

# THE JOPLIN GLOBE

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## Historic preservation symposium set for May 13-14 in Joplin

FROM STAFF REPORTS  
news@joplinglobe.com

The third annual Missouri Historic Preservation symposium will be held May 13-14 in Joplin.

The theme is "The Road Ahead: Fueling the Economy Through Historic Preservation." This year, the symposium is also joining in the centennial celebration of Route 66. There will be a special traveling exhibit, "Missouri Main Street: 100 Years on Route 66," on loan from the State Historical Society of Missouri. According to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, the exhibit showcases Missouri's role in Route 66.

The event is presented by the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office and cosponsored by the city of Joplin, Downtown Joplin Alliance, Missouri Southern State University, the Joplin Historical Neighborhoods Museum, Missouri Preservation and Crossland Construction.

The symposium begins with an opening reception at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 13, at the Schifferdecker and Zelleken homes, 422 Sergeant Ave. The following day's activities, including the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the historic Buchanan home as well as the symposium itself, taking place on the Missouri Southern State University campus.

Event keynote speakers are:

- **JEFF AND CAROLINA NEAL**, of Neal Group Construction in Joplin, who have completed over 100 historic rehabilitation projects in Joplin and Southwest Missouri.
- **MARIE TAYLOR**, of True North Preservation.
- **RILEY PRICE**, executive director of Missouri Preservation.
- **THOMAS WALTERS**, with the Joplin Historic Preservation Commission.
- **JILL HALBACH**, executive director of the Post Art Library in Joplin.
- **LORI HAUN**, with the Downtown Joplin Alliance.
- **SABINE MARTIN**, of Kansas State University's Technical Assistance to Brownfields program.
- **HEATHER BUETHE**, with National Trust Community Investment Corp.

Several state historic preservation team members will speak about historic tax credits, the National Register of Historic Places, the Certified Local Government Program and historic preservation grants.

The symposium will have two tracks: a community preservation track and a historic tax credits track.

Advance registration is required by April 30 and can be submitted by visiting [mostateparks.com/event/third-annual-missouri-preservation-symposium](https://mostateparks.com/event/third-annual-missouri-preservation-symposium).

There is a \$25 standard registration fee and a \$10 student registration fee. The fee covers admission to the symposium, breakfast provided courtesy of Crossland Construction and a catered lunch.



Bob Harrington, commander of the Joplin American Legion Post 13, talks to the crowd of mostly veterans Thursday at a public meeting hosted by the Friends of Joplin Memorial Hall at the Joplin Public Library. GLOBE | JOHN HACKER

## Keeping a promise

Friends of Memorial Hall outline plan to save historic building during public meeting

BY DEBBY WOODIN  
dwoodin@joplinglobe.com

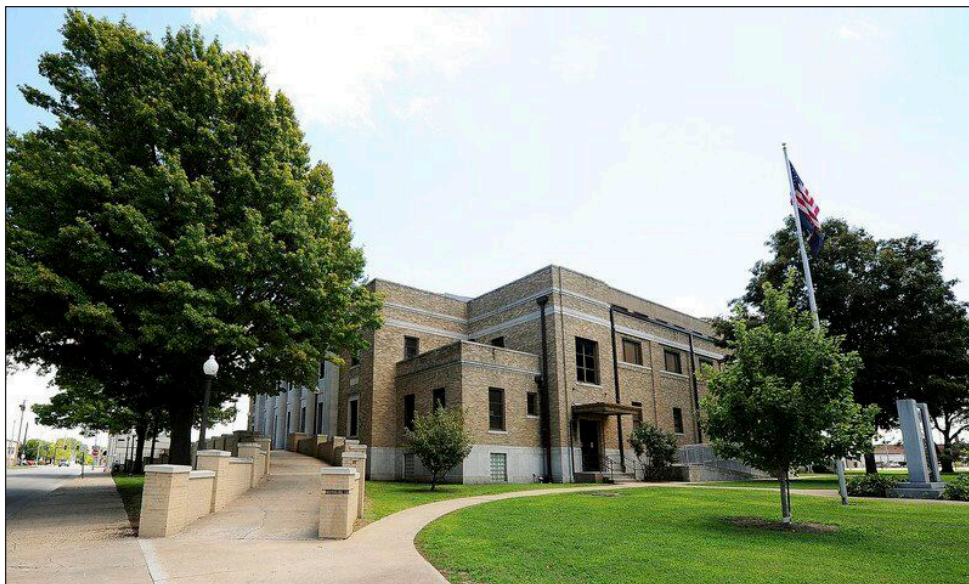
Efforts to get plans off the ground to renovate Joplin's long-empty Memorial Hall are expected to move forward this year.

