



News From the Plains

Winter 2009
Vol. XXIII No. 1

Oregon-California
Trails Association

Lands Bill To Come Before Congress

**By Bill and Jeanne Watson
Legislative Liaisons**

Many thanks to all of you who contacted your Senators asking them to support passage of the Omnibus Public Lands bill during the Special Session of Congress in November. Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) insisted that the entire bill be read on the Senate floor, a two-day project. Then he planned a three-day filibuster. This would leave no time for the House to vote on it, so our Senate supporters withdrew this bill.

We greatly appreciate all of

your support over the years in our efforts to get Congress to authorize the study of additional routes/cutoffs for the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails. Many of you are frustrated with the failure of four Congresses to pass this bill and so are we. Since first proposing these studies to Congress 10 years ago, we have each contributed more than 12,000 volunteer hours to this project.

The new 111th Congress convenes in early January and they already have a lot of work assigned

to them by President-elect Barack Obama. However, the Senate leadership plans to promptly re-introduce the Omnibus Public Lands bill, which includes authorization for the study of additional routes and cutoffs for our trails.

With your continued strong support we can soon achieve our goal in 2009.

Please write or e-mail your U.S. Senators and your U.S. Representatives and urge their support for passage of the reintroduced omnibus public lands bill.

Mid-Year Board Meets in Yuma

By John Krizek

The Mid-Year OCTA Board meeting will be held Jan. 15 and 16 in Yuma, AZ. New Board Member training/orientation will take place prior to the actual meeting.

A symposium will follow the meeting with events Jan. 16-18 including a banquet address by Paul Hutton, Distinguished Professor of History at the University of New Mexico.

The symposium also will include talks about a variety of topics as well as tours in the Yuma area.

The symposium will include:

- A Friday night welcome reception and presentation hosted by a local historian and the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area.
- A Saturday morning full of talks and presentations by a roster of leading historians, authors and experts.

- Tours of local historical sites, including the Territorial Prison, Quartermaster Depot, museums, and trail sites.

To register for the Symposium contact OCTA headquarters at www.octatrails.org or 888-811-6282.

All meetings and the banquet will be held at the Shilo Inn Hotel & Suites in Yuma. Contact the hotel at 928-782-9511 and ask for the OCTA group rate of \$92.95.



News From the Plains

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Winter 2009 News From the Plains

2008-09 OCTA Officers

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John Krizek, Public Relations Chair
Bill Wilson
Fern Linton
Leslie Fryman, Preservation Officer &
Preservation Chair

Glenn Harrison, President & ex officio
on all committees

Winter 2009 News From the Plains

Nominations Requested for OCTA Board

By Vern Gorzitze

"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 2009 the terms expire for Robert Clark, Duane Iles, Lethene Parks, and David Vixie. Several 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 word) 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 (a jpeg format digital image. It should have a resolution of at least 300 dpi. It should be a portrait with no hats or shadows on your face).

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 Board meetings are held each year, one at the National Convention and the other at a Board designated, or 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, 2009. Nominations should be mailed to the Nominating and Leadership Committee chair:

Vern Gorzitze
3026 Metropolitan Way
Salt Lake City, UT 80109-2238

If you have any questions, please contact Vern at 801-484-9623 or by e-mail at vergor@viawest.net.

Committee members:
Vern Gorzitze, Chair
Roger Blair, Chapter President
Mary Ann Tortorich, Member at large



Wyoming Chapter

Park Contributions Recognized

Norm and Gaynell Park, above left, were recognized Nov. 12 during a ceremony at Independence Rock. The Parks, through their ranch operation, donated land around Independence Rock. They have cooperated in many other ways through the years to preserve the trail site and its viewshed to the east.

The chapter held a regular meeting that evening in Casper with a program presented by Frankie Israel, Kim Merchant, and Janet Wragge, cast members of "In Pursuit of a Dream." The Parks allowed access to Independence Rock for the film production.



Photos by Lee Underbrink

From the Headquarters Manager...

