

# NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

FALL 2012

VOL XXVII NO. 4

## Board Approves Marketing Campaign

# OCTA Sets Out to Energize Membership

By Candy Moulton  
NFP Editor

An aggressive marketing campaign, a new sign program, a new business sponsorship program along the trail routes, and changes in the election procedure are steps OCTA will take to reinvigorate the organization.

Plans to withdraw \$10,000 from the Heritage Endowment Fund to support a marketing proposal that involves advertising in *American Heritage*, won approval on a close vote with six directors expressing support and five voting against the measure. A

related plan to undertake a direct mail campaign to subscribers of *American Heritage* who live in trail states, also was approved with seven directors in favor and four opposed. Up to \$4,560 will be allocated to this effort, the board decided. (See related article on page 4.)

During lengthy discussion about the marketing plan submitted by Marketing Chair and Board Member Pat Surrena, OCTA Vice President John Krizek, who also chairs the organization's Public Relations Committee, strongly endorsed the effort, but he stressed that there is no guarantee to OCTA

that the return on investment will be as large as projected.

In a related action, the board agreed to have an OCTA booth at the Tucson Festival of Books, March 10-11, 2013. That event, which draws an estimated 150,000 attendees, precedes the Mid-Year Board Meeting, which will be held March 14-17, 2013, also in Tucson.

The directors approved a change to the Bylaws that in the future will require candidates for OCTA Board positions to be at least 18 years old. Elected to the board this

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## OCTA Celebrates 30th Anniversary



These Charter Members of OCTA were on hand for the 30th Anniversary Convention. Front row, from left: Jeanne Watson, Mary Martin, and Sandra Wiechert. Back row: Chuck Martin, Ron Volk, Bill Watson, Art Siverling (Charter member, first convention), Roger Blair, Ross Marshall, and Ron Downs. Not shown is Bill Hill, who was also in attendance at the convention. He and the Watsons are the only members to have been present for all 30 conventions.



## NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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### *News from the Plains*

### **Winter Issue Deadline**

**November 25, 2012**

Send materials to  
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## **2012-13 OCTA Officers**

Officers, except Preservation Officer, are voting members of the Board.

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### **Committee C - Preservation, Collections, Public Relations, and Property Management**

Doug Jensen, Chair  
Pat Surrena  
Vern Osborne  
Loren Pospisil  
John Krizek, Officer Liaison

Duane Iles, President & ex officio on all committees

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# OCTA Board Launches New Marketing Effort

*Continued from Page 1*

year are 17-year-old Brian Larson, Loren Pospisil, Pat Fletcher, and Vern Osborne. To control costs and better manage elections in the future, the nominations will be due in February with all election information and ballots distributed in connection with regular publication of *News From the Plains*.

The health of trails organizations will be the focus of a meeting sponsored by the Partnership for the National Trails System in Albuquerque later this fall, Partnership Executive Director Gary Werner told the OCTA Board. The Partnership is working on a major initiative to create stronger links between National Wildlife Refuges and the historic and scenic trails and also is making significant strides in protecting the landscapes along the nation's trails.

Werner commended OCTA for mitigation work that was done along the Lander Road in Wyoming, where the New Fork River crossing was purchased using corporate mitigation funds and a public park is being developed in cooperation with the Sublette County Historical Society. He said the Partnership position is that if an acre of trail is being destroyed then an equal or greater amount of the resource should be preserved.

"If you are going to destroy something that is irreplaceable, we need to preserve something at a more than one-to-one value," Werner told the OCTA Board.

Raising awareness of the national historic trails along their

routes is the goal OCTA Board President Duane Iles has in the board-approved measure that establishes a business sponsorship category in the organization. For a \$50 fee, businesses along the trail can support OCTA. They will receive an OCTA decal or plaque that they can place in their business. This program will serve to promote the trail as a resource, particularly for travelers.

This business sponsorship is launched as a way to generate increased financial support for OCTA and all chapters will be encouraged to sell the sponsorships to businesses. In addition to the window decal, each member will receive a listing in *News From the Plains*. Businesses will be encouraged to provide discounts or special promotions for OCTA members, to join in trail promotion and activities, and to hold trail-related social events.

The board rejected a motion on a 7-5 vote that would have increased regular membership dues by \$5 annually for the Individual and Pioneer categories.

The board approved a \$348,000 budget that shows revenues of \$166,519 from the National Park Service, including a \$25,000 grant for a new sign program (*see related article on page 4.*)

The Gregory M. Franzwa Collection has been received by OCTA for the Merrill Mattes Research Library in Independence, MO, and a \$3,000 grant from the NPS will allow for digitization of maps in the collection.

The NPS has also completed the auto tour booklet for the trails in Nevada.

Work continues on the

feasibility study to identify potential new segments for the national historic trails. NPS Trails Superintendent Aaron Mahr said route descriptions are being developed for 63 routes.

Work is also underway on writing historical summaries to evaluate the significance of the routes. A draft of this material is being reviewed by the NPS study team and by OCTA members. Additional work is also being completed on maps for the trails in the study in western states.

Further review will be done by federal and state agencies, before the public review process starts in 2013.



*The National Park Service presented an award during the Board meeting to Kay Threlkeld, a former NPS employee, for her recent work on mapping potential new trail segments as part of the ongoing trail feasibility study.*

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# OCTA Markets to *American Heritage* Readers

By Candy Moulton  
NFP Editor

A marketing plan for OCTA, including display advertising in a major national publication, was approved by the Board at its meeting in Lawrence and is moving into high gear.

Outlined by Marketing Committee chairman Pat Surrena, the plan includes a series of one-third page ads in *American Heritage*, starting with the fall issue released at the end of September. The ads will echo the same "Save the Trail" theme of the new membership brochure introduced earlier this year.

The goal of the ads and the "Save the Trail" theme are to attract new members and supporters to OCTA and its mission.

"The demographic of *American Heritage* subscribers is the closest match to our demographics of any national publication that we can afford," said Vice President John Krizek. "They are interested in history, and are relatively affluent. According to the member survey

last year, *American Heritage* is the second most popular publication read by our members—after *The Smithsonian*. Of their 165,000 subscribers, approximately 33,000 are in the Western trail states."

A second part of the plan will be a direct mail pitch in October to 7,500 *American Heritage* subscribers who live in trail states.

The Board agreed to withdraw \$10,000 from Endowment funds to pay for the advertising program. "According to accepted industry standards, a one-percent response rate is considered successful," according to Surrena. "At that rate, we could see 300 new members in the next year—which would more than pay for the program, and help assure OCTA's future as a dynamic, growing trail preservation organization."

As part of the campaign, the Marketing Committee is working with the Internet Committee to ensure that the OCTA web site can handle the expected traffic. "According to Webmaster Adam Welch, the web site received over 100,000 'hits' in just the first six months of this year," Krizek told

the Board. "While the majority of those probably were student-driven searches for information about such subjects as the Oregon Trail, many may have been from prospective members. So far we've been unable to capture any data on who those people are. We're pleased to be working with Internet Committee chair Marley Shurtleff and Adam Welch on addressing that need, and making it as easy as possible for people to not only find us, but also to join us or donate or both."

Another part of the plan is to make the ad art available to local chapters, to insert in local historical publications and other media, Krizek said. Discussions will be pursued regarding articles and other PR support for the advertising program.

"OCTA has never done anything like this before," adds Krizek. "But the need is urgent. We're convinced there are a lot of folks out there who would love to be part of us, if they only know we're here."

## NPS Grants \$25,000 for Trail Sign Program

The National Park Service has allocated \$25,000 for a local signing initiative designed to connect travelers more closely with National Historic Trails.

Under the program that begins Oct. 1, NPS will supply the signs, but a locality such as a city, county, or state would have to agree to both fund the posts and hardware and agree to install the signs along the designated route.

