

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

Summer 2014

VOL XXIX NO. 3

Tours to Plum Creek, Mormon sites planned

OCTA to Gather in Nebraska

*By Candy Moulton
NFP Editor*

The Oregon-California Trails Association meets for its annual convention in Kearney, NE, Aug. 4-9 at the Holiday Inn.

The theme this year is "Drama on the Medicine Road" with talks and presentations by Gordon Yellowbear, tribal historian from the Southern Cheyenne-Arapaho tribe, Nancy Gillis, a member of the Pawnee Nation, and Joseph Marshall III, a Lakota from the Rosebud Reservation.

Other speakers include Nebraska State Historical Society Historian John Carter, OCTA Past President David Welch, and Loren Pospisil of Chimney Rock State Historic Site.

Jack Hultquist of Minden, NE, will demonstrate making photographs from glass negatives and there will be presentations about music and quilts related to the trail.

This year continuing education credit for teachers can be obtained through Central Community College and the University of

Nebraska at Kearney.

Among the tours are Mormon Trail sites north of the Platte River, the Plum Creek massacre site and cemetery, Pony Express stations, and trail sites along the Blue River including 32-Mile Station, Lone Tree Station, Spring Ranch, Pawnee Ranch, and Liberty Farm.

Other convention activities will involve the annual awards banquet, author's night, and a visit to Fort Kearny, that will involve demonstrations by reenactors.

BLM Rejects Mining Permit Along Hastings Cutoff

*From KSL- TV Reports
Salt Lake City*

The Bureau of Land Management has again rejected an effort by a mining company to resurrect a controversial project in a pristine chunk of unforgiving desert 20 miles north of Wendover, NV.

History buffs hotly oppose the project because it's near a historic trail — the one used by the ill-fated Donner Party in 1846.

Mesa Exploration hopes to eventually create a potash mine in a dried lakebed known as the Pilot Valley playa. The Donners crossed part of the stark-white playa

before they met their fate in the Sierra Nevada of California.

The BLM denied a prospecting permit to Mesa Exploration last year. The company is pursuing an appeal of that decision with the U.S. Interior Department Board of Land Appeals. The company submitted a new proposal aimed at settling the appeal. The BLM has rejected that plan as well, so the appeal will continue.

The controversy surrounds a harsh, surreal landscape a few miles northwest of the Bonneville Salt Flats. What looks like water is usually a mirage. Mountains appear to float on dry ground. The

horizon often seems lost in the shimmery distance.

"It's exactly what someone would have seen in 1846," said historian and OCTA member Will Bagley. "And there aren't many places left like that."

Bagley said a wagon train could travel about only 15 miles a day. Across the brutal salt flats area, people, mules and ox teams had to survive a 90-mile stretch without a source of drinkable water.

Bagley said it helps to get out to such remote, desolate areas to appreciate what those travelers faced.

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NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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CALENDAR

OCTA Convention
Aug. 4-9, 2014
Kearney, NE

OCTA Convention
Sept. 21-25, 2015
South Lake Tahoe

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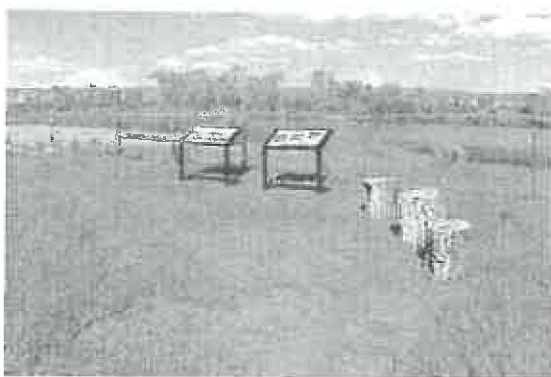
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New Emigrant Historical Park Open to Public

By Clint Gilchrist

"examined all our wagon-beds, selected two of the tightest and best made, took them off the axles, caulked them as tight as possible, and otherwise made them fit for boating, and then put them in the water. The next morning they were soaked tight.... A wagon was taken in pieces and put in one boat, and baggage put in the other, and rowed over... nearly 40 wagons were taken over that day." Sherlock Bristol described the difficult New Fork River crossing in July 1862.

Today, at this same place, the new Lander Trail New Fork River Crossing Historical Park is open to the public. The 100-acre park is located on the west bank of the New Fork River where tens of thousands of emigrants crossed using the new Lander Road and camped from 1859-69. Although under private ownership



Interpretive wayside signs provide information about the significance of the New Fork Crossing.

for 100 years, the property was never developed for agriculture and visitors now have a unique opportunity to experience a river setting much as emigrants encountered 150 years ago.

The park has been minimally developed with the vast majority



The New Fork Crossing dedication took place in late June. (Photos by Clint Gilchrist)

accessible only by foot traffic. Nine interpretive panels have been placed along a one-mile rustic nature trail down to the river and back along the Lander Trail corridor. The interpretation focuses on the daily lives of emigrants at the crossing and campsite relying heavily on 45 Lander Trail diary accounts. Accompanied by custom artwork, the emigrants' own words and experiences at the New Fork River take the visitor back in time. For those with limitations, a short 600 feet accessibility trail allows easy access to an overlook with a view of the emigrant era island and river channel.

The property is like an oasis in the middle of the Wyoming desert. Located along a branch of the Green River, the park is in a grove of hundreds of young and mature cottonwood trees. It has lush grass and willows, wildflowers, and includes a half mile of river frontage. Several of the old cottonwood trees in the park were recently dated through tree coring samples, with the

exciting news they were growing at the site during the emigrant era. The oldest tree is more than 180 years old (1833 or older). If only the trees could talk!

The park is unstaffed and open for day use during the summer. It is located 35 miles south of Pinedale, Wyoming with paved access all the way to the developed parking lot.

To date, 26 federal, state, local, non-profit, corporate and private organizations have contributed to the project. Thanks to unique agreements with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Shell, Ultra



Trails suitable for exploration are fully accessible to a portion of the new park in Sublette County, WY.

Resources, and PacifiCorp funded the purchase of the property to mitigate impact of development on the setting of the Lander Trail through the Pinedale Anticline natural gas field. The park is managed by the Sublette County Historical Society in Pinedale, WY, the parent organization of the Museum of the Mountain Man. OCTA has been a major development partner along with the National Park Service. More information and directions can be found at www.NewForkPark.com.

