

# NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

*Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association*

Winter 2017

Volume XXXII, No. 1

## Vancouver Symposium Will Highlight Columbia History

Join us on April 1-2 for "Layers of History of the Columbia River," a symposium co-hosted by the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (LCTHF) and the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA) in Vancouver, Washington.

The symposium headquarters is the Heathman Lodge, a beautiful rustic log lodge tucked in the tall firs along the north shore of the Columbia River.

**(See more details on the Symposium on page 6.)**

The Symposium will kick off on Saturday morning with a brief overview of Columbia River, its unique geography and how it influenced history and settlement of that region.

Other topics on Saturday will cover the American Indians who populated the area, including a presentation on the Cathlapotle Plankhouse and Scottish fur-traders and their American Indian wives.

In addition, there will be sessions on the fur trade and experiences of the Lewis & Clark expedition in the Vancouver area.

The Oregon Trail will be a focus of presentations on early settlers from their descendants and famed fur trapper Peter Skene Ogden.

The keynote speaker on Saturday evening will be naturalist and teacher Jack Nisbet, the author of several books on the history of the Intermountain West.

An optional bus tour is planned on Sunday, including stops at the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, Frenchman's Bar, the Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge, Fort Vancouver and the Clark County Historic Museum.

The Heathman Lodge has both single and double-occupancy rooms available for \$125/night (normal rate is \$148). Call the hotel at (360) 254-3100 to reserve your room under the OCTA rate.

The OCTA National Board of Directors will hold its spring meeting at the hotel on Friday, March 31, with a number of Committee meetings on Thursday.

## B2H Draft EIS May Include Good News For Trails

The Final Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Boardman-to-Hemingway (B2H) power transmission line in western Idaho and eastern Oregon has been released by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

In more than 3000 pages it considers impacts across 24 alternative routes and identifies the Agency Preferred Alternative, as well as the Environmentally Preferred Action Alternative.

The BLM and their consultants appear to have done their best to protect the Oregon Trail and the NPS Auto Tour Route. The Record of Decision, identifying the final route, will be made sometime in 2017.

John Winner, OCTA president commenting on the final EIS. "Although this is far from over, this part of the process is welcome. The BLM gives the appearance of taking into account many of OCTA's suggestions. That's not to say we still don't have issues, but we're at the table in the discussion process."

Billy Symms, Northwest Chapter Preservation Officer, who has been involved in the development of the Programmatic Agreement, which protects cultural resources, including the Oregon Trail, wants to see what the final route is to determine what mitigation may be needed to offset Trail impacts.

If either the Agency Preferred or Environmentally Preferred routes are selected, the remaining 50 miles of Class 1 and Class 2 swales in Oregon, should not be physically damaged. There will be significant visual impact from the Trail because it is difficult to hide 190-foot tall towers.

Flagstaff Hill, the BLM managed Interpretive Center, will have the B2H in full view from their picture window looking to the west. OCTA is advocating for the burial of the transmission line for about one mile, which would preserve most of the view.

Birch Creek and Alkali Springs will have major visual impacts. At Birch Creek the line is about 550 yards distant and sky-lined across the ridge.

After the Record of Decision is finalized, the process moves to the Oregon Department of Energy, Energy Facilities Siting Council, a predicted two-year long process. Stay tuned.

*- William Symms and Gail Carbiener.*

# FROM THE PRESIDENT



*By John Winner, OCTA President*  
Greetings to all....I want to start by thanking you for your generous support to OCTA. Whether it be by the volunteer time that you take from your busy schedule, your in-kind gifts, or especially your faithful and generous financial support.

Without this support we would be hard pressed to accomplish our mission and meet our goals.

The demands on the organization today are many. Almost weekly there is a new threat to an emigrant trail. Our effort in trail preservation is endless. Whether it be by constant vigilance by the chapters, our members, agency and/or public notification, National Preservation Officer Jere Krakow and others spend endless hours in an effort to *Save the Trails*. To give you some sense of the ongoing plight, here are a few of the challenges facing OCTA: Power Transmission Lines in Idaho, Oregon, Missouri and Nebraska. Expansion of military control on land in Utah and Nevada. Pipeline project in Nevada, Open Pit mining in Nevada. Vegetation Management (Tree Removal) on National Forest Land in Oregon. All of these projects have the potential for direct, indirect (visual) and adverse impact to emigrant trails. The long awaited Final Environmental Impact Statement, a couple thousand pages, for the several hundred mile B2H power transmission line project in Idaho and Oregon was released by the BLM the day after Thanksgiving with the comment period ending around Christmas (see story on page 1). How's that for some holiday reading. I can't emphasize enough the appreciation for the effort by so many members that work to preserve the trails.

On a more positive note, plans are well under way for the 2017 Mid-Year Board meeting and symposium in Vancouver, Washington. Dates are March 30, 31 and April 1 and 2, 2017. The Board will hold a series of study sessions (workshops) on Thursday March, 30. The Board of Directors will formally meet on Friday March 31 and the Symposium will be April 1 and 2, 2017. Mark your calendar for OCTA's 2017 Annual Convention to be held in Council Bluffs, Iowa, August 8-12. Headquarters will be the Holiday Inn on the Council Bluffs riverfront. The Crossroads Chapter is already well under way in planning the 2018 OCTA Annual Convention to be held in Ogden, Utah, and the Southern Trails Chapter is tentatively proposing the 2019 convention for Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Over the past several months, I have had the opportunity to participate in a host of trail activities. My travels have included Missouri, Kansas, California, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico plus the daily routine of emails and conference calls. While in Albuquerque, New Mexico, I had the opportunity spend a day attending a meeting with members of OCTA's Fundraising Committee. The committee will be making a presentation at the Vancouver workshops on creating a Lasting Legacy and other ways to continue your support of OCTA. Recently the committee advised our membership on how to do a year-end gifting opportunity through Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) that can actually save some taxes.

As I've said on many occasions, OCTA's Chapters are the backbone of the organization. At the Board of Directors meeting at the Fort Hall convention during the Chapter reports several chapter representatives talked about various projects that their chapter had done or planned to do. Others were looking for suggestions for chapter projects. To follow up on this, I asked each chapter to come up with five projects that they could complete before the Mid-Year meeting scheduled for the end of March, 2017 in Vancouver, Washington. A project could be anything that would promote OCTA's Mission and Goals. Most chapters have on going activities scheduled throughout the year so this should not be much of a challenge. Give some thought and suggest to your chapter leadership ideas that you would like to see OCTA participant in. The idea is to keep OCTA's base membership energized and to seek interest from others to promote the historic trails legacy.....*More to come.*

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**Spring Issue Deadline**  
**February 25, 2017**

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# OCTA Board Nominations

## Due February 15

Nominations close on February 15 for the election of two directors to the OCTA National Board. Directors serve for three-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

Directors whose terms expire at the National Convention in 2017 are Cecelia Bell and Jere Krakow, both of New Mexico. Bell is eligible to run for reelection and plans to do so, while Krakow will be completing his second two-year term and thus is not eligible to run again.

Members of the Board are responsible for setting policies and priorities for the organization. They also serve as liaisons with OCTA chapters and can represent the interests of their chapters at Board meetings.

Directors are expected to attend two Board meetings annually, one of which is held during the Annual Convention in August. The second, Mid-Year meeting, usually in late winter or early spring, is held in rotating locations.

