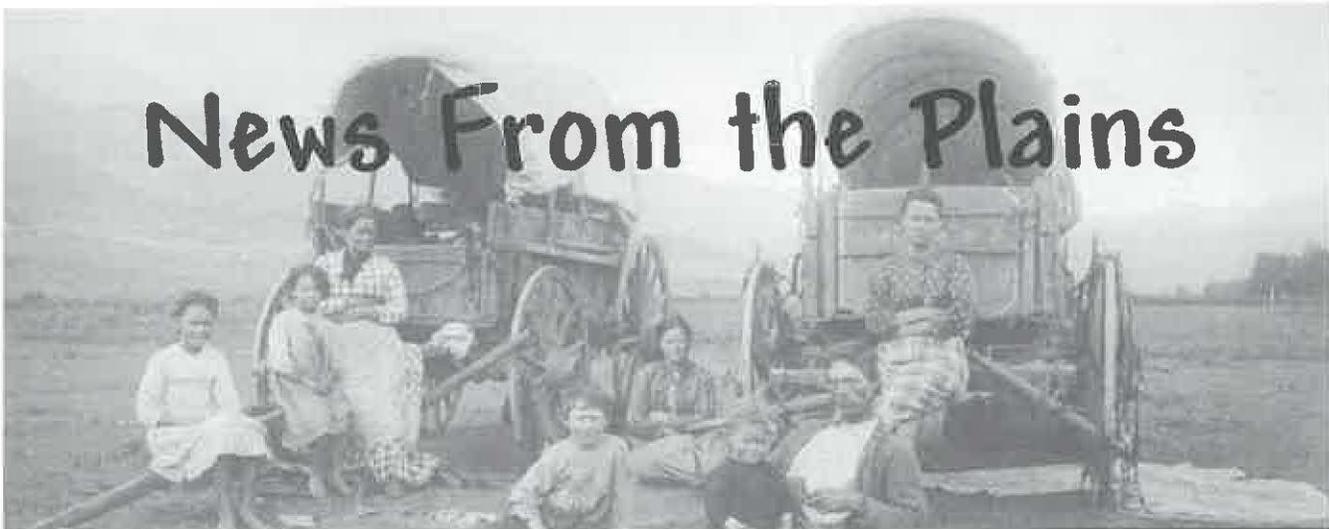


News From the Plains



Vol. XXIV, No. 3

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Summer 2005

OCTA to Convene in Salt Lake City

By Vern Gorzitze
Crossroads Chapter

There are just a few weeks remaining until the opening events of the OCTA 2005 National Convention. There is still time to register and join in the activities. Utah Crossroads Chapter has worked diligently to pull together all the components that make up a pleasing event. As you have noticed by reading your registration materials, we have a Keynote Speaker, Dr. Fred Gowans, who has held audiences spellbound at several past OCTA gatherings. We have eight people giving papers on a variety of subjects and five field trips,

any one or two of which should please even the most picky trail buff.

Our raffle, items donated and often made by OCTA members, will be a several times each day event. Proceeds benefit OCTA and chapter activities. Donated items for the raffle would be greatly appreciated. It is still not too late to contact Jerry Dunton for information and instructions. P.O. Box 9645, Salt Lake City, UT 84109 or 801-557-4476.

At the general membership meeting, the newly elected board members will take office and the board will elect the officers for the coming year. There will also be chapter meetings, workshops and some interesting special events.

On Tuesday, August 16, from 7 to 9 p.m. there will be a "Town Meeting" to discuss trail preservation issues. The purpose of the meeting is to provide an open forum for the membership to ask questions and comment on OCTA's trail work.

Thursday, August 18, you will be able to spend an evening with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Officially formed in 1847, one month after the

pioneers entered the valley, it still thrills audiences today.

Also planned are the awards and recognition banquet on Friday, and the now famous BBQ, to be held at Wheeler Historic Farm on Saturday.

The committee has worked hard to make this yearly get together of trail friends a memorable one that you will place in your memory book alongside the one we hosted back in "94."

As you make your final plans, please remember to bring your lotion, the air is dry, and sun block, the elevation is high. The state's altitude ranges from a low of 2,200 feet in southern Utah, to more than 13,000 feet in the Uintah Mountains. Salt Lake City sits at an elevation of 4,330 feet above sea level.

Finally, remember to

"GET AROUND TO IT."

For additional information and updates view the Convention Website

www.utahcrossroads.org/OCTA2005/

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News From the Plains

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OCTA Board Committee Assignments for 2004-2005

Committee A

*Headquarters Operation
Membership
Publications*

Glenn Harrison, Chair

Dave Welch
Bill Martin
Dave Vixie

Ex Officio Members

OCTA Secretary
OCTA Treasurer

Committee B

*Finance, Governance
Long-Range Planning*

Andy Hammond, Chair

Edna Kennell
Fran Taplin
Bill Wilson

Ex Officio Members

OCTA Treasurer
OCTA Past President

Committee C

*Preservation, Collections
Public Relations
Property Management*

Lethene Parks, Chair

Jack Fletcher
John Mark Lambertson
Frank Tortorich

Ex Officio Members

OCTA Vice President
OCTA Preservation Officer

What's Happening...

July 22-23, 2005

Little Sandy Restoration Project
Little Sandy Crossing near
Farson, Wyoming

August 15-21, 2005

"Trailing the Pioneers"
OCTA Annual Convention
Salt Lake City, UT

August, 2006

OCTA Annual Convention
St. Joseph, MO

August, 2007

OCTA Annual Convention
Elko, NV

◆◆◆

Check out the new
OCTA Online Store

www.octa-trails-org

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NFP Deadline
Fall Issue
August 25, 2005

Trailing the Pioneers

23rd Annual OCTA Convention

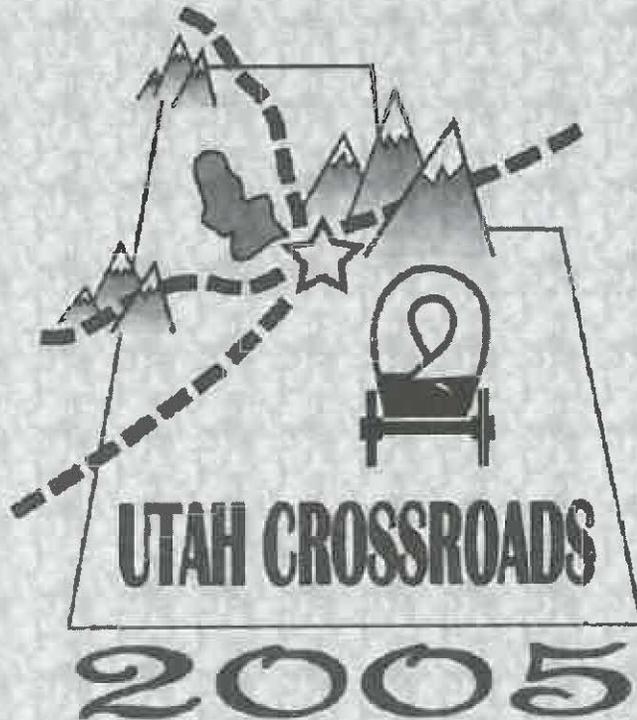
The Battle for the Green
River
1850-1857

