

News From the Plains

Vol. XXIV, No. 4

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Fall 2005

City of Rocks Property Purchased

By Dave Welch
National Preservation Officer

On July 31 the National Park Service completed acquisition of 290 acres in the City of Rocks National Historic Reserve with the assistance of OCTA. All of the area adjacent to Register Rock is now held by the NPS. The NPS was unable to complete the purchase without OCTA's assistance because it is limited to paying the appraised value based upon similar property and use in the area. No premium may be paid for the historic aspect of the property. The property was purchased from William Loughmiller, while the transaction was handled by Rick Wagner of the NPS's Seattle Office.

OCTA contributed \$25,000 toward the purchase price, with more than \$9,300 contributed spontaneously by OCTA members with the remainder drawn from the Loomis Preservation Fund. Thank you to all who made a donation. It is not too late to make a contribution to offset the amount OCTA provided. If you want to support the purchase, please send your check to headquarters with a note saying it is for the City of Rocks project.

In expressing thanks, the NPS noted that the project would not have occurred without OCTA's participation. We provided both a financial boost and demonstrated that the preservation of the site is important to us.

Park Superintendent Wallace Keck told the *Idaho State Journal* that during the next few years the area will be restored to the historic landscape and interpreted to the public. Efforts include removing fences, restoring vegetation, and adding interpretation signs for personal tours, exhibits and publications.

The partnership agreement was made with OCTA, The Conservation Fund and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

Register Rock has many emigrant signatures on its granite monolith.

The City of Rocks National Historic Reserve was created by Congress in 1988.

Inside This Issue

Town Meeting.....	Page 9
OCTA Awards.....	Page 12
Board Actions.....	Page 17
Preservation News.....	Page 19
Little Sandy Project.....	Page 20





News From the Plains

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What's Happening...

August, 2006
OCTA Annual Convention
St. Joseph, MO

August, 2007
OCTA Annual Convention
Scottsbluff/Gering, NE

August, 2008
OCTA Annual Convention
Elko, NV

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NFP Deadline
Winter Issue
November 25, 2005

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Correction

Jo Foster of the Rock Springs BLM in Wyoming was incorrectly identified as a visually handicapped student on page 11 in the last issue of *News from the Plains*.

Teach - Relate - Affirm

The OCTA convention held annually in August celebrates the end of an active year and toasts the start of a new one. So it was this year as trail friends met in Salt Lake City.

The past year was an event filled year, which saw the revamping and modernization of the Membership Application Form, with Thomas Hart Benton's *The Covered Wagon* on the front leaf. Also, we published a very fine, long awaited Emigrant Trails Map just in time for viewing and purchase at the Salt Lake gathering.

Another item was the formation of an Education Program Committee. This was of particular interest to me because I believe that through education, of the youngsters and oldsters alike, lies the future of OCTA. Swiss philosopher and poet Henri-Frederic Amiel wraps it up in the following words, "*It is by teaching that we teach ourselves, by relating that we observe, by affirming that we examine, by showing that we look, by writing that we think, by pumping that we draw water into the well.*"

OCTA this past year gave birth to a Chapter Presidents' Committee, formed to give Chapters a needed and much wanted vehicle to express needs and wishes to the Board of Directors through their elected presidents on a regular basis.

During the next two years as your president I would like to focus on two areas, Education and Chapter Development.

EDUCATION: "*It is by teaching that we teach ourselves....*" OCTA is not just about the three "M's" (Marking, Mapping and Monitoring),

it is about educating our younger generation (elementary, middle school and high school), and our young adults who are just starting families. With all the activities now available, OCTA needs to get to the young people early, get there first and instill an interest in the trails and help promote activities to maintain that interest. **Challenge** – Adopt a school, adopt a fourth grade, get to know a teacher and offer your knowledge.

CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT: It is September 2005, yesterday has come and gone - and the future will be what you make of it.

Chapter Presidents, ask yourselves the following questions and therein lies the **challenge**. What are you going to do differently today, tomorrow, this week or for that matter this year that is different from what you did last year? Do you have a specific plan and are you sticking to it? Are you going to market your chapter any differently? What specific action steps are you going to take today, right this moment that could launch you and your chapter into the stratosphere?

One final observation: our Chapter Presidents have banded together and formed a group that is designed to feed information from the membership to the Board of Directors and Headquarters. OCTA members, this is your opportunity to make yourselves heard and chance to have your chapters make a difference. It is time to **pump** some excitement and enthusiasm into your groups. The Chapter President can't do it all – you need to become active and participate. Please don't be like the person that

attends a function with the attitude "I'm here - entertain me."

Ask what you can do to be involved and help, make suggestions, be active and above all make your chapter presidents do a good job. You will be the winner and if you're a winner the Chapter is a winner.

We have turned a corner on a new activity year; we have the opportunity to **pump** some new energy and enthusiasm into our great organization.

LET'S GET AROUND TO IT.

Passings...

Roy Acker died August 19 due to a massive stroke that occurred the previous day. Services were held August 29 at Inglewood Mortuary in Inglewood, CA.

Survivors include his wife, Ruby, and daughters, Cheryl Kabloona, Janet Palmer, and Marilyn Acker and other relatives. Cards may be sent to his family at 2700 Neilson Way Apt. 728, Santa Monica, CA 90405-4017.

Roy was a CA/NV Chapter member with a great wit and wonderful smile. Historically he is best remembered in the past years for his research of Summit City, the highest gold town in the Sierra. He had a personal interest in that he had relatives living there. His book, *the Historic Summit City*, is the result of his research.

Vern Gorzitze is OCTA President

Taking over as OCTA President is Vern Gorzitze of Utah, a member of the Crossroads Chapter and the chairman of the 2005 Convention in Salt Lake City. He will be assisted in leading the organization by Glenn Harrison, a member of the Northwest Chapter, who will serve as Vice President. Bernie Rhoades, also a member of the Northwest Chapter, will serve another term as Secretary; Randy Wagner of the Wyoming Chapter, will serve as Past President; and Dave Welch of the Northwest Chapter, will serve as National Preservation Officer.

OCTA Needs a Treasurer

OCTA needs a treasurer to serve during the upcoming term, according to President Vern Gorzitze. The position can be filled by someone working at home using the telephone or via e-mail and would ideally be filled by a retired bookkeeper, accountant, or someone with bookkeeping basics or who has acted as a treasurer for an organization. "Surely there must be someone out there who has enough loyalty to OCTA to step forward and say, 'I will give it a try,'" Gorzitze said.

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give," he said adding, "Is there someone in our membership that has a little TIME to give?"

If you are willing to serve in this position, or want more information, contact him at vergor@wasatchnet.net or call headquarters toll-free at 888/811-6282.

Board Members Elected

Dave Welch of Steliacoom, WA, and Jack Fletcher of Sequim, WA, were re-elected to the OCTA Board. ballots, the new board members were elected by ratification during the general meeting.

Also elected to the board are John

Krizek of Van Nuys, CA, and Suzette McCord-Rogers of Highland, KS. All will serve three-year terms.

The election results follow:

Total Ballots Cast
822

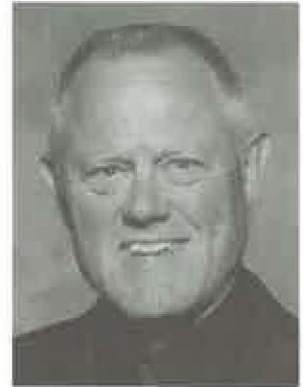
Welch	636
Fletcher	578
Krizek	471
McCord-Rogers	451
Nelson	361
Luppi	343
Fisher	257

Ballots rejected: 5
Write-In
Candidates: 9

Since fewer than 50 percent of the qualified electors cast



Dave Welch



John Krizek



Jack Fletcher

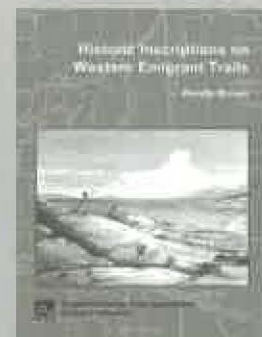


Suzette McCord-Rogers

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From the Headquarters' Manager...

