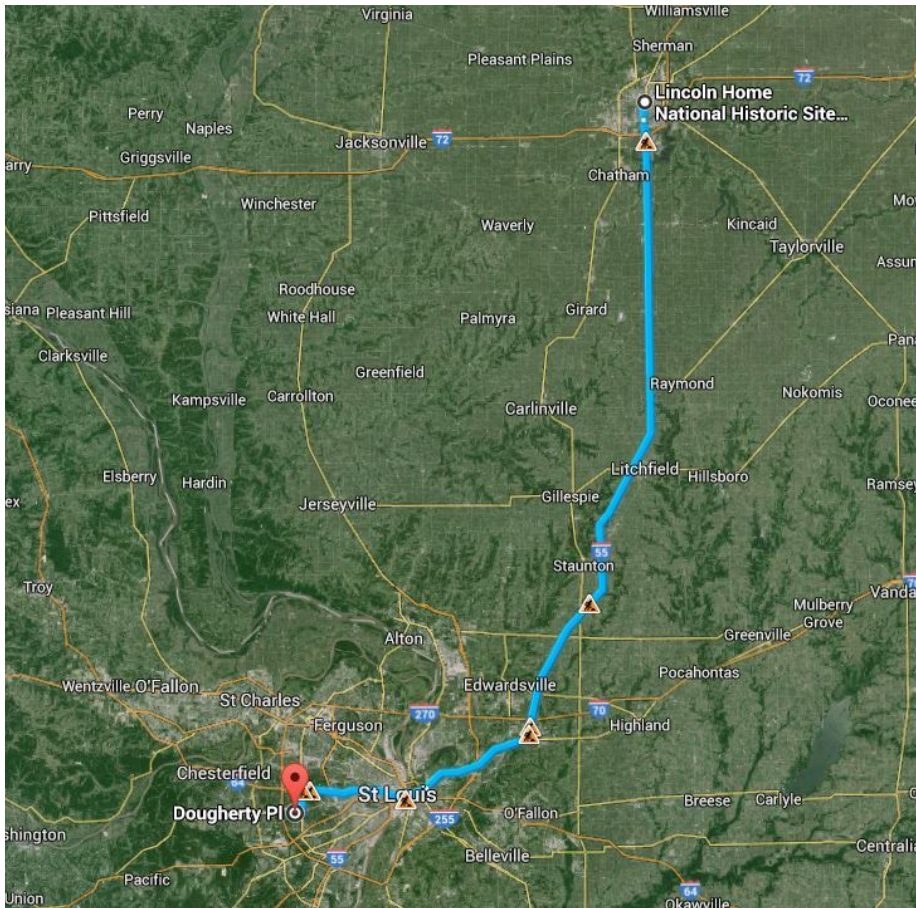
The area around Lincoln's home is a step back to that part of our history. While today it feels very much park-like, it doesn't take long to get into the feeling that the next person you see walking down the tree could be wearing a tall top hat.

The air was still and the humidity and heat were high the day I visited. I was glad I was dressed in a tee-shirt and shorts. By the time I had walked from the parking lot area at the edge of this step back over 150 years, I was hot and sweaty.

I didn't have time for a tour, but I did talk to a Ranger and I explained my time-line. In addition to letting me take a walk through the house without a guide, he stopped his rounds long enough to take the picture (above) of me.

After a quick walk through Lincoln's home - I was off to St. Louis.





I blew through the city of St. Louis having not found a good photo-op of the arch and the day starting to get away from me.

I moved on. This, in retrospect, was a mistake. I had made an error in judgement about my route and I was panicking over the distance I needed to cover.

