



Martin's Cove Lease Approved

By Candy Moulton

Federal legislation approved in late November and expected to be signed by President George W. Bush will allow the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to lease Martin's Cove in central Wyoming, although terms of the lease have not yet been established.

The 25-year lease was included in an amendment to the Energy and Water Development appropriations bill. Wyoming Sen. Craig Thomas said he had opposed a 99-year lease for the property but supported the shorter lease term because it will still provide for public access. He called it "a good agreement for Wyoming."

The LDS Church considers the site hallowed ground. In 1856 about 150 Utah-bound Mormons

died nearby when their handcart caravan became stranded by winter weather. The site itself is U.S. Bureau of Land Management property but had been operated under an agreement with the BLM under a lease that expired in 2001, according to reports in the *Casper Star-Tribune* and *Deseret News*.

The church attempted to purchase 1,640 acres of BLM land, but after strong public opposition asked for a 99-year lease. Thomas offered instead a 25-year lease for a 940-acre parcel. Church officials have said they are satisfied with the legislation.

Although there is a time frame for the lease, the specific terms were not expected to be finalized by the Department of Interior and the LDS Church until the president signed the bill. Opponents to the lease now want a public comment period before it actually goes into effect.

Emigrant Historic Trails Study Act still before Congress

By Bill and Jeanne Watson
OCTA Trail Liaison

Congress has been tied up for months and is finally completing passage of the 13 different Federal Fiscal Year 2004 operating budgets. Meanwhile, OCTA constituents of House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill) and House Resources Chairman Richard Pombo (R-CA) have urged them to support HR-1051 — The Emigrant Historic Trails Studies Act.

Our House sponsors and OCTA have done everything possible to move HR-1051 this fall. Now, the sponsors advise us that we must wait until Congress returns in early January 2004. Similar to HR-1051, the Willing Seller bill also has to wait until January but there is no House sponsor for that bill.

This is the mid-point of the two-year 108th Congress so HR-1051 does not have to be

Continued on Page 20



News From The Plains

Editor

Candy Moulton
Star Route Box 29
Encampment, WY
82325
307/327-5465
nfpocta@aol.com

Contributing Editors

Bill Martin
Richard Pingrey
Kathy Conway
Travis Boley

Oregon-California Trails Association

News From the Plains
is published quarterly
by the
Oregon - California
Trails Association

P.O. Box 1019
Independence, MO
64051-0519
888/811-6282
816/836-0989 (Fax)
octa@indepmo.org

Copyright, 2004

Masthead Photo Courtesy of
Denver Public Library

OCTA is a 501 (c) (3)
Not For Profit Organization

Fort Vancouver Convention **Diverse Tours to Highlight Fort Vancouver Convention**

**By David Welch
Convention Chair**

From the convention site on the Columbia River near Fort Vancouver, Washington (not British Columbia), we will explore the history of the local native culture, Lewis and Clark's visit, the fur trade and the emigrants' arrival through three pre-convention tours and four convention tours during the OCTA Convention in August.

Before our official start, Vic Bolon will lead a pre-convention tour from the Hermiston area, west of Pendleton, to the early end of the overland journey at The Dalles. This two-day auto tour will see extensive ruts, swales and traces in the fields and rolling hills of eastern Oregon.

Chuck and Suzanne Hornbuckle will be leading a one-day auto tour of the Cowlitz Trail from Fort Vancouver to the Olympia area. This is the route of early pioneers into the Puget Sound area. The original route survives as modern roads and highways, testimony to the early traveler's selection of the best route.

The final pre-convention tour will be a one-day escorted tour of Fort Vancouver and Oregon City with Jim Tompkins. At Fort Vancouver you will see a reconstruction of the original trading post with demonstrations of the life of the trapper and trader. The Hudson's Bay Company policy was to divert Americans to the south side of the Columbia River, which gave rise to Oregon City as a trail terminus, particularly with the completion of the Barlow Road. A half-day visit to Oregon City will include visits to local museums and the End of the Trail Interpretive Center (EOTIC). New greatly improved programs at the EOTIC make this visit a must.

Convention tours will include a trip up the Columbia Gorge from Vancouver to The Dalles, which will cover both Lewis and Clark and the pioneers on this segment of the Columbia River. Another tour will take convention attendees from Fort Vancouver to the Pacific Ocean and Fort Clatsop. This will be a Lewis and Clark tour that will include special sites not usually visited. A third tour will cover the Barlow Road from the crest of the Cascades to Oregon City. The fourth convention tour will visit sites in the Willamette Valley where pioneers established their farms and set up the territorial and state governments. Hiking options will be offered with the Barlow Road and Columbia Gorge tours.

The Northwest Chapter invites you to plan to attend the 2004 convention in Vancouver. Registration materials will be mailed in April.

OCTA Convention
August 9-14, 2004
Vancouver, Washington

From the President

Richard Pingrey

rjpingrey@charter.net

OCTA, as an organization, functions on three levels, as a national organization, as a chapter organization, and at the individual member level. All three are vital to the success of the organization but none can exist without the other two. Perhaps the least understood relationship is that which exists between the chapters and the national organization. The first to come to mind in this relationship is coordination and leadership. The national organization, through its professional staff at headquarters, its board of directors, and its officers, makes it possible for the chapters and for individual members to carry out our activities and programs that would otherwise be impossible. If one gives just a little thought to this working relationship it is easy to see why all individual and chapter members need to be members of the national organization. Indeed it is a bylaws requirement for chapter members to also be members of OCTA National.

Thanks to the dedicated work of our OCTA friends and members in Nebraska it appears that new life is returning to that chapter. By early next year a Nebraska Chapter of OCTA should be a reality. A lot of credit needs to be given to Chapters Chairman Ross Marshall, Association Manager Travis Boley and OCTA Board Member Jim Denney. None the less, in the final analysis it is the Nebraska OCTA members who are making it happen.

For several years OCTA's membership has not grown or has even decreased. Growing our membership is vital to achieving our objectives. I am pleased to announce that OCTA has a new National Membership Chairperson. Joyce Bolerjack of Bellevue, Washington, has accepted the assignment. Joyce has served as Northwest Chapter Treasurer and Membership Secretary for a number of years and brings a great deal of experience and dedication to the position. Membership development is a key goal for me personally as it is for our new Association Manager, Travis Boley. Recruiting new members and retaining existing members is a job for every OCTA member. If we all simply remembered to bring a friend to every OCTA activity we attend

we would be doing a lot toward the goal of increasing our membership significantly.

I would also like to announce that we have filled another national position that has been vacant for quite a long time. Arleta Martin of Oketo, Kansas, has volunteered to take over the duties of the position of OCTA's National Historian. Many of us got to know and appreciate Arleta and Ken Martin while attending the Manhattan, Kansas, convention this past summer.

Both Joyce and Arleta need help in carrying out the responsibilities of their positions. You need not live near them to be able to provide assistance. Here is an opportunity to be of service without the need to spend a lot of time or to do a lot of traveling. I am sure they would like to hear from you if you have ideas and can be of assistance. Both are listed in the 2003 OCTA membership roster.

One final comment. No one person has all the good ideas. Accomplishing our goals requires the efforts of many working together. When I was flying as a Pan-Am or United Airlines pilot we sometimes defined an airplane as a collection of parts more or less flying in close formation. We tried to keep that formation as tight as possible. The same is true for OCTA. We are a large collection of parts called members. To be successful and reach our goals we all need to keep in close contact and in the same direction.

Mid-Year Board Meeting

April 16-18

Independence, Missouri

Friday, April 16--Background information on a variety of subjects

Saturday, April 17--Study and meeting

Sunday, April 18--Business meeting

Submit items for the Agenda to:
Richard Pingrey
e-mail: rjpingrey@charter.net

Headquarters Manager's Report

Kathy Conway

KConway@indepmo.org

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2004! Headquarters has a terrific new volunteer.... Her name is Frances Gabbard. Frances had learned of our organization from a class given by John Mark Lambertson (NFTM Director) at the Mid-Continent Library's Genealogy Branch. Because John Mark mentioned our COED program she was immediately interested in our organization. Her two main hobbies are family research and reading! She volunteers not only for OCTA, but also for the Jackson County Historical Society and is currently the Acting Secretary for the Jackson County Genealogy Society. Frances and husband, Gary, live in Independence. She is now retired from Social Security Administration and brings to the table a wealth of excellent administrative skills.

A big thank you to Chapters who advertise OCTA Bookstore items in their newsletter!