By Dr. Fred R. Gowans

**Presentations by Trail
Scholars**

"Death on the Trail"
"Terror on the Trail"
"Fishing Along the Trail"
"The Trail to Mt. Misery"

Plus
**Handcart Pioneers
Geology along the Overland Trail**



Salt Lake City, Utah
August 15-21, 2005

www.utahcrossroads.org/OCTA2005/

Call Headquarters for Registration Information, 888-811-6282

Two Years at the OCTA Helm

This is the last time I will be reporting to the OCTA membership prior to leaving office at the August convention. During the past two years I feel we have accomplished a number of significant things, set the stage for revitalizing our membership, started several key programs and developed a strong working relationship at the national level. Let's look at a few of these things.

Under the able leadership of Preservation Officer Dave Welch and committee chair Jim McGill, Leslie Fryman, Gail Carbiener, Chuck Hornbuckle and many others, a well designed trail mapping, marking and monitoring program is now in place. We are getting the preservation job done and trail preservation is now OCTA's priority activity. This will become very apparent to the OCTA membership and others in the years ahead as this program takes hold.

At the national level long delayed bylaws revisions have been approved and OCTA's new comprehensive Policy and Procedures Manual is up to date. Thank you Andy Hammond and Marley Shurtleff for your outstanding effort with getting both of these tasks accomplished.

The Board, the Association Manager and the Long-Range Planning Committee are well along in establishing specific five year and longer goals for the organization with real evaluation tools to insure these goals are met. Better than ever before board members and officers understand their legal and fiduciary responsibilities to the organization. The bickering and fighting that was characteristic of board meetings is a

thing of the past. The new OCTA Organization Chart clearly outlines lines of responsibility and authority.

We have established new membership categories with a minimum increase in dues. The first increase in five years I might add. National will assist chapters by processing all memberships, both chapter and national, at headquarters and issue a new combined national and chapter membership cards. Meaningful incentives have been added to encourage members to join or renew at higher membership levels. Perhaps most significantly we have made a major effort to extend membership to teachers, students and other groups. A number of OCTA aided and trail related educational programs are operating as the result of efforts by Travis Boley, our Association Manager and others.

The board has approved the expenditure of OCTA funds for a number of important trail related programs. These include the restoration of the Little Sandy Crossing in Wyoming; the potential purchase of land to protect the California Trail in the City of Rocks area in Idaho; and help with the construction of an interpretive center at Gardner, KS. All of these projects presently are moving forward.

A pet project of mine has been the establishment of a program that will encourage the development of regional OCTA libraries as part of the overall Merrill Mattes collection in Independence, MO. OCTA board member, Bill Wilson of Boise, ID is chair of the OCTA Library subcommittee of the OCTA Collections

Committee. The immediate goal is to have this subcommittee be composed of at least one OCTA member from each chapter that has a library collection or is interested in starting a chapter library. The long-range goal is to establish several OCTA branch libraries in cooperation with a state, city, university or other library. These libraries would house and administer the collections for OCTA. Hopefully we can tie all of the OCTA libraries together electronically for the purpose of making our collections readily available to OCTA members and the general public. One goal of this program will encourage our members to donate their collections of books and related material to OCTA at the time of their death or when the owner no longer needs them.

Our legislative efforts to pass trail-related legislation in Congress have been stalled for several years by a small minority of well-positioned anti-trail congressional legislators. We continue to work closely with the coalition of trail organizations and our friends in Congress to pass legislation that is in support of our goals. Over the long term I think we will prevail in our efforts but we must be both persistent and patient. I would personally like to thank Bill and Jeanne Watson, our Legislative Liaison Committee co-chairs who have worked tirelessly for OCTA for many years in their capacity.

When I became OCTA president two years ago I recognized that there was a need for greater input from the

Continued on next page

Headquarters Manager's Report...

Kathy Conway
Kconway@indepma.org

We encourage all OCTA members to cast their vote in the upcoming annual election of four directors for OCTA's National Board. Please take the time to vote....we need all of you to participate in this process. For your vote to count, **ballot envelopes must be postmarked no later than July 15, 2005.**

Want a week of memorable events and activities? Then be sure you are coming to Salt Lake City, August 15-21 for OCTA's 23rd Annual Convention. There is still time for you to register. Give us a call (1-888-811-6282) and we will take the registration over the phone.

We have a brand new Online store on www.octa-trails.org. Not only are more of our products displayed, but also you will have more ways to locate just the right item. Visit our site and see. If you haven't ordered our newest publication, *Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails* by Randy Brown, you will find it there along with over 400 other books and items.

We would like to extend a special thanks to members Sandy Waggoner and Sandy Drago who donated two days of vacation time to do work on several projects here at Headquarters. Both Sandys live several hundred miles from Independence so their work on the association's behalf is certainly appreciated.

Pioneer Trails Bill Stalled

By Bill and Jeanne Watson
Legislative Liaisons

The Senate has been so polarized over the issue of Presidential judicial appointments that virtually nothing else has happened. The 17 trails related bills, including our Trails Studies Authorization Act, cleared the Energy & Natural Resources Committee and still await consideration by the full Senate. Our

friends have tried, but the partisan feelings have been so bad that the Senate could not even agree on a combination of pending "non-controversial" bills to vote upon.

On May 23rd, the Senate reached an accord that judicial nominations receive straight up or down votes with limited rights to filibuster. We now ask that our Trails Studies Authorization bill also receive a straight up or down vote in the Senate.

