

News from the Plains

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Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

January 1999

Solicitor Narrows Scope

Comprehensive Trails Plan Nearing Completion

By Bill Martin

The final version of the Comprehensive Management Plan for the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails and the update for the Oregon and Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails will be on file by mid-summer, 1999, according to the National Park Service.

Jere Krakow, Superintendent of the NPS Long Distance Trails Office, said the final document will incorporate "substantive" comments – those related to points of fact or policy – received during a series of public meetings held in September and October.

About 180 individuals attended the nine public meetings and Krakow's office received written comments from 130 individuals,

government agencies and private organizations.

"In general, the plan was very well received and most respondents supported the proposal," Krakow said in an update he prepared. "The most often mentioned concern was that not *all* the historic California Trail routes were identified as part of the authorized National Historic Trail.

"Even though the majority of California routes were described in detail in the plan, some trail advocates claimed that if the current plan did not include *all* the historic routes, the opportunity for protecting the resources would be lost."

As a result of those concerns, the U.S. Department of the Interior Office of the Solicitor was asked to interpret the

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Mattes Library Collection Grows; Nears 3,000 Volumes



In July, the family of the late Merrill J. Mattes gathered at the library named in his honor at the National Frontier Trails Center, and had a tour of the facility. Present were his widow, Claire, all three sons and their wives, a grandson, and his brother Paul. They were treated to an informal reception in their honor by the OCTA headquarters. Front row: David, Claire, Warren, and John Mattes. Back row: Ruth, Steven, Paul, Carmen, and Wanda Mattes.

By John Mark Lambertson

The Merrill J. Mattes Research Library at the OCTA headquarters in Independence, MO continues to slowly grow in size and scope.

The remarkable collection now houses over 2,900 volumes, many of them rare books of Western Americana. Several knowledgeable researchers and visitors have stated that the library, only seven years old, is already the largest public research library in the nation focused on the overland trails.

The collection was begun by OCTA's co-founder, the late Merrill Mattes, in 1991 with the generous donation of his own personal library. That original nucleus of 1,350 volumes reflected Merrill's many years as a National Park Service historian and also included works of his own authorship, such as *The Platte River Road*, and *The Platte River Road Narratives*.

The National Frontier Trails Center which

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From the Editor's Desk . . .

Now that the Comprehensive Management Plan for the emigrant trails is entering the home stretch of a long, long, long planning process, what does it all mean?

We've been told all along that it will be a changing document and there's quick evidence of that fact. Already the National Park Service has promised to see what it can do to include all California Trail segments in the plan and not just those included as a result of a narrow interpretation of the original federal legislation. We expect that OCTA, too, will be taking a hard look at what it can do legislatively.

Meanwhile, we do have a Comprehensive Management Plan. So *News From The Plains* asked Jere Krakow of the National Parks Service what his fellow OCTA members might expect to see in the short term as a result of its adoption. Krakow had two quick examples.

First, the NPS will begin to work with private and public landowners to develop written agreements which identify specific sites as official and important trail resources. Such agreements, Krakow said, also will be an indication that the property owner will share the trail resource with the public.

Second, the NPS will be working with Departments of Transportation in different states to put up signs and logos on "auto tour routes," identifying hard surface roads as being in emigrant trail corridors. That will help increase public awareness of trail resources.

Krakow also pointed to a third benefit of the CMP, something which he said was "less observable but very critical." Having the Plan in place will be a boost for those who advocate for the

protection of trail resources, he says. Essentially, it will provide ammunition when plans or projects threaten the trails.

Krakow also was asked about the so-called "turf battles" between the National Park Service and other federal and state agencies. His biggest concern, he said, was the effort it takes to coordinate with all of the agencies involved, complicated by the fact that agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service have different missions than the NPS.

But he said he was confident those other agencies would incorporate the trails management plan in their own planning. And he added this comment, which individual OCTA members should take to heart:

"All of the agencies have indicated their commitment and interest in working together, but a lot of it is based on personal relationships at the very ground level.

"Often there are staff changes and maybe *the long-standing common denominator is the OCTA member who can bridge the gap and provide continuity that can balance the normal coming and going of staff.*"

In other words, sometimes new people in the field need a little education about the importance of our trails resources. That may be especially true in agencies like the BLM and the Forest Service, who have "multiple use" mandates and might not want to give trails the attention we think they deserve.

Whether or not you agree with every part of the Comprehensive Management Plan, it's virtually a done deal, at least in its first final form. Now we need to get out on the trails and make sure people are paying attention.

— Bill Martin

Submission Guidelines

News From The Plains welcomes timely submissions of news, features and photos related to the work of the organization and its members and the preservation of our trails heritage.

Material is due 30 days prior to publication dates. Material is best sent either on a computer disk (in DOS or text format but make sure you include a hard copy) or via e-mail.

Pictures are appreciated but cannot always be returned.

If you have any questions, please call Editor Bill Martin at (775) 747-2860 or e-mail at words@worldnet.att.net.

Next Deadline Is March 1, 1999

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From The President . . .

by Roger Blair

About the time you should have received the last issue of News from the Plains (NFP), the National Park Service (NPS) released the long-awaited California Trail/Pony Express Trail Comprehensive Management Plans (CMP) and update of the Oregon Trail and Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail plans.

While still containing some deficiencies, the document reflected significant improvements over previous versions. I would like to thank all OCTA members who took the time to review the plans and attend the public meetings.

This is not a final document, however. The plan contains provisions for further study, update, and evolution. It is incumbent upon OCTA to take the lead in implementing this aspect of the plan. I encourage each member to study and monitor the trails and become involved in this evolutionary planning process.

Trail protection also suffered a setback by a recent Solicitor's opinion concerning the addition of sites and segments to the Oregon Trail National Historic Trail (NHT). The Department of Interior's Solicitor has judged that additions must be approved by Congress, while OCTA has felt that such additions could be designated administratively by the Secretary of Interior.

This means that alternate routes not included in the restrictive, originally designated Oregon Trail NHT route cannot be added without an exhaustive process similar to the original designation.

In a separate opinion the Solicitor also indicated that the official California Trail NHT could only include those trails identified in the 1987 Feasibility Report, upon which Congress based its official designation as a national historic trail. This opinion forced the NPS to drop several segments, routes, and sites from its final version of the just released CMP.

The actual act designating the trail is more generally worded and includes all sites, segments, and routes constituting the California Trail. OCTA, through its legal counsel Steve Corey, is exploring its options for clarifying and rectifying the situation. The NPS is assessing the possibility of amending the Feasibility Report.

Another significant event for trail preservation has also occurred since the last issue of NFP. The Nature Conservancy, in a joint project involving the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, the Bureau of Land Management, and Idaho Department of Fish and Wildlife, has purchased two of the islands at Three Island Crossing, as well as significant acreage of the south side uplands, including the trail and the descent to the crossing. The land owners were facing bankruptcy and the land was jeopardized by subdivision and development.

The Nature Conservancy is a non-profit organization that protects important natural resources by purchasing the land, acquiring easements, etc. The Conservancy then donates or sells the lands to public agencies for protection. In this case, a significant portion of the funding is coming from federal Land

and Water Conservation Fund (L&WCF) monies.

When the federal budgeting process was delayed last September and October, timely purchase was threatened because L&WCF monies had not been approved. The Nature Conservancy sought to obtain a loan to continue the purchase. Allan Sands of the Conservancy then contacted OCTA about paying the interest on their loan. The Board of Directors was polled and authorized paying up to \$12,000 (approximately \$2000 per month for up to six months until the L&WCF were expected to become available) to cover the interest payment. As it turned out, the L&WCF monies were released and the purchase went forward without the loan becoming necessary.

From OCTA's standpoint this is important for more than just the obvious preservation of a significant trail resource. To my knowledge, the action by the Board marked the first time OCTA has authorized a substantial financial investment in preservation in response to an outside request for assistance.

Your generous support has placed OCTA on a sound financial footing where it can "put its money where its mouth is." As developments increasingly threaten trail resources, the likelihood of financial intervention and assistance in other areas in the future will increase also. I encourage you to continue your financial support for OCTA programs.

Finally, I regret having to announce that Helen Sundell has resigned as Secretary. Helen has diligently served as Secretary longer than any other person. Hopefully she will be able to remain active in OCTA affairs in other ways. Pending formal Board approval, Mary Holden, from Wyoming, has agreed to serve as Secretary.

-- Roger Blair

News From Headquarters

By Kathy Conway

Your OCTA Headquarters staff has had a busy fall. With the mailing of our 1999 OCTA Catalog which includes many "choice" new items, we cannot help but think we're off to a great start for the new fiscal year.

Our bookstore, being located at the National Frontier Trails Center here in Independence, has benefited from the many visiting tour groups who seek out and buy our trail books and merchandise.

Speaking of visiting tour groups, Headquarters has received nothing but praise and thank you notes for suggesting a certain Merriam, Kansas OCTA member as a tour guide through the Kansas City area to Salt Lake. This was a part of a ten day Donner Party tour arranged by OCTA member Frankye Craig. We've acquired several new members from this "successful" Donner Party expedition.

New OCTA member Betty Hughston wrote of this excellent trip: "I celebrated my 80th birthday at Donner Lake, the culmination of a dream trip come to life. Those ruts on the front of your brochure were just like the picture - and I hiked

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California Trail Mail

Even if you can't take part in a commemorative wagon train for the 150th anniversary of the California Gold Rush, your mail can.

