

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

SUMMER 2010

VOL. XXV • NO. 3

28th Annual Convention

Elko and The Elephant Welcome OCTA

By Bob Evanhoe
CA/NV Chapter President

Whether you arrive by trail or rail or Interstate highway, Elko, NV, is prepared to host OCTA's 28th Annual Convention from Tuesday, Aug. 10 through Saturday, Aug. 14, 2010. Nearly all activities will take place in the Elko Convention Center, which is close to hotels, motels, and restaurants.

Elko is the ideal small town convention city. The city hosts thousands each January at the National Cowboy Poetry Gathering and the National Basque Festival takes place in the city each July. A new tradition has begun each

spring with the California Trail Center sponsoring Trail Days, a celebration of lifestyles and activities common during the nineteenth century.

Permanently situated in town is the Western Folklife Center, a nonprofit organization working to expand our understanding of the everyday traditions of people who live and work in the American West.

The Northeastern Nevada Museum is adjacent to the Convention Center, and would be a worthwhile stop during a lull in convention activities.

This year's theme is "Emigrants, Elko and The Elephant," a nod to the new BLM California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center. There are also some lesser "themes" being considered.

Although trappers, traders, and emigrants moved through the area earlier, Elko became a real town in 1868 when it was



temporarily the terminus of the eastward moving Central Pacific Railroad. The crews moved on, but the town remained as a ranch and mining freight and supply center. It was finally incorporated in 1917 and now has a population of around 17,000.

Elko's location at 5,066 feet above sea level provides for cooler temperatures than much of the surrounding desert areas. Average maximums during August are 88 degrees, with minimums at 47. A short trip up into the Ruby Mountains may remind you of being in the Rockies or Sierra Nevada. If you are not on the hiking tour, do make an effort to drive up into Lamoille Canyon on your own.



An exhibit in the California Trail Center, above, and a team of oxen will greet OCTA members in Elko. (Photos Courtesy of Bob Evanhoe)

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News from the Plains
Published quarterly
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News From the Plains

Fall Issue Deadline

August 25, 2010

Send materials to
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Calendar Features "Hazards Along the Trail"

By Bill Hill
Education Committee Chair

The new 2011 "Hazards Along the Trail" calendar will be available next month at the Elko convention. The calendar contest is a project of the Education Committee. It is open to elementary children.

Each year the calendar has a theme related to the emigrant trails west. Past themes have been: "Chimney Rock Throughout the Year," "Animals Along the Trail," and "Landmarks Along the Trail."

Although the final selection of the artwork is not complete at the time of this writing, it will be by the time you read this article. The names of the students whose artwork was selected will be announced at the convention

in Elko. Each of those students receives a check for \$50, and a copy of the calendar. The school which the student attends also receives a copy of the calendar.

This year we had the largest participation and the selection process has been difficult. The students have come from schools from the coast to coast.

This project provides teachers and students with a way to study and learn about the trails west. It incorporates history and art. Examining all the submitted artwork is a good method for teachers to use in assessing what students have learned and then incorporated into their art.

Next year the theme will be "Forts Along the Trails." The forts could be either trading posts or military forts. The trails are

not limited to the main Oregon, California, or Mormon trails.

We are hoping the projects and themes encourage teachers and students to study all the trails, including feeder routes, alternates, and southwest trails. We are looking for even greater participation next year.

Information about the new calendar contest will be available on the OCTA web site by the end of the summer.

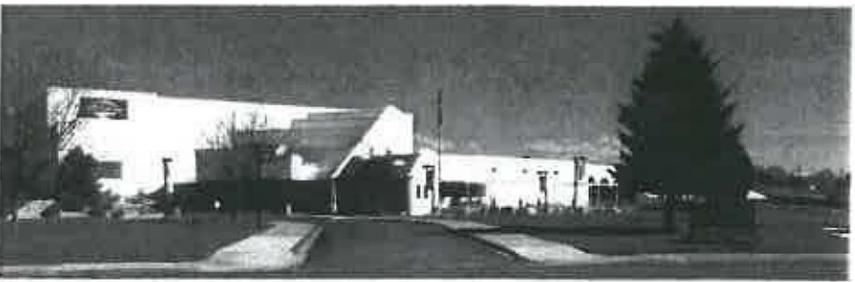
Be sure to look for the "Hazards Along the Trails" calendar at the convention or order one from OCTA headquarters now. The price is only \$10. The money goes to help defray the cost of the printing and awards.

