



## Historic Trails Studies Act Blocked

*By Bill and Jeanne Watson  
Trails Liaison Co-Chairs*

In mid-October, Chairman Richard Pombo took the unprecedented action of closing the House Resources Committee staff office for the duration of the 108th Congress. This blocks House consideration of all remaining trails legislation including the National Historic Trails Studies Act and Willing Seller authorization. These bills automatically died when the 108th Congress adjourned.

For four years, OCTA has attempted to get the extensive Trails Studies Act passed by Congress. It took six years to get the California National Historic Trail designated in 1992. We are now working with our four Trails partners seeking lead sponsors in the new 109th Congress, however, the House Resources Committee undoubtedly again will be firmly under the control of Chairman Pombo. After completing Congressional calls during Trails Advocacy Week in the Spring of 2005, we will be in a better position to discuss with the Board and Officers various legislative options and their requirements that may be available to OCTA in the 109th Congress.

We want to thank each OCTA member who supported this legislation and special thanks to each member of the Trails Liaison Committee who strongly supported the Trails Studies Act with their Congressional contacts.

### **Congressional Trails Funding - Fiscal Year 2005**

Congress passed in mid-November the Omnibus Appropriation bill funding many Agencies for the Fiscal Year 2005, which started October 1. This bill contains a small 1.4 percent reduction in funding for all federal agencies covered by the Interior Department budget, which includes the National Trails System.

However, the hard efforts made by all Partnership for the National Trails System participants during Trails Advocacy Week 2004 in Washington, D.C., successfully helped achieve the

*Continued on page 4*

### **Inside This Issue**

**Award Nominations Needed**

*Page 8*

**Convention 2005**

*Page 13*

**Donner Excavation**

*Page 15*

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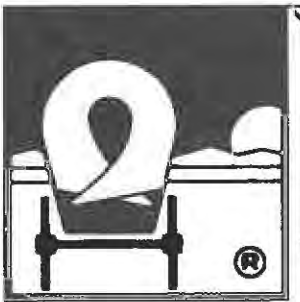
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News From the Plains
is published quarterly
by the
Oregon - California
Trails Association

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WHAT'S HAPPENING...

OCTA Events

March 4-6, 2005
OCTA Board Meeting
Denver, Colorado

August 15-20, 2005
OCTA Convention
Salt Lake City, Utah

August 2006
OCTA Convention
St. Joseph, Missouri



Ezra Meeker Bust
New at the
National Frontier
Trails Museum
(Photo by Judi
Wollenziethin)

Join the OCTA online forum by sending an e-mail to:
overlandtrails-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

# From the President

Richard Pingrey

rjpingrey@charter.net

I would like to thank all of you who wrote, e-mailed, and telephoned me in regard to my comments in the previous issue of *News From The Plains*. There were many diverse and challenging ideas put forward. I think the key to resolving many of our problems can be found in opening channels of communication and by listening to what others have to say.

Turning around our declining membership is not going to happen overnight. Several of you expressed what you feel are the reasons for our shrinking membership. Things like: We are simply an organization that is growing old and old members eventually drop by the way side; we are suffering from our own success and we no longer have the big challenges; chapters and national are not communicating effectively with each other; we need programs and activities to attract younger people and their children.

I suspect there is an element of truth in all of those statements and there are probably many more reasons we haven't identified that result in a decline in our numbers. The point again being, there is no simple answer to OCTA's declining membership problem. It is something we all need to work on.

Under a joint initiative of the President and the Association Manager, national headquarters has undertaken a plan to help chapters process their memberships. At present we process all national OCTA memberships and chapters process their own chapter memberships. Under the new voluntary plan national will also process chapter memberships and then supply chapters with a roster of their chapter members. Members can send their application to the chapter or directly to national headquarters for processing. This should be a significant help to those chapters that do not have a membership secretary and therefore, find it difficult to process memberships and maintain records. The new national membership brochure will contain information on chapter memberships as well as the national membership. This will make it easier for new members to join both a chapter and the national organization even though they have not yet made a

chapter contact. Detailed information on this new program will be sent to the chapters by our national headquarters staff in the near future.

The mid-winter OCTA National Board of Directors meeting will be held in early March in the Denver, CO, area. In addition to the Board meeting there will be time devoted to strategic planning, chapter development, officer and board member responsibilities and planning, and trail preservation. The March meeting will involve several days of activities. OCTA members are encouraged to attend OCTA Board meetings and related programs as observers.

Vice President Vern Gorzitze and the Leadership and Nominating Committee have issued a call for candidates for officer positions and board positions. There will be four board members elected next spring and we need to have at least eight candidates for the four positions. It is an excellent opportunity to get involved and to help shape OCTA's future.

By design and from the president down to the lowest level, OCTA is run by volunteers. We never have enough people to do all the things that need to be done. Opportunities abound for all who are interested in participating in our programs.

Thanks again to all of you that shared your ideas and offered suggestions. Working together we can accomplish many things and overcome even the largest obstacles.

## OCTA Board Meeting March 4-6, 2005 Denver, Colorado

Agenda items...

- ◆ Bylaw revisions
  - ◆ 5-Year Plan
  - ◆ Membership Issues
  - ◆ Preservation Activities
- And more...

# Trail Journal

Candy Moulton

NFP Editor  
nfpocta@aol.com

During the past six months, I have had the opportunity to get out on sections of the Overland and Oregon Trails and see ruts, swales, and other features I had not been to previously. The first journey during mid-summer took me and several other Wyoming OCTA members out with BLM archaeologists Colleen Siever and Bonnie Bruce of the Rock Springs District. They were evaluating a study funded by Anadarko that identifies trail features. This study is still being finalized by BLM officials

We traveled trail from Dug Springs west to the Black Butte Coal Mine, stopping for lunch at the ruins of Fort LaCledé. For much of the route we saw limited development, but in places oil and gas activity—including new roads, well pads and other features—encroached within the quarter-mile buffer zone along the trail. One site in particular, on private land leased for development by Anadarko, was just feet from

impressive trail swales. This was a reminder that trail marking efforts are essential.

On my second trip, I joined National Trail Preservation Officer Dave Welch, his wife Wendy, BLM Archaeologist Terry Del Bene of the Rock Springs District, and other OCTA members in a day visiting Oregon-California Trail sites from South Pass to west of the Green River. Dave Welch provides more detail about the activities ongoing in that area. Suffice it to say, there are new and expanding development projects that have the potential to affect trail resources throughout much of western Wyoming.

Spring Issue News From the Plains  
Deadline: February 20, 2005

## Historic Trails Studies Blocked

following improvements in the 2005 funding for the National Scenic and Historic Trails:

- \$500,000 increase in National Park Service Challenge Cost Share Program funding to \$2,450,000, with one-third of those dollars going to National Scenic and Historic Trails;
- \$500,000 increase in National Park Service Long Distance Trails offices annual base operating funding to be spread over the National Scenic and Historic Trails offices;
- Five percent increase in the annual base line operating funding for each National Park unit, including all Park Service Long Distance Trails offices;
- \$1.5 million additional funding to the Bureau of Land Management toward construction of the Elko, NV, California Trails Center;
- \$2 million additional Land and Water Conservation funding to the Forest Service for Florida National Scenic Trail right-of-way land acquisition plus \$1 million for Ice Age National Scenic Trail right-of-way land acquisition.

