

On the Main Street of America in Pulaski County



Across from the western end of the Star Motel (now All Star Inn), on the north side of Historic 66, is one of the oldest extant buildings on the road. The **Ideal Court and Cafe** was built in 1936. This preceded the construction of Fort Leonard Wood by four years, thus was in response only to the increased tourist traffic on Route 66. The court was comprised of 12 one-room cabins, one of which survives as the office of the trailer court behind the enlarged cafe building. The original cafe was the left or western half of today's remodeled building (bottom right).

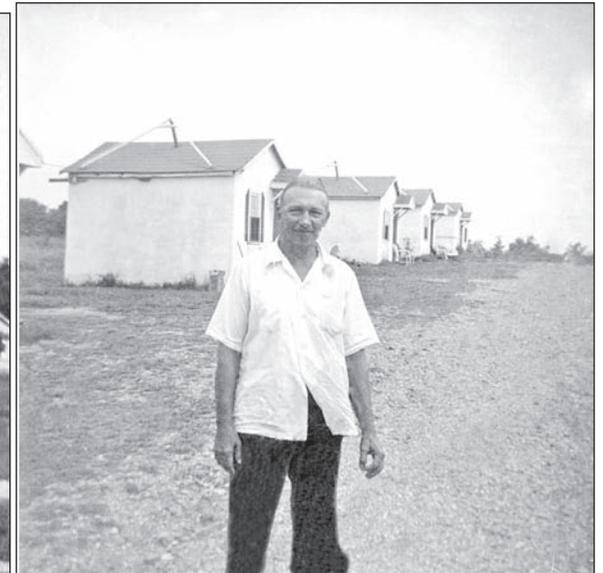
Robert and Sophie Sindler, with their three children, came to Pulaski County from Chicago in 1949. They bought the Ideal Court and Cafe (right) located one mile east of Waynesville in the unincorporated area along Route 66. The family leased the cafe and operated the cabin court as **Sindler's Cabin City & Cafe**.

The exterior walls of the 12 cabins were covered with a brick-patterned "tar paper." Mr. Sindler drove roofing nails into the walls and, although told it wouldn't stick, stuccoed the exterior of the cabins. The one surviving cabin still has that stucco finish. He also installed neon tubes on the roofs of the cabins that could be seen at night on the Route 66 ridge that ran through Hazelgreen (middle right).

In 1953 the cafe lease expired and Robert, nicknamed "Pop," turned the cafe into Pop's Place. The 1956 picture below shows the neatly appointed interior, part of the wall-length bar in the adjoining room, and the 1955 V200 Seeburg Select-O-Matic juke box (remember those?)

behind the couple on the left. Pop remodeled the exterior in 1958 and constructed an addition on the east side with an apartment above. He designed a unique brick facade with inward slanting windows. Pop Sindler died in November of 1958. All but one of the cabins were torn down in the 1960s and trailer hookups installed. In 1960 the family changed the name to Ken's Lounge and then closed the bar in 1976. In 1980 the building became Mike's Gym and Martial Arts and is still operated by Mike Sindler.

This article is excerpted from *Route 66 in Pulaski County, Missouri—a local history* by Terry Primas. Thanks to **Mike Sindler** for sharing some of his family history and photographs with us.



Top Mike Sindler and the 1940 Buick the family drove from Chicago in 1949.

Above left The Sindler family with their new business sign. From left: Sophie, Kenny, Robert, Mike, and Roberta. **Above right** Robert "Pop" Sindler in front of the stuccoed and neon-lit cabins. **Below left** Pop's Place. The couple at right are Pop Sindler and wife Sophie. On the left are daughter Roberta and her friend Benny Owens. **Below** The building today.