On April 26, wagon trains will leave St. Joseph, Missouri, bound for the tri-county marker on the Kansas-Nebraska border.

The "Echoes of Times Past Wagon Train," organized by OCTA members Ken and Arleta Martin, will travel the St. Joe road. A separate wagon train will travel north through Nebraska and continue on to Sacramento.

Individuals can purchase a commemorative letter, which will travel the entire route to California, for \$5. The commemorative includes a specially designed envelope, a California Historic Trail map and a vignette on the Gold Rush written by OCTA's Jeanne Watson.

Applications should be sent to Arleta Martin, 528 12th Road, Oketa, KS 66518, no later than April 1.

Heritage Alliance On-Line

A new web site for the Frontier Heritage Alliance is now on-line at www.wavecom.net/frontieralliance/index.html.

The Alliance is a multi-state organization formed to address historical and cultural resource "themes" that cross county and state lines and "to promote communication, cooperation, and coordination between organizations, government agencies, Indian tribes and cultural committees, educational institutions, businesses, and individuals." Several OCTA members are involved.

For additional information, contact Mary Ellen McWilliams, Bar A Ranch, 1004 Big Goose Road, Sheridan, WY 82801-9454. Phone (307) 674-4954.

Headquarters (continued from Page 3)

up to them to actually touch them."

Being a part of this wonderful organization, and witnessing, to only a small degree, the countless volunteer hours our members donate in preserving the emigrant's imprints causes your Headquarters Manager to wish OCTA the best year yet in 1999!

As a reminder, copies of the second edition of *Graves and Sites On the Oregon and California Trails*, by Randy Brown and Reg Duffin, are now available from the OCTA Bookstore. The list price is \$17.95, with a ten percent discount for OCTA members.

Also available is the third volume in the Emigrant Trails Historical Studies Series, *From the Old Northwest to the Pacific Northwest: The 1853 Oregon Trail Diaries of Patter-son Fletcher Luark and Michael Fleenen Luark*, edited by Howard Jablon and Kenneth R. Elkins. The list price is \$14.95 in soft cover and \$27.95 in hard cover, with a ten percent discount for OCTA members.

Annual Fund Drive Underway

Once again OCTA members have demonstrated their dedication and commitment to the emigrant trails by helping the Annual Fund Drive get off to a roaring start.

Results reported by Treasurer James E. Budde include \$7,434 for the Endowment Fund, \$563 for the Annual Fund, and \$2,002 for Designated Funds, for a total of \$9,999 (as of November 30th).

Thanks to those members who have helped OCTA further its goals. Contributors through November 30 included:

James K. Graves	Richard M. Hill
Robert L. Kabel	Richard F. Klein
Jim & Jan Rhine	Carl & Irene MacDonald
Art Iworsley & Family	Ed Lynch
Robert H. McCaffree	Malcolm E. Smith, Jr.
Willard R. Garred	Dick Nelson
James T. Owen	Victor & Harriot Gardener
Richard Higgins	John Balmforth
Marvin & Dorene Burke	Martin H. Schloo
James G. Stearns	Michael Philbrick
Eva Allen	Edwin & Mary Jo Sprague
Archie & Naomi Gordon	Jack & Ruth Yeaman
George E. Parrish	John H. Rebenack
Marsha K. King	Helen H. Henderson
Janet Pease	Janice Thronton
Ronald O. Downs	Robert A. Robinson
David Smoot	Doug & Eloise Crary
Clovis M. Robertson	Pat & Jerry Phillips
Warren & Beth Schmidgall	Dennis C. Wentland
Caroline Kaszuk	Baldwin & Ormie Lamson
Virginia Nelson	Richard M. Davis
Lee Underbrink	Greg Childs
Nita R. Spangler	Cornelius J. O'Sullivan
Tim Burns	Gene Serr
D. W. Wilson	Mr. & Mrs. Robert L. Wilson
Roy Welton	Robert & Alice Shellenberger
Nelson S. Weller	G. Nicholas Ifft
Paul A. Grunland	Keith A. Palmquist
Sheldon F. Craddock	Frank & Laurie Brown
Edward Scoles	Rose Ann Tompkins
Carol Ann Buss	Carleton L. Fuhrman
Norman J. Barker	Willard & Veneta Renner
Bucky Green	Mr & Mrs Robert G. Colvin
Dave & Cindy Welch	Don B. Popejoy
Virginia Hammerness	Janet F. Boom
Alan G. Posey	George & Feme Bille
Joan Barsotti	Martha Barnes
Edwin Winn	John & Janet Latschar
Tom Triplett	Marguerite Christopherson
Marjorie H. Variel	Lois C. Revak
Gilbert Ward	Jacqueline Williams
Randy & Barbara Powell	Gene A. Sessions
Elvin Walker	Don C. Clark
Glenn L. Calhoun	Mrs. Rose W. Burnham
Tom Ronk	Charley Taylor
James & Patricia Whitworth	Jim & Ardis Everett
Joanne Hinchliff	Nebraska St. Historical Society

OCTA Leadership Positions Available

Board Nominations Sought

Nominations are now being accepted for OCTA's Board of Directors.

Each year, the terms of four of the twelve directors expire. In 1999 terms expire for Will Bagley, Levida Hileman, Walter H. Meyer and William Rupp. Will Bagley will complete two consecutive terms and is not eligible for reelection.

According to OCTA's bylaws, all current members of OCTA are eligible to be nominated and any current OCTA member may submit one or more written nominations.

The following must be submitted to the Nominating and Leadership Committee before the nomination can be considered:

- Information about the qualifications and experience of the person recommended and the extent to which such person has participated in the affairs of the Association.
- A brief (about 100 word) statement on where they would like to see OCTA go in the next five to ten years and what they would do to help reach those objectives.
- A written endorsement from three OCTA members.
- A statement of willingness to actively serve, if elected, signed by the nominee.

While trail-related activities are a key consideration for all nominees, nomination of persons with service on other boards or management and financial expertise is encouraged. Experience as an educator, historian (amateur or professional) or researcher should be noted. To assist the Committee, submission of a resume for each nominee is encouraged.

Elected Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings. A minimum of two board meetings are held each year, one at the national convention and the other at OCTA headquarters in Independence, MO or at a chapter sponsored site. Travel expenses connected with duties of the Board may be reimbursed by the Association.

The deadline for receiving nominations is April 1, 1999. Nominations should be mailed to: David Welch, P.O. Box 88947, Steilacoom, WA 98388

Ballots will be mailed about May 1, 1999. If you have questions, please contact Dave at (253) 584-0332 or djwelch@csi.com.
- David Welch

Jedediah Smith Conference

The Jedediah Smith Society and the John Muir Center for Regional Studies are sponsoring a conference, "Jedediah Smith and the Fur Trade Era," in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of Smith's birth in 1999.

The conference will be held at the University of Pacific in Stockton, Calif., April 23-24. For details, call (209) 946-2895 or e-mail johnmuir@uop.edu

OCTA Needs New Treasurer

OCTA's long-serving treasurer, Jim Budde, has announced that he will not be a candidate for re-election. Nominees for the position are being sought for the Board's consideration at the Chico convention.

Candidates should have a background in finance and be familiar with accounting principles as applied to non-profit organizations. The treasurer is the chief financial and accounting officer of the Association. As such he is responsible for proper receipt, deposit and disbursement of all organizational funds.

Working with the Finance Committee, he prepares an annual budget and when required renders an account of financial transactions and the financial condition of the Association to the Board of Directors. Other duties performed by the treasurer include overseeing committees responsible for the annual fund raising drive, the endowment fund and the finances of each convention.

In actual operation, many of the duties outlined above are performed by the treasurer working with the headquarters staff and an outside accountant. The outside accountant prepares various tax and employee-related reports.

Due to the fact that Jim was located near the office, he has been able to participate on a weekly, if not daily, basis. It is not expected that the next treasurer will operate in the same way. With day-to-day operations in the hands of the headquarters staff, the new treasurer should be able to perform his duties regardless of his location.

Jim has also recommended that committees responsible for fund raising and endowment-related activities be re-activated to reduce the treasurer's workload.

Nominations should be sent to Dave Welch, P. O. Box 88947, Steilacoom, WA 98388, (253) 584-0332, djwelch@csi.com. Candidates should submit a resume for consideration by the Nominations and Leadership Committee by March 1, 1999.

- Dave Welch

Mid-Year Board Meeting

The Mid-Year meeting of the OCTA Board of Directors will be held on March 5-6 in Independence, Missouri.

The formal Board meeting will be held Saturday, March 6, convening at 8:30 am. All members are invited to attend.

Friday, March 5, will be devoted to Board training and orientation sessions, in accordance with the Administrative Committee recommendation presented and approved by the full Board at the Pendleton meeting.

Mattes Library (continued from Page 1)

cares for the library, is funded by the City of Independence, and the Center has purchased over 1,000 additional books for the collection.

The library includes a great deal more than just books, however. The holdings of manuscripts, maps, periodicals, photographs, and microfilm have also been growing. In all of these areas, the Mattes Library has been greatly enhanced by donations from George Watkins, Ross Marshall, Paul Edwards, the estate of Paul Henderson, and many others.

The scope of the collection covers nearly every subject imaginable in the American West, from Lewis and Clark to the transcontinental railroad, from Missouri to the Pacific, and from approximately 1800 to 1880. The major focus, however, is the Oregon, California and Santa Fe Trails. To this end the

collection includes over 2,300 trail diaries, letters and recollections, including seven original diaries.

