

# NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

FALL 2010

VOL XXV NO. 4

## Mitigation Funds Approved By Industry Lander Trail River Crossing Purchased

By David Welch

As mitigation for impacts to the setting of the Lander Road west of Wyoming Highway 191 and south of Pinedale, the developers of the nearby gas field agreed to fund the purchase of the western portion of the road's crossing of the New Fork River. The Sublette County Historical Society (SCHS) paid more than \$900,000 for the parcel using funds from Shell, Ultra Petroleum, and PacifiCorp. The property will be managed by the SCHS. A conservation easement will be held by the Wyoming Land Trust.

The development of this mitigation package was the result of a multi-year effort by trail advocates including OCTA (Dave Welch), the Alliance for Historic Wyoming (Lesley Wischmann), and the Sublette County Historical Society (Clint Gilchrist). The actual purchase was negotiated by SCHS with the landowner. They deserve much credit for making this happen.

Other primary participants were the BLM represented by Dave Crowley supported by Field Managers Chuck Otto and Brian Davis and State Director Don

Simpson, the Wyoming SHPO (Mary Hopkins) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Nancy Brown). Fern and Fred Linton and Clint Gilchrist also assisted through their work on the Pinedale Anticline Working Group.

Shell, Ultra Petroleum, and PacifiCorp funded the purchase as mitigation. The amount of funding they provided is commensurate with the importance of the historic Lander Road and the extensive impacts of the expanded Pinedale Anticline gas field development.

In the course of developing the programmatic agreement defining mitigation, the Pinedale BLM staff led by Dave Crowley re-discovered the original route of the Lander Road approaching the New Fork River. This route is now documented and protected under Wyoming BLM regulations and as an alternate route of the California National Historic Trail.

During the next year the SCHS will sponsor archaeological studies and will develop a master plan for the site. The site will be a stop at next year's Rock Springs-Green River convention.

Please see the summer 2010 *Overland Journal* for more information on the regulatory processes employed in acquiring this important property.



*This crossing site on the New Fork River is now preserved under the purchase agreement. (Photo by David Welch)*

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*News from the Plains*  
Published quarterly  
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Independence, MO  
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*News From the Plains*

**Winter Issue Deadline**

**November 24, 2010**

Send materials to  
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# Geocaching and the Trails

By Matt Ivory  
*fly\_fisherman5261@yahoo.com*

During both the March and August 2010 OCTA Board meetings, the topic of geocaching on the trails was discussed at length. Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game where you use a handheld GPS device to find "treasures" hidden by others. Geocaching has become a worldwide phenomenon

The OCTA Board of Directors has approved the idea of using geocaching as a way to educate people of all ages about the trails and their significance. The organization that facilitates the geocaching Web site <[www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com)> has granted our organization permission to place geocaches on the trails and to include a link to the OCTA Web site on geocaching pages.

All geocaches placed by OCTA members will need to be added using the OCTA login for the geocaching site. For your information the OCTA username for the geocaching website is "octa-trails". I am still in the process of updating the username profile to include information about OCTA, but this will be coming soon.

As a board member and geocaching enthusiast, I will be the administrator for the geocaches placed along the trail by OCTA members.

Members wishing to place a cache along the trail will need to e-mail me the geocaching information (coordinates, description, pictures, etc.) and I will be responsible for posting this information to the geocaching website for approval.

Please feel free to e-mail me with information on new geocaches as well



*Anne Tussell records a geocache on the grounds of the Elko Convention Center during the OCTA Convention. Several caches were discovered during the convention at a variety of trail locations. (Photo by Glenn Harrison)*

as questions regarding geocaching in general.

## Board Action at Annual Convention

By Candy Moulton  
NFP Editor

The Board took the following actions at the Annual Convention:

\*Decided to review the OCTA Preservation Policy to determine whether it should be revised. All members are urged to review the policy, published on page 5, and make comments to board members.

\*Approved the annual budget of \$333,659, which is an increase of \$43,759 over the budget for the last fiscal year. The approved budget includes a deficit of \$378, making this the first nearly balanced budget in several years.

The budget includes an increase of \$31,037 in expenses, including \$4,300 for publication of a book about J. Goldsborough Bruff that

will be sold on a subscription basis generating an equal or greater amount of revenue. Half of all annual revenues (\$164,279) will come from the National Park Service, Treasurer Marvin Burke reported.

\*Agreed to place the first \$15,000 earned from *In Pursuit of a Dream*, into the OCTA Heritage Endowment fund, with \$10,000 to be returned to the general operation accounts for expenses associated with marketing and development of the movie. Should additional revenues over \$25,000 be received prior to the 2011 Mid-Year Board Meeting those funds will be held pending recommendations from Committee B and the Investment Advisory Committee.

\*Endorsed the Northwest Chapter's current initiatives to develop mitigation for wind turbine projects

in Oregon through direct contact with developers. The chapter should evaluate the cost and availability of professional legal council for possible future legal actions.

\*Approved a Pathfinder Membership with a fee of \$90 per year, and a Youth Membership open to youths age 18 and under at a cost of \$10 per year.

\*Disbanded the COED Committee as of Sept. 30, 2010.

\*Disbanded the Policies and Procedures Committee, with that work now under Board Committee B.

\*Set the Mid-year Board meeting in conjunction with a symposium in Cedar City, UT, March 24 and 25, 2011.



## Preservation is the Heart of OCTA Mission

**Bill Martin**

*bmartinocta@gmail.com*

Preservation is at the heart of everything OCTA does. Our Mission, as stated in our Strategic Plan, is to protect the legacy of the trails. And the Plan's first goal for achieving that mission is "preserve the historic emigrant trails."

It doesn't matter how well we do anything else, because if we don't preserve and protect the trails, our purpose disappears...along with the trails.

OCTA members are working every day to preserve the trails and the stories that accompany them. The efforts range from preservation officers who work closely with government agencies when threats appear to individual members marking trails. They range from writers telling the stories of the emigrants' journeys to chapter leaders planning outings and symposiums. Even OCTA members who only pay their dues and read journals in the comfort of their living rooms are helping preserve the trails.

Still, questions remain: Are our current preservation efforts enough?

Some have suggested that OCTA needs to be more aggressive. One long-time member suggested we need to get attorneys involved early and often, questioning data, threatening legal action, and causing as much delay and expense as possible. Others point out that OCTA can't afford the expense of protracted legal proceedings, especially when faced with the deep pockets of energy companies and others.

