

News From The Plains

Volume XVII, No. 4

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

October, 2003

OCTA Names First Association Manager

By Bill Martin

Membership growth is first on the list of his challenges, according to Travis Boley, the new Association Manager for the Oregon-California Trails Association.

Boley, introduced to the membership at the Manhattan convention, was scheduled to assume his position on October 1. He joins OCTA after two years as Director of the Pony Express Museum in St. Joseph, MO.

Boley, 31, was one of four finalists for the newly created position interviewed by a Board search committee. About 35 letters of inquiry were received after OCTA advertised the position.

Boley grew up and attended high school in Lexington, MO, site of the oldest courthouse west of the Mississippi, near a Civil War battlefield and once home to the firm owned by Pony Express founders Russell, Majors and Waddell,

"It's a great old town for history," says Boley, "and I had it around me every day."

Perhaps inspired by that upbringing, he obtained a degree in history from the University of Missouri-Kansas City, then secured a masters degree in historical administration from the University of Kansas.

While at Kansas, he had the opportunity to work in a number of museums, which led him into a professional pursuit of museums and historic preservation. After graduation, he was an assistant curator at the National Basketball Hall of Fame in Massachusetts and then curator at the International Bowling Museum in St. Louis before joining the Pony Express Museum.

Working for OCTA, Boley says, "is a dream position, doing what I want to be doing and doing

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New OCTA officers, left to right, Past President Randy Wagner, Treasurer Doug Brown, Secretary Bernie Rhoades, Preservation Officer Dave Welch, President Richard Pingrey and Vice President Vern Gorzitze. — Photo by Bill Martin

New OCTA Officers Elected

Richard Pingrey of Selah, WA, has been elected President of the Oregon-California Trails Association for a two-year term.

Pingrey, who has served as Vice President for the past two years, was elected by the OCTA Board to succeed Randy Wagner, who will continue in a leadership role as Immediate Past President.

Other officers will be: Vice President, **Vern Gorzitze**, of Salt Lake City, UT; Treasurer, **Doug Brown**, of Independence, MO; Secretary, **Bernie Rhoades**, of Edgewood, WA; and **Dave Welch** of Steilacoom, WA, National Trails Preservation Officer.

Pingrey is a former high school and college teacher and pilot for Pan American Airways and United Airlines. His great-grandfather traveled the Oregon Trail to Oregon City in 1845. A member of the Northwest Chapter, he has been involved in trail marking teams and has led trail outings.

Gorzitze is retired from the construction trades and was a charter member of the Crossroads Chapter, serving as vice president and president. He designed and supervised construction of the Donner Spring Historic Trail Site Kiosk and Trail Marker at Bidwell Pass. He has also lectured at local schools on western emigration history.

Brown is a Certified Public Accountant with over 30 years of financial experience. He took over as OCTA Treasurer following the resignation of Marilyn Bryan in early 2002.

Rhoades is a familiar name and face to OCTA. An architect by profession, he is an avid car collector, a covered wagon restorer and genuine rutnut. He has been active in a variety of Northwest Chapter activities.

From the Editor's Desk . . . by Bill Martin



After six years as Editor of *News From The Plains*, I've reached a jumping off place, you might say. This is my final issue and it is time to turn this job over to the capable care of Candy Moulton, an extraordinarily experienced and dedicated journalist and writer. Readers – the members of OCTA – will be in excellent hands. From a personal viewpoint, my decision to leave as editor was made more comfortable by the fact that she will be taking over. (Thank you, Candy, for giving me a guilt-free transition!)

Editing a quarterly newsletter is not a one-person job, of course. I've been privileged to serve under five OCTA Presidents – Jackie Lewin, Roger Blair, Dave Welch, Randy Wagner and Dick Pingrey – each of whom made invaluable contributions to the publication. The guidance of Publications Committee Chairs Rose Ann Tompkins and Candy Moulton was always crucial. And I can't even begin to tell you the multitude of contributions made by Headquarters Manager Kathy Conway; simply put, OCTA members have no greater friend and no greater asset.

I could fill up this entire newsletter with the names of OCTA officers, Committee Chairs, Chapter Presidents, Chapter newsletter editors and correspondents, convention chairs, volunteers, and so many others without whose assistance it would have been impossible to fill these pages.

Most of all, however, it is important to thank the OCTA membership, individuals and families who have dedicated themselves to the preservation of the emigrant trails and who have kept alive the spirit and initiative of those who opened the West a century-and-a-half ago. Many are descendants of those who plodded across the trails. Others simply love the history of the trails and are involved because they want to

help preserve an experience unlike anything the world has ever seen.

The first time I wrote in this space, in the January 1997 issue, I said I felt a tremendous sense of responsibility to the membership of OCTA. I promised to approach *News From The Plains* the way the editor of a community newspaper would, placing a priority on news about chapters, people and events. I hope I have fulfilled that promise.

But it is clear to me that I have received a lot as a result of my tenure as Editor. At the time I started this assignment, I was an OCTA member living on the California Trail in Reno and knew I had ancestors who came West on the Mormon Trail. But I had never been to a convention, had never seen the trail from anything but paved highways, had barely read much about the trail. Today, some of my most treasured memories are of times spent actually on the trails, my year is in many ways built around the annual OCTA convention (Vancouver 2004!), and my personal library grows steadily, with credit card receipts from the OCTA Convention Bookroom and the OCTA Bookstore to prove it. So while I am proud of my contribution as Editor, I am more grateful for what OCTA has returned to me, and for the many friends I have made as a result.

I'm also grateful that I will have an opportunity to continue making a contribution to OCTA's mission of preservation and education as chair of the Publications Committee and, at least for the next year, by serving on the Board. I'm looking forward to the new challenges the future will bring and to continue to learn more about the trails.

Thanks again to everyone and I'll see you on the trail.

— Bill Martin



News From The Plains

Editor Bill Martin

Contributing Editors: Kathy Conway, Candy Moulton, Richard Pingrey

Mail Submissions To:
Candy Moulton
Star Route Box 29
500 Beaver Road
Encampment WY 82325
Phone & Fax: (307) 327-5465
e-mail: NFPOCTA@aol.com

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Oregon-California Trails Association
P.O. Box 1019 Independence, MO 64051-0519
(816) 252-2276 Fax (816) 836-0989
e-mail: octa@indepmo.org

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Masthead Photo Courtesy of Denver Public Library,

Submission Guidelines

News From The Plains welcomes news, features and photos related to the work of OCTA and its members and to the preservation of our trails heritage. Material is due 30 days prior to publication dates. Material should be sent either on a computer disk (in Word or text format; please make sure you include a hard copy) or via e-mail.

Pictures are appreciated and can be sent via e-mail, on a disk (jpg format) or originals for scanning.

Next Deadline Is December 1, 2003

From The President . . .

by Richard Pingrey



In recent years OCTA's membership has remained at about the same level. Income has lagged behind our ability to fully finance key programs such as trail preservation. We are in need of a jump-start to get things progressing in a number of primary areas. We need some additional energy to get things moving forward once again. To get this needed energy the Board has approved the hiring of a full time Association Manager. The addition of the Association Manager to OCTA's staff should provide our organization with the opportunity to make that step forward in a number of key areas.

Last March, then-President Randy Wagner appointed a special committee, chaired by the Vice President, to carry out the Board's mandate to select and hire an Association Manager. The committee finished its assigned task just prior to the Manhattan convention by hiring Travis Boley of Saint Joseph, MO to fill the position. Additional information about Travis and the Association Manager position can be found in a separate article in this issue of *News From the Plains*.

In addition to overseeing the overall management of day-to-day operations for our association, Travis will have responsibilities in several key areas, such as membership development, fund raising, grant writing and marketing of OCTA's products and programs. Key to his success will be the continued tradition of volunteerism by OCTA members. Travis as Association Manager, Kathy Conway as Headquarters Manager and me, your newly elected President, will work together as a team to accomplish these objectives. I personally intend to devote much of my time to assisting both Travis and Kathy during the next two years.

Some of you may wonder where are we getting the funds to

pay the salary of the Association Manager. OCTA has been awarded a multi-year grant from the National Park Service to pay the Association Manager's salary and related costs. Eventually, we anticipate that enhanced revenues will allow us to cover these costs without the need of the Park Service grant.

