

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

WINTER 2010

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Oregon City, West Linn seek National Heritage Area Status

By **Candy Moulton**
NFP Editor

The Oregon City News reported in November that Oregon City and West Linn could become only the nation's 50th designated National Heritage Area based on a feasibility study request made by U.S. Congressman Kurt Schrader.

"As the first incorporated city west of the Rocky Mountains, and the end of the 'Oregon Trail,' the Oregon City region is steeped in history and has drawn visitors from across the world," Schrader said in a press release. "Establishing a National Heritage Area would not only preserve the unique history of the West Linn/Oregon City community but also promote tourism that will bring much-needed jobs to our region."

A National Heritage Area is a site designated by Congress to encourage historic preservation of an area that has

a rich historical, cultural, or social history to it. It also must include have exceptional opportunities to educate the general public.

The establishment of a National Heritage Area has shown to dramatically increase tourism to a designated location, according to Schrader's office.

Such a designation could galvanize a number of local efforts, as Oregon City considers how to best promote its history after the recent closure of the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center. Meanwhile, the Willamette Falls Locks have been shut down for years.

"Creating a National Heritage Area in this unique and historic corridor would enhance, support and protect the Willamette Falls area, fulfilling a long-standing vision for our communities," Oregon City Mayor Alice Norris said in the release. "I want to thank Congressman Schrader

for beginning this process that has the opportunity to bring real benefits to our region."

National Heritage Areas are administered by the state government, non-profits or private companies, according to Schrader's office, for which the federal government and National Park Service provide an advisory role.

Numerous groups have endorsed the effort, including the cities of West Linn and Oregon City, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde, Clackamas Heritage Partners, Clackamas County, Oregon State Parks, the Ice Age Floods Institute, Portland General Electric, One Willamette River Coalition, the Clackamas County Arts Alliance, the West Linn Paper Company, the Blue Heron Paper Mill, and the Clackamas County Tourism and Cultural Affairs Department.

Mid-Year Board Meeting March, 4-6

The Oregon-California Trails Association Board of Directors will hold its Mid-Year meeting at the National Trails Center in Independence March 4-6.

An orientation session for new Board members, new Chapter

Presidents, and others will be held Thursday evening, March 4.

On Friday morning, Sharon Brown of the National Park Service will lead a review and update of the OCTA Strategic Plan. The Board meeting will begin after lunch on Friday and continue as long as necessary on

Saturday, with a goal of adjourning by late afternoon.

Anyone who has agenda items should submit them to OCTA President Bill Martin by February 1 at (bmartinocta@gmail.com).

As always, any OCTA member is invited to attend the meeting.

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News From the Plains

Spring Issue Deadline

February 25, 2010

Send materials to
nfpocta@aol.com

2009-10 OCTA Officers

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John Krizek
Lethene Parks, Secretary,
Officer Liaison

Bill Martin, President & ex officio on all
committees

Past President Dick Ackerman Dies

Dick Ackerman, OCTA's President from 1987 to 1989, died in October. A Charter and Life member of OCTA, Dick also served as National Trails Preservation Officer. He selflessly gave of his time and even moved temporarily to Independence to negotiate the deal that brought OCTA's Headquarters to Independence, and then helped set up the operation.

Born in Wendell, ID, he attended public schools in southern Oregon and served in the U.S. Marine Corp from 1941 to 1945 throughout the South Pacific. He returned to active duty from 1950 to 1954, this time serving in Korea. After working in telecommunications for 36 years, he

then spent 10 years as Director of Human Resources for a subsidiary of his telecommunications company. He also served on an advisory panel for the University of Wisconsin regarding labor relations and was co-chairman of the Industrial Relations Research Association for the state of Iowa for 10 years. He shared his work experience by conducting labor relations seminars at several universities throughout the Midwest.

He became interested in western migration while still in grade school, and it remained a key passion for his entire life. In addition to being a Charter member and past president of OCTA, Dick also served as vice-

president, helped form the Northwest Chapter, and served as chairman of the 1993 Baker City, OR, and 1998 Pendleton, OR, OCTA conventions. While working as OCTA's National Preservation Officer, he also was chairman of Oregon's Heritage Signing Committee and was tapped to sit on the governor's Oregon Historic Trails Council. In his spare time, he loved to conduct RV tours on western migration routes for Western Oregon University.