Speaking of bookstore items we are pleased to present OCTA's newest video....*Across the Kansas Prairie: Riding on a Modern-Day Wagon Train*. Wagon train enthusiasts trace the footsteps of the pioneers as they ride across prairie and pastureland still graced with remnants of the emigrant trail. This entertaining and educational video follows a modern-day wagon train along the rolling hills of Northeast Kansas. It retails for \$15 plus \$4

shipping and handling. Give us a call, toll free 888/811-6282 to order.

(Also, see OCTA's full page ad elsewhere in this issue for all your Lewis and Clark books).

On another book topic, OCTA received an extensive book collection from the family of the late Carol Pinney Crabb of over 300 books. Carol's son, Richard Crabb, tells us his mother was an avid reader and researcher. She began collecting and researching quilting books and these activities led to the publication of her book *A Patchwork of Pieces*, an anthology of early quilt stories from 1845 to 1940. She branched out from quilts to researching steamboats on the Missouri and the early days of Missouri county fairs and gave lectures on both of these topics. We thank the Crabb family for sharing this collection and know it will form a valuable core for women's studies research (mid-1800's through early 1900's material).

Reminders: Our Annual Fund Raising Drive is off to a good start. As of this writing over 100 members have mailed in their contributions totaling almost \$8,800. This year our campaign runs through the end of March, so there's still time for you to make a difference.

We urge all Chapters to include Headquarters in their newsletter mailings. From these we learn of planned outings, events, newly elected officers and deaths of our members.



2003-2004 OCTA Officers

Richard Pingrey
President
P.O. Box 130
Selah, WA 98942

Vern Gorzitze
Vice President
3026 Metropolitan Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84109

Bernie Rhoades
Secretary
11809 36th St E.
Edgwood, WA 98372

Douglas Brown
Treasurer
218 N. Pleasant
Independence, MO 64050

Dave Welch
National Preservation Officer
102 Chinook Lane
Steilacoom, WA 98388

Association Manager's Report

Travis Boley
Tboley@indepmo.org

Exciting things are afoot in Nebraska! After five years of near-dormancy, the Nebraska Chapter of OCTA is generating renewed interest from all corners of the state, as two reformation meetings were held within a week of each other in early November. Thirteen people came to the Denton meeting to discuss the probabilities of kick-starting the chapter. Denton, a small town located a few miles southwest of Lincoln, is home to the Audubon Society's Spring Creek Site. This site is of importance to OCTA, as the grounds have visible remnants of the Nebraska City to Ft. Kearny cutoff.

OCTA member Greg Nelson of Lincoln organized the meeting and served as the facilitator. Those in attendance enjoyed the treks that the chapter used to take and wanted future treks to be common-place in the revitalized chapter. Many felt that not enough people were willing to fill leadership roles in the chapter and that the same few people were relied upon again and again, eventually wearing them down.

The discussion then turned to future directions. Most in attendance wanted to wait for the next meeting to conclude before making any definite plans. Everyone agreed that all interested parties should come together at a future date to finalize the revitalization of the chapter, with particular attention paid to leadership, dues structure, membership drives, committees, future trek possibilities and marketing.

Twenty-two people came to the November meeting, held at the North Platte Holiday Inn. Some people came from as far away as Denver to hear the discussion. The meeting kicked off with a luncheon, followed by a presentation made by Scottsbluff National Monument's Patty Wagner on William Henry Jackson's lantern slides.

Those in attendance agreed that they wanted to keep Nebraska as one statewide chapter with a co-chairman on the east and west sides of the state for activity planning. Loren Pospisil, site administrator for Chimney Rock, volunteered to be the temporary coordinator for this group, while Carole Meyer of Hastings volunteered to publish the group's

newsletter. Lincoln's Liz Bergstrom suggested that the chapter be renamed the "Great Platte River Road" chapter, though no action was taken on that suggestion at this meeting. The group then decided that a statewide meeting should be called for next spring.

All in all, it appears that Nebraska is well on its way to having an active chapter. The key to keeping the revitalized chapter from stagnating again will be strong leadership and membership recruitment, especially recruitment of younger members. It is absolutely essential to support the Nebraska chapter in all of its endeavors, as so much of OCTA's central core stems from Nebraska. Some of the most readily identifiable trail landmarks can be found here and several key early Nebraska OCTA members called Nebraska home. Here's to wishing the fine people of Nebraska much luck in their future endeavors!

Spring Issue
News From the Plains
Deadline: Feb. 20, 2004

Mormon History Association

Annual Conference

Marriott Hotel

Provo, Utah

May 19-23, 2004

Learn the latest in Mormon History Scholarship
Spend a day with Porter Rockwell
Discover Fort Utah
Study Nineteenth Century Pioneer Architecture

Call 1-888-642-3678 for reservations or visit
www.mhahome.org

Plan now to attend!

Trail Journal

Candy Moulton

NFP Editor
nfpota@aol.com

I was riding a wagon across the Crow Reservation on the Bozeman Trail in 2001 with Howard Boggess, a Crow historian, when discussion turned to his efforts to preserve places sacred to American Indians. Our specific discussion dealt with the Valley of the Chiefs, which he and leaders from a confederation of tribes had been working to protect. Not long before our wagon journey, Boggess, other Crows and Lakota tribal members had testified at Congressional hearings in Washington in a joint effort to safeguard the valley. "We are traditional enemies," Howard told me. "But we have to save the Valley of the Chiefs."

My notes from that day are barely legible, written in pencil in a small blue notebook as we bounced across the trail. But the message resounded with me then and Howard's words still ring true. "I think we need to educate people because that's how we save it," he told me. Indeed. Not only the Valley of the Chiefs, but other cultural sites as well, including our precious trail resources.

In August 2003, I took the long way to the OCTA convention in Kansas, by driving south to the Santa Fe Trail near Dodge City, Kansas, and then following it to Manhattan. When I first struck the trail along U.S. Highway 50 near Cimarron, what

struck me was a highway sign indicating that the highway itself was on the trail. The thought made me incredibly sad as I realized if there was a highway over the trail then the trail was *gone*. True, I could follow the landscape earlier travelers had experienced, and there was one interpretive area where I could actually see the trail as it rolled over the Kansas hills. But precious swales had been obliterated.

I live in southern Wyoming where I report for the *Casper Star-Tribune* on a variety of natural resource issues. I see the increasing number of applications for development projects along the route of the Overland and Cherokee Trails from Elk Mountain west to Fort Bridger. There also are a plethora of projects along the Oregon-Mormon Pioneer-California Trail and various cutoffs, particularly in the area west of South Pass and throughout all of western and southwestern Wyoming. Development—both ongoing and for the future—in the Jonah Field west of Pinedale, Wyoming, is so intense there are serious air quality concerns. If the air above is impacted, just imagine the ground below. OCTA members must be vigilant and OCTA leadership must never flag in the mission of trail preservation.

From the Mailbag

To Rut Nuts Everywhere

Dear OCTA Membership:

It was a wonderful surprise to discover that OCTA had awarded me a Distinguished Service Award at the Manhattan, Kansas, annual meeting. I want to thank the membership. In looking back on all the trail projects I have ever been involved in, what strikes me the most is the deep and unwavering commitment from OCTA members to make all those endeavors successes. Nothing I've ever undertaken in this realm was done without partners and the tremendous support of the OCTA membership. So, I

hope you will forgive me if I accept this award on behalf of all of those who have ever loved a segment of trail enough to get involved in its long-term preservation. The award would have better been inscribed to "rut nuts everywhere" rather than this humble public servant who was lucky enough to have hundreds of helping hands when they were most needed. My hat is off to each and every one of you. Until we meet again on the trail...

Terry Del Bene
Green River, Wyoming

Unrelenting Pressure On Trails

Editor's Note: This letter was sent originally to the directors & officers of the Oregon-California Trails Association, and others. In addition to serving on the Internet Committee, Lesley Wischmann has been an OCTA Board Member.

Dec. 1, 2003

Dear OCTA:

Following months of reflection and consideration, I have decided that I will not be renewing my OCTA membership. Since I have been a member for more than fifteen years and an active volunteer for about as long, I believe I owe the organization an explanation for my decision. I offer this in hopes it might prompt some inner reflection in an organization that has meant much to me.

For the last couple of years, I have watched with increasing concern as the trails of central Wyoming have come under increasing and unrelenting pressure from both the rapid expansion of mining interests and the equally rapid escalation of trail commercialization. As many of you know, I was actively involved in the fight against the unprecedented sale of Martin's Cove, a national historic landmark along the common trail corridor in central Wyoming, to the LDS Church. The proposed sale created a remarkable outcry from the population of Wyoming. For months, debate over the sale dominated the letters to the editor pages of the Casper Star-Tribune. Public pressure forced a U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee to hold a public hearing in Casper and while OCTA submitted a formal letter opposing the sale, they did not speak out publicly against the sale. Eventually, the controversy over the proposed sale attracted national media attention but OCTA remained silent, not even lending support to those of us who were fighting this unprecedented sale of public lands to a private, religious entity.