Kathy Conway
Kconway@indeproo.org

Our 2005 OCTA Convention held this year in Salt Lake City, UT was a tremendous success. Attendees were treated to well planned tours, interesting talks, good food and some lively entertainment. A "special thank you" goes to Vern Gorzitze, who served as this year's convention chairman and who has taken over as OCTA President for the next two years!

Our brand new OCTA trail map, titled "Overland Trails: Opening the American West" had its debut and went on sale in the convention book room. The map is 26 x 36 inches printed on two sides. (A map of the trails on one side and details that include diary quotes, narratives about the trails, illustrations and pictures on the reverse side). We are selling it in flat (\$11.95) and folded (\$9.95) versions. Colorful, attractive and suitable for framing, these maps will become the focal point on any wall. We recommend the use of our map in school classrooms across the country!

Now available for immediate sale is the 2005 OCTA Commemorative Coin, "Santa Fe and Old Bents Fort" (Cherokee Trail). We urge you to buy as soon as possible as this item is quite popular with the coin collectors and we had only 250 minted. We also still offer our first coin, "Lewis and Clark." Buy both coins as they make a great set! The coins retail for \$29.95 each.

Visit the OCTA Store online or call us at (888) 811-6282 to order.

Trails Legislation Moves Forward

By Bill and Jeanne Watson
Trails Liaison Co-Chairs

As reported to the General Membership in Salt Lake City, Senator Orrin Hatch, R-UT, our lead sponsor, reintroduced the Additional Routes & Cutoffs Studies Authorization bill in early January and it was again numbered S-54. The Senate passed S-54 on July 27 and on August 2 sent it to the House Resources Subcommittee on National Parks for action.

Congressman Richard Pombo, CA - 11th District, Chairs the House Resources Committee and Congressman Steve Pearce, NM - 2nd District, Chairs the National Parks Subcommittee.

Rob Howarth, Pearce's Subcommittee Staff Director, assured us in July that we will be invited to testify later this year when they hold a public hearing on S-54.

Fiscal Year 2006 - Trails Funding

Each spring, we join with other members of the Partnership for the National Trails System during Trails Advocacy Week to call on Congress and tell them:

■ What OCTA members have contributed to our trails in hours, expenses and projects;

■ What has been accomplished with supplemental funding they provided; and

■ What could be done with additional funding in the next fiscal year.

This is our 20th year working on Capitol Hill on behalf of OCTA in support of trails legislation and federal funding.

Working with the Partnership for the National Trails System, the current Fiscal Year 2005 Interior budget included \$50,000 in supplemental funding for the National Trails System office, which was carried forward into their Fiscal Year 2006 base line budget. It also included significant Fiscal Year 2005 Challenge Cost Share Project funding for the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer and Pony Express National Historic Trails.

The Fiscal Year 2006 Interior Budget was completed by Congress in late July, just before Congress left Washington, DC, for the summer break. This budget again includes new supplemental funding of \$50,000 for the National Trails System office and significant Challenge Cost Share Program funding for our four trails.

California Trail Marked in Idaho

In June BLM employee Dick Hill, and his son, Jake, Lyle Lambert and Patti and James McGill completed marking in the Granite Pass area of the California Trail. They located and accessed all of the trail, from near City of Rocks to the Goose Greek/Birch Creek Road, and the Utah border, hiking several segments to check the present status of the carsonite

markers. Dick Hill provided carsonite markers and some decals and OCTA volunteers placed four or five markers with "Private Property" decals attached on ranch property. Other existing markers were checked and found to be in good shape.

During the project, volunteers located two graves, and possibly a third, on the west side of Granite Pass.

The Oregon-California Trails Association has once again kept its preservation efforts at the forefront of what it does. I just returned from our bi-annual board meeting in Salt Lake City, where the Board of Directors approved projects for the 2005-06 fiscal year. And for the second consecutive year, OCTA's Board of Directors is strongly committing itself to preservation projects, including supporting the Bureau of Land Management in its quest to define the boundaries of South Pass in Wyoming and to support an archaeological dig at a river crossing in Nebraska.

Two years ago, many members were critical of OCTA's perceived lack of preservation efforts. Some of these members actually left our membership rolls. OCTA's Board of Directors responded by increasing the profile of its preservation projects. During the next fiscal year, preservation remains a high priority. Dave Welch, OCTA's National Preservation Officer, has undertaken an ambitious program to train volunteers in mapping, marking, and monitoring our most precious assets, the Oregon and California Trails. Three training sessions are occurring in different parts of the country each year for the next three years. We fully expect to train hundreds of new volunteers during these sessions. The end result is that I've not heard a single complaint about OCTA's lack of preservation efforts in over a year!

Last year, OCTA contributed to an effort to provide better access at the Whitman Mission in Walla Walla, WA, and this year is contributing to projects in Gardner, KS and Farson, WY. OCTA also contributed financially to help preserve trail and

Register Rock in City of Rocks National Reserve in Idaho.

At the same time, OCTA continues an ambitious publishing schedule, with Randy Brown's new *Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails* and a new historic trails map that is already available.

But these endeavors cost money. If OCTA wants to retain its identity at the forefront of all trail organizations, it must continue to invest in trail preservation projects. It must continue to publish the crème de la crème of books, journals and maps. It must continue to train new volunteers in mapping, marking, and monitoring. It must expand efforts to recruit younger adults, students, and young families by providing programs that appeal to younger members. It is a certainty that without these projects OCTA will die. Without them, OCTA loses its *raison d'être*. But to continue to do them and do them well, we need more money.

One area that was studied for over a year is the cost/benefit of membership in our organization. The cost for a single membership at its most basic level is currently \$40. What do you get for \$40? You get quarterly copies of both the *Overland Journal* and *News From the Plains*, which combined cost OCTA \$28 per member per year to publish. You get discounts on publications bought through OCTA's store. You get invitations to participate in trail treks and to hear speakers talk about trail history. You get invitations to the best annual trail convention in the land. You get to meet hundreds of people who share a common interest, your love of the trail. And most importantly, you have the knowledge that you are contributing to a worthwhile cause,

that of preserving our nation's history for future generations.

What else does that basic \$40 membership cover? It costs OCTA nearly \$5 per member just to create membership packets and brochures and to send letters reminding you that your membership is about to expire (that's why it's so important to respond to that first letter; it helps keep our postage costs down!). It also costs OCTA about \$10 per member in administrative time to process memberships. And before suggesting that we find ways to reduce administrative costs, you should know that OCTA will spend only 25.3 percent of its operational budget on salaries and related expenses in the upcoming fiscal year.

Most not-for-profit organizations spend between 50 and 80 percent of their budgets on salary and benefits. I think you would have to agree that OCTA's small staff is an extraordinary bargain. By adding all of these numbers together, you can see that the hard cost of maintaining a membership is \$43. If all of our members came in at the bargain rate of \$40, we'd quickly go out of business. And the \$43 figure doesn't even include the soft costs of membership (such as the cost and time of distributing membership information, etc.), which probably drives the cost of maintenance up over \$50. As currently configured, OCTA's membership program is set up as a loss-leader.