He is survived by his wife, Trudy.

Gateway Project Raises Concerns

Opinion by Doug Jenson
OCTA Board Member

Many people, members of OCTA and not, have been watching the Gateway West Transmission Line project. The potential for impact on the emigrant trails within Idaho is enormous. Briefly, the folks behind it all want to build some additional power transmission lines between eastern Wyoming and southwestern Idaho. They have been busy laying out potential routes, filing statements, holding hearings, etc. Fundamentally, we don't argue with the need for electrical power transmission. Our concerns are with the routing.

One of the "Preliminary Proposed Corridors" (everything is preliminary at this point) goes right across the Parting of the Ways, along the Raft River, and follows the pristine Oregon Trail ruts west from there. Another "Considered, Not Proposed" route would go across the south end of the City of Rocks area, straight up Granite Pass on the California Trail.

We've been hearing from landowners in the proposed areas, official personnel at the City of Rocks, and interested trail buffs. All want to know what they can be doing, and what IOCTA is doing. I attended one of the scoping meetings, and also filed some comments on the Geotechnical Environmental Assessment. Del Mangum also filed comments. Wallace Keck, Superintendent at City of Rocks, has also been busy writing letters and attending some hearings. Each of us can be involved. See <www.wy.blm.gov/nepa/cfdocs/gateway_west/> and let them know of your concerns. Get on their mailing lists, and respond when there is an opportunity. Look at the maps, etc., so you understand where they are going with this.

Upcoming Events

Mid-Year Board
Meeting
Independence, MO
March 4-6, 2010

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Pony Express
Sesquicentennial
Events
Washington, DC
April 10-15, 2010

♦♦♦

OCTA Convention
Elko, NV
Aug. 10-14, 2010

♦♦♦

OCTA Convention
Rock Springs, WY
Aug. 10-14, 2011

Memberships and Heritage Tourism

Travis Boley
Tboley@indepmo.org

I recently bought two memberships in OCTA for friends as Christmas gifts. I know both friends have some interest in historic trails—all they needed was a gentle nudge to become involved. I pulled out my checkbook and provided that push. Do you have friends or family members who similarly have an interest in historic trails and just need a little prodding to join? If so, have you considered buying memberships for them to introduce them to the benefits of OCTA? In addition to receiving our quarterly publications they will also learn about our annual convention, and, if you also sign them up for a chapter, they will have an opportunity to participate in tours and outings, hear speakers, and take part in many other exciting events OCTA holds throughout the year.

As birthdays and holidays approach and you find yourself wondering what sort of gift to buy, please consider buying the gift of OCTA membership. After a couple of years of membership growth, OCTA has become the victim of an economy in recession. Letters and e-mails arrive periodically from people whose membership is expiring, stating that their income has contracted to the point that they have to leave the organization, if only temporarily, until their economic situation improves. OCTA board member and national membership committee chairman Duane Iles and I know this is occurring in other trail organizations, too. You can help us overcome these losses and nudge people you know who have an

interest in historic trails into joining OCTA.

Earlier this year, the Omnibus Public Lands Act of 2009 was signed into law. It authorizes the National Park Service to conduct feasibility studies on 64 additional routes and cutoffs of the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails. OCTA will be taking the lead in partnering with our friends in the NPS to conduct these studies, and we have contracted with Jere Krakow, retired superintendent of the National Trails Office, to do the field work.

The work your chapters have already done on these sections of trail—locating traces on the ground, mapping and marking alternate routes, documenting the existence of segments by tracking down evidence in diary entries and working diligently to protect these resources—will come into play in gaining National Trail status for them. We were excited to gain the authorization to get the feasibility study process underway, and we are even more excited to actually begin.

One of many important reasons we support this trail work is because of the potential impact of heritage tourism.

A recent research study by Heritage Travel reveals that 78 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and heritage activities. This translates to 118.3 million adults each year. With cultural and heritage travelers spending almost \$1,000 per trip, they contribute more than \$192 billion annually to the

U.S. economy. Cultural and heritage activities identified by travelers include: visiting historic sites (66%), attending historical re-enactments (64%), visiting state/national parks (41%), and shopping in museum stores (32%).