The process of facilitating the NPS funded signs with local road departments will fall to OCTA volunteers.

OCTA Chapters are encouraged to plan and implement a sign program along the trail routes. A sign plan must be created by the chapter of OCTA volunteers, using a planning process developed by the NPS. If you intend to develop a sign plan, please contact Steve

Burns at [steve\\_burns@nps.gov](mailto:steve_burns@nps.gov) for assistance.

Other than site identification/entrance signs, all signs must be placed on public roads. The signs will be based on the national historic trail family of signs. Because signing will usually be done in both directions of traffic, the signs are paired to serve traffic effectively.



## Call for Papers for 2013 Convention

The Oregon-California Trails Association invites submission of abstracts for papers to be presented at its annual convention in Clackamas, OR, July 22-26, 2013. The deadline for receiving abstracts of 200 words maximum is Nov. 1, 2012.

The theme of the convention is "The End of the Oregon Trail and Beyond." All submissions relating to mid-nineteenth century overland migration to the west will be considered, but priority will be given to subjects related to the theme, especially what happened after their overland trek

Papers addressing interaction with Native Americans, claiming land and creating a home, establishing towns and cities, the Hudson's Bay Company/Dr. John McLaughlin, and forming a government are examples of the topics sought. Presentations by descendants of pioneer settlers are especially sought, although descendants' talks may be grouped as a panel presentation, dependent upon the number of submissions. Talks should run approximately 45 minutes in length, except panel participants for which the allotted time for each speaker would be approximately 20 minutes.

Papers should be scholarly and original. Permission may be sought for publication of one or more presentations in OCTA's publication, *Overland Journal*. For consideration, abstracts should be submitted by Nov. 1, 2012, to Roger Blair, 524 NW 3rd Street, Pendleton, OR 97801. For additional information or questions, call 541-966-8854 or e-mail [rblair@oregontrail.net](mailto:rblair@oregontrail.net).

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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### Partnering For the Trails

By Duane Iles

[96cruisin@embarqmail.com](mailto:96cruisin@embarqmail.com)

Congratulations to the Trails Head Chapter and all the folks who spent many hours putting on a great convention in Lawrence. Anyone not present missed a lot of informative tours, speakers, workshops and especially the camaraderie of being with OCTA friends again. I congratulate all the folks who received awards and recognition at the awards banquet. All were well deserved.

The Board of Directors was very busy getting its work accomplished in one day. I want to thank Quackgrass Sally, Billy Symms, and Matt Ivory for their service on the board. I also want to welcome Brian Larson and Loren Pospisil, our new members of the board.

There were some significant outcomes of the board meeting. One of the biggest changes will be the way in which we conduct our elections. We have always conducted our elections by mail. We will now be doing the entire election through *News from the Plains*. The only real changes you will notice are in the deadlines for filing. The ballot will be inserted in *NFP*. This will save OCTA around \$900 each year.

Additionally, since we rarely have a quorum among the ballots returned, we have to have a vote at the annual general meeting to confirm the election. We have made a minor change to the bylaws that will mean that now the election will be determined by a majority of ballots returned,

regardless of the number returned.

We have initiated a new program in our membership effort. Vice President John Krizek and Pat Surrena, chairman of the marketing committee, have prepared a marketing plan (described separately) that will include ads in *American Heritage*. We are also starting a business sponsorship program to enlist the support of businesses along the trail.

Our new book *Our Faces are Westward* will be printed this fall and available before Christmas. What a great gift a membership in OCTA and a copy of our new book would make for all your friends and relatives.

The National Park Service is initiating a program for local tour signage. They are making \$25,000 available to us for use to mark areas not covered by the Auto Tour Route program.

The Mid-Year Board meeting will be in Tucson, AZ, March 14-17, 2013, in combination with a symposium. They have excellent tours already planned. I'm sure they will also have informed speakers. Besides, it will be great for us northerners to get out of the cold. Start making plans for mid-March in Tucson.

It is looking like a great new year coming up. You will be hearing about all these projects in future mailings. Don't get left out, get involved.

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# — PRESERVATION OFFICER —

## Summary Report for General Membership

*Editor's Note: This report, though prepared for the OCTA Board and General Membership at the Annual Meeting, was not presented at that time. It is printed here in its entirety.*

*By Leslie Fryman  
National Trail  
Preservation Officer*

Several very large energy development projects that have been in environmental review for 1-3 years are moving into the final stages of approval in 2012. Determining if, and how, these projects will affect cultural resources, including historic trails, has been largely postponed via Programmatic Agreements (PAs) to when the best route or location for the project has been chosen, so that detailed cultural resources studies and their associated costs are not wasted on alternate routes or sites that will never be used. OCTA is granted consulting party status when PAs involve historic trails, and having a PA in place presents both advantages and disadvantages for OCTA.

A PA for cultural resources is essentially a signed promise that important historic sites and trails will be adequately studied and appropriately treated before any impacts occur as a result of the project construction. Details are given in PAs for methods of field inventory or mapping for trails, conducting visual analyses of historic trail viewsheds, and establishing adequate "buffer"

zones around trails for both ground-disturbing construction or direct impacts, and visual or indirect impacts.

Though we won't know exactly when any of these studies are about to occur on a given project, most of the PAs state that consulting parties like OCTA will have the opportunity to participate further in reviewing studies or developing specific mitigation measures deemed appropriate for impacts to historic trails. We should not, however, take these promises for granted – it is imperative that OCTA chapter preservation officers and especially trail mappers remain vigilant and actively track the schedules of cultural resources studies and the progress of Section 106 consultation with lead federal agency cultural resources staff.

Projects for which PAs are presently in draft or final stages are the Cascade Crossing Transmission Line in Oregon, the Chokecherry and Sierra Madre Wind Energy project in Wyoming, the Gateway West Transmission Line in Wyoming and Idaho, the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line in Idaho and Oregon, the Mountain States Transmission Intertie in Idaho and Montana, and the Transwest Express Transmission Line in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada.

Other projects that OCTA members are consulting on currently are BLM Resource Management Plan updates, land exchanges, numerous smaller

wind and solar energy projects, and highway expansions.

Most entail relatively quick confirmations that no threats to trails exist, or that trails in proximity to the project areas will be carefully avoided – but others are more tedious negotiations requiring much effort from OCTA and other trail preservation groups to achieve adequate consideration for historic trails and historic transportation corridors.

Several important projects in trail preservation are off to a good start or were completed this year – the long awaited culmination of the New Fork River crossing land purchase in Wyoming is at the top of that list. Also, KUDOS this year go to the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council representative Nancy Brown, and members of Wyoming BLM cultural staff in leading the effort to recognize and document historic property landscapes in a special workshop held in Pinedale in May. The trail landscape at South Pass was presented here very effectively by Lesley Wischmann of the Alliance for Historic Wyoming. Much credit for the state of Wyoming being leagues ahead of other states in giving serious consideration to trail viewsheds certainly goes to OCTA and the Alliance for many years of agency "encouragement."

And special KUDOS this year go to the Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Committee and the Hugo Neighborhood Association

*Continued on Page 8*



# Preservation Officer Summary

*Continued from Page 7*

of Josephine County, OR, for successfully negotiating an Interstate 5 widening project over Sexton Pass (near Grants Pass) in southern Oregon to avoid impacts to the Applegate Trail corridor. The earliest emigrant wagon road in this location has been overlaid with successive grades of a military road, stage road, and an early highway, all of which are historically significant routes. The Hugo

group (all or most of which are OCTA members) has made much progress toward documenting the historic transportation resources in this corridor and has established a working website for the project. When completed this study will be a valuable addition to the existing National Register of Historic Places documentation for the Applegate Trail in Nevada and California, which was completed in the 1980s by OCTA and the BLM.