So that brings me to this point: what exactly is the purpose of a national membership in OCTA? In my mind, it serves multiple purposes. First, it provides a base of support

Continued on next page

for our mission. Without members, we couldn't hope to carry out the work of preservation and education delineated in our mission statement. Second, our members help us recruit more members to our cause. The most effective membership recruiting efforts occur when you tell your friends, family, and associates about us and get them excited about our work. Third, our members work to garner effective legislation to help preserve our trails. Fourth, from a member's perspective, a membership is an opportunity to contribute to a good cause, meet like-minded folks, and learn more about that which you love.

But perhaps the most important reason to be a member of OCTA is to contribute financially to the health of OCTA. If OCTA has to subsidize memberships through other means, we are not being fiscally responsible to the organization. If OCTA has to subsidize memberships, we are effectively undercutting all of the important work we need to do, including preserving trail diaries, preserving trail remnants, placing more interpretive signage on the trail, publishing more information about our trails and advocating in state and national legislatures to pass bills

designed to protect the trails. These are but a few of the things done by OCTA, but they all cost money. And to continue to do them and do them well, we simply cannot afford to subsidize membership.

With all of this background information in mind, OCTA's Board of Directors approved a slight increase in membership fees at its March 2005 board meeting, effective October 1, 2005. The basic membership will increase from \$40 to \$45 per member. This works out to about an extra 10 cents per week. **I understand that some of our members are of a limited means, but because I really want to keep you as a member I will personally pay the extra five dollars to keep you as a member if you let me know that another \$5 per year is going to be the difference in keeping you or not.** I would hope that everyone could save an extra 9 ½ cents per week to ensure that we continue to preserve a trail that is losing dozens of miles of traces every year. I would hope that an extra 41 ½ cents per month means you are not going to abandon OCTA and its efforts. Honestly, what can 41 cents buy you these days anyway? I'll tell you what it can buy – the peace of mind knowing you are contributing to

the fiscal health of an organization dedicated to preserving the history that you love!

What I really hope you will do is look at our new membership brochure, (which is now available by contacting Headquarters. You will find that as you increase your level of commitment to OCTA, OCTA will increase its level of commitment to you. You will receive more benefits and gain steeper discounts in our store by signing up at higher and higher levels.

My goal is to retain each and every one of you as members and to have you all moved up to the next highest category. I know you are all dedicated to the Oregon-California Trails Association, so I know you will not only stay, I know you will at least consider increasing the amount you pay for your membership. And you should also know that, historically speaking, OCTA has only raised its dues every five years. It was five years since OCTA's last increase. It will likely be another five years before this issue is revisited. At \$45 for a basic membership (which is less than a dollar a week), you can help preserve one of our nation's most precious assets. What a bargain!

Overland Trails On the Web

If you have not already done so, you may join the overland trails listserv on yahoo.

To join, go to www.yahoo.com and register for the group by clicking on the "Groups" link and then type in the word "overlandtrails." You'll see two lists. Click on the second one. Register to join it. An e-mail will be sent to the list administrator, which he will then approve. If you don't already have a yahoo ID, you will be asked to create one. It's free and only takes a couple of minutes. You'll immediately have access to all previous posts, you'll immediately be able to make posts and you will automatically begin receiving all new posts either in single e-mails or daily digests.

Also, to reach the Member's only page on the OCTA Website, the username is "octa" and the password is "trailswest."

Although much of this issue of *News From the Plains* is filled with information related to the annual OCTA Convention in Salt Lake City, there has been a lot of activity on the trails themselves this summer. Judging from action by the board, there will be plenty of opportunity for members to become involved in the upcoming year, as well.

Reports elsewhere in this issue give details about the purchase of property at City of Rocks in Idaho, a Trails Day project at Little Sandy in Wyoming, and a town hall meeting to discuss trail preservation issues.

OCTA will join in celebrating the centennial of Ezra Meeker's 1906 crossing of the trail. One of Meeker's wagons will be taken along the trail with events planned in all trail states to culminate at the 2006 Convention in St. Joseph, MO.

The Lander and Rock Springs offices of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in Wyoming are undertaking a joint project to define the boundaries of the South Pass National Historic Landscape (an area roughly between Ice Slough to the Little Sandy Crossing and Buckskin Crossing) and well as the South Pass National Historic Landmark. The project will entail both archival and field research and volunteers are needed. The Rock Springs District of the BLM has received a \$36,000 grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has allocated \$50,000 from its own funds, and may seek additional funding from OCTA, according to BLM cultural resources specialist Terry A. Del Bene, who is a project coordinator.

OCTA volunteers are reminded to submit their time and contribution reports to Bill and Jeanne Watson by Jan. 1. The report form was published in the Spring and Summer issues of *NFP*. However, the address on that form was incorrect. Please send reports to: Bill and Jeanne Watson, 28 Warford Terrace, Orinda, CA 94563.

Sutter Fort has a new wagon thanks to the efforts of OCTA National Board member Frank Tortorich and others.

The Chapter Presidents have organized within OCTA to provide a forum for idea exchange and cooperative efforts to further the goals of OCTA. Brent Reber, president of Crossroads Chapter which hosted the 2005 Convention, will serve as the Chapters President for the next year. In subsequent years the president for the host chapter at each convention will serve in that role.

Although OCTA has a paid professional staff, much of the work is done by volunteers including committee chairs and members. Current committee chairs are:

Archaeology, Terry Del Bene; **Awards**, Jackie Lewin; **Chapters**, Ross Marshall; **COED**, Sallie Riehl and Marley Shurtleff; **Collections**, Jeanne Watson; **Education**, William E. Hill; **Education Outreach**, Laura Vaile; **Graves and Sites**, Randy Brown; **Membership**, Joyce Bolerjack; **NPS CCSP Coordinator**, Zeke Sicotte; **Nominating & Leadership**, Glenn Harrison; **Photography**, Roger Blair; and **Policy Manual**, Marley Shurtleff; **Publications**, Bill Martin; **Public Relations**, John Krizek; **Trail Mapping**, Jim McGill; and **Trails Liaison**, Bill and Jeanne Watson.

Currently there are no chairmen for these committees: Future Conventions, Conventions, Long Range Planning, Investment Advisory Committee, History and Archives, and Fundraising. If you are interested in serving on a committee, contact President Vern Gorzitze by e-mail at vergor@wasatchnet.net, or call headquarters at (888) 811-6282.



In July several OCTA members were involved in filming segments for a gold rush documentary to air in 2006 on the History Channel.

Town Hall Meeting Focuses on Trail Issues

By Candy Moulton
NFP Editor

Federal land managers addressed trail management issues during a Town Hall meeting at the Salt Lake City Convention where OCTA members raised concerns about access and trail damage.

Don Simpson, Deputy State Director for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in Wyoming; Jere Krakow, Director of the National Trails System office; Gordon Williams, Interpretive Services and Tourism Coordinator for the U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Region Office; and Leslie Fryman, Preservation Officer for the CA-NV Chapter joined OCTA National Preservation Officer Dave Welch in the discussion.

The BLM wrote a trail plan in 1986 for Wyoming that governs the trail activities today. As part of the plan, Simpson said BLM officials agreed they needed to mark the trails and get the public out in the area. The agency did well with those projects and Simpson said, "Now one of the biggest issues" facing the agency is how to manage the visitors.