The vast majority of these travelers (65%) say that they seek travel experiences where the “destination, its buildings and surroundings have retained their historic character.” This quote, I think, is quite telling. Travelers choose authentic sites to visit primarily for their historic character. Preservation of on-the-ground resources, including the viewshed of these resources, is a primary reason for OCTA’s existence. Our job, in part, is to better promote such resources.

John Williams, president and CEO of Heritage Travel, said that “this study of the habits of cultural and heritage travelers reconfirms the size of this lucrative market. It also shows that cultural and heritage travelers seek authentic destinations with historic character as well as educational experiences in their travels.”

One way we are starting to find that nexus between preservation and heritage tourism is through the development of the movie *In Pursuit of a Dream*. The movie touches on the preservation ethos, and its companion Web site promotes visitation to historic trail sites. This is but one part of our overarching plan to better protect and promote our trails.

Another key piece, which is

Continued on Page 10

Preservation and New Trails

Bill Martin
bmartinocta@gmail.com

Not long ago, someone asked me if OCTA felt it was more important to preserve existing trails or create new historic trails. The question was asked in the context of plans to obtain National Historic Trails status for the southern emigrant trails

The person who asked was wondering how we would find time to work toward a new southern NHT when we are working so hard to preserve and protect existing NHTs, not to mention studying the addition of various routes and segments as authorized by Congress.

It was a fair question, but my answer was that we have an obligation to do both. OCTA’s mission, as spelled out in our Strategic Plan, is “to protect the Historic Emigrant Trails legacy by promoting research, education, preservation activities and public awareness of the trails.”

Whether a trail has been designated officially as a National Historic Trail is secondary to our mission. A trail is a trail, and all are important to our nation’s emigration legacy; all

are worthy of our care and attention.

A National Historic Trail covering the southern routes is overdue. Emigrants used many routes to reach the Pacific. While northern routes are better known today and were more heavily used, southern routes were also important and should be given fair consideration.

The Southern Trails Chapter held a great meeting at Fort Mojave in mid-November to focus its plans. The group is organized and looking forward to Trails Week in Washington, D.C. in February to begin the process of winning Congressional approval for this important new NHT.

We should remember that many of the Southern Trails – including the Salt Lake City to Los Angeles route, the Upper and Lower Roads in Texas, the Beale Road, the Mojave Road, and others – were cited for further study in the National Parks Service’s *Comprehensive Management and Use Plan* adopted in 1999. As a result, OCTA is fulfilling a federal agency mandate by supporting these trails.

Of paramount importance, too, is the fact that securing designation of the Southern Trails complex as a National Historic Trail would, as Southern Trails Chapter President Bert Eddins put it, “Bring closure to the historic trail system into California.”

So, the question remains, how do we find time to work on so many fronts? Fortunately, OCTA has strong chapters that take leadership roles on preservation issues and who are on the ground regularly marking and mapping and educating people. We are blessed with a strong legislative team, led by the indefatigable Bill and Jeanne Watson, who have nearly a generation of contacts in Washington.

Most of all, however, we have members who believe in our mission, who love the trails, and who are committed to our nation’s trails’ legacy. OCTA’s highly de-centralized structure, spread out over 11 chapters, gives us the ability to do many things in a lot of areas. That depends on every member to pull his or her load, to find a place to be helpful, and to pull together to preserve the trails.

OCTA Committee Chairs Needed

OCTA is looking for individuals willing to take leadership roles on a pair of important committees.

After many years of service, Roger Blair has asked to step down as chair of the Awards Committee. In addition, Marley Shurtleff, who already is chairing two other committees, is looking for someone to succeed her as chair of the Internet Committee.

The person who chairs the Awards Committee will be responsible

for soliciting nominations for the various awards that OCTA presents at the Awards banquet during the convention. There are no special criteria for chairing the committee, but we need someone who will take the role seriously.

The Internet Committee should be chaired by someone who has a working knowledge of the Internet. This person will help oversee OCTA’s presence on the Web.