*Continued from Page 1*

There are additional rumors from Washington that the Administration Fiscal Year 2006 proposed Interior budget due, out early next year, will have significant across the board reductions, including for trails activities, as part of the President's deficit reduction plan.

### Report Volunteer Hours

Annual reports of volunteer hours, miles and expenses help OCTA obtain Congressional dollars to support the federal agencies that manage and administer our trails.

Please report your hours for 2004. Record actual activity hours, including planning, travel and activity time for attending conventions, symposiums, trail treks, trail marking, chapter meetings, etc. Also record vehicle miles driven planning and participating in trail activities and expenses that are not reimbursed, including lodging, air fare, materials and supplies, etc. Send your completed report to:

Bill and Jeanne Watson  
18 Warford Terrace  
Orinda, CA 94563

# Headquarters Manager's Report

Kathy Conway

KConway@indepmo.org

**It's here!!!** We are extremely delighted to announce OCTA's newest publication, *Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails* is now available. Written by OCTA's Chairman of the Graves and Site Committee, Randy Brown, this work is considered the most comprehensive study of emigrant trail inscriptions ever done. Order by March 1 and shipping is free! (See full page ad, page 12)

Our Annual Fund Raising campaign for the 2004-05 year is off to a good start. As of Dec. 7, 127 of your fellow OCTA members have contributed \$8,743 to this campaign. If you haven't already done so, please send your donation as the campaign runs through March 31, 2005. This year you may make your donation in installments.

David Dary recently spoke at the National Frontier Trails Museum (NFTM) on one of our favorite topics, the Oregon Trail, as it is the subject of his newest book titled, *The Oregon Trail: An American Saga*. Dary devotes the last chapter in this book to the rebirth of the trail. He gives credit to Ezra Meeker for beginning the work that others carry on, such as the former Oregon Trail Memorial Association, the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, state and local governments, OCTA, and private individuals.

It was during this same presentation that NFTM Director, John Mark Lambertson took the opportunity to unveil OCTA's Ezra Meeker bronze bust created by Dr. Daniel Fairbanks, and announce it is to be placed in the Trail Museum.

Before we close, Happy New Year 2005. May you experience a most prosperous year, and thank you for your generous financial support to OCTA's valuable programs.



David Dary, right, and John Mark Lambertson at the National Frontier Trails Museum. (Photo by Judi Wollenziehn)

## From the Mailbag

### Kennell Extends Thanks

OCTA Members,

I want to thank the members of OCTA who supported me in my election to the Board. I greatly appreciate your vote of confidence.

I did not accomplish everything I intended to this last year because of the illness, hospitalization, and passing of my late husband. I'd like to thank the many people who sent their condolences and sympathy. He was not a long time member of OCTA,

but he was proud of his membership and encouraged me in my reelection. During the next three years I will work harder to achieve my goals and help OCTA move forward.

Again, I appreciate all those members who voted for me.

Sincerely,  
Edna Kennell  
Casper, WY

# Association Manager's Report

Travis Boley  
Tboley@indepnw.org

My last column generated so many positive responses and so much positive feedback that I feel really inspired and I hope that I can in turn inspire all of you to help OCTA grow and continue its string of successes.

First off, please find Bill Martin's column elsewhere in this issue. Bill recently became the fundraising chairman (in addition to his multiple other duties, including serving on your national Board of Directors) and has a lot of great ideas and enthusiasm. I won't repeat his entire column, but please do follow up on his suggestions that you contact your employer (or, if you're retired, your former employer) and find out if they match your contributions to not-for-profit organizations. Because OCTA is designated a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization by the IRS, your contributions often are eligible for such matches. What a great way to double your contribution and help to ensure that OCTA has sufficient funds as it undertakes a great expansion in training its members in preservation techniques.

One of the jobs of the national office is to coordinate with the chapters and help them to ensure that they can get their work done more efficiently. With that thought in mind, please do not hesitate to contact my office if you see a way that your headquarters staff can ever be of assistance. One thing that is already underway is a re-design of the membership brochure. We will include optional chapter memberships on the national membership form. I know that a lot of folks who join OCTA aren't even aware that the option of chapter membership exists and hope that by including the details on the national membership form that they will sign up for one or more chapter affiliations. The national office is equipped to handle the processing of chapter memberships as well, so if your chapter doesn't have a membership chairman (or if your president or other designated person is tired of dealing with it), please utilize our services. There's no charge for it and you'll still get 100 percent of your membership dues; it's your national office, so use it!

This autumn I've dropped in on many chapter meetings to encourage participation in the development of a long-range plan for OCTA. Obviously, I can't make it to all of the chapter meetings, but I want to share that same message with everyone—please participate in the development of a long-range plan for OCTA. We need to develop this document so that we have a mutually agreed-upon direction for OCTA. We're a big organization with a lot of (sometimes contrary) ideas, but we're also a democratic organization. In the next few days, I expect to decide upon a facilitator for the mid-year board meeting (to be held in or near Denver during the first weekend of March) to help guide the Board of Directors through this process. The California/Nevada chapter has already submitted a multi-page document of possible ideas and directions; I'm encouraging every other chapter to do the same. If you don't have a chapter affiliation, you can contact me directly with your ideas. I plan to put all of this together into an easily read format for our board members and we'll take the best of these and set off on a new, exciting course!

As has been repeated often in this and the past issue of *News From the Plains*, OCTA is dedicating more and more of its resources to preservation. Dave Welch, OCTA's National Preservation Officer, is planning multiple meetings around the western United States over the next few years to train OCTA's members in what he has deemed the "Three M's": mapping, marking and monitoring. Dave is going to need a lot of help in this endeavor, so I hope you'll step forward with assistance. If you can't get out on the trail anymore, there are still ways you can help. For example, you can return your year-end appeal envelope with a donation marked "preservation." This process is going to be expensive and we need all the resources we can get to do it properly. The first of these meetings will have already occurred by the time you read this (December 8 and 9 in Salt Lake City), but there will be other opportunities to attend similar meetings. Be sure to watch for more details in the future.

*Continued on next page*

## Association Manager's Report

Continued from previous page

The final thing I have is a plea for your help. We are in the process of totally revamping OCTA's website ([www.octa-trails.org](http://www.octa-trails.org)). We're nearing completion of our new store site ([www.octa-trails.org/store](http://www.octa-trails.org/store) is a non-functional prototype) but the site still needs a lot of work. In the process of consolidating the site onto one server, many links became broken or lost. The job of fixing this is tedious, but necessary. One of the vacancies OCTA has is the job of Internet committee chairman. As a matter of fact, the entire committee is vacant. The

only qualifications are that you have access to a computer, preferably with a high-speed Internet connection. We will be using DreamWeaver software to build and maintain the site; if you have experience with this software, wonderful! If not, I can train you. Please call me toll free at 888/811-6282 or email me at [tboley@indepmo.org](mailto:tboley@indepmo.org) if you want to help. We've submitted an application to the SBC Foundation and asked for over \$16,000 to assist in building a new dynamic site. I expect to hear any day now if we will be getting an award. Keep your fingers crossed.

## New OCTA Book Now Available

By Bill Martin  
OCTA Publications Chair

OCTA members will receive free shipping with all orders for Randy Brown's *Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails* received by March 1.

The book, a detailed compilation of emigrant inscriptions on the overland trails, is available for \$29.95 in soft cover and \$49.95 in hard cover. Shipping normally is \$5 per volume.