A number of key positions need to be filled by the President. Bob and Barbara Kabel have made a monumental effort to bring our COED program to the place where it is operational. Bob is stepping down as COED chairman and we need someone to take over that responsibility. OCTA has been without a Historian for quite some time. We really need to have that position filled as soon as possible. Both of these positions provide a great opportunity for member service. Please consider volunteering for these important positions.

The Board of Directors has given me the privilege of serving as your President for the next two years. It is both an honor and an obligation that I do not take lightly. It is an honor to be selected to lead an organization with so many knowledgeable, talented and highly educated members. It is an obligation to carry out the many responsibilities of the office and to administer the programs and policies established by the Board. I need and very much want your help, suggestions and ideas. OCTA has a rich tradition of membership participation and it is essential that the tradition continues. Working together we can accomplish many things and we can continue to make OCTA an organization in which we all take great pride.

I hope to see many of you somewhere along the trail some time soon.

— Dick Pingrey

From Headquarters . . .



By Kathy Conway
Headquarters Manager

Headquarters would like to share two letters received earlier this spring from a young California trails fan. Brandon Baker wrote:

April 4, 2003

Dear Oregon-California Trails Association,

My name is Brandon Baker. I am an Eighth grade Honor-Roll student at Judkins Middle School in Pismo Beach, California. In a few weeks my school is having its annual History Fair. This is a mandatory assignment and it requires a lot of research.

Eighth grade curriculum is United States History. My teacher, the best History teacher ever, will give us a list of options on subjects we can research, like the Civil War or the Gold Rush (which would be very easy to obtain information on considering we live in California). I want my project to be more challenging: **THE OREGON TRAIL**.

This is why I'm writing to you in the hopes you could send me some "primary" sources coming from one of the states "The Trail" originated. A postcard with an historical site, a picture of a pioneer such as Jim Bridger, a picture of the Shawnee Mission, or some information on the tragedy of the

Donner Party would be very helpful. Any information you send me will be put on my tri-fold backboard.

I am trying for the "Outstanding Student in Social Studies" for the Eighth grade. So far I've received straight "A's" in Social Studies. My sister won this award when she attended Judkins. I'm telling you this not to brag, but that I'm very sincere with my request to you. I am making a plaque thanking everyone who I write to for the information they send me. I'm enclosing \$1 for postage. Please help me achieve my goal and I thank you in advance.

Sincerely, Brandon Baker

June, 2003

Dear Oregon-California Trails Association,

I am writing to thank you for the wonderful information you sent me for my "Oregon Trail" project. I apologize for taking so long to get back to you, but I wanted to let you know my grade before I wrote you back. We received our grades June 3rd. Out of 100 points, I received 105 which gave me an A plus. I wrote to 5 organizations, and you gave me more information than all the others combined. I have

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Park Service Will Provide Additional COED Support

The National Park Service has agreed to provide a new \$25,000 Challenge Cost Share grant to support continued work on the Census of Overland Emigrant Documents (COED) project.

Interim Chair **Bob Kabel**, in a report to the Board in Manhattan, noted "significant progress" in the COED effort, including improved quality control, updated document repository information in the database, and a revised surveyor's manual.

Kabel said over 200 OCTA volunteers have contributed an estimated 100,000 hours over 16 years to the COED project.

Highlights of Kabel's report (his last as COED chair):

- The direct cost for production of 500 copies of the *Emigrant Names* compact disk (completed on a pro bono basis by **Looking Glass Analytics, Inc.**) was \$1,040. At the time of the Manhattan convention, 215 copies had been sold for \$29.95 each.

- Duplication of 2,263 paper survey forms by computer scanning is virtually complete. **Jim Riehl** and **Barbara Kabel** are 85 percent finished with editing scanned images. Copies of the surveys are available for purchase from OCTA headquarters.

- After discovering that repository information was out of date, professional librarian **Sallie Riehl** took on the responsibility of checking for accuracy on COED documents. The updated information will be included on the next version of *Emigrant Names* and will be posted on the OCTA web site.

- **Rose Ann Tompkins** has led the revision of the COED surveyor's manual, which includes the addition of many route codes not previously included in the database. In addition, survey forms have been revised. **Don Buck, Pat & Jack Fletcher, Shann Rupp, Susan Badger Doyle, Dick Rieck, Dave Welch, Sharon Manhart, Barbara Kabel** and **Charlie Little** have been involved.

- **Shann Rupp, Kathy Buob** and **Dave Welch** have been working to improve the document assignment software.

- Major advances have been made by **Dave Welch** and **Gary Shurtleff** in the conversion of the COED database and administrative programs to Access software. The conversion will eventually allow public access, efficient data transfer and translation, and tracking of all COED activity.

- **Sharon and Hal Manhart** are working through some 700 surveys that have been received by the COED project in recent years but have not made it into the database. At the same time, **Dave Welch** is developing data entry software. Quality control of the data files in the pipeline must be completed before they can be entered into the database. **Charlie & Nola Little, Shann Rupp** and **Marian McKenzie** are working on hundreds of other documents.

- **Cherie Evanhoe** has accepted the role of correspondent with people who have communicated with COED on any subject, but especially on the potential availability of new documents. **Nola Little** has volunteered to help.

- A structured search for documents is on the COED radar screen, including a database of known documents, those documents surveyed and inventories of prospective repositories. **Sallie Riehl, Hal Manhart, Charlie & Nola Little, Shann Rupp,** and **Betsy Kanago** are all involved.

- **Mark Wheeler** will be spearheading efforts to improve COED presence and accessibility on the Internet.

Assoc. Manager (cont'd from page 1)

the kind of history I want to do."

One of his first assignments will be to increase the organization's membership, which has stagnated in recent years. He plans an early focus on bringing in younger members.

"Through my work at the Pony Express Museum, I became familiar with the Gateway Chapter and one thing that stood out was that OCTA seemed to be an aging organization, one that could really use a youth movement," he says.



OCTA Association Manager
Travis Boley

"I thought back to when I was in college and if somebody had offered me a chance to get involved in something like OCTA, I would have jumped at the chance. There is a massive opportunity."

With that in mind, Boley plans to start by searching out universities and colleges that offer course work in westward expansion, where there will be students who are interested in OCTA programs.

He also said he plans to focus on building stronger local chapters, on developing working relationships with local historical chapters, and on finding corporate sponsorship partners. A strong planned giving effort will also be important to growth of OCTA financial endowment.

"OCTA is still a fairly young organization," he notes. "It is only 21 years old and has accomplished a remarkable lot. But there is so much yet to be done."

Boley and his wife, Angela, have three children, ages 11 and 7 and a baby born July 18. Angela is a fourth grade teacher and Boley points out that part of the fourth grade curriculum in Missouri schools is a section of westward emigration.

The position of Association Manager, with a \$45,000 annual salary, is being funded for at least two years by a grant from the National Park Service.

OCTA On The Web: www.octa-trails.org

Tortorich, Four Newcomers Join OCTA Board of Directors

The OCTA membership has re-elected **Frank Tortorich** and elected three new members to the National Board of Directors.

Tortorich, of Pine Grove, CA, was elected to a second three-year term. New Board members elected were **Glenn Harrison**, of Albany, OR; **Lethene Parks**, of Hunters, WA; and **David Vixie**, of Paradise, CA. All will serve three-year terms.

In addition, **Bill Martin**, of Georgetown, TX, was appointed to fill the final year of the term of Bob Wier, who has resigned from the Board.

Tortorich is a Charter and Life member of OCTA and is chair of the Mapping Committee. He is past president of the CA-NV Chapter and has served in a variety of national leadership positions.

Harrison is completing his second year as President of the Northwest Chapter, after serving as Vice President for eight years. He was involved in organizing the Baker City and Pendleton conventions and is active in local historical endeavors.

Parks completed service as OCTA Secretary at the Manhattan convention. A retired librarian, she is a past President and Board member of the Northwest Chapter and was a tour guide for the Pendleton and Baker City conventions.

Vixie is an eighth grade teacher and past winner of the OCTA Outstanding Teacher Award. He has received a number of awards for his work in involving students in historical



New Board members, left to right, Glenn Harrison, Lethene Parks, Bill Martin and Frank Tortorich. Not pictured, David Vixie.