In addition, OCTA has had a long-standing need for someone willing to serve as chair of the Fundraising Committee.

Complete job descriptions for all of these positions can be found in the Members’ area of the OCTA Web site. If you have an interest in serving or questions about what is involved, contact OCTA President Bill Martin at (bmartinocta@gmail.com) or call him at (512) 818-1609.

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FROM THE HQ MANAGER

Kathy Conway
Kconway@indepmo.org

Your national headquarters staff wishes to extend best wishes to OCTA members for a Prosperous New Year 2010.

We are pleased to make available the 2010 Membership Roster. You may order either a paper copy or a printable version (PDF) sent via e-mail. The cost of a paper copy is \$5, which includes shipping. Also, we now have available a complete

Index of the Overland Journal by topic. Again, a paper copy is \$5 and includes shipping.

We are stocking the book *A Country of Vast Designs: James Polk, The Mexican War and the Conquest of the American Continent* in hard cover (\$30). This is a great read about America's Manifest Destiny and the President who tackled it during his one-term.

Just last month OCTA's Annual Fund Drive letter came to your mailbox. If you haven't already

contributed, we hope you will write your check and send it to us today. Your support is always needed and greatly appreciated.

The mid-year Board of Directors meeting will be held March 4-6 in Independence, MO. We want to extend an invitation to all members who would like to attend.

For more information on how you may obtain copies of any of the above items, contact your Headquarters by e-mail (octa@indepmo.org) or telephone: 888-811-6282.

NEW MEMBERS

LIFE MEMBERS

Bill and Diane Martin
Georgetown, TX

Bob Noll, Norfolk, MA

GENERAL MEMBERS

Shannon Barrett, Cheyenne, WY
Arlynn Bottomley, Brea, CA
Mary Campbell, Boise, ID
Pat Davis, Wamic, OR

Richard Davis, Tujunga, CA
Doug Drebert, Paradise, CA
James Foster, Torrington, WY
Ronald Hall, Cheney, WA
Chloe Heil, Omaha, NE
Jim and Jennifer Hill, Spring Creek, NV
Robert Kilts, Lincoln, NE
Amber Lemaster, Cheyenne, WY
Ken Marshall, Valley Springs, CA
Douglas Moore, Williamstown, MA
Mark Mudgett, Acton, MA

Peri Muhich, Camas, WA
Lise Ohlson, Fox Island, WA
Craig Rice, Green River, WY
Dan Rottenberg, Philadelphia, PA
Kenneth Stallbaumer, Seneca KS
Michael Stroude, Volcano, CA
Kennedy Thatch, Lander, WY
Naomi Torres, Oakland, CA
Tommy Upp, Green River, WY
Chris Wray, La Mesa, CA
Jody Zeman, Wakeeney, KS

Publications Committee Still Wants Input on Budget Issues

Many thanks to all of you who responded to our request for your input on ways to cut costs in production of *Overland Journal* and *News From the Plains*. Those who responded appreciate that OCTA has separate journals for research articles and for news. They feel that the two publications should not be combined. There is resistance to decreasing the number of times a year the journals are produced, but an acceptance that

some reduction—say to three issues a year—may be inevitable, if the organization's finances require cost reduction. There is an even split between those who would be willing to receive an electronic version of *News From the Plains* and those who insist that a paper version is necessary. (Given the strong feelings, it is clear that OCTA will need to make a printed version available to those who want one.)

We continue to seek input from OCTA members on this topic. Send your ideas to us by e-mail or land mail at the address below:

Deborah and Jon Lawrence
Co-chairs, OCTA Publications
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Marketing Begins for *In Pursuit of a Dream*

In Pursuit of a Dream, the OCTA film premiered at the Loveland convention in August, has moved into the marketing phase, with the goal of achieving maximum beneficial exposure for the film, the educational project, and for OCTA.

With the production phase virtually completed, responsibility for the project has shifted to the marketing committee, chaired by OCTA board member and documentarian John Krizek. Other members of the film marketing team include: Denver-based marketing executive Pat Surrena, Jane Leche, Forest Service public information officer, OCTA board member Quackgrass Sally, Association Manager Travis Boley, and Candy Moulton, the film's producer.