President's Letter

Continued from previous page

chapters at the national level and a need for more activities between chapters. In a lot of ways, chapters operate as independent organizations rather than as part of one big organization. I have tried to do several things to solve this problem. We invited all the chapter president to attend the four-day board meeting at Denver in March. They met together and with the national board and officers. The goal was to establish an association of OCTA Chapter Presidents that could meet on a regular basis. When they meet they can discuss common problems, plan joint activities and develop recommendations that could be presented to the national board and officers for action. As president I feel this is a very important program. The plan is also strongly supported by our Association Manager Travis Boley and others. At this point the chapter presidents themselves must make the program work. I would encourage them to move forward with this plan, as it is a highly desirable program for the chapters and OCTA.

Because of the efforts of our Association Manager and others we have started a new chapter in

Colorado and along the Cherokee Trail route. Loren Pospisil is doing a very good job of bringing the Nebraska members together in an effort to revitalize the Nebraska Chapter. Convention Chair Vern Gorzitze and the Utah Chapter membership have put together another well organized convention for August in Salt Lake City. Since 2006 is the 100th anniversary of Ezra Meeker's trip along the old Oregon Trail route. OCTA and the Ezra Meeker Museum will trace the path taken by Meeker with public programs at many locations along the way. This program will end at St. Joseph, MO in time for the start of the 2006 OCTA convention.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to commend Kathy Conway, Travis Boley, other staff members, our fine staff of national officers, committee chairs, our twelve board members and our many volunteers who have worked hard to make all these things happen. Many more things need to be done but I feel we have made real progress in many areas. In my opinion OCTA has a bright future if we continue to stay the course we are now on.

California Library Expands Trails Collection

By Richard M. Davis

The OCTA Western Overland Trails Collection at the California State Library continues to grow with support from OCTA membership. Over 90 new titles have been added recently for a total of 496 on the website (www.library.ca.gov) with more working. Mrs. Eddie Bateson donated her late husband's extensive book collection focused on the American West to the collection. A judicious book collector, Eddie Bateson bought books about the areas and people in which he was interested including the Pony Express, Snowshoe Thompson, Lewis and Clark, and the western migration. Eddie was an active member of OCTA and the gift includes typed notes on the many OCTA trips and events in which he participated.

The chapter's agreement with the California State Library extends beyond published or unpublished

materials to include periodicals, graphic materials, and maps. For example: Sara Hunt has recently donated in memory of her husband, Jerrold Hunt, a wonderful print titled "On the Plains" (c. 1897) by noted western artist Herman Wendelborg Hansen. Measuring 34 x 21 inches, it was printed via chromolithography by U.S. Crocker & Co. of San Francisco. The print depicts a covered wagon, pioneers on horseback, and evidence of an Indian attack. "On the Plains" is an excellent companion to the library's print, "Westward the Star of Empire Takes its Way." The Hunt donation is now hanging in the Library's California History Room. A color transparency and digital image have been created.

Don Buck has begun the preparation of copies of overland diaries, journals, recollections, and letters from various research libraries,

historical societies, private collections, newspapers, and quarterlies for placing in the Western Overland Trails Collection. A cover page for each overland document provides pertinent information that might be of use to the researcher. For many of these diaries and journals Richard L. Rieck, Professor of Geography at Western Illinois University at Macomb, has made the transcriptions. The overland documents are cataloged by author and by the trail used to reach California. These materials cannot be reproduced or quoted for publication without permission of the original owner of the item.

Last, the Library's non-profit support group, the California State Library Foundation, has received generous donations of funds to the OCTA Collection. Funds will be used to enhance acquisitions.

Trails Day, June 4, 2005



Visually handicapped students from Accessible Arts in Kansas City moved a wagon across the trail and then forded the Little Sandy in southwest Wyoming to recognize Trails Day, 2005.



Photos Courtesy
U.S. Bureau of
Land Manage-
ment/Terry A. Del
Bene.

OCTA is expanding! Actually, OCTA is reclaiming a chapter that was dormant for some time. In a recent meeting, OCTA members living in Colorado made the decision to restart their chapter. They're already planning treks and starting a newsletter. Some members are even interested in attending the Colorado Trails Symposium in mid-September to make certain that the Cherokee Trail, Smoky Hill Trail and other historic trails in Colorado get their due.

On Saturday, April 16, I met with 15 people interested in restarting the dormant Colorado chapter. We sent invitations to the 103 OCTA members living in Colorado as well as invitations to many members living in nearby areas, such as southern Wyoming. Dozens of people responded saying they'd join the chapter if reconfigured.

With sufficient interest in restarting the chapter, the first step was to ask the folks in attendance at the meeting if they'd be interesting in leading a portion of the restarting process. Camille Bradford agreed to take the lead on the overall process and to serve as treasurer, so she will be our main contact in Colorado until the chapter is sufficiently reconfigured so as to hold elections. The attendees unanimously agreed that their annual dues should be set at \$10. They were pleased that the national board passed a resolution allowing the national office to handle the duty of dues collection for them.

One of the most important things we thought we could do is start a chapter newsletter to report on the meeting, give some background history of the trail through Colorado (Lee Whiteley graciously will allow

us to reprint some of his already published material for this exercise) and talk about some upcoming events. These include a trek planned for August that will take chapter members and guests to the sites of various forts between Denver and Greeley, the Colorado Trails Symposium in September, and a business meeting in September, which will most likely take place in conjunction with the Colorado Trails Symposium.

Because the chapter still had about \$480 in its treasury when it went dormant (and because the chapter was never officially disbanded), they're using this pool of money for the initial creation of the first newsletter and the necessary postage. High school student David Gilbert, who is interning at the Aurora newspaper, has agreed to develop this first newsletter. I'll work with him in this endeavor and have offered headquarters help in getting it printed and mailed.

One of the key things that will be in this newsletter (the first one will be mailed to everyone in Colorado and folks living along the Cherokee Trail in other states) is a form for chapter membership. We will have a contest to name the newsletter, invite other members to get involved by volunteering to fill posts and begin collecting dues.

I also went over such things as OCTA's liability insurance policy, read aloud their chapter charter, OCTA's by-laws and policy manual, the need to establish treks (Winnie Burdan agreed to take the lead in developing a Colorado chapter trail trek this year; she has experience leading ghost town tours), the fact that 2009 is the 150th anniversary of the Colorado gold rush (and thus making Colorado ripe for the convention that

year!) and developing membership (Nancy Houtz has agreed to lead this endeavor).

Finally, a couple of "thank yous" are merited as we reorganize this chapter. First, thank you to Jack and Pat Fletcher for inviting Linda Graybeal to the meeting. She's a 4th grade teacher from Westminster, CO, who is fairly new to the trail and had contacted them trying to get more information; they encouraged her to attend the meeting and I recently mailed her a membership brochure. I think we all agree that the more kids we can get involved the better, and every year Linda will have a fresh, captive audience. And second, thank you to Lee Whiteley for giving everyone in attendance a free copy of his book about the Cherokee Trail. Lee is very busy with other activities these days, but is still very supportive of OCTA.