— Photo by Candy Moulton

activities, including organizing a Beckwourth Trail commemorative wagon trip.

Martin has been editor of *News From The Plains* for the past six years and has been named chair of the OCTA Publications Committee. Previously a long-time resident of Reno, NV, he is a member of several OCTA chapters.

Results of the 2003 Board elections: Tortorich 702, Parks 696, Vixie 691, Harrison 627, Vern Gorzitze 559.

Vancouver Serenade for 2004



Members of the Northwest Chapter's "OCTA-pella Choir" offered conventioners a musical peak at plans for the 2004 Convention in Vancouver, Washington, on the Columbia River just across from Portland, OR. The convention will include special focus on Native American culture, Lewis & Clark, the Oregon Trail and the Hudson's Bay Company. There will be a variety of tours and presentations, a barbecue at Fort Vancouver, a for-credit teachers' institute and more. Watch News From The Plains for details. Future conventions include Salt Lake City in 2005 and St. Joe in 2006.

Report From the National Preservation Officer

By David Welch

National Trails Preservation Officer

Serving as OCTA's Preservation Officer permits me to combine preservation business with pleasure. It is an excuse to visit great places and great people while encouraging trail preservation.

The Welches journey to and from the Manhattan convention took us through 13 states and covered over 6,000 miles. The first portion of the trip was the return journey of Lewis and Clark along Lewis' route through Montana. Except in the Bitterroots and a free flowing portion of the Missouri in central Montana, there are few Lewis and Clark sites that are not greatly altered from the time of their journey.

Replicas such as Fort Mandan are built at sites more convenient for tourism. The Columbia and Missouri Rivers would be unrecognizable to the explorers due to the construction of dams and natural course changes. Of course, physical remnants of the expedition are extremely rare since it was a one-time event.

We are fortunate that the emigrant trails survive even in some highly impacted areas although the surviving element may be only a fragment found in the confusion of modern development. A swale in a golf course, plowed field or gas well complex does not really convey the story and emotion of the emigrant's remarkable effort.

Our return trip from Manhattan was an "Oregon-California Trails" journey. For the first time since learning of my family's history in the area, we visited the area around Oak, NE, on the Little Blue where some of my ancestors were victims of the Indian attacks in August 1864. It was chilling to read portions of Ron Becher's "Massacre Along the Medicine Road" while standing near the site of the horrific events.

My great great grandfather (Eubank) and most of his family were killed and my great grandfather (Ambrose Asher) was taken captive. The presence of some agricultural development did not, in this case, distract from the experience. We saw few other people and the heat was reminiscent of that day 139 years ago. I do not believe in ghosts, but I do believe in spirits.

Our travels in Wyoming involved both highs and lows. The highs were two days on the Lander Road escorted by Irv and Mabel Sutton in the company of 14 other trail buffs. We traveled from Burnt Ranch to Thayne, ID, while some of the group continued on to Fort Hall and Pocatello.

The trail (or road) did not disappoint as it proceeded westward with the backdrop of the Wind River Range. The road varied from an improved county road (gravel) to an imaginary two-track that challenged our modern vehicles. Along the Lander from its crossing of Highway 28 near the Sweetwater rest stop to Buckskin Crossing, one can still see a trail and countryside that are surely reflective of the emigrant's experience.

The journey's lows occurred where development is destroying the trail and the viewshed. In defining our position regarding development, OCTA considers the positive economic impact of such activities on the people of Wyoming. However, I

still lament the irreversible loss of an historic resource.

After completing the Lander trip and after a little rest and relaxation in Pinedale, we set off for a meeting in Rawlins with representatives of energy companies, government agencies and interested OCTA members. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss development activities and protection along the Overland and Cherokee Trails in southern Wyoming.

A prerequisite for protection is accurate documentation of the trail location and its condition. This is lacking in many areas. The BLM has responsibility for this activity, but we are insisting that OCTA members who have extensive knowledge be included in the process.

Our visit to Wyoming concluded with a return visit to South Pass. My family group (about a dozen) passed through the pass in late July 1847 on their way to Oregon. On this trip, we approached the pass from the west, leaving the highway at the interpretive site a few miles from the pass.

We followed the two-track around Pacific Springs and on to the pass. We had the site to ourselves. Only the wind rustling the sagebrush disturbed the absolute quiet. It was easy to take a few steps off the trail to visualize the clanking wagons and gear, voices directing the oxen and calling to children. The dust swirled and they moved on. And so did we.

South Pass is not pristine, but the experience survives. There is a railroad grade, irrigation canal, markers, fences, and power lines. A pipeline is a possibility for the future. However, the site is not lost and could be reclaimed. OCTA cannot stop developments based upon preservation issues alone, but we should encourage and promote the reclamation of South Pass and appropriate mitigation in other areas.

I have purposefully woven my personal experiences and family history into this discussion of preservation issues to illustrate that preservation is about people and their stories, not just an imprint in the ground. The trails tell the stories and give us a link to the past. As we lose trail, we lose some of the connection.

OCTA Volunteers Needed

OCTA members have an opportunity to get involved in the organization in a leadership capacity by volunteering to lead two important OCTA programs.

The COED (Census of Overland Emigrant Documents) Committee needs a new chair to replace Bob Kabel. Thanks to Bob's leadership, COED is making rapid progress, but now someone is needed to step in and continue the good work.

If you are interested in helping, contact OCTA President Dick Pingrey or National Preservation Officer Dave Welch.

Also, OCTA is looking for an new Historian, a position that has been vacant for more than a year. The Historian works with local chapters to make sure a complete and accurate record of OCTA activities is maintained.

For more information, contact OCTA President Dick Pingrey or Headquarters Manager Kathy Conway.

OCTA Headquarters Will Stay In Independence

The OCTA Board of Directors has approved a draft agreement with the City of Independence that will keep the headquarters of the Oregon-California Trails Association at the National Frontier Trail Museum for the foreseeable future.

The agreement followed protracted negotiations between the city and OCTA, represented by former OCTA Treasurer Jim Budde.

Under terms of the July 30 draft, OCTA will continue to have office, meeting, research and storage space at a charge of \$1,000 annually. The city will provide utilities at no cost to OCTA.

The NFTM will receive a 15 percent commission from the sale of OCTA books through the Center's gift shop. In addition, the NFTM will receive advertising space in the *Overland Journal* and *News From The Plains*.

OCTA will also be required to make an annual donation of \$1,000 to Friends of the Frontier Trails Museum and will provide support for the facility's redevelopment efforts.

Budde described the agreement, which was approved unanimously by the Board, as "the best deal we can get."

In other activities at the Manhattan meeting, the Board of Directors:

- Heard reports on planning for future conventions in Vancouver 2004, Salt Lake City 2005 and St. Joseph 2006.

- Received a report from National Preservation Officer Dave Welch, who said of the 230 actions processed by his office since March 2002, 90 percent have been in Wyoming.

- Authorized a letter of reprimand to an OCTA member in California who sent a letter to the South Tahoe Public Utilities District improperly purporting to represent OCTA. Only chapter preservation officers are the authorized to speak for chapters on preservation issues.

- Approved up to \$5,000 to support construction of a parking lot and other improvements to maintain public access along the Oregon Trail corridor at Whitman Mission National Historic Site in Washington state. A portion of the funds will be sought from OCTA chapters that wish to participate. Walla Walla County estimates the total cost of the project at \$10,000.

- Defeated, on a 6-5 vote, a policy statement that no Board member can serve concurrently as a Board officer. The issue will be addressed during a Bylaws review now underway.

- Approved the following policy statement concerning the acquisition of real property and easements by OCTA: "It is the policy of OCTA to encourage the development of preservation easements, and other types of protective measures short of ownership. However, in recognition of the fact that each case is unique and that state laws define the procedures and regulation, the development of easements should be referred to the national organization at the earliest possible time. Chapter members may take the lead in developing easement agreements subject to review by the National Preservation Officer and an appropriate attorney. The national board will approve all agreements when in final form."

