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Pink Elephant Antique Mall in Livingston hosts 3rd Annual Route 66 UFO Festival

By Editor (<https://www.timestribunenews.com/author/editor/>) | September 13, 2025 | 0  (<https://www.timestribunenews.com/2025/09/13/pink-elephant-antique-mall-in-livingston-hosts-3rd-annual-route-66-ufo-festival/#respond>)



Organizers claimed people came from as far as Germany to attend this year's show but this particular visitor might be a bit further away from home than Earth. (Bruce Darnell photo)

By Bruce Darnell • Illinois natives and visitors from as far as Germany stopped by the Pink Elephant Antique Mall's Route 66 UFO Festival to scratch their itch for the unexplained — and maybe buy a few alien knick-knacks while they're there.

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There may not be proof of extraterrestrials at the center of our universe, but they were certainly central to this festival's theme, acting as a cryptic counter to the Pink Elephant's Bigfoot Festival, which occurred on May 10.

The UFO Festival was estimated to have brought in thousands of visitors to the area, said Suzann Hormell, who does marketing and event coordination at the Pink Elephant. She said around 3,500 people attended last year's festival.

Outside the antique mall, there were around 40 vendors; live music from multiple bands; an inflatable play area for children; a horse carriage ride; and a charity 5K run, dubbed the "alien chase" — though only a few participants actually dressed as aliens. Profits from the 5K run will be donated to help fund the Livingston Park Association's holiday baskets.

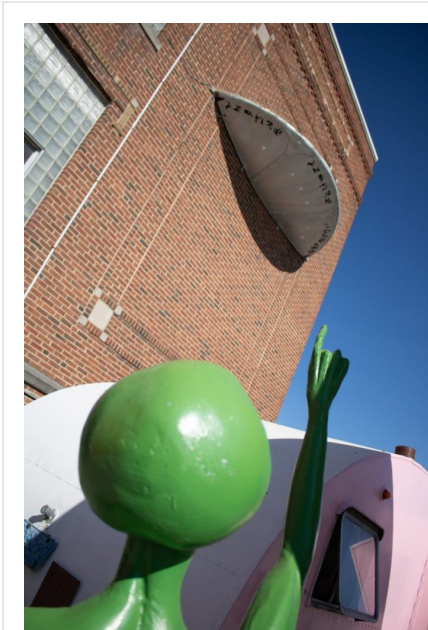
Hormell said this event was originally named the Fall Festival, but, when they decided to rebrand their Spring Festival to the Bigfoot Festival, they thought it would be wise to do something similar for the fall.

Hormell said guest speakers were a big draw for Saturday's events. One speaker was alien aficionado Debbie Ziegelmeyer, the state director for Missouri's chapter of the Mutual UFO Network, or MUFON.

MUFON is a non-profit organization which takes in UFO reports and attempts to investigate them by documenting the location they were seen at. Ziegelmeyer said MUFON averages about 40 reports a month.

Ziegelmeyer said most reports are easy to solve. They either turn out to be Starlink — which can be seen as dots flying in a straight line in the night sky — or Venus and Mars. But, she added, there are some UFO reports they simply cannot explain.

Ziegelmeyer believes aliens are behind the UFOs. She also believes there are multiple alien races with different agendas and that some may have originated on Earth or arrived through some means of extraterrestrial transportation.



This photo illustration pokes a bit of fun at science fiction and cloaking devices. (photo by Bruce Darnell)



This guy might have adapted to some of our Earthy customs — the overalls, the faux hawk and the bandanna. He seems to have enjoyed the UFO Roadshow event at any rate. (photo by Bruce Darnell)

Ziegelmeyer said her specialization focuses on aliens in waterways, which is aided by her other job as a scuba dive instructor. Her presentation outside the Pink Elephant examined alien sightings from the broader region, such as one in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, in 1941.

Ziegelmeyer said she was excited to be at the UFO Festival, especially since it was on Route 66, a hotbed for reported UFO sightings.

Wayne Pickerill, co-owner of the Pink Elephant with his wife, Tonia, said the store already has plans to host future UFO Festivals, but the timing will depend on the weather. Last year, they had planned for an August date but the weather was too hot, so it got pushed back to September.

Hormell said people seeking information about next year's festival should keep watch on the Pink Elephant's Facebook page.

Pickerill said there are plans to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Route 66, the famous highway which cuts across Livingston. The anniversary will be on Nov. 11, 2026.

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