When I asked to post OCTA's formal letter of opposition on OCTA's own website, I was told that it would be better if I didn't. Our official opposition would remain a secret, even to many of our own members. Despite chairing OCTA's Internet committee and maintaining that website, I had to create an alternative website and mailing list to keep concerned people — including many OCTA members

— up-to-date on developments regarding the proposed sale of Martin's Cove. <<http://ProtectRockyRidge.org>> Last week, we learned that Congress had included language mandating a 25-year lease of 970 acres surrounding Martin's Cove to the LDS Church in an appropriations bill that President Bush is expected to sign this week. Many details remain to be worked out. While public access is ensured, this lease also guarantees that the increasing pilgrimage treks which have already seriously compromised stretches of trail in central Wyoming will continue apace. During our short summer of 2003, more than 80,000 visitors registered to use the fragile trail resources in this region.

This summer, it became apparent that the increasing LDS commercialization of the trails now threatens the integrity of Independence Rock. An estimated 50,000 LDS members climbed the rock this summer, holding mass prayer services in the same spot several times each day. Scrambling rapidly up and down the Rock, they evinced little apparent regard for this precious resource. Meanwhile, the burdens on the Rock are clear to all. The parking lot is overwhelmed, trash accumulates too rapidly to be collected, historic signatures are endangered by careless disregard, and many visitors now feel intimidated from climbing and enjoying the Rock. Many Wyoming residents are deeply alarmed by these developments and the Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department has begun to look into the problem. Yet OCTA remains silent.

The overwhelming burden on Rocky Ridge exerted by the LDS pilgrims has created an untenable situation for that stretch of trail. The BLM has yet to work out a long-term special recreation permit with the church. Last summer, they permitted 7,500 pilgrims to make the trek, down from 12,000 in 2002. A string of porta-potties now dots this formerly pristine stretch of trail. A long-time OCTA member who has traveled this route many times in the past reported this summer, "Rocky Ridge is gone. We should call it Sandy Hills now." Nonetheless, until the final permits are granted, the impact to this area can be mitigated with appropriate effort.

Meanwhile, the threats to the trail extend well beyond this stretch in central Wyoming. The rapid

Continued on Next Page

Unrelenting Pressure

Continued from Previous Page

and rampant expansion of oil and gas drilling throughout Wyoming threatens trail resources on the main trail corridor, the Overland Trail, the Sublette Cutoff, and the Lander Road. While Dave Welch is doing an admirable job trying to oversee these developments, he receives precious little support. I watched in dismay as WY OCTA undercut Dave's efforts in their newsletter and elsewhere. Despite OCTA's claims to be dedicated to trail preservation and the fact that local chapters are to operate under the rubric of the national organization, I have seen little evidence of national support for OCTA's National Preservation Officer against these unwarranted attacks.

Most recently, I was appalled to read in the *Casper Star-Tribune* that one of OCTA's national directors had suggested publicly that OCTA needed to "pick one" of the Overland Trail routes for protection while ignoring all alternatives. I also understand that, at this same public meeting in Rawlins, the efforts of the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office to develop a multimedia website to educate the public about the history of Wyoming's trails were denigrated, despite the fact that WY SHPO worked closely with two long-term OCTA volunteers — Randy Brown and myself — to develop this resource. Seeing OCTA publicly undermine the efforts of WY SHPO, which has the legal responsibility to protect the historic integrity of the trails, further erodes my confidence in OCTA's stated commitment to trails preservation.

Watching these developments over the last few years has caused me unspeakable heartache. For several months last year, I worked closely with other concerned OCTA members to attempt to develop a plan to reverse these trends within the organization that has meant so much to me. Unfortunately, I ultimately concluded that I no longer have the energy or passion to work within OCTA to resolve these problems. My years working within the organization have taught me how adverse OCTA is to confrontation or controversy. Seeing imminent threats to the Wyoming trails, I doubt that they can await OCTA's internal reform. Without outspoken advocacy now, the most spectacular ruts in the nation may be permanently damaged and our descendants' opportunity to study these trails confined to museums. I cannot continue my membership because I am no

longer willing to self-censor my speech and actions to conform to OCTA's public silence. I must free myself of OCTA commitments so that when issues of Wyoming trail preservation erupt again, as they inevitably will, I will feel completely free to speak out.

I have already communicated my intention to leave my position as Internet Chair to the Vice President so that he can make the necessary arrangements. I have also detailed specifics regarding the website and mailing list to headquarters and have offered whatever assistance I can provide in facilitating the transfer of all responsibilities.

As I hope this letter illustrates, I have reached my decision to terminate my OCTA membership only after long and thoughtful consideration. It has been an extraordinarily difficult decision that I deeply regret. Nonetheless, I believe it is the only action I can take in light of the situations detailed above. I wish OCTA all the best and, should I see a renewed public commitment to trails preservation in the future, I will be delighted to rejoin.

Lesley Wischmann
Laramie, WY
lesleywisch@earthlink.net

Jere Krakow Receives Award

We extend our congratulations to Jere Krakow on receiving the Department of Interior's Honor Award for Superior Service in November from his new Regional Director Steve Martin, who has replaced Karen Wade.

**Support the OCTA
Bookstore**
Browse the Bookstore
www.octa-trails.org
or Call 888/811-6282

**10 percent Discount
for OCTA Members**

Nominations Open for OCTA Board

By Vern Gorzitze
OCTA Vice President

Nominations are now being accepted for OCTA's Board of Directors. Each year, the terms of four of the twelve Directors expire. In 2004, terms expire for James Denney, Edna Kennell, Bill Martin, and Charles Martin Jr. Charles Martin will complete two consecutive terms and is not eligible for reelection.

Because all OCTA Directors serve at-large, location of residence or chapter affiliation is not a consideration. According to OCTA's bylaws, all current members are eligible to be nominated and any current OCTA member may submit one or more written nominations.

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

- * Information about the qualifications and experience of the nominee and the extent to which he/she has participated in the affairs of OCTA.

- * A brief (about 100 word) statement on the goals and objectives the nominee would like to see OCTA accomplish during the next several years and what the nominee could do to help the Association reach those goals and objectives.

- * A written endorsement from three (3) OCTA members.

- * A statement of willingness to actively serve, if elected, signed by the nominee.

- * Passport type photo of a quality suitable for reproduction and printing.

Obviously, trail-related activities are a key consideration for all nominees, but nomination of persons with service on other association boards, or with management and financial expertise, is encouraged. Also, experience as an educator, historian (amateur or professional), or researcher should be noted. A demonstrated interest in all Western trails and trail-related history is more important than single trail or event expertise. To assist the committee, submissions of a resume for each nominee is encouraged.

Elected Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings. A minimum of two (2) 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. The Association may reimburse some travel expenses connected with duties of the Board.

The deadline for receiving nominations is April 1, 2004. Nominations should be mailed to the Nominating and Leadership Committee chair:

Vern Gorzitze
3026 Metropolitan Way
Salt Lake City, UT 84109-2238

Ballots will be mailed out about May 1, 2004.

If you have any questions, please contact Vern at (801) 484-9623 or by e-mail to

<vergor@wasatchnet.net>. Committee members include Kathy Conway and Jack Fletcher.

Awards Nominations Needed

By Jackie Lewen
Awards Chair

Nominations are now being solicited for OCTA service awards and Friend of the Trail awards to be presented at the August convention in Vancouver.

The success of OCTA is due to the many dedicated volunteers who work to improve and strengthen the organization, preserve existing trails and historic resources, and educate the public about OCTA and America's historic trails. OCTA's awards program is a small way to recognize and thank these individuals for their dedication.

Your help is needed in this process. You are the ones who recognize and nominate deserving individuals or organizations for their untiring efforts and many hours of service. Deadline to submit nominations is June 1. Following are the awards categories:

Meritorious Achievement Award - the highest award OCTA can give to recognize long-term and significant contributions to OCTA. Only members can qualify for Meritorious Achievement.

Continued on Page 11

In Remembrance of My Friend, Bob Wier

By Lesley Wischmann

Bob Wier died on October 31 at age 56. He had been suffering from liver disease for the last few years and recently he fell and broke his hip. Following hip replacement surgery, he contracted an infection and, in his already weakened state, he was simply not able to fight it off.