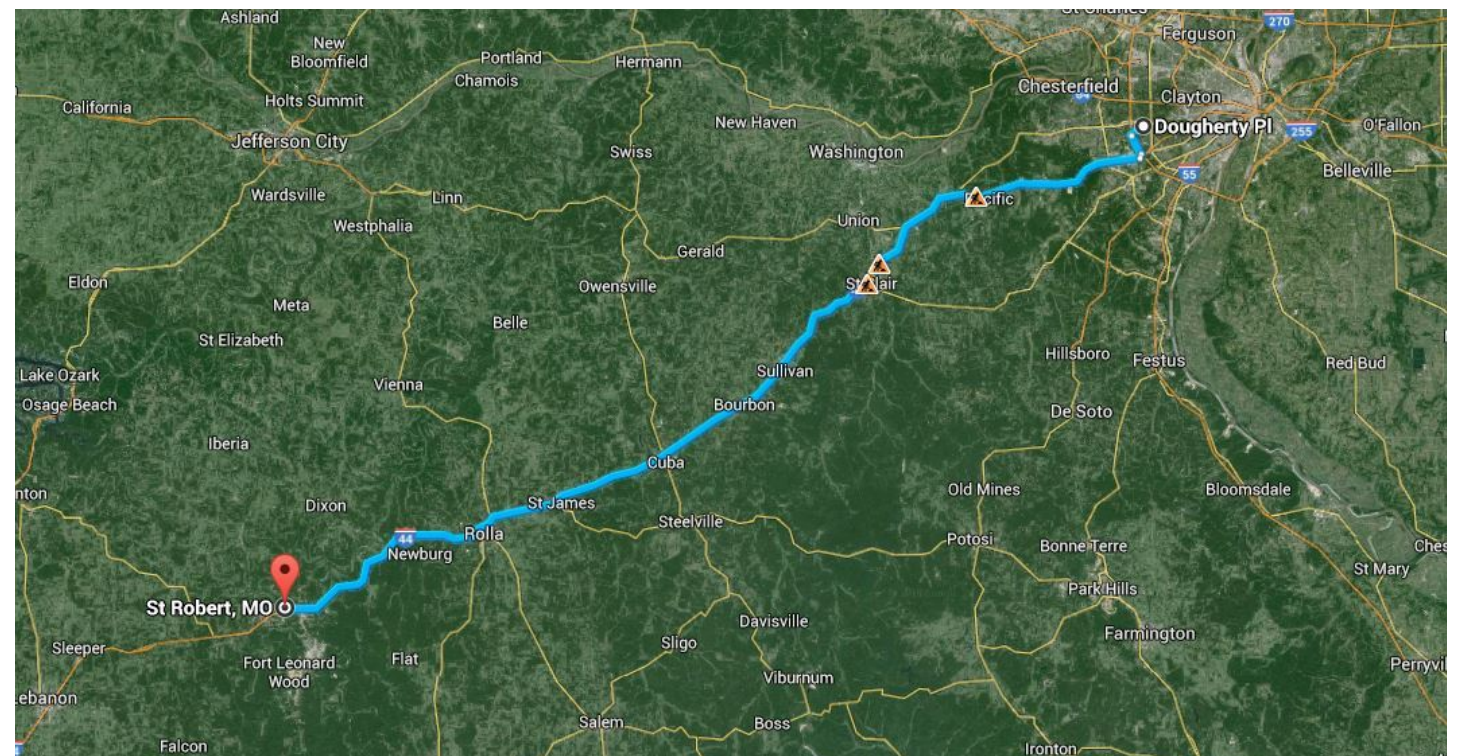
I thought I had misjudged the route in some way and thought I was now going to need an additional day that I didn't have.

