

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS



THE OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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

March 1988

Preservation Alert

By Tom Hunt

The Nevada State Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is proposing to lease two entire sections—two square miles—of public domain lands for the construction of a salt extraction facility. It would be on the Parran Flat section of the Carson River 40-Mile Desert Emigration Trail.

This section of trail lies just south of the Salt Creek Crossing, between the Humboldt and Carson Sinks on the desert crossing to Ragtown, and contains magnificent trail traces and accompanying artifacts. The salt extraction facility will be built directly over these traces.

Upon learning of this proposal, OCTA submitted extensive documentation to establish the historical validity of this section of trail. The BLM at first questioned that the trail actually crossed this flat and then contended that no bona fide traces remained due to subsequent use of the flat by other vehicles.

They now concede that "Wagons did use portions of Parran Flat." Despite this concession and an inability to refute OCTA's documentation, and despite the exceptional, irrefutable historical importance of this section of emigrant trail (one of the most dramatic and most commented-upon sections of trail in emigrant literature), the BLM office in Winnemucca has just informed OCTA that they will still recommend to the Nevada State Office that the lease be granted.

THIS IS AN URGENT APPEAL! Please write to the Nevada State BLM asking that the proposed salt extraction lease on Parran Flat be denied and that the historic trail be preserved and protected. Please do it now! Time is running out. Your letter is absolutely

(Continued on page 10)

Grave Marking Efforts Bring Response

Last October the Northwest Chapter-OCTA joined with the Earl Dean Chapter of the Telephone Pioneers Association to sign and fence a pioneer grave in Oregon. The site was a common grave shared by Catherine Bonnet Butts and three unknown pioneers on the Meek Cutoff route in central Oregon, ten miles east of Tygh Valley.

In January, members Mr. and Mrs. Robert Templeman of Palisade, Nebraska, sent in a donation in gratitude. Mrs. Templeman is related to Catherine. The letter read, in part: "I wish there was a way I could personally thank each and every one who so generously gave of their time and effort to mark this spot so dear to our hearts."

Marilyn Hill Craig of Oregon, a descendant of Henry Hill and great-grandniece of Nancy Jane Hill, has expressed her gratitude for the marking of those graves in Wyoming. "I am particularly grateful to Reg Duffin, chairman of the Graves Committee, for the many hours of work he extended on this project. There are other persons who deserve thanks as well, especially Karen Buck and Randy Brown and his school children of Douglas, Wyoming. OCTA should be very proud of its accomplishment."

Roma Sitton, who works in the Yamill County Museum in Oregon, sent for a back issue of the OJ which carried a story on Joel Hembree's grave. She later wrote to the president of OCTA to express her delight with our grave projects.

Six days after Joel Hembree was buried, his mother gave birth to a girl. That was Roma's grandmother. Roma had hoped to get back to Wyoming someday to try to locate the grave, thinking it would be an impossible task. Now that she knows the grave is marked, she is pleased, but probably won't be able to go see it. She plans to give up her automobile when she turns 92 on her next birthday!

Regardless of being able to visit, Roma is thankful for OCTA's work.



OCTA members and Telephone Pioneers join efforts in marking the Catherine Butts grave.

From the President's Desk

I want to share with you a small part of the report I sent to board members in advance of our Independence mid-year board meeting:

"One of the things I feel we need is unity and I will unite behind the decision of the board. Even before we are board members, we are OCTA members dedicated to the preservation of this wondrous historic western movement. This is a strong bond that knits us together, perhaps as strong a bond as that which united those early pioneers.

Because of this we are not easily torn apart or deterred from reaching our objectives. With all this and a dedicated membership behind us, I am confident we are going to be around for a good many years, perhaps in spite of anything we do." OCTA is going to be around for many years because OCTA people are different. They're great!

I began my report with: "In my opinion OCTA is in better shape today than it has ever been. Better economically, stronger as an organization, and with a fantastic track record for trail preservation." We can all be proud of trail legislation, grave marking and fencing, historic signage and preservation of trail remnants.

After our membership renewal letters went out, responses came in very quickly. There were upgrades in categories of membership and extra contributions. Fred and Dorothy Clagett not only took out a life membership but contributed an extra \$500, becoming the first recipients of a set of Jackson prints.

Plans are well underway for an outstanding convention in St. Joseph.

All these things indicate we are a healthy, growing organization. I assure our members that we are well on our way to achieving our objectives. Thank you.