Bob was the technical genius behind OCTA's Internet presence. Bob and I "met" on the Internet, through a genealogy forum, in the late 1980s. Before long, we were plotting and scheming about how to bring OCTA into the Internet age. This list was our first venture in that direction, followed soon thereafter by the OCTA website. While I designed most of the content for our website, it would never have seen the light of day had it not been for Bob's technical skill.

Some of you may remember those very early days when we were always struggling to get new information posted and helping people understand how to use the tools Bob was making available. What a good nature he brought to all of that! I can't tell you how many times he'd explain something to me only to have me throw up my hands in ignorant frustration. Those of you who attended our Internet workshop in Elko got a glimpse of Bob's extensive knowledge and understanding of computer systems. Despite my technical ignorance, we discovered an excellent way to work together that emphasized our own skills without putting either of us in over our heads.

Bob graduated from the University of Colorado before getting his doctorate from the University of Texas in Arlington. When we began working together, he was teaching computer science at East Texas State University but always regretted being so far away from the trails. Several years later, he was offered a position at Rocky Mountain College in Billings and jumped at it in order to be closer to the trails that he loved. At the time of his interview, the college told him how impressed they were with all the Internet work he did for non-profits. Shortly after moving to Rocky Mountain College, Bob also helped get the Bozeman Trail Association and Frontier Heritage Alliance on the web.

Bob also had a passionate love of ghost towns and 3D photography and managed several other mailing lists in addition to the Overland Trails list. His long experience with mailing lists and his gentle hand made the OT list known for its complete absence of flame wars. Bob and I were both very gratified that one of the conspicuous characteristics of the OT list has always been its civility.

Bob received both a certificate of appreciation and the Distinguished Volunteer of the Year Award in 1998 from OCTA for his work on the website. He was also elected to serve two terms on OCTA's national Board of Directors. His health problems forced him to resign that position last year.

Bob's pride and joy was his historic home in Ouray, Colorado, where he was able to spend most of the last months of his life. Whenever he would go home to Colorado from Montana, he would purposely take a different route so he could check out new trail sites. Bob was always out there with his GPS unit and never gave up his dream of plotting the full trail by GPS. Before the Casper convention, a few of us took our own tour over Rocky Ridge in Wyoming and I will never forget all of the technical equipment Bob had in his Jeep — computers, GPS, digital cameras, etc. The Jeep was only large enough for Bob and his equipment. In recent months, Bob saw another of his passions — panorama photographs — make a larger presence on our website.

The first time Bob and I met, he told me I could recognize him by his hat, his suspenders, and his belt. "I don't like to take any extra risks," he told me laughingly. Well, Bob, I'll be looking for that combination again as I travel down the road.

Dr. Robert Wier 1946-2003

Dr. Robert R. "Bob" Wier, 56, of Ouray, Colorado, former OCTA board member and winner of the OCTA Volunteer of the Year Award in 1998, died on October 31, 2003.

Memorials may be made to the Oregon-California Trails Association, 524 S. Osage, Independence, Missouri, 64051 or to the Preservation Fund of the Ghost Town Club of Colorado, 1100 Holly Ave., Longmont, Colorado, 80501.

OCTA Publications

Bill Martin

Publications Chair
OCTA NFP@aol.com

New OCTA Map Project Underway

Work has started on development of an official OCTA trails map, a long-discussed project authorized by the Board of Directors and assigned to the Publications Committee.

If there is a single 'most requested' item on the wish list of those who contact OCTA, it is for a map of the emigrant trails. A trails map published and endorsed by OCTA will have tremendous value."

As envisioned, the map will be a profit-making item for OCTA, sold through the OCTA Bookstore, and will have important public relations value for the nation's leading trails preservation organization.

The map will include not only the primary routes of the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, and Santa Fe trails, but additional routes and segments, ranging from many southern trails to the Bozeman, Naches, and others.

As an initial step, the Publications Committee

has asked the National Park Service Long Distance Trails Office for its assistance in providing a base map for OCTA's use, utilizing material in the public domain.

Once routes to be shown on the map are determined, the Publications Committee will develop a format for the final document.

The map itself may not belong to OCTA, but the document in which the map is contained, including text and accompany materials, would be a fully copyrighted OCTA product.

This is not a responsibility the Publications Committee takes lightly. We want a map of which OCTA and OCTA members will be proud and which is a credit to our trails heritage.

It is anticipated that a preliminary map with routes and text will be submitted by the Publications Committee for Board approval at the Mid-Year meeting in April, with a final map to be considered at the Annual Meeting in August.

Awards Nominations

Continued From Page 9

Distinguished Volunteer Award - bestowed on OCTA members who contribute significantly to achieving OCTA goals and projects. Only OCTA members can qualify for Distinguished Volunteer.

Distinguished Service Award - granted to organizations, businesses, government agencies, individuals, or others who contribute or participate in furthering OCTA's programs directly or provide substantial support in a non-affiliated way to trail preservation and education.

Friend of the Trail Award - presented to groups, individuals, or organizations that have direct ties to lands over which historic trails pass. Neither property ownership nor current residence on trail property is required, but emphasis is placed on

preservation of trail remnants, education of the public about their historic resources, and allowing responsible public access to the historic resources.

National Certificates of Appreciation - presented to individuals and organizations that have made a particular effort in achieving a short-term OCTA goal. These certificates are for efforts of national scope; more regional or local efforts should be recognized by appropriate chapters.

Young OCTAN Award - presented to children and youth between the ages of six and twenty-one who have demonstrated particular interest in OCTA and the history and/or preservation of historic emigrant trails. The nominee will have demonstrated this interest by an activity in the field or via a school or

Continued on Page 22

Preservation Report

David Welch

Preservation Officer
welchd1@comcast.net

From OCTA to the Trail of Tears


In early October, I was invited by the Trail of Tears Association to speak to its annual conference on the subject of trail preservation. The meeting was held in Cherokee, North Carolina, and brought together members of the Eastern Band of Cherokees from the North Carolina area and members of the Cherokee Nation from Oklahoma. The Eastern Band managed to avoid the forced march to Oklahoma in the 1830s that took the lives of about twenty-five percent of the evictees. In the intervening 160 plus years, the groups have evolved somewhat differently due to very different circumstances. It was enlightening to observe these two groups working together.

The Trail of Tears is not a single route. It includes both land and water routes through Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Alabama, Mississippi, and Arkansas to Indian Territory (later Oklahoma). The forced migration occurred in winter and involved groups from concentration camps located in northwestern Georgia, eastern Tennessee, and western North Carolina. You may find my use of the words "concentration camp" pejorative, but that is what they were. The sites (called forts by the military) were places to which people were unwillingly brought to be assembled into groups for the journey to Indian Territory.

I was not sure that my talk on OCTA's preservation activities would be relevant to the Trail of Tears because of the difference in the environment and geography, and the absence of extensive public land in the East and Midwest. I expected that little of the trails used by Cherokees would have survived to the present. I was surprised to learn that many of the routes are still identifiable, although like the western emigrant trails many have been obliterated by subsequent adaptation to modern uses.

Portions of the land routes of the Trail of Tears survive as swales through the woods, two tracks, and modern roads. Presently, the routes are mostly un-marked. I pointed out that mapping and marking are the first requirement if they are to preserve and commemorate the routes and their stories. OCTA's trail marking and mapping program, to include the Mapping Emigrant Trails (MET) Guide, was used as the example of how mapping and marking should be done.

All who participate in OCTA's mapping and marking activities deserve credit for the fact that OCTA is recognized as a leader among the trail organizations in documenting trail routes and their history.

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION			NEW MEMBERSHIP Membership Categories (Check One)	Clip & Use For New Members
P.O. Box 1019 / Independence, MO 64051-0519 / (816) 252-2276			<input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$40/year	*Memberships are available for full-time students at accredited colleges/universities, with verification. Student memberships are limited to four years.
<input type="checkbox"/> Dr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. (Please check)			<input type="checkbox"/> Family \$45/year	
Name _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$75/year	ALL CONTRIBUTIONS TO OCTA ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE TO THE FULL EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW.
Address _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$125/year	
City _____ State _____ Zip _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Institutional \$300/year	
Telephone(_____) _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Life \$1000	
e-mail address _____			<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate \$1,250/year	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Student* \$15/year	
			<input type="checkbox"/> Gift	
			Amount Enclosed \$ _____ OR	
			<input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MC Exp. Date _____	

News From The Chapters

Gateway



Gateway members and guests on the replica rope ferry at the Historic Trails Park in Marysville, Kansas. (Photos Courtesy of Jackie Lewin)



Joseph Brentano, Glenn Calhoun, Bob Hamilton, Wayne Schutte, Charlotte Reinschmidt, William Meade and William Leppert gather around the mochilla at the Hollenberg Pony Express Station Museum.