Our existing Preservation Policy provides for legal action when

necessary, but our usual course is to work with government agencies, and sometimes with developers, to make sure the law is followed and that trails are protected. We've had a lot of successes, but maybe we aren't doing a good enough job of publicizing them.

Further complicating the discussions is the fact that preservation is often a nuanced activity, affected by local and state politics, landowner desires and laws that don't always go as far we would like them to do. For example, it's easy to say we want to preserve the setting of the trail (the "viewshed," or what you can see while you are standing on the trail), but sometimes it can be challenging to find applicable local, state or federal laws that provide that kind of protection.

Many suggestions for more aggressive action reflect a passion for preservation that could greatly benefit the trails if it was shared by more individual OCTA members. Our preservation officers have said repeatedly that preservation starts with individual members who are willing to get involved at the grassroots level. And I know they'd like to have more help.

As an organization, OCTA has been guided by an "official" Preservation Policy that was adopted by the Board of Directors in 2001. That policy is reproduced on the following page and I urge you to read it and think about it.

At its meeting in Elko in August, your Board decided to review the policy to determine if it needs to be revised. Recommendations will

be made at the Board's Mid-Year meeting next March.

It is extremely important that your voice as an OCTA member be heard. To make that as easy as possible, we have set up a special e-mail address where you can share your opinion. Read the existing preservation policy and then write to [preservation@octa-trails.org](mailto:preservation@octa-trails.org) and share your thoughts. If you think the policy is fine as written, say so. If you think changes are necessary, be specific. Each comment will be carefully considered when the Board considers possible revisions in the policy. If you do not have access to e-mail, you may send your comments to OCTA headquarters using regular mail.

Ultimately, our preservation policy should be realistic and reflect the capacity of the organization. It is easy to say we should be more aggressive, but our local and national preservation officers and volunteers must be able to work within policy guidelines.

We have no more important responsibility than preserving the legacy of our trails. How we do that should reflect the reasoned wishes of the membership. We want to hear what you think. You can help preserve the trails by equipping our preservation officers with the tools they need, including a policy that is appropriate, meaningful and effective.

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[www.octa-trails.org](http://www.octa-trails.org)

**888-811-6282**

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# FROM THE HQ MANAGER

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**Kathy Conway**  
*Kconway@indepmo.org*

What a wonderful week it was in Elko, NV for OCTA's 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention! Thank you Jan Petersen, convention chair, and the CA-NV OCTA Chapter for hosting such a memorable event. Jan had tremendous support from local volunteers including the Elko

Convention Center, which provided the use of the complex for the entire week. There are so many to thank in the CA-NV Chapter we might forget to mention someone in the long list of names. Instead, we will send our gratitude in care of Bob Evanhoe, Chapter President, to let the convention committee members know how much their devotion and hard work to the success of the event is greatly appreciated.

Our Saturday dinner was held under the "stars" and on the steps of the new California Trail Interpretive Center looking out upon the South Fork of the Humboldt where it joins the Humboldt. It was a grand finale. If you didn't get a chance to come to the convention, a visit to this new center is a must!

This fall we will be mailing a bookstore flyer containing our most recent additions to the store just in time for holiday shopping.

We would love to help you with your trail book questions and orders, call us toll-free 888-811-6282.

## Preservation Policy

*Following is the preservation policy adopted by the Board of Directors of the Oregon-California Trails Association, Casper, Wyoming, August 14, 2001.*

Whereas the mission of OCTA is the preservation and appreciation of the trans-Mississippi emigrant trails, and

Whereas those trails are continually and increasingly threatened by development activities, and

Whereas energy development and telecommunications activities pose a special threat to the emigrant trails.

OCTA hereby affirms its commitment to protect the emigrant trails. Furthermore, OCTA is committed to work with government agencies and private interest to seek solutions considering the interest of all involved parties. Where reasonable compromise is not attainable or established procedures are not followed, OCTA may take appropriate legal steps.

OCTA's expectation is that high potential sites and segments, as defined in the trails management plans, will be protected to the maximum degree possible. Mitigation shall include use of alternate sites away from the trails, careful routing of roads and pipelines, and minimization of visual impacts over the widest possible area. Development activities must include a plan for restoration of the site to its original state after activities cease.

## Film shown in Italy and Canada set in 1845 Oregon

A new film based on the 1845 events along the Oregon Trail cutoff that became known as Meek's Cutoff, recently screened at film festivals in Venice, Italy and Toronto, Canada.

Written by Jon Raymond and directed by Kelly Reichardt, *Meek's Cutoff* is set to the backdrop of events in 1845 when Steven Meek led a wagon train into the Cascade Mountains. He claimed to know a cutoff, but instead arrived in an area without water. In the film three couples break from the main wagon train to follow Meek. According to an article in the *Tacoma News Tribune*, these travelers must decide whether to continue following Meek or rely on a Native American who crosses their path. The movie is drawn from diaries kept by women travelers.

Filming for *Meek's Cutoff* took place near Burns, OR.



# ASSOCIATION MANAGER

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By Travis Boley  
*Tboley@indepmo.org*

We are pleased to report that OCTA has signed a distribution deal with McLean Media of Seattle, WA, for *In Pursuit of a Dream*. McLean will begin placing the movie in both foreign and domestic markets, and of course, it will become available for sale on DVD in the very near future. We will report more details via our e-newsletter as they become available. And if you are not yet signed up for "e-news," simply e-mail us at [octa@indepmo.org](mailto:octa@indepmo.org) to let us know you'd like to receive the monthly report.

In June, OCTA board member John Krizek and I worked with the film crew that was following the 150th anniversary Pony Express re-ride to film a short Public Service Announcement about the importance of South Pass, WY, focusing especially on the area's amazing history and occasional development threats. OCTA's own Will Bagley and veteran Hollywood actor/producer Peter Sherayko (best known for his role at Texas Jack in the movie *Tombstone*) appear on camera.

Please take a moment to view the short video on YouTube

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## Correction

An article in the Fall 2009 issue of *News From the Plains* incorrectly attributed an item related to wind energy projects in the Pacific Northwest to Stafford Hazzlett. He did not write the article.

at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EGkb0AZf31A>. Be sure also to e-mail friends, family, and colleagues and encourage them to join us as we work to preserve South Pass and other important sites along the length of the Oregon-California Trail system. Also, if you have a Facebook account, link the video there. We are trying to make it "go viral" and get it seen by literally thousands of people. In the first five days, it garnered 265 views. But we intend to get as much mileage out of this important new preservation tool as possible. So, go have a look and share it with others!