## CALENDAR

**Oct. 29 - Nov. 2**  
**Mapping & Marking Workshop**  
Salt Lake City, UT

**March 14-17, 2013**  
**Mid-Year Board**  
**Meeting & Symposium**  
Tucson, AZ

**July 22 - 27, 2013**  
**OCTA Convention**  
Oregon City, OR

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- Children's programs and activities
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Pack your provisions, circle the wagons and saddle up for a visit to the **National Frontier Trails Museum** where the West welcomes you, the journey begins and your adventure awaits.

**318 W. Pacific • Independence, MO 64050 • [www.FrontierTrailsMuseum.org](http://www.FrontierTrailsMuseum.org)**

# Board Nomination Deadline Now February 15

*By Bill Martin  
Nomination & Leadership  
Committee Chair*

Each year OCTA asks its members to consider serving in a leadership capacity on the National Board of Directors or as a National Officer of the nation's leading trails preservation and advocacy organization.

In action taken by the Board at its August meeting, the deadline for nominations is now February 15. This move was made in order to save the \$800 to \$900 costs of a separate mailing of ballots. Effective with the elections for 2013, ballots will now be included in the Spring edition of *News From The Plains*.

Each year, elections are held for four positions on the Board. Directors can serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms on the Board.

Board members whose terms are expiring in 2013 are Camille Bradford of Colorado, Fern Linton of Wyoming, Paul Massee of Washington, and Pat Surrena of Colorado. All but Linton are eligible to be re-elected should they decide to run.

Board members are expected to provide leadership for the affairs of the Association and attend two Board meetings, one held in conjunction with the annual Convention and a Mid-Year meeting usually held in the Spring. Financial assistance is available to help defray costs of the attending the Mid-Year meeting. Board members are also responsible for electing OCTA officers.

This is a pivotal time for

OCTA, which faces preservation challenges everywhere on the trails and must shepherd its resources to make sure it can continue to lead the fight to save the legacy of the trails for future generations. The role of the Board of Directors has never been more important.

In addition to policy and priority-setting responsibilities, members of the Board also serve as important liaisons with OCTA's chapters, with an opportunity to represent the interests of the chapters at Board meetings and in the organization's national affairs.

In order to be a candidate for the Board of Directors, all that is required is a short statement of qualifications and experience and the endorsements of three members of OCTA. Candidacy papers should be sent to Bill Martin at [bmartinoccta@gmail.com](mailto:bmartinoccta@gmail.com).

For more information about the elections process, you may also contact Nominations & Leadership Committee members Lethene Parks at [lethene@comcast.com](mailto:lethene@comcast.com) or Joyce Everett at [joy4everett@yahoo.com](mailto:joy4everett@yahoo.com).

Additional information may also be found in the Members Area of the OCTA website.

## Interested in Serving OCTA?

There are openings on OCTA committees. Contact President Duane Iles to see how you can help. E-mail him at [96cruisin@embarqmail.com](mailto:96cruisin@embarqmail.com).

## New Support for Mapping Emigrant Trails

*By Dave Welch  
Mapping and Marking  
Committee Chair*

The National Park Service has added a new task to the cooperative agreement with OCTA that will provide reimbursement of some expenses while mapping the National Historic Trails in accordance with OCTA's Mapping Emigrant Trails Manual. Over \$16,000 is available to cover lodging, per diem, and mileage expenses. This will provide approximately 100 man-days of field work.

Typically, the mapping effort will focus on one USGS 1:24,000 scale quadrangle. The selected quads should be in areas not currently covered by maps that have been prepared and submitted to the NPS.

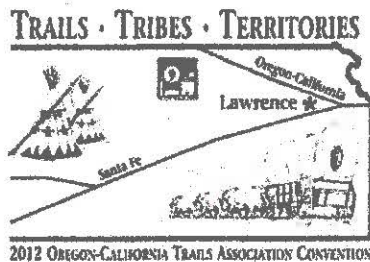
It is desirable that these funds be used to map in many chapter areas. All chapters are encouraged to develop mapping projects and to submit a request. Due to the limited funds, it is probable that not all expenses will be covered, but the task should provide a substantial subsidy for volunteer efforts.

The task will be managed by OCTA's Mapping and Marking Committee Chair Dave Welch and the NPS's John Cannella.

If you are interested in participating in the program, please contact Dave Welch, [welchdj@comcast.net](mailto:welchdj@comcast.net), for full details. If possible, please identify the area of interest to you.



# OCTA Holds 30th Annual Convention in Lawrence



*By Ross Marshall  
Convention Coordinator*

About 260 OCTA members and guests attended the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention in Historic Lawrence, KS, held August 6-11. Ten bus tours, an outstanding series of speakers, workshops, meetings, and dinner events during the week made this convention one to remember.

Hosted by Trails Head Chapter, the convention opened with a welcome by Lawrence Mayor Bob Schumm and a reception that featured entertainment by the Lizard Creek String Band. Leaders of the Wyandotte Tribe also greeted us.

One highlight of the week was Friday night at the 30th Anniversary dinner when Roger Blair, founder and past-president, gave an excellent Power Point presentation. To create the program he drew from his vast collection of photographs that date from the founding meeting in Denver on Aug. 11, 1982. In addition, about a dozen charter members attending the convention were recognized and shared memories of the early years of OCTA. This was a very enjoyable

and memorable event.

Other highlights were the ten bus tours that covered five different routes in the Kansas City, Leavenworth, Baldwin City, Lecompton, and Lawrence areas. These tours traveled four National Historic Trails; the Oregon, California, Santa Fe, and Lewis and Clark. But what made them special were the 21 well-trained and prepared tour guides thanks to the leadership of Craig Crease.

Eleven different speakers presented a variety of subjects

Coordinated by Dick Nelson, who also managed the Saturday night barbeque, it was well-paced, leaving sufficient time for the always entertaining and productive live auction as conducted by John Winner.

Authors' Night on Thursday, coordinated by Mary Beth Kullberg, featured 16 authors and entertainment by the Gum Spring Serenaders. Sandra Wiechert of Lawrence managed the workshops while Jean Coupal-Smith did a super job coordinating the silent



*Dedication of interpretive signs took place at McCoy Park during the OCTA convention. From left, Aaron Mahr, Sharon Snyder, Stephen Rhoades, Don Reimal, Travis Boley, Lynne Mager, and Cheryl Harness. (Photo by R. J. Burkhardt)*

under our theme of "Trails, Tribes, Territories," illustrating the various periods of history of Lawrence and the surrounding area. All were coordinated by Mary Conrad, who also helped with a number of convention responsibilities.

The awards dinner on Wednesday night honored many deserving OCTA members and others who have contributed to the preservation and promotion of the Oregon-California Trails.

auction and raffle room, as well as creating the attractive table centerpieces, doing the nametags, and helping in other areas.

Eva Allen handled the registration process while Trails Head Chapter President Pat Traffas edited and produced the convention booklet that featured dozens of articles by various authors covering our convention theme.



## 2012 Convention Lawrence, Kansas

*OCTA President Duane Iles (center in shorts), meets with National Park Service representatives during a planning tour at Alcove Spring. (Photo by Bill Martin)*

## OCTA on Tour



*This monument was one of the sites visited during a tour related to the Quantrill raid in Kansas that took place in the Border Wars period. (Photo by Bill Martin)*



*Tour participants walk in a well-defined trail swale at Fort Leavenworth. (Photo by Roger Blair)*





# OCTA AWARDS

## Gregory Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award

### John Atkinson

Each year OCTA recognizes an individual who has contributed in significant ways to the preservation, protection, and education mission of the association. This year the recipient of the Gregory Franzwa

chapter of SFTA, Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association (KCAHTA), and the St. Joseph Museums. While John has been quite willing to take roles of leadership, he also is quite effective behind the scenes in

encouraging individual involvement and working to spur action.