The recipients of the Outstanding Educator Awards also will be announced at the convention.

Elko Hosts OCTA Convention *Continued from Front Page*

Tours this year have been scheduled to highlight both the historical aspects of the California Trail and Elko, as well as to showcase the present attractions of the area. Tuscarora provides a look into the gold mining past along with current commercial arts and crafts fare. Lamoille Canyon offers a scenic mountain environment, and the Newmont gold mine tour shows what 160 years of evolving technology has done for the recovery of the precious metal.

For the closing ceremony, the Trail Center offers a new venue exhibiting the history of the



Activities will be held at the Elko Convention Center. (Photo Courtesy of Bob Evanhoe)

California Trail, accompanied by entertainment, presentations, and a Basque dinner, another of Elko's cultural experiences.

Much has been made of the busses to be used on the tours: they can travel indefinitely on dirt roads with the air conditioners

ON. (A very large fleet of these Coach America 55-passenger rigs transport miners to and from the gold mines on a daily basis, shift after shift.) While on tours and other activities we will also be certain to provide shade when possible.



Spring Rendezvous at Lone Elm

By Pat Traffas
Chapter President

On National Trails Day, June 5, 2010, Trails Head Chapter once again hosted Rendezvous at Lone Elm. This event is held every two years and all area trails groups, historical organizations, and interested individuals convene. It's always enlightening to learn what projects and activities each entity is promoting. Gary Werner, Executive Director of the Partnership for the National Trails System was the keynote speaker. The Oregon, California, and Santa Fe Trails all utilized this famous campground during trail days.

In recent years, the city of Olathe, KS, has purchased the property and established a marvelous complex of ball fields, park venues, shelter houses, and interpretative kiosks to

the delight of area citizens and trail enthusiasts. Among events at the rendezvous were guided hiking tours, speeches, exhibits, lunch on the premises, and a special visit from Tip and Buck (the oxen team from Mahaffie Stagecoach Farmstead).

An afternoon highlight was the celebration of the restoration of the Daughters of the American Revolution Santa Fe Trail marker at Lone Elm.

Trails Head Chapter was pleased to sponsor a luncheon for all who attended the Mid-Year Board of Directors meeting in Independence, MO, in March. Among the local chapter members who participated and attended were Dick Nelson, John Mark Lambertson, Bob Burkhart, and Ross Marshall.

Chapter members enjoyed a

spring meeting at Grinter Place State Historic Site in Wyandotte County, KS. This is where Moses Grinter established the first ferry across the Kansas River in 1831, an important advancement which served Oregon and California Trail emigrants, Santa Fe Trail traders, freighters, and soldiers traveling the military road.

This oldest home in Wyandotte county was also site of a trading post for the Lenape (Delaware) Indians. Joe Brentano, site administrator, provided an informative tour of this lovely Kentucky-style brick, mortar, and lumber house, which was home to Moses and Annie Grinter and their children.

Under the leadership of Ross Marshall, 2012 National Convention Chairman, committee members are exploring many area venues. Numerous committees have been established and will be working to ensure a most enjoyable and successful event.

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Connecting with Young People

Bill Martin
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Teaching young people about the overland migration experience isn't limited to elementary schools in states along the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails. Even in Texas, a state rich in history of its own, emigrants provide teachable moments.

For the past six years, Stephanie Barker, a teacher at Laura Bush Elementary School in the Leander Independent School District near Austin has made the Oregon Trail a richly rewarding part of her classes.

I heard about Stephanie in a roundabout way. One of her third grade students, Zachary Skelton, is the grandson of OCTA Awards Chair Dick Nelson. The proud grandpa, knowing that I live near Austin, emailed me a photo of the 10-year-old "Wagon Master" holding a large Oregon Trail map he made, featuring several photos taken by Dick on his own trail treks.

Now, I know that a lot of teachers in schools along the trail from Missouri to Oregon make the westward emigration an integral part of their curriculum. But I was curious why a teacher in Texas would be doing it. So I called Ms. Barker, who teaches the class with Tracy Clark.

Turns out she started teaching about the Oregon Trail six years ago when she and a teacher in New

York thought it might be fun if they taught a parallel curriculum and had the children share their experiences through video conferences, e-mails and letters between the classes. The New York teacher didn't come back for a second year, but Ms. Barker continued to use the simulation, provided by a California company called Interact.