In order to be a candidate for the Board of Directors, all that is required is a short statement of qualifications and experience, a photograph and the endorsements of three members of OCTA.

Candidacy papers should be sent to Nominating & Leadership Committee Chair John Krizek at [jkrizek33@gmail.com](mailto:jkrizek33@gmail.com). If you have any questions please contact Krizek. You may also contact other members of the Nomination & Leadership Committee members, Duane Illes at [96cruisin@embarqmail.com](mailto:96cruisin@embarqmail.com) or Barb Netherland at [bjneth49@gmail.com](mailto:bjneth49@gmail.com). Additional information may also be found in the Members Area of the OCTA website.

## Young OCTAn Award Winners



*OCTA Board member Duane Illes presented the Young OCTAn Award to members of Boy Scout Troop 180 of Marysville, Kansas in recognition of more than 15 years of work on trails projects. The award was announced at the 2016 OCTA Convention at Fort Hall.*

## Corrections

In the Fall issue of *News From The Plains*, Emigrant Trails Hall of Fame inductee Helen Henderson was misidentified as Mary Henderson. Her full name was Mary Helen Henderson, but friends knew her as Helen

In addition, the name of Friend of the Trails award recipient Steve Damele was misspelled.

We regret the errors.

### 2016-2017 Board of Directors

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# PRESERVATION

By [Jere Krakow](#)

*National Preservation Officer*

As we OCTA members full well know, not a week goes by without some potential for trail resources being compromised along the thousands of miles of routes in the trans-Missouri west. And since the last edition of *NFP* ongoing threats and new threats are noted.

I am constantly gratified by the monitoring of trail resources by chapter preservation officers, and by members throughout the length of the Oregon and California Trails who contact me, OCTA headquarters or board members. Vigilance is the key action and learning about potential and actual threats is a way to begin countering the proposals using the preservation committee members and OCTA members to report and speak out in engagement when threats are identified.

Working from east to west along the trails this report summarizes several activities. Near **Kearney, NE** the proposed reservoirs to even the flows of the Platte River have been placed on “hold” for several years. The good news is that the Plum Creek area trail resources will be spared inundation for the time being. I expect the project will be activated in the future when “times” are better for the project.

Further west along the Platte, the Nebraska Public Power District has muscled its way to a decision on the transmission line corridor that will impact national trails and the southern edge of the internationally famed **Sand Hills**. At a meeting in mid-November attended by representatives of OCTA, NPPD seems set on the route that will have the most impact on resources, and save them construction money. A meeting in North Platte pushed by the Governor of Nebraska seemed the last round short of a “taking” of lands for the power line. Appeals to the heritage not only of Nebraskans but nationally and internationally seemed of little value, according to eyewitness reports I received. The O’Fallon ruts are among the trail resources that will be compromised.

In the meantime the Wyoming Chapter of OCTA has been monitoring and assessing potential damage to the **Lander Road** along the western portion in Wyoming. Some reports indicate damage and further information is being pulled together by the State Historic Preservation Office in Wyoming.

In Utah the vast expansion of the **Utah Test Range** by the Department of Defense/Hill Air Force Base is percolating in the Senate and House. Crossroads Chapter members have been very active in pressing for

access and protection of the Hastings Cutoff and the Pony Express routes across the west desert. Part of the local strategy by proponents of expansion is tied into the initiative to convert public lands to state lands for purposes of “more efficient management” and resource utilization by private enterprise. It is a very challenging proposal that places trail resources at risk.

Just **west of Wendover** in far eastern Nevada the Newmont Mining Company is finalizing the environmental documents to continue to develop a large open-pit gold mine that lies athwart the Hastings Cutoff of the California Trail: the Long Canyon Mine. The president of OCTA and I have been engaged in several conference calls to urge mapping and classifying the trail through northeast Nevada including the project area. OCTA is not able to stop the project but through OCTA proposals for mitigation some better outcome may result, including public access.

Across Nevada in the western reaches at the end of the 40 Mile Desert are the **Fernley sand swales**, a remarkable example of extant trail resources. Adjacent to one of the remaining Central Pacific RR grades of the famous transcontinental railroad (1869 completion at Golden Spike), the swales are continuously used by local residents for dumping trash. Each year an OCTA-led community clean up takes place, however financial resources and volunteers have grown fewer the past several years. The California-Nevada Chapter is trying to muster support for the annual clean up or develop strategies for protecting the swales from trash dumping. And ATV tracks are carving out deep ruts over top of the Central Pacific RR grade. In short, several historic resources are at grave risk in the area.

And finally the behemoth known as **B2H (Boardman to Hemingway) transmission line** routing in western Idaho and eastern Oregon is ongoing. (See story on page 1.) The Northwest Chapter has exhibited remarkable diligence in tracking and commenting on the earlier document. OCTA is anxious to learn of the final routing as it may compromise the Oregon Trail in several locations, including below Flagstaff Hill near Baker City and the Tub Springs area north of Vale.

So you see OCTA has many challenges to our mission of protecting and preserving the Oregon and California Trails. Please monitor the trail resources in your area and let chapter preservation officers know about threats, or notify me and OCTA headquarters of such projects.



## OCTA Educators Take Curriculum Message to Washington

Matt Mallinson and Audrey Elder, co-chairs of OCTA's Education Outreach Committee, attended the National Council for Social Studies Conference in Washington, D.C. in early December to share information about OCTA's journaling curriculum.

As we considered our purpose in attending this conference for a second year, we realized that our objectives and goals were to align with the purposes of OCTA, including to provide education about the Oregon and California trails and create a future of protection for those trails.

Utilizing the lure of an OCTA-branded "You have died of dysentery" Oregon Trails Game t-shirt, we had many educators stop by the booth simply to share the excitement of seeing the shirt.

We gave away nearly 150 pamphlets of information on OCTA and the journaling curriculum as well as signed up six new educator members and one new full member. Many stated that they had friends, co-workers and family members that they felt would want to be members as well. All the educators discussed ways they could use our tools in their classrooms.

Also attending the conference were three educators from the Independence School District. Social Studies Director Brian Schultz and two eighth grade teachers provided a presentation at the conference about the journaling program with direct links and handouts that included our OCTA educator tools. The presentation was focused on how this curriculum can be used anywhere in the country to tell "Your local story".

We were also able to attend a presentation by Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz, author of "An Indigenous Peoples History of the United States." We presented her with an OCTA t-shirt after the presentation. She visited our booth and offered to assist us in ways we may better present Indigenous history within our organization. .

We were able to have dinner with Congressman Cleaver from Kansas City. We thanked him for his support of OCTA and the National Parks Service. He stated it is one of his goals during this next term to work with the Department of the Interior to delegate more funding for protection of our national heritage.

Going forward, the Education Outreach Committee will need help in continuing to share this information and follow up with new members. It is imperative that we have specific goals and objections for 2017 within the committee. Next year's conference will be held in San Francisco from November 17-19. We will be asking our California members to volunteer some time to manage the OCTA booth for that conference.

- Matt Mallinson & Audrey L. Elder



OCTA Education Outreach Chairs Matt Mallinson and Audrey Elder, on the right, with educators Roxanne Dunbar Ortiz and Dr. Debora Champagne, a new OCTA member.



The annual Hike the Hill gathering of OCTA and other trails supporters will be held in Washington, D.C. from February 12-15.

It is a joint effort between the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) and the American Hiking Society

The festivities will be preceded by a PNTS Board and Leadership Council meeting on Saturday, February 11. Jere Krakow, OCTA's National Preservation Officer, is a member of the Leadership Council.