At the OCTA board meeting in Elko, NV, we announced plans to hold a "Trails Capital of Kansas" symposium in Marysville Oct. 8-10, 2010. (By now, you should have received the registration form in the mail.) We also announced plans for

a March 25-27, 2011 symposium in Cedar City, UT and another symposium in Fayetteville, AR, likely sometime in April or May 2011. You will find registration details on OCTA's homepage at [www.octa-trails.org](http://www.octa-trails.org).

Thank you to Jan Petersen, the Elko convention planning committee, and the California-Nevada Chapter of OCTA for pulling off an incredibly successful 28th annual convention. Jan informed me that we had 404 paid registrations, making Elko's convention the best-attended event in seven years. Start making your plans now for OCTA's 29th annual convention, scheduled for Aug. 9-13, 2011, in Rock Springs, WY. Fern Linton, her planning committee, and the Wyoming Chapter are working on some very special events for next year.

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## NEW MEMBERS

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The following new members recently joined OCTA. Martha Boeckling, Meridian, ID; Jean Boling, Grants Pass, OR; Alida Boom, Wichita, KS; Elizabeth Coates, Red Bluff, CA; Nadine Crum, Portland, OR; John W. and Rosemary De Shazo, Huntsville, AL; Ellen Druckenbrod, Boise, ID; Steve Feasel, Carlin, NV; Candice C. Floyd, Wenatchee, WA; Carolyn Gilmore (Wild Rose Ranch), El Dorado, CA; Robert L. Goff, Bend, OR; Pat A. Gray, Tumwater, WA; Melvin and Robin Holland Jr., Reno, NV; Howdy and Katrina Hoover, Sacramento, CA;

Nancy Horton, Bend, OR; Colleen Janes, Starbuck, WA; Susan Kester, Klamath Falls, OR; Michael and Louise McCullough, Leavenworth, KS; Gail McGinn, Kirkland, WA; National Historic Trails Interpretive Center BLM, Casper, WY; Jody Nye, Spring Creek, NV; Kristin Rivers, San Jose, CA; Katherine Schmidt, Fairview, OR; Stephen Smith, Grand Terrace, CA; David Turnbull, Elko, NV; Harold W. Watts, Greenport, NY; Gerald Williams, Gilbert, AZ; and Janet Wragge, Casper, WY.

## Just My Opinion...

### Preservation and Awareness

By John Krizek

Recent acceleration of threats to the trails, primarily from energy-related developments, has aroused fresh debate over the tactics involved in OCTA's preservation efforts. Some ask whether our stated policy of working with government agencies and private interests to seek solutions, without waging public battles, is sufficient or in keeping with our commitment to protect those trail assets.

The Western states in particular are on a stampede to develop alternate sources of energy, especially wind energy, often in the same areas the trails pass through. The economic stimuli for these projects is hard to argue with. This has put extraordinary pressure on our preservation team and limited resources. The process of working with the appropriate agencies, seeking mitigation or prevention of damage when trail resources are threatened, is indeed complicated. Relationships leading to acceptable solutions need to be protected.

On the other hand, public awareness of those threats, and support for our preservation cause, is crucial to our long-term success. As new board member and marketing professional Pat Surrena pointed out at the board meeting in Elko, we present a major emphasis on the needs of preservation—but very little on the “why.” Why should the public care about preservation of those trails, let alone join us in our cause?

What we need is greater awareness of the threats to the trails. Awareness

comes with visibility. Visibility comes with speaking out—hopefully in carefully crafted ways, through publicity and the media available to us. Lawsuits, and “drawing a line in the sand,” can generate news coverage—the media loves conflict—but are a last resort, given the expense and potential relationship costs.

A public relations campaign, using news releases and other communications tools—including the “new media” such as with the South Pass video clip just introduced, which has been posted on social networking sites—is the most efficient way to generate awareness. A public that is informed and aware of trail history is much more likely to contribute to favorable government policy decisions than one that is not. Corporate decision-makers are inclined to avoid situations that stimulate opposition that might cast them in a negative public light.

Exposure for our message is not in conflict with our preservation policy. It goes hand in hand with achieving our preservation goals.

If we don't speak up when trail resources are threatened, who will?

*John Krizek is a member of the OCTA Board and Chairman of the Public Relations/Marketing Committee.*

*This space is available for your opinions. Send submissions to [nfpocta@aol.com](mailto:nfpocta@aol.com). All submissions will be reviewed by the Editor and the OCTA President prior to publication.*

### Pat Loomis Dies in California

After a very short illness, OCTA benefactor Pat Loomis passed away in her hometown of Arroyo Grande, CA, on July 20. She had just spent a week at her cabin near Lake Tahoe with friends Barbara Dorr and Virginia Hammerness. While there she became ill. Upon return home she was admitted to the hospital, where she died.

One of OCTA's three endowments is the Pat Loomis Preservation Fund, which she began, and that was valued at \$179,950 as of June 30, 2010. Earnings from this fund help pay for trail preservation needs all along the Oregon and California Trails system.

She was a granddaughter of pioneers E. C. and Clara Loomis and was raised in Arroyo Grande. Her interest in California history stems from her long career as a journalist with the *San Jose Mercury New*,” where for many years she wrote a history column named “Signposts” that focused on early pioneers of the San Jose-South Bay region and the streets named after them. (Two volumes of “Signposts” were compiled into book form and are still widely available on Amazon and other online book dealers.)

She served as an officer in OCTA, and edited the California-Nevada Chapter's newsletter for many years. Her generosity allowed the South County Historical Society in Arroyo Grande to renovate and restore sections of the 1888 Ruby's House in order to expand their library and outreach programs. The Society named Ruby's House the “Patricia Loomis History Library and Resource Center” in honor of her donation.



# Wind Agreement Reached

By David Welch

On August 30 OCTA concluded an agreement with Iberdrola Renewables to provide mitigation for the Montage Wind Energy Project along the Oregon Trail south of Arlington, OR. The project will include up to 269 wind turbines located entirely on private land. As part of the agreement Iberdrola has taken steps to avoid and minimize impacts to the setting at the BLM interpretive site in Fourmile Canyon, to not set turbines within 250 feet of the trail through the project area, and to provide additional interpretation along the auto tour route through the area.