If you are interested in joining the Colorado chapter and supporting their endeavors, please make out a check to "Colorado Chapter of OCTA" for \$10 and send it to headquarters or to:

Camille Bradford
11515 Quivas Way
Denver, CO 80234

In another piece of news, I plan to apply for a grant through Microsoft to assist as OCTA redevelops its website. Microsoft has an "Employee Engagement Program" that supports their employees' favorite organizations. If you are an employee of Microsoft and would be interested in hand-carrying our application to the Microsoft Foundation, please contact me at tboley@indepmo.org or toll free at 888-811-6282.

COED To Expand

By Marley Shurtleff

COED has two projects on tap for the rest of 2005.

An expanded Emigrant Names disk: Entry of data into the database is scheduled to be completed by mid-July, with disk preparation to follow. The new Emigrant Names CD, targeted for a November release date, will incorporate at least 1,000 more document surveys. In addition to the Emigrant Names disk, the committee plans to offer a completely new double disk set of actual survey sheet images that match with the Emigrant Names disk records. Intended to be helpful to individuals who are unable to easily get to the actual source materials, the survey copies provide a more in-depth review of the information that has been referenced by the Emigrant Names disk.

Convention activities: The committee invites you to visit with us at the Salt Lake City convention. We will be discussing some of the year's activities in a casual evening meeting August 8 (check at the registration desk for time and place) and offering more information to people who are interested in doing surveying for COED. There are still at least a thousand documents waiting to be surveyed.

In addition, all during the convention, Jim Riehl will be offering demonstration COED data searches for individuals. If individuals wish to request actual personal searches of the entire database they will need to purchase them through the OCTA bookstore.

Genoa Symposium Draws Crowd

By Kathy Lewin
Genoa Symposium Co-Chair

What a success! We had about 150 people attend the 15th annual CA/NV Chapter of OCTA Winter/Spring Symposium in Genoa, NV. The opening speaker was Frank Tortorich, who gave a fast-paced talk on the timeline of events during "Snow-shoe" Thompson's life in the Carson Valley and his famous mail route between Genoa and Placerville, the U.S. Mail, and the period when California was in Utah.

Next was a panel discussion, "Where was the first Mormon Station in Carson Valley?" Speakers were Don Buck, a long time chapter member and coordinator of discussions; Jeff Kintop, the Nevada State Archives Manager from Carson City; and Martin Griffith, an Associated Press reporter for the Reno-Sparks bureau with a lot of backpacking experience and an excitement and interest of early pioneer history that was contagious!

Many took advantage of the lunch hour to tour the Genoa Courthouse Museum and Mormon Station

We had a special treat from the Douglas County Historical Society Youth Chautauquans, who walked through our midst dressed in period clothing and acting as such familiar characters as Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins and Clara Barton.

The afternoon session was a second panel discussion, "Where was

the First Settlement in Nevada?" Don Buck and Martin Griffith were on this panel as well, joined by Stanley Paher, a well-known Reno historian who has published several works on Nevada history and Leslie Fryman, CA/NV Chapter's Preservation Officer, historical archaeologist, and a senior consultant for Jones & Stokes Associates of Sacramento.

Frank Tortorich toured a few folks over to see Snowshoe Thompson's cave on Highway 88 before joining the other attendees at Walley's Hot Springs for a Happy Hour with cocktails and fun music by OCTA musicians. A delicious dinner was followed by Chapter Awards Presentations by Awards Committee Chair, Anne Louise Bennett and her committee. Among the awards presented was

the Chapter's Lifetime Achievement Award to Don Buck.

Sunday, there was a special tour of the Markleeville Museum. Dick Edwards, director, Ellen Martin, assistant, and Nancy Thornburg, former director, were all on hand to answer questions and share with us even more history about the area.

The weekend came to an close out in Diamond Valley with a drive-by look at the remains of Snowshoe Thompson's homestead before starting for home just as the snow began!



Don Buck introduces Leslie Fryman for her portion of a panel discussion on "Where was the First Settlement in Nevada?" (Photo by Bill Martin)

Little Sandy Restoration Project Seeks Volunteers, Contributions

A protective fence and riparian area restoration project at the Little Sandy Crossing on the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California and Pony Express National Historic Trails will get underway in July.

The Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service National Trails System Office, Oregon-California Trails Association, Rock Springs/Green River Stakes of the Church of Jesus-Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Scouts of America, Radosevich Livestock Limited Liability Company, Ron's Ace Rentals, the Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce and a variety of other businesses are teaming up to restore the riparian environment at the Little Sandy Crossing.

The project will include placement of a buck-and-pole fence, meant to keep livestock from the fragile environment of the area and enhance the re-growth of willows. The site contains good trail ruts, the original ford, and two Pony Express station foundations.

Historic accounts describe a substantial willow grove at the crossing. John Henderson, BLM fisheries biologist and project lead said, "Our fencing project will be a necessary step to re-establish an environment more like the one you encountered here in the 1840s. This must have been a prime camping spot as long as the trees were present. Allowing that willow grove to come back will make for a healthier environment for the entire river system."

Once the willow growth has been re-established the Bureau of Land Management and partners will design a first-class interpretive site to

emphasize the historical values present at the locale.

The BLM is seeking volunteers to help with the construction of the fencing and donations to assist with the costs of materials and the eventual interpretive project. The volunteers are needed for July 22 and 23. Volunteer slots are limited and are filling rapidly. If you are interested in being a volunteer or otherwise assisting with this project please contact: John Henderson, 307/352-0220; or John_Henderson@blm.gov.

Please bring working gloves and protective eyewear. The Bureau will have some for those who forget. Near site primitive camping will be available on July 22. Lunches will be provided by the BLM for all volunteers. The Rock Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will provide dinner on July 22 and breakfast on July 23 for working volunteers only. BLM archaeologist Terry Del Bene will present a living history program at the dinner.

LDS Church Granted Intervenor Status in Martin's Cove Lawsuit

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was granted intervenor status in June in a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of several Wyoming residents over a lease of federal lands at Martin's Cove in central Wyoming. The suit claims the rights of the individuals are violated by the church lease of the site.

No court date has been set.

Wyoming Chapter...