Other activities include issues briefings, networking opportunities, meetings with federal agency representatives, and visits with legislators and staff on Capitol Hill.

For more information, visit

[pnts.org/new/events/](https://pnts.org/new/events/)

## Details of Columbia River Symposium, April 1-2, in Vancouver

Join us on Saturday and Sunday, April 1-2, for “Layers of History of the Columbia River,” a symposium co-hosted by the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (LCTHF) and the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA) in Vancouver, Washington.

Headquarters for the Symposium will be the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington, a beautiful log lodge tucked in the tall firs along the north shore of the Columbia River. Single and double-occupancy rooms are available at a special rate of \$125 per night. Call (360) 254-3100 to reserve your room under the OCTA rate.

The tentative schedule includes:

Welcome on Saturday morning by the LCTHF and OCTA presidents, followed by an overview of the Columbia River, its unique geography and how it influenced history and settlement of that region, from Dr. Steven Fountain, professor of history at Washington State University – Vancouver. Bob Setterberg follows with “The Missoula Floods: A Mega-Transformation of the Pacific Northwest.”

Next will be an exploration of the American Indians who populated the area, including a presentation on the Cathlapotle Plankhouse at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) west of Vancouver, the largest gathering of American Indians encountered by Lewis & Clark during their epic journey, from Sarah Hill of the Friends of the Ridgefield NWR and Chinook Vice Chairman Sam Robinson. PhD candidate Alys Weber, a student at Washington State University – Vancouver, will speak on Scottish fur-traders and their Indian wives.

Barb Kubik, historian and past-president of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, a co-chair of the symposium, will discuss “We Proceeded On....Down the Grand Columbia River: The Corps of Discovery in Present Day Clark[e] County.”

After lunch, National Park Service Ranger Bob Cromwell from Fort Vancouver National Historic Site will speak on the fur trade and Forts Vancouver and Colville in what is now northeast Washington.

Four speakers will address the Oregon Trail in the area, including Richard Engstrom, a descendent of eight different families that came to Washington; Larry Bafus from the Tri-Cities area, who will discuss his ancestor A.J. Boland, the first sheriff of Clark County, who was killed near Yakima; a presentation (speaker TBD at press time) on Amelia Stewart Knight, who settled in what is now Camas, Washington in 1853, giving birth to her eighth child the day after arriving in the Oregon Territory; and Lethene Parks, OCTA's former national secretary and a symposium co-chair, on Peter Skene Ogden, the famed Canadian fur trapper and explorer who was the Chief Factor at Fort Vancouver when Oregon migration began.

Wrapping up the day will be presentations on Fort Vancouver from the Indian Wars through World War II. Tanisha Harris, a descendent of African-American migrants from Texas, will speak on her family's journey along their own “Oregon Trail” to Vancouver at the outset of WWII to work in the Kaiser Shipyards. We will close with a presentation on Pearson Airfield, one of the two oldest continuously operated airfields in the United States, from Ranger Cromwell. It is the only airfield to operate inside a National Historic Site and was the site of Ezra Meeker's October 1, 1924 departure to fly over the Oregon Trail.

Saturday evening's keynote speaker will be naturalist and teacher Jack Nisbet, the Spokane-based author of several books that explore the human and natural history of the Intermountain West, who will speak on the geography, flora, fauna and fur trade as they relate to “The Mighty Columbia.” His most recent focus has been on naturalist David Douglas that resulted in *The Collector: David Douglas and the Natural History of the Northwest*, selected by the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association as one of their 2010 Books of the Year.

Also Saturday evening, we will recognize Dan Ogden, a descendent of Peter Skene Ogden, who was instrumental in writing the National Trails System Act.

On Sunday, we will offer an optional bus tour (limited to 50). The tour will include stops at the Chinook Plank House at the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, Frenchman's Bar along the Columbia and the Renaissance Trail (a hiking trail that connects Frenchman's Bar to the mouth of the Columbia Gorge). Later stops will include a tower built during WWII that offers sweeping views of both the remains of the Kaiser Shipyard and the greater Portland area, Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge to view one of Lewis & Clark's campsites, Fort Vancouver and the Clark County Historic Museum.

Registration for the Symposium is \$45 for an individual and \$75 for a family, plus meals, lodging and the optional tour (\$60 per person). To register visit [octa-trails.org](http://octa-trails.org) and follow the links.



*Ezra Meeker preparing to depart Pearson Field in 1924.*

# Make Plans Now For Council Bluffs Convention

Overland emigrants, American Indian tribes, the trans-continental railroad, the Mormon Pioneer Trail and more will be the focus on the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual OCTA National Convention at Council Bluffs, Iowa, August 8-12, 2017.

Make plans now to attend the convention, which will be held right on the scenic banks of the Missouri River overlooking beautiful downtown Omaha.

Of particular focus will be American Indian history and culture in the greater Council Bluffs/Omaha area and how the influx of fur trappers and Oregon/California Trail emigrants changed their lives forever. Active participation by American Indians will be a key component of the convention.

Speaker topics will include:

- Oregon and California Trails
- Tribal history and cultural changes
- Fur trapper history
- Lewis & Clark Expedition
- Mormon Pioneer Trail
- Mormon Battalion
- Lincoln Highway
- Trans-Continental and Wabash Railroad

Convention bus tours will include visits to sites relative to the speaker topics listed above, including visits to the Old Freighters Museum and Lewis & Clark Museum in Nebraska City, the original Kanesville

Tabernacle and Western Historic Trails Center in Council Bluffs, the First Financial Bank California Trail sculpture park, Winter Quarters, the Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, Fort Atkinson and the wreck of the

Steamboat Bertrand, among other places.

We will also feature a special two-hour dinner and riverboat tour on the evening of Wednesday, August 9 that will showcase the middle crossing of the trails west and important sites relative to the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Space will be extremely limited on this sunset cruise of the Missouri River, with room for only 110 people.

There will also be a special concert at the Ameristar Hotel on the evening of Friday, August 11, and again, space will be limited to about 200 people, so be sure to respond quickly when materials become available in the spring, because this will be a very unique convention with one-of-a-kind opportunities for those who register early!

Hotel rooms can be reserved now by calling either the Holiday Inn Riverfront or the adjoining Ameristar Casino and Hotel. Speakers, meals, and workshops will be held in both facilities, which are joined by a covered walkway. The rate at both hotels is \$109/night. Call the Holiday Inn at (712) 322-5050 or the Ameristar at (712) 328-8888 and ask for the OCTA rate.



## Get Your Emigrant Trail Certificate Today



If you have an ancestor who traveled the Overland trails, OCTA's Emigrant Trail Certificate is a great way to show pride in your trails ancestry.

Suitable for framing, the certificate is available for anyone who has an ancestor who came West the 1840s, 1850s or 1860s.

The certificate can be customized to fit your family's information.

The cost to OCTA members for a certificate is \$20; for non-members, \$30. Additional certificates are available for \$10 each.

The certificate application form is posted on the OCTA web site at [octa-trails.org/people--stories](http://octa-trails.org/people--stories). Click on the link to "Certificate Application" at the bottom of the item description.



# SOUTHERN TRAILS

## Southern Trails Symposium Set for March

Mark your calendar for the Southern Trails Chapter's annual symposium in El Paso, Texas, March 15-19.