"It is always my students' favorite part of the year," she says. "What a fantastic way to learn about westward expansion and the journey made by those courageous and brave people searching for a better life in the West! The Oregon Trail is an important part of our country's history, no matter what state we reside in."

The class starts with the students selecting items for their wagons and writing a journal entry about themselves and their family, why they are going to Oregon, and how they feel about the trek west.

"It is so awesome to see how they connect as a group," she told me. Wagon train teams face the same decisions that emigrants did, lightening their wagon loads, dealing with illness and injury, deciding which routes to take, writing journal entries, and enduring unexpected twists and turns.

Texas, of course, has its own history, from emigrant trails and cattle trails to the Alamo and

the Texas Rangers. But even for a teacher and students living in the midst of so much history, the Oregon Trail experience was so important that they imported it south of the Red River.

From my perspective, classes like this underscore the importance of westward emigration as a national experience, one that touched our country from coast-to-coast and from border-to-border. As OCTA works to preserve the legacy of the emigrant experience and the trails themselves, it is good to have teachers like Stephanie Barker who are introducing young people to their heritage.

See you in Elko!

Upcoming Events

Annual Carson Trail
Cleanup
July 26 & 27, 2010

♦♦♦

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

♦♦♦

Northwest OCTA
Free Emigrant Road Tour
Sept. 11, 2010

♦♦♦

Colorado-Cherokee Trail
Chapter Tour
to Cripple Creek
Sept. 11, 2010

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Annual Appeal Comes to a Close

175 members responded to this campaign. We are delighted to report the excellent results and to include a list of our donors who have contributed since the end of February.

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Education: \$905

Endowment: \$405

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Preservation: \$5,485

Total: \$16,474

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FROM THE HQ MANAGER

Kathy Conway
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We are now busily processing registrations for the Elko Convention, Aug. 10-14. We hope you've registered for this week of fun-filled activities. However, if you haven't done so, you can use the convenience of our on-line registration. Simply visit octa-trails.org and find the link with the full informational booklet posted there. If you have questions or want to register by phone, give us a call at 888-811-6282.

You don't want to miss this year's convention! Some events will be held in the beautiful new California National Historic Trail Interpretive

Center. The convention promises an abundance of great tours, informative and educational workshops, intriguing topics for the Wednesday and Friday talks, and lively entertainment that includes John Winner, our own "OCTAuctioneer." Our traditional activities, authors' night, the auction and raffle, and the book room are all a part of the line-up.

To help commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Pony Express we are offering our OCTA workbook, *Here Comes the Pony* by Bill Hill for \$3 through the end of 2010.

Sometime this summer, Bill Hill will have a new title on the

Pony Express Trail to add to his *Yesterday and Today* series from Caxton Press.

Also new out this summer is *Forts, Fights and Frontier Sites: Wyoming Historic Places*, written by Candy Moulton and published by Nancy Curtis at High Plains Press. The University of Oklahoma Press has also released *So Rugged and Mountainous: Blazing the Trails to Oregon and California, 1812-1848*, which is volume one in a trail history by Will Bagley.

To learn about these books and others visit our website (octa-trails.org).

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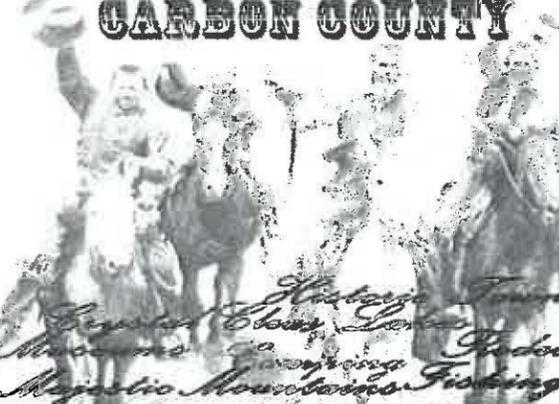


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Chapter Hosts Bakersfield Symposium

By Bob Evanhoe
Chapter President

The recently discovered gravesite of Elisha Stephens, leader of the Stephens-Townsend-Murphy emigrant party of 1844, was dedicated at Union Cemetery in Bakersfield, CA, as one activity of the CA-NV Chapter's Spring Symposium and board meeting on the weekend of April 30-May 2, 2010.

Under the guidance of Tom Hunt, the Chapter added an OCTA plaque beside the grave's monument. The plaque details the history of Stephens' life and his leadership of the first emigrant party to take wagons over the Sierra Nevada, in 1844.