Fundraising Committee Chair Named



Melissa Shaw Jones, a member of the Southern Trails Chapter, has been appointed to the long-vacant position of chair

of the fundraising committee. As a Certified Financial Planner, Melissa will be available to help OCTAns with planned giving and estate planning issues.

Jones, from Irvine, CA., has ancestors who traveled the Mormon Trail with the Willie Handcart Company in 1856.

She says her love of the Oregon Trail includes growing up in and around Gresham, OR, and the Portland area. "We would ski on Mt. Hood and the Barlow Trail was common knowledge. I knew I had pioneer roots and I was very proud of that fact," she said.

Jones and her son Chris attended the 2010 OCTA Symposium in

Marysville, KS. Last year they attended the National OCTA meeting in Oregon City, OR. Both have joined the Southern Trails Chapter.

Jones says her full time job is a Certified Financial Planner with an insurance agency. She is also a registered representative selling securities and investments and has owned Accent Insurance Brokerage, teaching other financial planners how to write insurance products. Her husband, Douglas Jones also is an insurance and investment professional.

In the 1990s Jones helped her parents give away an apartment building as part of a Charitable Remainder Trust (CRT). "They worked with OHSU and the dental school for their planned giving. It was a great experience for them, and they have met wonderful people as a result of their planned giving. The lifetime income they received from the CRT has

made them feel safer and more comfortable with their lifestyle. I helped them create a wealth replacement trust for their five children, and they funded it with life insurance," she said.

In the last issue of *News from the Plains* John Krizek asked for someone who was familiar with OCTA and estate planning and planned giving. "It occurred to me my gifts may be helpful to others," Jones said.

"It's easy to encourage folks to include OCTA in their estate plan. Even a \$10,000 stated gift will help replace \$500 a year of income they might have given to the organization. When you're not here to give annually to the causes you believe in, then your gift to the endowment will keep your name and values going even after you are gone. You have a chance to be a Pioneer for the next generation!"

Kansas Trail Events Planned

Two fall events in Kansas will include presentations about the Cherokee, Santa Fe and Chisholm trails and include an Indian Powwow.

OCTA will sponsor a symposium in Newton, KS, during the weekend of Sept. 25-28 involving sessions related to the Cherokee Trail, the Santa Fe Trail, and the Chisholm Trail. These three trails come together near Newton, located north of Wichita.

An Indian powwow and special demonstrations are planned for an Alcove Spring event in Marshall County, KS, Sept. 26 and 27.

Have Something of Value You Would Like to Donate to OCTA?

Nebraska Chapter seeks Auction & Raffle Items

We are seeking items for the silent and live auctions, and also for the raffle we will hold at the 2014 OCTA Convention in Kearney, NE.

If you have something to contribute, please send a description and photo now and then bring the item with you to the convention, or mail it in advance.

Send the information/item to:

Barb Netherland, 160109 Cherry Lane, Mitchell, NE 69357,
bjneth49@gmail.com

Nancy Petersen, 553 S Blaine Ave, Minden, NE 68959
bilancy@hotmail.com

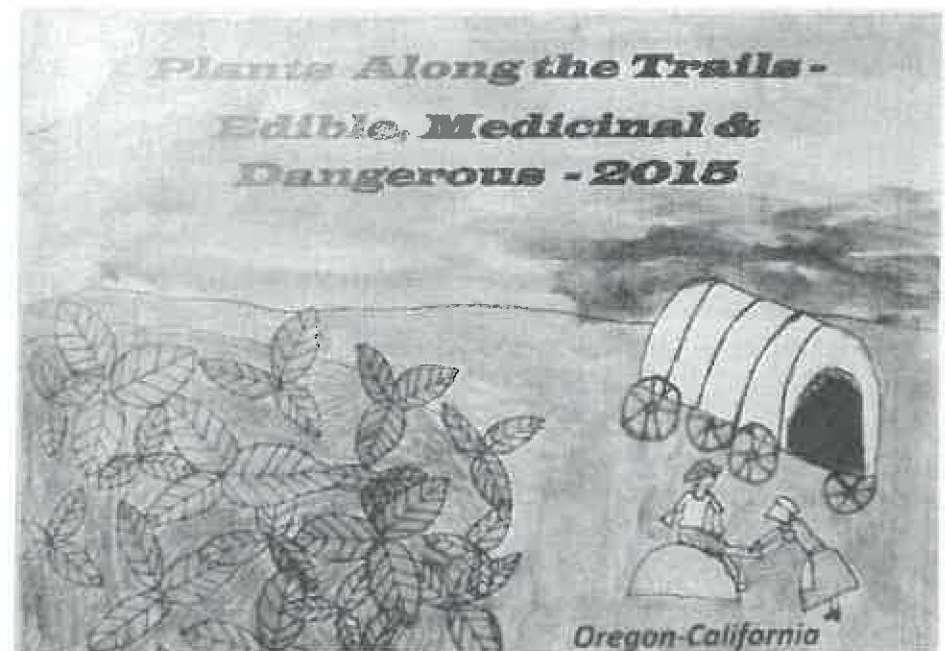
Book Presented, New Trail Calendar Available

*By Bill Hill,
Education Awards and
Publications Committee*

In the last issue of *News From the Plains* we announced the winner of our book raffle, Gene Mattuccei of South Lake Tahoe. Since then, with the assistance of the California-Nevada Chapter, a class set of *Reading, Writing and Riding Along the Oregon-California Trail* was presented to him. The books were well received by Matteucci and his fourth grade students at Tahoe Valley Elementary School. Our raffle for next year will commence in September when we will again be sending out notices and accepting post cards from teachers and schools for the 2015 drawing. 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.

Our calendar using elementary students' artwork is now being printed and will be available at the convention in Kearney. Our contest encourages teachers to delve a little deeper into a particular topic during the study of the westward migrations. Each year the topic changes, but it is always one that is both appropriate and interesting for children.

The 2015 theme was "Plants Along the Trails – Edible, Medicinal, and Dangerous." Students with their teachers' guidance researched the topic and then submitted artwork depicting it. During the selection process students had identified more than sixty-five different plants, which made the judging process both



*OCTA calendars feature the artwork of students from across the country.
(Photo by Bill Hill)*

very interesting and difficult.