On Friday evening, March 17, the keynote speaker will be Glen Ely, author of *The Texas Frontier and the Butterfield Overland Mail 1858 - 1861*, who will discuss "The Butterfield Stage - Fort Davis to El Paso." Members of the El Paso - Las Cruces Westerners Corral #26 will join us.

Other presentations during the symposium will include: The Military Trail -San Antonio to Fort Davis, Camels in the Southwest, Boundary Commission Negotiations, The Victorio Campaign, Romance on the Santa Fe - Camino Real Trail, and Rails: El Paso to Douglas, Arizona.

To avoid the spring breezes in El Paso, tours will be in the morning. Tentatively scheduled are the Concordia Cemetery, the Magoffin House, Chamizal National Memorial, Hueco Tanks, and Mesilla Plaza. The highlight of the Friday tour is to the Butterfield Golf Course to see the efforts of the city of El Paso in preserving the trails of the Butterfield -Overland Stage.

On Saturday, we will explore the mission Trail to San Elizario.

Lunches, on your own, will be restaurants along the way. We will be using a bus with

speakers to share bits and pieces of the history of the El Paso area. On Saturday, the 19th, a trip is planned for those who wish to explore Fort Davis area..

The Symposium will be held at the Country Inn and Suites, 99 Sunland Park, 915-833-5588. The rate of \$80 + tax includes breakfast.

Registration will be available in early January, so watch for more information in the OCTA E-News. For more information, contact Cecilia Bell, [ceciliajb@aol.com](mailto:ceciliajb@aol.com) 575-388-4477 or 575-956-3294



## IDAHO

A mild fall blessed Idaho and allowed us some unexpected additional opportunities to get out on the trails. I led a small group on a California Trail tour on October 8. We started at the base of the Goose Creek mountains and followed the trail southwest up Goose Creek past Record Bluff, Rock Springs, Emigrant Springs, and Thousand Springs Valley to Highway 93. It was a fun outing with lots of interesting trail sites.



*IOCTA group at Record Bluff along California Trail in Goose Creek valley*

The fall Idaho chapter meeting was held Saturday, November 5, which was followed by a tour of the remodeled state capitol building led by Afton Patrick. The chapter celebrated the successful Fort Hall convention and re-elected all of the existing officers. I will continue as president, John Briggs and Lyle Lambert as vice-presidents, Dan Dunne as treasurer, and Paul Dinwiddie as secretary. Jim and Dawn Fazio, and Dave Taylor will serve another term as directors. Virgel Clark will take over as the chapter historian from Peggy Cristobal who has done a fantastic job for many years. I will continue as the webmaster, Wally Meyer and Lyle Lambert as

preservation officers, and Nancy Briggs as the Trail Dust newsletter editor. My sincere thanks to all of the officers, directors, and appointed positions which enable the chapter to function smoothly.

I have been searching for a little-known massacre site on Goodale's Cutoff near the junction with the main Oregon Trail for many years. A possible site had been located and efforts have been made to confirm the

location this fall. Cadaver dogs hit upon the suspected mass burial site. Ground penetrating radar showed lots of anomalies in the burial site. Serious metal detecting in the area has yielded several rifle balls near the rocks from which the Indians are presumed to have attacked and square nails from where the wagons likely circled. It is hoped that an archaeological excavation can be conducted on the area next summer.

Chapter meetings are tentatively scheduled for the first Saturday in May and the first Saturday in October.

-- Jerry Eichhorst



# CROSSROADS

We have had a productive year at Utah Crossroads. We set three rail posts this spring, and more are planned for 2017. We had a good turnout for the convention in Fort Hall and four of our members received awards.

Our fall social/dinner at Ft. Douglas turned out well with our usual near 50 in attendance. Plans for future meetings will be directed to this facility. Our speakers were from Grantsville, Utah. Steve Allred showed us how arrowheads were chipped by the Native Americans in the area and Craig Anderson spoke of trails through the Tooele Valley area as well as Indian relations with pioneer settlers. Both are members of the Twenty Wells Chapter of the Sons of Utah Pioneers. These two have shown interest in joining OCTA and Crossroads Chapter.

Our fall field trip took place Saturday October 22, a one-day trip in northern Utah along the Bartleson-Bidwell Trail of 1841. There were ten along for that trip.

Our final gathering was November 10, 2016, at the Salt Lake County Complex where elections were held and new officers set in place. Some questions still remain on the results of the election because of some health issues. So more on this later.

We want to recognize the efforts of the outgoing officers who have served very well -- Terry Welch, Mike Landon, Craig Fuller and Drew Wanosek (who remains as treasurer). Gar Elison worked with Terry Welch as "vice president" after Mike Landon moved away. We also welcomed some new members. Bill McKinnon then spoke to us on the aftermath of the Utah War (1857-58) and Johnson's Army. There were 24 in attendance. We certainly hope everyone will stay active as we are working toward the 2018 National Convention, which will be held the first week in August in Ogden.

-- Oscar Olson



*Crossroads members on the Bartleson-Bidwell Trail at Lucin, Utah.*



*Terry Welch, Bill McKinnon, and Gar Elison at the OCTA meeting on November 10.*

## NFP Via E-Mail

**Get News From The Plains in living color by having it delivered directly to your email box.**

**It is convenient for you and will help OCTA save thousands of dollars in printing and mailing costs.**



# NORTHWEST

In response to Ray Egan's recent article in the *Overland Journal* about the "myth" of killing three oxen to make rope out of their hides for lowering wagons down a cliff on Naches Pass in 1853, Dave Welch, Ray Egan and Dennis Larsen ventured up to this famous site.

The goal was to GPS the route down and compare those findings with the descriptions left by the 1853 pioneers. In researching *A Yankee on Puget Sound*, Dennis Larsen had walked the route five years ago. At that time there was a distinct Forest Service trail from FR 70 down to the Greenwater Lakes trailhead. There was a sign both at the top of the "cliff" and at the bottom of the trail telling the story of that 1853 wagon train.

On September 29, we started down the trail taking readings. Near the top of the "cliff" the trail was clear and distinct. Below that it quickly became obvious that no maintenance had been done on the trail since it was last walked.

Climbing over downfall, trying to sort out what was trail from animal tracks, we slowly made our way down. Eventually, all signs of the old trail disappeared and the trek became a brush bash. From the "precipice" to the Greenwater Lakes trailhead is a drop of 710 feet. The average grade is 30 percent, but there are places where the grade is 45 to 50 percent. The trio walked 1.4 miles to cover a straight-line distance of 0.4 miles. Our conclusion is that the terrain really doesn't match the pioneers' descriptions. The descent into the Hilgard camping area near LaGrande, Oregon is similar with an average grade of 25 percent with short sections of 45 percent or more. However, as Dave noted, that section of the trail did not seem to attract similar dramatic reminiscences from the 1853 travelers.