By Jackie Lewin

Gateway Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association held two events in the Spring of 2003. On May 10, two interpretive historical signs were placed in Doniphan County, Kansas. The first was at the Iola Cemetery, which overlooks the Wolf River Valley and wagon crossing site. The second was on the trail at the Courter-Richey Cemetery. The first burials in the cemetery were 1849 trail burials. Gateway members Paul Dittmore and

Jackie Lewin developed the text while the OCTA Trail Marking Committee provided both of the signs. Suzette McCord-Rogers coordinated the dedication ceremony.

On June 7, 26 members and guests took a tour of the western section of the St. Joe Road from the Nemaha River crossing to the Hollenberg Pony Express Station. Jerry and Jackie Lewin led the day-long tour. The group viewed and heard about the history of the swale at Clear Creek, the historic

St. Mary's Church in St. Benedict, Kansas, the fording site of the Big Blue River, the monument at the junction of the St. Joe and Independence Roads, and the Hollenberg Pony Express Station. The group had lunch "on the trail" at the Koester House Restaurant in Marysville, Kansas.



Gateway Chapter members Pete Duncan, Suzette McCord-Rogers, Paul Dittmore and John Atkinson unveil the historic marker at the 1849 Courter-Richey Cemetery in Doniphan County, Kansas.

KANZA

By Arleta and Ken Martin

After the convention in Manhattan, the KANZA Chapter began tying up loose ends. Vern Osborne and Jim Bradley settled finances with Kathy Conway at headquarters. Ernie and Della White returned items that the chapter borrowed. Alicia Keegan, Don Cooper and Arleta Martin designed, wrote and signed "Thank You" notes. Barb Pretzer and Molly Ledoboer delivered "Thank You" notes and convention booklets to people and/or businesses that had helped us in their respective areas. Ken and Arleta Martin made personal contacts with all the landowners that allowed us to bring tours onto their properties and presented them with a "Thank You" note and a convention booklet. Is having a convention hard on a chapter? Absolutely NOT, we always wear each other's handprints around our throats!!!!

On the first Sunday in September 15 the Rutnuts were up and running as we visited three properties in Marshall County, the first on the Rich Pacha property. There we found three different segments of visible trail that measured 961 feet. We placed a carsonite post off Highway 36 in Section 29 to mark these swales. Next, we visited the property of Wayne Holle and found three swales that measured 918 feet. After a picnic lunch at the Hollenberg Station, we visited the property of Mary White where we measured 745 feet of visible trail. These swales all line up and match the swales that we measured and marked several years ago on the Pecenka property.

Then the chapter gathered for a convention wrap-up dinner and session at the home of Vern and Carol Osborne in St. George. Certificates of Appreciation were given to several chapter members.

The first Sunday in October found eight Rutnuts on the ground in Pottawatomie County. We measured and marked trail on the Gilbert Kemnitz property. At noon we drove to the Louis Vieux Elm and shared a picnic lunch with some of Mr. Vieux's descendants. We met with Susan Campbell, and her husband Eric, from Hawaii, and Leo Nadeau, and his wife Ida, of Solder, Kan. After a nice lunch and a short gab session, Jim Tessendorf took us on a hiking tour behind the Cholera Cemetery to the spot

where the Yott cabin was located in the 1880s. The Yotts were also descendants of Louis Vieux. Jim also showed us the ford on the Vermillion River that the emigrants used when they bypassed the Vieux toll bridge.

On Sunday, October 12, we planned on hosting our annual "Friend of the Trail" award dinner. This year's honoree was Jim Tessendorf. Early on Saturday morning, Jim's wife, Sharon, called to tell us that she was taking Jim to the hospital – he had pneumonia. At these dinners, we have the awardee display the certificate that they receive from the national organization and our chapter presents them with a wooden, Kansas shaped plaque. We had to award Jim with his KANZA award at a later date.

Several years ago we had some people living near Odell, Neb., ask us to come and view some "ruts" in their area. Since there hasn't been a working Nebraska Chapter, we decided to try and help them out. On November 2, eleven Rutnuts drove to Odell to check out some possible trail. This was a variant of the trail known as the Oketo Cutoff. To our surprise there were some beautiful swales in two different areas. We GPS'd the area but this variant needs a lot more studying.

The next Sunday found the KANZA Chapter enjoying its annual Thanksgiving dinner. Maxine Haller cooked the turkey and members brought salads, vegetables, and deserts. After this great dinner, we had a business meeting and election of officers. Officers for 2004-05 are: President, Ken Martin; Vice-President, Glenn Larson; Secretary, Don Cooper; and Treasurer, Della White. Board members are: Jim Bradley, Molly Ledoboer, and Barb Pretzer.

We would like to wish all OCTA members a happy and prosperous New Year.

Check Out These Deals

Rush to Riches (Hardcover) Regular \$55
Price Reduced to \$25

Map of the Northwest Fur Country 1836
(Map and accompanying brochure-limited
edition and numbered set) Regular \$25
Price Reduced to \$14

Available While Supply Lasts
Call OCTA Headquarters 888/811-6282

Trails Head

Phil Barbour gave a program on "Shoemaking During Trail Days" at the October meeting of the Trail Head Chapter while Mary Conrad presented a slide show and program on "Multnomah Archaeology Dig" at the November meeting.

During this past year the chapter took part in a number of activities at the Lone Elm Campground south of Olathe on the Independence Route including assisting with archaeological surveys and digs, construction of walkways through the campsite area, and the addition of athletic fields. Upcoming activities will include development of kiosks and

exhibits. Among the artifacts collected were ox shoes, old coins, military items, lead musket balls, and forged metal objects. Among the members assisting with these projects were Mary Conrad, Craig Crease, Jeanne McGuire and Ross Marshall.

A number of Trails Head Chapter members took part in the Santa Fe Trail Association Symposium in Kansas City in September assisting with coordination and leading tours. Craig Crease presented a paper, "The River, The Rock and the Road."

Nebraska

Nebraska Chapter Reorganizes

**By Ross Marshall
Chapters Committee Chair**

After four or five years of being relatively inactive, the Nebraska Chapter has a plan to revive its activities. The first reorganization meeting was at Denton, Nebraska, led by Greg Nelson with about a dozen people present, mostly OCTA members. A few of these people were not able to attend the next week, but some good ideas came out of this preliminary meeting.

The following Saturday, a larger meeting was held in North Platte, arranged by Barb Netherland from the North Platte Valley Museum in Gering and attended by about 22 OCTA members. The first order of business was lunch. These Nebraska people know how to have a meeting!

Patty Wagner then presented a program on the life and work of William Henry Jackson. Travis Boley, OCTA's new Association Manager served as informal moderator. Since Nebraska is such a large state, the first issue was to discuss whether one or two chapters would serve best. After much discussion, everyone agreed to keep the chapter statewide. The process of reorganizing on this basis was not complicated since the Nebraska Chapter was never dissolved as an OCTA Chapter.

Of course the key obstacle is the width of the state, which is about 500 miles. People from places like Omaha, Lincoln and Scottsbluff would find it

nearly impossible to attend meetings on the opposite side of the state. The solution was to plan activities on each side of the state, as well as the middle, knowing that not everyone would be able to attend each event. A coordinator of eastern events and western events will be enlisted.

Loren Pospisil, Director of the Chimney Rock Visitor Center near Bayard, will serve as interim facilitator to lead the initial start-up planning. Carole Meyer volunteered to edit a newsletter.

The Nebraska Chapter is important to OCTA and to the trail. Over 1,000 miles of trail are in Nebraska, including routes located on both sides of the Platte River. The Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails are involved. Preservation and promotion of these trails is a high priority for OCTA.

Most of the previous chapter leadership was present as well as a few more recent members. This was a good mix and the enthusiasm to reestablish the chapter was high. This was a fun meeting and all of us enjoyed it very much. Special thanks to Mark Wheeler, Greg Nelson, Travis Boley, Russ Genung, Betty Scheinost, Corrine Rickner, Barb Netherland, and others for helping in this very important reorganizing effort spanning over two meetings. We look forward to exciting things from Nebraska!

Wyoming

Dave Welch, National OCTA Preservation Officer, coordinated a meeting in Rawlins, Wyoming, Aug. 25, to discuss the Anadarko Oil Company inventory of the Overland Trail locations and artifacts. Thirty-one people attended with OCTA, BLM, private "checkerboard" landowners, the Petroleum Association of Wyoming, Anadarko, and archaeological companies present.