The artwork of the 14 students selected depicted different plants used or avoided by the emigrants and Indians. Each student whose artwork was 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 also thank the teachers for their cooperation and for integrating our project into their busy schedules. This project uses an interdisciplinary approach in teaching by combining both history and art. It is one of the ways OCTA helps to introduce students to the trails.

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

Lorelai Slaydon, c/o Mrs. Van Nostrand, Gold View Elementary School, San Ramon, CA; Grace Ryan and Izzy Young, c/o Mrs. Gorman, John Paul II Catholic School, Overland Park, KS; Erica Hinckley, c/o Mrs. Neilsen,

Upland Terrace, Salt Lake City, UT; Akira Christensen, Mady Shepherd, Kate Siddoway, Gabriella H. Abo, Anya Malugin, Leah Hicks, Wyatt Bennett, Brooke Hunsaker, Olivia Richardson, and Hope Jackson, all c/o Mrs. Hansen, Upland Terrace, Salt Lake City, UT.

The cost of the calendar is only \$10. Be sure to order yours from headquarters now. There are only a limited number available for sale.

Contest guidelines for our 2016 calendar project "Emigrant and Indian Children's Toys and Games" can be viewed on OCTA's web site. Please encourage your children and grandchildren to tell their teachers about the project and to look at the web site. If a school or teacher does not have sufficient time to devote to the project, individual students may still enter the contest and their artwork will be judged just as impartially as those submitted by a school/teacher.

Preserving and Creating Trail Resources

By Travis Boley
tboley@indepmo.org

I grew up in a small town along the Missouri River, about an hour east of Kansas City. The National Trails System was literally both my front yard and back yard in Lexington, MO. The Santa Fe Trail originally ran just outside my back door. Lewis & Clark camped along the nearby river banks. The homes of two of the Pony Express founders were just around the corner from my house. The steamboat *Saluda*, carrying hundreds of Mormon Pioneers, exploded along the banks of my hometown, killing most aboard. (The bell from the *Saluda* today hangs on the corner of 13th and Franklin, at the exact spot where my bedroom used to be before that home burned down in the early 1990s.) Jesse James robbed a bank there (and was shot in the lung for his troubles). A famous Civil War battle raged for three days there in September 1861, and the Confederates used hemp bales to overtake the Union positions high on the bluff (a state park commemorates the site today). Over 50 antebellum homes, mansions, and plantations still exist there in what was deemed a modern-day Athens in the mid-19th century. To say that I've always had one foot planted firmly in the past is an incredible understatement.

Today, my office stands beside the Oregon/California/Santa Fe Trail, just a few blocks south of

the Independence Square and a few miles south of where these three trails meet the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail along the Missouri River in Sugar Creek, MO, at a site known as the Wayne City Landing. Today, the Wayne City Landing is a park, complete with interpretation, a walking trail, and a prominent entrance sign. The Three Trails Corridor extends south from the Missouri River and then turns west into Kansas, sharing the same route for about 40 miles to a spot known as the Gardner Junction. This is the site where the Santa Fe Trail turns to the southwest and the Oregon/California Trail continues west toward Lawrence and Topeka. Today, it is the site of a small park, complete with interpretation, a walking trail, a shelter, and a prominent entrance sign.

Basically, we have bookended the Three Trails Corridor with anchor points, and over the past decade, many other significant developments occurred along this corridor. Land acquisition for parks, stretches of hiking/biking trails built, bridges over highways constructed, new exhibits installed, auto tour route signs planted along roadways, museums with new trail exhibits, historic homes fleshing out their connection to the trails, and increasing acknowledgement from local elected officials have created an environment where it suddenly became feasible to actually build a retracement trail across the entire metro area, connecting

these remaining historic buildings and sites, cemeteries, and wagon swales.

At the same time, miles of riverfront trail were being built along the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail corridor. Kansas built a new state park at the confluence of the Missouri and Kansas Rivers, a spot where Lewis & Clark camped for three days. A new Lewis & Clark statue was erected in Case Park, on the west side of downtown high on the bluff overlooking the river juncture. Kansas City and various suburbs installed riverfront interpretation, telling the story of the expedition.

Within the past few months, the old Town of Kansas site saw the installation of nine new interpretive panels along the riverfront trail in downtown Kansas City, telling the story of Westport Landing and its connection to the Westport Route of the Santa Fe Trail as well as the story of Lewis & Clark. Suddenly, a vision of connecting the four trails via a retracement trail looked more and more viable.

Enter the Katy Trail. Widely regarded as one of the most successful rail to trail conversions in the country, the Katy Trail begins in the suburbs of St. Louis and ends up in southwest Missouri, about an hour southeast of Kansas City. A few years ago, a dam owned by a St. Louis utility collapsed, completely destroying

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Kansas City Trail Resources

Continued from Page 6

a state park. Part of the mitigation for the damage included the utility allowing the Katy to use the Rock Island Line (which they owned) to build an extension into Kansas City. That extension will meet the Three Trail Corridor near 63rd & Blue Ridge Boulevard in the suburb of Raytown.

Last June, I called together the local leaders of the three trail associations and the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association. I asked them if they would be interested in holding their March 2014 board meetings in Independence and then following that up with a two-day Kansas City Trails Conference. I wanted to bring together the non-profits, our National Park Service colleagues, our local elected officials, and the staffs of the various municipalities to first tour the metro and show everyone what was already built and then to spend a day talking about how it was built and what we might do to advance that toward a complete retracement trail along Kansas City's four National Historic Trails.

This all came to fruition on March 12-15, 2014. The boards of the three trail associations met at the Drury Inn in Independence on the first two days. On Friday, March 14, we filled two busses with 100 people and set out to show the attendees the various sites that were developed in the metro area in the past decade. Finally on Saturday, March 15, we convened at the National Frontier Trails Museum in Independence and began a discussion on how to move forward with completing our

retracement trails.