From the Wyoming Chapter Newsletter

By Lee Underbrink

A trek from Fort Laramie to Glendo is slated in July for the Wyoming Chapter of OCTA, to be led by Randy Brown. The chapter had tours of trail sites in southwestern Wyoming in May that were organized by Tom McCutcheon, Bill and Fern Robinson and Don Hartley.

This spring the Lander field office of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management issued new regulations for travel on 26 miles of trail from Rocky Ridge to Rock Creek Hollow.

The section from the Sixth Crossing to Rock Creek has had up to 12,000 Mormon handcart trekkers in past years, but now will be limited to 7,500 people annually in groups of 26 or more. Any group with more than three vehicles will be required to pay a \$4 per person fee to travel the trail, with a minimum of \$90 charged for large groups. Those groups will be limited to no more than 200 people, as compared with up to 400 in past years.

No support vehicles will be allowed on the trail, although small groups can still drive the trails in certain areas. The two mile segment of Rocky Ridge will be closed entirely to motorized vehicles, making it accessible only on foot. The season of use for this segment of trail will be from July 1 to Sept. 15, and is implemented to allow for wildlife breeding periods and spring runoff conditions.

CA-NV Chapter...



Workers place fencing at the site of the future California National Historic Trail Center. (BLM Photo by Mike Brown)

California Trail Day Celebration Held

A public event to celebrate the California Trail was held at the site of the future California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center west of Elko, NV, on Saturday, June 25. Acting Trail Center Manager Dave Jamiel said, the program included a variety of historical related activities such as talks on life on the emigrant trail, gold rush era firearms, clothing and demonstrations of Dutch oven cooking and cooking in a clay oven.

Replica Wagon for Sutter's Fort

Frank Tortorich and the Sutter's Fort historical site volunteers have procured an authentic replica of an 1846-era covered wagon for the Sutter's Fort State Historic Park. Getting the funding and contracting for the construction of the wagon was a major effort and benefits everyone, including school children, who are interested in preserving and promoting 19th

Crossroads Chapter...

Wet Spring puts Damper on Trail Activities

By Al Mulder

A very wet spring put a damper on several trail activities including training tours for the convention bus tours and work projects to re-mark segments of the Hastings Cutoff. An April practice run to the Donner Spring site revealed major damage to the Bidwell Pass kiosk and interpretive panel. Several carsonite trail markers were missing or shot up by vandals. Sadly, vandalism of historic signs and trail markers is not an uncommon problem in remote, isolated areas where the trails on public lands are not closely monitored or protected.

Two prominent tourist attractions in Salt Lake City will be unavailable for tours and events during the 2005 convention. The Tabernacle on Temple Square is undergoing major renovations and seismic restructuring

as is the State Capitol Building. Both buildings will be closed to the public during the major construction projects.

Several chapter members attended the GIS/GPS training classes in May in Salt Lake City. The training was sponsored and conducted by the NPS and University of Utah Computer Lab. Twenty-two participants from OCTA chapters participated in the three day training session. The NPS is looking to OCTA chapter volunteers to provide trail data for the Graphic Information System database.

John Eldredge has published an excellent illustrated trail guide on the Mormon Pioneer/California trail west of Fort Bridger to the Salt Lake Valley. Copies of the spiral-bound book will be available for sale at the 2005 convention as will extra copies of the trail guide booklets included in each convention bus tour.



Some OCTA members will see these engines at Golden Spike National Historic Site during the 2005 convention tour on the Salt Lake Cutoff. (Photo by Al Mulder).

Southwest Chapter...

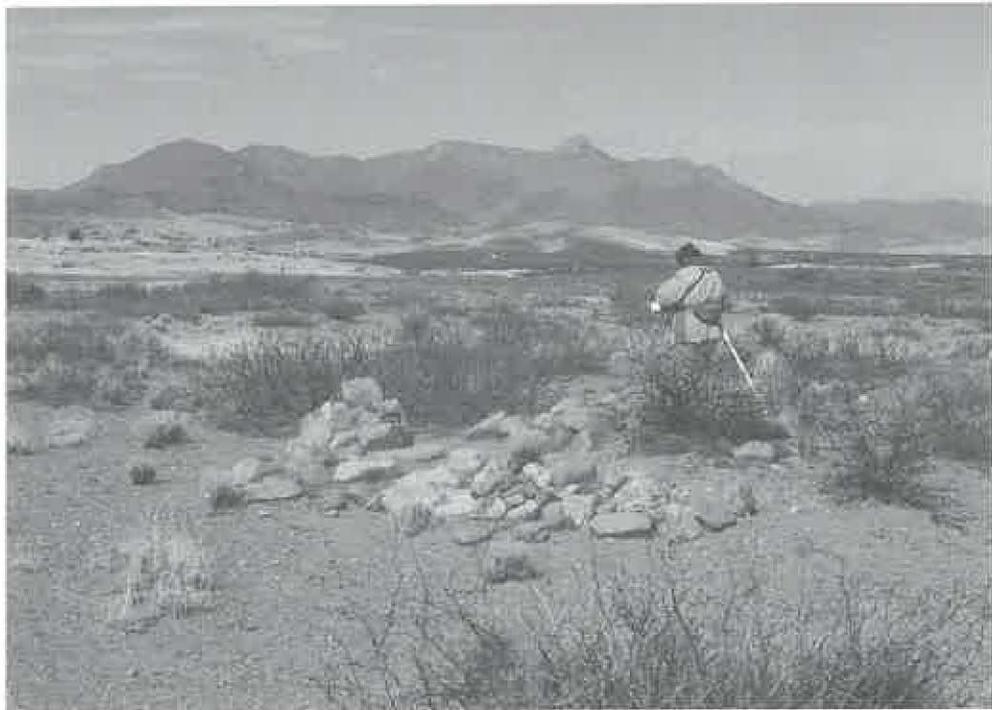
by Deborah and Jon Lawrence

The Southwest OCTA Trail Turtles returned to New Mexico in February to remap the section of the Southern Emigrant Trail from the Rio Grande to Soldiers Farewell. When the Turtles had mapped this section of the trail in 1996, the GPS system had an error factor (known as "the dither") imposed for national security reasons. The current mapping trip was for the purpose of establishing accurate readings.

In addition, the Turtles are in the process of writing up their last twelve years of mapping into a book, and the earlier mapping they had done on this section of the trail had been conducted while the Turtles were learning the ropes of the mapping process.