Anadarko Petroleum has pledged to watch the trail resources and has hired Western Archaeological Services (WAS) of Rock Springs to identify the "illusive" segments of the Overland and Cherokee Trails in Wyoming.

Gail and Bill Robinson and Fern and Fred Linton recently traveled the trail with Dave Johnson of WAS, concentrating on segments that have not been mapped from east of Black Butte Stage Station to Fort LaCledé. The Robinsons feel the four OCTA members made some real contributions with their week of work.

The section of trail from LaCledé to Washakie Station is also being studied by Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office and Robert Rosenberg.

Don Hartley, Western Wyoming OCTA preservation officer, has also made recent visits to trail sites on both the Sublette Flats northwest of Farson and on the Overland Stage Road east of Fort LaCledé. He submitted suggestions to National OCTA Preservation Officer Dave Welch on his findings.

The Wyoming chapter had a program in October on the Cherokee and Smoky Hill Trails

presented by Lee Whiteley, author of *The Cherokee Trail*.

Twenty-seven OCTA members in eleven vehicles made a trek to Scotts Bluff and vicinity in early September. The trek started at Scotts Bluff National Monument where National Park Service Historian Dean Knudsen gave an excellent presentation on William Henry Jackson paintings.

The group then visited Pierre Papin's grave in Helvas Canyon where grave dowsing Bill Robinson found more graves before following leader Randy Brown to the Robidoux Trading Post sites and Robidoux Pass.

On the second day of the trek the OCTA members visited the Rebecca Winters' grave near Scottsbluff and Chimney Rock where Joe and Lois Fairfield provided leadership to show beautiful swales, a monument to Paul Henderson, Courthouse and Jail Rock, and Mud Springs.

In a separate outing a number of OCTA members followed the Lander Trail with Irv and Mable Sutton serving as tour leaders. They were assisted by Tom McCutcheon, Ken Sosolla and Bill and Gale Robinson as they followed a route used by such folks as Captain Benjamin Bonneville, Captain William Stewart, Lieutenant John C. Frémont, and artist Alfred Jacob Miller. One of the most used campgrounds and burial grounds on this route was at Buckskin Crossing of the Big Sandy River.

While on this trek some demonstrations of dowsing to locate graves were given by Ken Sosolla and Bill Robinson.

Wyoming SHPO Has Trails Website

Information and photographs of Wyoming trail resources are now online at the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office website. In cooperation with Wyoming State Parks and the Division of Cultural Resources, SHOP is hosting a sample of collections as part of the Western Trails project sponsored by IMLS through the Colorado Digitization Projects.

The collections are linked by a trails theme with specific details about the Oregon,

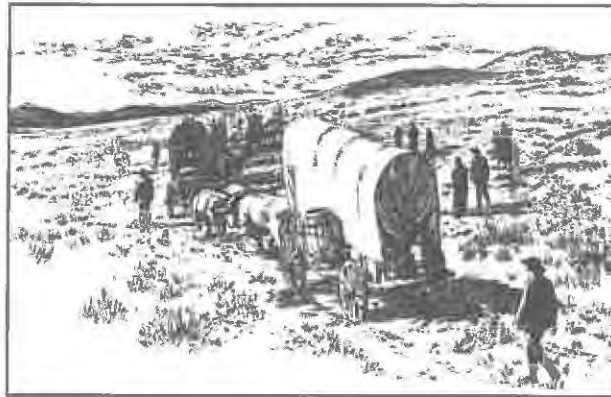
California, Mormon Pioneer, Pony Express and Bridger Trails. Specific information and photographs relate to various trail themes such as river crossings, graves, monuments and markers and inscriptions. A section related to "trails management" has a link to OCTA.

The site has digital collections including black and white and color photographs of various trail sites. To visit the sites go to <http://wyoshpo.state.wy.us/trailsdemo/index.htm>

Crossroads

By Al Mulder

The trail year for Utah Crossroads closed out with an October field trip on a section of the Hastings Cutoff. Twenty vehicles and 35 or more trail buffs participated in the trek from Grassy Mountain to Silver Zone Pass. It was an ambitious outing and we ran out of daylight before we could cross Pilot Valley to Silver Zone Pass. OCTA members and friends from Idaho, Nevada and Wyoming joined the group led by Roy Tea and Gar Elison. Richard Wilkes from East Sussex, England, was able to participate before returning to England after touring the Southwest and southern Utah. Many in the group had never been on the Salt Desert Trail from Grayback Hills to Donner Spring and it was an experience many would never forget. A vehicle rollover (without injury) reminded us that even though we had no wagons to tip over, the trails are still dangerous when driving modern SUVs at high speeds on gravel roads. California Trail decals were placed on some of the carsonite posts placed on the Salt Desert Trail



several years ago and we took time to repaint some of the iron rail posts recently placed at several trail sites by Crossroads members from Utah and Elko, Nevada.

The fall barbecue and membership meeting was held in September at Washington Park in Parley's Canyon where John Eldredge give a visual aids presentation on the stage stations in southwest Wyoming. The interesting subject and tasty barbecue made a pleasant evening for old and new friends, some who traveled great distances to attend.

Chapter elections for 2004 will be held at the January 2004

membership meeting. More plans for the 2005 OCTA convention to be held in Salt Lake City will be discussed and a calendar of convention events and activities will be presented. The higher room rates expected for the 2005 convention will be tempered by the luxurious accommodations and outstanding convention facilities available at the City Center Sheraton Hotel. Plan now to meet us in 2005 at the "Crossroads of the West."

Northwest

By Glenn Harrison

Northwest OCTA's October 11 effort to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Free Emigrant Road's first use by the Elliott wagon train generated quite a bit of publicity for the route, the emigrants, and OCTA.

On October 5, 2003, *The Register-Guard* included "Steep price for free wagon road" by Pete Peterson with a copy of the OCTA marker.

The November 2003 Lane County Historical Society newsletter gave a "Free Emigrant Road" update and copied the sign text. The Fall 2003 Lane County Historian contained "The Lost Wagon Train

- Lane County's Great Saga" by Dorothy Velesco and Maureen Shine with the marker text and a plug for OCTA. The Winter 2003 University of Oregon's *Oregon Quarterly* contains "Tracks Through the Outback" about the Elliott wagon train written by Pete Peterson. The January 2004 *Linn County Historical Society Newsletter & Journal* will include "Marker Dedication" by Glenn Harrison with a photo and copy of the OCTA sign.

Trail researcher and OCTA member Delbert Spencer sent news about the dedication to the *Newberry News* and the *Dead Mountain Echo*, both of which published the article.

California/Nevada

Progress Continues On California Trail Center in Elko, Nevada

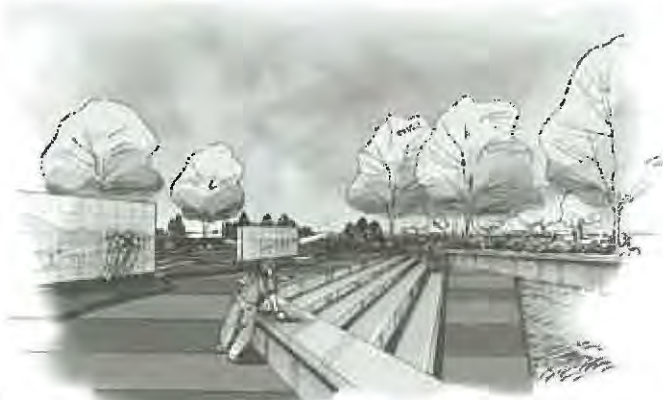
By Mike Brown

The California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center to be built near Elko, Nevada, passed a major milestone in June 2003.

"We finished the Conceptual or Schematic Design phase and we're now in the process of fine tuning the building and exhibit designs in the Design Development phase," said Dave Jamiel, Acting California Trail Center Manager. By October the project was "half way through the Design Development phase," he said.

The Design Development phase for all project components is scheduled for completion this June. The remaining workload includes producing the construction documents and then soliciting bids. Under the current schedule the construction contract will be awarded in February 2005.

"While it may sound like we're a long ways from having our Trail Center built, it's just around



the corner," said BLM Elko Field Manager Helen Hankins. "We're maintaining the schedule we set more than a year and half ago; and based on federal appropriations we still plan to open in Summer 2006. This has been a grassroots project since day one when a group of local OCTA members decided they wanted a trail center in Elko. They secured \$15 million in commitments from the City of Elko, Elko County, State of Nevada and congress. The excitement is growing and we'll keep people informed as progress continues."