Steve Rhoades, a local landscape architect, spoke about how developments were funded in the past. Kristin Van Fleet, a landscape architect with the Santa Fe trails office of the National Park Service, talked both about the potential alignments we might use for the retracement trail as well as the auto tour route sign plans her office is funding, both here in Kansas City and nationwide. The morning climaxed with a presentation from Lou Austin, the leader of Kansas City's Three Trails Community Improvement District (CID) in south Kansas City. He showed how Kansas City is using the corridor as an economic development tool. New bridges over interstates and highways, hiking/biking trail, parks, and interpretation are already prominently in place, and the massive highway interchange (I-470/I-435/I-49/US71) was renamed the Three Trails Crossing Memorial Highway. Hundreds of thousands of vehicles pass through this interchange every day, and the signing and massive wagon silhouettes along the highway brand the area as distinctively trail related. The crowning achievement of the Three Trails CID is bringing the new Cerner Corporation campus to the area. A new 4.25 million square foot office complex will be built along the trail, eventually employing 14,000 people. And Cerner will build the 4,500 foot section of trail across their campus, joining trail already built to the east and west of the development.

After lunch (which included an appearance by "Harry Truman"

talking about his family's connection to the trails), we opened the session to a moderated discussion. Gordon Julich of Jackson County Parks and Deb Ridgway, the bike/pedestrian coordinator for Kansas City, spoke extensively of their plans for areas they manage. Many ideas were generated and saved to ponder. But importantly, most of the key decision makers now know one another, and there is a shared sentiment to make Kansas City the laboratory on how to actually build up National Historic Trails in an urban setting. We believe this will bring economic opportunities, beautify the area, bring community pride, and help kick-start a latent tourism industry related to the trails. The Kansas City area only really has one National Park: the Harry Truman Home. But now we have a chance to essentially build what might be deemed a long, linear national park of sorts, connecting the remaining sites related to Kansas City's 19th century trails.

Don't Miss E-News

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Also, check your spam settings to ensure our E-News isn't bounced from your account.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Good News for Rut Nuts

By John Krizek
jkrizek33@gmail.com

Welcome to the favorite time of year for Rut Nuts. I trust you're all out there smelling the sagebrush, and smiling—or at least thinking about it, if not preparing to do so.

I trust also that come August we'll all be on the road to Kearney, NE, for our 2014 convention. Kearney, in the heart of Merrill Mattes country.

Merrill Mattes, the preeminent overland scholar most of us never had the opportunity to meet, whose *Platte River Road Narratives* remains one of the primary works of trail history, and whose collection anchors the OCTA research library at the National Frontier Trails Center in Independence. Kearney, where so much of the trail traffic funneled through the "Great American Desert," following the Platte River to the West, and so much history abounds. It should be a great convention.

There is other news of importance to share.

The long-awaited upgraded OCTA web site is up and running, with the framework in place and the work of "repopulating" with critical ingredients well under way. As web sites always are, this one will be a work in progress, but Internet Committee chair Marley Shurtleff and web editor Kathy Buob are diligently managing it. Check it out at www.octa-trails.org.

I'm pleased to announce the appointment of Melissa Shaw Jones as fundraising committee chair. This position has been long vacant, and we look forward to pursuing this avenue, which is so important to OCTA's future. Melissa is introduced elsewhere in this issue.

When I announced the goal of increasing our membership by 300 by the end of my term of office, we threw in as a challenge to our chapters the carrot of a free registration to an OCTA convention if they reached a growth target as laid out by membership chairman Duane Iles.

The Southern Trails Chapter—with a growth of 22 members between last October and March 31—was provided with the first such award. They'll provide this registration—plus a bus tour—to a new member who has not yet attended one of our conventions. We hope others will follow.

With the completion of the New Fork River Crossing park near Pinedale, WY, in June, a great new showcase of trail history is now available for public enjoyment—thanks to Clint Gilchrist, the Sublette County Historical Society, and the National Park Service.

The first five nominees for the newly established OCTA Hall of Fame will be announced at the annual convention with a mailed ballot vote to be held at a later date.

Plans are under way for two OCTA symposia in Kansas the

last week of September: One at Alcove Springs, the recipient of a National Park Foundation grant aimed at helping people connect with their national parks and heritage sites, and one at Newton, where being at a crossroads of the Santa Fe and Cherokee Trails has stimulated interest in possibly starting a new chapter. Partner considerations led to the simultaneous timing.

There's more—there always is. Keep in touch—with your chapter, and all the other Rut Nuts in it. Let's enjoy keeping history alive.

OCTA Film is a Hit with Oregon Middle School Students

The OCTA documentary, *In Pursuit of a Dream*, was featured at the Annual Preservation Awards program of the Corvallis, OR, Preservation Society. Candy Moulton, the film's writer/producer, was on hand to introduce the film and answer questions about the making of the documentary as well as other OCTA activities.

Following the showing, students who attended shared so much information with their fellow classmates and teachers that the film was subsequently shown at an end-of-the-year film festival in the local middle school. Copies were purchased for future use in the local schools.

FROM THE HQ MANAGER ---

Funds Being Raised to Replace Statue

*By Kathy Conway
Headquarters Manager*



One person has already been sentenced to jail for the theft and destruction of the Pioneer Woman Statue. Two others face trial.

Last summer the Pioneer Woman Statue was removed from the grounds of the National Frontier Trails Museum and later destroyed to be sold as scrap metal.

One the three people accused of stealing the statue pled guilty and was sentenced to seven years in prison. The others are still awaiting trial.

A special fund has been established for replacing the statue and the Friends of the National Frontier Museum are accepting contributions with a goal of having the necessary funds raised by the end of this summer.

The Pioneer Woman Statue (with child) was such a remarkable art piece. It symbolized so much to those who understand the enormous struggles and determination it took to leave all behind and strike out across the unknown western landscape for a better life in Oregon or California. Countless visitors to the museum would come to the courtyard where the statue stood to pause and admire the work and most often take her picture.

If you would like to help with the Pioneer Woman Statue project, please consider a donation in her honor by sending your check to the Friends of the NFTM Statue Fund, 318 W Pacific, Independence, Mo 64050. You may also call the museum at 816-252-7582 to donate via a credit card.