Kathy Conway
Kconway@indepmo.org

We are off to Yuma, AZ, Jan. 15, 2009, to hold our Mid-year Board of Directors' meeting and to attend the *Roads to Yuma* Symposium two days later. John Krizek, Pat Etter, and Reba Grandrud have been extremely busy this fall lining up great tours and interesting speakers who will focus our attention on the historic trails that came together at the Yuma Crossing of the Colorado River during the 18th and 19th centuries. Invitations were sent to many Arizona historical groups and we expect to host over 150 registrants for this event. Should you not be able to join us, please look for details of the board meeting and the Yuma Symposium in the Spring 2009 issue of *NFP*.

We hope you have enjoyed our recent focus on the southern trails in the *Overland Journal*. We have heard from several of our members who have commented on how much they appreciated the quality and value of these articles. In addition, we now have added several books to our OCTA store that highlight America's early Southwest history and these are listed in our latest catalog. Also visit our on-line store – www.octa-trails.org.

This past October there was quite a turnout for the re-dedication of the now completed park and interpretive site at Wayne City. This important

Continued on Page 6

The President's View

Glenn Harrison
glennharrison@cinug.com

Checking Your 'To Do' List for OCTA

Happy New Year! I hope 2009 is starting out well for you. Whether you are off to a good 2009 with your New Year's resolutions or finishing up those pesky left over to do items from 2008, here are a few items to include in your list.

1 - Renew your membership in OCTA at a higher level when it is due. We appreciate the support of our seven corporate members shown on the OCTA website and our 75 life members.

Emigrant	\$45
Pioneer	\$60
Trail Patron	\$125
Mattes Society	\$250
Ezra Meeker Life Member	\$1,000*
Student (college)	\$20
Educator	\$45
Institutional	\$300
Corporate	\$1,250

2 - Encourage others to join OCTA and get at least two new or returning members.

3 - Join all the chapters where you have an interest.

4 - Take part in OCTA and chapter activities whenever possible. I hope to see you in Yuma, AZ and Loveland, CO.

5 - Volunteer to lead a chapter outing or speak on a trail related topic at a meeting.

6 - Give a talk about westward migration to service clubs, historical groups, or a classroom.

7 - Assist with trail preservation by helping with mapping, marking, and monitoring trails in your area.

8 - Contribute to the OCTA fundraising effort. If you missed out before December 31, your donations are still needed and appreciated.

9 - Read the articles in *Overland Journal* and *News From the Plains* as well as chapter newsletters. They are filled with useful and interesting information. Do you have an article to submit?

10 - Check out the improved website at <http://www.octa-trails.org>. It will continue to get even better.

11 - Look for a name using Paper Trail at <http://www.paper-trail.org>.

12 - Make contacts with legislators in the new congress concerning our trails bill when requested. Yes, we are back to square one, but things are more promising this year.

13 - Be willing to serve on a committee, as a committee chair, or as an officer or board member at the chapter and national level.

Membership Memos

By Duane Illes

There is good news today. We are not growing by leaps and bounds as we would like, but it has been slowly happening. Don't forget that the Membership Gold Rush is still on. As usual each new recruit brings you a \$5 gold nugget to spend at the OCTA general store. At the January Mid-year Board meeting and Yuma Symposium, we will draw names from all who have recruited since the last convention for one free convention registration and two free tours! You still have plenty of time to be in the drawing.

From the Association Manager...

Travis Boley
TBoley@indepmo.org

Extend Your Credit and Help OCTA in the Process

As you likely know by now, OCTA now has its own Affinity credit card. With the OCTA Visa card, you can help us preserve and promote our two trails. Your everyday purchases work harder by helping us raise needed funds to support mapping and marking efforts, genealogical research, and support to create sustainable tourism on the Oregon and California National Historic Trails. This is especially important during these lean economic times.