## A new Oregon Trail diary

Four years after OCTA published *Our Faces Are Westward: the 1852 Oregon Trail Journey of Edward Jay Allen* the co-authors of that book, myself and Karen Johnson, received an e-mail from a woman who identified herself as a direct descendant of Jacob Resser who traveled west with Allen from Pittsburgh in 1852. The descendant told us she had a copy of the diary Resser kept while on that journey and she kindly sent us the same, including her efforts at transcribing it. Both will shortly be on their way

to the Mattes Library in Independence. This diary supplies information missing in Allen's voluminous writings. For instance, we named the wagon train the Wapello Train, after the county in Iowa from which many of the immigrants departed. Resser informed us it was called the Dahlenega train after a township in Wapello County. Resser's diary also enabled us to more accurately pinpoint the death of David Koontz in today's

Echo, Oregon, as September 5 or 6, 1852. The diary clears up a mystery about the inscriptions at Names Hill, Wyoming. Many of those inscriptions have the date July 7 attached to them, but Allen's writings clearly state he left the Green River on that date leaving no time to do the inscriptions. Resser makes it clear that the majority of the wagon train took a rest day at Names Hill. And to our chagrin we got the date of Allen and Resser's departure from Pittsburgh incorrect. They left the smoky city on Saturday,



Ray Egan and Dave Welch at Naches Pass "cliff" April 17, 1852.

## Refurbishing 1916 Oregon Trail markers

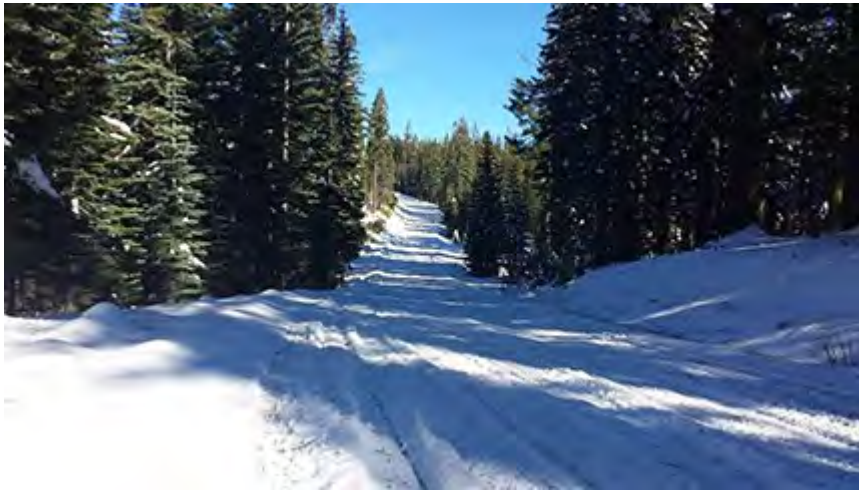
In 1916 eleven concrete markers each with a bronze inscribed plaque were placed along the Cowlitz Trail branch of the Oregon Trail that extended from the Oregon border to the south end of Puget Sound. Ten of them read "Oregon Trail 1844 Marked by the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution in the State of Washington 1916." The eleventh, a "unique" marker, was placed in Vancouver, Washington. After one hundred years the bronze plaques were in serious need of refurbishing. The Sacajawea Chapter of the DAR took the lead in this project. On September 27 the City of Toledo and the DAR sponsored a re-dedication ceremony of their marker near Cowlitz Landing, the place where the immigrants ended their river travel north and went overland to Puget Sound. The city landscaped the area around the monument and hosted a gathering of more than 50 people, many dressed in period attire. The event concluded with local fourth grade school children placing rocks on which they had written their names at the base of the monument. Unbeknownst to the planners, having school children place rocks at the base of the Oregon Trail markers is exactly what Ezra Meeker did during his marker dedications along the trail between 1906 and 1912.

-- Dennis Larson



# CALIFORNIA-NEVADA

Maybe not like other places but California is finally having a winter! The photo shows the Beckwourth Trail heading up Soapstone Hill on the Oroville-Quincy Highway in Plumas County, California.



The Chapter is taking the opportunity to plan for increased activities next year. The Chapter Board met in Yuba City, across the Feather River from Marysville, the destination of many emigrants traveling to the gold country.

The Board set an active agenda for the coming year including new interpretive marking projects, field trips and becoming active stake holders with other historic organizations.

Planned interpretive panels include one in Northern California along Highway 44 on the Nobles Trail at the Bogard Rest area. Mark Wilson will lead the project. We are exploring the possibility of an OCTA interpretive panel being placed in cooperation with the John Marsh Historic Trust Site and surrounding Marsh Creek State Park. Bob Evanhoe will be the contact person for this cooperative project. Panels and a kiosk are being considered for the Fernley Swales. Maintaining current markers is also on the agenda. Frank Tortorich had reported that a display panel support leg had buckled last winter. At the Board's direction, he facilitated ordering a replacement. A work party will be arranged to get the replacement installed.

The chapter has also been monitoring work on three sites that may impact the trails in Nevada. The Fallon Range Training Station is increasing its holdings by 670,000 acres, but the new land acquisitions do not appear to cross trail routes. A new highway bypass route between Interstate 80 and Highway 50 was determined not to impact the trails in the proposed areas. A Nevada DOT project near a Class 1 section is still being monitored.

During the second week of July 2016 twenty-five volunteers worked with Plumas National Forest archaeologists to help relocate and excavate French's Hotel, which operated from the early 1850s into the early 1860s in Plumas County. We know that the Hotel existed

along a major travel route began as a pack trail into the mines of the northern Sierra Nevada. French's Hotel was mentioned in diaries kept by emigrants and gold miners alike. The project was a collaboration

between the Plumas National Forest and the Chapter.

The Chapter has been helping to find and document evidence of the Beckwourth Trail on the Plumas National Forest for the past five years. The effort is very important as it is the only California National Historic Trail established by an African-American. Participating from the OCTA/Beckwourth Trail Mapping Group were Dee and Glen Owens, Anne and Ed Bagne, David Lorea, Dan Murray, Dick Waugh, Ken Smith and Richard Arnold. Anthropology students from California State University, Chico helped work with the Passport In Time volunteers and Forest Service archaeologist to excavate the French's Hotel archaeological site.

Board member Howdy Hoover attended a Youth History Camp in Red Bluff in September where he gave a talk about trails' history. The camp was a living history event and involved 4th and 5th graders.

October 8-9, Jon & Janet Nowlin represented the Chapter at the Aspen Alpine Festival in Hope Valley (Carson Trail) where they tended the OCTA display table with information and handouts.

Board member Steve Shaw attended the Great Basin Archeological Convention in October held in Reno, which was a great opportunity to talk with the archeologists from throughout the area and promote OCTA both at the National and Chapter level. He and his wife, Donna will next attend the meeting of the Society of California Archeologists will be held in Fresh Camp, California March 9-12, 2017. The Chapter has placed emphasis on participating in events that promote history and preservation throughout the two states.

*Continued on next page*



## California-Nevada *(continued)*

The Chapter has accepted a donation from the family of James P. McClain. James McClain was a long time OCTA member and a guide for the 40 Mile and Black Rock Desert Trails. He was also a writer for the Overland Journal. He taught California history at the high school in Grass Valley. He guided many groups of students and OCTA members on trips along the trails. The Chapter has arranged for the collection to be donated to the Churchill County Museum in Fallon,

On the morning of October 11, Tom Fee, Steve Knight, and Jon Nowlin made a presentation on the Fernley Swales at the Fernley Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors breakfast meeting. Rachel Cruise, BLM archaeologist, also attended the meeting. Fernley Mayor Roy Edgington expressed interest on how the city might contribute to the Fernley Swales preservation efforts. Our chapter is a stake holder in preserving, cleaning and monitoring the 18-acre historic right of way easement on BLM land, representing three major corridors: the Swales (emigrant trails), railroad tracks (transcontinental railroad) and first Nevada highway.