Trail use has increased exponentially as a result of celebrations for sesquicentennials of the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer and California Trails, he said. For example, Mormon trail visitor centers, which previously did not exist, attract around 100,000 people annually. Also the BLM has



OCTA National Preservation Officer Dave Welch, standing, leads a discussion with, from left, Don Simpson, Wyoming BLM; Gordon Williams, Intermountain Region U. S. Forest Service, Jere Krakow, National Park Service National Trails System office, and Leslie Fryman, CA-NV Chapter Preservation Officer. (Photo by Candy Moulton)

written and is finalizing a context report for the trails. One issue yet to be decided is classification of the trail's condition.

Simpson said he and the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer needed OCTA and other groups to "tell us how much of the trail is really super duper and how much doesn't exist and then what is in the middle."

The BLM in Wyoming does more consultations to comply with federal laws than any other government agency in the nation concluding about 5,500 transactions each year, with a goal of processing the applications more quickly. Much, but not all development, is related to energy production and Simpson said in Wyoming it is usually easy to identify development on public lands where oil tanks are camouflaged, roads are contoured around hills, and tanks are not placed on hills, but instead are

located below ridgelines to reduce visibility.

"We are not saying no to oil and gas development, we are just trying to manage the process," he said.

Landscape analyses are now being prepared or are planned for the areas of Slate Creek, South Pass and along the Lander Road.

Future issues include increased recreation, particularly at Mormon Trail visitor centers, and "how to manage historic trails and the setting."

Simpson also predicted an increase in wind generation projects. "Hang on to your hat, because that may be the next wave of development that you see," he said. The wind projects are often situated on ridges and therefore highly visible.

Both Simpson and Forest Service Spokesman Gordon Williams said off road vehicle use is a potential concern. The Forest Service is currently developing ORV policies and regulations that will be applied by individual forests. This issue was one about which OCTA members also raised concern, citing damage to trail resources.

"We've got motorcyclists burning circles around Oregon trail signs," OCTA Mapping Chair and former Idaho Chapter President Jim McGill said.

Continued on Page 10

Town Meeting Focuses

Continued from Page 9

The National Park Service has a mission to preserve and protect resources and tell the stories that those resources represent, Krakow said. "Our role in administering trails is to be advocates in protecting resources. It's a little different focus than administering multiple use," he said. "Our goal in administering is very close to the mission that OCTA has. That is an advocacy position."

To accomplish the goal, the National Park Service tries to work cooperatively with trails groups and other agencies.

"We sort of blur that logo or symbol that agencies have or that governments at state and local levels have so that what we represent is the Oregon National Historic Trail or the California National Historical Trail," Krakow said. "It's not the BLM's trail, or the Forest Service's trail...It really is the nation's national trail."

While there are both national historic and national scenic trails for

which his office has responsibility, Krakow said the "historic trails are richer. They're richer because of the interaction of people with the land. And that interaction I think is what we need to pass on to those future generations. We know that we can't protect everything. We know that some things are going to disappear."

There is impact to trail resources because of demands for land, growing population and demands for energy. But Krakow says organizations and agencies should be "working together to see how we can shape things and consequently not cause the risk to get too great that we lose too many resources. After all we have to pass something on to those future generations. It cannot just be a book of maps, or a website."

He advocated use of the trails and particularly commended Eleanor Craig who has taken visually impaired students on trail treks. "You need to get out there and touch it. You need to

touch it in as many ways as you can, with as many senses as you can."

"The trails have been very, very important to the legacy of the nation," he said, adding they are the history we share with foreign visitors as well as with American citizens.

Leslie Fryman became involved with OCTA and trail preservation issues after working on an archaeological evaluation and realizing there were miles of trail she recommended listing on the National Register but that Forest Service officials did not want included.

"I had actually been hired to say that most of it was not eligible. I disagreed (and) the project went south very quickly," Fryman said. She encouraged OCTA members to become familiar with federal management rules and regulations, believes most trail sections are archaeological sites, and encouraged federal agencies to provide employees with better cultural resource training.

OCTA Map, Inscriptions Book Published

By Bill Martin
Publications Committee Chair

The OCTA Publications Committee has produced two new products this year with three more in the pipeline. The OCTA trails map – "Overland Trails: Opening the American West" – is now available.

Special thanks are due to the National Park Service National Trails System Office (especially Chuck Milliken and Jere Krakow); writers Candy Moulton and Terry Del Bene (with research assistance from Will Bagley); designer Charmaine Keller; the production supervision and oversight team of Jim Conway,

Association Manager Travis Boley, and Headquarters Manager Kathy Conway; and the many, many individuals who offered input and insight into the map as it progressed.

Regular retail pricing will be \$9.95 for the folded version and \$11.95 for the framable version.

Also available is *Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails*, by Randy Brown. This book, published in both hardcover (\$49.95) and paperback (\$29.95) editions, can be ordered by calling headquarters at (888)811-6282 or visiting the OCTA store at www.OCTA-Trails.org.

The OCTA Publications Committee is now working on two

new projects including a book by Andy Hammond based on his popular "Look of the Elephant" column in the *Overland Journal*, and another book by Dick Rieck related to deaths on the trail.

The committee also has oversight for the OCTA Internet site. Adam Welch at Hemisphere Design has started work on a full re-design of the OCTA website.

Call toll-free
(888) 811-6282
or order on line at
WWW.OCTA-trails.org
Visa and MasterCard accepted

National OCTA Grant Guidelines

Anyone wishing to obtain a grant from the OCTA Endowment Funds must submit a request in writing to the OCTA President. All applications will be reviewed by the Grant Review Committee.

All Grant Requests must include:

1. The specific amount desired.
2. The intended use of the requested grant.
3. Names of all organizations involved in the project, including OCTA chapters.
4. The name of the lead organization and/or the individual responsible for the grant monies.
5. A time table for completion of proposed activities.
6. A statement that the grant should be sufficient or if additional money must be raised.

Preference will be given to projects having the following characteristics:

1. Is in accordance with the OCTA Statement of Purpose.
2. Can be completed within one year.
3. Involves many chapter members.
4. Has wide community support.
5. Has the potential for favorable publicity with OCTA recognition.
6. Alternate or supplementary funding can be obtained.

Approval for all grants must be by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors, either at regularly-scheduled meetings or by a special meeting or by emergency Board action.

Crossroads Chapter...

Preparing for Handcart Sesquicentennial

By Al Mulder

Summer is over and the weather on the trails is starting to get cooler and wetter. A final chapter meeting and social, hosted by Vice President Marie Irvine, was expected to take place in September to wind up the trail season for most of us. The program was a lecture on the Simpson Road. An election for new chapter officers will take place in January.

The 2005 OCTA Convention committee is finally able to relax and enjoy the success of the 2005 convention. Kudos to committee chairman and newly installed OCTA President Vern Gorzitze, who put together a productive, educational and entertaining convention. Although the convention attendance was small compared to previous years, the tours, speakers, and special events were enjoyed by all, with few, if any, glitches to mar the proceedings. It was a great reunion for good friends who attended the 1994 OCTA Convention held in Salt Lake

City. We are already looking forward to the 2006 convention in St. Joseph, Missouri.

A lot of work lies ahead for the chapter in 2006, with the sesquicentennial of the Mormon Handcart companies to prepare for and celebrate. Several sections of the historic trails in Utah need to be remarked due to the removal and damage to carsonite trail markers. The Bidwell Pass interpretive panel will need repairs and the kiosk will need to be reconstructed.

A cooperative effort to preserve the 190-acre Perkins Flat in Emigration Canyon is being made by Utah Open Lands and other groups interested in preserving the area from developers and saving the acreage for wildlife and recreational use. The canyon meadow is part of the historic Mormon Pioneer Trail route through Emigration Canyon. Some historians believe the area was the site of the last camps used by Mormon pioneers before they entered the Salt Lake Valley.