OCTA's endowments have lost 24 percent of their value this year, so we cannot depend on them as a source of income. Your support of the Affinity card program can help drive educational programs across the country, advocacy on Capitol Hill for increasing federal appropriations and legislation for trails, and create a sense of community for anyone who supports our National Trails system.

Just think, with the simple gesture of using your new OCTA credit card, you have the opportunity to raise awareness each time you use it. Plus, United Missouri Bank will contribute \$50 for every new account that is activated within 90 days of an approved application. That would mean approximately \$85,000 in our coffers if every member applied for and used their card within the first 90 days of receipt.

OCTA also receives 0.3 percent of all net retail transactions, meaning your future credit card use will continue to be a source of income for OCTA. There is no annual fee required and you can use your OCTA credit card anywhere that takes Visa. Best of all, you'll get a special 0

percent introductory rate during the first six months for purchases and balance transfers.

I've also worked with CardPartner (the firm that helped us set up our program with United Missouri Bank) to develop an affiliate program. OCTA can now reach out to other non-profit organizations and help them set up their own Affinity card programs. Once our non-profit partners have their program up and running, OCTA will receive \$10 for every successful application generated through their program. To date, I've already helped the Old Spanish Trail Association set up a program, the Florida Trail Association has started the application process, and I've been in touch with several other trail associations who are bringing this program to their boards of directors in the coming months. I've also helped a couple of non-profits outside of the "trail world" set up similar programs. OCTA will reap the rewards of helping other non-profits start their own programs (and these non-profits will receive the same \$50 OCTA gets every time a new credit card is generated and used within the first 90 days).

I mention all this because I know many of you belong to other non-profit organizations. If you'd like to help another organization get started in this program, please have them contact me for details. I can answer any questions they might have and put them in touch with my contacts at CardPartner. It costs nothing to set up the program, and CardPartner creates all of the marketing materials for the program. It's really just an investment

of a bit of time to market the program to the organization's membership. So, be sure to sign up for your own OCTA credit card and let your friends in other non-profits know about this great opportunity to add a new line of revenue to their spreadsheet.

I recently attended a "Building New Constituencies" workshop in Little Rock, AR, sponsored by the Partnership for the National Trails System, a coalition of the 26 National Historic and Scenic Trails, their non-profit advocates, and the federal agencies charged with managing or administering these trails. There was near-unanimity amongst the various non-profit trail associations regarding one item—the erosion of membership continues unabated.

OCTA's membership losses of a few dozen members in Fiscal Year 2007-08 pale in comparison to what others have encountered. One group has shrunk from nearly 4,000 members to around 1,300 members in just a few short years. OCTA experienced some growth two years ago and minor losses in the past fiscal year, but we've shown some growth in the autumn, which is certainly promising. We're lucky compared to some of our colleagues and friends who advocate for the other 24 trails in the National Trails System. Even while operating a deficit budget during the last two fiscal years, OCTA has still come close to breaking even both times. We're lucky indeed.

However, we all know good luck generally does not last forever. I know people all over the country

Continued on Page 6

Association Manager's Report

Continued from Page 5

are looking for ways to trim their own household budgets. Often, membership organizations are the first to go when deciding how to reduce the expenditure of discretionary dollars. But I'm writing this column with one thing in mind—to convince you to retain your membership in OCTA. More than that, I want to challenge you to increase your level of membership. I want to challenge you to give the gift of membership to a friend or family member. And I want to challenge you to give to our annual year-end appeal campaign.

As I mentioned above, OCTA has seen a great retraction in its endowment holdings. OCTA is surely not unique in this regard, but the reality is that we cannot rely on endowment earnings to cover any shortfalls that might occur during this fiscal year. This means programs might have to get cut if we experience a reduction in any of our revenue sources. We've collected around \$20,000 during our last few year-end appeals. This represents close to 10 percent of our annual operating budget. I hope you'll seriously consider contributing something toward our campaign this year. If 1,500 members contributed an extra \$50, OCTA would earn \$75,000. While this may not be a realistic expectation, I thought it would be illustrative to demonstrate how a small amount of money contributed from a considerable percentage of our membership could significantly impact our bottom line.