Brown, an OCTA member from Douglas, WY, spent years of field work compiling and verifying inscriptions for the 464-page book, which has been

called "an exceptional work," "an invaluable resource," and "a must have book for the library of every trails enthusiast."

To order, call OCTA at 1-888-811-6282, visit [www.octa-trails.org](http://www.octa-trails.org), or use the order coupon in the advertisement found elsewhere in this issue of *News From The Plains*.

The book is 8 1/2 by 11 inches and includes a complete name and place index, maps of inscription sites, a bibliography and introduction.

Brown is also editor of OCTA's best-selling *Graves and Sites on the California and Oregon Trails*.

## BLM Director and Elko County Hold Trail Center Event

A public event to celebrate the start of access road construction to Elko's future California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center was held in October at the site located just off I-80 at the Hunter Exit (8 miles west of Elko) on the north side of the interstate.

Partners in the Trails Center including representatives from the California Trails Center Advisory Committee, City of Elko, Elko County, State of Nevada, Maggie Creek Ranch, Nevada Senator Harry Reid's Office and BLM Director Kathleen Clarke gave brief presentations. The event also honored several individuals who have contributed to the project.

Funding includes \$2 million from the City of Elko, \$1 million from Elko County, and \$3 million from the State of Nevada. Senator Harry Reid was successful in sponsoring Senate Bill S.2749, which authorizes the appropriation of up to \$12 million for the Trail Center.

The late William Searle of Maggie Creek Ranch donated forty acres and a road easement for the site west of Elko.

While interpreted to some extent at other facilities, no one interpretive center exists that deals solely with the California Trail.

"The California Trail Center project began as a private citizen's grassroots effort," said BLM Elko Field Manager Helen Hankins. "The support for the project has its basis in the local community. Recognizing that no one entity had sufficient resources to fund such an undertaking, the local community supporters used collaboration and partnership to obtain the financial commitments needed. The success of the project will remain with that spirit of collaborative partnership."

For more information about the California National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, contact David Jamiel at the BLM Elko Field Office 775/753-0213.

## Awards Nominations Needed

By Jackie Lewin  
Award Chair

It is time to begin the nomination process for the OCTA Awards to be presented at the August convention in Salt Lake City. Several requests have been made to provide a list of all of the past recipients as a help to members in determining who might qualify for the various categories.

First, the categories and the qualifications:

**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.

**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; appropriate chapters should recognize more regional or local efforts.

**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 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.

The success of OCTA is due to the many dedicated volunteers who work to improve and strengthen the organization, preserve existing trail ruts 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 for submission of nominations is June 1.**

Letters of nomination should be sent to Jackie Lewin, 4715 Amazonia Road, St. Joseph, MO 64505, email [jlewin@magiccablepc.com](mailto:jlewin@magiccablepc.com). Nominations should include specific details as to why the nominee deserves recognition.

The past recipients have been:

**Meritorious Achievement:** (Note that in the early years, institutions were awarded Meritorious Achievements. That is no longer the case. They are now in the Distinguished Service category.)

1983 - Dr. E.G. Frenchy Chuinard.

1984 - Merrill Mattes, Tom Hunt and Nebraska Game and Parks.

1985 - Aubrey Haines, Troy Gray and Wyoming Recreation Commission.

1986 - Clyde Arbuckle, Helen Helfrich, Merle Wells, Robert & Marguerite Griffin and Oregon City, Oregon.

1987 - Gregory Franzwa and Idaho Bureau of Land Management.

1988 - John Latschar and Independence, Missouri, *Examiner*.

1989 - James Bowers and Idaho Dept. of Parks & Recreation.

1990 - Charles Martin Sr. and City of Independence, Missouri.

1991 - Don Buck, Jack & Richard Steel and Chuck Graydon - Trails West.

1992 - Barbara Magerl, Reg Duffin & Wyoming Bureau of



## Award Nominations

### Land Management.

- 1993 - Richard Ackerman.  
1994 - Jim Budde, Betty Lee and Rose Ann Tompkins.  
1995 - Randy Brown and Robert Berry.  
1996 - Andy and Joanne Hammond, Susan Badger Doyle and Burlington Northern Railroad.  
1997 - Al Mulder and William Hill.  
1998 - Charles Dodd, Kathy Roubal, James Renner, Marv Ross  
Trail Band, Joyce Hunsaker and Tamastshikt Cultural Institute.  
1999 - Bill & Shann Rupp.  
2000 - John Leamon and Craig Crease.  
2001 - Bill & Jeanne Watson and Lee Underbrink.  
2002 - Charles Martin Jr.  
2003 - Ross Marshall.  
2004 - David Welch.

### Distinguished Volunteer:

- 1990 - Elaine McNabney.  
1991 - Kathy Roubal.  
1992 - Bill & Shann Rupp.  
1993 - Chuck Dodd.  
1994 - Vernon Gorzitze.  
1995 - None.  
1996 - None.  
1997 - Lesley Wischmann.  
1998 - Dr. Robert Wier.  
1999 - Mary Mueller.  
2000 - Ruth Anderson.  
2001 - Judy Budde.  
2002 - Dave Hollecker.  
2003 - Barbara & Bob Kabel and Mark Wheeler.  
2004 - Chuck Hornbuckle and OCTA's Western Library Committee (Dick Davis, Don Buck, Dick Brock, Tom Hunt and Charlie Little).

### Distinguished Service:

- 1999 - Carrie Smith, Gerry Gates & Surprise Field Office, BLM.  
2000 - John Mark Lambertson and Kansas City Historic Trails Assoc.  
2001 - None.  
2002 - Peggy McGuckian, Susan Lynn and Gary Bowyer  
2003 - Joe Kabel, Jere Krakow and Terry Del Bene.  
2004 - Ken Dauble and Oregon Historic Trail Advisory Council.

### Friend of the Trail: (Note that until 1990 this award was called Rancher of the Year)

- 1985 - Stella Hammett (Kans.), Ivor Dilke (Neb.), Rudy & Ruth Chesnovar (Wyo.) and Homer & Kay Abell ( Ore.).  
1986 - Dwight Ewing (Neb.) and Marvis Applequist (Wyo.).  
1987 - Bernard Sun (Wyo.), Robert Ward (Id.), Mr. & Mrs. David Bagley (Ut.) and George Dein (Nebr.).  
1988 - Donald Willsey (Kans.), Krebs Ranches (Ore.) and Chester & Bill Frederick (Wyo.).  
1989 - Paul & Ruby Tschirky (Calif.), Herb & Mary Allen (Id.), Neal & Leona Ambrose (Id.), Bill & Edna Barber

(Wyo.) and Jim & Betty Sudbeck (Kans.).