On November 5, Chapter members completed photo monitoring of the Fernley Swales site. The members are also working to find a location to place an informational kiosk near the entry to the site and to develop community support for preservation of this historic location.

- Dick Waugh

## TRAILS HEAD

The Trails Head Chapter's annual meeting was held on November 12 at the Trailside Center in Kansas City.

Election of officers was held and those officers will remain as the past year: Jean Coupal-Smith, President; Dick Nelson, Vice President; Mary Conrad, Secretary; and Arnold Cole, Treasurer.

Our program was Audrey Elder and Matt Mallinson; co-chairs of the OCTA Educational Outreach Committee. Their program entailed how this committee approached and worked with the Independence (MO) School District to develop a curriculum that relates to area trail history using resources from the OCTA-Journals website. Students are encouraged to create their own journals.

Planning for events in the spring will be in the works. Two wayside exhibits have arrived at Penn Valley near Kansas City and Mission Hills, Kansas with installation and dedications to be held in the spring.

The Johnson County, Kansas, Museum will open its new facility in 2017. Trails Head would like to make a presentation on trail history in the area to them. Late spring, we again hope to plan a joint get-together with Missouri River Outfitters, SFTA and Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association to celebrate Trail Days. These will be good winter projects to get underway!

- Jean Coupal-Smith

## COLORADO-CHEROKEE



*Colorado-Cherokee Chapter members paused on tour for a group snapshot.*

The Colorado Cherokee Chapter had a wonderful presentation and trail tour on November 12 presented by Linda Graybeal on the Cherokee-Overland Trail route through Westminster. Linda is President of the Westminster Historical Society, a teacher of 38 years, and has spent many years working on this project.

We began the event with a presentation and slide show tracing the historic route through Westminster

including maps and photos. She had many then-and-now photos of historic sites with narrative on each. Our trail tour began at Westminster University, which is located on a predominant hill, giving our group perspective of where the route traveled. We then visited many intersections and historic locations. Many thanks to Linda for the effort she put into this event.

Our mapping team including John Murphy, Ken Van Wyk, and Rich Deisch have completed 15 townships in Pueblo

County and have sent the maps and data to the National Park Service and Dave Welch of OCTA.

In association with Linda Anderson of the Kansas Friends of the Cherokee Trail, a virtual map designed by Berl Meyer and Rich Deisch is on the chapter's website [cherokeetrail.org](http://cherokeetrail.org). The map and photos depicts our chapter trip to Kansas in April 2016.

-- Mark Voth

# KANZA



Randy Brown, OCTA's Grave's and Site's Committee Chair, has placed a new marker near the Henry Roush grave site on Box Elder Creek southeast of Westmoreland, Kansas.

Randy worked with landowner Darold Bunkow and Roush descendant Jeri Medler of Oklahoma in researching and placing the marker, which is located on the fence line on Broderick Road in Pottawattomie County just off the original trail.

Roush died of an unknown illness in 1849 while en route to the California gold fields, leaving behind a wife and five children in Illinois.



A running/walking/biking event was held at Alcove Spring as part of an official National Park Service centennial celebration event. NPS Representative Kristin Van Fleet was there to swear in new Junior Rangers. Events included a unique 10K that follows a retracement trail over the hills from US 77 on the trail to Alcove park and follows the trail through the park on the trail to Independence Crossing as well as the iconic sites.



Duane Durst and Duane Iles presented OCTA Friend of the Trail Awards to Gauby Farms and to the Gauby families, recognizing their generosity in giving the land to create a monument to Mormon Springs.

Duane Durst worked with Doug Tippin and the late Don Combs, along with the KANZA Chapter to create this beautiful park with marker and wayside exhibits. Pictured left to right are Duane Durst, Lee Gauby, Les and Terri Gauby, Gary Gauby and Iles

Mormon Springs was a favored campground for this branch of the Mormon Trail. The Gaubys plan to install a specially designed wrought iron fence around the park to protect and enhance it.

- Photo by Dan Thalmann of the Washington County News.



*Nicholas Ottens of Boy Scout Troop 180 built this outhouse facility at Alcove Spring as part of his Eagle Scout project.*

*Save the Trail*



# GATEWAY



*Gateway members on Independence Square with the covered wagon and local reenactors.*

The Gateway Chapter held its fall bus tour of historic sites on Saturday, October 1. Twenty-eight members and friends toured the Lexington Civil War battle site and the Anderson Mansion. The group next traveled to Independence where they had lunch at and toured the historic Bingham Waggoner home as well as the Frontier Trails Museum. Travis Boley, OCTA Association Manager, boarded the bus and led a driving tour of part of the new Kansas City Urban Trails Corridor currently under development. Coordinator of the day tour was Bill Leppert.

On November 8, 29 Gateway members met for dinner and the annual meeting. President Carole McClellan reviewed the chapter activities for the year. Vice-President Corky Smith reported on the planning for an overnight tour to The Narrows in southern Nebraska to be held in May. In keeping with Election Day, the program featuring Election Campaigns of the Past was presented by St. Joseph Museums' Sarah Elder. The board plans to meet in early January to plan the 2017 activities.

*-- Jackie Lewin*

*Sarah Elder of the St. Joseph Museum presented a program on "Elections of the Past."*



*Chapter President Carole McClellan and Vice-President Corky Smith.*



# FROM OCTA HEADQUARTERS

## Thank You!

Thanks to many donors who support OCTA's preservation work through gifts to our annual fund drive and memorial gifts to those who have passed. Recent gifts include:

Eva Allen  
Lynne Alvord  
Ron Anderson  
Ronald Becher  
Dave Berger  
Lee & Sandi Black  
Janet F Boom  
Margaret Bowen  
Carolyn Bowser  
Bonnie Breen-Wagner  
Marvin Burke  
Dick Campbell  
Gail & Muriel Carbiener  
Virgel Clark  
Donald Cooper  
Virgil Culler  
Jo Anna Dale  
Dick Douda  
Ronald O Downs  
Nancy Elig  
Christine Ellin  
Bob Evanhoe  
Joyce Everett  
John & Thelma Fromm  
Marilyn Gaddis  
Koichiro Harada  
Glenn and Carol Harrison  
Connie Holbrook  
William Holmes  
Howdy Hoover  
Chuck Hornbuckle  
Billie Johnson

Leon & Judith Jones  
Polly N Kennison  
Dr Philip S King  
Larry & Linda Lacey  
Charles & Harriet Lewis  
Carolyn Logan  
Francis Madsen Jr  
Ross & Shirley Marshall  
Bill Martin  
Ford Maurer  
Gordon & Carolyn McGregor  
Kendall McNabney  
Amy Murphy  
Dick and Ruby Nelson  
William and Margie Nolan  
Keith A Palmquist  
Lethene Parks  
Jim & Sallie Riehl  
Richard Schmidt  
Raymond E Schoch  
Robert & Jan Schwartz  
Nancy Sicotte  
Beth Skinner  
Joel Spandler  
Bill Speiden  
Alan Stockland  
Melvin and Ellen Sweet  
Lorna Waltz  
David and Wendy Welch  
Nelson S Weller  
John and Susie Winner

## Welcome New Members

Kathy Barnes, Independence, CA  
Debora Champagne, Independence, MO  
Dixie Colson, Elsie, NE  
Gail Dunbar, Caldwell, ID  
Duane and Beth Fager, Topeka, KS  
Josh Fisher, Gig Harbor, WA  
Joe Frausto, Dripping Springs, TX  
Harry Hewitt, Wichita Falls, TX  
Curtis Kimble, Cotati, CA  
Allen Maret, Arcata, CA  
Michael Martin, Idaho Falls, ID  
Lane and Jean McCullough, Venice, FL  
Lewis M Ruddick, Turlock, CA  
Martin Schmidt, Minden, NE  
Jay Skiles, Renton, WA  
Chip Smith, Asheville, NC  
Gary Stark, West Linn, OR  
Dan Thalmann, Palmer, KS  
Grant Vaughn, Centerville, UT  
Mike Vermillion, Council Bluffs, IA  
Elwood Youman, Vacaville, CA



## Visit OCTA on the Internet

[OCTA-trails.org](http://OCTA-trails.org)

Our Journals site:

[OCTA-journals.org](http://OCTA-journals.org)

OCTA Bookstore:

[www.OCTA-trails.org/store/](http://www.OCTA-trails.org/store/)

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

February 12-15, 2017 - Hike The Hill, Partnership for the National Trails System, Washington, D.C.