Important: *News From The Plains* Contact Information

Effective October 1, the new contact information for *News From The Plains* is as follows:

Editor: Candy Moulton

Mailing Addresses:

Regular Mail: Star Route Box 29

UPS/Fed Ex: 500 Beaver Road

Encampment, WY 82325

Tel & Fax: 307/327-5465

E-mail: NFPOCTA@aol.com

- Approved the hiring of Candy Moulton as editor of *News From The Plains*, renewed the contract of Bob Clark to edit the *Overland Journal* and appointed Bill Martin as chair of the Publications Committee.

- Learned that Beth Finger has resigned as chair of the OCTA Membership Committee.

- Approved a resolution requiring the chairs of all committees to develop and maintain a statement of committee purpose subject to Board approval; and to submit a report to all Board meetings, even if the report is only a statement of no action.

- Received a report from the Internet Committee with an update on the new OCTA website. Plans include upgraded capabilities for the OCTA online store.

- Appointed Bill Martin, of Georgetown, TX to serve the final year of Bob Wier's term on the Board of Directors; Wier has resigned.

- Approved creation of a Young OCTAN Award to recognize those between the ages of six and 21 for participation in trails preservation activities.

- Received a report from Zeke Sicotte, chair of the Challenge Cost Share Program. Of the eight projects active during the past year, four were fully funded and closed (Trimble Unit, The Dalles survey and mapping, the OCTA trails video, and initial funding for COED). Four projects still open included The Dalles GPS Upgrade, Oregon Trail to Kansas, Applegate South Road, and COED supplemental funding. Total CCSP federal support was \$134,734. Sicotte noted OCTA's cost share percentage, based on hours worked at \$14 per hour, exceeded the NPS reimbursed amounts.

- Received additional reports from the Chairs of the Grave and Sites/Trail Marking Committee (chair Randy Brown), Archaeology Committee (chair Russ Tanner), Education Committee (chair Bill Hill), Chapters Committee (chair Ross Marshall), and Collections Committee (chair Jeanne Watson).

-- Bill Martin

OCTA Board Approves \$187,235 Annual Budget

The OCTA Board of Directors approved a 2004 budget totaling \$187,235 during its annual meeting held in conjunction with the Manhattan Convention.

The budget represents a slight increase over spending for the 2003 budget year, which ended September 30, and represents a break-even balance between revenue and expenses.

Not included in the budget are expenses for the new Association Manager or revenues reflecting a National Parks Service grant that will fund the position.

"At the time of budget preparation, it was deemed probable that income and expense would equal," Treasurer Doug Brown explained in his report to the Board. "If we generated additional costs, we would be get offsetting grant revenue."

At the same time, Brown noted the budget includes "sizeable goals" for the new Association Manager to achieve in meeting projected funding levels. "We feel this budget will allow programming to continue as well as keep OCTA viable for the future," Brown said. "We do need to note the need for continued fund raising activities to get OCTA in a better position to direct our mission in the future."

The budget includes \$289,650 in revenues and support, including annual dues, convention revenues and book store sales. After deductions of \$102,250 for convention expenses and costs of good sold, net income is budgeted at \$187,400.

Expenses of \$187,325 include \$94,900 for member support and administration, \$55,690 for publications, \$12,650 for committee activities and \$10,210 for direct preservation activities, including COED and trail mapping and marking.

The Board also was told of year-to-date increases as of June 30, 2003 for OCTA endowment funds managed by the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation, reflecting improved performance of stock market and other investments, particularly during the second quarter of the year.

As of June 30, endowments totaled \$622,079, including:

Restricted Endowment Fund - \$279,204

Unrestricted Endowment Fund - \$14,573

Charles W. & Mary C. Martin Restricted Endowment Fund - \$177,455

Pat Loomis Restricted Endowment Fund - \$150,847

Total fund value as of January 1, 2003 was \$564,566.

In other financial news, Special Endowment Fund Drive Committee Chair Richard Pingrey told the Board that the Drive fell significantly short of its goal of \$100,000, netting approximately one-third of that amount.

In discussing the shortfall, Pingrey said the SEFD Committee "failed to stimulate the group right here" [the Board] and was unsuccessful in attracting corporate support and sponsorships.

However, he said the Committee laid important groundwork for future efforts, particularly by providing the membership with information on planned and estate giving opportunities.

"One bequest of \$100,000 would be worth far more than the man hours and funds expended to make this program happen," Pingrey said.

— Bill Martin

Moulton Named Editor of *News From The Plains*

Candy Moulton has been named Editor of *News From the Plains*, effective with the January 2004 issue. A former newspaper editor, Moulton has done freelance writing, photography and editing for the past 21 years.

She edits the Western Writers of America *Roundup Magazine* and is a former editor of the *Western Outlaw Lawman History Association Journal*. She also writes regularly for a number of publications, including the *Casper Star-Tribune*, *Rawlins Daily Times*, *Fence Post*, *Wild West* and *American Cowboy*.

She serves as a writer and contributing editor for *True West* and is a staff writer for *Persimmon Hill*, official publication of the National Cowboy Museum and Western Heritage Center in Oklahoma City.

In 1990, Moulton traveled with the Wyoming Centennial Wagon Train over the Bridger Trail as a reporter for the *Casper Star-Tribune*. She has subsequently reported for the paper from wagon trains crossing the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, Bozeman, and Cherokee Trails.

She won a Friend of the Trail Award from the Old West Trail Association in 1993 for her coverage of the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial. She also won an Award of Special Merit from the Wyoming Press Association and an Outstanding Service Award from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for her coverage of the Mormon Pioneer Trail Sesquicentennial in 1997.

This year, she was named as a finalist for the Spur Award by Western Writers of America for Best Documentary for her work on "Footsteps to the West," the orientation theater program at the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper.

Moulton has written or co-authored 12 books, including *Wagon Wheels: A Contemporary Journey on the Oregon Trail*, *Roadside History of Wyoming*, and *Roadside History of Nebraska*. She is presently at work on three additional books.

Moulton can be contacted at Star Route Box 29 (mail), 500 Beaver Road (delivery), Encampment, WY, 82325; Phone and fax: 307/327-5465. E-mail: NFPOCTA@aol.com.

Articles can be submitted electronically by pasting the message into an e-mail; please include "OCTA" in the subject line of the message. Photos saved as jpeg files can also be sent electronically. Other materials may be mailed to the address above. If possible send a typewritten or computer generated copy that can be scanned.

Future National Conventions

Vancouver WA 2004
Salt Lake City UT 2005
St. Joseph MO 2006
????? 2007

Historic Trails Legislation Pending In Congress

OCTA members are being urged to contact members of the House of Representatives in support of the Pioneer National Historic Trails Studies Act, HR 1051. An identical bill, S-635, passed the U.S. Senate in June.

OCTA members who live in or near the district represented by Congressman Richard Pombo are especially encouraged to contact his Stockton, CA office urging consideration of the bill.

Pombo, a Republican whose district includes portions of Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Alameda and Santa Clara Counties, is chair of the House Resources Committee, where the legislation will be considered.

His Stockton office is located at 2495 W. March Lane, Suite 104, Stockton CA 95207. The phone number is (209) 951-3091; fax (209) 951-1910.

All OCTA members are encouraged to contact the local offices of their congressional representatives asking them to become co-sponsors of the legislature.

The primary sponsor of the bill in the House, Congressman Doug Bereuter of Nebraska, has contacted Pombo asking for expeditious consideration of the legislation.

The bill would allow the study of numerous trails and segments to determine if they should be added to the National Trails Act. More than 60 specific routes, segments and cutoffs would be studied, potentially adding several thousand miles of trails to the Act.

Headquarters (continued from page 3)

kept straight A's in Social Studies all year and without your help my project probably wouldn't have received the grade I received. It's organizations such as yours that care about History and a 14-year old student you never even met. You should be acknowledged. Once again, thanks for your time and effort for helping me succeed.

It goes without saying, we are delighted for Brandon's success with his history project. Brandon is being sent an OCTA Pin and Patch with our congratulatory letter.

We wish to welcome OCTA's new Association Manager, F. Travis Boley, who will begin his new assignment with us in October.

As a reminder OCTA's Annual Fund Drive is on the November calendar. Letters will be mailed during the first week of the month. Also be looking for an OCTA catalog just in time for your holiday shopping.