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Logo Pins, Patches, Pendants, Decals, Bumper Stickers and Hats**

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NEW MEMBERS

The following are new members of OCTA who have joined since the last publication of *News From the Plains*:

Linda Ard, Minden, NE
Lindsey Beers, Medford, OR
Barbara Birge, Charlotte, NC
Mr Kim Boddie, Bend, OR
Rod Booth, Lenexa, KS
Cheryl Bradford, Vale, OR
Jeff Broome, Littleton, CO
Susan Buchel, Garden City, ID
Marie Erickson, Salt Lake City, UT
Anita Fickle, Mountain Home, ID
Jim and Dee Goodspeed, Coloma, CA
Phillip Gordon & Philippa Newfield, San Francisco, CA
Hugh Harrington, Milledgeville, GA
Emiline Hogg, Caldwell, ID
Dianne Jennings, Minden, NV
Pamela Jordan, Turner, OR
Terra Kemper, Huntington, OR
Katherine Kirk, Boise, ID
Steven Lee, Clarkston, WA
Gary/Nancy Makey, Idaho Falls, ID
Donna Middleton, Fullerton, CA
Audrey Pavla, Norco, CA
Perry Randall, Chandler, TX
Catherine Rice, Valencia, CA
Eydie Ridder, Baraboo, WI
Vern Segelke, Danville, CA
Larry Short, Independence, MO
David Smith, Chico, CA
Kenneth Smith, Oroville, CA
Allan Soboleski, Belle Plaine, MN
David Stearns, Boise, ID
Michael Strodtman, Bucklin, KS
Evans Turpin, Iraan, TX

OCTA Intern Develops Social Media Platforms

By Kelsey Sackrey
OCTA Marketing Intern

I'm spending 2013-14 as OCTA's PR/Marketing intern, and one of my chief tasks is to develop social media opportunities for the association.

There are various forms of social media, and we will focus on a handful of them. OCTA already has a Facebook page, which allows us to post stories, images, and links relative to our mission and allows the end-users to engage us (and each other) in a conversation on myriad trail topics. We are in the process of building three other forms of social media: Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest.

Twitter is quite a bit different from the four forms of social media OCTA will have later this year. You are given very limited amounts of space (140 characters, to be exact) in which to write messages that encourage others to re-post and explore any links you might add in your message. Whereas Facebook is largely speaking to an audience that has to "like" you, Twitter reaches anyone who searches certain keywords, such as "gold rush" or "Oregon Trail" or "Donner Party."

Instagram is photo-based form of media, which allows people to see historical sites related to the trail in one arena. And finally, OCTA is building a Pinterest account, which will house collections of similar topics and will allow people to see other things similar to your own items that other people have posted.

I'm also working on a film project that will be based

in Kansas City for its first "episode." It will take viewers through different places in the metropolitan area and explore the history of these places and what they are today. Westport, Westport Landing, West Bottoms, the River Market, Wayne City Landing, the Independence Square, and Shawnee Mission are but a few areas to be explored.

Another project I'm working on is the compilation of teacher resources so that we can give educators correct trail-site information and locations close to their schools. We want to encourage the active learning of history, and Kansas City has more developed miles of recreational trail and more parks and historic sites relative to trail history than any other metropolis in America. We can develop the model here on how to engage educators and students on-the-ground instead of entirely out of a textbook. Already, OCTA's new web site houses numerous educational resources. This will be yet another online tool that we can share with teachers and students.

I will also be putting together a Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation grant to help facilitate bringing at-risk youth to places like the National Frontier Trails Museum in Independence, Wayne City Landing in Sugar Creek, and the Town of Kansas site in downtown Kansas City. These places all share commonality between the Lewis & Clark story and the story of overland wagon travel.

Finally, I am working to help develop marketing outreach efforts for OCTA's upcoming convention.

Annual Fund Drive Raises \$23,000

We wish to thank all members who donated to our Annual Drive.

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

Mary Anderson
Lorraine Bennett
William Braden
Lloyd Brownell

Brynn Burns-Holm
Donald Davis
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Dan Dunne
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Sandy Harding, left, and Sharon Steenson, right, manage the Weaver Hotel. Note the Business Sponsor sticker in the window. (Photo by Duane Iles)

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Canyon Creek Idaho Stage Station Preservation Efforts

By Jerry Eichhorst

Located in a beautiful valley on a small stream about 10 miles north of Mountain Home, ID, Canyon Creek was a popular camping location on the Oregon Trail. A stage station was built about 1874 to serve the overland road stages and freighters traveling from Kelton, UT, to Boise and the Rocky Bar area mines. Built of rock with mortar containing deer hair, the structure survived quite well until a fire destroyed the roof. Although many walls are still in good shape, others are leaning or have fallen down. The structure is at a critical point if it is to be preserved to its original state as show at right.

The station is a unique historical structure because of the age and easy access for the public. This important site is listed in the Oregon Trail NHT Comprehensive Management Plan:

Canyon Creek Station was another stage station used during the later years of the Oregon Trail. The station was located where the trail crossed Canyon Creek. The availability of water and grass made the creek bottoms a favorite camping spot for emigrants. The station was a private residence until the 1970s, when a fire gutted the structure. The rock walls are all that remain.

Stan Norstebon and his family own the station site and the small valley oasis. They have been

extremely supportive of IOCTA for many years, hosting bus tours and regular visits to the station. Stan received the OCTA Friends of the Trail award in 2013.

Recently the family has been searching for a means to restore the station and/or transfer ownership to an organization that could properly care for the station going forward. I have worked



with the family for many years in this endeavor. Unfortunately, our efforts appeared to reach dead ends as local and state government organizations do not have the funding available to preserve the station.

Within the last couple of years, Katherine Kirk, Director of the Idaho Heritage Trust (IHT), became involved with the effort. IHT specializes in preserving historical buildings and other sites within Idaho. Katherine's great interest in preserving the station has been a blessing to the process. In addition, Katherine is a new IOCTA member. With trained historical architects and masons available, IHT can provide

the expertise needed for such a project.

Terry Heslin, IOCTA member and Outdoor Recreation Planner with the BLM in Boise, also shares an interest in preserving the station. We have discussed preservation prospects many times. In early April, Terry arranged for me to lead a number of BLM people on a tour of the Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway. We stopped at the station and talked with the Norstebons for some time about preservation options involving the BLM. Many of the BLM members had never been to the site and were very interested in the preservation effort.

On Monday, April 21, members of the Norstebon family, BLM, Idaho Heritage Trust, and IOCTA met at the Canyon Creek Stage Station to discuss its preservation. A very productive meeting was held on the lawn of the station.

In just a few weeks this spring, the preservation effort has gone from a dead-ended dream to a promising reality. As a result of the ongoing work by many people, several major steps have been achieved:

1. The BLM is very interested in receiving the donated stage station site.
2. Work is commencing to accomplish the transfer of ownership by the end of the year.