Your president,
Dick Ackerman

Greetings from Headquarters

By Elaine McNabney

Greetings from the administrative office of OCTA! Last August I offered to staff the headquarters office as a volunteer for about six months until it was running with some efficiency. I certainly have enjoyed these months and appreciate most of all our members who are dedicated and patient. I've especially enjoyed the variety of checks and stamps that came with your renewal cards!

We have stored at the office back issues of the OJ (\$4 each for members) and the lovely Jackson prints (prepared for mailing in plastic over cardboard). We also have a small supply of the printed prayer (suitable for framing) offered at the grave of Rachel Pattison

during the Scotts Bluff convention.

The office is open from 8:30 -12:30 daily. Most of my time is spent on membership items such as renewals, address changes, new members, etc. Phone calls from members and from prospective members are always welcome pauses. The assistance from the City of Independence has been just as remarkable as their original offer. Our computer files are kept updated, the copy center has printed reams for us; even this typewriter was provided by the City. Last, but hardly least, are those OCTA members who come in with little notice to help with general office work or to help prepare the OJs for bulk mailing. Even as I prepare to turn over the reins I realize that I shall miss all this.

Recent Changes Made on Board

A recent ruling by the Justice Department on what constitutes "conflict of interest" for federal employees has brought changes to OCTA's board.

John Latschar, National Park Service, can no longer serve in a policy making position, i.e., officer or director, but will be able to serve on committees.

Don Buck has replaced John as secretary of the board.

Larry Jones has been selected to fill John's board position.

Larry was a candidate in the last election. He is a Charter Member of OCTA, staff historian for Idaho State Historical Society, and is co-author of the Oregon Trail Cultural Resource Study, a monumental work on the Oregon Trail in the Snake River area. He is also president of the Idaho-Montana Chapter.

Membership Report

As of the end of February, our paid membership stood at 1,225. It is difficult to say how many members we have since so many memberships include spouses and/or family members.

Current renewals are pouring in so we know our number will soon top 1,350 at least.

The key to budgeting for projects we need to undertake is to build membership. We need YOUR help to do this. There are several ways you can assist.

If you are involved in local chapter work, send your newsletters to prospective non-members. Invite at least one non-member to an outing or a program.

Take part in civic groups as a speaker and let them know about OCTA and our work. Spread the word to other local history groups on the city, county, and state levels.

One of the proposals we are considering is to make a brochure rack available to local chapters and other individuals interested in helping build membership. These might be especially effective in R.V. and outdoor equipment stores, restaurants and stores located near the trails.

We have just received about 8,000 copies of the new membership brochure. It is available at our Independence headquarters for the asking.

If you are shy, we'll help. Think of someone who has asked you to join something, or someone who shares your interests. Send that name and address to us on a simple, quick and easy 14¢ postcard. We'll mail the membership information with or without your name being used.

New Editor for Overland Journal

By Chuck Dodd

Last year in Casper I agreed to produce two issues of the Overland Journal (OJ). I had every expectation of continuing as editor, but I quickly learned that the burden of that work would prevent me from earning a living. Priorities being what they are, I have to give it up after two issues.

Lois Daniel will become the editor with volume 6, number 1.

My experience with the OJ has made me aware of some realities.

First, the publication represents the largest single OCTA budget item. We constantly balance the quality with production costs, and always look for ways to decrease costs without sacrificing the quality.

Second, it takes a tremendous amount of time to produce and deliver the OJ. For instance, I started in September. There was no carryover from the previous editor, except a couple of articles and a few book reviews. I had to develop things from scratch.

When I was finally able to send the OJ to the printer, I discovered firsthand that it takes five to six weeks to get it

printed—if there are no problems to resolve.

I received my copy of the OJ two weeks after it was mailed from Independence. Thus, it was two months from the time I sent it to the printer until I had my copy in hand.

We could speed things up, but only at a greatly added cost. For example, we could mail the OJ first class. But that would increase the cost about \$1 per member. We need that dollar-per-member for things like trail marking and preservation, so we will continue mailing the slow, but least expensive, way.

We know the importance of the Overland Journal to OCTA members and, while keeping costs within reason, we are doing what we can to catch up. Volume 5, number 4 went to the printer in February. Members will receive it in early April.

Thank you for being understanding. We really do appreciate your patience. And please let us know what you think of the changes. We'll even take complaints.

Cal-Pony Update

By Jeanne and Bill Watson
Legislative Co-chairs.

The National Park Service proposal to designate the California Trail and the Pony Express Trail as National Historic Trails ran into unfortunate timing.

The proposal arrived at President Reagan's Office of Management and Budget for review while they were finalizing the current budget and working on the President's fiscal '89 budget.