Leaders of the nonprofit community group Friends of Joplin Memorial Hall provided details on the status of the efforts at a public meeting Thursday at the Joplin Public Library.

The group has formed a public-private partnership with the city of Joplin to raise funds and guide a \$16.7 million project to repair and update the 100-year-old auditorium.

A drive in 1924-25 to secure public support for a bond issue to construct the building as a war memorial after World War I was conducted by American Legion Post 13.

A large part of the Thursday audience was made up



Memorial Hall stands in this undated photo at Eighth Street and Joplin Avenue. The building turned 100 years old in 2025. GLOBE FILE

of veterans who are current members of that post. The hall was dedicated to those whose lives were lost in the war and for use by the American Legion.

Post commander Bob Harrington said that when the hall reopens, the post is to have a meeting room in a prominent location on the second floor.

"We really want our home back. We're kind of looking forward to this," Harrington said.

The post had to move out of the building when it was closed in June 2020 after a partial roof collapse and the development of mold that spread through the building along with other problems with the building's condition.

Since then, the veterans have been meeting in the general aviation terminal at the Joplin Regional Airport.

Presenters at the meeting were former

Joplin mayor Melodee Colbert-Kean, director of the Downtown Joplin Alliance Lori Haun, and Clifford Wert, with the Harry M. Cornell Arts & Entertainment Complex located next to Memorial Hall.

The plan devised to pay for the hall's renovation would require local voter approval for a 2% increase in the city's lodging tax, Haun said. That would

SEE HALL, 2A

## Centennial Route 66 shield dedicated at area drive-in theater

BY JOHN HACKER  
jhacker@joplinglobe.com

CARTHAGE, Mo. — They're popping up everywhere along Route 66, these 12-foot 3D sculptures of the iconic Route 66 highway shields with holes cut out in the two 6's.

The latest of these interactive signs was dedicated on Friday as the official Route 66 Centennial Commission sign in Jasper County at the 66 Drive-In

Theatre on the Old Route 66 Boulevard just west of Carthage.

Nathan McDonald, owner since 2017; his wife, Amy; and children, Ayla and Easton McDonald, joined Patrick Tuttle, director of the Joplin Convention and Visitors Bureau and a member of the Missouri Route 66 Centennial Commission, to cut a ribbon on the new sign set up just behind the ticket booth at the historic drive-in.

This sign is one of 11 funded by grants from the commission through grants in the 10 Missouri counties along the route and in the city of St. Louis.

"Having a new roadside attraction at an established historic landmark is a great honor," McDonald said. "Not only will our local patrons enjoy it ... we welcome travelers from around the world to

SEE SHIELD, 2A



The McDonald family, Easton McDonald (left), Amy McDonald, Nathan McDonald (left in the center group) and Ayla McDonald (right), join Patrick Tuttle and Mark Hecquet (right in the center group) to cut a ribbon on the new interactive Route 66 sign placed at the 66 Drive-in Theatre and dedicated on Friday. The McDonald family has owned the 66 Drive-In Theatre since 2017. GLOBE | JOHN HACKER