Soon after retirement, Atkinson became the Gateway president and continued in that capacity for four years. During that time, Atkinson wrote a regular column

"Message

from the President" in which he encouraged memberships in national OCTA, participation in national conventions, attendance at Gateway programs, involvement in the maintenance of Gateway carsonite markers, meeting with landowners, and much more. During Atkinson's four years as president, membership in Gateway almost doubled.

As Gateway president, Atkinson sincerely looked for ways to improve the effectiveness of the chapter. In 2005 he attended a Denver workshop organized

by the National Park Service (NPS) aimed at helping chapters communicate with the NPS and pursuing the OCTA mission.

When the Gateway Chapter agreed to host the 2006 national OCTA convention in St. Joseph, MO, Atkinson joined Jackie Lewin as co-chair of the convention. At the same time he took on yet another major responsibility when he became chair of the Gardner Junction Park Project. While officially SFTA appointed him, this major renovation was of prime significance to both SFTA and OCTA, and Atkinson saw himself as a representative of both trail organizations.

As originally envisioned, the Gardner Junction Park Project was to be a modest \$30,000 renovation of a small wayside beside Highway 56. The first planning meetings were held in 2003, but the major considerations began in earnest in October of 2004. Originally the planners thought the redesign could be completed within a year. As the plan expanded, the time line turned into years, yet Atkinson continued to shepherd the flock that consisted of a wide variety of officials within the city government of Gardner, within the county government, and within KDOT, as well as representatives from Gardner Historical Society, OCTA, and SFTA.

The Gardner Junction Park  
*Continued on Page 12*



*John Atkinson*

Meritorious Achievement Award is John Atkinson, a past president of the Gateway Chapter.

Before retirement, John Atkinson already was involved with OCTA, Gateway Chapter, and other trail organizations in a number of ways. Then in 2000 when he retired after teaching mathematics for 43 years, he became even more active in the research and promotion of historic trails through the organizations of OCTA, Gateway Chapter, Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA), Missouri River Outfitters





## OCTA AWARDS

### Elaine McNabney Distinguished Volunteer Trail Turtles

One of two awards for outstanding volunteer activity was given this year to the Trail Turtles, a group from Arizona. The Elaine McNabney Distinguished Volunteer Award is bestowed on OCTA members who contribute significantly to achieving OCTA goals and projects. Only OCTA members can qualify for the Award.

Since 1993 this group of trails enthusiasts, has worked to answer the question – “What is the exact location of the Southern Trails?” To date, and without interruption, Trail Turtles’ volunteers have conducted twice-yearly, week-long field mapping, a follow-up to the several months of documentation and resource preparation necessary for fieldwork.



*Rose Tompkins and Tracy DeVault accept the award for the Trail Turtles.*

In the field, work consists of using GPS to identify sites and creating and saving waypoints, which, along with photos, are transferred to a laptop computer at each day’s end.

Following completion of the field work on the mapping trips information is submitted to a mapping coordinator who prepares maps and an outing report that documents the field findings. Subsequently printed or digital reports are issued to mapping group members.

The Trail Turtles first organized at a workshop in Flagstaff, AZ, in October of 1993. Since that time they have worked along the Southern Trails in such locations as Apache Pass, AZ, along the Gila River Valley, AZ, along the Cimarron Cutoff, from Round Mountain to Separ, NM, and in many other locations along the Southern Trail, including locations in California.

## John Atkinson

*Continued from Page 11*

Project turned into a \$150,000 creation with a kiosk, interpretive markers, and a new parking area. In September of 2007, Atkinson joined many others at a ground-breaking ceremony. A year later Atkinson joined others in celebrating completion of the project, even though the planting of a stand of native grasses had been delayed. Later Atkinson organized volunteers to seed the native grasses. Now almost 10 years after the first planning meeting, Atkinson continues

to check on the vitality of the plantings and on the adequacy of signage.

While Atkinson kept busy for many years as Gateway Chapter president, as co-chair of the 2006 national convention, and as the main facilitator of the Gardner Junction Park Project, he did not limit himself to those activities. At times he volunteered to research topics and to give programs. He has given his re-enactment of William Bent to many trail organizations,

including Gateway, KCAHTA, MRO, and many SFTA chapters. In the recent past, he chased down leads on a St. Joe member of the Robidoux family who was involved with both the Oregon and Santa Fe trails. Now Atkinson is researching an early St. Joe trail figure to develop another re-enactment.

In recent years, Atkinson has returned to active leadership in Gateway, first as treasurer and now as president.





## OCTA AWARDS

### Elaine McNabney Distinguished Volunteer

### Don Hartley

Don Hartley, vice president of Wyoming OCTA, is a recipient of a second Elaine McNabney Distinguished Volunteer Award presented in 2012. He is known as an intrepid defender of trails; organizer of meetings and treks; chairman of 2011 OCTA convention tours; liaison between OCTA and BLM; advisor to National Preservation Officer; preservation officer for Western Wyoming; trails explorer and discoverer of "new" evidence of pioneer travel; and community volunteer extraordinaire.

Hartley is totally unassuming, and if asked what he does for OCTA, he might give a short answer, but he never tells about himself, his involvement, or his accomplishments.

For the May 17, 2012, Wyoming Chapter gathering, Don secured the Green River meeting place and made all arrangements for the session. The next day he was the trek leader, guiding a large group of OCTA members to some old favorites as well as some less-visited sites.

In April of 2012 Don and his wife Jill drove 480 miles round trip to attend the joint OCTA/Natrona County Historical Society annual dinner.

Beginning almost two years before the 2011 National OCTA convention in Rock Springs, Don, as tour chairman, made plans for the four exceptional tours that were offered to members. He



*Don Hartley*

chose the locations, contacted proper authorities and land owners, personally drove every mile of each tour, wrote the trek descriptions for the registration and convention booklets, arranged for expert tour guides, loaded the buses, waved them good-bye, and was waiting at the hotel when each bus returned.

Several years ago, with the explosion of mineral exploration and development in western Wyoming, Hartley volunteered to monitor projects filed with the Bureau of Land Management which might affect the pioneer trails. Don established a rapport with BLM personnel and often bummed rides with them as they made their official reports. Pinky Ellis, past president of the Wyoming Chapter said, "As Chapter President, the information gathered by Don was forwarded to me and shared with the National Preservation Officer. It would have been a physical impossibility for Randy Brown (Eastern WY

Preservation officer living in Douglas, WY) or me in Casper to have made most of these day-long excursions."

Hartley has a tendency to go out on the trails on his own, always keeping up with what's happening, and is instrumental in discovering things that need to be taken care of and reporting to the membership. Don has a strong interest in the Overland and Cherokee trails as well as the Oregon Trail in southwestern Wyoming and spends time looking for undiscovered evidence of these trails.

Not only does Hartley have interest in OCTA concerns, but he also participates in other community activities. He acts as a consultant and volunteer for the Rock Springs area Chamber of Commerce. Dave Hanks, Chamber Manager, said, "Don has a vast amount of knowledge for 'an old coal miner.'" Among other things, he serves on a five-person Resource Rendezvous committee, which in two days in April 2012 educated 1,100 fifth through eighth graders about the multiple use of public lands. Thirty-four area entities were represented at the Rendezvous.

He is chairman of the Rock Springs, WY, Chamber of Commerce Enterprise Committee, which deals with land and water issues, and serves on a board

*Continued on Page 14*





## OCTA AWARDS

## Friends of the Trail

### Leo Pellant

Leo Pellant is a recipient of the Friend of the Trail Award.