- 1990 - Don & Jean Rowlett (Ore.) and Louis Schumacher (Mo.).  
1991 - Ray Bedke (Id.).  
1992 - James Gould (Calif.), Mr. & Mrs. Leonard Osler Family (Neb.), Freed-Robinson Partners (Ut.) and John & Leonard Hay Families (Wyo).  
1993 - Lyle & Carol Woodbury (Id.), Steve & Susan Cory (Ore.), Peter & Jeanne Maher (Wyo.) and Wayne & Mae Koch (Neb.).  
1994 - Les Broadie (Id.), Mr. & Mrs. David Gage (Kans.), Mr. & Mrs. John Gage (Kans.), Joseph Ray Broadbent Jr. (Wyo.) and Joseph Siddoway Broadbent (Wyo.).  
1995 - Steve Percy (Id.), Joe & Dianne Jeffrey (Nebr.), Pete & Faye Gaines (N. Mex.) And Edwin Boddy Family (Neb.).  
1996 - Maggie Creek Ranches (Nev.) and Vernon Bomgardner (Wyo.).  
1997 - Gerald & Patricia Mick (Neb.)  
1998 - Rachael Huninghake (Kans.) and Gerald Swaggart (Ore.).  
1999 - Marion & Scott Bradley (Kans.) and William Tompson Family (Calif.).  
2000 - Marc & Helen Vering (Kans.)  
2001 - Norman & Gaynell Park (Wyo.), Elvin & Shirley Holle (Kans.) and Audubon Spring Creek Prairie (Neb.).  
2002 - Art & Lorene Pacha (Kans.)  
2003 - Jim Tessorndorf (Kans.) and Pat & Alicia Keegan (Kans.).  
2004 - Rex & Loleta Morton (Kans.), William Johnson (Ore.) and Larry & Corrine Lindsay (Ore.).

### National Certificates of Appreciation:

- 1991 - Pat Reuy.  
1992 - Doris Dart.  
1993 - Ross Marshall, Sally True and *Casper Star-Tribune*.  
1994 - Tom Bell & Peter DeLafosse.  
1995 - Cong. Doug Bereuter and Lois Daniel.  
1996 - Will Bagley and Placer Dome US, Inc.  
1997 - Lyn Ryder, Dr. Robert Wier and Olive Donaldson.  
1998 - William White and Walt Tegge.  
1999 - Larry Ludwig, Cassidy & Gena Falkenburg and U.S. Postal Service.  
2000 - Cave Spring Assoc., Friends of Rice-Tremonti Home, Walter Cook, Westport Historical Society, Kans. City Parks & Recreation, City of Westwood, Tom Laidlaw, Charles Goslin, Gail Carbiener, Trails Head Chapter and Ross Marshall.  
2001 - Marilyn Holt, Ron Lund and Edna Kennell.  
2002 - Pat Loomis.  
2003 - Ernie & Della White, Glen Larson, and Verne Osborne.  
2004 - Dave Hollecker and Fred Dykes.

### Young OCTAN Award:

- 2003 - Skylar German and Kiera Keegan.  
2004 - Ryan Marshall.

## Nominate for Outstanding Educator Awards

*By Bill Hill*  
*Education Committee Chair*

WANTED – Educators deserving of praise and recognition. If you know of a teacher or museum program that has done a fine job of educating your children or others, or the public, our program can grant them the recognition they deserve. The deadline for nominations for the 2005 Outstanding Educator Awards is March 31, 2005. The awards will be presented at the awards banquet during the convention in August in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The awards program was designed to recognize outstanding achievement in educating students of all ages about the westward migrations of the nineteenth century. Nominations are open to any individual or team of individuals that has contributed significantly to the education of

students. The work may reflect a complete unit or special project within a unit or course. The work must have been used during either the 2003-4 or 2004-5 school year.

The awards may be granted in five different categories: elementary-primary/intermediate; middle school/junior high; high school; post-secondary/college/university or adult ed.; and museum/institutional. Recipients will receive a \$250 honorarium, a framed certificate, convention registration, and room and board for the night of the awards banquet.

For nomination forms or more information, contact OCTA headquarters at P.O. Box 1019, Independence, MO 64051, phone 816/252-2276; or William E. Hill, OCTA Ed. Chair, 91 Wood Road, Centereach, NY 11720, phone 631/585-2592; or the local chapter presidents.

## Friend of the Trail Recipient Honored Before Death

*By Ken Martin*  
*KANZA Chapter*

Rex and Loleta Morton of rural Frankfort received the Oregon-California Trails Association's 'Friends of the Trail' award in Vancouver, WA, during OCTA's annual Convention in August 2004.

The KANZA Chapter of OCTA honored the Mortons with a dinner and reception on October 10 at the City Hall in Marysville. Mr. Morton had been hospitalized and was too weak to attend the celebration. Mrs. Morton, their daughter Annette Cline and her family, and many friends attended.

The Friends of the Trail award is given to landowners who implement preservation practices for protecting visible trail remnants or sites along the National Historic Trails.

The Mortons own land in southern Marshall County which has visible remnants of the trail, and have allowed trail buffs access to their property.

Arleta Martin welcomed the Morton family and their guest, and Don Cooper of Manhattan, led the group in prayer.

Della White of Westmoreland presented the Mortons with the Certificate they received from the

National Organization and Jim Bradley of Westmoreland presented them a plaque on behalf of the KANZA Chapter.

Ken Martin displayed a map of the area where the remnants are still visible and several pictures of the area. He also displayed other trail related materials.

The Morton property was shown in both OCTA videos, "Saving a Legacy" in 2003 and "Across the Kansas Prairie" in 2004. While walking in Morton's pasture several years ago, Jere Krakow made this comment, "This is just like it was during the migration, there is nothing modern to be seen."

Two former awardees were present, Rachel Hunninghake of rural Frankfort and Marian Bradley of Westmoreland.

Rex Morton passed away on October 21 at the Onaga Hospital in Onaga, KS. Funeral services were held at the United Methodist Church in Frankfort, KS, on Monday, October 25, 2004.

Rex lived on land where trail remnants are still visible. He was buried at Antioch Cemetery, where there are visible trail remnants. Rex has traveled the ultimate trail and is at peace.

# Nominations Sought for OCTA Board of Directors

OCTA's By-laws specify: "Members shall be advised in writing prior to January 31 each year, either by a direct mailing or in the Winter issue of an OCTA publication, of the number of directors to be elected in the next election and they may submit one or more recommendations for Board nominees. Each recommendation shall be in writing and shall include the following:

- 1) Information about the trail qualifications and experience of the person recommended, the extent to which such a person has participated in the affairs of this Association, and other pertinent information requested by the Nominating Committee.
- 2) A written endorsement of such person from three (3) additional members in good standing.
- 3) A written statement from the member being nominated indicating his or her willingness to serve actively on the Board if elected.

*The last date on which such recommendations shall be submitted shall be the first day of April preceding the next annual meeting."*

In accordance with the OCTA Bylaws the Nominating and Leadership Committee is now accepting nominations for the Board of Directors.

Each year, the terms of four of the twelve Directors expire. In 2005 the terms expire for Jack Fletcher, Andy Hammond, Fran Taplan and David Welch. All of which are eligible to run for reelection should they desire to do so.

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

In addition to the three (3) requirements listed above the Committee requests that you also submit the following:

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

Association reach those goals and objectives.

- 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 serve for three years and 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, 2005. Nominations should be mailed to the Nominating and Leadership Committee chair:

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

If you have any questions, please contact Vern at (801) 484-9623 or by e-mail to [vergor@wasatchnet.net](mailto:vergor@wasatchnet.net).

Committee members include: James E. Budde, [jjbudde@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jjbudde@worldnet.att.net); Mary Mueller, [mary\\_mueller@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mary_mueller@sbcglobal.net); and Vern Osborne, [cosbo@kansas.net](mailto:<cosbo@kansas.net).