The film itself has undergone some further editing and additions since the August screening—thanks in part to the feedback from OCTA members, the general public, and the students and teachers who are in the film. It is now a feature-length film designed for selected theatrical exposure. Some further refinements are still in the works, according to filmmaker

Bob Noll of Boston Productions.

The marketing strategy, according to Krizek, is:

- to explore possible broadcast and distribution partnership options through contacts with national cable networks and broadcast entities, especially those with educational outreach resources;
- to enter the film in selected film festivals, to achieve recognition and exposure, especially at the professional level, that might lead to other marketing and exposure options;
- keeping the option open for possible future independent public television broadcast, which would involve considerable editing to meet broadcast time constraints;
- to seek a limited number of special theater screenings, similar to the one in Loveland in August, where there is a high level of civic interest and the OCTA resources available to help put together a special event with multiple

promotional benefits. Such events are being considered in Scotts Bluff, NE, where OCTA board member Barb Netherland is leading the effort; in Kansas City, where Travis Boley is exploring the options; and in Oregon.

Meanwhile, the project Web site continues to build. Recent additions include a dozen three-to-five-minute vignettes not seen in the film but which focus on specific themes—such as Shoshone culture, oxen, preservation, etc. An interactive feature will be a virtual trail with over 100 points of interest, including such icons as South Pass, with site images, diary quotes, driving directions, and where applicable, discussion of preservation issues. All OCTA members and friends are encouraged to visit the Web site at www.octa-trails.org/In-Pursuit-of-a-Dream/.

Project educational chairman Lethene Parks has begun working up sample lesson plans, curriculum ideas, and links to other resources. Parks recently arranged for special screenings of the film at the grade school level to gauge the responses from that age group and help guide future educational efforts.

"The film itself was always envisioned as just one key part of a major educational campaign," according to Krizek. "This is a critical period, where we need to take advantage of the freshness of the film, get it exposed to and appreciated by all the right audiences, and at the same time pave the way for the long term educational benefits.

"This film puts OCTA on a national stage like we've never been on before," Krizek adds. "We want to make sure we do it right."

NEWS FROM WYOMING

Projects Impact Trail

From the Chapter Newsletter

The Wyoming Highway Department has released its cultural resource survey for the proposed Casper West Belt Loop, which will destroy a small section of the trail. Interpretation of the Custard Red Buttes Battle (July 1865) will be placed at a new turnout as partial mitigation.

Meetings in the Rock Springs area

are being held to discuss mitigation along the road between Browns Park and Rock Springs where Questar's Hiawatha Project may impact the Cherokee Trail. To compensate for the impacts, oral histories will be developed. A highway turnout interpretive sign also is being considered.

The chapter will host the 2011 OCTA National Convention.

NEWS FROM TRAILS HEAD

Mary Conrad, Kathy Conway Receive Awards

By Pat Traffas, President

Mary Conrad was recognized with the Trails Head Chapter's Meritorious Achievement Award for her lifetime of achievement with historic trails. The Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association received the Distinguished Partner Award for continued leadership in promoting partnerships for trail work in the KC area while Kathy Conway, OCTA Headquarters Manager, received the Award of Appreciation for her twenty years of service and support to OCTA. The awards were announced Nov. 14 at the annual Awards ceremony led by Awards Committee Chair Dick Nelson.

At the annual meeting The Trails Head Chapter voted to submit a proposal to host the 2012 National OCTA Convention. This proposal will

need to be approved by OCTA's Board of Directors in March. The members elected the following officers for 2010: Pat Traffas, president; Dick Nelson, vice-president; Mary Conrad, secretary; and Jim Budde, treasurer.

The program included a guided tour of the new National Archives building near the Union Station in downtown Kansas City. The new exhibits chronicle the many chapters of Kansas City history, including historic trails, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Border War, and the Civil War.

Craig Crease then reviewed trail projects in the Kansas City area. With Sapling Grove Park, Gardner Junction Park and the Upper Independence (Wayne City) Landing Overlook Park having been completed a year ago, two new projects are currently being worked on.

The first is the Town of Kansas signage project at the pedestrian bridge at the foot of Main Street downtown on the south bank of the Missouri River. Various partners, including Kansas City and the National Park Service, are involved in this signage project that will include ten interpretive panels being installed at the site which is traversed by four national historic trails.