These travelers not only succeeded in moving some of their wagons over the summit before winter set in, but made the entire journey without a loss of a single life, and increased their number with the birth of two babies. In addition, 17-year old Moses Schallenberger was left behind to guard the remaining wagons

and was successfully rescued in the spring. (Read complete text of plaque and other details at www.canvocta.org)

That the story of the Stephens-Townsend-Murphy party is little



Tom Hunt makes remarks at the gravesite of Elisha Stephens, during a presentation held as part of the Spring Symposium. (Photo courtesy of Bill Martin)

known is due to the notoriety attached to the Donner party who attempted the same Sierra route two years later.

The story of this 1844 journey is chronicled in the documentary film, *Forgotten Journey*, by John Krizek, executive producer, which was shown at the symposium lunch following the dedication at the cemetery.

The chapter's spring board meeting was held the previous night after a buffet dinner at the

Crystal Palace Motel. OCTA President Bill Martin was in attendance and presented Tom Hunt with the David Welch National Preservation Award given to him in absentia at last year's national convention.

The board voted to request a waiver from National for the 50-50 split requirement on silent auction items at conventions in order to meet the terms of the Charlie Little Collection donations. (This request was subsequently granted.) This will make these publications available to convention attendees. All proceeds from the sale of items from the Little Collection will go to the Western Overland Trails Collection in the California State Library.

The board also approved a \$500 budget item for the Chapter Library Committee, and an additional annual donation of \$500 to the special OCTA Fund within the California State Library Foundation.

Nominated to fill the two board seats up for election were Dave Hollecker and Mike Trueblood.

Work continues with CalTrans and the National Park Service

Continued on Next Page

Trail Monitoring, Pony Express Program Planned

By A. Oscar Olson

Joe Hatch, a Crossroads member who is also an officer in the National Pony Express Association, gave a presentation on 27 Utah Pony Express sites at the chapter's spring membership meeting. He compared older and more current photographs of the sites.

Two days after that program two carloads of trails members and friends headed out on a pre-run of the chapter's spring field trip. Participating were Oscar Olson, Brice Billings, (Crossroads news editor), Jesse and Nancy Petersen and several of their family including Jeff and Jennifer Pashley and children,

Grace, Olivia, Owen, and Mary. In two cars the group headed west from Utah Route 36 and explored the Pony Express route to Boyd Station before following James Simpson's 1859 trail across the Great Basin to Western Nevada (which became the Overland Stage Route).

That night the group stayed in Ely, NV, and the following morning returned east to Utah to retrace Simpson's eastbound (or return) route to Camp Floyd, at present Fairfield, UT. Problems with vehicle tires caused the group to detour to Delta, UT. At a later date—with new tires—the group completed the route. This same trip was repeated as the chapter spring field trip in mid-May.

Simpson's route is the subject of a book by Jesse Petersen, *A Route for the Overland Stage: James Simpson's 1859 Trail Across the Great Basin*, which is a must read for trail buffs.

On April 24 the chapter did some trail marking and GPS work at trail sites. This work involved Roger Tschanz, Bryce Bilings, Charlie Burkhalter, Vic Heath, Roy Tea, and Oscar Olson. They headed west to Wendover, NV, and then north to the Munsee Cabin just south of Donner Spring. After lunch the work group set seven new carsonite markers between that location and Hall Springs. They also took GPS readings for another 30 carsonite markers that had been placed along the trail.

Bakersfield Symposium *Continued from Previous Page*

on the location and installation of Auto Tour Route signs in California. Work also remains in progress for the installation of interpretive signs at locations along the Carson Trail.

During the weekend awards were presented.

The Lifetime Achievement Award went to Chuck Dodd for his outstanding contributions towards preserving our nation's historic overland emigrant trails heritage.

The Trail Boss Award was presented to Tom Hunt for his countless contributions to

OCTA throughout its 28 years in existence. In presenting this award to Tom, Bob Evanhoe described it as summing up all previous recognitions in the organization, and filling that one last remaining spot on a wall filled with previous awards.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to Mary Ann Tortorich as founder and editor of the Chapter E-News service; to Vince Correll for his service as a board member; and to Bob Evanhoe as president of the chapter.

Awards were also presented to

Susan McCabe and Stephen Cristy of the Carson City BLM Field Office for their contributions to maintaining and preserving the Fernley Swales. Trash Pros of Fernley received an award for allowing the Swales cleanup debris to be dumped at their transfer station free of charge.