-- Kathy Conway, Headquarters Manager

Visit the
OCTA Bookstore at
www.OCTA-trails.org

Special Endowment Fund Drive Contributors

OCTA's Special Endowment Fund Drive raised \$31,281 through September, 2003. Contributors included:

Eva Allen	Lorraine Dyson	Albert Koch	Clair & Virginia Ricketts
Norman J Barker	Frank J & Jackie Ellis	Richard J Laird	Turner Rivenbark
Adele Bellmer	Jim & Ardis Everett	Baldwin & Ormie Lamson	Louise Hammer Rossi
Roger & Susan Doyle Blair	Clifford H Fiscus	Jean Leamon	Semon J Sandven
Janet F Boom	Jack E & Pat Fletcher	Charles & Harriet Lewis	Paul Sawyer
Thelma Bowser	Eleanor Fry	Charles Little	Raymond E Schoch
Weston & Eleanor Briggs	Dwight J Garrison	A S Littlefield	Gene & Nancy Serr
Dennis Brown	William F Gloy	Patricia Loomis	Malcolm E Smith
Nancy Brown	Lois & Ted Gobin	Michael Luther	Dan Spencer
Doug Brown	Archie Gordon	Sharon & Hal Manhart	Virginia Stanton
James and Judy Budde	Bucky Green	Chuck & Mary Ellen Martin	Sharon L Stokes
Dr. & Mrs. B R Cahill	Andrew W & Joanne Hammond	Jim McClain	Mort & Fran Sumberg
Jude A Carino	John & Norma Haner	Stan McKee	William C Tapley
Greg Childs	Glenn Harrison	Kendall & Elaine McNabney	Fran Taplin
Marjorie Coffill	Dr. & Mrs. E. Scott Hendricks	Virginia Nelson	Charley Taylor
Gary Conklin	Richard A Higgins	Bob & Manuella Nicholas	Richard L Trevallee
James & Kathy Conway	Jim & Alma Holcomb	Norma Norman	Randall A Wagner
Robert L Corder	Chuck & Suzanne Hornbuckle	Keith A Palmquist	Daniel Weber
Nancy B Costa	Herbert & Lois Hunn	M Lethene Parks	David Welch
Ruth Crane	Robert A Iverson	Judson Parsons	David A White
Doug & Eloise Crary	Robert Kabel	George Petrie	Sandra Wiechert
Dick & Virginia Davis	Barbara Kabel	Richard Pingrey	Robert R Wier
Ronald O Downs	Edna Kennell	Vauna Pipal	Gareth & Deann Wilson
Fred Dykes	Dr. & Mrs Duane M Kline Jr.	Mrs E W Puckett	Daniel Woodhead III

Marshall, Kabels Headline OCTA Awards Banquet

By Bill Martin

Former OCTA President and long-time trails volunteer **Ross Marshall** received the **Meritorious Achievement Award**, OCTA's highest honor, during the annual Awards Banquet at the Manhattan convention.



Ross Marshall

Marshall, of Merriam, KS, is a charter member of OCTA. He served as President in 1991-1992, Vice President in 1989-90 and two terms on the Board of Directors, from 1994 to 2000. He also is a past president of the Santa Fe Trail Association.

He has chaired a number of national committees and was chair of the OCTA convention in Independence in 2000. He has served several terms as President of the Trails Head Chapter and is an active member of the National Trails Partnership.

In nominating him for the Meritorious Achievement Award, the Gateway Chapter noted, "Ross' long history of leadership and accomplishments are familiar to all who have been involved with OCTA for any length of time. (He) is an energetic advocate for OCTA and other Western Trails. His enthusiasm is contagious as he encourages others to get involved."

In a separate letter of nomination, Craig Crease of Shawnee, KS said, "I know of few individuals who have devoted as much time and effort over the last two decades towards the interpretation and preservation of American's great frontier trails as Ross Marshall."

Crease added, "Many times I have seen Ross spend countless hours working tirelessly on an important trail preservation project, never seeking the limelight, but always keeping the project moving forward. Many OCTA members and others have had the benefit of his selfless help and counsel over the years."

The nominations also noted Marshall's efforts on behalf of the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association, for preservation of the Lone Elm Campground, and in cooperative projects with the National Park Service.

"This is an honor that I will treasure the rest of my life," Marshall said in accepting the award, which traditionally is

presented in recognition of long-time service and significant contributions to OCTA.



Bob and Barbara Kabel

Also at the Awards Banquet, **Bob and Barbara Kabel**, of State College, PA, were named recipients of the 2003 **Distinguished Volunteer Award** for their efforts on behalf of OCTA's Census of Overland Emigrant Documents (COED) project.

"Bob and Barbara have scarcely had a life of their own since taking on the challenges of getting COED back on track," said Shann Rupp in nominating them, adding that they "have accomplished what no others were able to do. Considering how close COED came to going down the drain and losing all the time, effort and money invested by so many OCTA volunteers, we owe a great debt of gratitude to the Kabels."

Kabel, a former member of the OCTA Board of Directors, has served as "acting" chair of the COED Committee for the past two years. Together with his wife, Barbara, they were instrumental in getting the COED *Emigrant Names* compact disk to market.

At the same time, OCTA presented a **Distinguished Service Award** to **Joe Kabel** of Olympia, WA. The son of Bob and Barbara, Joe Kabel donated over 500 hours of programming and database management, valued at about \$20,000, to the COED project through his company, Looking Glass Analytics, Inc.

Also receiving a **Distinguished Volunteer Award** was **Mark Wheeler**, of Des Moines, IA, co-chair of the OCTA Internet Committee, who was recognized for his work in re-designing and improvement the OCTA website.

In presenting the award, OCTA Awards Chair Roger Blair described Wheeler's considerable investment of time and expertise in making changes in the OCTA website and said his work was "exactly the sort of effort for which the award was created."

Also receiving **Distinguished Service Awards** were **Terry Del Bene**, of Green River, WY; **Jere Krakow** of Salt Lake City, UT; and **Mike Metcalf** of Colorado.

Del Bene, an OCTA member and Bureau of Land Management employee in southwestern Wyoming, was recognized for accomplishments that nominators described as "simply staggering" over the past dozen years.

His efforts have included developing partnerships with diverse trails interests; developing grants for National Historic Trails Projects; guiding tours of the trails; lecturing at the BLM's Trail Tales summer lecture series; giving over 100 programs to community groups and schools; and much, much more.

"Southwest Wyoming has the most miles of pristine National Historic Trails left in the nation," OCTA member Mike



Jere Krakow

Brown said in nominating Del Bene. "In addition, they're the best marked, best interpreted and best protected trail remnants in the country — thanks to Terry's efforts."



Glenn Larson

Krakow has been superintendent of the National Park Service Long Distance Trails Office since 1995 and recently was named manager of the National Trails System Program for the Intermountain region, which includes the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, Pony Express, Santa Fe, Trail of Tears and El Camino Real del Adento trails.

His award cited NPS support for OCTA conventions, the Challenge Cost Share Program, COED and other OCTA activities.

"From OCTA's inception, the National Park Service has been an important trail partner with OCTA in planning, preserving and promoting historic emigrant trails," noted Blair. "In fact, the founding meeting of OCTA was held in a NPS conference room in Denver. That relationship continues to this day and indeed has strengthened over the years. That strengthening can be directly tied to Jere Krakow."

Metcalf owns a Colorado archaeological consulting firm and was instrumental in preserving trail segments in Wyoming during surveying work on the Medicine Bow Gas Pipeline.

OCTA also presented National Certificates of Appreciation to Vern Osborne, of St. George, KS, for his work as chair of the Manhattan Convention; and to Glenn Larson, of Waterville, KS, for his efforts on a "data dictionary" used in GPS trail mapping.



Terry Del Bene, left, with OCTA Immediate Past President Randy Wagner.
— Photo by Candy Moulton



Friend of the Trail Award Winners Pat and Alicia Keegan with their family

Friend of the Trail Awards

Members of two Kansas families have received **Friend of the Trail Awards** from OCTA for their actions to preserve access to important trail remnants.

Jim Tessendorf was recognized for his efforts to provide public access to the Louis Vieux Cemetery, the Cholera Cemetery and the site of the Red Vermillion Cross/Vieux Toll Bridge.

Cited work included sharing his knowledge of the area with local OCTA members, giving the National Park Service permission to conduct a ground survey on property east of the Cholera Cemetery, and doing everything he can to preserve the sites and history of the westward migration near the Red Vermillion River.