They will also conduct a new comprehensive survey of the trail in the project area and have established guidelines for the involvement of archaeologists during construction. There will be a \$20,000 donation to the Oregon Community Foundation for long-term maintenance of the interpretive signs and a \$1,000 donation to OCTA to update OCTA trail markers in the area.

This agreement marks the first time that mitigation has been obtained for a wind energy project in Oregon. It sets several new precedents that should be beneficial in negotiations on other projects.

## JoAnn Levy on Library Board

OCTA member JoAnn Levy was recently chosen to serve on the Board of Directors for the California State Library Foundation. Levy is the author of four books exploring the history of women in the Gold Rush including *They Saw the Elephant: Women in the California Gold Rush*.

She was nominated to be on the board by Executive Director and Curator of Special Collections at the California State Library Gary F. Kurutz. He had earlier asked her, when her fourth book was published, if she would donate her research papers to the state library. The idea was daunting to Levy, who had five file cabinets, a shelf full of binders and memos and correspondence on the computer. Initially overwhelmed by the prospect of gathering all of these papers, she ultimately agreed to donate the research she had spent 25 years accumulating and using.

"There's a lot of material there that other people can use," she said.

## Nebraska Historical Park Effort Continues

By Candy Moulton  
NFP Editor

In August, state historic and tourism organizations in Nebraska met in Gering, NE, to renew an effort to include five sites in a National Historical Park.

Two of the sites are well-known: Scotts Bluff National Monument west of Scottsbluff and Chimney Rock National Historic Site south of Bayard. The other proposed sites are the Horse Creek Treaty site, Fort Mitchell, and Robidoux Pass.

If brought to fruition this would not be a traditional park, but instead would allow the five sites to be

connected with common signs and kiosks, according to a statement from Gene Morris, field representative of Heritage Nebraska, a historical preservation group.

Fort Mitchell, west of Scottsbluff, was an outpost of Fort Laramie that operated from 1864 to 1867. Although no buildings remain at the site, it has been on the National Register of Historic Places since 1978. Robidoux Pass, about nine miles west of Gering, served travelers on the Oregon Trail from 1840 to 1850. It was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1961.

Some say the Horse Creek Treaty of 1851 marked the largest gathering of Indians in recorded American history

when between 8,000 and 12,000 Plains Indians gathered where Horse Creek flows into the North Platte River.

Designating the sites a National Historical Park would require federal legislation, Morris said. No legislation has been drafted.

If approved, the Nebraska project would be overseen by the National Park Service, but it would not change ownership or management of the included sites, according to Ken Mabery, superintendent of Scotts Bluff National Monument.

OCTA has already endorsed this designation for the sites, as has the 20-county Western Nebraska Tourism Coalition.



*CANV Chapter President Bob Evanhoe and Convention Chair Jan Petersen share the wagon in Elko, above left; Susan Badger Doyle was the winner of two silent auction dresses that had belonged to the late Cherie Evanhoe. At right members sign a get well card for Past OCTA President Vern Gorzitze, who fell and broke his hip during the convention. (Photos by Roger Blair)*

## ***The National Frontier Trails Museum is Celebrating the Oregon Trail!***



**"The Mystery on the Oregon Trail"**  
by Carole Marsh.  
Christina, Grant, Mimi and Papa "head 'em out!" on a real covered wagon trek across the prairie, encountering adventure much as the pioneers of yore, and a mystery that you could say leaves Grant "upchucking!"!!  
\$7.99 paperback

*Relive one of the most captivating sagas in American history – the westward expansion. Traders who made fortunes by daring to cross hostile plains, families who left loved ones and braved half a continent of wilderness to fulfill the American Dream. The National Frontier Trails Museum is the only museum and archives dedicated to the history of the Oregon, California and Santa Fe Trails. The museum has recently been designated by the National Park Service as a Mormon Pioneer Historic Trail interpretive site. Audio Guides coming this summer to enhance your museum tour.*

*Shop our museum store for this and many other book and gift items!*

### **The National Frontier Trails Museum**

**318 W. Pacific, Independence, MO 64050**

**816-325-7575**

**www.frontiertrailsmuseum.org**

**Mon.-Sat. 9:00 am – 4:30 pm**

**Adults -\$5.00, Seniors (62 & older) \$4.50**

**Sunday – 12:30 – 4:30 pm**

**Youth – (6-17) \$3.00, Ages 5 & under free**



# OCTA Awards 2010

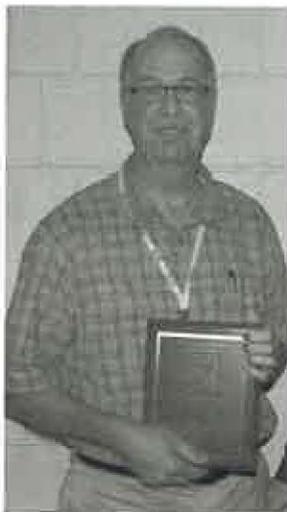
## Distinguished Service Award

### Mel Bashore

As a librarian at the LDS Church History Library in Salt Lake City, UT, Melvin L. Bashore envisioned and coordinated a massive indexing project to create the online Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel Database <[www.mormontrail.lds.org](http://www.mormontrail.lds.org)>. Today the database is the most complete listing of Mormon pioneer emigrants and companies who traveled to Utah from 1847 through 1868. It indexes over 350 known emigrating companies, lists rosters for each company, provides excerpts from trail narratives, includes photographs of company captains, and allows individuals to submit changes or additions.

Currently the database indexes over 50,000 emigrant names and contains full-text transcriptions to nearly 3,200 Mormon Trail narratives including diaries, reminiscences, reports, letters, and contemporary newspaper reports. These first-person accounts come primarily from Utah archival collections, but also include manuscripts in other institutions, such as the Bancroft Library at the University of California-Berkeley, and all known published narratives. When permission to provide a trail excerpt is not forthcoming or when the item is protected by copyright, a full citation is provided.

The Mormon Overland Travel Database, which has received 336,520 visits since 2003, reaches multiple audiences and educates them about trail history. The site's scope



Mel Bashore

goes far beyond Mormon companies, however, since other travelers and companies are often mentioned in the narratives and the mass of detail about specific trail locations and conditions is applicable to sections of the California and Oregon Trails

that traversed the same landscape.