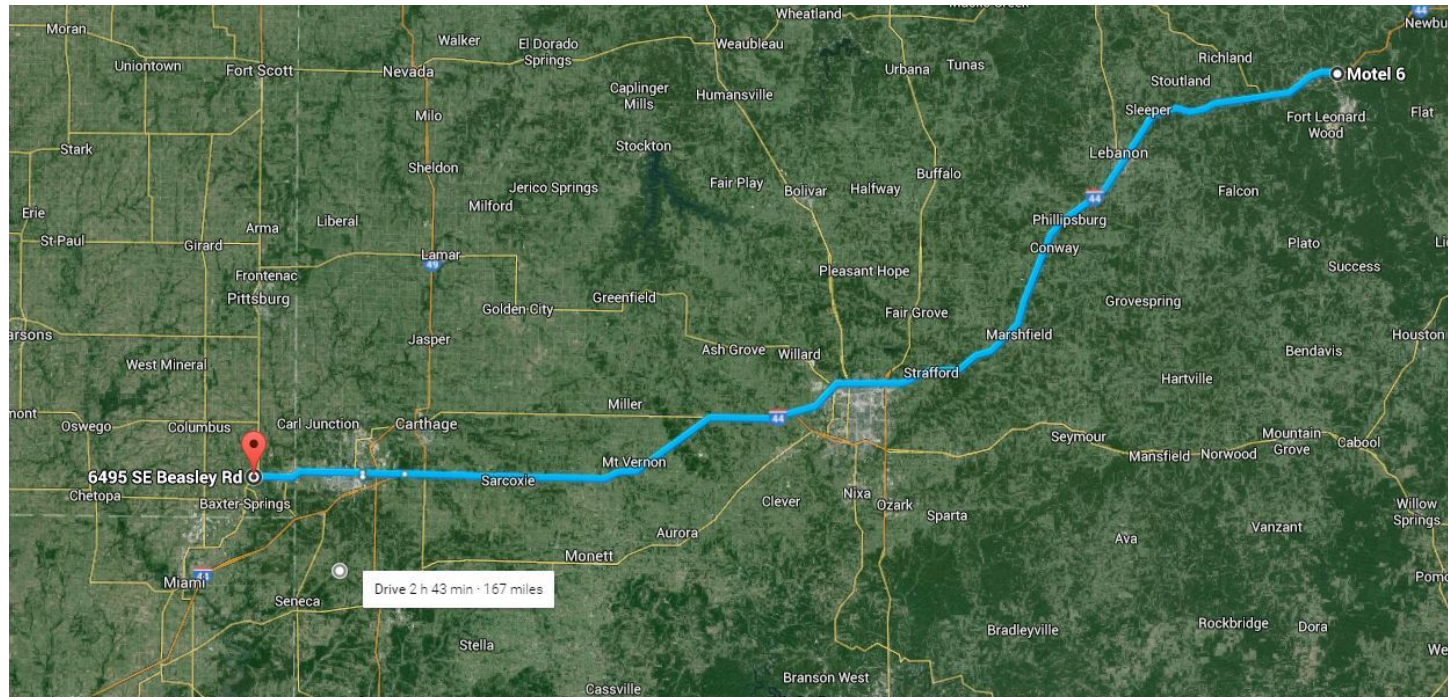
It was gonna be a quick stop at Donna and Jim's.



SO - Donna fed me a quick afternoon snack/late lunch; and I was off to close the incorrect "gap" in my plans. It was off to split the difference between St. Louis and Oklahoma City as best I could.

I ended up in St. Robert MO. for the night at a pleasant Motel 6.