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BLM Rejects Permit in Utah

Continued from Page 1

The historic trail is still visible in some places, though enhanced by the tires of modern vehicles. Congress gave it special protection in 1992 as part of the historic California Trail. The portion that runs through Pilot Valley is the Hastings Cutoff used by only a few wagon trains.

"Maybe a thousand immigrants came through this section of trail," said T. Michael Smith, an archaeologist and past president of the Utah Chapter of OCTA. "Some of those (travelers) almost every American knows, like the Donner Party."

The California-bound emigrants followed such a God-forsaken route because they were persuaded by a promoter named Lansford Hastings that it would save time and distance, a promise that proved faulty.

"This is hard country," Bagley said, "and it was no shortcut."

In the midst of the desolation, there is a possibility of economic development if the mining company gets its way. Mesa Exploration wants to drill the

playa to see if there's enough potash to make mining feasible. Potash is used for fertilizer.

"We think there is enough that we are interested in going out and testing it out and finding out," said J. Wallace Gwynn, consulting geologist for Mesa Exploration.

If the company finds an economically exploitable concentration of potash and wins approval for mining, it could bring 20 to 50 jobs to the Wendover area, according to Emily Carter, mayor of West Wendover, Nevada.

"Actually, anything that would bring economic diversification to the community would be a great benefit," Carter said.

Traces of the historic trail are still visible on the playa, according to BLM officials. Mesa Exploration promises to stay at least a mile away from those traces and to minimize the visual impact.

"Mesa has committed to doing everything they could to make that as unobvious as you can make it," Gwynn said.

Trail buffs, though, believe the

project will inevitably disrupt the desolate view that confronted early travelers.

"We need, in the mix of life, to preserve some space for special places," Smith said. "And this is one of those."

Mayor Carter didn't dispute that premise but argued that a balance needs to be struck.

"I do agree that there should be some preservation," she said, "but there's a fine line between preserving the history and moving forward to a better future."

The historic vistas need to be protected, Bagley said.

"This landscape matters," he said, "because if we let it be destroyed, we've stolen it from our grandchildren."

BLM official Kevin Oliver said the agency carefully considered the company's new proposal but decided not to accept it or to enter into negotiations. That means the company appeal will continue, a process expected to take another year or two.

Canyon Creek Stage Station

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3. A preservation plan with cost estimates for various levels of restoration will be developed in the next few months by Fred Walters, a noted historical architect who has done many restoration projects throughout Idaho and the West.

4. IHT and IOCTA have pledged money to the project for preliminary stabilization efforts.

Work started this spring. The planned work for this year consists of stabilizing the west wall and developing plans for restoration options.

A great deal of work and money will still be needed to restore the stage station. One idea suggested to provide funding is through the creation of a "Friends" organization. Other ideas for fundraising are also desired. IHT

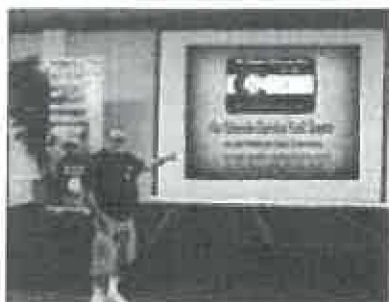
has offered to match the funds that are obtained.

Although it will take a number of years to complete the preservation effort, I am happy that IOCTA is involved with the effort. I believe this will be a great project and am looking forward to the effort.

Please let me know if you are interested in helping with preserving the Canyon Creek Stage Station.

Colorado Chapter Shares Trail Stories

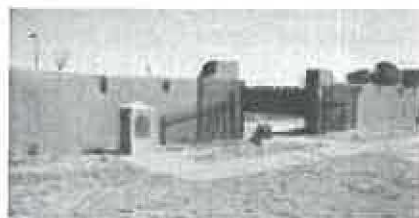
*By Berl Meyer,
Chapter President*



Pat and I recently attended a great five-day nature conference in Gatlinburg, TN, sponsored by the Kentucky Society of Natural History, of which I am Vice President. Gatlinburg is the northern gateway to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

In Cherokee, NC, I gave a presentation on the Cherokees and The Cherokee Trail. It was very well-received as less is known about this historic trail in the East. It was just a little different from the presentation that I gave in Colorado Springs last summer. I included more on the eastern band of Cherokees who live in the border lands of the Smokies. I explained that the Trail of Tears was just the beginning of the Cherokee story and that the people eventually traveled to the California gold fields.

I met a park ranger in the new Clingmans Dome visitor center who had worked for a few years with the National Park Service in Utah and was familiar with the Cherokee Trail.



Fort Vasquez

On May 17 the chapter had a meeting at Fort Vasquez 32 miles north of Denver on highway 85. We started out with a general meeting followed by a presentation about the fort by William Crowley, Chief of Operations there at the fort. He gave a brief history of the fort's importance to the era of the fur trappers and the Cherokee Trail. We would like to request that if you are going up Highway 85 please stop in at Fort Vasquez, and sign their guestbook to demonstrate your interest in the Fort as it relates to the Cherokee Trail.

Our mapping volunteers, Rich Deisch, Bruce Watson, Bill Burr, Roger Hanson, John Murphy, and Gary Dissette, have been researching and calculating the map points of the Cherokee Trail in Colorado. The work done by these folks has been very accurate and professional. Researching the survey notes is very meticulous work and takes a good set of eyes. We still need a few more good eyes for our mapping. The research is done in Douglas and

El Paso Counties, but field work still needs to be done. The work in these two counties should be completed this summer.

Pueblo County research is mostly complete; field work needs to be done. Larimer County research also is mostly complete, but there is still a need for field work.

In Otero County, both research and field work need to be done but should be completed summer of 2015.

We appreciate Rich, Bruce, Bill, Roger, John, and Gary for all the work that they do on mapping the Colorado segments of the Cherokee Trail. Their efforts, one day soon, will pay off in making the Cherokee Trail a National Historic Trail.



The Pioneer History Museum.

We met in late June at the Colorado Springs Pioneer Museum in Colorado Springs, CO, with special guest speaker Dr. Michael L. Olsen, Vice President of the Santa Fe Trail Association. He intended to talk about his

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Colorado Chapter

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newly published book, *That Broad and Beckoning Highway: The Santa Fe Trail and the Rush for Gold in California and Colorado*.