Energy development is going to be THE centerpiece of the new administration in Washington, D.C. Obviously our two trails lie right in the heart of where much of this energy development will take place. We all know that we must develop other sources of energy. We'd

also like preservation of historic resources to be taken into account when developers create new sources of energy. Don't you want OCTA, an organization whose mission it is to preserve the story of this great overland journey, to have the tools it needs to ensure that responsible energy development is the rule, not the exception? If so, there are a few steps you can take to guarantee that OCTA remains the pre-eminent historic trail association in America:

1. Sign up for OCTA's credit card today. As noted above OCTA will receive a \$50 contribution from United Missouri Bank when you first use the card, and will also earn 0.3% of all purchases, creating a permanent stream of income. Go to www.octa-trails.org and click on the Visa link on the bottom right-hand portion of the Web site.

2. As noted, encourage other non-profits to contact me about setting up

their own Affinity card program.

3. Keep your membership current! Nearly one-third of our revenue is derived from our membership. Because it costs around \$47 to service a membership every year (and because our base rate is only \$45 for a basic Emigrant-level membership), please consider increasing your membership level.

4. Invite a friend or family member to join, or give them the gift of membership.

5. Contribute to our year-end appeal. I know the economic times are tough. But if enough of our members take these five steps I've listed here, OCTA will overcome the impact to our endowments caused by the downturn of the financial markets. Even if you can only contribute a few extra dollars, please make the effort to do so.

Thanks for all you do for OCTA and best wishes in the New Year.

Headquarter's Manager's Report

Continued from Page 4

historic trail site is located on the property of Lafarge North American, Inc. in Sugar Creek, MO, where it overlooks the Missouri River. It was at this port that early emigrants came ashore to enter life in this area around Independence and some to move westerly on the emigrant trails. Once an area in great need of attention and care, Wayne City/Upper Independence Landing can now boast of landscaping improvements, fencing, benches, sidewalks, and a new plaque honoring those who donated money for the project. Local civic leaders, Steve Kidwell of Lafarge NA, Sharon Brown of the National Park Service, John Mark Lambertson, Director of the National Frontier Trails Museum, and Jane Mallinson, a concerned citizen who kept this project alive for nearly two decades, each had some meaningful comments on the importance of this site. Brown declared that it is the only place in the United States traversed by four National Historic Trails—the Lewis and Clark, Santa Fe, Oregon and California—a site to appreciate, indeed!

THE FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL FRONTIER TRAILS MUSEUM

Invite You to a Fascinating Adventure

LEWIS & CLARK TRAIL BUS TRIP



The Friends of the National Frontier Trails Museum

plan to host a nine-day escorted bus tour in September, 2009 following the most historically significant trail in westward expansion. Departing from Independence, Missouri, the tour will follow the Lewis & Clark Trail to North Dakota and back.

Your air-conditioned motorcoach will take you to exciting stops where American history was made. Visit historic sites and stunning landmarks witnessed and recorded by the courageous members of the Corps of Discovery.

For more detailed information contact
Lynda Black at the

National Frontier Trails Museum,
318 W. Pacific, Independence, Missouri, 64050
816-325-7575 or lblack@indepmo.org

Trailside Reader Submissions Sought

Rees Hughes and a colleague at Humboldt State University are preparing an edited anthology, *Tales for the Trail: The Pacific Crest Trailside Reader*, of historic and contemporary accounts from people whose lives touched segments of the Pacific Crest Trail (or trails/paths that preceded the PCT) which spans the length of the West Coast.

They are interested in stories that are based on "appropriate historical, first person accounts or stories from the high country including places where the PCT and historic trails intersected (such as the Applegate Trail in the Pilot Rock/Mt. Ashland area, the Sisson/Callahan Trail from Mt. Shasta to the Scott Valley, the Lassen and Noble Trails in the areas just east and south of Mt. Lassen, the Donner and Carson Pass areas, the Mormon Trail as it crosses the mountains east of Los Angeles).

