

# White Pole Road

## SCENIC BYWAY

Group Travel Itinerary



Saints Center for Culture and the Arts

Dallas, Adair and Guthrie Counties in Southwest Iowa

Steeped in historic adventure, visit Iowa's heartland on one of the first East-West routes across the State





## WPRSB

### Group Travel Itinerary

Take a historic route! The **White Pole Road** has an extensive history dating back to the early 1900s. At a time where the popularity of automobiles was exploding, Iowa had earned a reputation for having an extremely poor transportation system. In fact, the poor roads not only deterred tourists, but prevented many farmers from traveling to railroads and towns for weeks at a time when the roads were impassable. State and community leaders took the matter seriously and hosted a convention in 1912. This precipitated a race across the state to develop the best East-West route from border to border. Even then, community leaders connected the roadways to economic development and knew the more traffic through their towns the more business they would have. Community leaders in this area of Southwest Iowa chose to denote their road, "The Great White Way" with white painted poles and the route was marketed as the "straighter, leveler, and shorter" way across the state. As time passed, the popular route merged with other roads, experienced several name changes, and was the impetus for the development of Interstate 80 in the same corridor. Today, 26 miles of the original route regained the name of "White Pole Road" and is noted by the famous white poles.

### Unique Adventures

The history of the White Pole Road also includes the adventures of the infamous **Bonnie and Clyde** of the Bloody Barrow Gang. Stop near Dexter where the gang was engaged in an intense fight against a local posse. The location is marked by an interpretive granite marker. Both Bonnie and Clyde were wounded in the shoot out, but it wasn't the end! They stole another car and continued their adventure for 10 more months. Nine months later, the famous couple revisited the area and robbed a bank in Stuart, Iowa. The bank is gone, but it's a great spot for a photo op!

Bonnie and Clyde weren't the only gangsters with an Iowa connection. Visit Adair to see the **Jesse James Historical Marker** where he pulled off the world's first moving train robbery.

### Scenic Spots

Iowa was a major thoroughfare for pioneers crossing to the Western part of the United States. Imagine their plight at the **Wagon Trail Ruts near Casey, Iowa**. Take McPherson Street north of town to the T intersection to see the abandoned track that led to the county seat of Guthrie Center.

Admire the beauty of the **Adair Viaduct**, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and marking the Western entrance of the White Pole Road Scenic Byway. This railroad overpass is an interesting example of artistic state-commissioned infrastructure.

### Points of Discovery

Historic adventure in this area wasn't just for gangsters. Famous adventurer/author Jack Kerouac made the **Former Rock Island Railroad Depot** in Stuart, Iowa famous when he wrote about how he and his friend were stranded there in his best-selling novel, "On the Road."

For an amazing example of brilliant architecture in small town Iowa, book a tour at the **Saints Center for Culture and the Arts**. Once voted the Most Beautiful Church in Iowa, the Catholic church in Stuart fell victim to a hate crime in 1995 by an arsonist. The city and the Project Restore Foundation didn't give up hope and successfully rallied for its restoration. After being awarded a Vision Iowa Grant the old church was transformed into a community cultural center, which now serves as host to concerts, school events, weddings, family gatherings and more.

### Local Flavors

For a taste of an heirloom chocolate recipe, stop at **Drew's Chocolates**. In 1927, Helen Drew started a chocolate shop in Dexter, and her original recipe is still in use today. The candies are fork-dipped in chocolate by hand and made fresh daily!