The library, with approximately 100 researchers annually making 150 research visits, is always in search of additional titles. If you, or someone you know is seeking a good home for a personal collection of trail-related volumes, photos, slides, maps, manuscripts or periodicals, I encourage you to contact me. We also are always on the lookout for artifacts to help illustrate trail life in our exhibits. It is largely through the generous donations of trails enthusiasts that we are able to relay the unique and fascinating story of this epic saga in American History, to both researchers and museum visitors.

John Mark Lambertson is director of the John Mark Lambertson, National Frontier Trails Center, 318 W. Pacific, Independence, MO, 64050; (816) 325-7577; or jlambertson@indepmo.org.

Comprehensive Plan (continued From Page 1)

intent of the legislation. In its opinion, the Solicitor's office said only those California Trail routes specifically identified in the National Parks Service's 1987 Eligibility/Feasibility Study would be included (see accompanying list). Additional routes can only be added by Congressional amendment of the California Trail Act, the Solicitor said.

Krakov, an OCTA member, told *News From The Plains* that the Solicitor's opinion would be a topic for discussion during the annual meeting of National Parks Service trail managers scheduled for January.

The managers will try to arrive at a consensus on the best way to go about adding other routes and cutoffs that Congress did not include in the original legislation. "We want to be able to say these are the procedures that should be followed, the hoops to jump through to bring in the additional routes and cutoffs and not do it piecemeal," he said.

The best solution, Krakow said, would be to amend the legislation. "I think that's really the best way to go because it sets forth in rather unequivocal fashion the inclusion of all routes and that's a permanent sort of solution."

Dick Ackerman, OCTA Trails Preservation Officer, agreed that amending the legislation would be "the easiest and most practical way to proceed," adding that seeking an amendment to the original legislation would be an easier task than trying to obtain entirely new legislation.

List of Trails Included In Comprehensive Management Plan

The following are the "official" routes identified in the *Eligibility/Feasibility Study and Environmental Assessment for National Historic Trail Authorization on the California and Pony Express Trails* in the Congressional legislation passed in 1987.

Other trails, such as the Cherokee Trail, can be added only through amending the original California Trail Act, according to the Solicitor's opinion.

Identified routes include:

- Main trail from Independence, Missouri, to the Humboldt Sink, Nevada
- Eastern Feeder Routes: Council Bluffs Road, St. Joe Road, Old Fort Kearny Road
- Central Cutoffs and Alternative Routes: Sublette Cutoff, Hastings Cutoff, Salt Lake Cutoff, Hudspeth Cutoff, Childs Cutoff, Kinney Cutoff, Seminole Cutoff, Slate Creek Cutoff, Baker-Davis Road, Dempsey-Hockaday Cutoff, Lander Road, Julesburg Cutoff
- Western Routes: Truckee Route, Applegate Trail, Carson Route, Lassen Trail, Beckwourth Trail, Nobles Road, Sonora Road.

Mark Your Calendars!
1999 OCTA National Convention
Marking the 150th Anniversary of the California Gold Rush
Chico, California - August 11-14
 (See Page 15 for more information)

Black Rock Management Plan Under Review

by Charles H. Dodd

Today about 135 miles of the Applegate-Lassen trail, much of it pristine and all of it spectacular, remain essentially as the emigrants saw it when they traveled it to Oregon and California in the years following 1846.

This section of the California Trail complex, one of the most significant remaining, crosses the Black Rock Desert in northwestern Nevada. Most of the area is public land, under the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

For years, the BLM has managed the Black Rock Desert with a management plan that was so far out of date and so inappropriate to changing demands that it was effectively no plan at all. Finally, though, after a lot of urging from OCTA and others interested in protecting the resources in the area, and after more than a year's work, the BLM released a plan for public review and comment.

Informally called the Black Rock Management Plan, by its official title it is the "Sonoma-Gerlach and Paradise-Denio Management Framework Plan Amendment and Draft Environmental Impact Statement."

The plan describes three alternatives and a "Proposed Action." The alternatives are (1) continuation of present management, (2) maximum resource protection, and (3) maximum resource use.

The Proposed Action is a middle ground between the maximum resource protection, which would be very restrictive, and the maximum resource use, which would allow wide-open uses that would probably destroy the trail and other natural and cultural resources in the area.

It deserves our support, and we should write the BLM to indicate that support. Public comments must be submitted in writing to Gerald Moritz, EIS Project Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Winnemucca Field Office, 100 E. Winnemucca Blvd., Winnemucca, NV, 89445. Comments were to be accepted until January 15, 1999.

Positive aspects of the plan are:

- Explicit protection of the Applegate-Lassen and Nobles Trails.
- Visual resource management (to maintain the visual integrity of the trail).
- Establishment of Limits of Acceptable Change, and continuing a study to monitor change.

- Imposition of limits on large scale events. (No more than 10,000 people at any event.)

- Establishment of a "Common Pool" recreational permit allocation. The Common Pool would create a 50,000 user days per year limit for recreational events that require permits. (OCTA tours on the trail, for example, do not require permits because they are non-profit and too small. User days are the number of people times the number of days of the event. A 3-day event with 500 people produces 1,500 user days.) The Common Pool allocation with a 50,000 user day limit means that the total of the all user days, for all events cannot exceed 50,000 per year.

The Common Pool allocation for recreational permits was perhaps the most controversial aspect of the plan. The cap of 50,000 user days per year is admittedly arbitrary. However, by monitoring changes and the impact of permitted events (events requiring permits) and completing the Limits of Acceptable Change study, the Common Pool cap can be adjusted appropriately.

One of the most annoying aspects of current management of the area is that each permitted event is considered independently of all other events, as though it were the only event being held in the area. The Common Pool allocation is an attempt to consider the sum of the events – to consider the cumulative effect all the events will have on the area.

It may not be a perfect approach, but it is an important effort that considers the whole and not just the separate parts.

The only event that would be affected by the limits on large scale events or the Common Pool is the Burning Man. There were approximately 15,000 people at the 1998 Burning Man, which lasted for eight days (120,000 user days).

The Proposed Action deserves our strong support. We should urge the BLM to adopt the plan, to guide their management activities in the area, and we should urge them to retain the elements of the plan that provide protection to the very important segment of the trails that pass through the Black Rock area, and to protect the environment of the trail.

(For a more detailed analysis of the Black Rock plan, you can contact Chuck directly, via e-mail at trails@inreach.com, via regular mail at Rt. 1, Box 9, Chilcoot CA 96105, or call him at (916) 993-1425.)

OCTA Seeks Nominations For Annual Awards Program

Nominations are now being accepted for OCTA Service Awards which will be presented at the convention in Chico in August.

The deadline for award nominations is June 1st.

The awards include the Meritorious Achievement Award, the highest award given by OCTA. This award goes to individuals or organizations who have made long-term and significant contributions to OCTA and its programs.

Other awards include the National Certificate of Appreciation, given to individuals or organizations who help with specific short-term projects, and the Volunteer of the Year Award, given to an individual OCTA member.

Letters of nomination should be sent to Roger Blair, President, 1113 NW Horn Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. The nomination should include specific details as to why the nominee deserves the award.

Gold Rush Lecture Series Underway In Sacramento

A series of free public lectures are underway in Sacramento, California, commemorating the sesquicentennial of the California Gold Rush. The lectures are being sponsored by California State University, Sacramento, and the California Council for the Humanities.

The lectures started in October and will continue through October, 1999. Each lecture features an outstanding historian discussing a particular aspect of gold rush history and the continuing impact of the Gold Rush on California's history.

Plans are to include the complete set of lectures as chapter-length essays in a volume entitled *The California Gold Rush: A Sesquicentennial Reexamination*, edited by Kenneth Owens, the organizer and facilitator of the lecture series.

Lecture dates, titles, lecturers, and locations for 1999 include:

January 27 - *Where Have All the Young Men Gone? The Social Legacy of the Gold Rush*, Elizabeth Jameson, University of New Mexico, California State Archives Auditorium.

February 10 - *Clouded Legacy: The Gold Rush and California Indians*, Albert L. Hurtado, University of Oklahoma, University Ballroom, CSUS Student Union.

March 10 - *"Do You Think I'll Lug Trunks?" African Americans in Gold Rush California*, Shirley Ann Wilson Moore, CSUS, University Ballroom, CSUS Student Union.

March 24 - *Never Far From Home: Being Chinese in the California Gold Rush*, Sylvia Sun Minnick, Stockton, CA, Tsakopoulos Library Galleria, Sacramento Main Library.

April 7 - *The Last Fandango: Women, Work, and the End of the California Gold Rush*, Susan Johnson, University of Colorado, California State Archives Auditorium

April 21 - *After California: Later Gold Rushes of the Pacific Basin*, Jeremy Mouat, University of Athabasca, California State Archives Auditorium.

May 12 - *From Gold Pans to California Dredges: The Search for Mass Production in Placer Mining*, Clark Spence, University of Illinois, University Ballroom, CSUS Student Union.

May 26 - *"My Brother's Keeper:" Mexicans and Latin Americans Meet the Argonauts in California's Gold Fields*, Michael Gonzalez, University of San Diego, California State Archives Auditorium.

September 29 - *Disorder, Crime, and Punishment in the California Gold Rush*, Martin Ridge, The Huntington Library, University Ballroom, CSUS Student Union.

October 20 - *Begun by Gold: Sacramento and the Gold Rush Heritage After 150 Years*, Kenneth Owens, CSUS, University Ballroom, CSUS Student Union.