Stories could include an excerpt of journals from the Donner Party (e.g. Patrick Breen, Virginia Reed Murphy, etc.), accounts from the development of the Lassen Trail, or John Fremont's accounts of crossing the Carson Pass.

The articles should be 1,000 – 2,000 words.

Anyone interested in more information, or wishing to submit an article can contact

Rees Hughes
1660 Brigid Lane
Arcata, California 95521
707-826-0163
hughes@humboldt.edu

Awards Nominations Needed

By Roger Blair
Awards Committee Chair

It is time to begin the nomination process for the OCTA Awards to be presented at the August convention in Loveland, CO.

To make a nomination, it is necessary to complete the Award Form, which is published on the OCTA Web site in the "Members Only" Section. If possible, complete the form and e-mail it to the Awards Committee by sending it to rblair@oregontrail.net. If you do not have access to the Internet and need a form, contact OCTA Headquarters at 888-811-6282. The deadline for nominations is June 1.

The categories and the qualifications are as follow:

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.

Elaine McNabney 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.

News From the Plains

Spring Issue Deadline

February 25, 2009

Send materials to nfpocta@aol.com

Preservation News

Leslie R. Fryman
National Trails Preservation Officer
archaeo44@yahoo.com

Preservation Policies and Projects

One of my first goals as OCTA's preservation officer is to revise and expand our existing statements and policies regarding archaeology and participation in archaeological work along historic trails. As an archaeologist familiar with the myriad of legal standards and disciplinary ethics attached to the practice of field archaeology, I hope to develop a useful framework to guide OCTA trail experts in such techniques as using metal detectors, distributing field data, and negotiating agency permits for conducting archaeological work on trails or at trail-associated sites and features. A key objective while updating our policies on archaeology is to remain flexible enough to encompass the diverse types of work we participate in, while at the same time identifying sufficient restrictions to keep OCTA members out of trouble (legal or ethical) while working on federal lands or with federal agencies such as the NPS and BLM.

Secondly, I hope to assist Dave Welch in revising and updating OCTA's mapping programs to better incorporate our policies on trail monitoring and consultation. When starting to consult on a preservation project, a monitor requires two critical sets of data: trail location and trail condition. Whether or not trail data has been recorded and where a monitor can find the records or otherwise access the data are archaeological aspects of OCTA's mapping policies that are poorly defined at present. They will require some collaborative revision so preservation projects can proceed accurately and on time.

Communicating new policies and updated programs to all interested OCTA members can easily be achieved through an ongoing program of preservation workshops. Dave and I have conducted these workshops for several years and hope to continue them, with updated curricula, throughout OCTA's chapters and at conventions.

Ongoing Preservation Projects

Oregon and Idaho are quickly catching up with Wyoming in terms of numbers of energy development projects, including transmission lines, natural gas pipelines, and wind energy projects that will eventually pepper the landscape with the all-too-familiar giant turbines. Some of these projects have potential to intersect or otherwise have direct effects on historic trail segments, but more often present visual impacts to the historic trail setting that are most challenging to avoid or mitigate.

Projects in proximity to the Oregon Trail include the Golden Hills Wind Energy Farm in Sherman County, Oregon; the Boardman (Oregon) to Hemingway (Idaho) Transmission Line; and the Sunstone Pipeline Project from eastern Oregon (Stanfield) through Idaho to Wyoming (Opal). Although the process in each state differs slightly, OCTA is currently involved with these projects as a consulting party, working with land managers and the applicant's environmental consultants to avoid impacts to high-potential trail segments and trail-related sites.