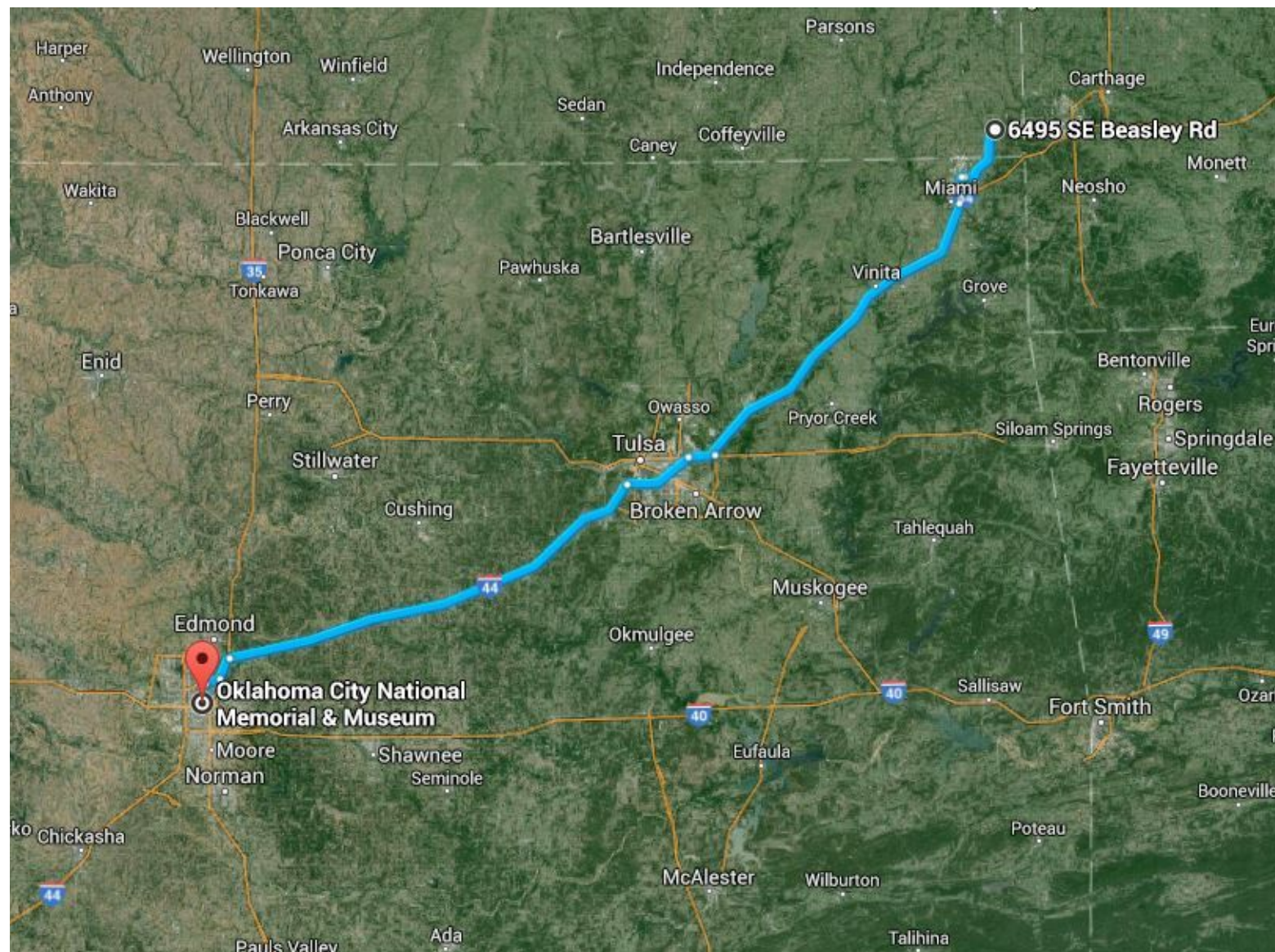




Technically Route 66 passes through Kansas. But, and this is important, if you blink; you will miss the opportunity. When you pass through the on again, off again Route 66 exits and on ramps along I-55 you have to pay attention when passing through Joplin MO.

To tell you the truth, passing through Kansas to complete the Route 66 contiguous legs - this is could be missed:

Now then in their defense - perhaps I missed it. But, I could find nothing other than very old and very beat-up highway signs that Route 66 exists in Kansas. There is no effort on the part of the people here to acknowledge this part of our history.



There is a very bizarre "rotary" junction that is best identified as I have shown here as 6495 SE Beasley Rd. That's pretty much it. Other than the very typical depressed and abandoned buildings that were once thriving Route 66 businesses there is nothing that Kansas has to offer.

You are "in" Kansas and "on" Route 66 for about 20 minutes at best. If you are listening as I was to songs easily associated with the state of Kansas, such as "Dust in the Wind" and others - you are not going to complete the list, if you have over seven songs, as I did.

