

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

SUMMER 2012

VOL XXVII NO. 3

Public Land Withdrawn from Development

Parting of the Ways Protected by BLM

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Rock Springs Field Office has withdrawn 40 acres of public land from surface entry and mining to protect the Parting of the Ways Historic Site. The withdrawal is in effect for the next 20 years. The Public Land Order was published on June 6 in the Federal Register.

The withdrawal protects the unique archaeological, historical, geological, and recreational values of the area. The site is located in the northeastern portion of the Green River Basin, in Sweetwater County, approximately 12 miles northeast of Farson, WY.

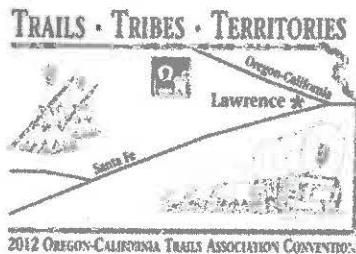
Parting of the Ways marks an historic fork in the emigrant trail where travelers had to decide whether to stay on the main track heading southwest toward Fort Bridger, a longer route, but one which had available water, or veer right taking the Sublette Cutoff, which was a shorter 50-mile path without water. The historic site has pristine integrity, both in terms of physical trail remains and environmental setting (*See photo on page 11*). It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Lands surrounding the historic site are public lands managed

by the BLM. The Parting of the Ways Historic Site lies on the congressionally designated historic trail system covering the Mormon, Pioneer, Oregon, California, and Pony Express Trails. The site has great historical significance and was previously protected by a withdrawal that expired in 2006. The purpose of this action is to re-establish the withdrawal protecting the site.

It has taken nearly four years for this action to be approved. The Notice of Proposed Withdrawal and Opportunity for Public Meeting was published in the Federal Register on Nov. 24, 2008.

OCTA Celebrates 30th Anniversary



*By Ross Marshall
Convention Coordinator*

The Oregon-California Trails Association is now 30 years old! The 2012 OCTA Convention in Lawrence, KS, August 6-11 will

offer opportunities to recognize and learn about the organization's early years.

OCTA was founded in Denver, CO, on August 11, 1982, by a dozen people invited to an organizing meeting by the late Gregory Franzwa. Those organizers elected a board and officers, and set the date for the first convention in Independence, MO, on August 19-21, 1983.

The 2012 OCTA Convention will include a special 30th Anniversary Dinner on Friday, Aug. 10. Former

OCTA President Roger Blair, who was one of the twelve founders mentioned above, will present a Power Point program of pictures he has accumulated over the years. We will highlight charter members and past leaders, hear some interviews, and celebrate all that OCTA has meant to the National Trails System and to all of us members.

Hosted by the Trails Head Chapter, this momentous convention will not only celebrate

Continued on Page 3

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION
NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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News from the Plains
Published quarterly
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News from the Plains

Fall Issue Deadline

August 25, 2012

Send materials to
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2011-12 OCTA Officers

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New Fork Crossing Park Development Continues

By David Welch

Clint Gilchrist of the Sublette County Historical Society reports the following progress on the New Fork Crossing project. With help from the Oregon California Trails Association (OCTA), the Wyoming Conservation Corp (WCC) was contracted to provide manual labor on necessary infrastructure improvements, including installation of locking gates, relocation of a property fence, construction of a pedestrian bridge over an irrigation ditch, and placement of boardwalks through a marshy area.

The WCC fees and supplies were partially funded by a grant from the Upper Green River Basin Fund of the Wyoming Community Foundation and the Sublette County Historic Preservation Board. Work was completed between May 23 and June 1, 2011.

During the summer of 2011, a Class III cultural resource inventory was conducted on the entire New Fork Crossing Historical Park by USU Archaeological Services with a

grant from the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund. Through metal detection, ground penetrating radar, and magnetometer testing, additional evidence of emigrant-period occupation was found on the Old Island and additional historic and prehistoric cultural material was found at other locations within the park.

After the cultural resource inventory was completed, a portion of the New Fork Crossing Historical Park interpretive trail was built with funds granted by the Wyoming Community Foundation and the Sublette County Historic Preservation Board.

With the addition of the site planning team from the National Park Service Santa Fe Trails Office, the original interpretation trail plan has been expanded and the parking lot location shifted to create a loop trail. The new plan also envisions a group use area at the water well location and a new overlook area with ADA accessibility. The new trail segment, interpretive signs, and

parking lot will be installed during the summer of 2012.

Funding for interpretive signs had been provided by the Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund and the parking lot will be built by Sublette County Road and Bridge. The park will have a soft opening in the summer of 2012, after which time the park will be accessible by visitors with some temporary interpretation signs but will not be widely promoted. The official grand opening with a ceremony inviting all partners and the public is planned for 2013. The conservation easement has been drafted by the Wyoming Land Trust, but will not be finalized or implemented until the initial development is complete during 2012.

The Sublette County Commission, via their Road and Bridge Department, has committed to build and maintain the access road and parking lot at the edge of the property. Details will be worked out this summer and construction will occur this fall or next spring.

OCTA Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Continued from Page 1

our 30th anniversary, but also offer a wide variety of activities and learning experiences related to the theme of "Trails, Tribes, and Territories."

We will be hearing speakers and doing bus tours that will interpret that theme throughout the week. We have the finest comfortable over-the-road coach

buses and trained tour guides that will provide for very enjoyable tours on the four National Historic Trails that traverse the area around Lawrence.

Our host hotel will be the spacious and conveniently located Lawrence Holiday Inn and Convention Center at 200 McDonald Drive, one-half mile south of I-70 at exit #202.

Each of you has by now received a registration booklet. You can also register online on our web site at www.OCTA-Trails/chapters/TrailsHead.

Come join us in August in historic Lawrence, KS, as we celebrate our 30th anniversary and enjoy the National Historic Trails.

Annual Fund Drive Raises \$16,000

We gratefully wish to thank all our members who donated to our Annual Drive, which generated \$16,000.

Since our last *NFP* edition, the following members have generously contributed.

Barbara Abrahamer
Carolyn Bowser
Dr. Vincent Correll
Howard Dugger
Janet H. Elliott
David Evans
Linda Graybeal
Geoffrey Griffin
Dr. Scott Hendricks
Richard Herman
James B. Herring
Beverly Hesse
Herbert Hunn, in Memory of
Lois Hunn
Dr. Robert H. Jones and Dr.
Hedy Jones
Dr. Philip S. King
Fred and Fern Linton
Al and Sharon Lopez
Jeanne Muller
A. Oscar Olson
George and Joan Paulikas
Dick and Penelope Peterson
Jim and Sallie Riehl
George Riser
Dan Rottenberg
Robert Shellenberger
David and Sharon Taylor
Gene and Charlotte Thompson
David G. Way
Joseph Whitehorne
John and Hazel Willmarth

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PRESIDENT

Partnering For the Trails

By Duane Iles

96cruisin@embarqmail.com

Partnering. The word usually describes diverse groups working together on a project of common interest. OCTA works with partners for much of what we do. When marking trails, we work with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, various levels of government, and non-governmental groups who have a common goal. When we undertake projects to preserve the trails, we work with the NPS, BLM, other organizations and individuals, and yes, with energy companies. All have a common interest.

May was an active "partnering" month. We joined with El Camino de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association in Austin, TX, to present a symposium. It was a great event with many interesting programs about the El Camino and our Southern Trails initiative. Besides picking up some new members, we established a relationship with this Texas trail association that will be important when the Southern Trail becomes a national historic trail. We will be partnering with them in the future since we share portions of the trail.