In states such as Wyoming

and Nevada, where BLM is the predominant land manager, OCTA and other interested parties can participate most effectively in the environmental review process. Unfortunately, it appears that in order to avoid the rigors of federal environmental compliance regulations, many power companies and other applicants plan to acquire much of their right-of-way from private lands. This strategy restricts OCTA's opportunities to preserve historic trails through a legal process, whereupon we can quickly find ourselves entirely reliant on the interest of local communities and individual land owners in trail preservation. For this reason, it is imperative that OCTA continues to raise public awareness of historic trail preservation at local levels, by identifying and marking trails, and by using trail outings and educational programs to involve land owners and communities in trail monitoring—kind of a "neighborhood watch" for historic trails.

Both Utah and Nevada are not only due for an increase in energy development projects, but are also undergoing intensive urban development in key areas along trail routes, such as Reno and Salt Lake City. In the past, OCTA's track record of trail documentation and monitoring (consultation) throughout Nevada and Utah has been less than stellar; consequently, long silences from land managers (and OCTA trail experts) in these states are likely to be reasons for concern.

Continued on Page 10

Preservation

Continued from Page 9

For those who are dutifully trying to keep up with trail monitoring projects and contacts, be aware that cultural resources staff changes at federal agencies or state review offices are very frequent these days — forcing us to repeatedly establish new contacts, or risk not discovering projects that threaten historic trails until it is too late.

A final note on preservation projects, currently OCTA's semi-official position on visual intrusions along important trail segments is to avoid placing objects (e.g., transmission towers and lines, wind turbines, gas pipelines, and wells) within a trail's "historic viewshed," which is loosely defined (by OCTA) as the view seen by emigrants from any point along a historic trail. If viewshed intrusions cannot be avoided, OCTA requests mitigation for these impacts, ranging anywhere from camouflage of the objects to the development of new trail signs or other interpretive projects. With the recent increase in energy developments that threaten to bring more and more wind turbines, pipelines, or overhead lines into our trail viewsheds, it is becoming increasingly difficult to either avoid their impacts or to adequately mitigate them. At some point, OCTA trail experts, board members, and the membership at large may have to address the practicality of our current position, and if we retain it, what mitigation measures might adequately compensate for a visual loss to the trail setting.

Mapping and Marking Reorganizes

By Dave Welch

At the August board meeting the board approved a reorganization of OCTA's mapping and marking committees. Previously, the mapping and marking had been in separate committees led by Jim McGill and Randy Brown, respectively. There is a third committee under Randy Brown working on marking graves and sites using the Novalloy interpretive panels. The Mapping and Marking Committee (MMC) is now one committee lead by Dave Welch. The graves and sites committee remains under the leadership of Randy Brown.

Last year a new challenge cost share grant from the National Park Service (NPS) was put in place to reimburse OCTA for Carsonite trail markers. However, this reimbursement can only be obtained when the location of the markers and the volunteer hours involved in their placement is reported to the NPS. Requests for trail markers should be sent to Dave Welch at welchdj@comcast.net. He will provide details on the very simple documentation requirements.

The MMC is also beginning some initiatives to improve and update

our mapping capabilities. A working group has been formed to solicit ideas and comments on how best to use modern technology (mapping software, GPS devices, and online mapping and photo resources) to accomplish our goals. If you would like to join and haven't done so, please contact Welch.

The committee is also attempting to document what has been accomplished in the past and to provide an archive of completed work and a resource center for future work. This is an opportunity for chapters to examine what has been accomplished and to plan for the future. It is also an opportunity for chapters to identify resource and training needs so that we can make appropriate budget requests.

Training on the techniques of mapping, marking, and monitoring the trails is available through an NPS challenge cost-share grant. These two-day sessions have been presented to all OCTA chapters except Nebraska. Chapters may request a second session by contacting Leslie Fryman at archaeo44@yahoo.com. Other workshops may be held in the spring and at the national convention.

Fiscal Year 2009 Interior Budget Update

By Bill and Jeanne Watson

Our federal agency partners are currently operating on a continuation budget at about 85 percent of the generous FY-2008 budget. Through Gary Werner and the Partnership for the National Trails System, we just learned that the Senate and House Appropriations Committees are preparing an Omnibus 2009 Fiscal

Year Interior Appropriations bill for quick action by Congress in early January.