The Mormon Pioneer Overland Travel Database is available free to scholars, students, preservationists, trail buffs, and family historians with access to the Internet. Because of the high quality and reliability of the transcripts, the database can be quoted confidently by graduate students and scholars, yet it is accessible even to a 4<sup>th</sup> grade history student.

In developing and managing the database, Mel has acquired vast, detailed knowledge of trail history, which he shares with numerous library patrons, including scholars and trail buffs. He has presented papers on trail history at academic conferences and published articles in *Annals of Wyoming*, *Kansas History*, *Mormon Historical Studies*, *Nauvoo Journal*, and *Pioneer Magazine*, making the story accessible to an even wider audience.

## Distinguished Service Award

### Sen. Harry Reid

Sen. Harry Reid (D-NV) received the Distinguished Service Award for his efforts in support of the trails over a period of many years. He helped obtain Congressional authorization for National Historic Trail designations of the California and Pony Express Trails. He later supported successful efforts to obtain Congressional authorization of feasibility studies for additional routes of the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer and Pony Express Trails.

Senator Reid's support also helped in development of the BLM California Trail Center near Elko, NV. "His 24 years of support for our trails has been invaluable while encouraging and helping to protect and support our heritage," according to the nomination by Bill and Jeanne Watson, OCTA Legislative Liaison Co-Chairs.



## Roger Blair

Roger Blair is the recipient of the Gregory M. Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award this year. He

## Gregory M. Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award



is a direct connection to OCTA's history. Blair was one of the eleven founders of OCTA, which was formed in Denver in August 1982. His activities include serving as an OCTA director twice, 1983-86 and 1993-95. He was OCTA vice-president 1995-96 and OCTA

President 1997-99. Since then Blair has been the official photographer at conventions (even taking a photo of himself when he won this award) and was awards chair for many years. He served two terms as Northwest Chapter president and continues as awards chair for the chapter.

Blair was convention co-chair for the 2008 Convention in Nampa, ID. He has presented papers at OCTA conventions and contributed articles to the *Overland Journal and News From the Plains*.

## Distinguished Service Award

## True West Magazine

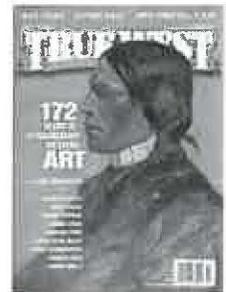


True West Magazine Contributing Editor Candy Moulton and OCTA President Bill Martin. (Award Photos by Roger Blair and Candy Moulton)

*True West Magazine*, under the direction of Publisher Bob Boze Bell and Editor Meghan Saar, has published coverage over the past several years of several trail stories including running Renegade Road travel articles about the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, Pony Express, Santa Fe, Bridger, Bozeman, and other trails related to the period of westward migration.

The magazine also published an article about the filming of *In Pursuit of a Dream* and has included various shorter articles regarding trail preservation issues.

*True West* is a national publication that gives OCTA considerable exposure to an audience that is intensely interested in the West, its historic and cotemporary stories, and most especially in the preservation of the heritage that includes westward expansion. Visit <[www.twmag.com](http://www.twmag.com)> to see some of the coverage *True West* has provided to OCTA and the trails story.



**Bookmark our Site: [www.octa-trails.org](http://www.octa-trails.org)**

*Quick and easy links to trail facts, people and places, resources, events, and more.*



# Teachers and Students in the Spotlight

By Bill Hill  
Education Committee Chair

Continuing OCTA's recognition of teachers who present quality learning experiences for their students, four teachers were honored at the Elko convention. Lauri Hansen, Anne Jensen, and Nancy Nielsen from Upland Terrace Elementary in Salt Lake City, UT, and Christine Kadonsky from Wausau West High School in Wausau, WI, received the Outstanding Teacher Awards for 2010.

Hansen, Jensen and Nielsen's program involves a wide range of learning activities to make their study of the westward migration a memorable unit for all the fourth grade students. Students are involved in regular classroom learning, but individual assignments are stressed, as well as hands-on projects, guest presenters and a culminating mountain man rendezvous. During the course of their work students can earn "beaver pelts," which can

be spent during the rendezvous. As classes they visit local historic sites and museums. Some of the individual projects involve creating models of wagons and handcars, cabins, Indian lodges, and posters about historic figures. Students also participate in a variety of activities such as horseback riding, making pottery, rope and candles, panning for gold, learning pioneer dances, making crafts, playing games, preparing food, and storytelling. Volunteers and docents are involved throughout the unit and especially during the rendezvous. This program has been developing over the years and is constantly improving.

Christine has developed a five-week program on manifest destiny, which is presented to all ninth graders



Education Committee Chair Bill Hill with winners of the OCTA Educator of the Year Awards.

including those of other teachers. She has adapted the unit for all students with diverse levels and skills including English Language Learners (ELL) pupils and those with various cognitive disabilities. In doing so she has worked with the school librarian to gather appropriate materials. In addition to the regular class work, her program focuses on a historical research project and presentation, which is required by all students. Emphasis is placed on historical accuracy and students must learn about primary sources and their proper uses. Students select from a number of topics including general ones such as the Oregon Trail, the Gold Rush or the Pony Express, or more focused subjects such as the Ghost Dance of the Sioux, 19<sup>th</sup> century cooking and clothing, or the study of individual historic figures. The program is constantly being developed and refined.

All these recipients epitomize dedicated educators who utilize constant program evaluation and improvement, and who involve all students in ways to encourage active learning.

Information about the award process is on the education portion of OCTA's Web site.

## Student Calendar Available

Fourteen students had their artwork selected for the 2011 Calendar, "Dangers and Hazards Along the Trail." About three hundred students participated from all across the country. The recipients represent six different elementary schools. Students learned about the hazards and dangers and then made a drawing representing a specific danger. Each student whose work was selected received a check for \$50 and a copy of the OCTA calendar. The recipients were: Thahera Shafi, Stanford, CT; Gracie Chance, Holstein, IA; Timothy Atkinson, Rock Springs, WY; Mary Shafe, Green River, WY; and Harrison Wayman, Katie Bankhead, Benjamin Van Der Berghe, Matt Anderson, Zach Gardner, J. Seth Esplin, Olivia Merrill, Blanca Vanessa Valdespino, Addie Provost, and Jake Jensen, all of Salt Lake City, UT.

Calendars cost only five dollars and are available through headquarters. The topic for the next calendar is "Forts and Posts Along the Trails." Information about the project is on OCTA's Web site. It is open to elementary students.