While the Trails proposal waited at OMB, OCTA legislative volunteers contacted senators, congressmen and staffs, urging support for the Trails proposal. In response to OCTA legislative contacts, Senate and House inquiries were sent to OMB on the state of the Trails proposal. As a result, and with the completion of the fiscal '89 budget we believe that the California National Historic Trail and Pony Express National Historic Trail proposal is now back on track and will soon clear the Office of Management and Budget.

Next, it will go to the Secretary of Interior for approval. This should not take long since it received the endorsement of William Penn Mott, Jr., Director of the National Park Service, before it went to OMB.

The approved Trails proposal and the OCTA/NPEA draft legislation will then go to Congress where separate Senate and House bill numbers will be assigned and sponsors identified. The National Park Service team can then issue copies of their final Trails recommendations to the public.

At that point, hopefully in the near future, we can ask you to write your senators and representatives to support this legislation.

With your help, the legislation should be passed before we gather in St. Joseph in August for the OCTA convention.

Introducing:

Lois Daniel

A Charter Member of OCTA, Kansas Citian Lois Daniel has had a full career of writing, editing and public relations.

She and her book, *How to Write your Own Life Story*, have been featured in many leading newspapers, including the *Chicago Sun Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*.

Her articles have appeared in *Reader's Digest*, *Rotary International*, and *Guidepost*.

Along with many other publications, Lois has edited five hard-cover books for Hallmark.

Her work for Zondervon Publishing Co., of Grand Rapids, publisher of *The New International Version of the Bible*, has included magazine and newspaper articles, and research and writing of a film script.



As editor of *Westport Magazine*, a periodical based in the historic Westport district of Kansas City, Lois became curious about western historic trails a few years ago.

That curiosity challenged her into participation in the Sublette Cutoff Expedition, at least for a few days.

Hard at work on her first issue of the Overland Journal, this role allows Lois to wed her journalistic talents to her trails interest.

Convention Point of Interest

Convention attendees will tour the Robidoux row site while in St. Joseph in August. The Row was built by Joseph Robidoux, fur trader and founder of St. Joseph. It served as a row of apartments for new settlers until they established homes or moved on west. Built around 1850, the Row is on the National Register of Historic Places.



OCTA Offers Range of Awards

To ensure recognition of members who make exceptional contributions to furthering OCTA's mission, the board established an awards program in 1984.

Awards offered include:

Meritorious Achievement Award: This is OCTA's highest accolade. Usually only two are given each year.

Certificates of Appreciation (National): A hand lettered and framed certificate goes to those who have made an effort to achieve a short-term OCTA goal, such as that given to Malcolm Smith.

(Local) Certificates of Appreciation: At Casper the board authorized local chapters to bestow certificates to those who assist them to attain goals. Standard certificates have now been sent to local chapters for their use.

Other National Awards: These include the Past President Award, certificates to out-going officers and directors, Rancher of the Year Awards (for private preservation efforts), and Resolutions of Thanks for convention planners.

Nominations for these awards can be

made by all OCTA members by writing to the chairman, John Latschar. Names should be submitted by June 1 to be considered for 1988 awards.

If you have suggestions for adapting or improving the award program, or if you would like to serve on the committee, write to the chairman.

The committee advises that all awards, whether national or local, should be coordinated with the Public Relations Committee, both to heighten the honor and recognition of the recipient and to publicize OCTA's mission.

***Wanted:* Riders and Trail Buffs** **Second**

Oregon Trail 100 mile ride June 26-July 2, 1988

Five day scenic horseback trip along the trails in South Pass region: Oregon, California, Mormon and Pony Express.

\$400 includes meals and extras

We also offer custom designed family trips for people of all ages, wagon trips, and photography outings, spring through fall.

Write or call: Wyoming Rendezvous

Judith Otte Regan

P.O. Box 821

Lander, WY 82520 307-332-2638 (evenings)

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS is published quarterly by the Oregon-California Trails Association, 111 E. Maple, Independence, MO 64051-0519.

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OCTA Library Begins

The headquarters library is now officially begun.

Ross Marshall, president of Trails Head Chapter and an avid trails book collector for decades, has given thirty books to our library.

Many of these were duplicates in Ross' collection, while others were simply ones he wanted to share.

Peggy Smith, Charter Member, has volunteered as librarian. She recently retired from the Missouri Valley Room (historical reference department) of the Kansas City Public Library. She has now set up an accessioning process and completed the work on our new/old books.

Instead of discarding books (in good condition) that you no longer want, send us a note or card to see if we would like to have it.