On the weekend of May 12, Bent's Old Fort held a Wagon's Ho event that was absolutely great. It was a prime example of partnering. Many groups, including the Colorado-Cherokee Trail Chapter of OCTA, worked together to co-sponsor the event

and present programs.

The week of May 14, the Partnership for the National Trail System presented a historic trails workshop in Socorro, NM. It was co-sponsored by El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association (CARTA). Much of the programming was planned and directed by Steve Burns of the NPS.

OCTA Board Member Jere Krakow planned and conducted a portion of the program. We spent two days exploring the path of El Camino Real through Socorro, and another trail segment in the nearby desert. Teams evaluated the two sites from the perspectives of CARTA, tribal interests, federal agencies (NPS, BLM, state and local governments), local residents and landowners, and the local elected officials and chamber of commerce business interests. Later each team presented a plan for developing the sites. This illustrates the importance of viewing all our preservation and development plans from the perspective of diverse stakeholders.

Partnering is a way to accomplish the best possible outcome in all the projects we engage in. With limited personnel and financial resources, it is a way to multiply our resources and create a much better product. It is easy to see a project from one's own point of view, but to ensure the best possible result, it is important to look at it from everyone's perspective.

The GPS Unit — More than One Use On the Trail

By Pat Fletcher

OCTA's field researchers in all chapters have used GPS technology for about twenty years to find, determine, and record exact locations of famous sites and segments of our historic western emigrant trails.

Some OCTAns have ventured across the bar to geocaching, but so far they have not spread the news of OCTA to bring more active geocachers into the OCTA fold. Even so geocaching is an innovative way to draw thousands of families to OCTA because it is something that is already wildly popular worldwide.

Last year in Rock Springs, the OCTA convention offered a workshop on how to use your GPS. The reaction? About 100 attendees flocked into and spilled over out of the room, overwhelming Matt Ivory, an ardent geocacher. It showed

clearly that we were behind the times.

That show of interest will be followed at this year's 30th convention, when Garmin, based in Olathe, KS, will have reps take part in the workshop program "Trail Travel has never been Easier." At last we can all learn what it takes to marry the GPS technology to the on-the-ground historic trail resources.

Geocaching the trails is perfect to stop the "Are we there yet?" grumbling coming from the back seat of the car.

Want to learn more *before* the convention? See: GPS.gov.

On that site, you will find GPS Adventures, an "immersive experience designed to teach kids and adults about GPS technology. Visitors navigate their way through an interactive maze while simulating the popular, GPS-based activity known as geocaching—a family-friendly treasure hunting

game enjoyed by millions of people around the world."

Let's reach out, communicate with, and invite families who take part in geocaching to join us.

Membership Brochure Available

*John Krizek
OCTA Vice President*

A new OCTA membership brochure is available. All members are encouraged to use it to attract new members to the cause.

Produced with the help of Marketing Chairman Pat Surrena, the brochure is keyed to the theme, "Save the Trail"—a call to action consistent with the findings of OCTA's recent membership survey and other market research determining that today's younger generations are more cause-related than responsive to the social connection needs of older members.

The brochure is intended as the first salvo in a coordinated campaign to carry that theme to the public through other media, including direct mail, selective display advertising, and web site design, according to Surrena. The ultimate goal is to increase membership in OCTA.

Anyone with access to local historical society mailing lists or display racks in libraries, museums, or tourist centers where people curious about trail history may gather, are encouraged to contact headquarters for copies of the brochure.

NEW MEMBERS

The following individuals have recently joined OCTA:

Pat Backe, Alexandria, VA
James Ball and Karen Williams,
Boise, ID
Andrea Burden, Austin, TX
Ruth Palmer Davis,
Fredericksburg, TX
Melanie Dundy, Wilsonville, OR
J. Ronald Dunsmore, Spokane
Valley, WA
April Garner, Austin, TX
Peter Guilbert, Auburn, CA
Lauri Hansen, Salt Lake City, UT
Terry Hobbs, Topeka, KS
Kathy Koester, Loomis, CA

Julie Konno, North Fork, CA
Michael La Salle, Hanford, CA
Mike Lais, Worland, WY
Gus McClelland, Lawrence, KS
Amy Murphy, Anchorage, AK
Lee Nellis, Wapiti, WY
Richard Preston, Dallas, TX
Susan Radke-Sproull,
Kirkland, WA
Tony Scott, Pearland, TX
Robert Sinnock, Colfax, CA
Susan Snow, San Antonio, TX
Steven White, Halfway, OR
Nola Wilkerson, Westmoreland,
KS
Martha Williams, Fraser, CO

Help Wanted: OCTA Committee Members

*By Duane Iles
OCTA President*

We have several committee vacancies within OCTA, including work on fundraising, libraries and collections, and history and archives. These committees are of great value to OCTA and we need your talents. Committee responsibilities and objectives are described in greater depth in the in the member area of the web site (www.octa-trails.org).

Committee members are needed. Why not take a look at

the following committees and see if you can find one that fits your interests and skills.

Fundraising – Planning, developing and raising funds from planned giving, drives and corporate sponsorships are just a small part. We desperately need to fill this chair and its membership.

Library and Collections – The chair will be vacant in August. The committee oversees our collections and the Merrill Mattes Library. This will be particularly exciting with the acquisition

of new collections, putting our archives online, and potentially a program to put many journals online.

History and Archives – Basically this job is responsible for maintaining the history of OCTA. Our history is a part of the trails' preservation and history also. This could be a great fit for someone with a love of OCTA and its history.

We need your help. Give me a call or send a note for information or to volunteer.

National Historic Trails Center Plans 10th Anniversary Events

The National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, WY, celebrates its 10th Anniversary this year. Special activities will be held the weekend of Aug. 3-4, and will include living history camps, special presentations, and programs that involve the Pony Express, mountain men, frontier military, and emigrant travelers.

A number of participants will be on hand who have traveled the overland trails on wagon trains during recent years. These include individuals who took part in the filming of the OCTA Documentary *In Pursuit of a Dream*.

The National Historic Trails Center Foundation will hold its annual Celebrity Cookoff on Aug. 20. This event raises funds that are used for upkeep and development of exhibits at the Center.

The grand opening of the California Trail Interpretive Center just west of Elko, NV, attracted a crowd of around 700 people. The \$20 million federal facility tells the story of the overland journey during the California Gold Rush and commemorates more than a quarter-million adventurers who followed the various branches of the California Trail between 1841 and 1869. It is the third center managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to interpret the overland migration. The agency operates a center in Baker City, OR, devoted to the story of the Oregon Trail, and another in Casper, WY, which interprets four major trails: Oregon, Mormon, California, and Pony Express.

The exhibits in the new center near Elko include a typical emigrant camp, the Donner Party, American Indian tribes of Nevada and Utah, the Gold Rush, and the journey the travelers made across the Plains and the Great Basin. Included are galleries organized by

the regions the emigrants crossed: Missouri River, Great Plains, Parting of the Ways, Great Basin of Nevada and Utah, Nevada's Forty-Mile Desert, and the Sierra Nevada.

The interpretation is provided through use of life-size dioramas, original artwork, interactive displays, and multi-media presentations.

The center is situated beside Interstate 80 and overlooks the junction of the California Trail and Hastings Cutoff.