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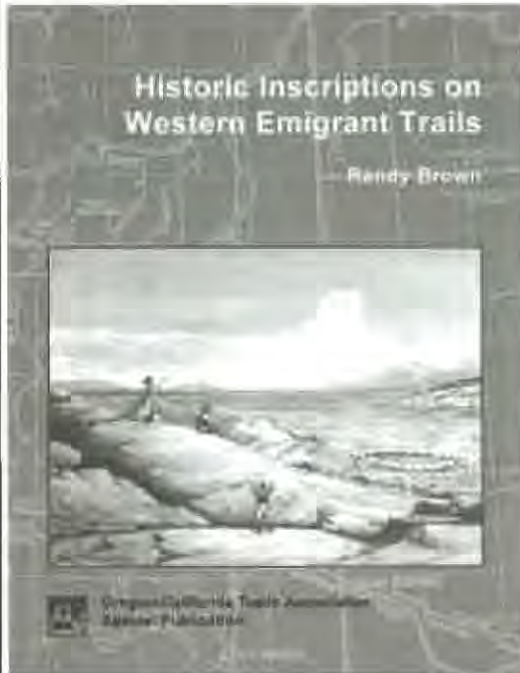
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## Make Tracks to Salt Lake City in 2005

**Be a part of "Trailing The Pioneers." Put your feet in the footsteps of the people who trod this area over 150 years ago.**

**August 15-20, 2005  
"GET AROUND TO IT"**

*By Vern Gorzitze  
Convention Chair*

**UTAH** - A trip into some of the most varied landscapes of all the states in America: Mountains covered with forests, high plateaus, rock formations of varied shapes and colors, the largest inland body of salt water in North America, mountain peaks covered with snow well into the summer months, canyons of unbelievable proportions and that just for starters.

The first recorded trail activity in Utah was at the time of the 1776 signing of the Declaration of Independence with the Spanish Dominguez-Escalante Party. They were followed by such notables as William H. Ashley, Jedediah Smith, Bidwell-Bartleson, John C. Fremont, Lansford W. Hastings, the Bryant-Russell Party, the ill fated Donner-Reed Party, and the Mormon Pioneers, to mention just a few of the lengthy list of explorers, mountain men, trappers, and emigrants on their way west.

Prior to our official convention start, Charlene Olorenshaw with the help of Mike Bateman will conduct a tour following in part the route of the Bidwell-Bartleson party starting in Soda Springs, ID. A second pre-convention tour will cover the Mormon corridor from Fort Bridger to Salt Lake City and will be conducted by John Eldredge and we hope, Dr.

LaMar Berrett. The final tour, led by Roy Tea and company, will cover "all you wanted to know but have been afraid to ask" questions about the great salt desert to the west.

Convention tours will cover the Salt Lake Cutoff to the California Trail with a railroad interest; the "Trail West to Donner Spring;" an overview of the Hastings, Harlan Young, Bryant/Russell,

Lienhard/Hoppe travels into and across Utah; and portions of the Hastings Cutoff with Lincoln Highway/ Pony Express interest. Also of interest will be a hiking option on the Mormon Pioneer Route from Mormon Flat to Big Mountain Pass.

All of the tours will include special sites not usually visited; you will view and experience a number of sites with ruts, swales and trail traces.

Will Bagley is assembling a cadre of fine speakers to keep

you on the edge of your seats, covering a wide range of thought provoking, tantalizing, and perhaps even controversial subject material.

Pre-convention tours will start Sunday, August 14, and the final farewell BBQ is Saturday night, August 19. We would like to try and plan a post-convention tour on Sunday, August 20. The Board of Directors meeting will be Tuesday, August 16, with General Membership Convention Activities Wednesday through Saturday.

Convention Central or Ground Zero as we have been calling it, is the Sheraton City Center Hotel, 150 West 500 South, the same structure where we held our last Salt Lake City OCTA Convention, but with a new name.

Visit Crossroads Chapter convention website at [www.utahcrossroads.org/OCTA2005/](http://www.utahcrossroads.org/OCTA2005/)



*Oscar Olson and Brent Reber, Crossroads Chapter president, during an October 9 field trip at Rocky Ford, one of the crossings on the Salt Lake Cutoff. This route was also used in 1841 by the Bidwell-Bartleson Party. The carsonite marker denotes The Rocky Ford crossing on the Malad River. (Photo by Jerry Dunton)*

## COED Makes Plans for 2005 Activities

By Marley Shurtleff

COED Committee co-chair

On October 22-23, thirteen members of the COED (Census of Overland Emigrant Documents) committee met in Portland, OR, to determine 2004 progress, and plan for 2005.

This year, COED committee members have taken time from their individual committee tasks to meet three times and evaluate progress. At the meeting, members reported progress on several fronts.

- We have made progress toward preparing more than 650 surveys for inclusion on the next release of the Emigrant Names disk.
- The surveyor's manual has been revised and updated, ready for new surveyors to put to use.



From left: Kathy Buob, Dave Welch, Lethene Parks, Wendy Welch, Shann Rupp, Richard Rieck, Nola Little, Charlie Little, Marley Shurtleff, Sallie Riehl, Jack Fletcher, Pat Fletcher. Not shown: Jim Riehl, photographer.

• The COED database data entry program is in the final stages of revision and improvement, and will be ready to use for inputting accumulated survey records within the next few months.

• Committee procedures are defined for specific processes and for how members work together.

• The COED website has been completely redone and will be available for OCTA members and visitors to view in the near future.

The committee plans to add the more than 650 completed surveys into the COED database early in 2005. Data from the surveys will be added to the

current Emigrant Names disk information in a new release by Convention time, 2005. While in Salt Lake, the committee plans to provide a variety of information for people who are interested in becoming surveyors or in conducting a search of the database.

## Double those Donations, if you can

By Bill Martin

Fundraising Chair

What could be better than having your tax-deductible donation to OCTA doubled or even tripled?

One of the easiest ways to increase the impact of your contribution to the OCTA Annual Fund Drive now under way is by taking advantage of an employer matching program.

Hundreds of businesses and corporations of all sizes will match an employee's contribution to a non-profit organization, such as OCTA. Some businesses will even match the donations made by retirees and spouses.

Typically, you can find out if your employer has a matching gift program by asking your human resources or personnel department and obtaining any necessary forms. Return the form with your contribution and OCTA will do the rest. (If you've already sent in your contribution, it's not too late to send in a matching gift form.)

On occasion, an employer matching gift program will even apply to tax-deductible portions of annual memberships and some companies even match their employee's volunteer hours with donations. (And, while you're at it, ask your employer to become a member!)

The OCTA Annual Fund Drive is one of the organization's most important fundraising tools, with each dollar used for trails preservation in a number of vital areas, including archaeology, COED, education, graves & trail sites, special publications, trail mapping, trail marking, and more. You can even make a contribution to help build OCTA Endowment funds.

This year, for the first time, OCTA is offering the opportunity to make donations in monthly, quarterly or semi-annual installments, billable to Visa or MasterCard.

For more information about employer matching, the Annual Fund Drive, or other ways of offering financial support to OCTA, contact Association Manager Travis Boley at 888/811-6282.

## Archaeologists Expand Excavations – Donner Family Camp

By Leslie R. Fryman  
CANV Chapter Preservation Officer

The tragic story of the Donner Party and what it endured during the winter of 1846-47 is one of the most widely known and talked about events in Western history. Its small collection of primary accounts and reminiscences by survivors has been followed by a maelstrom of folklore and conjecture, as well as many varied efforts at scholarly research and illumination of historical facts. In the 21st century, technological improvements in archaeological method can be applied to help differentiate fact from fiction, and reveal previously unknown details of the events that took place during that ill-fated winter in the Sierra Nevada.