All lectures begin at 7 p.m. For more information, contact Kenneth Owens at (916) 278-6589.

Louis Vieux Cemetery Damaged By Vandals

Reprinted by permission of Jim Travis, Editor & Publisher of the Westmoreland, KS, Recorder

Susan Campbell fills with emotion when she thinks of the vandalism at the Louis Vieux Cemetery east of Louisville. Susan and her husband Eric make their home in Seattle, Wash., but happened to be in St. Marys, Kansas at the End of the Trail of Death Commemorative Caravan, a 660-mile trek commemorating the 160th anniversary of the relocation of the Potawatomi tribe from their ancestral home in Indiana to Kansas.

The Campbell's were shocked to learn of the recent desecration of the Louis Vieux family Cemetery. Susan is the great-great-great granddaughter of Louis Vieux. Numerous tombstones and grave markers in the 150 year old cemetery were shattered and a guest book listing visitors was destroyed by fire.

The damage was discovered on the morning of Sunday, Sept. 27. On the following Thursday, authorities from the Potawatomi County Sheriff's Department had located suspects, based on anonymous tips they had received. (*Note: Suspects arrested in conjunction with the vandalism were 15, 16, 17 and 18 years of age.*)

Photographs taken for use as evidence and a map of the cemetery showing where the stones from the monuments were found scattered in disarray made a clear image of the extent of the devastation. "I just don't understand," Susan said, shaking her head as she looked at the photographs.

The Campbells had visited the cemetery last summer. "We sent a letter to the historical society and thanked the county. We were very pleased with how they had protected and cared for it," Susan said. Rodney Biesenthal, director of the county's noxious weed department and who is also responsible for overseeing the maintenance of cemeteries in the county, spoke with the Campbells and invited them to meet with the Potawatomi County Historical Society the next day, when a special meeting had been scheduled to discuss the repair of the damage.

The Campbells did meet with the historical society on Saturday and indicated they would discuss with other family members and decide what they would like to see done to effect repairs or replacement. Following the meeting with the historical society the Campbells went to the cemetery with Biesenthal to inspect the damage firsthand. Susan provided a wealth of information on the Vieux family history. She is a genealogist and has been researching the family history since the mid-1970s.

Susan said Louis Vieux and his wife, Sha Note, also known as Charlotte, had a fur trading post near what was then known as Skunk Grove, WS, near present day Racine, when an 1833 treaty gave them three years to give up their land "voluntarily." Susan said Louis and Sha Note stayed as long as they could,

(continued on Page 17)

Trails Preservation Committee Meets

OCTA's Special Committee on Trails Preservation is "up and functioning" and expects to provide an interim report to the OCTA Board of Directors' Mid-Year meeting in March, according to chairman Dick Ackerman.

Ackerman said the six-member committee, formed at the Pendleton convention in August, held a three-day meeting in Salt Lake City and "explored a lot of ideas." He declined to provide details pending more discussion and study within the committee. "We are moving forward," he said.

Ackerman, OCTA's National Trail Preservation Officer through the August convention in Chico, heads the committee whose membership also includes Frank Tortorich, Al Mulder, Ken Martin, and Chuck Martin, with OCTA Vice President Dave Welch an ex-officio member.

The special committee was formed by the Board of Directors in August, charged with developing a definitive statement on OCTA's approach to trails preservation issues. Its tasks include developing a job description for the NTPO and recommendation an organizational structure for trails preservation at the chapter and national levels.

It also will develop a definitive statement on OCTA's approach to trail preservation and resource requirements.

— Bill Martin

Administrative Committee Will Review COED Program

OCTA's Administrative Committee, which was created by the Board of Directors in the spring of 1997, met at headquarters in Independence, MO December 6 and 7.

This is the third such meeting for this committee during 1998 as the transition at headquarters continues resulting from Executive Director Jeanne Miller's retirement in the fall of 1997.

Kathy Conway, who subsequently was promoted to Headquarters Manager, is doing an excellent job of leading headquarters operations. Additional transitions at headquarters will occur in 1999 as OCTA's longtime Treasurer Jim Budde retires.

The Committee, whose members are Chair Levida Hileman, Jackie Lewin, Bill Rupp, and Ross Marshall, with President Roger Blair as ex officio, will next meet in January with Kathy Roubal and Chuck Dodd to review strategies for the COED program and report to the Board at the March mid-year meeting.

— Ross Marshall

Casper Trails Center Sets Summer Groundbreaking

Ground will be broken in June for the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, Wyoming, following passage of federal legislation which was signed by President Clinton on October 27.

The federal legislation provides \$5 million in funding, including \$2.6 million available in the current year, which will be matched by \$4 million in non-Federal funding secured by the National Historic Trails Foundations, Inc., including \$700,000 from the state of Wyoming.

The legislation notes that the location of the Interpretive Center in Casper is significant because it is the only geographic location in the western United States where four congressionally recognized historic trails (the Oregon, Mormon, California and Pony Express) converge, along with the Bridger Trail, the Bozeman Trail and many Indian routes.

The 10-acre site for the facility is being transferred from the City of Casper to the Bureau of Land Management, which will operate the Center. Meanwhile, Hilferty & Associates is working with a design committee to develop exhibits for the Center.

— Bill Martin

OCTA Education Awards Open For Nominations

Nominations are being sought for the Outstanding Educator Awards to be presented at OCTA's 1999 Convention in Chico in August.

The awards are given to individuals who contribute significantly to students' education about the 19th century westward overland migrations in the United States. The work may reflect a whole unit or special project within a course.

The programs will be considered for their unique or imaginative approach which goes "above and beyond" the normal teaching of the topic; the appropriateness for the students' level and range abilities; the accuracy of its historical presentation; the range of student participation; and its effectiveness in presenting the topic to the students.

The 1999 awards will be presented for work during the 1997-98 or 1998-99 school years. Awards will be given in four categories: elementary-primary/intermediate grades, middle school/junior high, high school, and post secondary/college, adult education.

Nomination forms can be obtained from William E. Hill, OCTA Education Chair, 91 Wood Road, Centereach NY 11720-1619 (phone (516) 585-2592). The deadline for submitting award nominations is March 20, 1999.

— William Hill

Don Wiggins: "Thinking With the Emigrants"

With this issue, News From the Plains starts a regular series of stories profiling OCTA's unknown heroes and heroines, rank and file members who are quietly going about the work of preserving and enhancing the emigrant trails. If you have a suggestion for someone whose activities are important but unsung, please send a nomination to NFP Editor Bill Martin.

by Candy Moulton

Sand spills over low-topped shoes as journalists follow OCTA member Don Wiggins down a swale at the edge of the Forty Mile Desert in Nevada.

It is a cool October day with no breeze. But during trail migration, people would reach this area of Nevada in the heat of summer. Their stock, already weak from hundreds of miles of trail behind them, were further affected by the desert crossing.

And just where they could finally see the river, the scene became one of "confusion and dismay," Wiggins said as they struggled through the deep sand.

Don knows what it was like on the trail during the rush to California after 1849 through his five-year quest to find the route. He's read nearly 200 diaries and other first-hand accounts, seeking to know what it was like on the trail, and more importantly to find the actual Truckee River and Dog Valley routes.

"You must see it and feel it on an August day," he told the journalists as they stood in the sand. Only then is it possible to realize what the trek did to the bodies and spirits of people and animals.

Long interested in the emigration, Don started actively seeking the route after his retirement five years ago. Now if the weather cooperates, he works on trail location almost as if it were a full-time job. It might not be a job, but it certainly is a calling.

He's been searching out the Truckee Trail, which he says is, "Probably the worst part of the emigrant route." A lot of the route has been misidentified and Wiggins, along with some occasional helpers, has been searching to find the real trail.

Wiggins has help — clues if you will — from early trail travelers. He's read hundreds of accounts, and uses several journals routinely, including accounts by Eleazar R. Stillman Ingalls and William Kelly who crossed in 1850, and Augustus Ripley Burbank, who crossed in 1849.

A portion of the Truckee Route is known as the Snake Trail and Don believes—after his years of searching—that he's found the route. "I'm the only one who's looking for it and I've found 2-3 miles. I think I've found the snake part of it," Wiggins says.

When searching day after day, he reads the diaries and walks the landscape, looking for clues. One day as he worked in the area between Verdi and Dog Valley, "One of the landmarks just blossomed before me."

Don had been reading one of his journal sources and was simultaneously attempting to follow the trail as it made three different elevations. The diary said: "We descended into a ravine." Don's route did the same. "It was exactly like he described it."



Don Wiggins with one of the markers he has installed on the California Trail leading into Dog Valley on the California-Nevada border.
— Photo by Candy Moulton

That was one strategic breaking point in Don's search for the Snake Trail. "Once you get on the trail, all of the sudden everything starts falling into place. The word descriptions match the physical descriptions."

Don has found that to be the case as he has looked for trail routes near Donner Pass, at the Truckee River, and certainly in making the trip into Dog Valley. One of his sources is the work of Irene Paden, whom he calls the "first great writer on the trail."

Burbank's journal, meanwhile, is also helpful. It said: "A spring rivulet crosses the road from the left." As Don walked and looked for trail evidence he read that account. "I had just crossed that spring." Then he noticed that the road turned toward the right.

Finding the trail is made more difficult in certain areas, as in the approach to Dog Valley, where there are numerous parallel wagon ruts. It took Don three or four weeks using multiple diaries to locate the trail section atop the ridge above the valley. He is now confident he has done that and with help from other OCTA members he has marked it.