The second project, of which Trails Head Chapter is sharing the lead with the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association, is at Strang Park at 84th and Farley in Overland Park, KS. It will involve four interpretive panels with the Overland Park Parks Department and National Park Service as partners. This site is at the junction of the two Westport Routes of the Santa Fe and the Oregon-California National Historic Trails.

NEWS FROM CROSSROADS

Tour Takes in Southern Routes, Sites

By Oscar Olson

We had our fall field trip on Oct. 3, 2009, in southern Utah. E. Leo Lyman directed us on a tour of the Salt Lake to California Route, which overlaps the Old Spanish Trail from the site of Mountain Meadows to Mesquite and on into California. The tour ended in Nevada, where the California Wash came out of the Meadow Valley Wash-Muddy River area. At one time there were 22 vehicles in the tour.

During the evening Dr. Lyman

gave a lecture in Mesquite that was attended by local residents and Crossroads Chapter members.

On Oct. 17, a group of about a dozen volunteers visited Donner Springs, in western Utah, to do fall maintenance. After the work was complete, some members took a tour around Floating Island to view trail sites and an ancient Indian cave.

On Nov. 13 and 14, Chapter Board members Craig Fuller and T. Michael Smith attended a chapter meeting of the Southern Trails Chapter in

Laughlin, NV. It was held to begin discussion on getting national historic trails status and recognition on many of the trails that went west to California over southern routes. This will include the Salt Lake to Los Angeles route that went south to avoid the Sierras and winter problems.

We want to congratulate the Utah Chapter of the Lincoln Highway Association for efforts to place an historic marker at Historic Johnson (Fisher) Pass.

Awards Nominations Being Accepted

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

To make a nomination, please 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 OCTA Headquarters, (octa@indepmo.org).

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 follows:

Gregory Franzwa 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.

David Welch Preservation Award — given to an OCTA member who has provided significant contributions in the area of trails preservation over a period of years. The award recipient is determined by the OCTA Board based upon nominations from chapters and members. This award is not necessarily given every year.

From the Association Manager... *Continued From Page 4*

only now coming into focus, is the upcoming Historic Trails Workshop being developed by the Partnership for the National Trails System. Set to occur in San Antonio, TX, May 12-14, the workshop's primary focus will be the integration of preservation and heritage tourism. Our symposium in Yuma, AZ in 2009 is an example of how we do this. Our recent annual convention is another example. The City of Loveland, CO, provided funding and physical support to our efforts because it recognized

both the value of protecting the historic resources in the community and working to promote them as a destination for the heritage tourist.

The numbers don't lie. The work we do is important to our fellow Americans. They seek out sites such as those we work to preserve. The study and possible addition of 64 additional routes and cutoffs will only increase our number of potential preservation projects, as well as the number of sites to which we can direct the heritage tourist.

Finally, we recently mailed our Annual Year-End Appeal letter. Because membership dollars are down this year, this appeal takes on even greater importance. Please be sure to consider OCTA in your annual giving.

There are many options for you to support, from our various committees to our three endowments to our general operations fund.

Candidates Sought for Board of Directors

Even though the new board members were just seated and officers elected, it is time to begin thinking of running for the OCTA board or serving as an officer in 2010-2011.

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

Nominations for the board are due by April 1. If you are interested or need more information contact the OCTA Nominations and Leadership Committee members:

- Glenn Harrison, Chair
(gr.harrison@comcast.net)
- Edna Kennell
(nhtcf@hotmail.com)
- Bill Peterson

(bilancy@hotmail.com).

Each year, the terms of four of the twelve Directors expire. In 2010 the terms expire for Patricia Etter, John Mark Lambertson, Fern Linton, and Bill Wilson. Linton and Etter 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 these three (3) requirements—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 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 Committee requests that candidates 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

Continued on Next Page

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Long Awaited 1863 Goodale Variant Tour Held

By Jim McGill

Many members of the Canyon County Historical Society, who also belong to Idaho's OCTA Chapter, worked to help plan and implement the 2008 OCTA convention and later choose to repeat some of the field trips for the general public's participation.