The Alder Creek meadow is known by tradition as the campsites of George and Jacob Donner and their families. George Donner, his wife Tamsen and five children were thought to have inhabited one shelter around the base of a large tree in the meadow, while Jacob, his wife Eliza and seven children occupied a second shelter a short distance away. The two family groups built constant fires for warmth, cooking, and light. Before the last of four relief parties arrived in April of 1847, seven people are thought to have died at the Alder Creek camp of exposure and/or starvation. After George Donner's death, Tamsen Donner left Alder Creek and moved to the camp at Donner Lake, but died before the rescue party reached her camp.

Archaeological fieldwork at the Alder Creek site began in the late 1980s with Dr. Don Hardesty and Dr. Susan Lindstrom's research.

In 2003, the Alder Creek site was revisited, this time by Dr. Julie Schablitzky of the University of Oregon/Museum of Natural History and Dr. Kelly Dixon of the University of Montana, in order to retrieve additional data using a variety of new technologies such as ground penetrating radar, and forensic analyses like those applied in modern crime investigations. Only a couple of excavation units were opened during the short 2003 field season. Typically, though, on the last day the team found the ashy evidence of a fire hearth buried nearby, and knew they had to return. Upon obtaining grant funding, a two-week excavation was planned for July 2004.

Luckily, because I was one of the volunteering

archaeologists in both 2003 and 2004, special permission was granted for OCTA to have a two-day "open house" to visit the site while work was in progress.

Excavation work in 2004 focused on opening units surrounding the one in which firepit ashes and oxidized (burnt) soil were found the previous year. When the first OCTA members toured the site on July 8, approximately six new units were opened and small artifacts, including wagon hardware and bits of emigrant-era ceramic dinnerware, were slowly being exposed with brushes, point-mapped, photographed, and removed to be placed into labeled bags. Tom Fee and Ford and Ellen Osborn arrived just as I discovered an intact wagon staple in my own unit (the largest artifact recovered), which caused considerably more excitement among OCTA members than among the archaeologists! Bob and Adrienne Dietrich also visited the site July 8, a day rich in artifact discoveries as several lead pellets (birdshot and buckshot) and two button backings (made in London) were also found.

OCTA members who visited the Alder Creek site July 9 were Mary Mueller and Pat Loomis, Curtis Grant and grandson Jacob, Tom and Dee Birch, Dave Hollecker, and Norine and Robin Kimmy. No spectacular finds were uncovered this day, but a lot of dirt was moved and many more bone fragments collected. Then, on Sunday, a small thin fire hearth filled with ash, charcoal, bone and artifact fragments was uncovered just south of the 2003 units. It turned out to be the first of a series of campfire remains, more or less connected over the space of a meter, which may represent what Dr. Lindstrom has referred to as "migrating hearths."

The hearth features contained quantities of crushed and burned food bone interspersed with early emigrant-era household artifacts, causing great excitement among the research team members. To what types of mammals these bones belong will be the primary subject of the forthcoming laboratory analyses, and, as of yet, it is unknown whether or not any of the bone is human. Other implications of this year's fieldwork, however, seem to favor the probability that the archaeological remains in this meadow are indeed associated with the Donner campsite.

Eventually, all artifacts from the site will be returned to the Tahoe National Forest for curation.

# Preservation Report

David Welch

Preservation Officer  
welchjd@comcast.net

With prospects for a fine Indian summer in the west, Wendy and I decided to visit Idaho and Wyoming to take care of OCTA preservation business.

The first stop was in Nampa, ID, to discuss mapping activities and plans for the preservation training to be conducted under a Challenge Cost Share Grant from the National Park Service with Jim McGill. Jim is now OCTA's mapping committee chair and the Idaho chapter preservation officer. Jim has agreed to take the lead on the mapping component of the training program. This will provide classroom and field experience using the MET guide. The first session may be in Idaho in April, 2005 with other chapters scheduled later.

Next we met with Mr. Loughmiller and his wife at their home near the City of Rocks. Mr. Loughmiller owns about 150 acres in the middle of the City of Rocks National Historic Preserve, including Register Rock. He has been a good steward of the property and wishes to sell it to the National Park Service. However, his asking price is twice the appraised value and the NPS is prohibited from paying more than "fair market value." The difference amounts to about \$150,000. He encouraged OCTA to work with the NPS office in Seattle to find a solution.

We spent the better part of two days visiting energy and mineral development sites with Terry Del Bene in the BLM Rock Springs Field Office's area of responsibility. These included a proposed gold mine at Dickie Springs on the approach to South Pass, a phantom trail segment in the same area, the dormant Shell-Wolverine well pad, and the area south of the Sublette Cutoff where seismic studies are underway. OCTA members Bill and Gail Robinson and Tom McCutcheon, Candy Moulton, and Kierson Krume from the Pinedale BLM Field Office also participated in these visits.

The BLM is currently considering a request to dig test pits to determine if a gold mine is economically feasible in the area southeast of South Pass. The test activity itself is low impact, but the full project may have a significant impact on the viewshed approaching South Pass. The project is a little over a mile from the trails, but within the South Pass Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). In a letter

to the BLM in October, I questioned the rationale for permitting the test project if the follow-on project is likely to conflict with environmental and historic preservation laws.

In this same area, some maps show a variant of the Seminole Cutoff passing through the area of proposed test pits and riparian fences. However, field studies do not show evidence of a trail. The route in question crosses a hill and the ascent shows absolutely no evidence of a trail or road. Don Hartley, the Wyoming chapter preservation officer for the area, has also concluded that the mapped route is erroneous.

A few years ago, Shell and Wolverine Oil and Gas were permitted to drill a gas well about ten miles west of South Pass just off Highway 28. The agreement included standard stipulations for the restoration of the site when work was completed. For proprietary reasons, the results of the drilling have not been released but there has been no action to put it in production. While the drill rig and associated equipment have been long-removed, the pad, waste collection ponds and earthen berm remain and are visible from the trail. I will request information on future plans for this site from the BLM.

Much of the area between Pinedale and Rock Springs is being vigorously studied to determine its potential for gas production. This includes areas immediately adjacent to all historic trails passing through the area. The northern most fields (Pinedale and Jonah areas) are already in production and a recently signed programmatic agreement permits development in an area along about ten miles of the Lander Road west of Highway 191.

We visited the area northwest of Farson where seismic studies are underway (Veritas Vibroseis project). This involves the use of four "thumper trucks" traversing the sage at close intervals. The trucks lower a pad that transmits low-frequency sound waves into the ground. The echoes reveal the geology and prospects for oil and gas recovery. The trucks, and their support vehicles, are forbidden to traverse historic trails. The large, low-pressure tires leave a tread mark in the dry soil and crush sage over which they pass. However, the immediate damage is minimal. It is necessary to check next year to assess



## Trail Preservation Report *Continued from previous page*

long term effects. Of course, the real impact is the construction of roads, pipelines and well pads if the field is developed.

Our next stop was the BLM Rawlins Field Office. For the past few years we have been receiving copies of the letters from the Rock Springs Field Office to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) seeking concurrence of the BLM's finding of effect on the historic trails of a proposed development activity (usually a well pad, pipeline or road). These packages contain a cover letter, viewshed map and project map. I have found them extremely valuable since they provide a concise project summary and permit a quick evaluation to see if we agree with the findings. Up to this time, the BLM state office has resisted making this a "standard procedure" for all field offices.