This would continue funding for our federal trails partners at the same increased level as 2008, which had a 40 percent increase for our trails. If this appropriation is approved it will be wonderful news for OCTA and our partners.

Gateway Chapter

Gateway Inspects St. Joe Road, Elects Officers

By Jackie Lewin

Gateway members made their annual trek to inspect the OCTA markers along the St. Joe Road on a beautiful October 18th day. Thirteen members gathered at the Missouri River where the first sign is located. The caravan continued across the river into Doniphan County, KS, making several stops to adjust or replace signs. At New Hope Cemetery, an apple tree loaded with apples was enjoyed by all. (Sandy Smith later made a pie of some of the apples collected from the trail for the Annual Meeting.)

At the very prominent swale of the trail coming down into the Wolf River Valley, the group found much brush from the winter ice storm, which obscured the markers. It was decided that a work party would be organized to clear the swale. The tour ended in Highland, KS, with a feeling of accomplishment made with good trail friends.

Gateway Chapter met on November 13th at the Robidoux Row

Museum for the annual membership meeting and election of officers. Thirty-six attended the barbecue dinner. Elected to serve as the 2008-09 officers are: Wayne Schutte – President; Fred Sawin – Vice-President; Joan Floyd – Secretary; Marilyn Bryan – Treasurer; Pete Duncan and Carole McClellan – Board Members.

Outgoing President Bill Leppert gave a review of the Gateway year, which included three educational programs for the public, a field trip to Kansas City trail sites, a picnic at Whistle Creek Farm, and a trail marking trek. Marilyn Bryan presented the program for the evening

about the writings and lives of mid-1800 visitors and residents of St. Joseph. As part of the presentation chapter members engaged in playing an original, interactive card game similar to Old Maid but with the title "Old Joe [Robidoux]."



Ron Taylor, Jennifer Sprague, Bill Leppert, Wayne Schutte and T.J. Stohr enjoyed playing "Old Joe [Robidoux]" and also learning about mid-1800s characters during the Chapter's fall meeting.



Pete Duncan trims the bushes by the OCTA marker at the foot of Francis Street where the ferry landed to transport wagons across the Missouri River.



From left Joan Floyd, Paul Dittmore, Bill Leppert, Pete Duncan, Don Sherwood, Calvin Smith, Sandy Smith, Carole McClellan, Karen McClellan, Ron Taylor, Kim Adams, Glendon Hartman pose by an OCTA marker on the trail in Doniphan County. (Photos by Jackie Lewin)

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Upcoming Events

OCTA Yuma Trails Symposium
Yuma, AZ
Jan. 16-18, 2009

Partnership for the National Trails System "Hike the Hill" Advocacy Week
Washington, D.C.
Feb. 9-13, 2009

Partnership for the National Trails System Bi-Annual Conference
Missoula, MT
July 10-15, 2009

OCTA Convention
Loveland, CO
Aug. 18-22, 2009

2009 OCTA Convention in Colorado Aug. 18-22

Pre-convention field trips along the Denver Road from Julesburg to Greeley, Fort Collins and Loveland, on the Smoky Hill Trail beginning in Oakley, KS, and along the Overland and Cherokee Trails across southern Wyoming and into Northeast Colorado are on tap for the 2009 OCTA Convention. A tour on the Old Spanish Trail also may be a part of the convention pre-tour program.

The convention itself will include tours along the Cherokee and Overland Trails in Colorado; to the four fort locations and museums along the South Platte; to Gold Rush Park, Denver Public Library Western History/Genealogy, Colorado History Museum, and the Colorado Archives; to Greeley, Centennial Village and the Greeley Museum.



Workshops will be held related to trail mapping and marking, historic mapping, COED, National History Day, and on other topics. Speakers will discuss a variety of subjects ranging from general overland travel to the Colorado Gold Rush.