The Elko Convention Committee has been busy finalizing the 2010 Convention. For additional information refer to both the National and Chapter web sites: www.octa-trails.org and www.canvocta.org.



Southern Chapter Seeks Support for National Historic Trail Proposal

By Albert Eddins
Chapter President

The effort to attain National Historic Trail designation for the southern emigrant trail received official sanction from the OCTA Board of Directors at OCTA's annual convention in August 2009. Once the proposal circulated through OCTA's legislative committee and was discussed with others, the recommendation was made to expand the proposal to include a larger number of trails through the Southwest, including trails through Texas and Oklahoma, the Salt Lake to Southern California Road, the Beale and Mojave Roads, and other segments in addition to the main southern emigrant trail from Santa Fe to Tucson to the Yuma Crossing and through the Southern California desert to Los Angeles. While there are disadvantages in trying to include too many trails, there is a tremendous benefit working with the full support of the national organization, including the Utah Crossroads Chapter, and in seeking federal support.

In late February, an OCTA delegation went to Washington, D.C., and helped work to obtain the support of key legislators for the Southern Trail proposal. They included Albert Eddins, Bill and Jeanne Watson, Bill Martin, Vern and Carol Osborn,

Jere Krakow, Pat Hearty, and Reba Wells Grandrud. In total the delegation visited the offices of 62 congressmen, meeting with key congressional staff members and leaving an information packet describing the proposal and the various routes of southern emigrant trails.

Based on these contacts, it appears there is a possibility that a feasibility study could be authorized by the end of this year. However, the chapter needs to continue making contacts with federal and local legislators to convince them that the southern trails deserve NHT recognition.

A crucial factor will be to make a strong case for the economic benefits of NHT status, both to congressmen and to the communities along the trails. To achieve this it appears that the chapter needs to obtain the support of chambers of commerce, small businesses, social organizations, and government officials in towns along the trails. These groups are in the best position to convince their federal legislators to vote for the bill.

Effort is also underway to engage relevant Southwestern Indian tribes in promoting their version of the history of the southern emigrant trails. Often the relationship between Indian tribes and emigrants along the southern trails was very different from that along the northern trails.

In cases where the Native Americans lived in settled communities and practiced sophisticated, irrigated agriculture there was often a cooperative and positive relationship. The chapter leaders believe these positive situations need to be pointed out and history from Native perspective should be included.

To further efforts in this regard meetings are being held with the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, which represents 19 tribes in Arizona, to encourage them to participate in the process.

In another effort to seek support for the Southern National Historic Trail proposal Eddins made a presentation at the mid-May National Historic Trails Workshop in San Antonio, TX sponsored by The Partnership for the National Trails System.

If you are interested in contributing to this effort in any way, please contact Eddins at aseddins@msn.com or call 480-575-2733.

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NEWS FROM SOUTHERN TRAILS

Tours take in Fort Mohave and Arizona Missions

By Albert Eddins
Chapter President

The Southern Trails Chapter held two meetings during the winter: one at the Avi Resort and Casino in Laughlin, NV, Nov. 13-15, 2009, and another at the Tubac Golf Resort and Spa in Tubac, AZ, Feb. 12-14, 2010. The major emphasis for both meetings was the chapter's efforts to attain National Historic Trail (NHT) status for the routes of southern emigrant trails.

Talks by Albert Eddins, David Welch, and Reba Wells Grandrud focused on the effort needed to attain NHT status, and the progress being made by the chapter towards

the following individuals on the history of various branches of the southern emigrant trail network: David Miller on the trails east of the Rio Grande River, T. Michael Smith on the Salt Lake to Southern California Road, Dennis Casabier on the Mojave Road, Tom Jonas on the Kearney Pack route down the Gila River, Kevin Henson on the Mormon Battalion, and Jim Turner on the Pima Indian Villages. Tracy DeVault gave talks on the Trail Turtles' efforts to map the southern trails and also on the

John Chaffin grave marker project. Cliff Walker, the guest speaker at Laughlin, discussed Indian slavery on the western trails. At Tubac, the guest speaker was Don Garate, who impersonated Juan Bautista de Anza.

Both meetings included tours. At the first meeting, participants saw Camp Beale Springs, the town of Oatman, and other sites in the vicinity of Fort Mojave. As many as 15 people took all or part of a four-day 4x4 tour over the Mojave Road across the Mojave Desert. At the Tubac meeting, an



Chapter members visited the Mission at San Xavier del Bac. (Photos courtesy of Albert Eddins)

all-day bus tour included such sites as Missions San Xavier del Bac and San José de Tumacácori, as well as the ruins of missions in the vicinity of Tumacácori. The latter sites are not open to the public and require special permission to visit.