Nearly twenty years ago, as two OCTA members were driving west on U.S. Highway 40 along the Oregon-California Trail between Lawrence and Topeka, Kansas, they neared Tecumseh and wondered if there were more trail sections of which they were unaware. About that time they saw

a couple of men putting in new mailboxes at the side of the road so they stopped to ask them if they knew of any ruts.

One of those men was Leo Pellant who smiled and motioned with his hand toward the front yard of his new house. There they saw three dramatic swales. These trail remnants were somewhat hidden from the highway. From that time on, Leo and his family have welcomed any visitors to see the swales, including two buses that



*Duane Iles, left, and Leo Pellant*

stopped during the recent OCTA Convention in Lawrence.

Leo has long been a member of OCTA and Trails Head Chapter.

### Don Hartley

*Continued from Page 13*

to "Save the Green River." (A Colorado consortium is seeking permission to build a pipeline from either Fontenelle Reservoir or Flaming Gorge Dam in southwestern Wyoming, taking water from the Green to the State of Colorado. Permitting has been refused three times by the State of Wyoming Water Engineer.

Several years ago the BLM gave the Rock Springs School District property to build a neighborhood school, Sage Elementary. During the planning some Overland Trail ruts were found, and Don was instrumental in getting the City of Rock Springs, the school district, and local citizens involved in the historical value of this discovery.

The BLM fenced in the ruts and created educational signage explaining the history and significance of the area. This created a true learning site for the school population as well as the locals. Don planned a special dedication which was held during the 2011 OCTA convention.

### Jim and Diana Beason

Several parallel depressions, or trail swales, run southeast to northwest for approximately 200 yards through the property of Jim and Diana Beason near Elk City, KS. The Beasons are 2012 Friends of the Trail Award recipients. The swales are distinctly visible each spring when this hay meadow is burned. When not visible, the swales can be experienced by walking or riding parallel with and/or perpendicular to them.

These swales are a part of the Cherokee Trail to California, a branch of the California National Historic Trail, first used in 1849 by emigrants from Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, and Indian Territory.

The pristine Class 1 trail swales pass through a field of native



*Jim and Diana Beason*

grass that has been preserved in its natural state at least since 1925 by the Beason family. Other than hay harvest, no vehicular traffic or cattle grazing takes place. The 1850s viewshed remains largely unaltered and these preservation practices are expected to continue without interruption through the upcoming generations.





# OCTA AWARDS Distinguished Service Alcove Spring Historical Trust

For their dedication to preservation of the Alcove Spring near Blue Rapids, KS, the Alcove Spring Historical Trust received one of two Distinguished Service Awards from OCTA during the awards program in Lawrence, KS, in August.

The Alcove Spring Historical Trust is the owner and operator of the Alcove Spring park north of Blue Rapids, KS. The area is the location of the Big Blue River

the site or at least make it a national park, but he was unable to accomplish that goal. In the 1970s the Blue Valley Sportsman's Club was able to open it to the public and make a picnic area in the area, but it later closed due to vandalism.

In 1992, the Blue Rapids Chamber of Commerce obtained a lease to make Alcove Spring available to visitors. The following year the Alcove Spring Historical

Trust purchased 223 acres that include the spring, a homestead site, and the area west of the county road that is covered with swales and is believed to be the location of Sarah Keyes' grave. Seeing the

leadership of the trust, the non-historic portion of the acreage has been developed into areas with campsites that have been utilized by Scouts, rendezvous reenactors, and recreational campers. Alcove Spring has hosted historical organizations, concerts, civic organizations and weddings. Schools have used it for community service experiences, orienteering, cross country meets, and as a biological library. Its riparian and prairie environment has been kept as primitive as possible for the visitor's experience.

The historical areas of the park, with the assistance and guidance of the National Park Service, have been connected by a nearly one-mile walking trail. To enhance the visitor experience interpretive wayside exhibits have been installed, period carvings have been protected, and a bronze casting of the well-known J. F. Reed carving has been placed near the location of the original that is disappearing with time.

Brush was cleared west of the county road, exposing many wagon swales previously not visible and one area in a more remote part of the park that has faint swales has been marked to better tell the story of the emigrant trail. With NPS assistance, archaeologists have validated all these swales and done preliminary work to locate grave and campsites.

In 1985, OCTA presented Stella



*OCTA President Duane Iles, 2nd from right, presents the award to members of the Alcove Spring Historical Trust, Don Musil, Robert Schwartz, and John Schwartz. (Photo by Roger Blair)*

crossing known as Independence Crossing. It is also the location of Naomi Pike Falls, and Alcove Spring. Plus it is the final resting place of Sarah H. Keyes, mother-in-law of James F. Reed of the Donner-Reed Party, as well as other emigrants.

For years Alcove Spring was in private ownership and served as a pasture for various owners. Many attempts had been made to purchase the site. In the 1930s John G. Ellenbecker attempted to raise the money to purchase

need for professional assistance, the trust began working with the Kansas State Historical Society to develop a strategic plan and begin improving the site to make it more visitor friendly. In 1996, Jere Krakow, National Park Service, brought a team of experts to Alcove Spring and began working with the trust to develop the site. This relationship has been instrumental in elevating the park to National Park Service standards.

Under the guidance and

**News From the Plains**

*Continued on Page 16*





## OCTA AWARDS      Young OCTAN

### Nathan Anderson

Nathan Anderson, 16, a sophomore at Jefferson West High School in Meriden, K.S., received the Young OCTAN Award. He active in school and his community. In both middle



*Nathan Anderson*

and high school he has played in the band, and competed in cross country and track. He also keeps up-to-date on the latest electronic trends, which has been an asset to his father's project of surveying the Oregon-California Trail.

Nathan is a member of the Meriden United Methodist Church Youth Group. That group has had community service projects including at least two summers of Habitat for Humanity projects in Topeka, K.S., where they helped remodel two homes. They have

also gone to three out-of-state mission trips, working in shelters with the homeless. Their youth group holds fund raisers to help with expenses. Nathan also serves on the church's Worship Committee and has been the pastor's go-to person for most things electrical at church.

To earn the Young OCTAN Award, Nathan has been instrumental on some of his weekends in helping his dad, Rick Anderson, survey Oregon-California Trail swales and ruts with GPS software and creating maps of each. Eventually the maps will be part of the National Register appointed properties of the eligible Oregon-California Trail sites in northeast Kansas. Nathan walks the trail swales with his GPS unit recording prominent points while working his way through weeds, water, briars, and bugs. He does so without complaint and enjoys being part of discovering history and helping his dad.

The two have documented, surveyed, and mapped the swales at the Lone Elm Campground, Harmon Park in Prairie Village, Green Wildlife Memorial Area in Shawnee County, and the Scott Spring in Pottawatomie County. These sites and others have been determined eligible to be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. The Kansas Historical Society is working in conjunction with the National Park Service in this endeavor.

One of the most memorable

sites that Nathan and his dad surveyed was a known crossing of the Upper Wakarusa River in Douglas County. That day they discovered another, second crossing in the proximity of the first and very close to the 1850s GLO maps of the area. This site is still a work in progress. At the time of the preparation of Nathan's nomination for the Young OCTAN award, there were several sites that he and his dad planned to work on.

Within the family membership to the Trails Head and Kanza Chapters of OCTA, Nathan attends chapter meetings. As a sixth generation Kansan, Nathan is very interested in his ancestors and how his great-great grandmother came to Kansas from Indiana in a covered wagon in 1871. His great-great-great grandfather came to Kansas from Pennsylvania in the 1860s after serving in the Civil War.