This, I thought, was a travesty. So, after completing the mission I back tracked into MO. to get a contrast of effort.

This next page shows an example of what the local people should do, to remember Route 66 as it should be.

That said, it is on to the Oklahoma City Memorial.

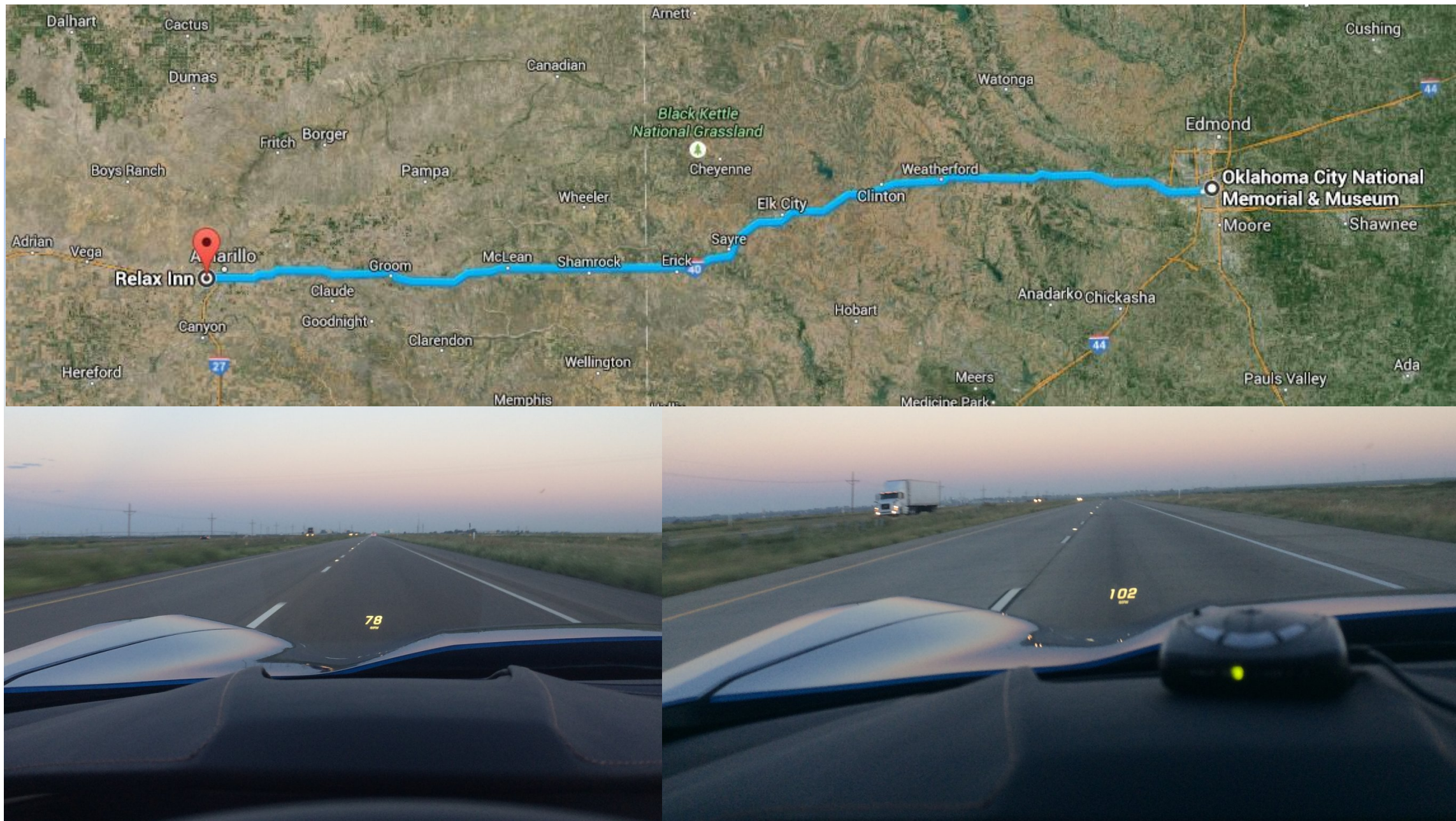


All of the other states have some tribute to Route 66 of some kind. Shown here are a couple of examples of Missouri and Oklahoma. Kansas should take some notes. Perhaps a nice little thing in the middle of the stupid rotary on Beasley Road.