A business meeting will be held from 3 to 5 p.m. on Aug. 13 at the OCTA convention in Elko, NV. A full chapter meeting is being planned for this fall in Silver City, New Mexico. A tour before or after the fall meeting may be held to visit the headwaters of several historically important rivers to southern trails, including, the Colorado, the Arkansas, the Rio Grande, the Canadian, the Pecos and the Gila.



Don Garate impersonated Juan Bautista de Anza at one chapter meeting.

this goal. Lee Kreutzer from the National Park Service gave a presentation on the National Trail System Act.

In addition, talks were given by

the vicinity of Fort Mojave. As many as 15 people took all or part of a four-day 4x4 tour over the Mojave Road across the Mojave Desert. At the Tubac meeting, an

Sketches from the Oregon Trail — A Symphonic Journey

By Candy Moulton
NFP Editor

Timothy Scott Misner is a music composer and member of OCTA, who has combined his interest in the trails and his ability with musical composition to create "Sketches from the Oregon Trail — A Symphonic Journey." He recently took the time to answer some questions posed by *News from the Plains*.

NFP: Tell us about *Sketches from the Oregon Trail*.

MISNER: It is an orchestral suite for full symphony orchestra, composed in ten short movements. As far as I know, it is the only Classical music work that celebrates and commemorates the Oregon Trail story.

NFP: What inspired you to compose it?

MISNER: I've always enjoyed history. Around 2004 I was reading a lot about Lewis and Clark and the Oregon Trail. I read everything I could get my hands on: books, diaries, articles, etc. And, as a family, we took trips to the Oregon Trail interpretive centers in Oregon City and Baker City, Oregon. Also, at that time, and in a separate way, I began teaching myself how to compose music for the symphony orchestra.

NFP: So you didn't know how to write symphonic music when you started to work on this piece?

MISNER: No, not really. Up until then, I composed mostly commercial production music. Yet, most of my life, I have been a classical music enthusiast. I think

it was my son's violin recitals and school concerts that exposed me to the orchestral activities going on in my community of Corvallis, OR. These events were the catalysts that got me thinking about giving orchestral composition a try.

NFP: How does someone go about learning how to compose music for a symphony orchestra



Tim Misner. (Photos courtesy of Tim Misner)

without going to school?

MISNER: There are several good books on the subject and I listen to music a lot. I also study orchestral scores, of course.

NFP: Getting back to *Sketches from the Oregon Trail*, how did the music come about?

MISNER: Around the time I was immersed in learning about the Oregon Trail, I had bought my first professional music notation software. Many of my initial musical ideas had a western frontier kind of feel to them, reminiscent of some of Aaron

Copland's works. I certainly wasn't consciously thinking about or trying to compose this kind of music. It is just what came out when I sat down at my computer and keyboard.

Eventually, bits of music began to take on lives of their own and seemed to develop organically. Then one day it suddenly dawned on me; what if I combined all of these various musical ideas into something portraying the Oregon Trail journey? An Oregon Trail suite? The idea seemed right, like a lightning bolt out of the blue! I felt that I was being guided to create this work. So, with sudden enthusiasm I began working out matching my musical thematic ideas with various aspects of the Oregon Trail story, and before long I had the makings of ten solid, unique movements. *Sketches from the Oregon Trail* portrays many familiar aspects of that westward migration experience.

NFP: What kind of aspects? Can you give an example?

MISNER: Well, the fourth movement is entitled "Hoedown at Independence Rock" and is intended to portray a Fourth of July music and dance celebration there. Trail enthusiasts know that this type of event actually occurred there. It's written about in the diaries.

NFP: Can you give us a brief description of each movement and what it's about?

MISNER: The first movement is entitled *Sunrise on an Open*

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A Symphonic Journey

Prairie and is intended to place the listener, not at the start of the Trail, but rather out onto the pristine prairie in the very early days of the western expansion. I wanted to set the stage, so to speak, in nature, in amongst the jackrabbits and buffalo grass.

The second movement, *Free Land Out West!*, does put the listener back at one of the jumping off towns, with all of the exciting hustle and bustle of procuring supplies and organizing into wagon trains.

The third piece, *Buckskins and Bonnets*, portrays the men and women of the Trail with thematic material that is masculine in the first part and feminine in the second section.