If we can't use it, perhaps you can increase your community's trail resources by donating there.

Faraway Members

How can we explain to our countrymen what strong appeal American western trails have for others?

We invite our international members to tell us in their own words. We would like to share them with our readers if you will allow us.

Also, if you are attending the convention in St. Joseph, let us know. We might even offer travel advice if you need it. Write to us at OCTA headquarters.

California Rendezvous

The first Rendezvous under our new program is one for Mojave Road for April 4-9.

The Cal-Nev-Hawaii Chapter will host the five-day trek which calls for four-wheel drive vehicles. For more information, contact Mary Mueller.

Meritorious Achievement Nominations

The Awards Committee has issued a call for nominations for OCTA's Annual Meritorious Achievement Awards, to be given for "outstanding contributions in bringing to all Americans a greater awareness of the identity and significance of the trails and landmarks of those pioneers who accomplished the westerning of our nation."

Awards may be given to both individuals and to institutions and organizations.

Nominations must include the name of the proposed honoree and a short essay on why that person or organization deserves the honor.

Nominations should be sent by June 1, 1988, to John Latschar, 794 Urban Street, Golden, CO 80401.

Notes About News

This publication is for you, our members. It is planned to be a quarterly report on who is doing what—not just information from the board and committees, although that is vital in keeping you informed, but information on what members are up to.

Most news has to come to us through chapter reports from either the president or secretary of the chapter. These will be due on May 15, August 30 and November 15, unless there is a change later to prevent running into the *Overland Journal* schedule.

Other members in areas where chapters do not exist, or someone who has an especially good story idea, should send information to OCTA headquarters, marked *News from the Plains*.

If photos are sent, all persons must be

identified and the photography should be sharp and clear. We can only print a few photos because of space and budget.

If you want the photo back, please so indicate. If you don't, we may file it for future use or to build our collection.

Copy submitted should be typed, if at all possible. Otherwise, make sure it is easily read. Be sure to include your name, full address and telephone.

As for content, other than the required organizational items, that should be determined by you, our dues paying members and readers.

Write and give us ideas if we are not giving you what you want. Also, if you have questions about OCTA itself, we might be the place to direct those, too.

Bill Hill Heads Education Project

Bill Hill has been appointed Education Director for OCTA. In that role he will formulate board policy and assist the Education Committee with its goals.

The initial thrust will be on nineteenth century emigration for the elementary level. Secondary level will follow later.

Bill has been a social studies teacher in Long Island, New York, for 21 years.

He is a long-time trail traveler and author of two books: *The Oregon Trail, Yesterday and Today*, and *The California Trail, Yesterday and Today*.

The Bookshelf

Member John Warning has self-produced a 70-page book on Ft. Mitchell, Nebraska. Cost is \$4.95. Write to John Warning, Route 1, Mitchell, NE 69357.

Upton & Sons, Publishers/Booksellers, say their last shipment of catalogues to prospective buyers was almost completely lost in the mail. If you want a replacement, write them at 917 Hillcrest St., El Segundo, CA 90245.

New Members

These are our new members or those who were left out of the roster.