Sen. Harry Reid, D-Nev., who secured funding for the trail center, said he has long been fascinated by the history of the California Trail and is pleased the facility will educate the public about its significance in the settlement of the West. "I worked hard to preserve this important piece of American history," Reid has said.

The new center will be open throughout the year.

California Trail Center Opens

Education Projects Support Idaho Classroom; Students across the West.

*By Bill Hill
Education Awards
& Publications Committee Chair*

Karen G. Wach from Twin Falls, ID, received a class set of *Following Lewis and Clark's Track* as the winner of a raffle for a set of one of OCTA's educational activity Books. Each year the Education Awards and Publications Committee sponsors the drawing as one of its projects. If your school district, or a teacher you know did not enter this year's contest, be sure to tell them about our annual raffle so they can enter this fall for next year. Teachers or schools may send in a postcard with the title of the book they would like to receive.

A second project the committee sponsors each year is a calendar contest for elementary students. A different topic or theme is selected and in the spring students are asked to submit an original drawing reflective of the theme. Information about the contest is available on OCTA's website and a limited number of notices are mailed to various school districts in the fall. Students, with their teacher's guidance, research the theme or topic and then submit artwork depicting it. The new 2013 calendar, "Emigrant and Indian Clothing and Equipment," has been produced and will be available at the OCTA convention in August and at headquarters. The cost is \$5 plus shipping. Be sure to order your calendar from head-

quarters now. There are only a limited number available for sale. We ran out of them last year.

The artwork of the fourteen students selected depicts different aspects of emigrant and Indian culture.

Each student whose artwork was

student of Ms. Leisha Black, and Mrs. Romney, and Kristie Shelton is a student of Ms. Leisha Black and Mrs. Jenkins, all of Canyon Rim Academy, Salt Lake City, UT.

Sydney Crouch, Oliver Hubbard, Mia L. Barth and Catherine Kirkham are students of Mrs.

Jenson, Upland Terrace, Salt Lake City, UT. Faedra August is a student of Ms. Wunch, Lee A. Tolbert Community Academy, Kansas City, MO. Alyssa Bedard is a student of Mrs. Piaia and Favour Wanjoku is a student of Miss Callas, all of Westridge Elementary, Rock Springs, WY. Fernando Aranda is a student of Mrs. Dutson at Jim Bridger Elementary School, Jordan, UT.



selected will receive a copy of the calendar and a check for \$50. One copy of the calendar will also be sent to the student's elementary school. We will also thank their teachers for their cooperation and for integrating our project into their busy schedules.

This project is one of the ways OCTA helps to introduce students to the trails. It also uses an interdisciplinary approach in teaching by combining both history and art.

Congratulations to our budding historians/artists! They are listed with their teachers and schools.

Luke Storheim, Eleanor Barry, Summer Webster, and Isabel Randall are students of Mrs. Hansen, Upland Terrace, Salt Lake City, UT; Chanel Van Grinkel is a

Contest guidelines for our 2014 calendar project "Mountain Man and Military Clothing and Equipment" can be viewed on OCTA's website. Ask your children and grandchildren to tell their teachers about the project and to look at the website. If a school or teacher does not have sufficient time to devote to the project, individual students may still enter the contest and be judged the same as those submitted by a school or teacher. It is the artwork that is judged and selected.

The recipient of our third project, the Outstanding Educator Award, will be announced at the convention in Lawrence.

California - Nevada Spring Symposium in Carson City in April

*By John Winner
Chapter President*

The California-Nevada Chapter held its spring business meeting and chapter symposium in Carson City, NV, in late April. The program included presentations about the Nobles Trail and its connection to the Central Pacific Railroad, the Pony Express, and other historical topics.

The Chapter Board of Directors met on Friday afternoon followed by a hosted reception. Saturday's session opened with the annual general membership meeting where chapter members and guests learned important information pertaining to trail preservation, trail mapping and marking, chapter activities, and projects and other matters. Representing the OCTA National Board was Vice President John Krizek and Board member Vern Osborne.

John shared with the audience the importance of membership and a recently completed survey on membership demographics.

At the symposium Wendell Huffman, curator of History and the Collection Manager for the Nevada State Railroad Museum, shared how the Nobles Trail determined the route of the Central Pacific Railroad.

Harold (Hal) James, author of *Bruff's Wake: J. Goldsborough Bruff and the California Gold Rush*, explained what inspired him to write this book and the fascination that he experienced while doing the research. Hal also showed current photos alongside of Bruff's illustrations.

David and Melody Kittle, spoke about the Pony Express. They are avid Pony Express historians and shared their enthusiasm for the Pony Express, especially as it traveled through Nevada.

Melody's great-great-great grandfather was Alexander Majors, a partner in the formation of the short-lived Pony Express.

Phillip Earl, retired curator of the Nevada State Historical Society and contributor to the *Reno Gazette Journal* with his series titled "This Was Nevada," talked about perceptions of the early days of Hollywood film making. We then watched the 1920s silent movie "The Covered Wagon," giving us a chance to be critics on the authenticity of Hollywood's take on what wagon trains endured. Popcorn was served!

Saturday evening the group met in Genoa at the Genoa Lakes Golf Resort for dinner, awards, and a Chautauqua presentation by Frank Tortorich of William Coray, Sergeant in Company B of the Mormon Battalion.

Sunday had a bus tour to "Stockton Wells" where five major trails converged, then on to Fort Churchill, an army fort built in 1860 to provide protection for settlers, and finally to Buckland Station, an early hotel, stage stop, and Pony Express station.

A special thanks to Steve and Patty Knight for their efforts in putting together the Carson City Symposium.

On a sad note, longtime OCTA member and CA-NV Chapter Treasurer Zeke Sicotte died May 1. He will be remembered for his many contributions to OCTA and as a regular in the OCTA band.



Participating in the Bent's Old Fort Wagon's Ho! event held May 12 were, from left, John Carson (Kit Carson's grandson), Aaron Mahr, and Vern Osborne. (Photo by Duane Iles)

Chapter Aids in Stabilizing Canyon Creek Stage Station

*Jerry Eichhorst
IOCTA President*

The annual spring meeting of the Idaho chapter was held in Mountain Home on May 5. Local historian John Hiler provided a captivating presentation on the history of his relatives who settled in the area. After lunch, a group of 29 people toured the Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway from Mountain Home to Bonneville Point. Special sites included a secluded site with emigrant graves and the Ditto Creek inscription rock.

A tour of the Oregon Trail in the Soda Springs area was planned for June 16.

Other activities for the summer include a tour of the California Trail at City of Rocks on July 21, a South Alternate Oregon Trail tour on Sept. 8, a fall meeting and tour of the Fort Hall site on Oct. 6, followed by a tour of the Oregon Trail from Chesterfield to Fort Hall on Oct. 7.

In addition, we will begin the restoration project for the Canyon Creek Stage Station and continue investigating multiple massacre sites.

We are looking forward to a fun year with lots of trail activities across the state.

The photo above right, shows the tour group at Rattlesnake Creek. The new sign highlights the Oregon Trail Back Country Byway.



Emigrants on the Overland Trail

The Wagon Trains of 1848
Michael E. LaSalle

\$40 pb • \$29.99 e-book
552 pp. • 23 illus; 20 maps

Emigrants on the Overland Trail takes a unique and fascinating approach to writing about westward emigration. Rather than just following one group of emigrants, Michael LaSalle follows all the wagon trains that headed west in 1848. As they struggle along each section of the trail, readers develop a thorough understanding of the physical and emotional challenges of the journey. We come to know and care about the successes of these pioneers. This is a "must read" for everyone interested in Overland Trail history.