I already mentioned the fourth movement, *Hoedown at Independence Rock*.

A Campfire Lullaby is the title of the fifth movement, and it is meant to bring the listener into the more quiet and intimate environment of a few late-night fiddlers and guitar players sitting around the dying campfire, winding down the evening's Fourth of July festivities with a sweet, mellow lullaby.

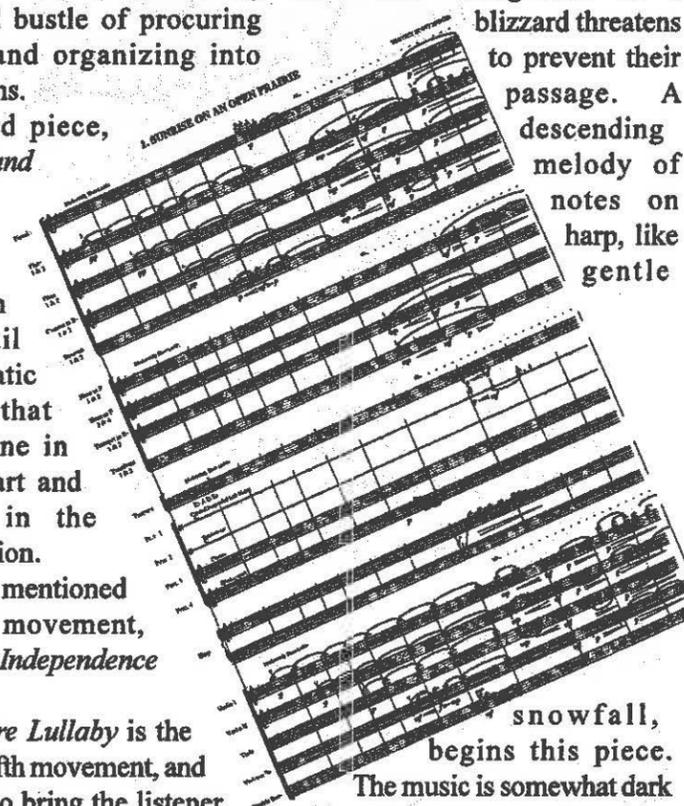
Waltz of the Buffalo — A Child's Dream is the sixth movement. It

takes the listener into the mind of a sleeping child dreaming of buffalos waltzing together. What could be more comical than that?

The seventh movement, *A Visit to the Fort*, portrays just that, a common occurrence at many of the forts along the Oregon Trail.

In the eighth movement, *Early Snowfall in the Blue Mountains*, things begin to get difficult for our emigrants as a blizzard threatens

to prevent their passage. A descending melody of notes on harp, like gentle



the snowfall, begins this piece.

The music is somewhat dark and builds to a dramatic pause. Then the snowstorm is unleashed upon our weary travelers. This movement was actually inspired by snowfall outside my music studio window.

In the ninth movement, *The Endless Barlow Road*, our wagon train is at the end of its rope. I



Tim and Kai Misner on the trail.

felt, a "death march" would be appropriate for this most difficult place on the Oregon Trail. Listeners will surely be able to imagine our emigrants as they slog along through rocky, muddy dark forests, and perhaps also get a sense of their feelings of hopelessness and near-defeat.

And finally, the tenth movement is *OREGON! The Promised Land*. It summarizes the entire work giving listeners a chance to experience the multitude of feelings that the pioneers must have felt as they endured their hardships and losses along the way, and rejoiced in their triumph over the Trail and the beginnings of their new lives in Oregon.

NFP: Were you able to get out onto the Trail and see some of it for yourself during the creation of this piece?

MISNER: Yes, I eventually came to realize that I needed to go and travel the Oregon Trail myself. So, one summer in June, my son Kai and I flew to Kansas City and started our adventure in

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Chapter Recognizes Cherokee Trail Pioneer

By Camille Bradford
Chapter President

The Colorado-Cherokee Trail Chapter met on May 8 at the Loveland Museum/Gallery to hear a presentation by Duane Kniebes, *Locating Your Ancestors Underground*. Duane and his wife, Susan, became the Larimer County volunteers about 10 years ago for a joint effort of the Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies and the U.S. Geological Survey to find, GPS pinpoint, and document all of the graves and cemeteries in Colorado.