OCTA Members participated in a trek along the Hastings Cutoff to Donner Spring. Pilot Peak is in the background of this group photo. (Photo by Al Mulder)

*Distinguished
Volunteer*

Marley Shurtleff

Marley Shurtleff of Renton, WA is a 2005 recipient of the Distinguished Volunteer Award. The award is presented to OCTA members who contribute significantly to achieving the organizations goals and projects.

Marley serves as secretary and assists with the newsletter for the Northwest Chapter. Nationally, she is co-vice chair of the Census of Overland Emigrant Documents (COED) Committee and has conducted quality control checks for data entries on approximately 1,000 documents. She also serves on OCTA's Policy Manual Committee, conducting surveys and handling all the desktop publishing work for updating the organization's bylaws and producing a new Policy and Procedures Manual. In addition, she developed a training tool presentation for the board on management structure. As her nominator said: "Marley Shurtleff has expanded her volunteer work into what amounts to a full-time job."

Meritorious Achievement

Jack & Pat Fletcher

Jack and Pat Fletcher of Sequim, WA, have been honored with the Meritorious Achievement Award, the highest award, from the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA). The presentation was made on August 19 at the group's annual meetings which were held in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The couple is recognized for their work in identifying, locating and documenting significant sites and segments on the Cherokee Trail. The Cherokee Trail was first used by a group of emigrants, including Cherokee Indians, headed for the goldfields in 1849. It ran through northeastern Oklahoma, through central Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming to Fort Bridger. From there, it joined the other trails to California.

Their studies have been published in three volumes of *Cherokee Trail Diaries - Vol. I: 1849, A New Route to the California Gold*

Fields: Vol. II: 1850, Another New Route to the California Gold Fields; and Vol. III: 1851 - 1900, Emigrants, Goldseekers, Cattle Drives, and Outlaws.

In addition, the Fletchers' research and maps have been turned over to the National Park Service National Trails System Office in Salt Lake City, to qualify the Cherokee Trail as a branch of the California National Historic Trail. This will now take Congressional action.

Dr. Jack Fletcher is a former science professor at the University of Guam, University of Northern Colorado, University of British Columbia and Eastern Washington University. Pat Fletcher taught history and geography in Guam, Arizona State in Yuma and supervised teachers at Eastern Washington University. Both are active members of OCTA and Jack serves on OCTA's board of directors.



OCTA President Vern Gorzitze, center, with Pat and Jack Fletcher

News From the Plains

Friend of the Trail

OCTA Recognizes Landowners from Wyoming, Utah, and Kansas

Landowners from Wyoming, Utah and Kansas are recipients of the 2005 Friend of the Trail Award. The award is presented to individuals who have direct ties to the lands over which the historic trails pass and have shown an



Earl and Jody Guild of Piedmont, WY, were on hand to receive their Friend of the Trail Award.

Dennis and Shirley Orr Andrus of Skull Valley, UT, operate the ranch that has been in the Orr family since 1890. The ranch was located on early transportation routes to the west, including the Lincoln Highway. The Orrs have preserved an original log cabin from which the family greeted early travelers and have collected historic artifacts and photos, which they are pleased to share with visitors. The Andrus family has always welcomed groups such as the Oregon-California Trails Association to visit their historic site.

Kenneth and Janice Goehring of Westmoreland, KS, own property on the Independence Branch of the Oregon-California Trail through northeast Kansas. Over 2,000 feet of Class 1 visible swales cross their land. Recognizing the importance of these trail remnants, the Goehring's have maintained the land in pasture to ensure their preservation.

emphasis on preservation of trail remnants, education of the public about their historic resource, and showing responsible public access to the historic resource.

Earl and Jody Guild are the fifth generation to live on the ranch near Piedmont, WY. The Guilds have always allowed anyone and particularly youth groups, wanting to experience trail life to visit their property.

Distinguished Volunteer

Ken and Arleta Martin

Ken and Arleta Martin of Oketo, KS, are winners of the 2005 Distinguished Volunteer Award. The Martins are founding members of the KANZA Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association and Ken Martin has served as a member of the national board of directors. Arleta Martin has served on numerous committees for the organization.

They both were intricately involved in the 2003 National OCTA Convention held in Manhattan, KS. In addition, they have spent much time in on-the-ground work researching and mapping the Oregon and California Trails through northeast Kansas. They have led re-enactment wagon trains and were featured in OCTA's video "Saving the Legacy."

Since the Martins were not able to attend the meetings in Salt Lake City, the KANZA Chapter will make a special presentation of the award.

**Frank Tortorich,
Jim Carman Win
Merrill Mattes
Award**



Frank Tortorich

Frank Tortorich and the late James M. Carman were recipients of the Merrill Mattes Award for Outstanding Article published by the *Overland Journal*. Their article, "The Big Tree Carson Valley Wagon Road: A Branch of the Carson River Route," was published in the Fall 2004 issue of the magazine.

**Certificates
of Appreciation**

National OCTA Certificates of Appreciation were presented to George Ivory of Midvale, UT, and to the *Casper Journal*.

Distinguished Service Award

Utah Sen. Orrin Hatch, Museum of Church History and website designer recognized

A United States Senator, a website designer, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Museum of Church History and Art Outreach Program received Distinguished Service Awards from OCTA. The award is given to individuals organizations which contribute to or participate in furthering OCTA's programs directly or provide substantial support in a non-affiliated way to trail preservation and education.

Over the years, the Honorable Orrin G. Hatch, senior Senator from Utah, now serving his sixth term, has remained steadfast in his support of trails bills that honor and protect all emigrant routes in the American West while encouraging OCTA to continue its work. He introduced a Trails Studies Authorization bill at the beginning of the 109th Congress. Approved early in the year by the Senate Energy and National Resources Committee, S-54 was passed by the full Senate on July 27. It authorizes "Additional Routes & Cutoffs Studies" and now awaits action in the House.

As lead sponsor during the past three sessions of Congress, Senator Hatch was responsible for an agreement between OCTA, the Petroleum Association of Wyoming and the energy interests. This resulted in the Trails Studies Authorization bill being passed by the Senate. Senator Hatch has continued to support legislation that calls for studies of additional routes of the Mormon Pioneer, Pony Express, Oregon and California trails.

Stephenie Flora has developed and maintains the web site www.oregonpioneers.com, which provides a wealth of information on the emigrant trail to Oregon. She also publishes a list of emigrants with information about many of them. and has links on her website to the OCTA national site and chapter sites. Flora encourages education about the trails and the early emigrants.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Museum of Church History and Art Outreach Program "On the Trail to Utah," was inaugurated in 1985 and has undergone updates and revisions over the last 20 years. Today, "On the Trail to Utah" visits an average of 50 fourth grade classrooms each year, serving 4,300 students. Through the presentation, students learn about the trails and the daily life of the early pioneers. The museum has demonstrated a continuing commitment to trail education. Jenny Lund accepted the award.



Stephenie Flora



Jenny Lund

Young OCTAN Award

Casper Kids Trail Team

The Casper Kids Trail Team has been honored with the Young OCTAN Award. This award is presented to children and youth between the ages of 6 and 21 who demonstrate particular interest in OCTA and the history and/or preservation of the historic emigrant trails.

The Casper Kids Trail Team began in 2003 when Sarah Clayson and Hannah and Hollie Becker decided they wanted to start a history club. Their mothers, Karen Clayson and Cathy Becker, members of OCTA, volunteered to lead the organization. Jude Carino, director of the National Historic Trails Center, agreed that the group could meet at

the Center. Flyers were sent out and the *Casper Journal* printed a notice and youth began to sign up. Today, there are 30 members, grades 4 through 7. The group meets once a month during the school year with special programs and field trips related to the Oregon and California Trails and related history of the Wyoming area. In addition, the Casper Kids Trail Team researched and presented special programs at the National Historic Trails Center.