So that future readers of the book will have a better idea of what the emigrants actually saw, two of the Turtles (Tracy DeVault and Richard Greene) hiked this section of the trail and recorded their observations. The other nine members present (Judy DeVault, Marie Greene, Brock and Levida Hileman, Rose Ann Tompkins, Charles Townley, Cam Wade and Ken and Pat White) drove to sites where the trail crossed local roads.

Sites explored included Hunter's Draw, variant routes off the Rio Grande that converged at Foster's Hole, and the Cooke's Spring/ Fort Cummings area. Much of this part of the trail is on private land; indeed, the Cow Springs area is now behind a locked gate and inaccessible. The hikers found that much of the trail has returned to its natural state and, even with GPS technology, is difficult to follow.



The grave of John Chaffin, the only marked grave in the Cooke's Canyon area in Arizona. Cooke's Peak is in the background. (Photo by Cam Wade)



A visually handicapped student from Accesible Arts in Kansas City experiences the Wyoming wind on the trail in southwestern Wyoming during a June trek. (Photo Courtesy BLM/Terry A. Del Bene)

Idaho sets new markers from Raft River to California Trail Parting

By James W. McGill
I-OCTA Preservation Officer
OCTA Trails Mapping Chairman

On May 19-21, 2005, the resetting of the BLM cement marker posts was finished on the eight-mile stretch of Oregon Trail that goes west from Raft River and the Parting from the California Trail. In 1988, a scout project had set markers almost every one-tenth mile across that BLM land, with the exception of Sec. 16, T10S, R27E, which is Idaho state land. By this time only three or four of these posts were still upright.

Last year in a trail-viewing field trip participants covered the first 1.5 miles west, and carsonite markers were set on the remaining ruts of the California Trail route from the Parting southwest to Yale Road. At that time a few of these cement markers were reset on the east end of the Oregon Trail, but without any concrete to pour around the bases the cattle had by this year pushed on most of those and tipped them.

• On May 4, Lyle Lambert and James McGill scouted the whole route to see the work that needed to be done on all of the eight miles. At that time they reset as deep as possible a few of the cement posts.

On May 19, Lambert reset with concrete most of those posts that had been dug in last year on the eastern end of the route. The next day four members of I-OCTA continued the work across the first four miles of the route. On May 21, eight members of the chapter worked on across west to the end of the ruts at the access road and the beginning of private property. There appears to be no longer any ruts

west on the private land! (Besides the concrete in the hole, rocks were piled around them to help prevent cattle hooves from wearing the soil down near the posts.)

There are thirty cement posts now standing across the nearly nine miles of trail. In between these markers there are some carsonite markers. There is still work to do in this area. Seven posts were broken and useless, and need to be cleaned up, 20 posts are in good shape but were left lying

where they had once stood and five more posts have large blocks of hard concrete still on the bottom. A clean-up now would make that section of the Oregon Trail one of the most scenic and pristine stretches of mostly class 1 trail (Met Manual) across Idaho!

Contributing concrete mix for this project was John Lytle with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management at Burley and Lyle Lambert, an I-OCTA Vice President.



These photos by James McGill show damage along the trail near Glens Ferry, Idaho.

Dave Vixie Wins National Disney Education Award

Disney heroes have been capturing children's hearts for generations, but the newest Disney hero is reaching them in ways that Cinderella or Aladdin never could. David Vixie, a history teacher at Paradise Adventist Academy and member of the OCTA Board of Directors, has been chosen from more than 50,000 nominees nationwide to receive the 2005 Disney Teacher Award in celebration of his creativity, innovative teaching methods, and ability to inspire his students.

As one of only 45 Disney Teacher Honorees, Vixie receives \$10,000 from The Walt Disney Company and a trip to Disneyland in Anaheim, California, for a week of fun and celebration from July 23-28, 2005. In addition, Disney awards \$5,000 to Paradise Adventist Academy.

New Bozeman Trail book

Pavey Western Publishing has announced publication of *Promise: Bozeman's Path to Destiny* with text and photographs by Searle Chapman. The book features photographs of the 2001 Bozeman Trail Wagon Train organized and led by Ben Kern.

The book is published in both hardcover and soft cover and as a limited edition leather-bound volume. For information or to order, contact Pavey Western Publishing, P.O. Box 982020, Park City, UT 84098 or e-mail: gonative@nemontel.net.

Northwest Chapter...

Students, OCTA Marks Echo Meadows Trail

By Glenn Harrison

Mary Oman, BLM Archaeologist in Baker City, OR, first suggested that the Northwest Chapter of OCTA remark the Oregon Trail in Echo Meadows. Since the chapter trail marking outings had been previously scheduled, I called Gary Miller and Keith May to see if their school classes might be interested in doing the project.

Both immediately volunteered to participate and arrange for their schools to allow the students to come out to the trail site.

On May 23, 2005 the buses arrived at 9 a.m. unloading 44 first grade and fifth grade students. Eighteen adults, both OCTA members and student parents, helped.

Teachers Gary Miller and Keith May paired up fifth and first graders and all pitched in to carry carsonite markers and the two heavy drivers out the pathway to the Oregon Trail. The students installed 13 markers over the next two and one-half hours.

The BLM provided much needed porta-potties. We had lots of water, all had gloves and all worked hard in the warm sun and cool light breeze.

It should be noted that OCTA members dressed as if in the 1850s. The Northwest Chapter president as well as the National OCTA President were in attendance and a newspaper reporter-photographer from Hermiston was present.

The OCTA Members contributed 124.5 hours to help complete the project.



Harrison and Paradise students remark the Oregon-California Trail Association markers eastward of the Oregon Trail Monday.

Keeping the trail alive

Students help trail association restore sections of Oregon Trail

By Glenn Harrison

To mark the centennial of the trail, the Northwest Chapter of OCTA is marking the Oregon Trail in Echo Meadows. The students installed 13 markers over the next two and one-half hours.

The BLM provided much needed porta-potties. We had lots of water, all had gloves and all worked hard in the warm sun and cool light breeze.

It should be noted that OCTA members dressed as if in the 1850s. The Northwest Chapter president as well as the National OCTA President were in attendance and a newspaper reporter-photographer from Hermiston was present.

The OCTA Members contributed 124.5 hours to help complete the project.

Passings...

Charles Davis, OCTA member and descendant of 1847 overland emigrants to Oregon, died on Monday, April 25, 2005. Mr. Davis, or, as he preferred, "Chuck," was the author of *Exploring Oregon-California Trails*, covering the overland trails and travelers between California and Oregon from the 1820s to 1846, *The South Road*, covering the Scott-Applegate Southern Emigrant Route to Oregon in 1846 and 1847, *The Oskaloosa Company*, covering the 1847 emigration over the Scott-Applegate Southern Emigrant Route, and *Scott-Applegate Trail 1846-1847 Atlas And Gazeteer*. He was a tireless researcher who located and made good use of the best known as well as the most obscure and nearly inaccessible sources.