This second round of trips has been as successful as the original tours. The most recent repeat was the pre-convention auto tour of Goodale's Cutoff, 1863 Variant, a nearly 40-mile loop north of Emmett, ID, through the Crane Creek route.

In September, ten people from the Nampa area, most of whom are very new to the emigrant trails, were guided on this second tour.

One particular section of the Goodale-influenced 1863 alternate route, which was rediscovered in 2007 by Jimi and Patti McGill, had originally opened six months after the Goodale Train passed through

Idaho. It is now on the east end of Crane Creek Reservoir and was a good place for the tour as many people interested in the trail requested it.

Some trail sections were viewed by participants as they followed the present

road. These segments are well marked and easily visible. On the tour participants hiked a few sections, while two, one-mile loops of the trail, now Class 2 trail, were viewed by driving the route.

Some sections are quite rocky. These rough trail sections do give modern day travelers a better feel



Tour group returning from hike on the Haw Creek swale, which is noted by the black arrow. (Photo by Jim McGill)

for some of the hardships that our ancestors endured in those hard-riding wagons, and indicate why most of them were walking.

Many CCHS members remain enthused about emigrant trail history, and a lot more have now been involved in one or more of the repeated tours. Next year we may do even more of these tours again.

Board Nominations

Continued from Previous Page

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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, submission of a resume for each nominee is encouraged.

Elected Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings. A minimum of two Board meetings are held each year, one at the National Convention and the other at 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, 2010. Nominations should be mailed to the Nominating and Leadership Committee chair:

Glenn Harrison (gr.harrison@comcast.net), 1132 30th PL. SW, Albany, OR 97321-3419.

New Mapping Approaches Being Considered

By David Welch
Mapping Chair

Until recently we have lacked an inventory of maps completed to the MET standard (1:24,000 scale) and submitted to the National Park Service. That inventory is now complete. It provides us with the means to avoid duplication of previous efforts and to identify areas with priority for new work. We also have a complete inventory and electronic copies of maps prepared at a scale of 1:100,000 which are the first cut estimates of the trail location. In the latter data set, all trails are covered except some of those being studied for inclusion as a national historic trail under the Public Lands Act of 2009.

In meetings in Salt Lake City between OCTA representatives and the NPS staff, progress was made

toward defining a new approach for conducting MET-quality mapping using consumer-level GPS units and commercial mapping software (Terrain Navigator Pro). This method will not replace the paper map work as described in the MET Manual for those preferring that method, but it offers a paperless approach for those so inclined. A manual describing the approach is now being prepared.

While you are reading this article in mid-winter, it is a good time to plan next year's mapping and marking efforts. Carsonite markers are available upon request in exchange for a commitment to report marker locations (GPS readings) and volunteer hours.

For additional details on any of these items, please contact me at (welchdj@comcast.net) or 360-923-0438.

Editor's Notes & Short Takes

Matt Meier of MeierDesigns provided the new look for this issue of *News from the Plains*.

Articles are always sought for the publication. Please send any material you have to nfpocta@aol.com.

The Virtual Trail is now on the OCTA Web site, but more information is needed to complete it. If you can provide photos or information about one of the trail sites, contact Candy Moulton at 307-327-5465 or cmoulton@bostonproductions.com.

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New Interpretive Signs to be Installed

By Bob Evanhoe
Chapter President

Three NPS interpretive signs for the Carson Trail should be installed by next summer. Frank Tortorich reports that the one for Caples Lake is complete; those for West Pass and Carson Canyon are under construction.

Don Buck reported that the Southern Nevada Conservancy has purchased 128 publications dealing with the California Trail from the Charlie Little Collection. These volumes will be placed in the reference library of the new BLM Trail Center in Elko. The proceeds from the sale will be donated to the OCTA collection at the California State Library.

Mark Wilson reported that he would like an OCTA representative for each of the CalTrans Districts

where NPS auto tour signs will be installed. It is hoped this activity will be underway by April. Vince Correll and Dick Young volunteered for two of the five districts involved.

The CA-NV Chapter Board voted to pursue the Adopt-a-Trail program as proposed by John Winner. There are some 25 branches of the California Trail in Nevada and California. John presented a spreadsheet noting current conditions and degree of documentation.