The Memorial is
A
Very Sobering
Place!



Nearing the end of the second day, I suddenly realized the error of my thinking.
I was rapidly approaching the half-way point.

Although my thoughts about Oklahoma and Texas was correct - it seemed like an eternity.

It was time to break out the Radar detector and change my "mode".

Oklahoma and Texas pass quickly at 100MPH.

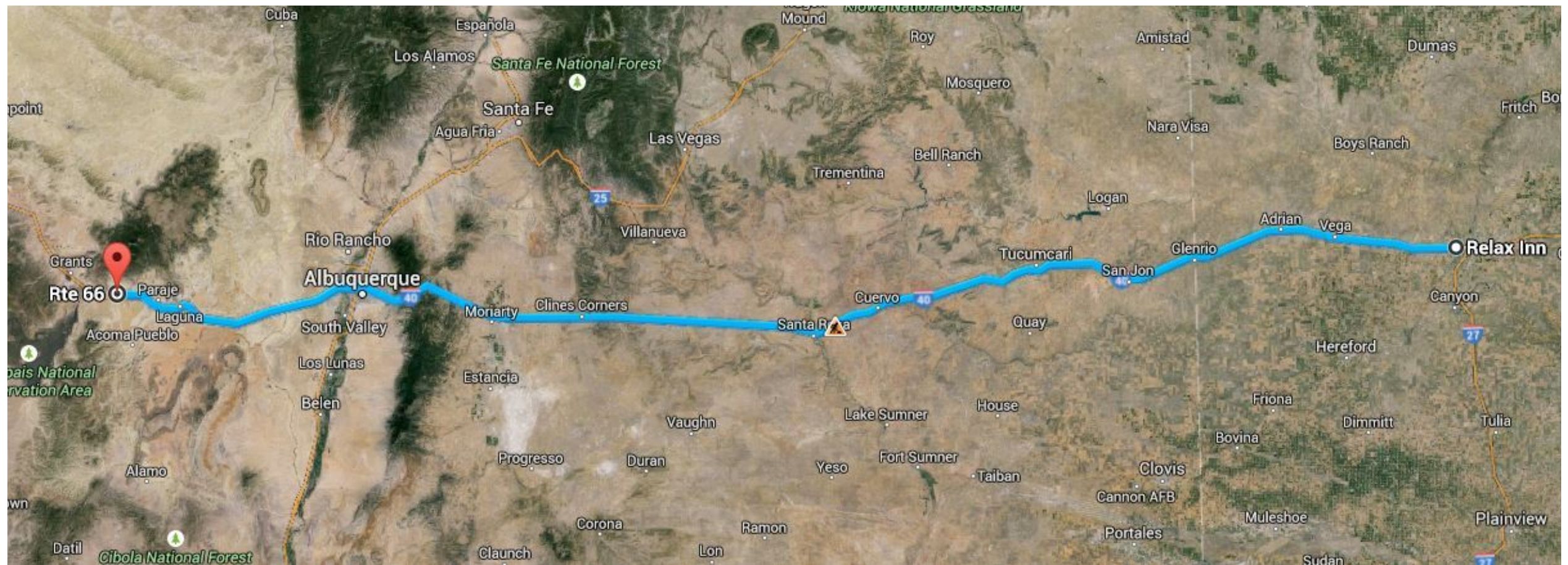
ON TO AMARILLO.



The high point of the middle of the trip.

The Cadillac Ranch

(Yup - that's pretty much it.)



Most of New Mexico is not much better.