### Alcove Spring

*Continued from Page 15*

Hammett, the owner at the time, its Rancher of the Year award for her efforts to protect this site. Since 1993, the Alcove Spring Historical Trust has owned and protected it, turning it into a visitor friendly site. This has been done while preserving the historical aspects, allowing the visitor to experience and see it virtually the way the pioneers saw it. In 2006, the NPS named Alcove Spring a Certified Historic Site on the Oregon National Historic Trail.





## OCTA AWARDS Certificate of Appreciation

### Rick Anderson

As a National Register historian in the Cultural Resources Division of the Kansas Historical Society (KSHS), Rick Anderson obviously is interested in nineteenth century Kansas. Due to his historical and metal detecting interests, he became active with the Shawnee Chapter of the Kansas Anthropological Association and he has been involved with the archaeological investigation of a number of nineteenth century sites, including ones associated with historic trails. For this work he was awarded a National OCTA Certificate of Appreciation at the convention in Lawrence, KS.

Anderson's interest in trails has involved a number of sites and activities. When the Kansas Historical Society surveyed and tested areas to try to determine the location of the Potawatomi and Oregon Trail town of Uniontown west of Topeka, Anderson was one of the metal detecting surveyors for the project.

When the National Park Service (NPS) contracted with the state historical society to determine which historic trail sites in northeastern Kansas would be appropriate for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Sites, the Cultural Resources SHIPO agent assigned the task to Anderson. For more than a year he has been working on this project, becoming immersed in the history of the Oregon, California, Pony Express, and Santa Fe Trails in northeastern Kansas. He learned of the local trail experts so they could

show him the known significant trail sites in each of their locales in northeastern Kansas. Anderson has asked those trail experts for known primary documentations, plus he has sought more archival documentations on his own.

Anderson also has been working



*Rick Anderson*

with Kansas Historical Society archaeologists Tim Weston and John Tomasic to determine what physical remains of trails they can see when actually visiting trail sites.

Anderson and these archaeologists also have been seeking clues to the actual routes of historic trails at particular sites by looking at historic maps, aerial maps, and maps produced by the relatively new tool LIDAR, which creates maps through a combination of the technologies of laser and radar. This new technology can "see" through vegetation so ruts that are not visible on aerial maps can be visible on LIDAR-generated

maps. Plus LIDAR can detect subtle trail features not detected by the human eye even in areas of little vegetation.

Thus Anderson and the KSHS archaeologists are discovering physical remains of trails that have been missed by other historians and archaeologists. When Anderson is completed with the project, he will have written the nominations for some of the trail sites that he has studied. These nominations not only will include long-time known primary documentations, but also new physical documentations not known before the NPS-KSHS project began.

Assisting him with some of this work is his son, Nathan Anderson, winner of the Young OCTAN Award this year. (See article on page 16).

## Merrill Mattes Award

### Jerry Eichhorst

Each year the Merrill Mattes Award for Excellence in Writing is given to the author of the best article published by the *Overland Journal*.

This year's winner is Jerry Eichhorst for his article "Pieces to the Puzzle: Rediscovering Idaho's North Alternate Oregon Trail," which appeared in the Summer 2011 issue (volume 29 no. 2).





## OCTA AWARDS Certificates of Appreciation Franklin County Historical Society

For its efforts to encourage visitors to experience historical driving tours, the Franklin County Historical Society in Ottawa, KS, is the recipient of a 2012 National OCTA Certificate of Appreciation.

A number of years ago the Society developed four detailed historical driving tours of Franklin County. Brochures which are distributed throughout the area were developed for each of the tours.

When the Franklin County Historical Society developed these four brochures, they decided not only to include historic buildings and individuals, but also historic trails and roads. The planners also included places associated with the Indian inhabitants including locations of lands and settlements

of Potawatomi, Shawnee, Ottawa, Chippewa, Sac and Fox, Peoria, Munsee, and Kaskaskia Indians.

The brochures include a number of historic roads and trails including the Fort Scott-California Trail, the Humboldt Trail, a stagecoach road, a branch trail from Westport, and a trail from Osceola headed toward the National Historic California Trail. These brochures also provide the locations of four water crossings for the Fort Scott-California Trail, two areas of wagon ruts, two stage stops,



*Deborah Barker, left, director, and another member of the Franklin County Historical Society accept the award from Duane Iles.*

and California Springs, a reliable source of water for trail travelers. One brochure even says the angled location of a particular building is due to the angled route of an early historic road.

## John Winner

Anyone who has attended an OCTA convention where John Winner has taken the microphone to conduct an auction in an effort

to raise funds for the association, knows his passion for the job.

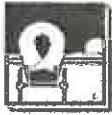
This year Winner is recognized with a National Certificate of Ap-

preciation for his involvement in the auction and the work he has done to accrue significant funds for OCTA.



*John Winner persuades Past OCTA President Bill Martin to make another bid during this year's auction.*





# OCTA AWARDS Educator of the Year

## Judith A. Schieszer

**By Bill Hill**

*Education Awards & Publications  
Committee*



Judith Schieszer, a 7<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher at Indian Hills Middle School in the Shawnee Mission School District, in Kansas, is the 2012 OCTA Educator of the Year.

The award is presented to an educator who has gone beyond regular classroom lessons and lectures and has engaged his or her students using differing approaches, challenging all students to apply themselves in new ways, and combining

disciplines in meaningful and enjoyable ways while focusing on the westward migrations.

Schieszer wrote a series of skits or plays about families migrating west over the Oregon-California and Santa Fe Trails. Students were introduced to various economic concepts along with information regarding problems encountered on the westward trips. Her programs also were used last year to show visiting teachers from Eastern Europe how to develop interactive programs that involve all students of different abilities in ways that bring life to history and make learning meaningful and fun.

**Judith A. Schieszer is the recipient for the Outstanding Educator Award.**



**Quackgrass Sally accepts a Certificate of Appreciation for her service as a member of the National OCTA Board from Dick Nelson, Chairman of the Awards Committee.**



**Convention activities included clothing by Marge Hardy, above, and an Author's Night, below. (Photos by Roger Blair)**



## OCTA AWARDS

## President's Awards



*Kathy Franzwa was recognized for her donation of papers and books that were part of the collection of her late husband, OCTA founder Gregory Franzwa.*



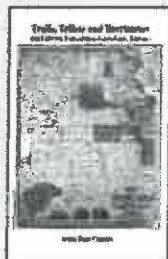
*Jeanne and Bill Watson received recognition from President Duane Iles for their 27 years of service to OCTA as Legislative Liaisons.*

**Oregon-California Trails Association**  
proudly offers to our membership:

**New items from the  
2012 OCTA Convention in Lawrence,  
Kansas, order on-line [www.octa-trails.org](http://www.octa-trails.org) or  
by phone 888-811-6282**



**2012 Lawrence Convention  
Tour Guide - \$5**



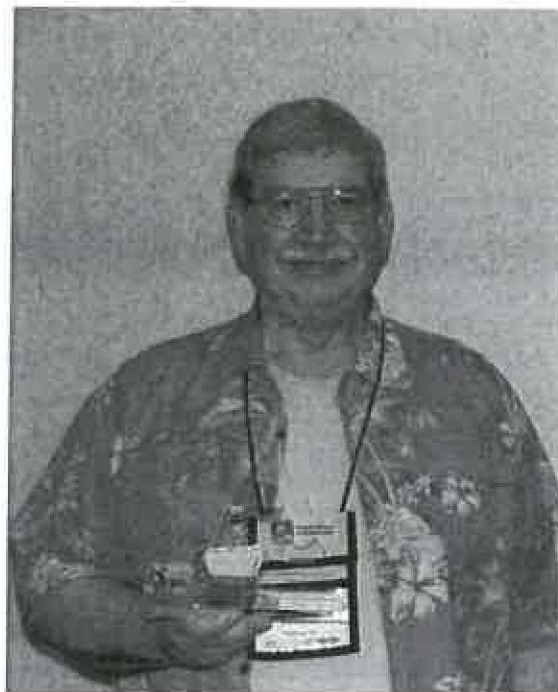
**2012 Lawrence Convention  
Souvenir Booklet - \$7.00**



**2013 OCTA  
ANNUAL  
CALENDAR \$5.00**



**OREGON-CALIFORNIA  
TRAILS ASSOCIATION**



*OCTA Founding Member and Past President Roger Blair was given a special award for his longstanding contributions to the organization.*



## Trailside Marking Projects Underway

*By Pat Traffas  
Chapter President*

Trails Head Chapter members had a busy year preparing for the 2012 Convention in Lawrence, KS. It was our pleasure to work together effectively towards the theme of "Trails, Tribes, and Territories." The chapter is privileged to have talented and selfless members who generously contributed throughout the past year.