They became so interested in the graves and cemeteries in Larimer County, the history of the individuals buried there and of those individuals' ancestors, and the history of the property on which the burial sites were

located that they are currently writing a book on that subject. To date, they have given over 20 presentations on their grave-search efforts in Larimer County.

Following the presentation, Duane gave a demonstration of grave dowsing at Lakeside Cemetery. This cemetery is the site of the relocated grave of H.L. Wilson Peterson, who was killed by lightning while traveling from Arkansas to California on the Cherokee Trail in 1854. At last year's convention



Susan and Duane Kniebes, Jane Leche, Lee Whiteley, Camille and Phil Bradford. (Photo courtesy of Jane Whiteley)

in Loveland, OCTA dedicated a plaque to honor Mr. Peterson as a trail pioneer and adventurer, who died in pursuit of his dream.

A Symphonic Journey

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Independence. We traveled for ten days, through Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon, stopping at all of the landmarks and interpretive centers along the way. It was great. I got to experience firsthand the landscapes, the weather, and the actual places that appear in *Sketches from the Oregon Trail*. Needless to say, it was quite exciting and I am now even more in awe at what these

emigrants accomplished a century and a half ago.

NFP: Has *Sketches* been performed by a symphony orchestra yet?

MISNER: Yes, portions of it were premiered by the Willamette Valley Community Orchestra. I am actively promoting the work to orchestras throughout the western United States, and would also like to create a CD of the music.

NFP: Is there some way our readers can listen to the music now?

MISNER: Certainly. They can visit my website at <<http://home.comcast.net/~misnermusic/>> and click on "Concert Music". Audio clips are available for listening. Listeners also can contact me at tim.misner@comcast.net.

OCTA Engages Firm to Market Film

By John Krizek
Marketing Committee Chair

The Oregon-California Trails Association has engaged the services of Ostrow and Company, based in Beverly Hills, CA, to market *In Pursuit of a Dream* for distribution to television. A future distribution deal also will make it possible to have DVDs of the film available for sale.

The marketing committee continues to screen the film in film festivals and other venues

including recent showings in Loveland, CO, Kearney, NE; Paradise, CA, and St. Joseph, MO.

Dream has screened at the International Family Film Festival in Burbank, CA; Boston International Film Festival; Cheyenne International Film Festival, USA Film Festival in Houston, TX, where it won a Silver Remi award, and at the "Traces of Tradition" festival at the Buffalo Bill Historic Center in Cody, WY. The film was selected by

Kids First! Film Festival in Santa Fe, NM, and will be showing in venues across the country.

Future screenings are planned at the Clark County Historical Society in Vancouver, WA, July 1 at 7 p.m.; at the National Frontier Trails Museum in Independence, MO, July 11 and July 18 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. each day; at the National Oregon/California Trail Interpretive Center in Montpelier, ID, July 23 and 24; in Marysville, KS, Oct. 8 at 7 p.m.; and in Casper, WY, Oct. 7 and 8.

Bookmark our Site: www.octa-trails.org

Quick and easy links to trail facts, people and places, resources, events, and more.

The National Frontier Trails Museum is
Celebrating the Oregon Trail!

Relive one of the most captivating sagas in American history – the westward expansion. Traders who made fortunes by daring to cross hostile plains, families who left loved ones and braved half a continent of wilderness to fulfill the American Dream. The National Frontier Trails Museum is the only museum and archives dedicated to the history of the Oregon, California and Santa Fe Trails. The museum has recently been designated by the National Park Service as a Mormon Pioneer Historic Trail interpretive site. Audio Guides coming this summer to enhance your museum tour.

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



"The Mystery on the Oregon Trail" by Carole Marra. Christina, Grant, Mimi and Papa "head'em out!" on a real covered wagon trek across the prairie, encountering adventure much as the pioneers of yore, and a mystery that you could say leaves Grant "upchucking!"! \$7.99 paperback

The National Frontier Trails Museum

318 W. Pacific, Independence, MO 64050

816-325-7575 www.frontiertrailsmuseum.org

Mon.-Sat. 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Sunday – 12:30 – 4:30 pm

Adults - \$5.00, Seniors (62 & older) \$4.50

Youth – (6-17) \$3.00, Ages 5 & under free





Oregon-California Trails Association
P.O. Box 1019
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In Pursuit of a Dream

www.inpursuitofadream.org

Upcoming Showings:

July 1 - Vancouver, WA
July 11 & 18 - Independence, MO
July 23 & 24 - Montpelier, ID
October 8 - Marysville, KS
October 7 & 8 - Casper, WY



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