There is a proposal to hold a spring symposium and general membership meeting in Bakersfield in April, 2010. Tom Hunt has indicated that the grave of Elisha Stephens (Stephens-Townsend-Murphy Wagon Train) has been located in a Bakersfield cemetery, and he has proposed that the Chapter install an interpretive plaque at the site. Possible tours to Walker Pass are also being discussed. Check the Chapter Web site <www.canvocta.org> for further developments about this activity.

Over 30 members attended the CA-NV Chapter Membership meeting at the National Convention in Loveland last August. Bob Evanhoe was reelected president and John Winner was elected vice president while Carol March and Zeke Sicotte remain appointed secretary and treasurer respectively. Steve Knight became past president. Board members are Dick Young, Frank Tortorich, Dave Hollecker, and Vince Correll.

At the Loveland convention, tables promoting the convention to be held in Elko, NV were shared with BLM's display presenting the new California National Historical Trail Interpretive

Center in Elko. The convention theme is *Emigrants, Elko and The Elephant*.

Elko Convention Chair Jan Petersen was kept busy throughout the week, taking notes and listening to recommendations for the 2010 meeting. Loveland Convention Chair Camille Bradford gave a gracious handoff to Jan, including a copy of Edvard Munch's *The Scream!!*

In November, the Convention Committee and the Chapter Board met on successive days in Reno and Carson City. Travis Boley was present at the committee meeting and informed the group as to National OCTA's involvement in the planning process.

The convention will include events at the new trail center as well as tours in northern Nevada.

At the business meeting of the board in Carson City, discussion ensued concerning the drop in dues payments as a result of switching from separate chapter collection to combined collection by national. A reminder will be sent to those members who have overlooked their Chapter dues because of the switch. The board also decided to place on the spring meeting agenda the increase to \$15 for annual family memberships. Currently, both individual and family memberships are \$10.

The chapter board decided to proceed immediately to transfer management of the chapter's Web site to Adam Welch. This was done to merge information with OCTA's Web site for coordinating the Elko Convention.

Public Lands Bill Studies to Begin Soon; Jere Krakow to Lead OCTA Effort

By Bill and Jeanne Watson
Legislative Liaison Co-Chairs

The Omnibus Public Lands bill, passed by Congress earlier this year, includes authorization for the National Park Service to study a specified list of additional routes and cutoffs for the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer and Pony Express National Historic Trails and to identify those that meet the National Trails Act's future addition to these four trails. It took two years to convince Congress to consider these studies and another eight years to get this legislation passed.

We are delighted that Jere Krakow has been designated by the Board to coordinate OCTA's efforts in support

of these feasibility studies and the related review process. Please assist with Jere's efforts on this very important project by sharing your documentation that supports these feasibility studies.

The Southern Trails Chapter recently expanded its Congressional Legislative request to include all emigrant routes to Southern California. Chapter representatives will join us in February to Hike The Hill during Trails Advocacy Week 2010 and seek sponsors for this proposed legislation. Each of these southern routes/cutoffs is recommended for future study in the 1999 Four Trails Comprehensive Management Plan.

Hike The Hill 2010 will begin our 25th year of representing OCTA and our trails with Congress.

It is not too late to turn in your 2009 "Volunteer Hours & Expenses Reports" to your Chapter Coordinator or to us at (BillJeanneWatson@att.net). This information is reported in OCTA's Annual Report to Congress and to the Partnership for the National Trails System. We and the Partnership helped obtain significant Congressional base line funding increases over the past two years for our Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service Federal Agencies Partners as a result of your volunteer hours and activities reports.

Pony Express 150th Anniversary in 2010

The Pony Express begins its eighteen-month-long celebration of the Sesquicentennial with events in Washington, D. C., April 10-15. National Pony Express Association members will "Carry a Message to Congress" by delivering mail for delegates and committee members from each of the eight states the Pony Express Trail covers.

The Annual Reride will be held in June, with all riding action during daylight hours to give communities along the route an opportunity for events.

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Inside

Film Marketing.....8

Board Nominations.....10

Trail Studies.....18

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