—Lynda Paznokas, Washington State University

His narrative weaves the various "voices" of these pioneer reporters into a compelling day-to-day trail experience that provides insight into this great American adventure.

—Willis M. Conover, The University of Scranton

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Trail Skelton Found Beside Green River

By Tom Rea
Wyoming Chapter President

Effort is underway to identify the body of a man found in a grave beside the Green River that is believed to date back to the trail era.

The body was a Caucasian male, and had a clay pipe with it. Jaci Wells of the BLM, who helped with the excavation, said it's the body of a 17- to 23-year-old male, with good teeth and otherwise apparently in good health. There are no signs of disease or accident, so it may have been a drowning death. The body was laid out carefully, lying on its back, with hands crossed at the waist, and buried about three and a half feet deep. All the

bones were in place. No clothing had survived, only small pieces of leather straps. The red clay pipe is identical to one in the collection of the Museum of the Mountain Man in Pinedale, Wells said.

The body has been transferred to the University of Wyoming. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) archaeologists are in charge of the project.

OCTA member Randy Brown of Douglas noted that his friend Dick

Reick, in Arkansas, maintains a database of trail deaths and graves, and from diaries and other accounts has identified 60 known trails-era deaths near the crossings of the Green River.

USFWS can't be specific about the location, but Randy noted that if the crossing was one of the named ferry points or fords, that information plus the young man's age could help him and Reick

Fern Linton reported on the National Mid-Year Board meeting. She also said OCTA is working with the BLM, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, and representatives of Shell and Ultra on mitigation under a Programmatic Agreement that will provide for new signage at Sand Springs north of Farson on Route 191, where the Lander Trail crosses the highway. There will be new signs at the spot, plus a public walking trail among the historic trail swales nearby.

Linton also was asked to represent OCTA in the Kemmerer office of the BLM, with an onsite visit about a controlled burn and an erosion control restoration of trail ruts on the Sublette Cutoff over Commissary Ridge. One project will prevent some erosion in the trail ruts and the other should return the vegetation to something more like

it probably was in the 1850s when the area was believed to be more open and less heavily timbered than it now appears.

Linton has been representing OCTA on the many conference calls for the mitigation Programmatic Agreement (PA) on the Anchutz Corporation's Power Company of Wyoming's Chokecherry-Sierra Madre project. This is a proposal for a 1,000-turbine wind-power project



Visiting Parting of the Ways on Saturday, May 19, were these Wyoming OCTA members, left to right: black cow, Randy Brown, Lee Underbrink, Tom McCutcheon, Dick Reick, Don Hartley, Gail Robinson, Jesse O'Connor, Jill Hartley, Victor Heath, and Allen Heaps. Well maybe the cow has not paid her dues, but she was there. (Photo by Tom Rea)

assist the FWS to identify the body.

The spring meeting of Wyoming OCTA Chapter took place in Green River in May with about 20 members present, plus archaeologists Jaci Wells and Breelynn Van Fleet from the Rock Springs Office of the Bureau of Land Management, and Vencie Beske of the Wyoming State Library.

National OCTA Board Member

2012 Newest Selections and Popular Titles



OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

Church Buttes, photo courtesy Roger Blate

BY R. L. JAMES



BRUFF'S WAKE

Author: Harold James
8.5" x 11", 64 images
\$34.95 Soft Cover

OCTA's Newest
Publication

The story of J. Goldsborough Bruff's overland journey to the California Gold Rush, his experiences in California, and his return trip to New York via Panama. It includes entries from Bruff's journal and couples a number of the drawings that Bruff made while on the trail with photos that James made recently at the sites of the drawings. Bruff's drawings are a primary source for historians and trail buffs, allowing visualization of what the emigrants encountered on the overland trail.

The published versions of Bruff's journal and drawings have, however, been out of print for more than 50 years. James' book makes this material available for a general audience.

For a limited time: Purchase any one book and get Bruff's Wake for \$24.95

THE LOOK OF THE ELEPHANT, *The Wandering Experience In the Words of Those Who Lived It 1841-1861.*

Authors: Andrew and Joanne Hammond
Soft Cover-\$18.95 Cloth Cover-\$34.95

Collection of diary quotes is a must-have for any student of the overland experience. Keynoted by maps, overviews of the trails and jumping off places, and thumbnail biographies of the diarists, puts the reader at the side of the men and women who surrendered comforts of the known in the middle of the 19th Century for the unknown promises of a future in an untamed wilderness.

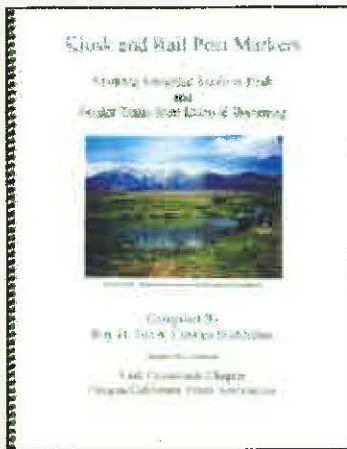
The Look of the Elephant

The Wandering Experience
In the Words of
Those Who Lived It
1841-1861

Andrew and Joanne Hammond



Oregon-California Trails Association

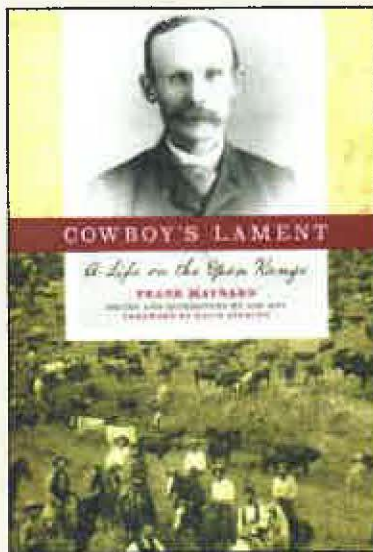


**KIOSK AND RAIL
MARKERS:
Marking Emigrant
Trails in Utah and
Feeder Trails from
Idaho and Wyoming.**

**Edited by: Roy Tea
& Charlie
Burkhalter**

**\$12.00 Spiral Bound
49 pages/12 maps**

The goal of this publication was to bring together information on the Rail Post Trail Markers and Kiosks installed by the Utah Crossroads Chapter of OCTA. Only semi-permanent markers are listed, many white fiberglass markers (Carsonites) are used to mark trails, but are not listed. Only GPS coordinates or UTM data and general map locations are provided. The book covers most of the trails in the state down to Greenville in Beaver Valley in Southern Utah.