Bill and Evelyn Aprile Modesto, CA	Robert Cuff Auburn, CA	Ted Huss Casper, WY
Miles and Evelyn Arens Sioux Falls, SD	Dorothy and Bert Dailey Portage, MI	Kenneth Irons Boise, ID
Paul and Louise Atteridg Grandby, CO	Jim Deal Casper, WY	Mrs. Herbert Jenkins Ephrata, WA
Bill Bagley Cheyenne, WY	Edward Doehne Sacramento, CA	Arthur C. Johnson Bridgeport, NE
John M. Baker Carmichael, CA	Richard Dyer Sonora, CA	Michael P. Jones Rhododendron, OR
Susan Baron, Omaha, NE	William Eaton Eugene, OR	Richard D. Jones Wilson, WY
Mr. and Mrs. S.E. Beck Rio Vista, CA	Kurt and Kathi Ehrenmann Hoeri, Switzerland	Gary and Voydean Keller Mesa, AZ
Jerome Beeson Boise, ID	Sunderland Everstill Idyllwild, CA	John and Frances Kennedy Casper, WY
Don Beilby Rio Oso, CA	O.J. Fargo Creston, IA	Graf and Alice Kroeck Stockton, CA
B.W. Bergstrom Greybull, WY	H. Sterling Fenn Redding, CA	Dr. Dottie Lane Laramie, WY
Duane and Carolyn Best Aurora, CO	Fort Larned National Historic Site Larned, KS	Fred L. Lee Kansas City, MO
Beverly and Ivon Blum Cambria, CA	Fred K. Fox Delhi, CA	Charles and Karin Lowrie Jackson, CA
Marjorie Bouton Fremont, CA	Steve Fuller Kansas City, MO	Mary Sue and John Luff Independence, MO
Bridgeport Lions Club Bridgeport, NE	Alice J. Gault La Barge, WY	Wendelin Lummel Bridgeport, NE
Daniel and Deborah Brooks Jamestown, CA	Mike George Oregon, MO	James Lynch Martinez, CA
Beverly Bunn West Des Moines, IA	Geri Graves Coburg, OR	Robert and Alexandra McCormick Douglas, WY
Robert Childs Shingletown, CA	Rep. Judith Hammerstad Lake Oswego, OR	Mr. and Mrs. John McDonald Dallas Center, IA
Russell and Deolinda Christensen Red Bluff, CA	Irene Harber Walnut Creek, CA	Clarence Mease Freeport, IL
Bruce, Jan and Kathy Coe Casper Wy	Dennis Hart San Francisco, CA	Jim and Doyen Mitchell Longmont, CO
John G. Collins Missoula, MT	Levida and Brock Hileman Casper WY	Harmon Mothershead Maryville, MO
Sherman Collins Naples, FL	Hank and Martha Hodges Carson City, NV	Mrs. Grover Mulkey Salem, OR
Mary Lynn Corbett Casper, WY	Steve and Martha Hodges Los Altos, CA	Stephen Novotny San Jose, CA
Lynn and Janet Cornford Reno, NV	Mr. and Mrs. John Holroyd Albion, IA	Darrell and Marian Offe Guernsey, WY
George and Jean Cox Palm Beach Gardens, FL	Elizabeth Hurst Sioux Falls, SD	
Bruce and Elizabeth Crain Sacramento, CA		
Eloise and Doug Crary Modesto, CA		

New Members

Continued

John D. Olson
Portland, OR
Pierce Olson
Jackson, WY
Kathy and Julian Orr
Casper, WY
Cornelius O'Sullivan
Houston, TX

Rep. Carole Roper Park
Sugar Creek, MO
France E. Peters
Wheatland, CA
Eugene Potter
Glenrock, WY
Yvonne Prater
Ellensburg, WA

Claire T. Raaum
Redmond, WA
Mr. and Mrs. Tom Ratliff
Madeline, CA
Kathleen Reid
Kelso, WA
Arlene Rhoda
Aurora, CO

Michael and Carolyn Robinson
Papillion, NE
Tom and Elizabeth Rockwood
Lenexa, KS
Dorothy C. Romo
Alameda, CA
Kathleen Roubal
Broadview, IL
Shann Rupp
Jamestown, CA
William C. Rupp
Jamestown, CA

Semon J. Sandven
Santa Monica, CA
M.D. Shaffrath
Sacramento, CA
Jake and Donna Simonitsch
Independence, MO

Robert D. Smith
St. Louis, MO
Melissa and Dave Stamey
Santa Maria, CA
Robert and Sandra Stoughton
Volcano, CA

Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Tiller
Portland, OR
Lena Tompkins
Red Bluff, CA

Tom and Ellen Watkins
Spokane, WA
C.L. Weller
Auburn, WA
Suzanne Wendorff
Kearney, NE
Emmy Werner
Berkeley, CA
Jim Wilson
Grandview, ID
Eleanor Witter
Sacramento, CA
Betty Wright
Sedona, AZ
Joyce Wyman
Portage, MI

Richard L. Young
Casper, WY

Special Funders

These members have renewed and contributed to our General (Special) Fund:

Don Beilby
James and Judith Budde
Madeline and Joe Cechmanek
Fred and Dorothy Clagett
Frances Cooper
Joy C. Duba
Elmer and Betty Eberhardt
Pauline Fowler
Porter and Rebecca French
John and Norma Haner
Charles R. Hehmeyer
LeRoy and Joann Jackson
Maude C. Jenks
Edward P. Jones, Jr.
Edith F. Kuhn
Carl and Laura Latschar
Ethel and Otto Lawrence
Pat Loomis

George Long
Merrill and Clara Mattes
Lucille D. Mayfield
Lucille E. Michaud
Mary Grace Paquette
Judson M. Parsons
George J. Richards, Jr.
Dr. Richard S. Rieck
Jeanette and John Roberts
Shann Rupp
William C. Rupp
Rev. Dominic Russo
Ron and Kathy Smith
Duke and Jewell Sumonia
Robert and Althea Templeman
Eva Tetreault
Leroy Tezak
Erwin N. Thompson
June and George Watkins
Roy Welton, Jr.
Charles and Lorraine Zinn

Life Members

We are delighted to announce the following new Life Members:
FRANK TORTORICH
FRED and DOROTHY CLAGETT

Kasperek Death

Bob Kasperek, member from Lakewood, Colorado, was killed in a plane crash recently in Durango. Bob had written an article on the Mormon Pioneer Trail for the Spring 1987 issue of the Overland Journal.