Accepting the award for the Casper Kids Trail Team were Sarah Clayson and Hannah and Hollie Becker. The group is an outstanding example of what can be done to excite young historians.



The Casper Kids Trail Team won the Young OCTAN Award. From left are Awards Chair Jackie Lewin, Sarah Clayson, Hollie Becker and Hannah Becker. These girls also won an award for their trails history team from the Wyoming State Historical Society in September.

Distinguished Volunteer

Roy Tea



Roy Tea of Salt Lake City, UT, was presented with the Distinguished Volunteer Award. Roy Tea became interested in the trails while working as a highway engineer on Interstate 80 across the Bonneville mud flats. Over the next 44 years, he followed, mapped, photographed, marked, and conducted tours of the emigrant trails. He has also preserved for future generations his unique knowledge through the written word. His extensive writings have appeared in history and professional journals including OCTA's *Overland Journal*. As one of the Roy Tea's nominators said: "Thanks to Roy Tea, our Utah State Transportation Department not only respects the importance of the trails, but frequently looks to him as an authority in our common purpose to preserve them."

OCTA Approves \$323,040 Budget

The OCTA Board approved a \$323,040 balanced budget for the upcoming year.

The budget includes revenues of \$412,750 for total support including dues (\$100,000); annual fund drive (\$20,000); book and product sales (\$44,000); convention revenue (\$85,000); and lesser amounts for advertising, life memberships, emigrant name searches, preservation projects and Challenge Cost Share Projects.

The total revenue is reduced by \$89,725 to cover costs of goods and products, convention funds, transfers to the endowment funds, and amounts in the reserve fund.

Expenses total \$323,040 and include \$11,000 for officer expenses; \$28,600 for committee expenses; \$28,320 for preservation; \$70,300 for publications; \$8,000 for other expenses including \$5,500 for capital equipment and \$2,500 for the OCTA store; and \$176,820 for administration including the association manager (\$85,000), headquarters manager, taxes and benefits (\$60,320), association operations (\$22,000) and membership support (\$9,500).

Dave Vixie is Walt Disney Teacher of the Year

The Oregon-California Trails Association surprised National Director Dave Vixie with a set of golden Mickey Mouse ears during the general meeting at the annual convention in Salt Lake City to recognize his selection as Disney Teacher of the Year. The Disney honor makes him a national spokesman for teachers and included a \$40,000 monetary prize. Paradise Adventist Middle School, where he teaches, also will receive \$5,000. Further, Vixie was named Middle School Teacher of the Year.

The Walt Disney Co., through an outreach organization called DisneyHand, singles out teachers who show creativity and use innovative methods to inspire their students. Vixie told the *Chico Enterprise-Record* he does this by "taking things that are normal and ordinary and using them in new ways." He believes teachers should be free to borrow ideas from each other and use them in ways that fit their own style.

Vixie likes to take students on 12- to 100-mile treks across emigrant trails in covered wagons pulled by mules to expose them to hardships, while showing them how to stay calm and take care of themselves.



Dressed in his grandfather's 100-year-old tux, and wearing Mickey Mouse ears and hands, Dave Vixie welcomes students who are wearing their own pioneer clothing back to school.



OCTA National Board Member Dave Vixie earned his "Golden Mouse Ears" from the Walt Disney Corporation when he was selected as the Teacher of the Year.

He said the trips are also a way of pointing out to students "the courage it takes to fulfill a dream."

At the OCTA convention, Dave wore his Mickey Mouse hat throughout the day, and even as he walked around Salt Lake City. His wife recalls, "We were walking down the streets of Salt Lake City and a woman had a perplexed look about Dave wearing his golden Mickey ears. Dave said, 'I'm looking for Disney Land can you tell me how close I am?' She just laughed. He was quite the celebrity there."

Dave wanted to celebrate Disney for its support of education so for his first day back at school this fall he showed up wearing the Mickey ears and a 100-year-old tuxedo of his grandfather's while his students arrived in clothes representative of 1900 showing they were ready to try to emigrate into 8th grade. "Dave stood on the street and waved to the parents and students" his wife said. "It was quite a celebration."

OCTA Board Action

The OCTA Board took the following action at its regular meeting August 16, 2005. All motions passed without dissent.

■ Approved payment of \$25,000 to property owner William Loughmiller to support the National Park Service in the purchase of about 290 acres in the City of Rocks National Historic Reserve in Idaho. OCTA is providing this payment in recognition of the historic nature of this property, which is in addition to the value of similar non-historic properties in the area.

The property being acquired is an important emigrant site on the California National Historic Trail. It is identified in numerous emigrant journals for its uniqueness and beauty. The property is within the City of Rocks National Historic Reserve boundaries and contains the historic Register Rock with numerous emigrant inscriptions.

OCTA has been involved in the creation and establishment of the City of Rocks National Historic Reserve for approximately 20 years. We have participated in the development of the Comprehensive Management Plan and have supported the National Park Service in a legal defense of that plan.

■ Approved having the Audit Committee obtain an "Engagement Letter" from Troutt, Beeman, & Co. for an OCTA financial review.

■ Decided to eliminate separate accounting for OCTA's Special Publication Fund and to fund future special or designated publishing projects through the Publications Committee budget that is part of the organization's General Operating Budget.

■ Approved book publications by Andy Hammond and Dick Rieck and the *Overland Journal* anthology for production under the supervision of the Publication Committee for 2006.

■ Added the following language to next issue of Policies and Procedures Manual: "Endowment funds established for the purpose of continuing the work of OCTA are of two types, restricted and unrestricted. The responsibility for investing and monitoring of both funds is assigned to the Investment Advisory Committee. Both the principal and earnings of the unrestricted fund are available for grants, while only the earnings of the restricted fund are available for that purpose."

■ Agreed that all applications for grants from from the Endowment funds will be reviewed by the Grant Review Committee.

■ Added the following policy statement to be included in the next issue of the Policies and Procedures Manual:

Disclaimer of Ownership. OCTA members may assist in the preparation, development, and marketing of items that may be sold to earn money for the Association. It is expected members will perform those tasks without expectation of recompense unless specifically agreed otherwise in writing. Unless otherwise agreed, members shall be asked to sign a Disclaimer of Ownership which indicates that they thereby assign and convey to OCTA all rights, titles, and interest in the subject work so that OCTA may have full ownership of the work, together with the right to sue for any infringement thereof.

The need for a disclaimer may be identified by the cognizant committee chair, a member of the board, an officer, or the Association Manager. Approval of the need and the wording of the disclaimer shall be the responsibility of the Board of Directors. The agreement shall be acknowledged and co-signed by the President.

■ Changed policy to make pre-and post-convention tours optional for convention organizers.

■ Agreed to update the Policy Manual, including the Organizational Chart, as appropriate after each board meeting.

■ Accepted the Nebraska Chapter's offer to host the 2007 Convention in the Gering-Scottsbluff area.

■ Agreed to have sections of the Bylaws reviewed by Colorado Attorney Nicole Lampe for recommendations and suggested changes in accordance with a report given by Edna Kennell to the OCTA Board of Directors.

■ Adopted the following Policy statement on long range planning: "The OCTA Board of Directors recognizes that planning is a continuous process and that effective planning will enable the organization to carry out its mission. Planning should include clearly stated goals, strategies, and specific action plans for achieving them. Plans should be in writing and should include statement of the resources needed to achieve them. All budget requests should be accompanied by written plans that state goals, activities,

Continued on next page

OCTA Board Action

Continued from previous page

timetables, and responsibility. In addition to overall goals established by the Board of Directors, OCTA chapters, committees and groups of members working on specific programs and projects should develop their own objectives and work plans that fit with-in the framework of OCTA's overall goals."

