



Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County

ABE66.com 217-732-8687

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2007 – Please note – interviews and demolition photo opportunities will be available Monday June 18 at 10am at The Mill on 738 S. Washington in Lincoln, IL. The Press is invited!

Vibrant New, Springfield Route 66 Business Helps Save the Old Mill on Route 66 in Lincoln

Lincoln, IL – Getting your kicks on 66 has taken on a new meaning and a new importance for the communities of Lincoln and Springfield, Illinois. David Stowers is a part owner of Kicks Buffet & Family Entertainment Center, located at 2744 S. 6th St., Springfield, IL (on Route 66) and also the owner of Parkland Environmental Group, which has been contracted to do the necessary asbestos abatement and partial demolition of the Mill in Lincoln, IL. Stowers was chosen by the Route 66 Heritage Foundation of Logan County to perform this work on the Mill Restoration Project (www.SaveTheMill.org) when it became apparent how interested he was in preserving the historic structure, which was a restaurant and bar dating back to the earliest years of Route 66 in the late 20's and early 30's.

The Mill, in Lincoln, IL, operated until 1996 but since then has been closed and abandoned and has become an eyesore in the community. Geoff Ladd, Chairman of the Route 66 Heritage Foundation of Logan County and Executive Director of the Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County, was able to negotiate a deal in the fall of 2006 between the owner of the Mill and the City of Lincoln that would eventually save the structure. At the time, the owner of the Mill faced stiff fines and contempt of court charges against him as a result of the property remaining abandoned and unsafe. The success of getting the structure out of this ten year cycle of changing hands via property tax auctions allowed the Route 66 Heritage Foundation to move forward with saving and restoring the structure into what will eventually be a Route 66 museum. The efforts to save the Mill have garnered local, national, and international attention.

Monday, June 18, marks the official date of the partial demolition of two of the less significant sections of the structure that have to be removed for safety concerns and as part of making the building a more attractive photo opportunity for Route 66 tourists. The part of the Mill that is being saved includes the original 1929 section, shaped like a Dutch windmill, and the post World War II addition to the building, which was originally an army barracks in Camp Ellis in Havana, IL.

The project has received assistance and support from several notable persons and organizations, including Patty Ambrose (Executive Director of the Illinois Route 66 Heritage Project), John Weiss of the Preservation Wing of the Route 66 Association of Illinois, the City of Lincoln, the Abraham Lincoln Tourism Bureau of Logan County, Ernie Edwards of the famous Pig Hip Museum, and many other citizens and preservationists.

Due to their interest in this historic Route 66 preservation project, the Parkland Environmental Group was also very generous in the bid that they proposed for the necessary abatement and demolition at the structure. "David Stowers is truly the Route 66 man of the hour," said Geoff Ladd from Logan County Tourism. "This grass-roots project is relying on donations to get this work done and with David's help the funds we have raised can now be used for other aspects of the restoration of the Mill. We are very grateful to David and the Parkland Environmental Group." Ladd noted that the help received from Stowers via his connection with Kicks and Parkland is truly a feel good story on Route 66 and shows the cooperation between new businesses and old landmarks on this truly historic road. The demolition will also be assisted by Lincoln Fire Department.

The Route 66 Heritage Foundation of Logan County also recently received a \$12,000 loan from Regions Bank in Lincoln, IL, to help with the project, and they have applied for grants to assist with the funding as well. However, donations are still greatly needed to see this project through to its completion. For further information, please call 217-732-8687 or check out www.ABE66.com.

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