The trail Don seeks was forged in 1845 by Caleb Greenwood. "Most of this trail has been well-known for 70 years," Wiggins said. "But it has been misidentified for 70 years."

Utilizing 120 diaries to locate the Truckee River route, Don has already used about 50 or 60 journals to help identify the Snake Trail route. "Follow the old descriptions and suddenly you can find the trace," he says.

Above Dog Valley the journalists, who had traveled along the general trail corridor from Elko to this point, walked through the trees and sagebrush with Don. He carefully avoided the sage, noting that he is allergic to it, particularly when it is in bloom in the fall.



Left to right, Don Wiggins, Bill Graves of Motor Home and Trailer Life magazines and Maureen Magee of the Calgary Herald

— Photo by Candy Moulton

Don located one of the 50-60 markers he'd installed to mark the trail and pointed out the clearly visible swale.

"I can feel the trail, it is smooth," Nevada Commission on Tourism Motorsports Coordinator Stephanie Penner said. "Off the trail it's lumpy. Over here it's rocky, uphill, downhill," she said.

Attention Teachers

The American Social History Project/Center for Media & Learning (ASHP/CML) is accepting applications from K-12 and college teachers of U.S. History (or comparable interdisciplinary humanities courses), to take part in the 1999-2000 New Media Classroom program, held at six regional center locations across the country.

The year-long program begins with a 5-day summer institute and continues through the end of the school year, June 2000. Each NMC Regional Center program focuses on a specific theme or area of concentration. Themes or topic areas have included migrations, studies of the Western Plains, local history, developing a humanities Web site, multicultural studies, and on-line writing and student literacy.

Returning to their schools for the 1999-2000 school year, participating faculty will test the strategies developed at the summer institute, participate in a national on-line forum, and take part in follow-up meetings and other activities designed to generate insights into the teaching and learning of U.S. history and culture.

Cost for participation is \$450, with a limited number of stipends available. Each participant is responsible for arranging travel and lodging. Meals and curriculum materials (including free software) will be provided. Regional centers are located in Kansas City, MO, Pullman, WA, Millersville, PA, Tulsa, OK, New York City, and Williamstown, MA.

Specifics for each regional program will vary. For more information, contact Donna Thompson, American Social History Project, Center for Media & Learning, Graduate School and University Center/CUNY, 99 Hudson Street, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10013. Tel: (212) 966-4248 x219 Fax: (212) 966-4589 email: dthomps1@email.gc.cuny.edu. You can also consult the ASHP web site at www.ashp.cuny.edu

"You've got to be really an expert to find this," Chris Chrystal, Nevada Commission on Tourism Media Relations manager added as Don pointed out the trail edges.

"Don, it's soft here. On the trail it's hard. Is it always like this," asked Chuck Hillinger, an author and former travel editor with the Los Angeles Times.

Here, on the actual ruts, the trail presence became real for some of the media members. They were no longer just passing by and learning about the emigrant experience; they were on the trail and sensed the feeling Don has when he finds a section. Some descended partway into Dog Valley, pushing their way through tall grass and heavy brush to do so.

Walking down the steep hill with them, Don quoted from Burbank's journal: "I can hear ox drivers. They're sliding down the hill like otters." The journalists in the lead make the brush pop and crack, which those following behind can clearly hear.

"I'm thinking with the emigrants all the time," Don says. "That's what I do. I'm trying to match their descriptions."

Journalist Candy Moulton of Encampment, Wyoming, is chair of the OCTA Publications Committee.

Quilt Show A Hit

The quilt exhibition at the annual Oregon-California Trails Association meeting in Pendleton was a tremendous success. Organizers received many compliments from people attending the conference about the beauty of the book room and the effectiveness of the quilts. It will be one of the things that people will remember about the conference.

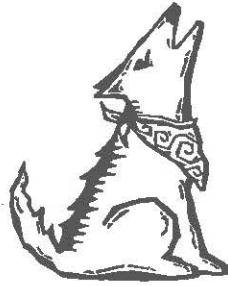
Organizers tried to place each of the 12 quilts so people would be able to get close to examine the ones that deserved close attention. Others were placed behind a bookseller's table space where they could be viewed effectively from a distance as well as up close.

The quilts were divided about half and half between school projects and individual quiltmakers. People got ideas for projects of their own from seeing these quilts. Teachers saw different resource materials used to create the traditional images of covered wagons and buffalos. Pioneer descendants saw how familiar quilt patterns and creative applique techniques could create tributes to their family members' trail experiences.

The quilt from the furthest away came from England. Sue Smith, one of the state walkers in the 1993 Oregon Trail Wagon Train, finally completed her beautiful commemorative quilt and sent it by air express to share with the group. Also on display was her Mormon Wagon Train Quilt from 1997, which will be going to the Church Museum of History and Art in Salt Lake City.

We thank everyone for sharing their quilts and the labors of their students and pioneer descendants.

— Mary Bywater Cross



NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

Trailshead

As the year 2000 draws closer, Trails Head members are busy planning for the convention you will NOT WANT TO MISS! There are so many exciting things being planned and the committee is working hard with monthly meetings.

But, we are not so busy with the convention that we are not taking time to meet for other informative and educational purposes.

In September we had a joint meeting with the Friends of the National Trails Center featuring Mary Conrad speaking on "Archaeology Revealed - More History of the Mahaffie Farmstead." October 17th saw a trek from the Westport Landing to Westport headed up by Ross Marshall.

Tuesday, November 17th was the annual meeting of Trails Head with the election of officers. New officers are: President, Judy Budde; Vice President, Henry Boppart; Secretary, Eva Allen; and Treasurer, Richard Nelson.

We were also treated to one of the most enjoyable evenings when Ms. Eleanor Craig told us about her trip with four visually-impaired students along the Oregon Trail. Accompanied by the superintendent of the Kansas State School for the Blind and three other adults, Ms. Craig and the students traveled the trail from Kansas City to the Scotts Bluff area and we saw photos and slides of their trip along with the maps that were made for the school to use for further history studies. At one point, the students crossed the Wakarusa by holding onto a chain which two adults held at each end. This was not Ms. Craig's first trip along the trail and her love of the trail is very obvious when you talk with or listen to her. She intends to go again next year, but she wants to go further this time with more students.

-- Judy Budde

KANZA

The KANZA Chapter has held two events and one gathering during the fall and early winter.

One event was the KANZA Friend of the Trail award ceremony. Rachel Huninghake received this award in September. Rachel was congratulated by KANZA members as being the local award as well as a national award recipient.

In conjunction with the announcement of this award was the unveiling of an OCTA bronze plaque. This plaque has now been placed at the S.M. Marshall gravesite that exists on Mrs. Huninghake's private land.

(A note to readers is that almost all the land in the state of Kansas belongs to private landowners unlike many of the western states where trail remnants exist on government lands.)

Unfortunately, plans had to be changed at the last minute as the weather did not cooperate so the dedication could be done at the gravesite.

In November, the KANZA Chapter had its annual Thanksgiving dinner and election of officers in Blue Rapids, KS. Over forty persons were in attendance to consume the turkey, fixins, and the desserts.

Elected officers for 1999 are Michael Philbrick, president; Charles Wicket, vice-president; Rosemary Forst, secretary; James Bradley, treasurer; and Ernest White, director. Duane Iles remains as director and past president Ken Martin becomes the third director.

The December meeting was a gathering at the Hollenberg Pony Express Station where the Friends of the Station hold an annual Christmas weekend at the station stoking up the fireplace and wood cookstove.

In the warm and cozy environment the participants, some dressed in period garb, gained a hint of yesteryear and life during a Kansas territory winter. The punch, cookies, and fresh popped popcorn were enjoyed by all.

In addition, several members of the KANZA Chapter took the opportunity and made the trek into Nebraska territory to attend the CMP meeting held at Lincoln.

- Michael Philbrick

MORE NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

Northwest

The Northwest Chapter held an informal meeting in October which was attended by 34 members at the Discovery Center in The Dalles Gorge to discuss the challenge cost-share proposal, a report on trail marking in the Pendleton area, MET procedures and applicability to projects, documentation objectives, guidelines for Preservation officers, and future activities.

After welcoming the group to the beautiful Discovery Center building, Dave Welch discussed the cost-share activities. Previous grants were used to buy carsonite posts and the driver to install them, and to cover travel and lodging expenses sustained by volunteers. The latest grant covers more posts and supplies, reimbursement of travel/lodging and documentation of the "Pendleton" area trail.

Vic Bolon reported on trail marking, stating that the trail had been marked by USFS. Some markers were gone and some posts were missing, but have been replaced. Vic expressed appreciation for the assistance of Jack Evans in locating the trail. Olie Mac Dougle and Dan Peterman were also singled out for helping members and material get as close to the trail as possible, due to their local knowledge.

The GPS has been very helpful in establishing trail marker locations. Maps using GPS information will be drawn when the chapter has the ability to download this information from the GPS. It is a goal to get field data on maps via computer.

Vic stated that from Meacham on, the route is uncertain to Deadman Pass; from Deadman Pass westward to Pendleton it is on the reservation and OCTA is unable to work there at this time. Mac and Dixie Temple, local landowners, will facilitate trail marking from Pendleton to Echo. Since the trail in this area crosses cultivated ground, posts will be located where the trail crosses a road, with the landowner's permission.