Pat and Alicia Keegan have a home on the St. Joe Road and live just east of Clear Creek Crossing and swales. They have traced the trail through their own property and through the general area.

Also, they have been especially willing to share their area and knowledge with others and helped lead tours during the 2003 Manhattan convention.

OCTA's Friend of the Trail Award is presented to those who have direct ties to lands over which historic trails pass, with an emphasis on preservation, education and allowing responsible public access.



Jim Tessendorf

Six Are Winners of OCTA Educator Awards

Six educators from Arizona, Kansas, Nebraska and Wyoming were named winners of the Outstanding Educator Award for 2003 at the Manhattan convention.

The winners were:

Elementary - Kim Merchant, Southridge Elementary School, Casper, WY.

Intermediate - Kelley Coday and Penny Buehler, Oregon Trail Junior High, Olathe, KS.

University - Katherine Morrissey, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, and **Susan Gray**, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.

Institutional - John Versluis, North Platte Valley Museum, Gering, NE.

Merchant was recognized for a curriculum entitled "The Oregon Trail Experience," designed to give students historic background and hands-on experience in traveling the Oregon Trail.

A "re-enactor" himself, Merchant motivates special education students in grades kindergarten through sixth by using historical novels, keeping daily journals and participation in authentic trails activities.

Adding to the classroom work is a "History Day" trip to Merchant's ranch located on the Oregon Trail 20 miles west of Casper, where students dress in period costume and divide up into pioneer families.

Richard Skatula, principal at Southridge, said "Kim's ability to make learning come alive for so many of his students is the hallmark of his work. He utilizes his vast knowledge of frontier history and draws students into the life of the pioneer, both through their class work and in real life situations and reenactments."

Coday and Buehler were honored for an eighth grade curriculum known as "Wagon Train" that focuses on westward migration in the 1840s and 1850s.

Students read an overview of the Trails and create a family to accompany on the trip, including where they are coming from and where they are going. Students are encouraged to visit trail sites in the Olathe area.

Throughout the study, students are required to make trail decisions, such as what to take in the way of livestock and provisions, and participate in the building of a friendship quilt commemorating their trail experience.

Assistant Principal Lynn McLennan noted, "The extra energy they put into Wagon Train speaks to their dedication to enhance student appreciation for this period in our history."

Morrissey, an associate professor of history at the University of Arizona, teaches a Topics in U.S. History class called "Women Riding/Writing the Trails," a semester-long reading, discussion and analysis seminar.

The course includes comparing and contrasting the writings of individual women, analyzes different perspectives and interprets cultural representations of western women.



Left to right, OCTA Education Committee Chair Bill Hill, John Versluis, Kelley Coday, Penny Beuhler and Kim Merchant. Not pictured, Katherine Morrissey and Susan Gray

"Katherine demands that the student think of the past in terms of representations," said Richard Cosgrove, UA History Department Chair. "That is, to get beyond stereotypes of Western history and examine original materials."

Gray teaches "The Overland Trails, 1840-1860," an undergraduate course, in the Department of History at Arizona State, a methods course required for history majors at the university.

Gray was chair of the faculty committee that developed the course and says she views trails history "as a window on American values and identities, as well as an unusually good vehicle for conveying to students the centrality of time and space to all historical inquiry." In addition, Gray has several students editing trail diaries as masters' degree projects.

In recommending Gray for the award, History Department Chair Noel Stowe noted that the curriculum emphasizes that "trail history is a muscular topic: its scope encompasses migration and immigration patterns, family history, gender analysis, race and ethnic history. Students rank the course among the top 10 percent in the department."

Versluis, executive director of the North Platte Valley Museum, was recognized for his educational work with Overland Trail history through the Paul and Helen Henderson Collection at the museum.

Through his efforts, the Henderson Collection is being indexed as part of the Western History Archive at the museum, with a goal of having the entire collection digitized.

"John Versluis has served as the guiding force in the efforts to upgrade the North Platte Valley Museum and the Western History Archive," said Dean Knudsen, a curator/historian for the National Park Service at Scotts Bluff National Monument. "His drive, foresight, knowledge and skill have contributed greatly to this project and will undoubtedly have a long-term effect on the museum and historical research and preservation."

— Bill Martin



Nine of the 10 Presidents in OCTA history were present at the Awards Banquet in Manhattan and were presented commemorative plaques made from the historic Louis Vieux Elm, which stood beside the Oregon-California Trail for nearly 300 years. Left to right, Tom Hunt, Dave Bigler, Ross Marshall, Jackie Lewin, Randy Wagner, Roger Blair, Dave Welch, Greg Franzwa and Bill Watson. Dick Ackerman was unable to attend.



Skylar German



Kiera Keegan

First Young OCTAN Awards Presented

OCTA has established a new award category to recognize youngsters between the ages of six and 21 who exhibit special interest in historic trails through school work or projects or through support for OCTA and its activities.

Two winners of the new **Young OCTAN Award** were announced at the Manhattan convention, **Skylar German** and **Kiera Keegan**.

Skylar is the daughter of Brent and Annette German and is a second grade student at St. Mark's Grade School near Colwich, KS.

As part of a class project, Skylar made a flat, paper image of herself that traveled the Oregon and California Trails. Many OCTA members hosted Flat Skylar, who took her to visit trail sites and sent pictures back to Skylar's classroom (see story in July, 2003, issue of *News From The Plains*).

Kiera is the daughter of Pat and Alicia Keegan of Baileyville, KS, and is a fourth grade student at B&B Elementary School in St. Benedict.

Kiera wrote an article about her trail activities and the fun she has had with her family along the trail. The article was published in the July, 2001 issue of *News From The Plains*.

In explaining the reason for the Young OCTAN Award, Awards Chair Roger Blair said, "We need to encourage young people to get involved so that we can be assured that the trails will have future historians and preservationists."

Coldsmith Keynote Highlights Convention Speakers

The trails have meant so much to so many people for so long a time that it is isn't surprising that so much emotion is involved in preservation efforts, author Don Coldsmith told members of the Oregon-California Trails Association at its annual convention.



Keynote Speaker Don Coldsmith

In a heartfelt keynote address, Coldsmith admitted that many OCTA members probably know more about specific trails than he does, but the Kansas native said he brought a writer's perspective to the study of the trails.

"You get to messing with the trails and you find stories," he said. "You can't make this stuff up. That's why it's great to be a writer – you get to share these stories."

Coldsmith, who has written 40 books and several times been a finalist for the Western Writers of America Spur Award, said he took a Kansas native's pride in the history of the Kanza territory.

"I call it a circle of history," he explained. "You take a compass to Kansas and make a circle with a 200-mile radius and there will be more history in it than any place in the continent. And in this part of the country we live close to our history."

Western roads started as little more than mouse trails through the grasslands, with humans likely to follow the same trails because "they lay themselves out as the easiest way to get from point A to point B," he said.

Coldsmith noted the Smoky Hill, Oregon-California and Santa Fe trails all went through the Manhattan area, which also was home to steamboats and railroads.

He offered a brief overview of area trails history, starting with Coronado in 1541, continuing through the emigrant experience, stagecoach lines, the Pony Express, railroads, and today's Interstate freeways.

"Take all of the events that took place on all of the trails and there is a lot of emotion involved," Coldsmith said. "It's understandable there are going to be ghosts on the trail. It would be unusual if there weren't ghosts. It's the spirits along the trail that keep us going."

Summing up the emigrant experience, Coldsmith cited an old Indian expression for those who seek to interpret overland travels: "If you think you have to understand it, you've missed the point."

Coldsmith was one of more than a dozen speakers who shared personal and trail history with those who attended the convention, on topics ranging from the history of Fort Riley to local trails.