However, Starting with Albuquerque heading westward
things start to get interesting.

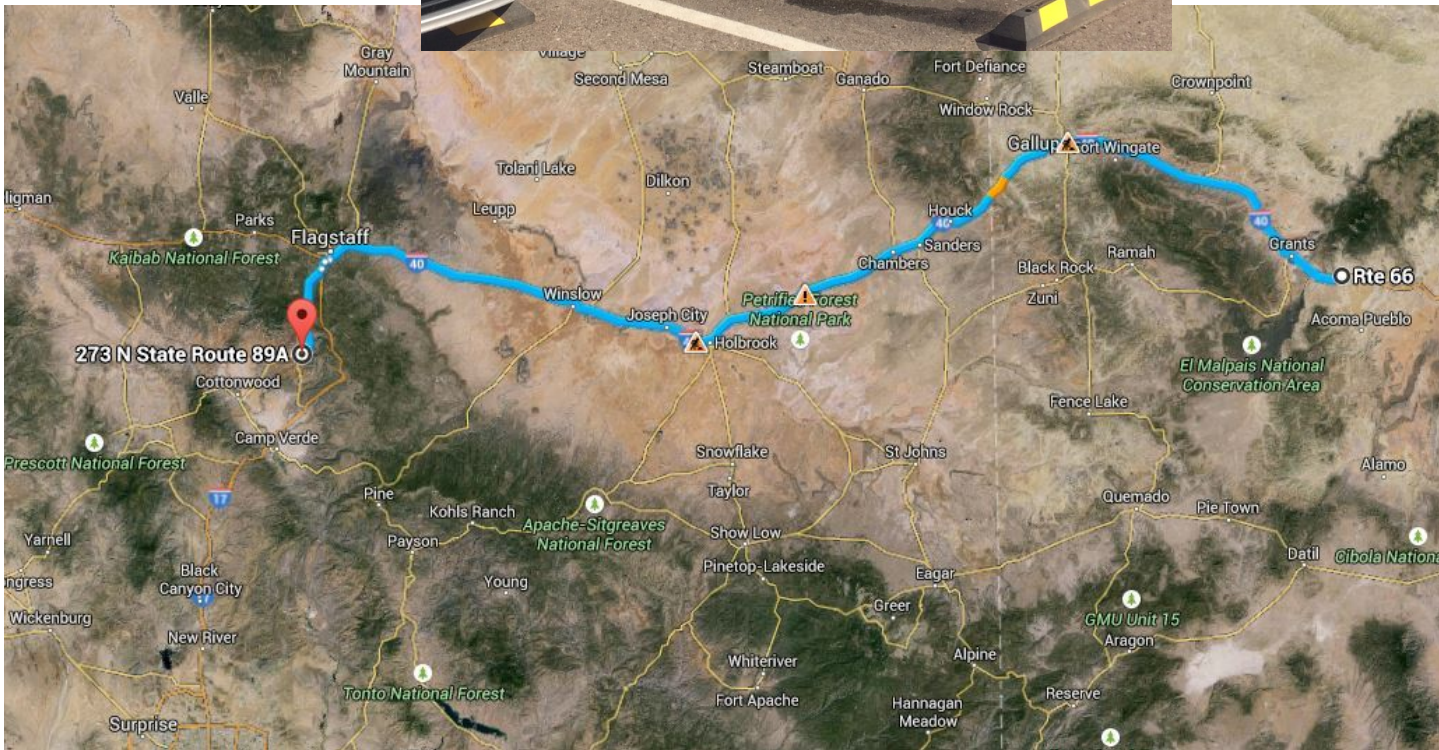
I'm keeping that for a trip with Wendy.