The marking schedule will be coordinated by Vic with Mac Temple when "the wheat is 6-8 inches high" and the trail shows up clearly. Dick Ackerman mentioned a trail branch that goes around to the south and rejoins the main trail near Well Springs. Vic asked Dick to act as an intermediary with the Navy, which he agreed to do. Roger Blair and Susan Doyle spoke of at least three routes leaving the present-day Pendleton area, exiting the river. These routes varied, depending on the decade and the river course. Railroad survey maps were suggested as resources.

Those in attendance also discussed MET (Mapping Emigrant Trails) procedures and applicability to the mapping project. Resources available include maps and surveyor notes and the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center Website. The Chapter may consider purchase of a metal detector to facilitate its research. Diaries are other possible research sources. The NWOCTA Chapter owns three sets of 1:24,000 (7.5 min. quad) USGS maps which are available for member use.

- Suzanne Hornbuckle

Rachael Huninghake Honored



Friend of the Trail Rachel Huninghake

Rachael Huninghake, one of the 1998 recipients of OCTA's "Friends of the Trail" Award was honored with a dinner and reception in Westmoreland, Kansas in September, sponsored by the KANZA.

The chapter honored Rachael and her family with a dinner. The public was invited to attend the dedication of a plaque which is to be placed on the grave of S.M. Marshall, which is located in Mrs. Huninghake's pasture.

Chapter Vice President Mike Philbrick gave the welcome; Ernie White, KANZA Preservation Officer, unveiled the grave marker; and Arleta Martin, presented the "Friends of the Trail" plaque read a congratulatory letter to Rachael from Jere Krakow of the National Park Service. Ken Martin then presented Rachael with a wooden plaque, made from wood of the Louis Vieux Elm, on behalf of the KANZA Chapter.

On a display table were 8 x 10 photos of the sites in Mrs. Huninghake's pasture. This property is included in the list of high potential sites in the Comprehensive Management Plan for the Oregon and California Trails. The site includes a creek crossing, a spring, a campground, S.M. Marshall's grave, a set of swales 12 to 15 feet deep, and — going over the hill — swales seven wide!

The reception was arranged by Della White and Rosemary Forst, co-chairs of the Hospitality Committee, and Marion Bradley. KANZA members attending were: Jim Bradley, Marcia Philbrick, Jim Forst, Duane Durst, Doc and Harriet Maskill, Lloyd and Dorothy Hoobler, Charlie and Mary Wicket, Vern Osborne, Viola Osborne, Wallace Carley, Jeanette Suboter, Charley Taylor, and Alfred and Helen Ericson.

Southwest

By the end of October 15, a Southwest Chapter mapping party had gathered at a parking lot at the Fort Bowie National Historic Site in southeast Arizona to continue trail mapping begun in the spring of 1997.

Participants included Don Buck, Sunnyvale, CA; Tracy and Judy DeVault, Prescott, AZ; Richard and Marie Greene, Angel Fire, NM; Dave Hollecker, Reno, NV; and Harland and Rose Ann Tompkins, Chandler, AZ

The NPS ranger, Larry Ludwig, allowed us to use the facilities of the parking lot as a staging area for the week. Having a level area for camping, water, and most of all, a bathroom with shower and an outlet for recharging various electronic devices, greatly simplified our week.

With dinner over and all rigged for sleeping in their vehicles, we discussed various aspects of the week ahead. Larry had contacted ranchers both east and west of the NHS where the trail moves onto private land and received permission for us to look for the trail on their land.

Over the next week, we continued to map this alternative route of the Southern Trail to California, both east and west of Apache Pass. We filled in gaps we had not finished on our previous trip, and moved beyond those areas in both directions. One day was spent on the area between the supposed Butterfield Station site and Apache Pass. By using the existing marked Butterfield Trail as a general route, the most likely emigrant route was mapped. We found that the emigrant trail is seldom on the present day marked hiking route.

One interesting aspect of the day was to find the place where a photograph had been taken in the 1930s. This photograph appears as Plate 61 in the three-volume set, "The Butterfield Overland Mail 1857-1859" by Roscoe and Margaret Conkling (Arthur Clark Co., 1947). The spot was located successfully and we noted that the very good swale in the photograph had been totally destroyed by the present day gravel road to the pass.

On Sunday, October 18, we conducted a chapter event, a hike up Siphon Canyon through an area we mapped during our mapping week in 1987. Several were shown the trail as we had mapped it, and we also visited a piece of trail that had been mapped only a few days before.

The next day, Larry Ludwig guided us into the area west of Apache Pass. Trail evidence was found as we mapped through a saddle into the flats beyond. An interesting grouping of rock walls was found in the saddle, their origin and use are unknown.

We had planned to map through Wednesday, October 21st, however, rain showers began Tuesday night. A morning rainbow and some sun during breakfast gave us hope for clearing, but the dark clouds returned. The decision was made to cancel this last day of mapping and all headed home.

The chapter has now completed 44 person weeks and three years of trail mapping. Our skills continue to get better. Five GPS units were available for use (almost 500 waypoints were

collected during the week), and we all had FSR radios to facilitate communication when we were out of sight of each other. Digital cameras are being used by several.

The trail in this area has now been mapped from roughly the mouth of Emigrant Canyon (Sec. 3, T15S, R29E) to west of Wood Canyon (Sec. 5, T15S, R28E), approximately 12 miles. Based on local information supplied by Larry Ludwig, historic military records, GLO and other historic maps, and emigrant diaries, there are multiple trails in the area.

At least two trails come from the east, the early route coming to the pass from the San Simon Cienega to the east, and the later route coming from Doubtful Canyon to the northeast. They converge to go up Siphon Canyon and through Apache Pass. The routes divide again west of the pass. One route headed southwest towards Sulphur Springs and then northwest to Dragoon Springs while the other headed northwest and then west across the Wilcox Playa to Dragoon Springs.

These routes were no doubt used by traveling Indians and then received heavy usage from the time of the 49ers until the present day, including various stage lines (the Butterfield being one), military use before and during the time of the fort, and continuing freight and ranch use. Sorting out the various trail routes through this area is difficult as we have found various alternates which undoubtedly stem from different time periods.

Although the Butterfield Trail is marked through the NHS with wooden markers and some interpretive markers, this area could certainly lend itself to some kind of marking by OCTA, in order to educate the public to the fact that emigrants also used this route.

The weekend of January 23-24, 1999 will be a chapter trip into the border history of Columbus, NM. We will meet at the K-Mart parking lot in Deming, NM at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday morning. For more information on this trip, contact Peter Bennett. phone (520) 888-6553, email floraaz@aol.com.

- Rose Ann Tompkins

Upcoming Activities

Events sponsored by OCTA Chapters or of interest to OCTA members. Schedule subject to change. If no contact name is provided, contact individual chapters for details.

January 29 - Southwest Chapter Outing in Deming, New Mexico, including Review of Pancho Villa's raid.
Contact: Peter Bennett (520) 888-6553.

February 20-21, 1999 - CA/NV Chapter Winter Symposium, Redding. Contact: Charles Little (916) 221-8646

March 5-6 - OCTA Board of Directors, Mid-Year Board Meeting, Independence, Missouri.

March 14 - Tri-State Meeting hosted by KANZA Chapter, Marysville, Kansas.

What's Up In Chico?

The 1999 OCTA National Convention will be held in Chico, California, August 11-14. With this issue, we start previewing some of the attractions and events scheduled for the convention.

Early Reservations Suggested

Early reservations are being advised for those who plan to attend the OCTA Convention in Chico, Calif., August 11-14.

Convention organizers say that motel/hotel rooms could be in short supply because Chico is a university town and there are other events scheduled in Chico at the same time as the convention.

Blocks of rooms have been set aside for OCTA at the Oxford Suites, Holiday Inn and Best Western Heritage Inn. Mention OCTA when you call.

Here is a list of accommodations located in Chico, with price ranges and phone numbers:

Hotels

AmeriHost (\$54-\$89) 530-824-5200
 Best Western Heritage Inn (\$50-\$59) 530-894-8600
 Holiday Inn (\$69-\$75) 530-345-2491
 Oxford Suites (\$69-\$73) 530-899-9090

Motels

Budget Inn (\$30+) 530-342-9472
 Deluxe Inn (\$30-\$45) 530-342-8386
 Matador Hotel (\$30-\$45) 530-342-7543
 Motel Orleans (\$30-\$45) 530-345-2533
 Motel 6 (\$30-\$45) 530-345-5500
 Safari Golden Motel (\$30-\$45) 530-343-3201
 Thunderbird Motel (\$30-\$45) 530-343-7911
 Town House Motel (\$30-\$45) 530-343-1621
 Vagabond Inn (\$44-\$51) 530-895-1323

Bed & Breakfasts

Esplanade Bed & Breakfast (\$65-\$85) 530-345-8084
 The Grateful Bed (\$80-\$110) 530-342-2464
 Johnson's Country Inn (\$60+) 530-345-7829
 L'Abri Bed & Breakfast (\$60+) 530-893-0824
 Music Express Inn (\$55+) 530-345-8376

"Gold Field" Donations Sought

"The Luck of the Draw" will be filled with anticipation for people as they "pan for gold" at the Chico Convention! You can make your own personal strike by buying tickets at the drawing booth for a chance to win interesting and exciting items! Books of yesteryear, western shirts, abundant baskets of California olives, walnuts, rice and almonds, hand-crafted emigrant dolls, covered wagon models, and Native American jewelry are just a few of the many items for which you will be panning! But we need more of your fabulous donations to assure a plentiful "gold" field. If you have a talent or gift to contribute, please contact: Bernadine Scoles, 844 Esplanada Way, Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 858-2748. e-mail: escoles@leland.stanford.edu

- Bernie Scoles

Author Holliday Will Keynote

Speakers have been announced by Ross McClintock (Cal-Nev Chapter) for the Chico Convention. Presentations will be made on Wednesday and on Saturday to allow maximum participation in the convention tours.