- Bill Martin



Moderator Jackie Lewin introduces John Call for his presentation on Asa Cyrus Call and his journey to California



Will Bagley answers questions after his presentation on murder and mayhem on the trail



David Jackson preparing for his session on the Gold Rush letters and diary of James and David Lee Campbell

Jack and Pat Fletcher shared stories of the Cherokee Trail through Kansas



Scenes From Manhattan 2003



Reenactor Buster Schmitz during a workshop on 19th Century black powder guns



Convention-goers enjoyed an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast



Olive Donaldson, center, and members of the OCTA Trail Band



Shann Rupp and Dave Welch share a COED moment



Convention chair Vern Osborne with author and speaker Tee Loftin



Andy Hammond, left, congratulates Chris Jeffries of the Chisholm Trail Heritage Center following his presentation

More Scenes From Manhattan 2003



Outgoing OCTA President Randy Wagner with incoming President Dick Pingrey



Author Will Bagley, left, with former OCTA President Greg Franzwa



Outgoing Board member and new OCTA Vice President Vern Gorzitze



Convention chair Vern Osborne, left, with Kaw Indian Nation Elder Luther Pepper, who provided the opening ceremony benediction.



National Preservation Officer Dave Welch presides over a well-attended workshop on trails preservation.



Still More Scenes From Manhattan 2003



Speaker Dr. Barbara Burgess shared "Stories of the Independence Road"



Author Don Coldsmith signs a copy of one of his books during Authors' Night in the OCTA Book Room.



Wendy Welch, right, said she wanted an "authentic souvenir" of Manhattan, so Glenn Larson arranged to present her with the "buffalo chip" award, described as "a new award given for no reason whatsoever."

— Photo by Dave Welch



"The Oregon Trail Through Pottawatomie County, Kansas" was the topic of a presentation by Charlene Peddicord.



All convention photos by Bill Martin unless otherwise indicated.



Helpful KANZA Chapter volunteers at the registration desk in Manhattan

www.OCTA-trails.org

Wagon Wheels On The Internet: OCTA Website News

Website Content Authors

The new website makes it possible for a variety of members to have authorized access to the website to add content. With the completion of the website content review and consolidation the Internet committee is now focusing on website content.

We are presently reviewing those website sections that require the most up-to-date information, and identifying one or more content managers for each section. We anticipate a content management education and training session in the near future where section content managers can become familiar with the easy system that is now in place to keep key OCTA information current.

Best of all, website section content managers don't need to know web page development techniques in order to update their section's content. This will allow for more members to quickly and easily keep website information current.

Chapter Website Integration

Our new website (OCTA-Trails.org) is capable of handling chapter websites for those chapters who have trouble finding someone to handle these responsibilities. We will soon be sending out information to chapter presidents letting them know that this option now exists. We will then work with those chapters who prefer to move their site to see that that is accomplished. We have had a couple of inquiries already.

Call for Photos

We are always looking for photos to add to the website. If you have trails-related photos that you would like added to the OCTA website, please forward them to: webmaster @ OCTA-Trails.org.

Note: Be sure to include any accompanying narrative and credit information.

What's New

Panoramas

We've added several panoramas, which are an exciting addition to the website. You can view them at www.octa-trails.org/JumpingOffToday/Panorama.

Note: A web browser plug-in (Apple QuickTime Player) is required to view this content. If you don't currently have the QuickTime Player on your computer, you can download it for free. This link is available on Panoramas website page.

Reminder: "Member's Corner"

Entrance Now Requires User Name & Password

Effective July 1, 2003, OCTA Members will need to enter the following information to gain entrance to the "Member's Corner" section of the OCTA website:

User Name: octa

Password: trailswest

This requirement is necessary in order to limit access to the information found in this section to OCTA members only.

Note: Please safeguard this information by not sharing it with non-members. Periodically, we will change the User Name & Password. When this occurs, we will communicate this change to Members in future issues of *News From The Plains*.

If you forget what the current User Name & Password is, don't worry. There is an email link to request that the User Name and Password be sent to you again.

Questions & Suggestions

We encourage members to send us suggestions and questions about any issues related to the OCTA website. To facilitate this communication, there is a "Webmaster" feedback link located in the lower left-hand corner of each web page.

Mark Wheeler
Internet Committee Co-Chair
Webmaster@OCTA-Trails.org

Lesley Wischmann
Internet Committee Co-Chair
lesleywisch@earthlink.net

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION



P.O. Box 1019 / Independence, MO 64051-0519 / (816) 252-2276

Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. (Please check)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone(_____) _____

e-mail address _____

NEW MEMBERSHIP

Membership Categories
(Check One)

- Individual \$40/year
 Family \$45/year
 Supporting \$75/year
 Patron \$125/year
 Institutional \$300/year
 Life \$1000
 Corporate \$1,250/year
 Student* \$15/year
 Gift

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ OR

VISA MC Exp. Date _____

Clip & Use For New Members

*Memberships are available for full-time students at accredited colleges/universities, with verification. Student memberships are limited to four years.

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO OCTA ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE TO THE FULL EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW.



News From The Chapters

Wyoming

The Anadarko Petroleum Corporation will fund a study along the Overland Trail in Wyoming between Washakie Station and Point of Rocks in order to identify what trail sites are present and to evaluate their importance, Jana Pastur of Western Archaeological Services announced at a meeting sponsored by OCTA in Rawlins on August 25.

The study will include areas west of Rawlins, north of Baggs, near Delaney Rim, in the Black Butte area, and near Point of Rocks. Anadarko is funding the study to assist in planning for future coalbed methane projects the company wants to develop in the area, Pastur said.

OCTA members, resource developers and Carbon County representatives said more work and improved cooperation is needed in order to protect the Overland and Cherokee Trails while at the same time allowing development to proceed without unnecessary delays.

"We're all interested in the same end goal," said Carbon County Commissioner Linda Fleming, who is also a member of the Wyoming Fish & Game Commission. "We don't want to shut down the gas production, we don't want to shut down grazing, and we don't want to shut down the tourism."

Fleming, an OCTA member, said the trails are important tourist resources that can be particularly beneficial to small communities like Baggs and Encampment.

OCTA National Preservation Officer Dave Welch, who moderated the meeting, stressed OCTA's interest in identifying trail sites and segments in order to protect those that are most important historically and for their quality.

All agreed that the important issue facing trails in the area is the need to quickly compile specific details about trail resources. The area is a mineral-rich location of Wyoming with a variety of resource development projects underway or on the drawing board including those related to coalbed methane, oil and gas, and coal mines.

"Our industry is moving fast. They need to know where they can be and where they can't be," Fleming said. "How do we get us all together to get something moving faster?"

Welch agreed, saying, "We need this evaluation of trails sooner rather than later." He said OCTA members are willing to assist in studies by providing information and working on mapping or marking projects.

Russ Tanner, representing the Wyoming Bureau of Land Management office, urged those at the meeting to contact the Wyoming State BLM director and ask for an expedited trails study and plan. "This needs to be done in a planning process and it will be done in a planning process," Tanner said. That process allows an opportunity for general public comment and review, he said.

Industry representatives indicated an interest in working with OCTA and public land managers in order to protect trail



Linda Fleming, an OCTA member from Baggs and also a Carbon County Commissioner, talks with Pat and Jack Fletcher in Rawlins.

— Photo by Candy Moulton

resources, but they expressed concern about developmental limits based on viewshed factors. They also questioned the quarter-mile corridor on each side of the trail in which development generally is not allowed by Wyoming BLM.

Dru Bower of the Petroleum Association of Wyoming said that she believes industry does "a very good job to minimize the impacts to the trail." But she noted that issues over viewshed protection are "problematic for the industry."

She also stressed that energy developers must deal with other issues besides historic trails when preparing development plans, including impacts to wildlife, soils, and water. "We're trying very hard to juggle probably five to ten impacts besides just the viewshed," she said.

Randy Wagner of Cheyenne, immediate past president of OCTA, said, "There are some places where OCTA will fight, I think, to protect the viewshed."

There are several variants to the 1840 and 1850 Cherokee Trails through southern Wyoming and OCTA National Board Member Edna Kennell of Casper suggested OCTA has to "pick one" to focus attention on. "We can't ask for half of Wyoming," she said.

But other OCTA members disagreed. "I don't think it is a matter of choosing one," Welch said. "It is a matter of choosing what is important." OCTA member Tom McCutcheon of Rock Springs added, "Why can't we protect it all?"

OCTA has reviewed more than 200 development proposals from energy companies with projects in Wyoming, Welch said. OCTA has not filed any protests, but has in certain cases asked for mitigation or changes in plans, which have generally been accepted by the BLM and energy developers.

— Candy Moulton

Crossroads

Utah's long, hot and very, very dry summer is coming to a close and chapter members are looking forward to a barbecue in cool Parley's Canyon and an October field trip.