OCTA Website News

Mark Wheeler
Lesley Wischmann

www.OCTA-Trails.org

Bob Wier Tribute

After several years of battling liver disease, Bob Wier passed away on October 31, 2003. For those of us on the Internet Committee, Bob was a big part of everything OCTA did on the Internet. His guidance, contributions and friendship will be truly missed.

Bob was instrumental in establishing the original OCTA website, working with Lesley Wischmann and Lyn Ryder on design and content. He contributed not only his time and technical expertise but the resources available to him through his employment for hosting and managing the website. He remained active with the website committee until his health finally made that impossible a few months ago.

The recently completed consolidation of website features and information content from multiple locations was accomplished with Bob's key involvement. Bob was a visionary when it came to understanding how the Internet, including websites and email lists, could help facilitate trails preservation communication for OCTA members and other interested parties.

We will all miss Bob's vision and leadership but his legacy will always be with us.

Internet Committee Co-Chairs Resign

Lesley Wischmann and Mark Wheeler have independently reached the decision to resign their positions as Internet Committee Co-Chairs. Lesley has been involved with the website and mailing list since the very beginning and has taken great pride in seeing the membership embrace the organization's efforts to reach out to the trails preservation community through the Internet. The most recent redesign of the website, which will allow easy and frequent updates by a variety of members, is an

excellent improvement which should facilitate communications through the website for all members.

Mark states that it has been his pleasure to serve with Lesley, and other members of the Internet Committee, as Website Manager (or Webmaster) the past 2 years. However, due to personal commitments he has decided to relinquish his responsibilities effective December 31, 2003.

Many exciting website developments have occurred during the recent few months, including:

- * Integrated multiple websites into one.
- * Integrated into the main OCTA website all COED content, previously placed at a separate location
- * Expanded the reach of trails content (e.g. "panoramas," "what's new")
- * Added the ability to stay connected with other OCTA members through a password-protected searchable Membership Roster.

In addition, as a result of Bob Wier's death, the Overland-Trails mailing list, which so many of our members enjoy, has changed. Unfortunately, we will not be able to re-register people on our own. Everyone who is interested in staying with the mailing list will have to rejoin. To subscribe to the new list go www.yahoo.com, click on "groups," enter "overland trails" in the search box and then click on the second option. If you have trouble contact Travis Boley at OCTA headquarters, 816/252-2276, for assistance.

Obviously, if you have ever wanted to help OCTA with the website or other Internet projects, now would be a great time to jump in! Drop headquarters a note OCTA@indepmo.org and let them know of your interest.

Continued on Next Page

Website

Continued from Previous Page

Coordination with headquarters will ensure that the website will continue to be managed and to expand to meet the ever-changing needs of OCTA members.

We are always looking for photos to add to the website. If you have trails-related photos that you would like added to the OCTA website, please forward them to: Tboley@indepmo.org.

Note: Be sure to include any accompanying narrative and credit information.

Reminder

"Member's Corner" Entrance Now Requires User Name & Password

Effective July 1, 2003, OCTA Members will need to enter the following information to gain entrance to the "Member's Corner" section of the OCTA website:

User Name: octa

Password: trailswest

This requirement is necessary in order to limit access to the information found in this section to members only. Note: Please safeguard this information by not sharing it with non-members. Periodically, we will change the User Name & Password. When this occurs, we will communicate this change to Members in future issues of *News From The Plains*.

If you forget what the current User Name & Password is, don't worry. There is an email link to request that the User Name and Password be sent to you again.

We encourage members to send us suggestions and questions about any issues related to the OCTA website. To facilitate this communication, there is a "Webmaster" feedback link (Webmaster@OCTA-Trails.org) located in the lower left-hand corner of each web page.

Finally, thanks to everyone for all of the help and support you have given to us over the years. We have really appreciated your suggestions and involvement.

Trail Funding Secured

Continued from Page 1

reintroduced and the companion bill approved by the Senate, S-635, is valid until the end of next year.

We will be back in Washington, D.C., February 28 - March 4 for Trails Advocacy Week and plan to spend much of our time visiting with members of the House of Representatives. OCTA President Dick Pingrey plans to join us for Advocacy Week and bring OCTA Association Manager Travis Boley with him. We can use their help scheduling HR-1051 meetings with their Representatives and thank you meetings with their Senators. During this week we will be distributing some copies of OCTA's new *Across the Kansas Prairie* video to key members of Congress.

We will provide OCTA's 2003 Challenge Cost Share report plus reports of all other volunteered hours, miles, and expenses. This later report includes chapter and national outings, meetings, projects and planning sessions including all volunteers (e.g., Boy Scouts, school programs, etc.), whether OCTA members or not. These reports will be included in OCTA's and the Partnership's reports to Congress handed out during Advocacy Week.

The FY-04 Interior budget was recently passed by Congress and signed by President George W. Bush. Working with Gary Werner, the Partnership for the National Trails System, and Senate and House Appropriations staffs, the National Park Service received a supplemental FY-04 appropriation of \$500,000. This is spread among 10 National Trails. This will add \$50,000 to the California Trail budget, \$40,000 to the Santa Fe Trail budget, and provide start-up funding for the El Camino Real and the Old Spanish Trails, etc. Challenge-Cost-Share dollars available for FY-04 will be comparable to this year's level.

The BLM will receive \$1 million toward construction of the Elko Interpretive Center for the California and Pony Express Trails. That agency received \$1 million in Land & Water Conservation Funds for land acquisition to protect the Sandy River Oregon Trail segment in Oregon. Congress has urged the BLM to support the Big Hill, Idaho, interpretation project as part of the National Oregon-California Trail center within their FY-04 budget.

Continued on Page 22

New National Members 2003-2004

Alkire, Clark and Emma
11335 W Appaloosa Rd.
Stilesville, IN 46180-9634
alkireacresinc@iquest.net
317/539-2653

Anderson, Carrie
Box 4184
Marbleton, WY 83113
andcar68@hotmail.com

Bartlett, Glenn
6225 S 440 East
Murray, UT 84107-7406
801/262-1069

Becker, Cathy
1835 N Willow Creek Rd.
Casper, WY 82604
307/265-2291

Berrien, Allen and Jaeger, Maggie
c/o Kate Berrien
5 Sorrento St - Apt 2
Allston, MA 02134
allenberrien1@earthlink.net
413/896-4106

Cook, James M and Anna J
402 North Shore Drive
Bellingham, WA 98226-4419
james.cook4@worldnet.att.net

Covington, Claude
1321 NW 63rd Ave.
Hollywood, FL 33024

Eyman, Alan and Eleanor
31326 S Dryland Rd.
Canby, OR 97013

Fraser, Ann
4104 Camino Real
Los Angeles, CA 90065
railroaduwpartne@mindspring.com

Gardner, J. Rex
16 Via La Brisa
Larkspur, CA 94939
415/924-2634

Kabel, Doug and Laura
1117 NE 245th Ave
Camas, WA 98607
kabelme@effectnet.com
360/834-1281

Kabel, Joe and Tammy
1827 Lakehurst Dr SE
Olympia, WA 98501
joekabel@comcast.com
360/754-2520

Kozusko, John
6746 Park Riviera Way
Sacramento, CA 95831
jkozusko@sbcglobal.net

Larson, Tom
LTA, Inc.
421 S Cedar St.
Laramie, WY 82072
tklarson@wyomail.com

McCullough, Tom
Blackhawk Station
1111 Station Loop Road
Park City, UT 84098
tom@jas-map.com
435/649-9449

Meade, William and Charlotte
4135 Preston Dr.
St. Joseph, MO 64503
Marine656276@msn.com
816/232-1794

Meldahl, Keith
310 Cerros St.
Encinitas, CA 92024
kmeldahl@miracosta.edu

Merchant, Kim
14260 Bessemer Road
Casper, WY 82604
307/235-1328

Millet, David
4917 W McIntyre Ct.
West Jordan, UT 84088
Jason@pollsound.com
801/280-2150

Nelson, Dave
221 Orange Blossom
Folsom, CA 95630
dlnelson@inreach.com

Parker, Bret and Jeanine
7 Gold Run Place
Stockton, CA 95207
bretparker@earthlink.net

Parr, Gregory
3711 Carnegie Dr SE
Olympia, WA 98503

Preston, Tim
2039 Occidental Ave.
Burley, ID 83318
208/678-3576

Rowe, Keith
13955 Cambridge Ln.
Athens, AL 35613
Smith, Ariane
119 W 22nd
Spokane, WA 99203