Distinctive trail marking and trailside activities continue to be a major focus of our activities. Members participated in recent dedications at Red Bridge/Minor Park in Kansas City, MO, at Strang Park in Overland Park, KS, and at McCoy Park in Independence, MO.

On November 10, 2012, our annual meeting with elections and

awards will be held at Mahaffie Stage Station in Olathe, KS. This all-day symposium will be in cooperation with the Missouri River Outfitters Chapter of the



*Ross Marshall, 2012 Convention coordinator, shows one of the new awards presented.*

Santa Fe Trail Association and with the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association.

It has been rewarding to see substantial membership growth,

due in part to interest in the 2012 convention. Much appreciation is expressed to our Convention Coordinator, Ross Marshall, for his leadership, and to the many wonderful committees!

It has been a special privilege to serve with Dick Nelson, Vice President, Mary Conrad, Secretary, and Arnold Cole, Treasurer.

## David Welch Preservation Award

This year the David Welch Preservation Award was not presented because the OCTA Awards Committee received no nominations.

Each year nominations for all OCTA awards are sought, and any member can make a nomination, or chapters can do so. The award nomination information will be published in the next issue of *News from the Plains*. Please consider members who should be nominated for all awards and prepare a nomination. The information also will be available on the OCTA web site, [www.octa-trails.org](http://www.octa-trails.org).

## Wayside Exhibits in Place

Nine new permanent National Park Service wayside exhibits were dedicated in September at the Town of Kansas site where Kansas City's history began on the banks of the Missouri River. The site is one of the few places that is traversed by four National Historic Trails.

The nine exhibits are "Lewis and Clark at the River," "The French at Westport Landing," "the Real McCoy," "From Steamboat Landing to City 1838-55," "Three Trails from Westport Landing," "Building Through the Bluffs,"

"Gillis House Hotel," "Waterfront Town to Metropolis 1856-1880," and "Hannibal Bridge," the first bridge across the Missouri River.

Speakers during the dedication included Dan Sturdevant, the current national president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Craig Crease, a long-time trails historian, and Ross Marshall.

Many partners worked for four years to develop this project, including Trails Head Chapter of OCTA.



## State Historical Society Recognizes OCTA

The Wyoming State Historical Society recognized the 2011 National OCTA Convention held in Rock Springs as the Award recipient of the WSHS Activities Award. The award is given to "An individual or group making a significant contribution to Wyoming history through a well-planned, well-conducted tour or tours to a historic site/sites in Wyoming, not to include a tour planned as a part of regular chapter activities."

An announcement from WSHS said, "We were so impressed with the OCTA 2011 Convention and wanted to bring recognition to the hard-working chairpersons and chapter members." Convention Chairs Fern Linton and Pat Cwynski managed the convention with the help of most members of the Wyoming Chapter.

### Trail Projects

Two trail-related projects were planned this late summer and early fall by the Upper Green River (UGR) Wyoming Archaeological Society Chapter. One project, in partnership with the Pinedale BLM office, involved work at Holden Hill, an emigrant inscription site on the Sublette Cutoff. Leading the work were Neffra Matthews and Tom Noble of the Denver BLM office. They are well known for their 3D photographic imaging of the Red Gulch dinosaur trackway near Worland, WY. They planned to incorporate the same techniques

at Holden Hill, as well as doing a lot of line drawings of the inscriptions. The work was slated for late August.

Another project involved the UGR working with the Sublette County Historical Society and Utah State University (USU) at the New Fork Historical Park and

river crossing along the Lander Road.

That work involved helping professional archaeologists with metal detecting; ground penetrating radar (GPR) and resistivity technology, and a search for buried historic artifacts associated with the emigrant trail.

## Edna Kennell Dies in Wyoming

Edna Kennell, the driving force behind development of the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, died in Casper, WY, June 29. A tireless supporter of the trails, she served two terms on the National OCTA Board, and in various positions within the Wyoming Chapter, including as president. She chaired the OCTA convention held in Casper.

Edna was born in Buffalo, WY, and was graduated from high school there where her high school yearbook described her as a "peppy girl who has fun where ever she goes." This apt description was true throughout her life. She attended the University of Montana, and in 1960 married James E. Kennell. They lived in Casper and in Texas where Edna owned and operated Travel Marketing Associates.

After relocating back to Casper in 1980, Edna worked for the Casper Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Casper Association. She also was involved with the Casper Historic Preservation Commission. In the late 1980s, she began meeting

with like-minded individuals with the dream of building a National Historical Trails Center in Casper. The Center, which opened in 2002, is a model of public-private partnership. Edna and others garnered support from the City of Casper, State of Wyoming, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the private National Historic Trails Center Foundation. Edna served as the first Executive Director for the Foundation from its inception until her retirement in 2011.

She was also instrumental in raising the funds to create an endowment for the Trails Center Foundation. The center celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The Edna Kennell Gallery was dedicated at the center in 2010.

Following her retirement, she enjoyed traveling with companion Ray Brubaker, and taking part in OCTA activities.

Memorials may be made to the Edna Kennell Memorial, c/o National Historic Trails Foundation, P.O. Box 397, Casper, WY 82602.



## Historic Cemetery Along Cherokee/Overland Trail to be Preserved

*By Bill Meirath*

Through the efforts of the Loveland Historical Society the mostly forgotten Mariano Medina Family Cemetery will now be preserved as a testament to the early Colorado pioneer. Jess Rodriguez, a real estate developer who had acquired the property several years ago as part of a larger tract, presented a deed to the cemetery portion to the Loveland Historical Society in June.

I began the project to promote awareness of the history of the site in June 2007. By January 2008 there had been a great response, including local newspaper articles, a national Hispanic newspaper article, a story on Denver's Channel 9 News, along with interest from local officials. I asked for assistance from my friends, Sharon Danhauer and Alfred Vigil to promote further public interest.

Rodriguez later bought the 13 acres of undeveloped property that includes the cemetery. Upon learning that his property included the cemetery, he immediately decided that the right thing to do was to donate the cemetery portion (.73 acres) to the Loveland Historical Society, once approvals were obtained from local authorities for his development plan. This became a lengthy process that was concluded



*Surveys using ground-penetrating radar were recently performed on the cemetery site by Dr. Andy Creekmore. Below: Jess Rodriguez (left) presents the cemetery deed to Bill Meirath (center) and Mike Perry, president of the Loveland Historical Society (right). (Photos courtesy of Bill Meirath.)*

recently.

At OCTA's 2009 convention in Loveland, the Colorado-Cherokee Trail Chapter honored Rodriguez with the chapter's first-ever Friend of the Trails Award. The chapter later formed a special committee, chaired by Susan Kniebes, to support and participate in this project. The chapter will donate a plaque to commemorate the trails that passed by the pioneer cemetery south of the Big Thompson River crossing and Medina's settlement.



The committee is now working on the design and text of the plaque.

A dedication ceremony is planned for May 2013 at the historic site.