Early fall is the time to hit the salt desert trails and a field trip on a section of the Hastings Cutoff is being planned. Check the next issue of the chapter newsletter, *Crossroads*, for the date and details. **Richard Wilkes**, our OCTA member in England, is planning a visit in October and may be able to join us.

The selection of **Vern Gorzitze** by the Board to be OCTA's Vice President to serve with new president **Dick Pingrey** is good news to Crossroad members. His leadership and ability to get things done will help strengthen and perpetuate OCTA's goals and programs the next four years.

Crossroads congratulates all the members of the new OCTA Board and an extra slap on the back for chapter members **Andy Hammond** and **Frank Tortorich**.

We are concerned about the proposed placement of a cellular phone tower at Timpie Point, a historic spot on the Hastings Cutoff between Tooele Valley and Skull Valley.

Placing a tower on the "point," will eliminate a viewscape from the top of the point and will require the removal of an iron rail marker. Access over the point to trail evidence and Big Spring in Skull Valley would probably be blocked and require vehicles to return to I-80 and Rowley Junction in order to access Hastings Cutoff and the old Lincoln Highway.

A replica of a Pony Express Station that was constructed for the 2002 Winter Olympics by the Utah Division, National Historic Pony Express Trail Association, has been relocated to the This Is The Place Heritage Park.

The cabin station was built as part of the Western Experience Village at Soldier Hollow. Crossroads member **Pat Hearty** was instrumental in coordinating the effort to relocate the cabin. The equipment and labor to accomplish the task



*Chuck Milliken and Lee Kreutzer of the National Park Service
Long Distance Trail Office at Timpie Point
near the Hastings Cutoff. — Photo by Al Mulder*

were donated by three private companies.

The 2005 OCTA convention in Salt Lake City will be held in the Sheraton City Center Hotel (formerly the Hilton where we held the convention in 1994). The Sheraton was selected for its convenient central location, excellent rooms and convention facilities, and bus parking convenience. It may be expensive compared to rates for hotel accommodations at previous conventions, so plan now and start saving those extra dollars for the higher room rates in 2005.

— Al Mulder

Northwest

A sizeable contingent from the Northwest Chapter attended the excellent OCTA Convention in Manhattan. We enjoyed promoting next year's convention at Vancouver, as well as the many activities that Vern Osborne and the KANZA members and recruits put on.

We are looking forward to a Chapter picnic with a varied program in late September at Borst Park in Centralia, WA. On October 10-11, there will be an OCTA marker placement followed by a dedication and hike along the Free Emigrant Road route followed by the 1853 Elliott wagon train.

(For a picture of the Northwest Chapter's OCTA-pella choir, see page 5)

— Glenn Harrison

KANZA

A 2003 Convention Photo Scrapbook has been posted on the KANZA chapter website, located at KANZA-OCTA.org.

Webmaster Glenn Larson said he would still welcome any photos of the convention that you would like to contribute to the scrapbook, especially photos from the tours, banquet and Fort Riley.

Photos can be sent electronically to his e-mail address (glarson@flinthills.com) or by snail mail to P.O. Box 104/239 Hiway 9, Waterville KS 66548-0104. Photos will be returned.

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- Anderson, Kevin
30251 S Dhooghe Rd
Colton OR 97017
- Babcock, Dean
400 Cervantes Rd
Portoia Valley CA 94028
650/861-8196
dbabcockpe@earthlink.net
- Balmer, Jean
5744 Mott St
San Diego CA 92122
- Beland, Edwin & Dorothy
1709 Devonshire Rd
Sacramento CA 95864-1502
teddot@winfirst.com
- Bernd, Roy & Zelma
9101-39 Steilacoom Rd SE
Olympia WA 98513
360/459-4342
rnzbernd@attbi.com
- Brewer, Margo Fariss
47 Riverbirch Drive
Pittsboro NC 27312
MargoLB@aol.com
- Brown, G Richard
McDonough, Holland & Allen
555 Capitol Drive, Ninth Floor
Sacramento CA 95814
916/444-3900
rbrown@mhalaw.com
- Carter, Sandra & Dennis
920 288th St S
Roy WA 98580
253/843-2164
sandi@smokedwire.com
- Coffey, Barbara
1520 NE Madison Rd
Poulsbo WA 98370
360/613-2876
barbrista@hotmail.com
- Cole, Jaynell
99 South Windsor
Russell KS 67665
785/483-4713
kleenexmom@hotmail.com
- Coleman, George
PO Box 7
Fiddletown CA 95629
209/245-3041
- Coronado, Paul A
4401 Eastside Rd
Coronado Vineyards
Ukiah CA 95482
zipac@aol.com
- Donohue, Lawrence
12744 Riviera Place NE
Seattle WA 98125
206/365-8871
larrydomd@mac.com
- Fleming, Linda
P.O. Box 59
Baggs WY 82321
LFleming22@yahoo.com
- Fruth, Jerry & Diane
Hickory Ridge Arabians
11701 Vienna Rd
Wodesville IN 47638
812/985-2151
hikrydg@evansville.net
- Gibbs, Nancy
473 Westcliffe Place
Walnut Creek CA 94597
925/939-8410
nangib@ix.netcom.com
- Glazier, Deborah
17453 Incense Court
Penn Valley CA 95946
allofus@jps.net
- Heaps, Allen
4196 Oak Meadows Dr #20
Taylorsville UT 84123
801/631-7018
heapsa83@hotmail.com
- Houck, Richard & Barbara
1470 Northwood Rd #243-F
Seal Beach CA 90740
562/596-6925
richbarb3534@adelphia.net
- Houts Jr, Joseph
1301 N 25th St
St Joseph, MO 64506
816/232-2040
- Hoyt, Mrs Stanley
351 NE 19th St #12
East Wenatchee WA 98802
509/884-2554
- Hughes, Dale
Route 2 Box 60
Nevada IA 50201
515/382-2637
- Jenner, Gail
6131 Island Road
Etna CA 96027
530/468-5331
gfiorini@sisqtel.net
- Jones, Toni
955 Weyand Way
Dixon CA 95670-2127
707/676-8270
- Kokinda, Mrs. Indrid E
9202 Attleboro
San Antonio TX 78217
210/654-7170
- Lovett, David
3359 N 146th Drive
Goodyear AZ 85338
623/535-0944
lovett25@juno.com
- Lozier, Brenda
7704 Caswell St
Indianapolis IN 46259-1604
317/862-0066
portland27@comcast.net
- Magers, Larry & Belen
4601 Ruth Way
Union City CA 94587-5023
510/487-1329
- Massee, Paul
5816 Ray Nash Drive NW
Gig Harbor WA 98335
253/265-3382
massee@harbornet.com
- Midkiff, Bob & Tony
1604 Humble
Midland TX 79705
432/684-5153
Bmidkiff@quick.com
- Oakes, Gene & Beverly
5414 La Moya Ave.
Jacksonville FL 32210
904/504-4837
Gene.oakes@mindspring.com
- Pitcock, Henry
616 NW 34th St.
Corvallis OR 97330
541/752-6139
Hpitcock@proaxis.com
- Reid, Susan
Expedition Air Tours
58 Fairlawn Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M5M1S7
Reidcom@sypatico.ca
- Stultz, Allen & Jean
5987 Taylor Creek Rd
Afton VA 22920-2914
434/361-9164
www.raynella5987@aol.com
- Woollard, D Wayne & Audean
PO Box 1097
Castroville CA 95012
831/663-5512
woollard@inreach.com
- Worley, Bill
3627 Locust
Kansas City MO 64109
816/309-0846
worleyw@umkc.edu

2003-2004 OCTA Officers:

President Dick Pingrey

P.O. Box 130, Selah WA 98942

(509) 697-4765/rjpingrey@charter.net

Vice President Vern Gorzitze

3026 Metropolitan Way, Salt Lake City UT 84109

(801) 484-9623/vergor@wasatchnet.net

Treasurer Douglas Brown

218 N. Pleasant, Independence MO 64050

(816) 833-4090 dbrown194@comcast.net

Secretary Bernie Rhoades

11809 36th Street E, Edgewood WA 98372

(253) 863-8917/rhoarclass@aol.com

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