*Don Buck, left, receives the Preservation Award from David Welch.*

## David J. Welch Preservation Award

### Don Buck

Don Buck, winner of the David J. Welch Preservation Award, has been a leader in OCTA's preservation activities for more than 25 years. His accomplishments include leading the development and publication of OCTA's *Mapping Emigrant Trails Manual* and the completion of mapping activities using the MET manual over much of the California National Historic Trails complex in Nevada and California.

The MET Manual has become a national standard that is now used by many federal agencies. At least as important as Don's technical achievements in the field of mapping is his service as a friend and counselor to all interested in the trails and their history.



*Receiving National Certificates of Appreciation for their service on the OCTA Board were Bill Wilson, left, from Idaho, and John Mark Lambertson, right, from Missouri. Both have served two terms as Board members. Dick Nelson, below, served as Awards Committee Chair.*



## Young OCTAN Award

### Ana Merchant



Ana Merchant has been involved in reenacting and telling stories of the overland migration period since she was barely old enough to walk and talk. She travels with her dad, Kim Merchant, to many activities and events each year.

They have done reenactment

camp at Fort Laramie, Fort Phil Kearny, Fort Caspar, The National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, Grand Encampment Museum, Oregon-California Trail Interpretive Center in Montpelier, ID, and other venues. Ana, an accomplished fiddler, performs at trail activities and functions, usually playing 19<sup>th</sup> century overland migration period songs. She joined the cast of *In Pursuit of a Dream* for scenes at Independence Rock in order to provide original fiddle music.

When her dad (now retired) was teaching special education students in Casper, he always had a "Kids Day at the Ranch" where he exposed his students to "life on the trail." As soon as she was old enough to help (about age five), Ana began assisting with those programs, giving the students guidance in horseback riding, wagon riding, and of course playing trail music. She is an energetic and enthused member of the trail community who lives near the Oregon Trail.





John Krizek



A. Oscar Olson

## Elaine McNabney Volunteer Award

This year two OCTA members are recognized for their volunteer work on behalf of the organization, receiving the Elaine McNabney Volunteer Award.

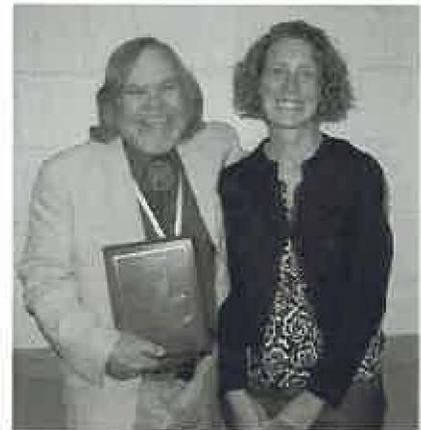
### John Krizek

John Krizek is serving his second term on the OCTA Board. He organized the Yuma Symposium in 2009, which helped rejuvenate the Southern Trails Chapter. He has also served as chairman of the Public Relations/Marketing committee, which is creating a plan to elevate the profile of OCTA. He also assists the efforts of the membership committee. He has played a role in marketing *In Pursuit of a Dream*.

### A. Oscar Olson

A. Oscar Olson has been a Utah Crossroads member since 1994 when he was asked to serve as chairman of the bus tours for the Salt Lake City Convention that year. He handled the same responsibility for the 2005 convention. He has served as Crossroads Chapter President and is always quick to help anyone in need. He helps with chapter field trips doing everything from arranging the buses to provide public relations or snacks, fixing a flat tire. He has organized speakers for chapter events, shares his musical talent, and writes for the chapter newsletter and the *NFP*.

## Merrill Mattes Excellence in Writing Award



**Will Bagley** accepted the Merrill Mattes Award for, "I Could Hardly Hold the Pen": Phebe Ann Wolley Davis's *Hard Road to Utah and Back, 1864-1865*" that he co-edited with Rick Grunder.

The article was published in the *Overland Journal*, Fall 2009. With Bagley above is former *OJ* Editor Ariane Smith.



Bob Pearce, left, and Bob Evanhoe.

**Bob Pearce, Jan Petersen, Dale Porter and Paul Sawyer** were recognized with Certificates of Appreciation from the Bureau of Land Management for their work on the California Trail Interpretive Center.

## Friend of the Trail Awards



*President Bill Martin and Board Members Barb Netherland and Doug Jenson accepted Friend of the Trail Awards for Nina and Lisa Betz and Eric Bedke.*

**Eric Bedke** owns the land where Record Bluff is located in Idaho. He has preserved the trail remnants adjacent to the bluff, and the bluff itself which has hundreds of inscriptions left by emigrants en route to California. He allows people to visit the area and works with school groups to help educate them with regard to the significance of the area. The immediate area is maintained in a condition very similar to what the emigrants would have experienced.



*Matt Tuma, left, and Dale Porter, center, accepted the award for Sen. Harry Reid. Dale Porter was also recognized by the BLM for his assistance in developing the California Trail Interpretive Center. Also shown is OCTA President Bill Martin*

**Nina and Lisa Betz** took on the federal government in an effort to preserve the setting along the southern border of Dome Rock in western Nebraska. They engaged OCTA, the press, historians, educators, preservationists, elected officials, businessmen, national agencies, and citizens in their effort to halt a plan to construct a ditch 100 yards wide and one and a half miles long to run along the south border of Dome Rock and the other southern hills abutting National Park Service property at Scotts Bluff National Monument. Their efforts drew national attention and were successful in stopping the planned project.

**Maggie Creek Properties** was recognized for donating the land on which the California Trail Interpretive Center is located. Jan Petersen, left, presented the award to a grandson of the property owner.



# South Pass Corridor Protection

By Dave Welch

The BLM's Lander Field Office (FO) is in the process of updating its Resource Management Plan (RMP), which will include guidance on how its portion of the South Pass corridor will be managed. OCTA has provided comments over the past two years emphasizing the need to avoid major new intrusions into the corridor like wind power projects.

Overall, I am relatively optimistic about the prospects for protecting the South Pass corridor viewshed. The BLM is sensitive to our views and understands the importance of protecting both the trail and the views in this area. While there are many diverse forces pushing on the BLM, trail and setting preservation is achieving the attention it deserves.

However, OCTA members need to continue to express their desires. Personal letters are important. They should be sent to the BLM Lander Field Office, Attention Jim Cagney, P.O. Box 589, Lander, WY 82520.