Charlie Cape, owner of the Mud Springs Ranch near Scottsbluff, NE, died at age 79 in March. His ranch surrounded the Mud Springs Pony Express Station and he always looked forward to participating in the Pony Express re-ride. He was an avid historian of that area and enjoyed sharing his knowledge with others, giving many historical presentations.

John B. Bristow of Pleasant Hill, OR died May 4, 2005, from a glioblastoma, or a malignant brain tumor. He shall be greatly missed. He is survived by his wife, Sandra.

OCTA member **Daryl Whiteley** died Saturday, May 14, 2005. He was a member of Trail Tenders in Baker City, OR, and very active in working with the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center. He regularly attended annual OCTA conventions and had many friends in the organization.

Arthur H. Clark, Jr., 92, died Easter Sunday, March 27, at his residence in Spokane, WA, after a brief illness. His wife, Ruth, deeply mourns his passing after almost sixty-nine years of marriage. He is also survived by sister, Mary Clark Gash of Walnut Creek, California; and sons Thomas and wife Jean, and Robert and wife Sheila plus seven grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren.

Born in Bedford, Ohio, Art's father had founded the company that bears their name some ten years earlier. Following Art's graduation from high school in 1930, his father moved the business from Cleveland to Glendale, California. Art and a friend drove across the country in a 1926 Chevrolet. After arriving in southern California, he enrolled at Occidental College. Art went to work with his father and his future partner, Paul Galleher, following his graduation from Occidental in June 1934.

His career in the bookselling and publishing industry lasted nearly seventy years. As editor, designer, and publisher of several hundred books, he worked with many of the top historians of the American West in developing and producing major contributions to our Western legacy. The company specialty was in books on the American West, and among the many titles which Art edited and published were numerous classic works on Western trails, such as *Conkling's Butterfield Overland Trails*, *McKinstry's Gold Rush Diary*, the works of Clifford Drury's *First White Women over the Rockies*, and many more.

Charter Member Elaine McNabney Dies

Elaine McNabney died June 17 at her home surrounded by close friends and family. She had battled cancer since last fall. She opened the OCTA headquarters office in Independence in the late 1980s. Elaine along with Dick and Trudy Ackerman were instrumental in getting headquarters off to a good start.

Elaine worked at headquarters for over a year, giving four hours a day running the office. "We owe her more than can ever be calculated," Kathy Conway said. McNabney also served as Assistant Editor during Lois Daniel's term as editor of the *Overland Journal*.

She was born in Kansas City, attended Border Star Elementary and Southwest High schools, and then earned a B.S. in nursing from Duke University. She worked as a nurse at Kansas City General Hospital, now Truman Medical Center, and was involved in many local organizations. She was a charter member of OCTA and was honored to be named the organization's first Distinguished Volunteer of the Year. She spoke to many civic groups about the Oregon Trail and performed the play "Little Elaine Goes West," interpreting a child's view of the long walk west, for civic and school groups.

Elaine is survived by her husband, W. Kendall McNabney, a son, three stepchildren, four grandchildren, and her sister, Carol Hydeman Bowers, plus a niece and nephew.

Services were held June 21. Memorials may be made to the OCTA Endowment Restricted Fund.

Fundraising...

OCTA's 2004-2005 Annual Fund Drive Concludes

Thanks to the generous donations from our members, we are happy to report the following results:

Annual Fund	\$ 9,765
Archaeology	178
COED	320
Education	715
Endowment	2,314
G&S	1,588
Preservation	2,578
Special Publications	325
Trail Mapping	516
Total	\$18,299

The following individuals have made contributions to the OCTA Annual Fund Drive during the period February 23-May 25.

Augustine, Lynn
Baird, Steve
Bay, Mary Glennys Baker
Bennett, Jean
Bjorge, Gary
Bliss, Bonnie
Bhun, Beverly
Bolon, Victor
Bond, John
Brennan, Linda
Cahill, B. R.
Campbell, Gail
Carter, D. Robert & Lyndia
Chamberlain, R. H.
Coffill, Marjorie
Conrado, Paul
Corder, Robert L.
Crowle, Clarice
Dragoo, Sandra
Dyer, E. Otis
Dyson, Lorraine
Edwards, Nicholas & Janie
Ellingson, Jean
Faris, Albert

Continued on next page

Preservation Officer's Report...

Dave Welch
Welchdj@comcast.net

Preservation Report: Deal'n with the Devil

I knew when I agreed to serve as National Preservation Officer that it was going to be a challenge. I have not been disappointed. I thought that fifty percent of the membership would think I wasn't doing enough and the remainder would think I was doing too much. So far (four years into it), the "doing too much" crowd is the noisiest, but the old "silent majority" speaks out occasionally. OCTA's recent preservation survey showed about 100-to-1 support for doing what we do now or more. However, for an organization dedicated to preservation, we still have some problems, although at the board level support has been strong.

One of the recurring issues is working with the federal agencies (the Devil?). Some complain vigorously when we assist the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or the National Park Service (NPS), especially if we use OCTA funds. Recently, I drew the wrath of a member for supporting a proposal to restore a crossing of the Little Sandy in Wyoming. OCTA is to provide a net contribution of \$2,500 to buy fencing to keep cattle from the area to permit vegetation to grow as was typical in the pioneer era. Federal agencies are providing over \$17,500 for the project and volunteers from churches, Scout groups, and OCTA will provide labor. Previously, the BLM had executed a land exchange to acquire the property for this purpose. This looked like a "no brainer" to me, but I was accused of pandering to the LDS Church, misrepresenting history and doing what the BLM should do on its own.

It sounds good to say that the BLM (or the NPS) should be doing it

without our help, but from a practical standpoint many projects won't happen if we don't show our commitment and enthusiasm. Budgets are tight and cultural resource protection is not the highest priority. We can be the difference between preservation (or restoration) happening or not.

In any case, I support working with the federal agencies to accomplish OCTA's goals. However, "working with" does not mean "agreeing with" in every instance. Our independence helps maintain our credibility.