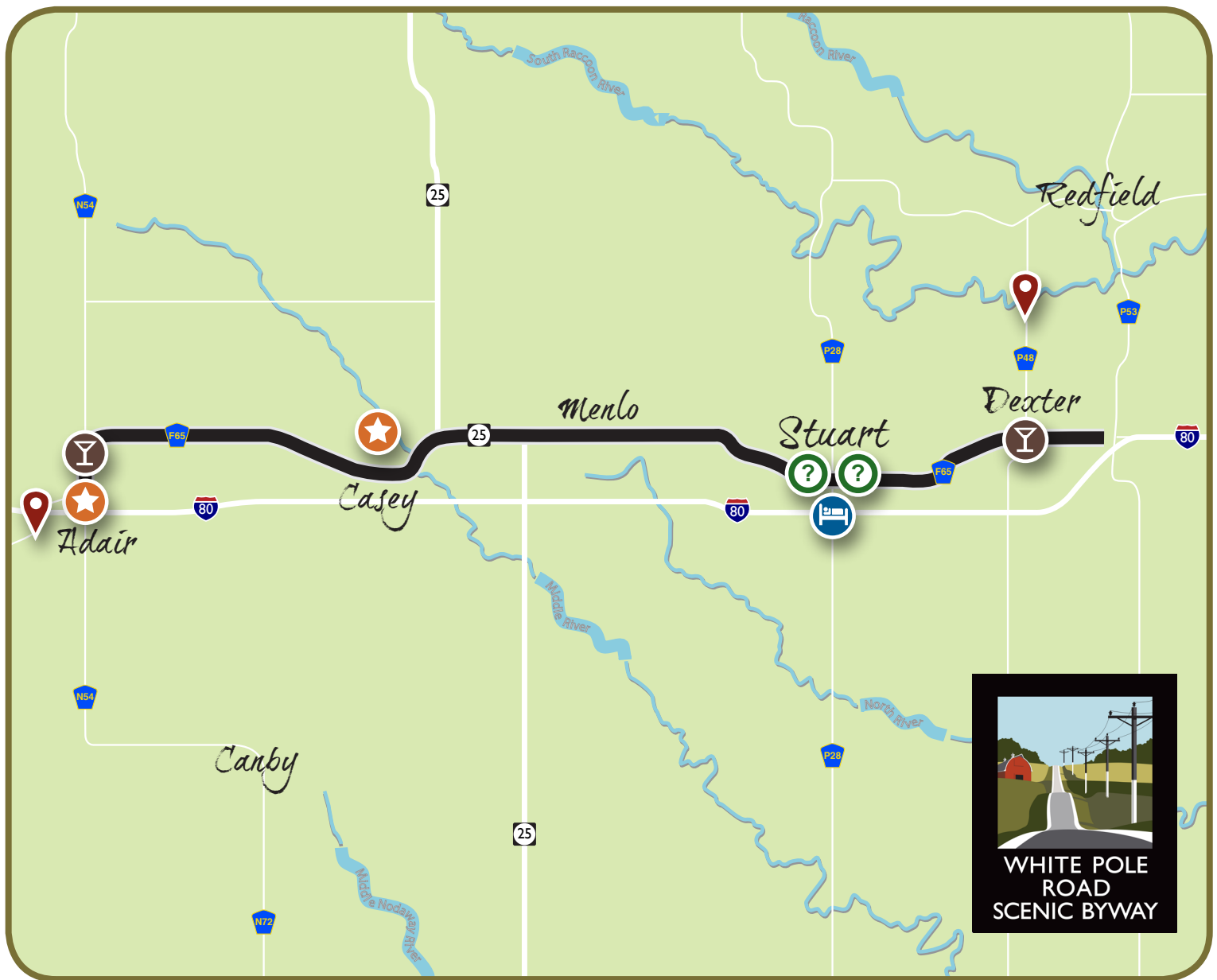
**Zipp's Pizzeria** in Adair has award-winning, specialty, hand-crafted pizzas. Awarded "Best Place to Have Pizza in Iowa!" Pickle pizza, anyone?

### Lodging Locales

**Americinn Lodge and Suites (Stuart)**

**Hotel Stuart (Stuart)**

**The Port at Lake Panorama (Panora)**



## For More Group Tour Options

### Contact

Byway Coordinator: Tom Smull  
 WPR Development Corporation  
 306 Audubon Street  
 Adair, IA 50002  
 Phone: 515-490.9076  
 Website: [www.whitepoleroad.com](http://www.whitepoleroad.com)  
 Email: [whitepoleroad@gmail.com](mailto:whitepoleroad@gmail.com)