However, in response to my visit to Wyoming, Tim Nowak (BLM State Office) called a meeting in Rawlins of BLM archeologists from all field offices to discuss this process. It has now been agreed that we will receive copies of similar relevant paperwork from all field offices. Tim will be issuing guidelines shortly. The new working relationship with the Rawlins Office resulting from this meeting is potentially a very significant step in providing better protection for the Overland and Cherokee Trails.

On the way to Casper, we stopped to visit with Gaynell Park at the Dumbell Ranch near Independence Rock. She expressed her continued concern about heavy and un-controlled use of the Rock, although the situation was improved this year by the presence of one paid staff member.

In Casper, I met with Pinky Ellis, Lee Underbrink and Donna Fisher to discuss my other visits and the possibilities for a new trail-marking project in Wyoming. The BLM has requested assistance with the installation of over 600 concrete trail markers in Wyoming. Obviously, this is a large project. The local chapter members expressed some reluctance due to the physical demands of the project, but it appears help can be obtained from Scouts and others in the Rock Springs, Rawlins and Casper areas. If this project is to proceed we need a "take charge" project manager.

Next stop was Cheyenne to meet Richard Currit and Claudia Nissly. Claudia is the recently appointed State Historic Preservation Officer. They have responsibility for reviewing all findings of effect on

the historic trails by BLM Field Offices and other Federal agencies.

We met briefly at the BLM State Office as a follow-up to the October 5 meeting in Rawlins. We talked about coordination procedures. Other attendees were Tim Nowak, Andy Tenney and Russ Tanner. Deputy State Director Don Simpson stopped in briefly. The Anadarko study of the Overland Trail was briefly discussed as was the on-going trails context study.

At this point we headed for home with a stop on the way in Douglas, WY, to meet with Randy Brown, chair of the trail marking committee and the graves and sites committee, to discuss mapping and marking activities. We have been considering combining the mapping and marking committee since the efforts of each are strongly dependent on the other. However, I think it better to postpone the combination until the new marking and training initiatives are underway.

### **Martin's Cove Lease Approved**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints signed a lease on October 26, 2004, to lease Martin's Cove in central Wyoming, an area important in church history for the tragedy that occurred there in 1856. The Church will pay \$16,000 per year for the lease with the Bureau of Land Management on 933 acres. The lease is in effect for 25 years and provides for continued public access to the area.

In an earlier draft of the lease, the Bureau of Land Management afforded the church "a right of first refusal to purchase, lease or otherwise manage Martin's Cove" if the property was sold or title was transferred to another party. The lease that was signed in October does not include the word "purchase." The change was made to reflect the original language of the act by Congress mandating the lease to the church, according to the BLM.

The legislation, passed last year as part of the energy appropriations bill, gives the church control over the area for 25 years, and also grants them right of first refusal for renewing the lease. Managers of the Martin's Cove site have said no changes are planned for the area.

# News From The Chapters

## California-Nevada

### Genoa is in Nevada

*By Mary Mueller*

Beginning in the summer of 1848, when the Carson Trail was opened for emigrant travel, Carson Valley became one of the most important stopping places along the California Trail. After the long, arduous trek across the desert, lush Carson Valley was a haven for preparing for the final ascent over the Sierra Nevada. By 1850 a Mormon trading post was established in the center of the valley at or near what became the settlement of Genoa (pronounced geNOa).

Because of its historic importance, Genoa has been selected for the next annual CA/NV Chapter symposium, to be held April 22-24, 2005 (Friday evening through Sunday morning). No matter how you pronounce Genoa, write this date on your calendar. This should be one of our best symposiums.

Kathy Lewin and Patty Knight, co-chairpersons, have chosen motels in the Gardnerville/Minden area to minimize the driving distance to the Genoa Community Center for the main symposium events.

## Idaho

### Idaho Trail Marking Continues

*By Jim McGill*  
*I-OCTA Preservation Officer*

On October 30, 2004, three members of I-OCTA, Doug Jenson, Lyle Lambert, and James McGill and Dick Hill, from the BLM in Idaho Falls, marked two sections of the Jeffrey-Goodale Cutoff. The first was 12 miles southwest of Arco, ID, on BLM land that was formerly part of the Stoddard homestead along highway 20-26-93. The second was the Lost River Route nine miles southeast of Arco, on the west side of Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEL) land.

There had been reports of a possible pipeline going near the Stoddard cabin, and Dick Hill had suggested marking that site well so the OCTA marking team put in a dozen new markers and reset two old posts that had been pulled up. They are rather close together to be sure that the whole route is well marked and protected. We used mostly the Greenline post supplied by the BLM.

The last two years, with the permission of Mrs. Josephine Sprecker and other land owners, we had marked the trail on to the west, including all the way to Craters of the Moon National Monument.

We proceeded then to the Lost River route southeast of Arco to mark between some trail portions that had also been marked in the last two years. The trail from the intersection of the southern route and River route is extremely rocky, and part of it needed to be hiked. There is still more than a mile inside the INEL west boundary that needs remarking and may be done next year with permission.

We then placed about 14 new markers and reset three old ones that had been pulled up. Fred Dykes and others had marked this trail some years ago, but there was not one old marker still standing. This was also marked rather close together because the ruts are extremely rocky in places and except for the wear on the rocks the trail is difficult to see in those areas.

## California-Nevada

### CA/NV Chapter Preservation News

*By Leslie Fryman  
Chapter Preservation Officer*

At the request of Bureau of Reclamation archaeologist Patrick Welch, Don Buck copied and delivered trail data on his field maps for the Nevada land exchange that OCTA has been following for some time. Inventory and evaluation of cultural resources, including trails, in the three land exchange areas near Rye Patch, Battle Mountain, and the Humboldt Sink is in the planning stages and Don's map data will assist BuRec in developing a "sample" inventory for contractors to carry out.

In August a Trails West outing discovered that two segments of the Nobles and Lassen Trails in the Lassen National Forest had been severely bladed by logging activities, one segment apparently having been used as a log landing. In response to OCTA and Trails West requests for an explanation, Don Buck received a letter in September from Christine Hill, archaeologist for the Eagle Lake Ranger District where the damage occurred. Though apologetic, the letter indicated that USFS does not think the logging activity caused permanent damage to the trail, and that "blading the trail is not inconsistent with typical use of Class 4 Emigrant Trails throughout the forest road system at this time." Until the recent blading occurred, it is questionable whether these segments would have been classified as Class 2 or Class 4. Nevertheless, the letter stated that the USFS would attempt to restore some of the damage and loss of visual integrity along the trail, and promised, "the natural areas surrounding the trail will return in the near future."

Several concerned OCTA members are tracking proposed developments at Kirkwood Ski Resort along the Carson River Route, where Kirkwood proposes two new ski lifts, a new maintenance road, and other new facilities in view of a much-visited and very important section of the trail through Emigrant Valley.

Two already-existing ski lifts pass directly over the trail itself, a café/ski chalet is located directly adjacent to the trail, and a Class 1 portion of the trail in Emigrant Valley was dynamited some years ago to smooth a ski slope. Input from Bill and Jeanne Watson and Frank Tortorich now has Kirkwood and the Eldorado National Forest promising that no further direct damage will occur to the trail, and that proposed indirect or visual effects will be mitigated adequately. A list of possible mitigation measures includes ski lifts that "lay down" to be less visible in summer, interpretive exhibits on the trail, a treatment plan to guide the USFS in protecting threatened portions of the trail and repairing damage in the vicinity of Carson Pass and Kirkwood, and "auto-tour" trail signs installed along Highway 88. USFS would require that Kirkwood follow through on the accepted mitigation or their special use permit could be revoked. OCTA members will continue to work with Kirkwood as these measures are decided.