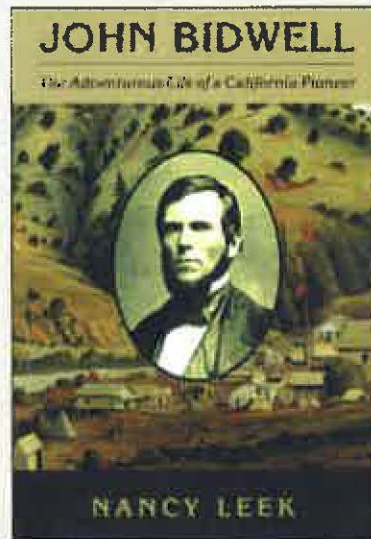
**COWBOYS
LAMENT, A Life on
the Open Range,
Frank Maynard.**

**Edited by:
Jim Hoy**

**\$29.95
Hard Cover,
216 pages**

**"[Jim Hoy] packs
the house and gets
great applause for
his wonderful pre-**

**sentations on cowboys and cowboy music. His books
are lively and compelling - well researched but never
boring history lessons." Nobody knows cowboys past
or present better than Jim Hoy. In this volume he
wrangles the memoir of Frank Maynard, a Kansas
cowpuncher whose recollections of the range and trail
during the heyday of the western cattle trade, are as
fresh and crisp as new saddle leather."**



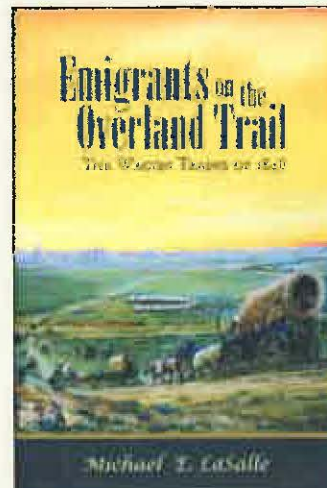
**JOHN BIDWELL,
The Adventurous
Life of a California
Pioneer.**

**Author:
Nancy Leek**

**\$18.65
Soft Cover
120 pages**

**"Nancy Leek's new
biography of
California pioneer
John Bidwell helps to**

**fill the constant and on-going need for good local
history books suitable for young readers. In clear,
engaging, and accessible prose, Leek tells the excit-
ing story of Bidwell, who helped organize the first
overland covered wagon train of American settlers
bound for the Golden State, thus blazing the cele-
brated California Trail. A terrific selection for bud-
ding young California historians!"**

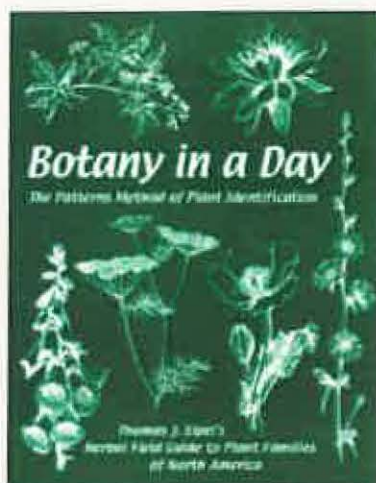


**EMIGRANTS ON THE
OREGON TRAIL,
Encounters with
Hostile Indians,
The Wagon Trains
of 1848.**

**Author:
Michael E. LaSalle**

**\$40.00 Soft Cover,
536 pages, 23 illus,
20 maps**

**Presenting the "lost"
year of the overland emigrants in 1848, this volume
sheds light on the journey of the men, women, chil-
dren, and the wagon trains that made the challeng-
ing trek from Missouri to Oregon and California.
These primary sources, written by seven men and
women diarists from different wagon companies, tell
how settlers endured the tribulations of a five-month
westward journey covering 2,000 miles. Subjected to
the extremes of fear, failure, suffering, and hope
they persevered and finally triumphed.**



**BOTANY IN A DAY,
The Patterns
Method of Plant
Identification.**

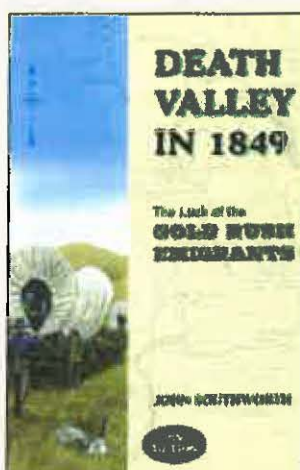
Author:
Thomas J. Elpel

\$30.00 Soft Cover
220 pages

Instead of trying to
identify plants one-
at-a-time, *Botany in a*

Day gives you a way to learn them by the hundreds,
based on the principle that related plants have similar
patterns for identification, and they often have similar
uses.

The one-day tutorial included in the text teaches you
seven key patterns to recognize more than 45,000
species of plants worldwide.



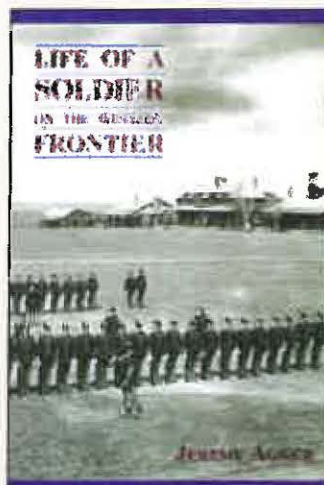
**DEATH VALLEY IN 1849,
The Luck of the Gold
Rush Emigrants.**

Author:
John Southworth

\$12.95 Soft Cover
132 pages

"An intensely interesting
and informative unraveling
of some of the mysteries of

the legendary Death Valley '49ers. Not content with
parroting previous theories of Jayhawker, et al, trail
retracings, Southworth's findings are the result of
years of on the scene searching. Notable is his icono-
clastic shattering of the Towne Pass myth as the
escape route from the 1849ers ill-named 'valley of
death'. An excellent addition to the library of
historian or armchair reader delving into the
fascinating story of the gold rush emigrants who
blundered into Death Valley on their fateful 'short
cut' to California's Mother Lode."



**LIFE OF A SOLDIER,
On the Western
Frontier.**

Author:
Jeremy Agnew

\$18.00 Soft Cover
266 pages

Their heads filled with
images of glory and bat-
tle, most young men
joined the frontier army

only to endure a life of tedious drills, bad meals,
uncomfortable quarters, and ill-fitting uniforms.

Focusing on the Indian Wars period of the 1840s
through the 1890s, this fascinating study captures
the daily challenges faced by the typical enlisted man
and explores the role soldiers played in the conquer-
ing of the American frontier. More than a convenient
reference book, it is also a gripping and affecting
story.

**EVOLUTION OF A
ROAD:
Changes in the
Southern Route from
the California Road
to the State (Territorial
Road)**

Authors: Lyndia
Carter, Roy Tea &
John Eldredge

\$9.00 Comb Bound



Utah Crossroads' spring trip was the northern portion
of the road from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles, show-
ing how the trail evolved and changed with the estab-
lishment of towns along the road. This route became a
thoroughfare for emigrants and freighters. It was an
alternate route for California-bound travelers between
Utah settlements and destinations in southern
California. The goal of this trip was to build aware-
ness of the significance of the southern route and dis-
cover more about the central and southern portions of
the overland road from Utah to California.

Wyoming Chapter Tours Trail Sites

south of Rawlins, on two east-west running ridges with the Overland Trail running right between them. The area is intermingled private and public land as part of the checkerboard and so is not very accessible now.

Other groups involved in this PA mitigation are the Rawlins and state offices of the BLM, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, and Anschutz' Power Company of Wyoming.

Linton also has been representing OCTA on conference calls for mitigation PAs on the Gateway South transmission line, which will run from Rawlins to Wamsutter to Beaver, Utah; on the Trans West transmission line, which will run from Wyoming south through Colorado and Utah to Las Vegas, NV.; and on the Gateway West line from Wyoming west through Idaho to Oregon and Washington; and on mitigation calls on a new wind project proposed for Aspen Mountain south of Rock Springs.

Wyoming Chapter Vice President Don Hartley reported on a new proposal for a land swap in the Seedskadee National Wildlife Refuge, where the Bureau of Reclamation may try to transfer the land to the BLM or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Wyoming Legislature has taken an interest in the process.