Speer, Theresa
17221 Roscoe Bl Unit 19
Northridge, CA 91325
818/343-6392

Stenwick, William
10 Navajo Trail
P.O. Box 1825
Graeagle, CA 96103
wsterwick@earthlink.net

Sutherland, Del and Joyce
P.O. Box 2014
St. Joseph, MO 64502
jasland@ccc.com
816/233-9955

Volpi, Ralph
2100 Napoli Dr.
Oxnard, CA 93035-2916
rvolpi@west.net
805/479-2966

Voth, Lynn and Mark
2344 S Yank Circle
Lakewood, CO 80228
lynn@lynnvothcpa.com
303/989-7407

Wood, Virginia
2722 S 22nd
St. Joseph, MO 64503-3216
816/279-2646

Wozniak, Doug and Margaret
930 Bluewater Dr.
Beulah, MI 49617
wozniak64@yahoo.com
231/882-0435

**ADDRESS
Changes**

Should be sent to:
e-mail: octa@indepmo.org

OCTA Headquarters
P.O. Box 1019
Independence, MO 64051-0519

2003-2004 Fund Raising Campaign Contributors

Acker, Roy and Ruby
Allen, Eva
Alvord, Lynne
Anderson, Ron
Anderson, Ralph K.
Arends, Billy Joe and Jacque
Barker, Norman J.
Berkenbush, Jo Ann
Bieber, William
Bolerjack, Joyce P.
Bolon, Victor
Brownell, Lloyd
Buss, Carol Ann
Bywater, John
Cahill, Mrs. John E.
Carbiener, Gail and Muriel
Carpenter, Estaline
Childs, Greg
Clark, Don
Coleman, George
Conrado, Paul A.
Costa, Nancy B. and Arthur
Coward, Robert R.
Crary Doug and Eloise
Denney James
Dove, Lois A.
Dragoo, Sandra Sue
Dyson, Lorraine
Eberhardt, Elmer and Betty
Epstein, Dr. Bonnie W.
Espy, Peg
Evanhoe, Bob and Sharon
Fishel, Dennis
German, Gene and Patsy
Gordon, Archie

Graham, Mariam G.
Grant, Curtis R. and Nancy
Green, Bucky
Grunland, Paul
Hammerness, Virginia
Haner, John and Norma
Harrison, Glenn and Carol
Hornbuckle, Chuck and Suzanne
Ivory-Carlina, Carol
Iworsley, Art
Jackson, Joann and LeRoy
Jones, Robert H
Kabel, Barbara and Robert
Kaszuk, Caroline
Kawahara, Karl and Mae
Kelly, Barbara A
Kendig, Garth
Kennell, Edna and Jim
Kokinda, Ingrid
Krainz, Frances
Kvenvold, Kathleen
Laird, Richard J
Lamson, Baldwin and Ormie
Lapham, H. A. Harry
Leamon, Vera Jean
Lewis, Charles
Loomis, Patricia
MacDonald, Carl
March, Hugh and Carol
McCluskey, Clovis
McDannald, Vernon A.
Meredith, James L.
Meyer, Walter H.
Miller, Jennifer
Murray, Jim and Jeanne

Nelson, Virginia
Nelson, Dick and Ruby
Nolan, Bill and Margie
Palmquist, Keith A.
Parks, M. Lethene
Parrish, George E.
Petrie, George and Jane
Pingrey, Richard
Ralston, R. W.
Rhine, Jim
Ronk, Tom
Rossi, Louise Hammer
Saunders, William H.
Schulte, David L. and Anne
Scoles, Bernadine
Serr, Gene and Nancy
Sheik, Jim
Smith, Calvin L.
Speiden, Bill
Spomer, James and Carlene
Stephens, Wayne
Strong, David
Sumberg, Mort
Tapley, William C.
Taylor, Charley
Tompkins, Jim
Trevallee, Richard L.
Underbrink, Lee
Vixie, David
Weller, Nelson S.
Wentland, Dennis C.
White David A.
Whitworth, James P.
Wiechert, Sandra K. and Allen

Trail Funding Secured

Continued from Page 20

During Advocacy Week 2003, we were told that trail funds were extremely tight but we explained how much had been achieved by Trails Volunteers and as you can see, OCTA's work with Advocacy Week 2003 and the Partnership was quite successful in obtaining additional funding for our trails.

Awards Nominations

Continued from Page 11

class project in such a manner that is considered outstanding and far above the typical field or school project. The project may also be an outstanding personal endeavor undertaken on the nominee's own initiative. An entire class or group of school aged children may be nominated as one aggregated nominee. Qualifying standards would include participation in OCTA

meetings, outings, and/or work projects over an extended period. OCTA membership is not a requirement.

Letters of nomination should be sent to Jackie Lewin, 4715 Amazonia Road, St. Joseph, Missouri 64505; e-mail jlewin@magiccablepc.com. Nominations should include specific details as to why the nominee deserves recognition.

ad copy 400 1-4 (1100) 5cd 9.667

10 1/2 tall 357

spell out

News From the Plains

Follow Lewis and Clark's Trail to the West with a book from the OCTA Bookstore!

(2318 W. Pacific Indep mo) 64050

Buy

Order one or several. Then read and experience this astonishing true to life adventure that changed our nation's history. OCTA members receive 10% discount. Order today. Call toll free 1-888-811-6282 or order on line www.OCTA-trails.org

816-325-7572

Item #	TITLE	Price
1554	Along the Trail with Lewis and Clark	\$19.95
1465	Cobblestone-Lewis and Clark (children)	\$4.95
1608	Following Lewis and Clark's Track (workbook)	\$7.95
1571	Going Along with Lewis and Clark (children)	\$11.95
1402	Journals of Lewis and Clark	\$14.00
1493	Journals of Patrick Gass	\$20.00
1187	Lewis & Clark-Voyage of Discovery	\$9.95
1406	Lewis and Clark Coloring Book (children)	\$3.95
1664	New Lewis and Clark Companion	\$16.00
1668	New Lewis and Clark on the Great Plains	\$14.95
1197	New Lewis and Clark in Missouri	\$19.95
1538	Lewis and Clark in the Three Rivers Valleys	\$16.95
1623	Lewis and Clark: A Photographic Journey	\$18.00
1610	Lewis and Clark: Doctors in the Wilderness	\$18.95
1669	New Plants of the Lewis and Clark Expedition	\$20.00
1313	Traveling the Lewis and Clark Trail	\$15.95
1460	Undaunted Courage	\$17.00
1570	West With Lewis and Clark (children)	\$3.95

524

524 S. OSAGE



OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION (NOT FOR PROFIT)
P.O. Box 10197 Independence, MO 64051-0197
web page <http://OCTA-trails.org>



#1668



#1538



#1402



#1460



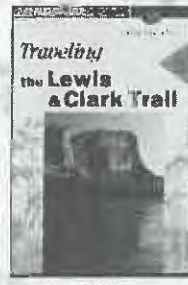
#1669



#1571



#1664



#1313



#1197



#1608

The National Frontier Trails Museum

318 W. Pacific, Independence, MO 64050

816-325-7575

Mon-Sat. 9:00 am - 4:30 pm

Adults \$4.00, Seniors (62 & older) \$3.50

Sunday 12:30 - 4:30 pm

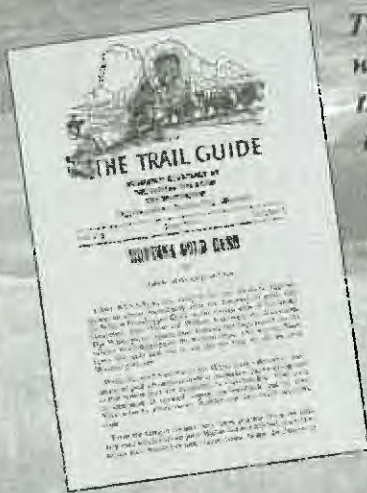
Youth (6 - 17) \$2.50, Age 5 & under Free

*Relive one of the most captivating sagas in American history --
the westward expansion.*

Traders who made fortunes by daring to cross hostile plains, families who left loved ones and braved half a continent of wilderness to fulfill the American Dream. The National Frontier Trails Museum is the only museum and archives dedicated to the history of the Oregon, California and Santa Fe Trails.

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

Special buy - Trail Guide of the Kansas City Posse of Westerners. Nearly complete sets, limited number available. First come, first serve. Excellent condition - newly unwrapped. Published years, 1955 - 1978 with subjects ranging from Custer, Mormons, Guns, Mountain Men, and Native Americans. \$29.95 - Only at the National Frontier Trails Museum



OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1019
Independence, MO 64051-0519

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Indep. MO
Permit No. 244