As a National Park Service employee, he had served from Washington, D.C., to Yellowstone and was with the Environmental Compliance office in Denver at the time of his death.

We express our sympathy to his family.

Chapter Reports

ARIZONA

Our winter outing was an overnight trek to Painted Rocks State Park in the Gila Bend region in late January. Dan Talbot led the trail hike, as well as presented the initial program in camp and presentations later on the trail.

We also held a business meeting attended by sixteen members, where we agreed to the name "Arizona Chapter" and will ask OCTA for local chapter recognition with that title.

Current officers are: Jack Root, president; Aubrey Haines, vice president; Susan Badger, secretary; and Sherri Lee, treasurer.

Our next outing will be April 9-10 when we explore the northern emigration route. Aubrey Haines will present the program on "Beal's Road" and we will travel to El Morro National Monument.

CAL-NEV-HAWAII

Cal-Nev-Hawaii Chapter has planned their entire year around trail treks. Leading off with OCTA's first Rendezvous they follow with a tour along Applegate and Lassen Trails by car in mid-May.

Early June will find them in the Truckee River and Parran Flat area with hikes planned for several segments.

COLORADO

The December meeting had to be cancelled due to weather and lots of Christmas functions. Plans are being made for an early March gathering. The nearness of the Oregon Trail in western Nebraska and Wyoming, and the South Platte Trail will give this now-forming chapter lots to focus on. Some of the 90 OCTA members in that region might give them a try. Contacts:

John and Barbi Daily
3588 Nucla St.
Aurora, CO 80013
303-690-7814

Duke Sumonia
P.O. Box 114
Glen Haven, CO 80532
303-586-8505

GATEWAY

With forty-seven members now, the chapter meets bi-monthly.

Recent programs have been centered on Missouri River Crossings, research material in the Troy, Kansas library, and archaeological findings in the Iowa Point crossing.

Two field trips have been taken in preparation of the August convention. Chapter members are researching diaries, campsites and burial sites.

IDAHO-MONTANA

There are currently eighty members in our chapter and renewals are coming in daily. Two of the five Montana OCTA members have now joined our chapter.

Last September four of our leaders took the Outdoor Editor of the *Idaho Statesman* for a tour of the trail in our area. As a result, a great article was published. From that we were invited to give a tour for staff members of our Congressional and Senate members' local staff people. They all stated their support for our trail preservation and signage efforts.

At the current time we are working with many groups to complete trail sign projects, including the Idaho BLM, Twin Falls County Historical Society and the Idaho Transportation Department. Signs in the Boise area will be completed this summer and the state has promised better directional signs to support our efforts.

We conducted a ceremony where we presented the Meritorious Achievement Award to Delmar Vail, recipient of the award given in recognition of the Idaho BLM's work with us in trail preservation.

We testified at the hearing on the proposed City of Rocks National Reserve. Instead of the original 10,320 acres suggested in the bill, we presented the National Park Service and OCTA's recommendation of 14,300, which has now been accepted by Senator McClure's office. Senate bill No. 1335 is now reported out of committee.

Our Adopt-a-Rut program has received a boost. Hollister Elementary School in Hollister, Idaho, has a fourth

grade class which has adopted a trail segment in their area as a result of their teacher's suggestion. The students are excited about the project.

Our next outing will be April 23 when one of our directors, J.J. Freeman, leads our tour to Glenn's Ferry and the Hagerman district. We are planning many trail treks now in anticipation of our 1989 convention.

NEBRASKA

A trail outing is in the forecast with Kim Naden leading. It is planned to begin this outing where the one led by Kim in the summer of 1987 left off.

The chapter is also planning a dedication ceremony for the new marker to be placed on Highway 30 south of California Hill.

Preliminary work on the 1990 convention in Omaha is underway.

OCTA members can help this project by contacting Bob Berry at 402-333-3522.

NORTHWEST

About fifty people attended the January 23 annual meeting of the chapter in Oregon City.