This year's keynote speaker will be J.S. Holliday who has authored two outstanding publications about the California Gold Rush: *The World Rushed In*, a truly epic chronicle of the trials and tribulations of traveling the California Trail and working the California gold fields, and *Gold Fever*, a recent publication for the California Sesquicentennial. Holiday is scheduled to speak on Wednesday morning.

OCTA member Joanne Levy will be the keynote speaker for Saturday's presentations. Levy, a resident of the California Gold Rush Country, is the author of *They Saw The Elephant: Women In The California Gold Rush*, a chronicle of the trail west and life in the gold mining camps from the perspective of women who participated in the gold rush, and a recent novel, *Daughter of Joy: A Novel of Gold Rush San Francisco*.

Other speakers about the trails into the California gold fields and the California Gold Rush include Frank and Mary Ann Tortorich, Larry Shiflet, Dick Silva, Mike Gillis, Don Weston, Jacqueline Williams, Jim McClain, Greg MacGregor and Curtis Grant.

Some of the speakers will join other authors for book signings after their programs.

-- Les Kelley

Kids Programs Planned

For the first time, at the Chico Convention next summer there will be activities planned especially for young people 9 to 13 years of age. Round up your children and grandchildren and bring them with you to Chico in August.

Under the leadership of OCTA member Karen March, California Junior High Social Studies Teacher of the Year last year, and other volunteers, the younger set will be invited to make pioneer music and to take part in a variety of crafts, trail games and gold-seeking adventures.

All of these activities will take place at the Elks Club convention center during the time that adult convention attendees will be listening to papers.

On your registration form there will be spaces to include the names and ages of young folks accompanying you to Chico. Please be sure to fill in that information to help us plan.

And tell the kids to bring their harmonicas and gold pans if they have them and wear their western clothes. They can join the Gold Rush to Chico in 1999 too!!!

-- Carol March

Oregon Boy Scouts Revisit the Emigrant Trail

By Chuck Fisk

Almost 155 years to the month where the great emigration along the Oregon Trail of 1843 took place, eight Boy Scouts and an Explorer from Troop 485 of Opportunity, WA, hiked 40 miles and paddled 20 miles to earn the bronze "level" medal offered by Cascade Pacific Council of Portland, Oregon.

The Troop decided to mount a massive, concentrated effort in the week of August 22-28, instead of dividing the hikes and paddle into several weekends, because of the distances involved.

So it was, with super support from six adult leaders, that the Scouts walked in many places directly in the old ruts left by the covered wagons so many years ago.

There are only some seventy sites along the entire 2,000 miles of the Trail where this can be done, and most are far-shorter than the forty miles in the Blue Mountains between La Grande and Pendleton.

In places, however, the route has become so over-grown that considerable "bush-whacking" was necessary, especially in blow-down areas. For the most part the segments were on the open, wind-swept, "cheat grass"-covered ridges.

The hiking portion of the trek was divided into two 10-mile and one 20-mile segments. On the first 10-miler, the Scouts found several artifacts (bolts, nuts, and square-cut nails) which had fallen from ancient covered wagons. They also visited the USFS Blue Mountain Crossing Interpretive Center.

The second 10-miler required considerable scrambling through brush and some compass work to find the way. Highlights were passing through Meacham ("capital" of the United States for a day in 1923 when President Warren Harding declared it so on an 80th Anniversary visit) and Emigrant Springs State Park.

The next day was a "lay-over" day, although the Troop hiked five miles of the 20-mile segment in order to lessen time hiking in the heat of the Umatilla River valley the next day. A visit to the Umatilla Tribe's Tamastlikt Cultural Center near Pendleton and finding a fine swimming hole in the Grande Ronde River were special events of the day.

The remainder of the 20-miler led over Deadman Summit and down the Kanine Ridge across the Tribal reservation to the Bureau of Indian Affairs Agency in Mission, four miles east of Pendleton.

Although the temperature rose to 102 degrees, the Troop started early enough to avoid the worst of it. In picking up aluminum cans along the route some of the Scouts earned \$25 from Oregon's five-cent rebate per container program.

On Thursday, the Troop moved from its USFS campsite at Bird Track Springs near Hilgard Junction to the Vernita Bridge area on the Columbia River. Although not on the original Oregon Trail route, the 52-mile Hanford Reach is the longest free-flowing stretch of the Columbia River and most closely resembles the swift current encountered by the emigrants below The Dalles, but with none of the rapids on the scale they faced.

The Troop was granted special dispensation to paddle this portion instead of on the Willamette River, again due to distance involved. Enroute to Vernita Bridge the Troop visited Fort Walla Walla, which has a wonderful collection of historic buildings moved to the site. Five modern buildings are filled with exciting displays including original cells from the State Penitentiary.

Friday proved to be a clear, hot and windless day, which made for ideal paddling conditions. The miles passed swiftly, as flocks of Canada geese, white pelicans, great blue herons, American mergansers and other waterfowl lined the shoreline. All along the way the grim plutonium factories reminded the Scouts of what was once one of the most secret places in the United States.

The ancient White Bluffs, some 200 feet high, concluded the paddle about noon. The Troop arrived home about six o'clock, a bit blistered and sun-burnt, but proud of having followed successfully in the footsteps and on the water the route of the hardy emigrants of 1843 and later.

Some of the Scouts may seek to earn the silver medal for 100 miles, or even the gold for 200 miles at some later date.

Any Troop that might enjoy joining in with Troop 485, or that wishes to get data about the Trail is encouraged to contact Scoutmaster Mike Everett for further information.

Participating Scouts were Craig Blakesley (SPL), Ned Blakesley (PL), Jonathan Everett, Adam Ramer, Josh Levi, Josh Reisenour, Mike Hernandez, Perry Failing and Explorer Kate Blakesley (who also served as an able lifeguard).

Adult support for the numerous shuttles, supply and hiking was provided by SM Mike Everett, Unit Commissioner Chuck Fisk, and parents Pat and Darrel Blakesley, and Cheri and Doug Ramer.

Chuck Fisk is a member of the Northwest Chapter of OCTA.

Papers Sought For Kansas City

The Trails Head Chapter has issued a call for papers to be presented at the National Convention scheduled for Kansas City in August, 2000.

The convention will focus on the role the greater Kansas City area played in the westward movement between the 1820s and the 1860s.

Topics may include, but are not limited to, the roles of area communities as outfitters and jumping-off places, competition among area towns, the influence on overland emigration by Missouri and Kansas Indian tribes, U.S. military forts and strategies, women, trail blazers and guides, steamboat and wagon travel, and geographical and climatic features.

The length of each paper should be around 40 minutes. Abstracts are requested by September 1, 1999. Send queries and comments to Mary Conrad, 3900 N. 55th Street, Kansas City KS 66104, phone (913) 287-4405. -- Mary Conrad

Louis Vieux

(Continued From Page 8)

leaving in 1836 to settle near Council Bluffs, Iowa, where they stayed about 10 years, then moved on to Kansas.

"They did not want to come here. It was foreign to them, but they put down roots and when the band split up they stayed when some moved to Oklahoma," Susan said. The Potawatomi who took allotments offered by the government in Oklahoma became known as the Citizen Band of the Potawatomis. Those who chose to stay in Kansas became known as the Prairie Band of the Potawatomis.

Susan is in disagreement with those who refer to the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Oklahoma. "There are seven recognized bands (and one more that will be recognized in the future) of the Potawatomi and together they are the Potawatomi Nation," Susan said.

When Louis Vieux died he left a 200-page will, she said. "He owned about half of Louisville and about half of Belvue and a lot of the land in between." Susan said. The will shows who got what, including a number of grist mills Louis Vieux owned in the area. His heirs included several adopted children. He is well known in the area for operating the toll crossing on the Vermillion River near the cemetery and the historic Louis Vieux Elm Tree. "He charged the settlers \$1 per wagon to cross, but charged the military 50 cents per wagon. He wanted to stay on their good side," Susan said.

Susan said she planned to call her father, who has three first cousins who are still alive and very involved with the family

cemetery. "I feel like my family has been violated and, in a way, I have been violated too," Susan said.

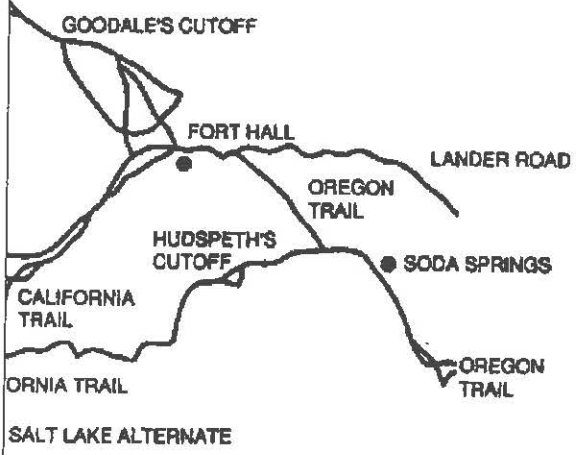
She went on to say, she hoped the incident was not racially motivated. "I hope they didn't read about the Trail of Death Caravan and do this knowing we would be here. We have run into racism on the caravan, including a mayor of a small town in Missouri. The world is getting too small for that," Susan said.