Lee Underbrink noted that after 21 years he will edit and produce only two more quarterly Wyoming OCTA newsletters before turning the job back over to OCTA's membership.



Gail Robinson, left, and Jill Hartley at Parting of the Ways.

The members thanked Lee and frequent contributor Randy Brown and applauded them for their leadership.

BLM Archaeologist Breelynn Van Vleet showed slides of damage and vandalism at prehistoric sites in Wyoming, and said the BLM is seeking volunteer site stewards to help monitor rock-art and other prehistoric sites in Wyoming's open spaces. Volunteers get one or two days of training. "The best part about being a site steward is getting out in the field and having a good time," she said.

For more information contact her at bvanflee@blm.gov.

BLM Archaeologist Jaci Wells said the BLM needs help thinking up new ideas for how best to mitigate the effects of large energy projects like wind-power development and long-distance powerlines that have such a large effect on the look of Wyoming's open spaces.

"We can't replace what is lost," she said. "Wind [development] is still a new thing," she said, "and we're still trying to figure out new kinds of mitigation."

For more details reach her at jwells@blm.gov.

Finally, Venice Beske of the Wyoming State Library gave a presentation on place names in Wyoming, and on the State Library's new place-names website, "Wyoming Places." See the site at <http://wiki.wyomingplaces.org/w/page/12715180/Wyoming%20Places> or click to search for a place name you're interested in at <http://wyld.sdp.sirsi.net/maps/>.

On Saturday, May 19, OCTA members and friends trekked under Don Hartley's excellent leadership from Green River, WY to Parting of the Ways near South Pass, with a visit to an unnamed crossing of the Green River now called Six Mile, as it is six miles south of the Seedskadee Wildlife Refuge headquarters. There were also stops at the Lombard Ferry, the refuge headquarters and new visitors' center, the Pilot Butte Overlook, and other sites near Simpson's Hollow. We also visited False Parting of the Ways, the Pony Express station site on the Dry Sandy, Plume Rock, and Parting of the Ways.

Spring Trip Takes in Skull Valley, Donner Spring, and Bidwell Pass

By A. Oscar Olson

We have opened the year with a lot of activity. On April 12, at our Spring membership meeting, Ouida Blanthorn, Tooele County author and historian, spoke to us about early Tooele County and Skull Valley ranching and livestock history. Tooele County and Skull Valley are neighboring areas just west of Salt Lake County. Both areas are hot beds of early Utah and trails history.

Our field trip for Spring 2012 was called "Historic Skull Valley," and

took in sites from Lake Point, Utah, to the west. We went west across Tooele Valley to Skull Valley where we had discussions on the Halloran-Hargraves burial sites, Twenty Wells, Jedediah S. Smith, Dell Spring, the '49ers, the Hastings Cutoff-California Trail, Orr's Ranch, Iosepa—an 1880-1917 Hawaiian community—Hope Wells, the Pony Express Trail, the Overland Trail, petroglyphs, and American Indian tales, T-rail markers, and the 1968 sheep die off near Dugway Proving Grounds.

At White Rocks, Victor Heath recalled playing the part of

George Donner in a BBC movie filmed there called "Hard Road West." We left Skull Valley at Johnsons' (Fisher) Pass. Then we traveled to Clover in Rush Valley, followed the St. John to Ophir Railroad "ghost rail" to a mining area, and then stopped

replace four weathered panels at Donner Springs and the Bidwell Pass Crossing. This has been an ongoing project for us. Chuck Milliken, recently retired from the National Park Service, has been a key figure in this work. We left Salt Lake City at 6:30



The Crossroads Chapter Tour stopped for a photograph at Historic Orr's Ranch in Skull Valley. Participating were 41 people in 14 vehicles. (Photo by Bryce Billings)

in Fairfield, which was Camp Floyd during the Utah War days of 1858-61. We had our old time members on hand to speak at each area. These included John Eldredge, Al Mulder, Roy Tea, Ouida Blanthorn, Joseph Lydell (author and Tooele historian), Jesse Petersen, Will Bagley, Marie Irvine, T. Michael Smith, A. Oscar Olson, and Linda Turner. We were pleased to have Stew Paulick of the Pony Express, Ed Otto of Trails West and a T-rail committee member, and Ray Kelsey with the BLM, share their knowledge.

On May 19 we went to western Utah's salt flats to remove and

a.m. in several vehicles and arrived at Donner Springs by 10 a.m. Chuck Milliken and Craig Fuller were already at work engineering and planning when some of us got there. Besides the two aforementioned people, T. Michael Smith, and his son Tom, A. Oscar Olson, Vern Gorzitze, Jesse and Nancy Petersen, Kathy Franzwa, Alex Eastburn, and Jeff Pashley also were there. Duane Carling of the Lincoln Highway Association and KNRS Radio personality Randy Holman helped us out as well.

Continued on Next Page

Expansive Chapter Plans for Regional Vice Presidents

By David Miller

Since the reorganization of the Southern Trails Chapter in 2009, the chapter has assumed responsibility under the leadership of Bert Eddins for designation of the Southern Route to California as a National Historic Trail. In so doing, the Southern Trails Chapter has assumed a major responsibility, since the Southern Historic Trails cover thousands of miles and pass through eight states—Arkansas, Arizona, California, Oklahoma, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah.

Membership in the chapter (about 120) is concentrated in Arizona, California and New Mexico, with chapter officers from Arizona, Oklahoma and Texas, and chapter members in an additional half-dozen states. In order to better serve the needs of this far-flung constituency, chapter officers are

proposing the establishment of five additional vice-presidential offices to the Southern Trails Chapter: New Mexico, Southern California, Oklahoma/Arkansas, Texas, and Utah. These five vice presidents will join existing chapter officers: President David Miller, Oklahoma; Vice President Reba Wells Grandrud, Arizona; Secretary John Fromm, Arizona; Treasurer Jud Mygatt, Texas; Webmaster Tom Jones, Arizona; and Historian Rose Ann Tompkins, Arizona. These proposed changes will be submitted to the chapter membership at the OCTA annual meeting in Lawrence, Kansas.

John Chafin Grave

The chapter is pleased to announce that the Las Cruces District Office of the Bureau of Land Management agreed to support the chapter's goal of marking the

grave of forty-niner John Chafin with an appropriate marker. This designation was the result of the hard work of chapter members including Tracy DeVault, Rose Ann Tompkins, Jere Krakow, and Reba Wells Grandrud, and the support of BLM officials including Bill Childress, Jane Childress, and Tom Phillips.

Convention Gathering

The Southern Trails Chapter Board invites all members or potential members of the Chapter who plan to attend the OCTA Annual Conference in Lawrence, KS, this August to sit together for dinner at the opening session on Aug. 10.

If you plan to attend and would like to sit with other Chapter members please RSVP to Southern Trails Chapter Treasurer Jud Mygatt at, jvn@onemain.com.

Crossroads Spring Tour

We successfully removed the four panels, and placed new metal supports. We are still using the old kiosks as sun covers. The new panels are free standing of the old kiosks. Dean Stephens died last winter, but we were able to visit with the new owner who assured us that we will have access to the site for future maintenance.

As part of our work that day, we also set a new panel at the Bidwell Pass Crossing of the trail.

This took some heavy digging as the ground there was very rocky. Thanks to all who helped on this long-time-coming project. All we need now is a dedication day and a fence-painting day—perhaps this fall.