Dr. Olsen has published this work through the National Park Service and you can download it free at: <http://www.nps.gov/safe/historyculture/upload/Olsen-Final-Gold-Rush-Aug-2013-2.docx>

We also have two other outings planned this summer. One will head to Fort Garland and the Highway of Legends, July 18-20, and another to Casper, WY, in conjunction with the Loveland Historical Society. For more information on these treks, please visit: http://www.octa-colorado.org/outing_2014.html

Ilene Gorzitze Receives Huntsman Award

By Lisa Schencker
The Salt Lake Tribune

When teacher Ilene Gorzitze retired, she kept teaching — for free. Gorzitze, now 82, has volunteered at several area schools, teaching physical education and keeping kids supplied with goodies, for about two decades.

“My grandchildren were here and I got hooked on it,” Gorzitze said, referring to her volunteer work at Upland Terrace Elementary in East Millcreek. Gorzitze, an OCTA member and wife of past OCTA president Vern Gorzitze, along with 10 educators, was honored this spring with prestigious Huntsman Awards for Excellence in Education this year. Winners receive \$10,000 each. A committee chose winners from a pool of nominees.

Before retiring, Gorzitze taught physical education and health and worked as the athletic director at Highland High in Salt Lake City. After retiring, she began volunteering at Upland Terrace, teaching as many as 10 hours of PE classes a week.

That was before the school had a PE specialist, meaning that Gorzitze’s PE classes were the only ones the kids got.

Gorzitze is also a bargain shopper extraordinaire who uses her skills to keep the schools stocked with PE supplies and prizes for events such as the Mountain Man Rendezvous. Years ago, she created an entire workout room at Upland Terrace.

Upon announcing the award to Gorzitze, Huntsman told her that she has to spend the \$10,000 on herself.



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KC Area Trail Sites Explored

*By Dick Nelson
Chapter President*

The Kansas City Trails Conference, in conjunction with the OCTA Mid-Year Board meeting, was held in Independence, MO, in March. Also attending were the Santa Fe Trail Association and the Lewis & Clark Trail Association. The Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association also participated. Each group held its own Board meeting while here.

One of the days was devoted to bus tours of the Kansas City metro area with two full buses covering a lot of ground in the tour. Participants were shown a lot of new signage as well as most of the trail related sites in the area.

Suffice it to say there is much happening in Kansas City when it comes to trail related happenings and much progress is being made.

Trails Head Chapter sponsored a walking tour of the historic River Market area in Kansas City, MO, on May 10. We had a good turnout and fine weather. Ross Marshall led the tour and gave the walkers a great history lesson on the beginnings of downtown Kansas City from the Missouri River to Westport and beyond.

Other chapter events will be held throughout the summer and several members are planning to attend the convention in August in Kearney, NE.

Alcove Springs Receives 2014 Active Trails Grant From National Park Foundation

The Oregon and California National Historic Trails are one of 37 national parks selected to receive a 2014 Active Trails grant from the National Park Foundation, the official charity of America's national parks.

Now in its sixth year, the Active Trails program supports healthy living by getting people out and active in national parks through projects that help restore, protect, and/or create land and water trails across the country. These projects include hands-on learning, hiking, kayaking, snowshoeing, volunteering, and more.

"Through the Active Trails program, people across the country are connecting with their national parks, discovering more ways to lead active and healthy lives, and giving back to the places they love," said Neil Mulholland, President and CEO of the National Park Foundation. "These grants are critical to helping with ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance the 17,000 miles of land and water trails across the National Park System."

The grant project will complete the first phase of the Development Concept Plan for Alcove Spring Park and Independence Crossing, a unique and important site on the Oregon and California National Historic Trails in Kansas. It will involve the local community and volunteer groups in building or renovating segments of historic and recreational trail. The work will complete a network of trails accessing all the major historic sites and other important destinations across the park. In addition, this project will include

various kinds of public events to attract new users to the park. Events will include volunteer trail building days, educational hikes and tours on cultural and natural topics, a trail run/walk event using the park trail network, and a Pawnee War Dance and tribal listening session, all coordinated by project partner The Alcove Spring Historical Trust and other local groups.

"This grant provides invaluable support to the volunteers in the communities of Blue Rapids and Marysville, KS, to maintain and enhance their park. The value of these local partners cannot be underestimated, as they are committed to completing the day-to-day, on the ground work of developing and preserving this highly significant historic site," said Aaron Mahr, Superintendent of the Oregon and California National Historic Trails.

Since 2008, the National Park Foundation has granted nearly \$2.4 million through its Active Trails program. To date, Active Trails has engaged more than 5,900 volunteers and 327 project partners who combined have contributed more than 30,000 hours to help promote, refurbish, or build national park trails.

"The National Park Foundation's Active Trails program provides vital funding that supports our national parks as centers of healthy outdoor activity for families and communities across the nation," said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. "The land and water trails maintained by the National Park

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Chapter To Learn about Historic Tree Blazes Along Trail

By A. Oscar Olson

Crossroads has had a slow start this spring, but we are gathering speed. Our spring membership meeting held April 24, was well attended. We heard from Archeologist Bob Leonard of the Richfield (Utah) National Forest Service who spoke to us on the Fish Lake Cut-Off of the Old Spanish Trail. As time goes on we are gathering more interest throughout Utah in this area which became the Salt Lake/Los Angeles Road during westward migration days. He spoke to us on more new discoveries on the Fish Lake Cut-Off (a trail short-cut used during summer months of 1830-1850). His lecture included many photos of evidence of trail history and usage. We also held a field trip later in May in this area.

Work is still ongoing to make trades for better rails for our rail post projects—two (pounds) for one.

Our fall social is set for Sept. 5 at

Active Trails

Continued from Page 16

Service invite visitors to explore natural and cultural beauty, and these grants will expand these great opportunities to even more visitors.”

Among supporters of the National Park Foundation are the Coca-Cola Company, The Coca-Cola Foundation, Subaru, Disney, and the Scooby Foundation.

our usual Fort Douglas Museum gathering room.

In late October the Utah BLM will hold a symposium for its employees to share information about the trails in Utah.

Crossroads will be involved with this if all goes as planned.