March 15-19, 2017 – Southern Trails Chapter Symposium, El Paso, TX.

March 31-April 2, 2017 – OCTA Spring Symposium and Board Meeting, Vancouver, WA.

April 28-30, 2017 – CA-NV Chapter Spring Symposium, Grass Valley, CA.

May 7-10, 2017 - International Trails Symposium, Dayton, OH

## Business Sponsorships

For just \$50 a year, you can become an OCTA business sponsor, a great way to connect your business to tourists following the trails.

Business sponsors receive a listing on the OCTA website, a window decal, a framed wall certificate and an OCTA trail map. To learn more, contact OCTA headquarters at (816) 252-2276.

Current business sponsors include:

**Heritage Inn Express**, 1155 Pony Express Hwy, Marysville, KS

**Little Hap's Bar and Grill**, 211 2nd St, Home, KS

**Scotts Bluff Area Visitors Bureau**, 2930 Old Oregon Trail Rd, Gering, NE

**Wagon Wheel Café**, 703 Broadway, Marysville, KS

**Surveyor Scherbel, Ltd**, P O Box 96, Big Piney, WY

**State Bank of Blue Rapids**, PO Box 157, Blue Rapids, KS

**Low Printing**, 227-B East College St-LL, Independence, MO

**First Commerce Bank**, 902 Broadway, Marysville, KS

**Weaver Hotel**, 126 S Kansas, Waterville, KS

## Shop Amazon, Save The Trails!



OCTA is now part of the Amazon Smile program and each purchase made through Amazon will result in a donation to OCTA's trails preservation efforts. Just bookmark [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). The first time you visit you will be asked to designate a charity. Follow the instructions and

find OCTA. Then, each time you shop on Amazon, enter the storefront through Smile and your purchases will result in a donation to OCTA.

There is no additional cost. Amazon will track OCTA spending and cut a check for us on a quarterly basis. It's an easy way to shop and benefit trails preservation at the same time.

## Life Member Chapter Dues

If you are an **Ezra Meeker Life Member** of OCTA, it is time to renew your chapter membership affiliations. To learn more, call headquarters at (816) 252-2276.

If you are not an Ezra Meeker Life Member, you can join at that level at any time. The cost is \$1,000, which can be spread over several regular payments. Call headquarters for more information.

Funds from Life memberships goes directly to OCTA Endowments, helping create a legacy of support for trails preservation and education.

## Track Your Volunteer Hours & Expenses

Volunteer hours and expenses accumulated by OCTA members are important assets for the organization in securing federal funding for preservation of the trails.

You can help OCTA by keeping track of your hours and expenses, including travel time and costs. A form is available on the OCTA website at [octa-trails.org/activity-forms](http://octa-trails.org/activity-forms).

Volunteer hours for the year should be reported to OCTA Headquarters Manager Kathy Conway [kconway@indepmo.org](mailto:kconway@indepmo.org) by January 15.

*Save The Trail*

# PUBLICATIONS

Fall is over and winter is upon us and a new year has begun. Our publications are full of interesting articles. All are meant to keep you informed and to broaden your knowledge of the trails. While a large portion of *News From the Plains* is focused on local chapter happenings and projects, the articles are really for everyone. They provide ideas for other chapters and help keep non-chapter members aware of improvements made along the trails. Every article has something of value for everyone.

We have received a number of nice comments about the *Overland Journal's* new design and recent articles, especially those on Fort Hall. If you haven't received the Fall issue, you should shortly. The Winter issue should be out in late February. If you have an interest in Fremont – and who doesn't? – then you have something to look forward to. We are also encouraging all our chapters and even our individual members to consider giving an OCTA membership or subscription for the *Overland Journal* to a local library. This will help spread the word. Please let HQ know!! Both of our editors and I like feedback on our publications, so don't be shy!

We are continuing to work on increasing the number of advertisers in both our publications, which will help in keeping our overall costs down. We have modified our advertising discount offerings and rates. They should be available on the website under the Publications-*Overland Journal* section by the end of the month. If you know of a business or someone who has products that may be of interest to our readers, encourage them to advertise with us, or let us know and we will contact them.

## Deadline Set for OCTA Awards

Nominations are due June 1 for the annual OCTA awards to be presented at the 2017 Convention at Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Awards exclusively for OCTA members include the Greg Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award and the Elaine McNabney Distinguished Volunteer Award. Non-members are eligible for Distinguished Service Awards and Friend of the Trail Awards.

Awards nomination forms can be found on the OCTA website by visiting [octa-trails.org/activity-forms](http://octa-trails.org/activity-forms). Questions about the awards process should be addressed to Awards Committee Chair Dick Nelson at [kcnelson42@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kcnelson42@sbcglobal.net)

Hopefully you have already purchased a copy of the 2017 elementary student calendar, *Emigrant and Indian – Modes of Transportation*. If not, one might still be available through HQ. The cost for each copy is only \$10.00.

The contest for the 2018 calendar *Emigrant and Indian - Musical Instruments* is underway. As always, we ask that our members contact their local elementary schools and encourage them to participate. Information is available on the website under Learn, Opportunities. This project is designed to increase interest in the trails in our younger children/students and to integrate learning history, culture and art. Teachers are encouraged to work the theme into their curriculum, and then have their students create related artwork. Each child whose artwork is selected will receive \$50 and a copy of the calendar. The deadline for submission is income tax day, April 15, 2017. We are also searching for new themes for future calendars. Please let us know of your suggestions!

If your child or grandchild's school hasn't entered our drawing for a free classroom set of one of OCTA's educational activity books now is the time to do it. The drawing will be held at the beginning of February. Information about this is also on OCTA's website under Learn, Opportunities. All a teacher has to do is send in a postcard to OCTA with their name, school, address, and the title and number of books needed. It is that simple.

Information about OCTA's Outstanding Educator Awards is also on the website. If you know of a teacher who has a unique unit on the western migration or has effectively stimulated student interest in the West, that teacher should be nominated. Applications and nominations close March 31, but it would be wise to start the process now. If you have any questions you may also contact HQ.

- Bill Hill, Publications Chair





# FUNDRAISING

*By Lee Black*

Covered Wagons, axle-grease and endowments.

You might ask what in the world do these have in common? Our forefathers faced a daunting task as they set out to forge a new future in the West. Wagons needed to be built to withstand the rigors of a 2000-mile journey over difficult terrain, through rivers, heat and sand. Axle-grease was a necessity in order to keep the wagons moving smoothly. Careful preparation for the journey and diligence in securing the necessary and proper resources were required to achieve success.