We also want to give notice of the recent death of one of our very special friends and a hard-working Crossroads member, William J. 'Doc' Weaver. His many contributions and positive support

to Utah Crossroads will not be forgotten. He and his wonderful smile will be dearly missed. Our warmest condolences go out to his family.

Continued from Previous Page

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www.octa-trails.org

OCTA Loses Longtime Members, Trails Advocates

Sandra J. Waggoner

Recent OCTA Secretary Sandra J. Waggoner, Zephyrhills, FL, died April 12 while in hospice care following months of severe illnesses. A retired teacher from Warren Township Schools in Indianapolis, IN, Sandra was born on July 20, 1938, in Martin County Indiana. She grew up in Vincennes, IN, the former Capitol

of the Northwest Territory, along the Wabash River. Vincennes is home of the George Rogers Clark National Memorial, commemorating Clark's capture of Fort Knox after his small troop of soldiers traversed the river.

The fascination with Clark began a lifetime of research and travel

for Sandra as she later followed the expeditions of Lewis and Clark and became an active member and held leadership roles in OCTA attending national gatherings as recently as last year.

Sandra is survived by her two brothers, Max Waggoner, and David Waggoner.

Bill Robinson

Bill Robinson of Green River, WY, died March 29, after a year long battle with lung cancer. Bill and his wife Gail joined OCTA in 1992 and the trails soon became their passion and way of life.

Bill enjoyed the various activities, from the treks, the conventions, working on the

South Pass Survey, to attending nearly every meeting concerning the trails, and meeting with all of his trail buddies.

Bill's love of South Pass and his desire to save its pristine views were in evidence in June 2010 when he assisted a film crew in creating a short Public Service

Announcement entitled *Save South Pass*. Also filmed that day were scenes for "Spirit of the Pony Express."

Bill is featured in that movie "dowsing" for graves near Pacific Spring in South Pass. He was also involved in the 2011 Rock Springs convention.

Ken Martin

Longtime OCTA member Ken Martin died on March 22. He was a charter member of the KANZA Chapter and an organizer of the 2003 convention in Manhattan, KS. He was heavily involved in the production of *Across the Kansas Prairie*, an OCTA documentary film, and served as president of the KANZA Chapter. He was also a 28-

year member of the National Pony Express Association and was heavily involved in their annual ride, especially their 150th anniversary ride in 2010. He traversed the entire Pony Express National Historic Trail that summer and appears in the new documentary, *Spirit of the Pony Express*. According to C. J. LongHammer, director of the

film, it "exists only because of a small handful of dedicated people, (and) Ken deserves a huge amount of credit." His wife Arleta and daughter Alicia Keegan are also heavily involved in OCTA, and his grandchildren have been mainstays at numerous OCTA events throughout the years. His love and stewardship of the trails will most certainly be missed.

George Hesse

George Hesse, a long time CA-NV Chapter member and former president of the CA-NV Chapter of OCTA, has died at age 80. He and his wife Beverly were very active members, although they had not been able to attend OCTA

events in recent years due to health issues. Bev is remembered for her great photos of OCTA events.

George retired as the supervising investigator for the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office.

He was an active member of many Masonic organizations and other service organizations, as well as numerous historical societies.

He is survived by his six daughters and eight grandchildren.

**The Rocky Mountain Map Society &
The Texas Map Society present**



**The Mapping of North America:
The Westward Expansion Conference**

July 26-27, 2012




&

Map Fair of the West


July 28-29, 2012

Denver, CO

**The Rocky Mountain Map Society &
The Texas Map Society first joint event**

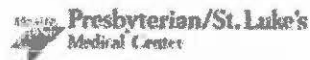
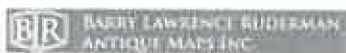
 **The Mapping of North America: The Westward Expansion** conference will focus on the exploration and mapping of the continent and the evolving concept of the frontier with presentations by twelve eminent authorities in the field of historical cartography.

Details and Registration at www.RMmaps.org

 **The Map Fair of the West** will be held in conjunction with the conference and will include sixteen international antiquarian map dealers exhibiting thousands of rare authentic antique maps.

Details at www.MapFairOfTheWest.org

Sponsored by:



Dick Davis

By Don Buck and Tom Hunt

Our dear friend and fellow trail enthusiast, Dick Davis, died at the age of 89, on March 25, 2012. In his professional life, Dick was a highly regarded investment broker in San Francisco. But his passion was the outdoor life.

Because Dick and his wife, Ginny, preferred to work quietly and unassumingly behind the scenes, many of the things they did for trail preservation, OCTA, and especially the California-Nevada Chapter have gone largely unnoticed. Their many contributions and accomplishments were honored when they received the chapter Life Time Achievement Award in 2002.

Although Dick had a wide-ranging interest in all the historic overland emigrant trails, his particular interest—and his great contribution to our knowledge of the trails—arose from researching and locating the Walker River-Sonora Pass Trail, the least known of all of the wagon routes over the Sierra Nevada and into the Great Central Valley of California.

In 1988, his article, “The Walker River Sonora Crossing” appeared in the *Overland Journal*. The pristine part of this trail that Dick spent so much time exploring is now protected in a wilderness area of the Sierra Nevada.

Ironically, the only other portion of an emigrant trail in California protected by a wilderness area was also of special interest to Dick—a small section of the Lassen Trail through the Ishi Wilderness along the divide between Mill Creek

and Deer Creek into the northern Sacramento Valley.

Dick was a talented artist who illustrated the texts of his many personal trail journals with marvelous drawings of trail-related scenes, sketch maps, and drawings of emigrant wagon parts.

Because of his interest in emigrant wagons, Dick became our preeminent authority on these wagons and wagon parts. He authored a two-part article in 1997 and 1998, “Where have all the wagons gone?” that appeared in the *Overland Journal*.

Over the years, Dick amassed through purchase and legal collection an impressive and probably unique collection of wagon artifacts. One of his goals was to preserve these historic articles by making them available in an educational way to the public. This required identification along with his wonderful illustrated sketches.

He worked with the Forest Service, state parks, and various museum curators to put together artifact displays at the Forest Service Ranger Station at Big Bend in the Tahoe National Forest, at the town museum in Tehama, the Tuolumne County Museum, and most recently at the Buckland Overland Station near Ft. Churchill in Nevada.

For the 1991 OCTA Convention in Sacramento, he organized an impressive artifact collection that ran for several months at the Sacramento History Museum in Old Town.

In addition to his interest in emigrant wagons, Dick anonymously and quietly made

arrangements with the Bancroft Library at the University of California to have printed, at his own expense, a full-sized reproduction of the famous 1857 George Goddard map of California. Proceeds from the sale of this map went to the CA-NV Chapter and copies were made available to public schools.

For the OCTA Convention in Chico, CA, in 1999, Dick made arrangements with the Huntington Library in San Marino, CA, to have enlarged reproductions of many of J. Goldsborough Bruff’s famous sketches, again at his own expense. These enlargements were displayed during the convention.

Perhaps the most enduring of all of Dick’s achievements will prove to be the establishment of the California-Nevada Chapter’s permanent OCTA Western Overland Trails Collection at the Special Collections Branch of the California State Library in Sacramento. Dick saw the need for an overland emigrant collection at the western end of the trail. With this vision and determination, Dick created a chapter search committee and made arrangements for meetings with directors of a number of potential research repositories over a two-year period which culminated in selecting the California State Library for the chapter sponsored collection. The establishment of this important collection was ratified by OCTA’s national board at the Casper Convention in 2001. A standing chapter Library Committee was subsequently formed with Dick as chairman.