The corridor extends from the area of Independence Rock to the Little Sandy Crossing west of South Pass. South Pass itself, and the area to the west, are in the BLM's Rock Springs Field Office area. The Rock Springs RMP, which will be started soon, will attempt to follow the guidelines set forth in the Lander RMP to provide consistency.

After the Elko convention, I traveled to Wyoming to meet with Lance Porter, the Rock Springs BLM FO manager, and Jim Cagney, the Lander BLM FO manager. I wanted updates on their activities and, if possible, to obtain insights into their plans.

Parallel to the BLM RMP revisions, the State of Wyoming under the

leadership of Governor Dave Freudenthal has been attempting to define "sage grouse core areas." These are areas where development will be restricted to protect the sage grouse and thereby avoid its federal listing as an endangered species. Maps have been published and in late August Freudenthal approved final plans. From OCTA's perspective, we benefit from the fact that many sage grouse habitat core areas overlay the South Pass Corridor. If the core areas hold up as currently defined, the nearest possible wind farm development will be ten to twelve miles away from South Pass and even that is unlikely because of the historic importance of the area.

Porter also noted that the existing application to build a wind farm in the South Pass area has been withdrawn. It appeared that the BLM has done everything possible to discourage this project and that the comments by OCTA and others insisting on the protection of South Pass were a factor.

Another Rock Springs FO project that impacts the trails, but is not in the South Pass corridor, is the White Mountain Wind Farm. If built, the turbines will be visible at a distance of about twenty miles. Definition of mitigation for this impact is underway.

In Lander I met with Cagney, whose office is much further along in the RMP process. He expects to have a "preferred option" identified "when the snow melts." Again, the comments by OCTA members and others have succeeded in calling attention to the importance of preserving the South Pass corridor. As in Rock Springs, the sage grouse core areas will play a major role. Cagney made two important points that we

can assume will appear in the plan. First, there will not be an outright ban on wind energy development in the corridor. He noted that to do so would be to eliminate the possibility of using new technology in the future that would not be intrusive.

There are also areas in the corridor where turbines could be placed and not be visible from the trail. Second, he noted that the corridor must be crossed by transmission lines and pipelines at some point. He pointed to the Jeffrey City area as the probable location. Independently, OCTA identified this area as the preferred location for north-south crossings. Therefore, crossings in this area may not be a problem although we will have to look at the specifics of a particular proposal. I was assured that no transmission lines or pipelines would go through South Pass itself.

It should also be noted that as a result of pressure from many sources, including OCTA, the wind test tower near Independence Rock has been removed. The proponent of wind development in that area has promised to avoid impacts to the trails, but we will have to watch this situation carefully.

It is clear that the South Pass corridor preservation will not take the form of a designated area such as a National Park, National Monument, National Conservation Area (NCA), or even an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), although the latter may appear within the management area. The primary reason for this is strong and vocal opposition by the citizens of Wyoming. They do not want additional federal controls on Wyoming lands.

Coincidentally I had a conversation

*Continued on Next Page*

# South Pass

*Continued from Previous Page*

with BLM State Director Don Simpson in Pinedale. He expressed his desire that the RMPs not allow the construction of wind turbines in areas visible from the trails. This does not prohibit turbines, but does place them where topography screens them from view.

While we are sure to retain the current quarter mile "no surface disturbance zone" on each side of the trail, further fixed distance absolute

protection zones are problematic. The protection will take the form of overlapping restrictions based upon topography, environmental concerns (like sage grouse), and key cultural landscapes. It is my opinion that we can achieve what we want to achieve within these parameters. However, it will not happen without our continued active involvement.

***A Public Service Video related to South Pass has***

***been prepared by OCTA and is now available for viewing on the OCTA Web site.***

***The video has already been posted on FaceBook and YouTube. OCTA Members are encouraged to link to it from their own social networking sites.***

## Fund Drive Nets \$7,216

Our Mid-Year campaign was a great success due to the generous response of our members who gave over \$7,000. We are truly grateful.

### *Results*

Annual Fund	\$3,346
Education	675
Endowment	525
Preservation	2,670

**Total**                 **\$7,216**

### *Contributors*

Alvord, Lynne  
Anderson, Ron  
Baker, Margaret  
Barker, Norman  
Bate, William G.  
Bay, Mary Glennys Baker  
Bernd, Roy and Zelma  
Birch, Tom and Dee  
Bolerjack, Joyce  
Brennan, Linda  
Brown, Judy  
Brown, Frank and Laurie  
Brownell, Lloyd  
Burr, Bill  
Cahill, Helen  
Calhoun, Glenn and Peggy  
Carbiener, Gail and Muriel  
Clark, Robert  
Costa, Dr. and Mrs. Arthur

Coward, Robert R.  
Cramer, Howard  
Crump, Connye  
Dale, Jo Anna  
Downs, Ron  
Edwards, Nicholas  
Edwards, Gene  
Epstein, Bonnie  
Fishel, Dennis  
Gaddis, Marilyn  
Grunland, Paul  
Hammerness, Virginia  
Harrison, Glenn  
Heil, Theodore  
Hendricks, Scott  
Hesse, George and Beverly  
Hill, Bill and Jan  
Holbrook, Connie  
Hombuckle, Chuck and Suzanne  
Hughston, Betty  
Johnson, Art and Billie  
Johnson, Leroy  
Jones, Drs. Robert and Hedy  
King, Philip  
Knight, William  
Lambert, Lyle and Nadine  
Lamson, Ormie  
Larson, Bob and Karen  
Lehrer, Kalista  
Lynch, Ed  
Madsen, Francis Jr.  
Minning, Charles  
Morrise, Martha  
Mygatt, Judson

Nadal, Wanda  
Navrkal, Joyce  
Nelson, Dick and Ruby  
Olson, Raechel  
Palmquist, Keith  
Parks, Lethene  
Pritchard, Jim and Eula  
Quackgrass Sally  
Ragen, Brooks  
Rawlings, Mary  
Rhine, Jim  
Rickey, Stanton and Addie  
Russell, Tom and Carolyn  
Schmidt, Richard  
Schoch, Raymond  
Serr, Serr  
Shellenberger, Robert  
Spangler, Nita  
Stovall, Jay and Leo  
Sumberg, Fran  
Swinnerton, Dick and Mary Ann  
Tea, Roy  
Towers, Dick and Wann  
Turner, Linda  
Valentine, David  
Ward, Gil  
Weaver, William

*Memorial gifts were received from Linda Turner for Lynne Turner; from David and Wendy Welch and Gail and Muriel Carbiner for Pat Loomis and Lowell Tiller; and from Glenn Harrison for Lowell Tiller.*



## We Saw The Elephant

**By Bob Evanhoe  
Chapter President**

Continuing kudos are due to Chair Jan Petersen and her dedicated volunteers for a successful Elko convention. Activities new and old were enjoyed by the 417 registered members and guests. Many thanks go to Kathy and Travis at headquarters, members of the Utah Crossroads Chapter, local Elko volunteers, and the official chapter convention committee.