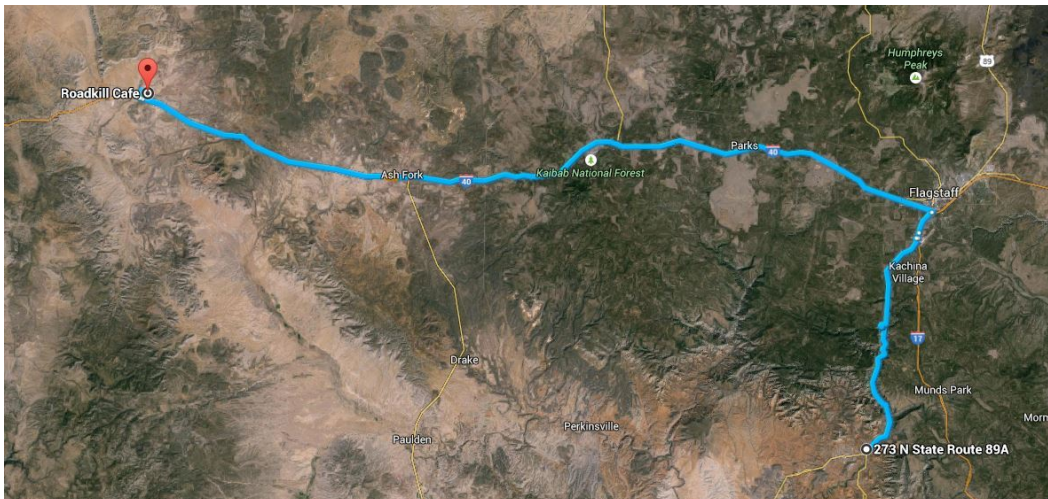


As the song says:

"Don't forget Sedona."

It's off the Route - but worth the side trip.





Seligman has its own beauty. A perfect place to end my last day "on the road" before I would be home. Ya gotta love a dinner place called the **ROADKILL CAFE.**

The poor deserted town that once thrived on Route 66, is now a very quiet little strip very thankful for us that have good wishes for those still there.

On your trip, take a few moments visiting - they will appreciate it.



Do I follow the sign to Flagstaff and head back east trying to recapture the dream.

Or do I head west - finish the trip - and take comfort that I did it.

Having started the trip at sunrise in Chicago, it seemed fitting that I end the trip at sundown on the Santa Monica Pier. So an early start out of Saligman, and a cruise to the east through town put me at this oft repeated intersection of Route 40 and Route 66.

I sat at this intersection for a complete passing of "Their Pie" by Mark Orton.



So I reflected on what I had done.

Satisfied that I had done it.

And I turned right.

On to California, my home.

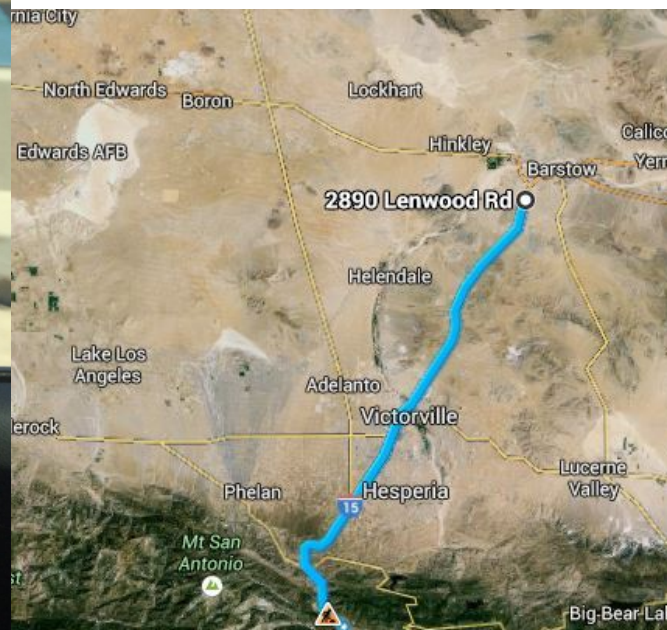


I love the desert.



Crossing the Colorado brought me to the California Desert.

I love my home.



I had a VIP to pick up on Pantera Dr. and the timing had to be perfect. The sun was overhead.