Zeke Sicotte

Good fortune smiled on the CA-NV Chapter when Zeke Sicotte volunteered to become the Chapter Treasurer in 2002. For over 10 years he served with distinction, keeping clear and precise financial records and regularly presenting excellent reports to the Chapter Board and members. It was with sad and heavy hearts that we learned of Zeke's death on May 1.

Sheldon D. Sicotte was born in Oakland, CA. Nicknamed Zeke some time in his childhood, he has been known by that name to his many OCTA friends. He and wife Nancy joined OCTA in 1992. They combined OCTA outings with

travel for genealogical research. You could also find Zeke with his camera, seeking out photo opportunities of historic buildings and old, picturesque barns.

In addition to being CA-NV Chapter Treasurer, Zeke also chaired the NPS/OCTA Challenge Cost Share Program between 2001 and 2007. He served as Treasurer for the USS Hamner Reunion Association, and he volunteered as a docent for the Museum of American Heritage in Palo Alto. OCTA friends will also remember Zeke with his guitar or fiddle, making good, old-time music at OCTA music sessions.

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News from the Plains

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www.octa-trails.org



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OCTA Strategic Planning Workshop Held in March

The OCTA National Board held a Strategic Planning workshop March 2 in Independence, MO, in connection with the Mid-Year Board meeting. The workshop was conducted by an outside facilitator, who provided this report.

Among the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified are the following issues.

Strengths

- High level of current member involvement
- Engaged volunteers
- Virtual trail
- Website traffic
- 11 chapters can serve as resources
- \$1million endowment
- Knowledgeable membership
- Relatively wealthy membership
- Tours
- Local and NPS partnerships

Weaknesses

- Declining membership
- Aging membership
- Disconnected chapters
- Lack of trail identification
- Lack of sense of urgency among donors/members
- Difficult to measure success
- Competition from more needy non-profits
- Generational lack of interest in membership groups
- Lack of connection to lives of communities near trail
- Competition from other needy non-profits

Opportunities

- Tours/heritage tourism
- 30th Anniversary of trail organization

Leverage the knowledge of members

- Can tap un-tapped donors
- Corporate sponsorship can increase
- Institutional membership can increase
- Alternative energy companies may embrace org
- Distribution of film
- Potential for new partnerships

Threats

- Other trails facing funding cuts and organizational difficulties
- Disappearance of trail and physical evidence
- Loss of story
- Diminishing resources
- Wind farms and other development
- Changing demographic needs

The Board also identified as potential target audiences baby boomers, educators, hotel associations, convention and visitor bureaus, tour bus operators, legislators and town councils, elder hostels, and chambers of commerce.

The Board reviewed the marketing plan and creative ways that OCTA can measure its success to communicate to members, donors, and legislators. These include, economic impact, collaboration with tourism groups to define impact (hotel stays, restaurants, etc), attendance at events, educational opportunities (children at educational programs), web site traffic, number of members, and dollars raised.

During breakout sessions, teams wrote four-sentence cases

for becoming a member and/or providing financial support to OCTA.

While committees will likely have a role in defining tactics, it is up to OCTA leadership to define goals, objectives, and strategies.

Based on the meeting, the board noted that a strategic plan may include goals and objectives that relate to financial strength and stability (increase memberships by a specific amount or raise a certain amount of money), that meet new audience needs and organizational needs, and that foster wider awareness of OCTA and its accomplishments

Strategies could lead OCTA to educate tourism officials about OCTA resources, educate a broader audience about benefits of membership, and formalize a committee to secure corporate sponsorship/donors.

Tactics that may be employed include such items as a trail-long photo contest, speaking engagements, leveraging the knowledge of members, introducing the OCTA story to new audiences, employing systematic and strategic corporate outreach, and connecting with community foundations along the entire trail.

Board Development

The discussion reviewed the importance of every board member making an annual donation to OCTA over and above standard membership.

It is recommended that OCTA develop and implement a board giving policy.

National History Day Attracts Students

By Pat Fletcher

In 2011, National History Day received the National Humanities Medal from President Barack Obama. The White House ceremony acknowledged the importance of this premier education program for Junior and Senior High School students that "Teaches, Prepares, and Inspires."

Exactly what is National History Day? Where is its importance? And what does OCTA have to do with it?

In about September of every school year, teachers of students from 6th to 12th grade begin their conversations about history, weaving stories that create visual images and suggesting opportunities to tell those stories to a wide audience.

National History Day's annual theme offers nine categories for

participation: Individual and Group exhibit; Individual and Group performance; Individual and Group documentary; Individual and Group web site; or write a paper [Individual only].

Once he or she knows his/her theme and category, the student reads background research, may do interviews, collects sources for the bibliography, writes, constructs, and does anything and everything needed to interpret the important and relevant subject, for him or herself and the judges.

Judges? Is this a competition? Yes—First for the school; then the district; then the state; and finally the nation. History Day incorporates lots of learning, lots of work, and lots of fun! And yes, the students do all their own work. Dad can't lift the hammer; Mom can't make anything more than the

cookies for long sessions.

What about OCTA? Throughout our chapters—including headquarters—resource persons, supporters, and judges have been involved for many years. We are, after all, intensely interested in history. Do students write about trails? Not always, but the more that OCTAns participate, the more likely students *will* write about the times, the trails, and the people who interest us.

OCTAns need to reach out more to this program. There are never enough volunteers and of course never enough financial support. And OCTA needs this program, this interest, and these future members. Contact your local history teacher for more details.

Fernley Swale Cleanup Sept. 29

By Jim Moorman

Members of the CA-NV Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association are organizing a cleanup party Sept. 29 to remove trash that has been dumped in and near the Fernley Deep Sand Swales immediately north of Fernley, NV, and just south of the historic Central Pacific Railroad bed.

Sponsors supporting this event are the Fernley Department of Parks & Recreation, Trash Pros, the Fernley *Leader*, the U. S. Bureau of Land Management, the Fernley Preservation Society, and the Fernley Chamber of Commerce.

The Fernley Deep Sand Swales were created by the passage of thousands of pioneer covered wagons. They are the only example of Deep Sand Swales on the entire California Trail. These swales and the Central Pacific Railroad bed are wonderful historic resources of which we all can be very proud!

The cleanup will be held Saturday, Sept. 29, 2012, starting at 9 a.m. All OCTA members are invited to participate.

Volunteers are urged to bring rakes, scoop-type shovels, pitchforks and heavy duty, tough plastic trash bags. If you have a pick-up truck or trailer, which can be used for hauling trash to the

transfer station, it would be very much appreciated.

Fernley is about 35 miles east of Reno, on I-80. Take the East Fernley/Exit 48 off-ramp and continue north ¼ miles. We will meet just past Terrible's Casino, where the pavement ends and the dirt road begins.

Wear a hat, heavy duty work gloves and layered clothing. The temperature will be anywhere from cool to hot. Boots are recommended.

Workers should bring their own lunch, snacks, drinks, and plenty of water. For more information contact Jim Moorman at 775-223-6181 or by e-mail at moorman-trails@peoplepc.com.



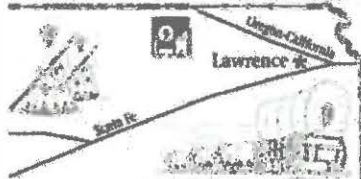
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Inside

Trails Centers.....6

Trail Era Skeleton.....10

Strategic Planning.....18

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