On February 10 the chapter gave Certificates of Appreciation to nine Boy Scouts in the east Portland area. Members of the two different troops had worked on the restoration of pioneer gravesites at Summit Meadows in the Cascades.

An open meeting at the Washington State Historical Society will be held April 9.

On May 5 the group will convene at Rickerall, Oregon, for a five-day trip along the 1848 California Gold Rush route.

A dedication program will be held June 4 at the Catherine Bonnett Butts grave.

Maurice Burchfield represented the chapter at the mid-year board meeting in Independence.

Postcards, Anyone?

OCTA now has its own postcards, thanks to the generosity of one of our members.

Available only in black on white, it has a wagon on the trail, with our name on the front and a promotional blurb on the reverse.

We would like to promote the idea of using these as members travel to our August convention. It might require a small donation to offset costs of printing and mailing them to members.

By handing these out at motels, campsites, restaurants, gas stations, attractions or general shopping areas, we would increase awareness of OCTA, the importance of the trails in our heritage and the impact of our



members' money on communities they travel in.

And, we just might build our membership, too.

Look for an announcement on this in the next issue, but if you are gung-ho, drop us a card now to say so.

SOUTHEAST

Clyde Welsh of Memphis would like very much to get some type of chapter started in the states ranging from Arkansas to Florida. He counts 48 OCTA members in his "district" and would like contact from anyone interested in forming the chapter, however loose-knit it might be.

Clyde points out that, if for no other reason, it gives you new friends when going to the convention. You will not find yourself an "outsider" while others belong to chapters.

Richard Rieck of Macomb, Illinois, is working with Clyde on a Computer Aided Drafting and Drawing project. Richard is with Western Illinois University.

If you're an OCTAn in Illinois, you might contact Richard.

TRAILS HEAD

A sizable group of chapter members turned out for the Santa Fe Trail public hearing in Independence on November 19.

At the annual meeting on December 12, eight Certificates of Appreciation

were given out to elected officials in both Missouri and Kansas who have helped with signing the trail and/or obtaining funds for the National Historic Trails Center in Independence.

On February 11 the meeting focused on Doing Research on the Trail.

On April 21, Charlie Martin, Sr., will come from Omaha to give a program on the Pony Express.

In May the chapter will co-sponsor a traveling exhibit at the Johnson County, Kansas Museum entitled, "Landscape and Architecture Along the Oregon Trail."

Part of the project will include co-sponsoring 10,000 maps of the trails and trail related sites in Johnson County.

New officers of the chapter are: Ross Marshall, president; John Leamon, vice president; Mary Conrad, secretary; and Jim Budde, treasurer. John has also volunteered for the national Preservation Committee.

WYOMING

Meeting at the Agricultural Resource Center in Casper on November 5, 1987, this chapter was born!

Elected as officers: Art Randall, president; John Kennedy, vice president; Kathy Orr, secretary; and Lee Underbrink, treasurer. (Remember him?) Board members are Karen Buck of La Barge, Bill Collister of Casper, Gene Potter of Glenrock, Julia Orr of Casper and Marian Offe of Guernsey.

A workshop was scheduled for February 10 to get members acquainted with the workings of OCTA.

On April 29 a banquet will be held in coordination with Natrona County Historical Society.

There may be a trail outing on May 11.

Get in touch with those named above. Get involved in this special chapter.

Graves Committee

Reg Duffin, chairman of the Graves Committee, has submitted a list of unmarked or poorly marked graves, primarily in the states of Nebraska and Wyoming. He has asked the board to prioritize these for marking.

Mattes Book Now Available

Merrill Mattes' *Platte River Road Narratives* is now available. It has been shipped to advance subscribers and will be on the shelf of specially selected bookstores this month.

The 631 page volume opens with a foreword by James Michener. The first journal entry is from Robert Stuart's narrative of 1812 and the last is from Sarah Wisner's 1866 description.

The book was published by University of Illinois Press, 54 E. Gregory Drive, Champaign, IL 61820. Price is \$95.

Preservation Alert

(Continued from page 1)

essential to this crucial preservation effort.

Your letter doesn't have to be long. The BLM has the facts. What you need to do is let them know that the American public cares about our historic trails heritage and wants it preserved — that sometimes private exploitation of public domain lands does not take priority over historic preservation.

The laws are on the books to give federal agencies the authority to give this sort of protection. What they need is encouragement to do it, and then backing when they do! That's where OCTA comes in; that's what we're really all about. Simply write and state your strong opposition to the lease and ask that the trail be protected. Write to:

Mr. Edward F. Spang
Nevada State Director, BLM
P.O. Box 12000
Reno, NV 89502.