- Approved a planning session to be held in conjunction with the 2006 mid-year Board meeting and acceptance of the National Park Service offer to have Sharon Brown assist with the planning process as an outside facilitator.

- Approved formation of an Education Programs Committee whose function will be over

educational programs and activities. This committee is separate from, and does not limit the existing Education Publications Committee.

- Approved Veteran's Day and President's Day as holidays for professional staff.

- Referred letters received from Tom Hunt dated 2/19/05 and 7/13/05 to Board Committee "B" for study, with a recommendation for action, if any, to be submitted to the mid-year Board meeting.

- Adopted the annual OCTA budget.

- Agreed beginning in 2006 to call the OCTA Volunteer Award the Elaine McNabney OCTA Volunteer Award.

Action Taken at General OCTA Meeting

During the General Membership meeting Aug. 17, the following actions were taken.

- Approved a motion providing for a summary of the actions taken by the OCTA Board of Directors at any of its meetings, as well as a summary of all General Membership meetings to be printed in the next edition of the *News From The Plains* following the meetings.

- Ratified the Election of OCTA Directors.

- Approved the Nominating and Leadership Committee: Glenn Harrison, chair; Jim McGill and John Atkinson, members.

- Heard committee reports.

COED Project Will Soon Release Emigrant Names Product

*By Sallie K. Riehl
COED Co-Chair*

COED Committee members are pleased to announce that most of the work is finished on the addition of older surveys to the main database. After some fine-tuning, the database will be sent to Looking Glass Analytics for the final software instructions that will allow the new CD of Emigrant Names to be produced. We are on schedule and plan to have the new CD available by November 1, 2005.

The new Emigrant Names includes more than 3,200 documents. The committee also plans to offer two additional compact disks which hold the full scans of the original surveys of the documents in the database. The Emigrant Names disk will be coded with individual document identities and these codes will allow searchers to find the original survey. We have

not scanned the diaries themselves, just the surveys of the diaries.

Marley Shurtleff is finishing the COED Policy Handbook and is in charge of the Challenge Cost Share Grant we now have with the National Park Service.

Sharon Manhart and Marley are working on two brochures about COED. The first is to explain the goals of the project and list ways that OCTA members can assist in finding new material for survey. The second brochure will focus on marketing the new Emigrant Names CD.

Demonstrations of the COED database were provided during the convention in Salt Lake City by Sharon Manhart and Sallie and Jim Riehl. The database contains more information that is available on in the EN disk. This information covers numbers of persons within groups traveling together, what type of animals they have with them, the

names of places they pass on their journey, types of Indian encounters they have, the routes they are using, and other details that might be of interest to a researcher.

In the future, the COED committee intends to develop a form to assist researchers in formalizing their requests so that the data they need will be easily retrieved. A price structure will be established for such searches.

Shann Rupp continues to survey documents and is fine tuning the master list of all documents that are being surveyed. This list is used to verify that the project does not include duplicate surveys, and to list those items that don't meet the Trail criteria. Surveyors have found plagiarized diaries, fraudulent diaries, and some documents that were written by people who were babies at the time of their travel. We try to verify diaries through bibliographies and other means.

South Pass Area Projects on the Drawing Board

For this issue's report, I will touch on most of the items reported to the board at its August meeting in Salt Lake City. The highlight during the last three months was the completion of the purchase by the NPS (with OCTA's assistance) of a key parcel in the City of Rocks. (Details are in a separate article elsewhere in this newsletter.)

A test project (Dickie Springs) for a gold mine near South Pass was approved in September. I became aware of the project in August 2004 and visited the site in October. Don Hartley has also visited the site. OCTA is on record as opposing the project since it might lead to a development project that would be devastating to the South Pass area. In itself, the test project is well-designed and considerate of all factors. However, it makes no sense to proceed with the test project when the project itself is unacceptable.

In the same area, an effort is underway by the BLM to define the boundaries of a South Pass Historic Landscape and the South Pass Historic Landmark. Despite the recognition years ago of South Pass as a National Historic Landmark, no boundaries were ever established. This omission has made it difficult to define and mitigate impacts to the trails and setting in the area.

At the present time the area from Ice Slough to the Little Sandy Crossing and up to Buckskin Crossing on the Lander Road is being considered as the boundary of the South Pass Historic Landscape. The definition is based upon a two-day wagon pull each side of South Pass. The National Landmark might cover

the area from Burnt Ranch to Dry Sandy. These definitions are subject to change as the study proceeds.

Also in Wyoming, Stan McKee is conducting a survey of current trail markers this summer to better define new marker requirements. Sources for concrete markers are also being sought. Marking in critical areas along the Cherokee Trail will probably be done with carsonite posts on a temporary basis.

In March, the board approved OCTA financial support (\$2,500) to replace barbed wire fencing with buck and pole fencing at the Little Sandy Crossing. This work was completed by about 80 BLM, LDS and OCTA volunteers on July 22. (See story elsewhere in this issue.)

There has been some controversy about this project. Most of it centered on what some perceived as the BLM's intent concerning new interpretation at the site, which some say was mistaken, while others noted the heavy weighting towards the Mormon Trail story with little concerning the Oregon and California Trails. From the start the BLM agreed that OCTA would participate in the development of interpretation and site planning. That part of the work will not proceed until funding is obtained.

In my last NFP article I stated that energy companies did not do anything to protect the trails unless forced by the BLM, or another Federal agency. That is generally true, but an exception was called to my attention. Anadarko Petroleum has taken the lead in conducting studies along the Overland and Cherokee Trails in southern Wyoming where they have extensive holdings. They have funded

studies to document the trail location and condition. This is an important first step in defining where well sites, roads and pipelines can be located while reducing impacts to the historic trails. OCTA members have provided input and comments for the recently completed Overland Trail study.

In June OCTA members from Casper and Rock Springs, Jack and Pat Fletcher, Chuck Hornbuckle, and I met with BLM staff from the Wyoming State Office, the Rock Springs and Rawlins Field Offices and representatives of Anadarko Petroleum to discuss mapping and classification of the Cherokee Trail routes. The Fletchers have generously offered to share the results of their twenty-plus years of research on the trails with the BLM and Anadarko to facilitate studies that will be funded by Anadarko on the Cherokee Trails. This will help ensure that development activities avoid the most important trail areas. Anadarko is to be commended for its willingness to undertake these studies.

In another trail study project, the Wyoming BLM has prepared a "context study" as a first step in providing for overall management of the historic trails in Wyoming. OCTA did not accept the results of the draft document since there was inadequate time and information to review the trail classifications presented in the study. We requested an extension of the deadline for comments to December 31, 2005 and offered to form a working group to work on trail classifications. This is an extremely important issue since it will determine,

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OCTA, LDS Volunteers Build Little Sandy Fence

By Candy Moulton
NFP Editor

Nearly a mile of buck and pole fence was constructed around a 26-acre section of public land east of Farson, WY, in July as part of a National Public Lands Day project that involved community volunteers and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

The site has remnants of the Oregon-Mormon Pioneer-California and Pony Express Trails including a ford where overland travelers crossed the Little Sandy River and foundation areas for the Little Sandy Pony Express Station.

The graves of 13 trail travelers are near the site as well, former land owner Ruth Chesnovar said.

Nearly 80 volunteers and BLM employees were on hand, many of them members of the Rock Springs and Green River Stakes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and some members of the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), which co-sponsored the Public Lands Day project by providing funding, food, and other assistance.