Having proper resources is just as important for OCTA today. As sure as having enough axle-grease was necessary for successful travel, if OCTA is to achieve its objectives, financial resources are required. Trail preservation, trail identification, preserving family history and educating future generations are strategically important and deserve our financial commitment today and in perpetuity.

OCTA endowment funds will assure a perpetual source of funding as the endowments grow. Your gifts to OCTA endowments are like planting orchards that will bear financial fruit in perpetuity. Just as axle-grease was essential to keep wagons rolling along to meet the traveler's objective, funding one of the three OCTA endowments will help achieve OCTA's objectives.

There are several easy methods you can choose to fund an endowment and become a Trails Legacy Society member. Perhaps you may elect to join Cheryl and Gil Hoffman, who recently became Society members when they reviewed their Living Trust and amended the instrument to provide an estate gift in the future. An

amendment is an inexpensive and simple document, usually one page, your legal professional can draft for your approval.

If you have a will, your legal counsel can provide a codicil naming an OCTA endowment as a beneficiary of a specific amount or percentage of your estate. The codicil is another simple document that does not require a complete rewriting of your will. Sample language for a codicil is available on the OCTA website under the Preservation drop down menu.

Lastly, many find it easiest to contact their insurance agent to request a "change of beneficiary" form. By completing the form, you can add an OCTA endowment as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy.

As the new year begins it is an opportune time to review your estate plan. It is an excellent time to include an endowment gift in your estate plan. If you choose any of the options mentioned, please notify Travis Boley in order to be recognized as a Trails Legacy Society member.

For more information, visit [octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society](http://octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society)



*Lee Black retired as Vice President of the Eastern New Mexico University Foundation Board and Planned Giving Committee Chair. He is a member of OCTA's Fundraising Committee and a member of the Southern Trails chapter.*

## Memorial & Tribute Gifts

**Memorial and Tribute gifts are wonderful way to recognize the contributions of loved ones to the legacy of the trails.**

**Leave your own legacy on behalf of those whose lives were marked by dedication to our Western heritage.**

**Visit**

**[OCTA-trails.org/donate-online](http://OCTA-trails.org/donate-online)**

## Leave a Legacy

**for the trails through OCTA's Trails Legacy Society.**

**Find out how easy it is.**

**Visit**

**[octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society](http://octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society)**

## Leaving A Legacy for the Trails: Cheryl & Gil Hoffman

*This is the first in a regular series focusing on donors who have chosen to make legacy gifts to the Oregon-California Trails Association.*

Cheryl and Gil Hoffman of Richland, Washington, are Life Members of OCTA, and partners in OCTA's Trails Legacy Society through a Living Trust bequest they established to benefit OCTA in perpetuity.

"You're a fifth-generation Californian. Your family came in 1843 and were working for Captain Sutter when gold was discovered.' I grew up with those words ringing in my ears," says Cheryl. "They launched my lifelong journey into tracing my family history. I discovered I had many ancestors who made that journey in the very early years. The earliest were James Williams (my 3rd great-grandfather) who came with the Chiles-Walker party of 1843, and Mary Patterson, who was with the 1844 Stephens-Townsend-Murphy party, and who would marry James the next year."

Before moving to Washington, the Hoffmans were active members of the California/Nevada Chapter for 10 years, where Cheryl served as membership chair in the mid-1990s. They participated in many OCTA conventions and events over the years, including the Lake Tahoe convention in 2015.

"I attended my first OCTA convention in Sacramento in 1991," adds Cheryl. "I met so many interesting people and returned home with a burning desire to learn more and eventually be on the same trail so many ancestors trod.

"At the Rock Springs convention, what an experience it was to actually be out on the trail, find the markers, and on August 11, 1992, be standing on the bank of the Green River, 149 years to the day that my ancestors had crossed it!

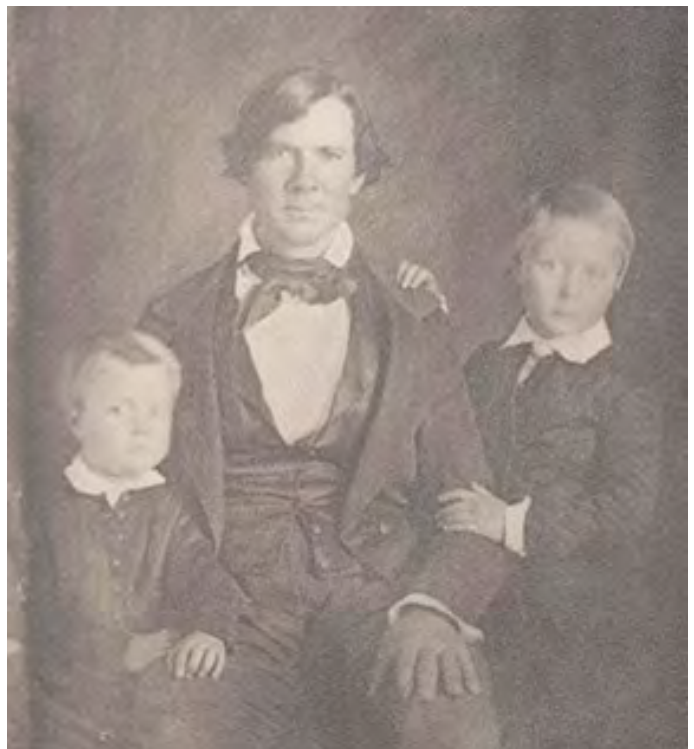
"Last year we realized there had been many changes in life and it was past time to review and update our Living Trust. At the top of the list was to join the Trails Legacy Society and add a bequest to OCTA. OCTA has provided many opportunities to discover and experience some of the adventures and trials my pioneer families experienced. Through our Living Trust bequest, we hope to aid OCTA in providing similar discovery opportunities to the next generation of trail enthusiasts."

Gil adds: "We are especially interested in OCTA's core work of identifying and preserving the trails for all to enjoy and push to see that this part of our history is taught in schools."

For information about how you make a legacy gift to OCTA, visit [octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society](http://octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society)



*Trails Legacy Society members Cheryl & Gil Hoffman*



*Cheryl Hoffman's ancestors James Williams with sons Isaac Benjamin, left, and Jonathon Patterson, circa 1850.*

*Save the Trail*



## Immerse Yourself!

### *Vancouver: Layers of History on the Columbia River*

Saturday-Sunday, April 1-2  
Vancouver, Washington

Sponsored by the  
**Oregon-California Trails Association**  
and the  
**Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage  
Foundation**

Visit [OCTA-Trails.org](http://OCTA-Trails.org) for  
registration information.

## Mark Your Calendars!



**2017 OCTA Convention**

**August 8-12**

**Council Bluffs, Iowa**



## NATIONAL FRONTIER TRAILS MUSEUM

The **National Frontier Trails Museum** in Independence, Missouri brings the pioneer experience on the trails to life. The only museum in the nation certified to interpret the Lewis & Clark, Santa Fe, Oregon, California and Mormon Pioneer trails, the National Frontier Trails Museum offers:

- A unique collection of original artifacts and special exhibits
- Firsthand written accounts, travel diaries and journals
- Interactive displays, audio guides and gallery walks
- Children's programs and activities
- A robust research library
- A gift store with the region's largest selection of trails books and merchandise

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

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