Although not an OCTA member, perhaps some who have roamed western Utah will know the name of Cecil Garland. He passed away on May 11, 2014, age 88, in Calla, UT. He was acquainted with Pony Express and Lincoln Highway sites. He was legendary in his

pursuit of desert land and water preservation. He fought the MX missile scheme in the 1980s and more recently the Nevada water proposals. A memorial service will be held Sept. 6, in Calla.

Work parties are yet to be organized but this year we will undertake projects at Donner Springs with weed removal, phragmite control (in the pond), as well as general maintenance.

We want to remind everyone to try to attend the OCTA Convention in Kearney, NE, this August.

Carson River Route Historical Nomination Being Processed

By Frank Tortorich

The nomination for the Carson River Route of the California Trail has been sent to the California Office of Historic Preservation to be placed on the National Register of Historic sites.

This has been in the works going back to the 1980s. The CA-NV chapter has been diligent in keeping track and prodding the Forest Service for all these years to prepare the nomination. Over the years there have been three major archaeological surveys of this segment from Carson Pass to Sly Park. This is about 40 to 50 miles with numerous class I trail segment. West Pass is the highest pass traveled by wagons during the peak of the gold rush at 9600 feet.



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Idaho Members Get Out on the Trail

*By Jerry Eichhorst
Idaho Chapter President*

The Idaho Chapter welcomed Spring with meetings and an outing on the Oregon Trail near Massacre Rocks on Saturday, May 3. Twenty people attended a convention planning meeting and a chapter business meeting at Perkins Restaurant in Pocatello. After lunch the group visited Oregon Trail sites near the crossing of the Portneuf River, along the Snake River near American Falls, and near Massacre Rocks. It was a fun outing on a beautiful Idaho spring day. Our thanks to Doug Jensen for leading the outing.

Additional activities planned for the year include an Oregon Trail tour from Fort Boise to Farewell Bend on Aug. 2, an outing on the Hudspeth Cutoff outing near Lava Hot Springs on Sept. 6 and on Oct. 4 the chapter will have a Fall meeting at Stage Stop Restaurant (Mayfield exit I-84).

Planning is well under way for the 2016 OCTA convention to be hosted by the Idaho chapter at Fort Hall. A good number of chapter members have volunteered to assist with the effort. More help is required as a number of tasks do not have a designated leader. Outings in eastern Idaho will be planned for the summer to begin marking trail sites visible to travelers visiting the convention.



*Trail ruts near Snake River, top, and more ruts in Massacre Rocks State Park that were clearly revealed after a fire burned through the area in recent years.
(Photos by Jerry Eichhorst)*

Group climbing trail ruts near Massacre Rocks State Park.

Mapping Workshop Held in Carson City

*By John Winner
Chapter President*

On May 24 and 25 the CA/NV Chapter conducted a mapping session in Carson City, NV, with 17 OCTA members in attendance. The workshop focused mainly on Part C of the recently revised OCTA MET Manual (Mapping Emigrant Trails). Students were introduced to the protocol and symbology of mapping using Terrain Navigator Pro, the mapping software adopted by OCTA. Don Buck gave a brief history of the MET Manual and discussed trail classification. John Winner offered a power point presentation on planning a mapping project followed by Dee Owens, Lloyd Johnson, and John Winner regarding executing a mapping project using Terrain Navigator Pro. The workshop included a review of the tools and icons using Terrain Navigator Pro, creating markers for trail locations, artifacts, features and signs, the use of labels and tracks, how to prepare a report, and exporting and importing a mapping project to other TNP users.

Following the workshop 13 individuals took to the field on a segment of the Carson Trail for "On the Job" field training.

Nevada Sesquicentennial

Last year the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office invited the CA-NV Chapter to become a significant partner in

their effort to celebrate Nevada's 150th birthday and Historic Preservation and Archaeological Month in May 2014. Part of the celebration was producing a deck of playing cards dedicated to the state's cultural resources. A contest was held as organizations submitted photos depicting their contribution to the cultural resources. One of the photos the Chapter submitted was an emigrant trail crossing Nevada including OCTA's logo and the Chapter logo along with the QR Code for the Chapter web site. The Chapter became one of the finalists and was awarded the "2 of Clubs." Our reward: 700 decks of cards.

Conference Exhibits

In 2014 the CA-NV Chapter has sponsored exhibits and/or made presentations at a number of conferences or conventions including: Conference of California Historical Societies; California Council for Social Studies; Society of California Archaeology; California Trails and Greenways Conference; Trail Days at the California Trail Interpretive Center in Elko, NV, and the Western Writers of America (WWA) Convention in Sacramento, CA where OCTA members Will Bagley and Terry Del Bene presented a discussion about the California Trail and the Donner Party, while Quackgrass Sally, William Hill and Christopher Corbett spoke about the Pony Express Trail to the nearly 200 writers in attendance.

2015 National Convention

The CA-NV Chapter will host the 2015 OCTA National Convention at Harvey's Resort Hotel in Stateline, NV (South Lake Tahoe). The theme of the convention is "A Bonanza of Trails." Pre-convention tours will include the Carson Route (Forty Mile Desert), Johnson's Cutoff, Carson Route (Coloma to Mormon Station), and Grizzly Flat Trail. Bus tours will include, The Truckee Route, with a presentation of the human remains detection dogs, Carson/Johnson loop and Coloma/Placerville (Gold Discovery). Hiking tours are scheduled to include Emigrant Valley to West Pass, Hawley Grade/Luther Pass, and Hope Valley.

The 2014 Chapter Symposium was held on April 26 and 27 at the Carson Valley Inn in Minden, NV. The theme "Pathfinders Then and Now" drew an eclectic group of speakers who entertained the crowd with topics that included: "Fremont's Lookout – finding Fremont's route and campsites along the Carson River," "Numa Pathfinders in their New World – A Northern Paiute Perspective," "Finding Fremont's Lost Cannon Site." "Discovering and Mapping the Grizzly Flat Road," and "The Jayhawkers Experience," Saturday evening capped the day's events with a traditional Basque dinner at JT Basque Restaurant. Sunday included a field trip to Jack Greenhalgh's Wheelwright, Blacksmith and Sheet Metal Shop.



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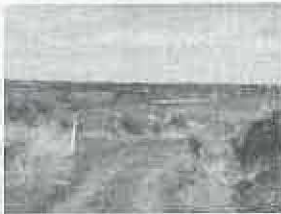
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