"We feel we've got a responsibility to be good stewards of the trails and also the area so people can come here



Fern Linton stands beside a Pony Express marker at Little Sandy.

and look at the sites," said Rock Springs LDS Stake President Kevin Heyborne. "From a religious standpoint, this is the trail that the pioneers followed and this is the path that they took." That alone makes it significant to church members, he said. In the past LDS members from the area have worked on other trail preservation projects and he said they likely will again in the future.

OCTA members who participated included Bill and Gail Robinson, Tom McCutcheon, Candy Moulton, Terry Del Bene (who was also working for

BLM as an archaeologist on the project) and Fred and Fern Linton.

The area is "very important not only for the historic properties that are here, but also for the riparian values that are here," said BLM Rock Springs Field Manager Mike Holbrook.

Most of the funding came from BLM as a riparian project, according to Fisheries Biologist and Project Director John Henderson. Other contributions were provided by Toyota Motor Sales, which sponsors Public Lands Day projects nationwide, the Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce, Ron's Ace Rentals, Wal-Mart, and landowners Fred Radosevich and Ruth Chesnovar.

The BLM obtained the 26-acre parcel as part of a land exchange with Radosevich, who had acquired the property from Chesnovar. Her grandfather homesteaded the area and she and her late husband purchased the ranch in the 1940s.

Eventually the site is expected to have an interpretive area and small parking lot, but that is not expected for another couple of years, Holbrook said. In preparing the future interpretive area, Holbrook said he will rely on BLM staff and "we'll bring in people that are considered to be subject matter experts" to assist.

Preservation Officer's Report...

to a large degree, what trails and segments are protected.

Plans for the centennial celebration of Ezra Meeker's Old Oregon Trail Monument Expedition (1906-08) are set. The Ezra Meeker Historical Society has restored one of Ezra's wagons and plans to bring it back over

Continued from previous page

the Oregon Trail in 2006 just as Ezra did in 1906. There will be about ten volunteers traveling with the wagon dressed in period costumes. The wagon will be set up in the morning in an appropriate place and in the evening there will be a program presented by Dennis Larsen and Ray

Egan. Sites selected for presentations include The Dalles and Baker City, OR; Boise and Fort Hall, ID; Rock Springs, South Pass, and Casper, WY; Scotts Bluff, and Fort Kearny, NE; Alcove Spring, KS; and St. Joseph and Independence, MO.

OCTA Honors Finest Educators with 2005 Awards



Education Award Winners Peggy Miller, left, Kelly Schloer and Committee Chair William Hill.

*By William Hill
Education Committee Chair*

Education is the process by which people pass on their culture. One important element of our American culture is our western history and migration. OCTA is dedicated to recognizing those who do an outstanding job of imparting knowledge about it. This past August three Outstanding Educator Awards were presented at the convention in Salt Lake City. The recipients were June Read, Peggy Miller, and the High Desert Museum/Kelly Schloer. Those who attended the convention were able to view displays about their programs.

June Read teaches eighth grade in the Edwin Markham Middle School in Placerville, CA. She was honored for her work with her students on her United States history program about westward migration. She has been teaching and improving the unit for the past five years. Her four-plus week unit covers the whole range of the migration: geography, motivations, preparations, routes, and problems.

In each of her classes her students are divided into wagon companies that in turn compete with each other to organize, overcome problems and successfully reach their "Promised Land." She uses simulations, role-playing, numerous hands-on activities, guest and student presentations all put uniquely together with the normal "book work" that makes the unit a favorite of her students.

Peggy P. Miller teaches fourth grade in Bell View Elementary School in Sandy, UT. A teacher of fifteen years, she was honored for her work with her students on her social studies program about Utah history, and especially for the period of migration over the trails to the West. Her program covers the whole range of Utah's history including: geography, Indians, explorers, mountain men, pioneers, mining and settlement. In all her units, her students participate in various activities including hands-on activities from making adobe bricks to butter, role playing as a specific historical figure or a common pioneer,

taking field trips to museums or historic sites, and having guest presentations by local trappers or local historians. Her love and enthusiasm for the subject comes through and is also transferred to her students. A parent noted, "Her approach is very refreshing and involving. She makes it fun and interesting at the same time....My children come home excited and eager to talk about what they learned."

The High Desert Museum in Bend, OR, was recognized for its outstanding work and programs about the early trails west that it provides for children and schools. Accepting the award for the museum was Kelly Schloer who served as the developer and director of the museum's educational program "Traveling the Trail." In the program, created especially for school groups, children learn about the history of the Oregon Trail, reasons for moving west, supplies and equipment used, geography's impact, daily life and problems on the trail, and the establishment of a new home. Through the museum's use of primary and secondary resources, role playing, and hands-on activities, history really does come alive for children when they participate in the High Desert Museum's programs.

As a point of information, Kelly attended last year's teacher program at the Vancouver convention and said that had helped her with the development of the museum's program. Kelly has now taken a job as a full-time teacher in Bend. Her students will now benefit from her enthusiasm everyday, and the museum has a fine established program.

These educators are honored not only for the subject matter they incorporate into their classes, but also for the way they teach the material.

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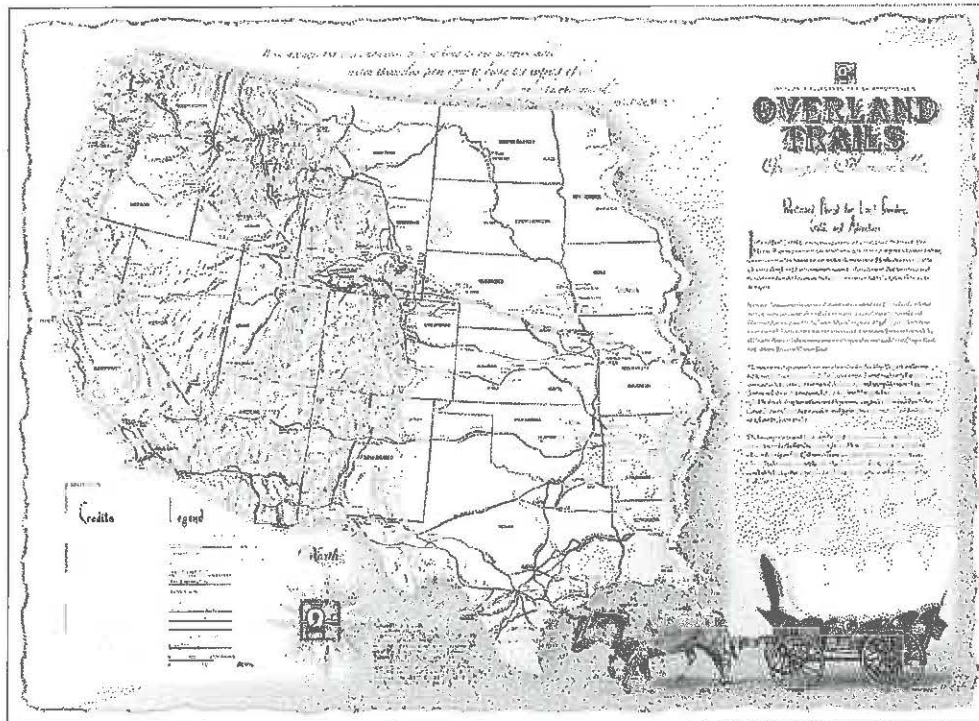
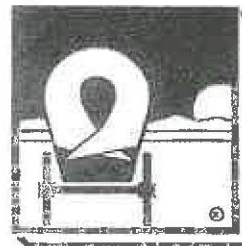
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