The Convention will be held at The Ranch, off Interstate 25 near Loveland, CO, Aug. 18-22, with the National Board Meeting on Aug. 18.

Loveland 2009: Raffle and Auction

The Colorado-Cherokee Trail Chapter is seeking donations for the raffle and auction at the convention in Loveland, Colorado, Aug. 18-22, 2009.

As in the past, items suitable for the raffle and auction include books, art work, historical memorabilia, photographs, gift items, gift baskets, note cards, handcrafted gifts, and a wide variety of other items.

Donations may either be mailed ahead or brought to the convention.

If you would like to donate items or have any questions at this time, please contact Camille Bradford: bradford@usa.net; 303-460-0371. Mail: 11515 Quivas Way, Denver, CO 80234.

Booksellers Wanted For 2009 Convention

Display and sales tables are available for booksellers at next year's OCTA convention in Loveland, CO, Aug. 18-22. The OCTA convention is a great venue for advertising and selling your trail-related books, art, and other merchandise. Attendance of over 400 enthusiasts is expected.

Tables for display of books and other merchandise must be reserved in advance. For more information, contact OCTA headquarters, or Robert Clark, 3334 W. Main St #506, Norman, OK, 73072; e-mail: (bob@clarkrarebooks.com).

Crossroads Chapter

Chapter Members Visit Hope Wells, place Markers on Hastings Cutoff

By Al Mulder

It was a busy fall for Crossroads Chapter members. In late September seven chapter members visited Hope Wells and Iosepa in Skull Valley to place Carsonite posts on sections of the Hastings Cutoff trail from west of Hope Wells (Ensign Ranches) to Redlum Spring. In November several members went on another trail-marking expedition to add and/or replace additional Carsonite posts on the Hastings Cutoff/Donner-Reed trail in Skull Valley. The trail marking posts were placed leading to and from Dell Spring and Hope Wells. Also in November, several members took Hensley's Salt Lake Cutoff route to revisit Hampton Ford and Rocky Ford river crossings to ensure that a proposed pipeline does not impact the historic Salt Lake Cutoff and Bartleson-Bidwell trail routes.

In October, chapter members met with members of the Utah Historical Society to clean fiberglass and metal interpretive panels that mark several historic sites from Emigration Canyon to Echo Canyon. A special cleaning compound was used to restore the surfaces of the panels and plaques that had deteriorated from years of exposure.

A final chapter board meeting was held November 20 and plans made for the chapter meeting on January 8, 2009. Michael Landon, noted researcher and historian, will speak on the historic Southern Route to California. An election will be held during the meeting to select officers to lead the chapter in 2009.

This will be my last article as chapter correspondent for *News From the Plains*. I have enjoyed writing columns "Around the Water Barrel" and "Trail Dust" for the chapter newsletter *Crossroads* for the past 18 years and have enjoyed submitting articles to Candy



Panel cleaning day in October, from left, Charlie Burkhalter, Ron Anderson, Gerald Haycock, Kathy and Greg Franzwa. (Photo by Oscar Olson)

Moulton and other dedicated editors activities but not my enthusiasm for *NFP* – they are great people. OCTA or my affection for so many Impaired vision is limiting my valued friendships.

In Pursuit of a Dream

By Candy Moulton

Work continues in the post-production phase of film development for "In Pursuit of a Dream." Filming last June and July in Wyoming and Oregon involved 24 students, three teachers, five wagons, dozens of additional cast members and generic interpreters, plus a crew of 10 working for Boston Productions Inc.

Since completing principal photography, we have had editors working on digitizing the footage, and beginning the process of reviewing and selecting material for the final film.

BPI has also started developing new Web site resources related to the film and the educational components of the program. When this is completed next summer it will have video segments and educational materials suitable for use in classrooms across the country.

Until the new Web site materials are launched you may visit the blog about the project at www.octatrails.blogspot.com.

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Inside

Board Nominations.....	2
Award Program.....	8
Preservation News.....	9
New Members.....	14