Another recent positive example of the fruits of cooperation is the City of Rocks project. OCTA's willingness to provide \$25,000 to help meet the landowner's price is widely acknowledged to be the reason the acquisition is proceeding. Thanks to OCTA (and this means you, the members) the heart of the City of Rocks National Historic Reserve including Register Rock will move to public ownership and protection. At the recent California-Nevada chapter meeting, support was shown with a spontaneous contribution of almost \$5,000, even though funds are available from the Loomis Preservation Fund. Thanks!

As I said, it was clear from the start that as NPO I couldn't keep everyone happy. The NPO's job is to carry out the trails preservation mission of OCTA which inevitably leads to conflicts with other interests. One of my first encounters was a meeting with a member where I was accused of being "too green." I wasn't sure whether he meant I didn't know what I was doing or that I was a "greenie"

Continued on next page

Preservation Officer's Report...

Continued from previous page

(environmentalist). Most likely it was both. I have never considered myself a green since historic preservation and environmentalism are very different. I prefer "conservationist" since that is what the preservation officer actually does.

On another occasion, I was labeled an "anti-Mormon bigot" in a letter to the editor challenging my right to comment on trail developments. I have also been referred erroneously as "that guy from Seattle." That really frosted me. I'm from Steilacoom, the first incorporated town in Washington and the northern end of the Oregon Trail, not that upstart called Seattle!

My final preservation officer story concerns another comment from a member. His assertion, when challenging my activities in his state, was that "energy companies had protected more trail than you ever would." I have been involved in over

600 applications for drilling, roads and pipelines in four years and have yet to see a case where a developer offered anything except when it was suggested or required by the BLM. The BLM mitigation requirements generally add little to the cost of an unproductive well and a few thousand dollars (at most) to a productive well that will probably bring in millions of dollars.

Which brings me full circle. In fact, it is "the Federal devil" that is legally responsible on a day-to-day basis for the protection of the emigrant trails on public lands (while accommodating other uses). Part of our job is to support and encourage those within the Federal agencies who are applying the laws and regulations to protect cultural resources. The archaeologists and cultural resource specialists in the Federal agencies deserve our full support and appreciation.

Additional Preservation Work

These are other preservation activities now underway.

The U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management are developing a Programmatic Agreement covering a seismic project long the Lander Road in Sublette County near the border with Lincoln County in Wyoming. Work will begin this summer, but it is anticipated that work along the Lander Road will be conducted in the summer of 2006. Procedures are in place to provide appropriate protection of cultural resources. If the project is successful, future energy development in the area can be expected.

The first training session for the NPS's Graphics Information System

Database was conducted in Salt Lake City, May 9 through 14. Twenty OCTA members participated.

OCTA's participation in the purchase of the Register Rock property in the City of Rocks in Idaho is continuing. The draft purchase option and related paperwork are under review. The OCTA board approved \$25,000 for the purchase contingent upon review of the final agreements.

Ezra Meeker Centennial (2006) – This is a joint OCTA-Ezra Meeker Historical Society project to take one of Meeker's restored wagons back over the trail in July and August 2006

Continued on Page 19

Fundraising...

Continued from previous page

Fiscus, Clifford
Gloy, William
Grant, Curtis R. & Nancy
Graves, James K.
Gravette, Bob
Harman, John
Heid, Janice
Houts, Joseph
Hughston, Betty
Hunn, Herbert & Lois
Jakicie, Jim & Charlene
Jones, Robert H. & Hedy
Kabel, Robert
Kelleher, Joan
Leamon, Jean
Little, Charles
Loomis, Patricia
Manhart, Hal & Sharon
McClain, Jim
McClellan, Carole
Moore, Jack E.
Mothershead, Harmon
Norman, Norma
Ott, Gregory
Pipal, Vauna
Quint, California
Renner, Willard
Rhine, Jim & Jan
Ritter, Dale W.
Rossbach, Charles
Sawyer, Paul
Scanlan, Jim
Schoch, Raymond
Seyferth, Marion
Smith, William
Spangier, Nita
Speer, Theresa
Stanton, Virginia
Stokes, Sharon
Tacey, Linda
Thompson, Gene
Troop, Richard & Marcia
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64051-0519
888/811-6282

Trail Preservation

Continued From Page 17

to celebrate the 100th anniversary of his original marking expedition. Displays, lectures and reenactments will be presented in about twenty venues in the trail states. There will also be a special visit to South Pass.

Marking/Re-marking Wyoming Trails – Stan McKee is doing the field work this summer to define what needs to be done. Contact him if you want to help.

South Pass National Historic Landmark Boundary Definition – This NHL has no boundary. A partnership with the BLM will be proposed to define a boundary. Both field and archive research will be required.

Cherokee Trail Mapping – Jack and Pat Fletcher assisted by Chuck

Hornbuckle and OCTA members from the Rock Springs area continue their work to document the Cherokee Trail routes. This information is urgently needed since development in the area is intense.

Preservation Training – The first session was held in Mountain Home, ID for

Idaho chapter members. The next session will be held for the CA-NV chapter in October. The training covers mapping, marking and monitoring as defined by OCTA policies and procedures. The next class will be in Wyoming next with a heavy emphasis on monitoring.

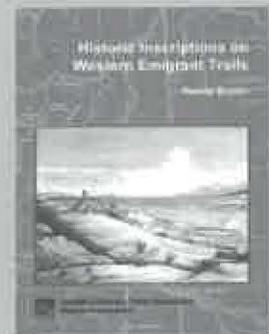
Camouflage Study – The BLM is proposing a study in Wyoming that might involve OCTA volunteers to determine if camouflage can be effective in reducing the visibility of gas and oil production facilities. This project is in the proposal phase as the BLM seeks support from various sources.

Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails

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"Journey of the Heart" by Annette Gray tells the life story of Marnie Aguirre, an American pioneer woman of extraordinary courage and talent. Married at age eighteen to Don Epitacio Aguirre, an aristocrat, freighter and merchant from New Mexico, set in motion a series of stirring adventures that shaped the course of her life. Author Gray, in this richly textured narrative, provides the first complete account of Marnie Aguirre's personal history. \$21.95 paperback. -Marc Simmons

The National Frontier Trails Museum presents the story of the exploration, acquisition, and settlement of the American West. An award-winning film prepares visitors for the interpretive exhibits which guide them along the Santa Fe, Oregon, and California Trails. Quotations from trail diaries are extensively used, allowing pioneer travelers to tell their experiences in their own words. The museum has an authentic covered wagon, relics and artifacts, hands on activities for kids, wagon train swales, and museum store. For more information on the Trails Museum and upcoming special events, please call 816-325-7575, or check our website at www.frontiertrailsmuseum.org.

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