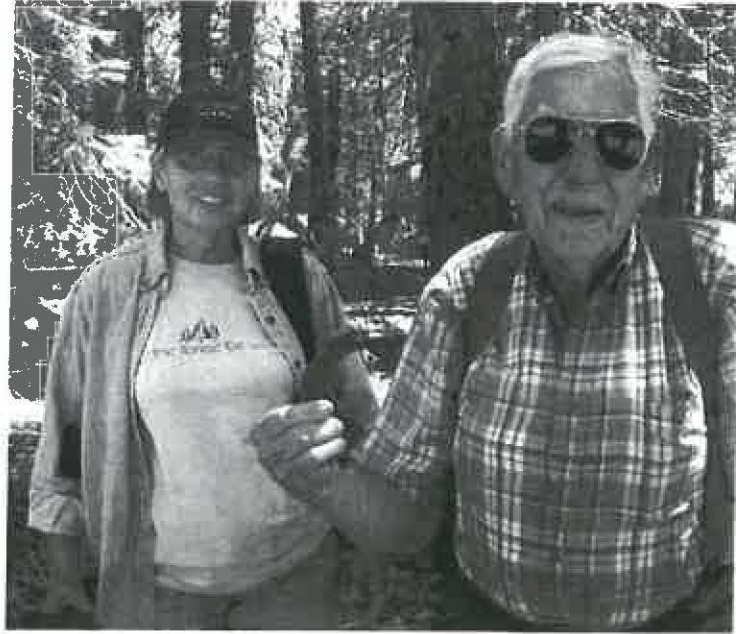


## Mapping Emigrant Trails

*By John Winner  
Chapter President*

In keeping with the "Adopt a Trail" program approved by the CA-NV Chapter in 2009, trail mapping has been an important activity of the chapter. Trail mapping teams have been busy in their effort to map or review previous mapping of the 25 emigrant trails in northern Nevada and northern California. Over half of the emigrant trails or portions of them have not been mapped to MET (Mapping Emigrant Trails) standards, the widely accepted method of trail mapping developed by OCTA.

Currently there are eight active teams coordinated by chapter volunteers that have scheduled field time in an attempt to locate and map the various trails. Forest



*Ellen Osborn and Dick Young with an ox shoe find.*

Service and Bureau of Land Management archaeologists along with local historians have been delighted to see this effort ramped up. As one archaeologist stated,

"You can't preserve it if you don't know where it is."

Although mapping has been high on the chapter radar screen, other activities continue, including

the annual Carson Route field days held in July under the direction of Frank Tortorich, and the annual Fernley Swales clean-up and field day under the direction of Jim and Denise Moorman. Plans are underway to place and replace carsonite markers on the Yreka, Beckwourth, Johnson's, Grizzly, and the California Trails.

The 2013 CA-NV Chapter Symposium is scheduled for the last weekend in April in Oroville, CA.



*Many CA-NV Chapter members took part in recent mapping and trail marking activities. (Photos courtesy of John Winner)*



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# NEW MEMBERS

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We welcome these new members to OCTA:

Dr. Armando Alonzo,  
College Station, TX  
Brian Donohue, Mill Valley, CA  
Kit Farwell, Burke, VA  
Julie Fleming, Atlanta, GA  
Dr. Francis Galan, San Antonio, TX  
Barbara Haines, Louisville, KY  
Howard Hartog, Lawrence, KS  
Nancy Pike Hause, Lawrence, KS

Claude Hudspeth, San Angelo, TX  
Allen Kosub, San Antonio, TX  
Robert Manley, Tooele, UT  
Carolyn Mathews, Sand Springs, OK  
Katherine McCartney, Hanover, KS  
Clifton P. McLendon, Gilmer, TX  
Cyd McMullen, Spring Creek, NV  
Jerry Mogg, St. Joseph, MO

Joseph Paulick, Tooele, UT  
Lorna H Ross, Villa Park, CA  
Rollie Schafer, Denton, TX  
Janet Skidmore, Millbrook, NY  
Greg Smith, Austin, TX  
Melvin and Ellen Sweet, La Jolla, CA  
Dr. Mariah Wade, Austin, TX  
Barbara Warner, Murrietta, CA  
Jim White, Fulton, MO

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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### OCTA Member Asks Preservation Question

Editor:

My unanswered question about Wakarusa Watershed preservation and protection efforts since our 2007 MET Workshop in Douglas County's Kanwaka Township became the "Elephant in the Room" during our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary OCTA-Trails Annual meeting on August 18. Dodging this question was unacceptable from a membership recruiting and retention perspective.

What if our OCTA Board tasked its Administrative Manager/Executive Director to devise a Balanced Scorecard for monitoring cumulative results of implementing prior strategic planning initiatives?

Background: The 2004 Four-States Environmental Educator Leadership Summit in Nebraska

City, NE, targeted "Elevation Awarenesss Deficiency" as our mapping and marking eco-challenge. Responding to an informal request, Google Maps added a "Terrain Tab" in 2006 along with photo/video geo-tagging. The Boy Souts of America (BSA) responded with a 2010 Centennial *Geocaching Merit Badge* booklet.

OCTA invested resources to produce a documentary film, *In Pursuit of a Dream*, that also highlighted our need for place-based "consequential learning" experiences. Yet, most OCTA-Trails Chapters in this region pursued "Heritage Tourism," mapping and marking projects.

OCTA was under-represented in the Missouri River Outfitters-NPS Freedom's Frontier

National Heritage Area (FFNHA) comprehensive management planning process (2006-09).

Kaw Valley River Orienteering/Community Stewardship: KVHAdventuring guided both KSHS Grinter Place and Monticello Community Historical Society to serve as a "Trails-n-Tales" proxy without any funding or support from OCTA Chapters. KVHAdventuring supported the South KCMO Trailside Center as our best management practices benchmark to equal or exceed.

The BSA's High Adventure Philmont Scout Ranch "Roving Outdoor Conservation School" service learning program inspired new Leave No Trace and Hornaday Award chapters in the 2009 Boy Scout Handbook.

—R. J. Burkhart

# Our Faces Are Westward

THE 1852 OREGON TRAIL JOURNEY OF EDWARD JAY ALLEN

*At* the age of twenty-two I found myself, if the doctors' opinions were to be accepted, very dilapidated as to lungs and in a general condition of goneness that did discredit to several generations of sturdy ancestors. An outdoor summer in the hills of Westmoreland County, and its resultant benefits, gave the cue for a more extended outing, from which grew the idea of a trip to Oregon. It seemed a kill-or-cure remedy and offered adventure.

EDWARD JAY ALLEN, 1908 MANUSCRIPT



In 1852, in search of better health, a sickly Edward Jay Allen traveled to Council Bluffs, where he joined a wagon train en route to Oregon. The group took the Child's Cutoff in Wyoming to South Pass and the Sublette Cutoff. At Three Island Crossing, Allen had become exhausted by the heat and insufficient water. Crippled by a badly sprained ankle, he led a small group floating down the Snake River. Following a near-fatal but exciting adventure over falls and rapids, Allen arrived at Fort Boise, where he took over a ferry operation from Ezra Meeker. After three weeks, Allen left to struggle on foot, short of food and water, across the eastern Oregon desert to Portland.

To tell the tale of this remarkable young man, editors Larsen and Johnson rely on Allen's long-forgotten letters, supplemented by his recently discovered trail diary, an additional unpublished manuscript written in later life, and contemporary letters written to Allen by his siblings as he traveled west. Filled with detail, poetry, and humor, these documents bring the emigrant trail experience to life in a remarkably literate and entertaining fashion.

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The 2012 Mid-Year Fund Drive netted more than \$9,800 for OCTA, thanks to the generosity of our members.

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