In addition, many members volunteered to staff positions throughout the convention when they registered. And, finally, many, many kudos to the Elko Convention Center staff and to the new California Trail Center crew. Your cooperation in accommodating the ever-changing requests of the chapter is especially appreciated. Let's do it again . . . in another 14 years!

One way to forget the butterflies and plunge into the activities of the convention was to have the keynote speaker cancel—due to pneumonia—at 8:23 pm the night before he was scheduled to deliver his speech. Thankfully, his remarks were typed and could be e-mailed to us. Chair Jan and Chapter President Bob Evanhoe shared the 28-page address with an appreciative audience. After that, nothing fazed the crew.

In addition to the keynote speech—on the Comstock Lode—six excellent talks with slide accompaniment were presented by Jim Hardee, Martha Voght, John Mark Lambertson, David Johnson, John Krizek, and Roy Tea. These chronicled activities on diverse subjects related to the California Trail.



*Wyoming Chapter President Edna Kennell accepted the Young OCTAN Award on behalf of Ana Merchant from Bill Martin, above left; CA/NV chapter members and volunteers load busses for the tours, above; AnnaMae and Sylvester Hale (aka Frank and MaryAnn Tortorich), left, provided a living history program at the convention opening.*

Again, many thanks to you all.

Tours of the historical trails were augmented by sightseeing and a visit to a modern day gold mining operation. Modern mining techniques are nearly incomprehensible. (At the current price of gold, Newmont Mining—host of the tour—is able to make a profit by extracting 0.06 ounce of microscopic gold particles from each ton of ore. That's 16 2/3 tons processed for each ounce of gold. Not to worry, the trucks carrying the ore, with their 8-foot diameter, \$30,000 tires, carry a payload of 240 tons.)

The closing ceremonies at the California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center featured a catered Basque dinner, entertainment, and awards. The Center staff and their

volunteers coordinated another fun evening to cap a very successful convention. See you all next year in Rock Springs, Wyoming.

On the Friday of the convention, 65 members attended the chapter board meeting, witnessing the transfer of the gavel from Bob Evanhoe to John Winner. Michael Trueblood took his seat as a new director, with David Hollecker beginning another term as a director representing Nevada and also service as vice-president. Carol March, Recording Secretary, and Zeke Sicotte, Treasurer, were unanimously reelected to their offices. Other directors are Vince Correll, Frank Tortorich, and Richard Young.

## Field Trips, Barbecue Attract Members

By A. Oscar Olson

The last time I wrote for this newsletter, we were preparing for our spring field trip, a two-day affair that saw nearly 35 participants and 15 vehicles. On May 15 and 16 we gathered at Camp Floyd with Jesse Petersen as trip leader. He directed us on the 1859 Simpson Road and Pony Express route. After an exciting day we spent the evening in Ely, NV. The following day we headed east on the 1859 Simpson Road returning to Camp Floyd, at Fairfield.

It was a great trip thanks to Petersen's leadership. Dorene and Marvin Burke from Colorado were our guests.

On June 4 a "gang" of four went into Skull Valley, UT, to mark newly found ruts with carsonite markers. Participating were Charlie Burkhalter, Vic Heath, Allen Heaps, and Bryce Billings. We had a board meeting in May. In June we supported the National Pony Express Association in its 150 year celebration and reenactment ride. This included events on June 14 in Tooele County, with an event at Simpson Springs as the riders headed east. A dinner and gala event involved the community along with the Pony riders, families, and supporters.

On June 17, some chapter members attended a Pony Express conference in Salt Lake that featured talks by

Dr. Leo Lyman, Marie Irvine, Janet Seegmiller, Camille Bradford, and David Fairbanks.

Approximately 30 chapter members attended the OCTA Convention in Elko. It was great to see so many old friends and to relive many old trail experiences.

On Sept. 11 we planned to have our fall social at Benson Mill, Tooele County, with a catered meal and local speakers who were slated to talk about the early days of OCTA in Utah and the organization of the Crossroads Chapter. Another field trip on Sept. 18 took in the area of Skull Valley, Hastings Pass, and Gray Back Mountain.

## Chapter Holds Rendezvous

By Pat Traffas  
Chapter President

Thanks to a quality group of speakers, a nice June day, and great attendance, Rendezvous 2010 was a rousing success under the theme of *Partnering – The Way to do Trails Work*. It was Trails Head Chapter's third biennial Rendezvous on National Trails Day.

Over forty of us met at the Rendezvous Shelter at the historic Lone Elm Park at 167<sup>th</sup> and Lone Elm Road south of Olathe, KS. Thanks to all the organizations and speakers who brought display exhibits.

Gary Werner, Executive Director of the Partnership for the National

Trails System, talked about the concept of partnering on a national basis, with an emphasis on how public-private partnering works. The vision of Benton MacKaye, founder of the Appalachian Trail, was that a partnership between private citizenry groups and federal agencies would work the best for his trail. This became the core vision of the 1968 National Trails System Act (NTSA).

In addition, Werner discussed the goals and action plans, developed under the Partnership's leadership and adopted by the various National Trails groups for the decade ending in 2018, on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NTSA.

Other speakers also talked about how they are partnering together to preserve and interpret our area's historic and recreational trail sites and resources.

Tim Talbott, site administrator of the Mahaffie Farmstead, had his team of oxen named Buck and Tip who demonstrated how a team works together. This was a great visual example of how trails work is done with teamwork!

Meanwhile, our chapter steering committee continues to do preliminary planning for the 2012 OCTA convention to be held in Lawrence, Kansas. We will continue to report progress as it is completed.





Oregon-California Trails Association  
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## *In Pursuit of a Dream*

[www.inpursuitofadream.org](http://www.inpursuitofadream.org)

*Upcoming Showings:*

October 8 - Marysville, KS  
TBA - Casper, WY



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