The relocation of 859 of the Potawatomi from their home in Indiana 660 miles to just outside Osawatomie, KS, involved a 61 day march. "There were 40 who were known to have died, but there were definitely more. Records show only 600 arrived at the Sugar Creek Mission outside Osawatomie," Susan said. She added, "For the past two weeks I have been speaking to people of what it means to be Potawatomi and encouraging people to appreciate what it means... I was looking forward to this time to be able to stop for a while, go to the cemetery and pray. I feel like I have lost that now." Eric corrected her, "You didn't lose it. It was taken away from you."

Submitted by Jim Bradley. A fund has been established to help with the restoration. Checks can be sent to the Rural Preservation Committee; c/o Linda Tessendorf; 20550 Neuchatel Road; Onaga, KS 66521. For more information, you can visit www.rutnut.com/mvoca/vieuxvandalism.html, a webpage compiled by OCTA's Tom Laidlaw.

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The Reading Trail



by Lyndia Carter

While we were raising our family, Robert and I used to take the kids with us on vacations to historic places. As parents, we told ourselves the trips would broaden their horizons, make them better people by learning about our country's past, and give us all very special time together. The trips did all that and more. But down deep inside, Robert and I knew that we were indulging ourselves, expressing our own deep love of history and giving in to a passionate addiction, hoping the kids might also learn to appreciate that passion.

We traveled the trails, camped out or stayed in quaint, off-the-main-road motels. We experienced the West and Midwest, including Illinois and Missouri. We stopped at every historic marker and site, spent hours in museums and antique stores. Our children put up with it and even (to make us feel good) acted like they were enjoying themselves and having a good time, except for those occasional days when we utterly wore out their patience by staying overly long in some museum. Basically kind-hearted, they were good sports. They indulged us, as all good children should their poor, aging parents, who, in the kids' opinion, were losing their grip on reality.

Of course, there were always the books we took along or purchased on the way. As we drove along, we read together, learning about the trails, the places, the people, the events, and the times. They learned and so did we; we grew closer to each other and America's past. But, wouldn't you know it, not one of the four grew up to embrace our love of history, even though we exposed them plenty to the incurable disease. They somehow became immune to the bug. (They would probably claim that such was the result of overexposure.)

Years passed and they took their own paths. Then our youngest, Thea, married. Fortunately, Brad loves history, as well as our daughter. If she had known the full implications of this, she might have backed out of the relationship while there was still time. Lucky for us, she didn't. And now the family history vacations have started again. This time they are three-generational and every bit as fun for us as they used to be.

We took our first trip together last summer. Brad, Thea, and seven-year-old Chaz flew out from California, and the five of us, plus luggage and stacks of books, packed into our car, and headed out for Wyoming and Nebraska. On our itinerary were sites on the Oregon Trail, such as Deer Creek, Casper, the ruts near Guernsey, and Fort Laramie in Wyoming, and though not related to the Oregon Trail, five days at the restored Fort Robinson State Park in northwestern Nebraska. Just like in the "good old days" of Thea's childhood, we read as we went, and talked about history and "stuff;" played verbal travel games together and picnicked out of a lunch box. We learned, and grew close to each other packed together in the car for hours. It was more than wonderful! We shared the ruts, trail lore, the scenery, and the forts with our extended family.

Our destination, Fort Robinson, is a marvelous place. Steeped in history and dating from the plains Indian wars, it is

an ideal place to visit, offering a myriad of activities without the frenzy and crowds of an amusement park. And I'll tell you what pure pleasure is: It is being a grandparent watching the delight of a seven-year-old boy discovering his first melodrama! Chaz was enthralled. I do believe Robert and I, who love live theater, had more fun watching Chaz watch the melodrama than we have ever had in watching any play we have seen anywhere.

But what does all this have to do with The Reading Trail? By now, you are likely feeling that I've taken a bad cut-off and my mind has become confused by thirst and the blazing sun. I digress, but I'm not lost. On this trip I learned something about trail-related books and seven-year-old boys. There just isn't much out there that really makes the connection. Chaz, following family tradition, was tolerant and didn't complain too much as we read together some of the trail books I had brought along in the big green bag. But the spark just wasn't there. When he and his dad read the book about life at the forts on the trail, he showed some genuine pleasure – it was a man kind of thing and they liked it. When Chaz read some others with Grandma, some of which I have recommended in The Reading Trail, part of the joy was missing. But when we read other books which I had brought for him for pleasure and relaxation, he became more enthusiastic and involved.

What was the difference? It was simple – fun! The other books were imaginative, cleverly written, humorous, highly-illustrated and colorful. They related to a child's sense of fantasy and joy; they met and reflected a young child's interests. I realized that some wonderful books in the green bag would just have to wait a year or two. Reading for pre-readers and beginning readers must, above all, be a joy, full of visual, verbal and mental pleasure. If these "picture" books just happen to contain covered wagons, trails, emigrant children, Native Americans, horses and oxen, so much the better.

It wasn't until a few weeks after we had returned from our family trek that I discovered a marvelous "picture book" about the westward migration. There it was, just sitting on a library shelf – lively, light-hearted text, fascinating, bright pictures, and covered wagons, emigrants, buffalo, and dancing grizzly bears. Yes, you read me right – there's a dancing grizzly bear – he also plays the bass in the trail band! *Dance, Pioneer, Dance*, cleverly written by Rick Walton and delightfully illustrated by Brad Teare, catches the imagination of youngsters and takes them to a squaw dance party on the trail. And of course, the animals, both wild and tame, join in with the emigrants' fun. The bouncy rhythm of the words keeps the kids swinging with the dancers; the pictures are so enchanting young readers can look at them countless times and find new fun, especially in the antics of the animals, such as lizards, prairie dogs, bears, horses, goats and pigs, who dance and play instruments. This charmer, published by Deseret Book in 1997 in celebration of the Mormon Trail sesquicentennial, can be

equally enjoyable for children of all backgrounds and locales. Brigham Young calls the square dance moves and the train is bound for "Zion," but otherwise the story line fits any emigrant train on the trails west. A brief, factual account of the first Mormon wagon train follows the story, *Dance, Pioneer, Dance*, best suited for three to seven-year-olds (but it will also tickle grown-up imaginations), can be ordered for \$14.95 from Deseret Books (P.O. Box 30178, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84130).

Well, the Carter clan is already making plans for next summer's trek. If all goes well, the five of us are heading for Northern California. I'm now on the lookout for great books for kids about the California Trail and the Gold Rush to take in the green bag. I'll keep you posted on my finds. Meanwhile, let me share a couple of books about the Oregon Trail.

Any child who has been adopted by a stray cat will enjoy taking the trail to Oregon with Kate Purdy and Snuggs. *Pioneer Cat*, written by William Hooks and illustrated by Charles Robinson, is great reading for independent readers aged eight to eleven, or as a read-aloud with children a little younger. Kate resents going west and being separated from her best friend, but then she meets Snuggs, the cat. She cleverly devises a way to smuggle her furry friend along. During the journey, she is befriended, like it or not, by Rosie, experiences a buffalo stampede, witnesses an Indian encounter turned dangerous by an emigrant's hostile action, nearly drowns during a river crossing, and learns to let a new best friend into her heart. Naturally, Snuggs is mixed-up in all of Kate's adventures. Girls will find this story especially interesting, but boys can also relate to Kate and her brother Duffy. Robinson's illustrations enhance Hooks' excellent narrative of the journey, emigrant childhood, and friendship. The length, 63 pages, vocabulary, and subject matter are just right for young readers. *Pioneer Cat* is a Stopping Stone Book (New York: Random House, 1988) and is available for \$3.99 in many bookstores that carry juvenile literature.

For readers in the middle grades (5-6) and junior high (7-9), the book *Across the Wide and Lonesome Prairie*, masterfully written by Kristiana Gregory, provides an excellent opportunity for adolescents and pro-adolescents to vicariously take the overland trek to Oregon. Parents and grandparents will find this book a wonderful way to entice their youngsters into experiencing the westward movement while learning important values on the way. *Across the Wide and Lonesome Prairie* is the Oregon Trail diary of fictional Hattie Campbell, aged 13.

Hattie's account is more than a trail story. It is also the chronicle of a young girl's inner maturation. While traveling west, Hattie learns to overcome prejudice, to see people for what they are on the inside, not their outward appearance. She learns to accept responsibility and cope with tragedy. She finds the importance of friendship, kindness, and sharing. And, like every adolescent, she wonders about love. Her journey of self-discovery is an integral part of her physical journey across America by covered wagon in 1847. Hardship, death, and loss test her emotional strength. Her wagon train is a community on wheels with a rich variety of characters. The people and events seem very real and personal to the reader. One hundred fifty years separate Hattie and today's young people, yet they will find themselves caught up in her problems and feelings. Despite a couple of historical errors (such as use of the trail to California through Utah in 1847 and Jim Bridger being at his fort), Gregory accurately depicts trail life. In light of her excellent plot, remarkable cast of characters, and realistic setting, her few minor mistakes are forgivable. Read it for your own enjoyment before giving it to the kids and you'll see what I mean. *Across the Wide and Lonesome Prairie*, (New York: Scholastic Books, 1997), is part of the Dear America Series. You can likely find this book in most school or public libraries or purchase it in bookstores for \$9.95.

Thanks for joining the kids and me on the Reading Trail. It's, a fun route to travel!



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