Send copies to:

Mr. Frank Shields
Winnemucca District Manager,
BLM
705 E. 4th St.
Winnemucca, NV 89445

and to me:

Tom Hunt
950 Old Trace Road
Palo Alto, CA 93406

BLM Land Swap Proposed

There is a proposed land swap between the Bureau of Land Management in Wyoming and Banner County Farms, Inc., in Goshen County.

William Mortimer, Platte River Resource Area Manager for BLM, says that acquisition of the land, almost due south of Ft. Laramie, would place segments of pioneer trail ruts of the Oregon and Mormon trails under government management. The BLM and the National Park Service at Ft. Laramie plan to develop an interpretive center on the site, once the exchange is completed.

Comments on the plan are invited. Write to: William Mortimer, BLM-Platte River Resource Area, P.O. Drawer 2429, Mills, WY 82644.

OCTA Involved in Wyoming Program

Three of our directors were involved in a seminar in December, co-sponsored by the Jackson Hole Museum and Teton County Historical Society in Jackson, Wyoming.

Merrill Mattes was the key speaker; Bob Rennells spoke on federal laws that protect historic trails; and Karen Buck presented a slide show on the Sublette Cutoff Cartographic Expedition of 1984.

The directors report that their information was well received and they anticipate a few memberships as a result.

The seminar was funded in part by the Wyoming Council for the Humanities.

Rancher of the Year Committee

Each year a Rancher of the Year Award is eligible to be given to one rancher/property owner in each trail state to salute the owner's care of his land in agreement with OCTA's preservation goals.

To make a nomination, please send the name and support information to Karen Buck of La Barge, Wyoming, chairman of the committee, no later than May 15.

Check It Out

Look at the expiration date on your mailing label. If your membership has expired, this is the last mailing you will receive. We will miss you if you go, so send us your renewal if you haven't already mailed it.

Genealogy Ads

With the next issue we will offer a small amount of space for family queries: 5 lines for \$5. Copy must be typed or very clearly written. Make checks payable to OCTA. This will be on a space available basis.

Donations Always Welcome

The General, or Special Appeals Fund, is a discretionary fund to be spent as voted by directors for special needs. These are used when specific funds are inadequate.

Paden Response

The last issue of the NFP carried a story on California Hill benefactor Malcolm Smith and the award OCTA gave to him.

Smith has asked that the historic spot be marked with a plaque honoring Irene Paden, author of *The Wake of the Prairie Schooner*.

Member Bob Hubbard of Alameda, California, took the story to his orthodontist, Dr. William S. Paden.

In the next issue we will have a short item submitted by Dr. William W. Paden, son of the author.

What are Local Chapters?

Have you enjoyed the camaraderie and trail trips at the national conventions? Local chapters offer the same things on a smaller scale.

The only way you will know for sure is to join. Consult the local chapter news to see who to contact in your area. If in doubt, write Headquarters or Mary Mueller, Membership Chairman.

Learn and Earn for OCTA

Oregon Trail-Pony Express Video Available

At the Casper convention we sold video tapes of the Oregon Trail-Pony Express--until we sold out. These films are available to us at discount with the order blank below. For every film sold, a donation will be made to OCTA. Read the producer's letter at right. Then, if you need more information, call the toll free number.

Made for educational use, this 30 minute film, with references to the Mormon Trail, will not add to seasoned scholars' knowledge, but is fine for newcomers and for programs.

Dear OCTA Members:

There have been several inquiries on usage of this film and we hope this letter will answer any questions you have.

The tape may be used for membership recruitment, such as at civic luncheons or dinners, or for entertainment at such gatherings. It may be shown by OCTA members who are asked to give classroom programs.

If the tape is to be shown on Public Broadcast Television, however, our permission would have to be obtained.

We appreciate the interest you have shown in our tape.

Jim Whitefield
President
Kaw Valley Films, Inc.
1-800-332-5060

Oregon Trail-Pony Express Video

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Amount enclosed _____

Remember the check

\$24.95 each

\$2.00 shipping

Mail to: Kaw Valley Films, Inc.
P.O. Box 3900
Shawnee, KS 66203

OCTA '88

Oregon-California Trails Association

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Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone(s) _____

Amount enclosed _____

New Member

Renewal

Memberships will expire on the anniversary date.

Membership Categories

- | | |
|--|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$1,000 up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life | 500 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional | 100 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate | 100 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | 100 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting | 50 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family | 25 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | 20 year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student* | 10 year |

*Proof of age 21 or younger must accompany application



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