Archaeologist Gary Bowyer of Carson City BLM has indicated that the upcoming Fernley Sand Swales monitoring and trash removal outing would also be an appropriate time for OCTA and BLM to discuss ongoing and additional measures for protecting and interpreting the swales. The BLM will likely request that OCTA participate in these measures with volunteer effort and chapter funds. Previous suggestions to prevent trash dumping in the swales and to increase public awareness of the historic trail range from chain link fencing to school programs.

The Chapter Preservation Officer's winter plans are to draft a summary of preservation policies and procedures to include in the CA/NV Chapter policy manual, and to assist national Preservation Officer Dave Welch in developing a "traveling" preservation workshop for use in training.

## Crossroads

### Salt Lake Cutoff Field Trip Held

By Al Mulder

A very successful Salt Lake Cutoff field trip on Saturday, October 9, closed out planned chapter activities for 2004. Mike Lunt, Marie Irvine and Roy Tea made the trip interesting and educational with their commentary. It was good to visit with Eli Anderson again and have a chance to see his remarkable collection of restored horse-drawn carriages, wagons and utility horse-drawn vehicles. The Hensley Salt Lake Cutoff Trail goes through his property on Salt Creek. The Anderson wagon collection will be one of the stops on the 2005 Convention field trip.

Also on October 9, a historical marker dedication took place at the I-80 rest stop near Black Rock. Marker Chairperson and Crossroads member Lynne Turner was largely responsible for the placement of the Jedediah Strong Smith marker at the rest stop. There are tough choices when two trail-related activities take place on the same date. The Jedediah S. Smith marker was sponsored by the Utah State Society, Daughters of the American Colonists.

In September, a few trail buffs got together to revisit the Mormon Pioneer Trail and California Trail route from Yellow Creek to Cache Cave to try to locate an unnamed spring trail historian John Eldredge had seen several years ago. We found the spring, but the drought years had taken their toll and the spring had dried up. It was nice to see the carsonite posts that were placed on the trail and at Emigration Spring ten years ago are still in place.



*Emigration Spring is on the Mormon Pioneer and California Trails west of The Needles. Many travelers stopped here on their way to Cache Cave and Echo Canyon. (Photo by Al Mulder)*

In late October a small group of chapter members led by Jeff Carlstrom followed the faint traces of an old trail/road at Perkins Flat in Emigration Canyon, hoping to find solid evidence that it was the route followed by the 1847 pioneers and later companies. No conclusions but a lot of speculation and theories.

Mike Brown, Elko BLM, invited Crossroads members to a special Trail Center Event in Elko in October that celebrated the construction of an access road to the California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center. The event honored several individuals who have contributed to the project. Crossroads member and good friend Paul Sawyer's grassroots effort played a major part in getting the project started.

Plans for the 2005 OCTA Convention in

Salt Lake City are progressing steadily and the many pieces needed for a successful convention are starting to fall in place. Work has begun on the bus tour field trip guides and other publications. The excellent accommodations and convention facilities at the Sheraton City Center Hotel will make OCTA members' stay at the convention hotel a pleasant and memorable experience. The room rates will be high compared to past conventions, but the convenient location and many amenities make the Sheraton the place to be.

For more information on the 2005 OCTA Convention in Salt Lake City, visit our Utah Crossroads Chapter Convention 2005 website: [www.utahcrossroads.org/OCTA2005](http://www.utahcrossroads.org/OCTA2005).

# Gateway

## Gateway Chapter had a busy spring and early summer

By Arleta Martin

On April 15, OCTA's Preservation Officer Dave Welch presented a program to update members about the legal aspects of trail preservation and the challenges OCTA faces in protecting the trail. The program was held at the Pony Express Museum in St. Joseph.



Barb Atkinson enjoyed the June 5 tour of trail sites in Independence, Missouri.

On May 5, Gateway's Preservation Chair Paul Dittmore led an outing to survey, replace and place new markers on the St. Joe Road in Doniphan County, Kansas. Paul prepared ahead by making a list of where the signs should be with the current county road names. Several signs were missing due to road construction in the area and one sign had been damaged by a grass fire. Paul next plans to conduct a similar survey of Brown County.

A bus field trip to Independence was held on June 5, National Trails Day. The group of approximately 35 people toured the Frontier Trails Center, Fort Osage and the swales on the grounds of the Bingham Waggoner house in Independence. Ross Marshall volunteered to serve as the tour guide.



Ross Marshall, right, lead the tour of Independence on June 5. (Photos courtesy of Arleta Martin)

Gateway chapter prepared for the 2006 convention by having an organizational meeting on July 24. Approximately 40 people attended to learn more about OCTA, the convention and to sign up for committees. The winner of the name the convention contest was named. Bill Leppert and his submission of "Rivers, Plains & Wagon Trains" was chosen.



Jackie and Jerry Lewin move the Carsonite marker at the Courter-Richey Cemetery on the St. Joe Road in Doniphan County, Kansas.



Bill Leppert, Pete Duncan and Suzette McCord-Rogers go over the map of the post locations with Gateway Preservation Chair Paul Dittmore.



Dave Welch visits with Ron Zirkle and Millie Humphreys after his program in St. Joseph.

# Northwest

## GPS Mapping Continues

By Glenn Harrison

Following a successful OCTA Convention, several NW Chapter members continue their active involvement in OCTA activities. Several members are deeply involved in COED surveying and data entry. Planning for Northwest Chapter outings and activities is underway. Locating and GPS mapping of the Free Emigrant Road

continues with the help of two BLM districts. Questions concerning the location relative to the Oregon Trail of a new vineyard and wind power generation are being answered.

The next Chapter Board meeting will be in Albany on Saturday, January 15. The following day Mary B. Cross will present a program, "The Ties that Bind: Quilts of Community."

# Wyoming

From the Chapter newsletter

Wyoming Chapter members were busy during the summer, monitoring ongoing development activities, particularly in the Southwestern part of the state, working with Bureau of Land Management archaeologists to evaluate Overland Trail sites and segments related to an ongoing study funded by Anadarko Petroleum, and touring. A Fall activity

involved a tour led by Randy Brown and Lee Underbrink that took members over portions of the Seminole Cutoff.

The November chapter meeting included a presentation by Scott Lorimer from the Mormon Handcart Center. The LDS Church will pay \$16,000 per year for a 933 acre lease on Martin's Cove, in an agreement finalized with the BLM in late October.

## Annual Fund Drive Donors

*The Annual Fund Drive is now underway. The following individuals had made contributions as of Nov. 25, 2004.*

- |                           |                              |                                 |                                |
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*Continued on next page*

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*Continued from previous page*

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*The Santa Fe Trail was one of the most dynamic trade routes in the nineteenth century. From 1822 to 1880, the trail was traveled by traders, army troops and pioneers until it was outmoded by the railroad. The Trails Museum will be hosting special Santa Fe themed presentations, gallery tours and activities through June 2005. Every Thursday through March at 2:00 pm, there will be a gallery tour: "The Old Santa Fe Trail", with a special tour of the exhibits that highlight artifacts related to this trail of commerce and emigration. For more information for this or our other special events, please call 816-325-7575, or check our website at [www.frontiertrailsmuseum.org](http://www.frontiertrailsmuseum.org).*

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