

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Summer 2017

Volume XXXII, No. 3

Trails, Trains, Tribes & Explorers Meet at Council Bluffs

The Oregon-California Trails Association's 35th annual convention, ***Council Bluffs: Gateway to the Great Platte River Road***, offers a diverse itinerary ranging from the American Indian Experience, to Mormon Pioneers, Lewis & Clark, the Trans-Continental Railroad, and much more.

The Convention, scheduled August 8-12, marks the first time OCTA has taken its annual meeting to this historic location, opening up opportunities to visit and learn about areas of the Overland migration never before available to convention-goers.

Links to both a downloadable PDF of the Convention registration book and an online registration page are available OCTA's homepage at OCTA-trails.org.

In an area rich in historical resources, the convention will focus on the American Indian experience in the region, as well as the entirety of European-American history from the early 19th through early 20th centuries.

Lewis & Clark, the fur trade, the Mormon Pioneer Trail, the California Gold Rush, steam boating on the Missouri River, the Trans-Continental railroad, the 1909 Glidden Automobile Tour, and the Lincoln Highway are all on the agenda. This will be one of the



The River City Star, your vessel of choice for Wednesday evenings cruise on the Missouri River.

most wide-ranging group of topics ever assembled at an OCTA convention.

Reserve your discounted room of \$109/night at one of the host hotels, which include the Holiday Inn or the adjacent Ameristar Casino and the Hampton Inn. All three hotels are inter-connected and located right on the Missouri River.

Contact the hotels by July 9 to get the Special OCTA Convention Rate. You can contact the Holiday Inn at (712) 322-5050; the Ameristar at 877-462-7827; and the Hampton at (712) 328-2500. Rates include hot breakfast every morning and free shuttle to and from the Omaha airport, if needed.

For more detailed information, see pages 4, 5 & 6.



Mormon Pioneer Cemetery, one of the stops on Saturday's tour.

Inside:

- **Federal Funding Threatened**
- **Leaving A Legacy**
- **Preservation Update**

FROM THE PRESIDENT



By John Winner, OCTA President

Greetings to all.... If you haven't made reservations for the 2017 National Convention in Council Bluffs you still have time.

Although all of the conventions are worthy, this one is unique. It's a potpourri of history, the California Trail, Mormon Pioneer Trail, Lewis and Clark Expedition

Transcontinental Railroad, American Indians, the Fur Trade.... and more. Hope to see you in Council Bluffs.

Next year we will be celebrating two significant events: The 50th. anniversary of the National Trails Act and the 175th. anniversary of the Oregon Trail. The National Trails Act was signed into law in October 1968 by President Lyndon Johnson. The Act was amended in 1978 to include the Oregon Trail and again in 1992 to include the California Trail. OCTA got a head start in celebrating the Act this past March in Vancouver with a special award presentation to Daniel Ogden, Jr. Mr. Ogden, an Assistant Director in the Department of Interior, chaired the "Trails for America" study and participated in the drafting of the bill to authorize the National Trails Act.

Over the next year and a half OCTA will include celebrating these significant events its activities.

Preservation of the historic emigrant trails is a top priority of OCTA and while we continue to be active in monitoring several threats such as, the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line in Oregon, the Long Canyon Open Pit Mine in Nevada, the North Platte Public Power District Project Transmission Line in Nebraska, the Rock Springs Resource Management Plan Revision in

Wyoming, to name a few, it is incumbent that our membership be vigilant and be the eyes and ears of activities in your area. If you observe or hear of potential activities that may be a threat to trails, notify your chapter preservation office and OCTA's Preservation Officer, Jere Krakow, jlkrakow@msn.com.

Once again it's important to recognize the cooperation and financial support we receive from the National Park Service. Like most Federal Agencies, the NPS is facing budget cuts which transcends to organizations like OCTA that receive financial assistance. Each year OCTA enters into a cooperative agreement with the NPS and receives funds that augment some of our programs; however, as the NPS endures these budget cuts it's becoming more challenging and fewer dollars are available. The reporting of your volunteer hours has been in the past and continues to be a major contributing factor that congress looks at for appropriations for historic trail preservation.

While some of OCTA's projects receive financial support from the NPS, we need to continue to generate revenue to support our mission. Through increased membership, profits from conventions and symposiums, book sales and auctions, grants for projects, grants for marketing, and fundraising. The generosity of our faithful membership has been overwhelming and we extend a heartfelt thanks. Keep OCTA in mind for legacy giving, in-kind gifts. Reach out to your neighbors, your friends, your community. Share the story of this rich part of history and the mission of OCTA to educate and preserve. Who knows, maybe they'll join or perhaps contribute to the worthy cause of "Saving the Trails".

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B2H Update

The Bureau of Land Management last November issued its Final Environmental Impact Statement for the B2H 300 mile transmission line through Oregon and over the Oregon Trail. A protest period of 30 days has come and gone. We are waiting for the Record of Decision (ROD) from the BLM.

The BLM National Project Manager told me; "We are still working on the draft ROD with our Washington Office." The ROD for the companion transmission line, Gateway, was 1,411 pages, B2H will be more, just watch.

So, while we wait, a small but dedicated group of individuals from eastern Oregon have been meeting with Idaho Power to help format an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) that will be presented to the Public Utilities Commission in June. The IRP is the 20-year plan for Idaho Power to provide service to their clients. B2H is a prominent piece of this plan. With all the developments in the power industry, we do not believe that the B2H will be needed.

In Oregon, there has been no segment of the Oregon Trail listed on the National Register of Historic Places since the 1970s. Recently, four adjacent landowners agreed to pursue such a listing with the help and support of OCTA and the National Park Service. If successful, they will show the way for others.

OCTA will continue to keep communication lines open between landowners and Idaho Power. Much remains to be decided, let us all hope for the best.

-- Gail Carbiener

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Baker City Marks 25 Years

(Excerpted from The Baker City Herald)

A long-lasting trail partnership was cited by former Oregon Gov. Barbara Roberts in recognizing the role of federal, state, city and county agencies, charitable organizations such as OCTA, and community volunteers in building the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Bend, Oregon.

The now 80-year-old former governor, whose ancestors crossed the Oregon Trail in 1850, attended the groundbreaking for the Center and the official opening ceremony on May 25, 1992, as well as its 10th anniversary.

"It's amazing to think of the teamwork that made (the center) possible," Roberts told a reporter at the 25th anniversary celebration. "'It feels like personal family history when I walk in here,'" she added.

Center Director Sarah LeCompte of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management said the silver celebration was about the people involved in making the center possible, as well as the ones who have been responsible for its success in the past quarter century.

"It really shows the level of commitment of everyone involved," said Dave Hunsaker, who was project leaders for the center's development and served as its first director. "All involved are fortunate to have this group of public and private to make this happen."

LeCompte said the center began as an economic development project in the mid 1980s.

"It was a time when things weren't going so well in Eastern Oregon and people wanted to change that and make things happen by developing tourism in Eastern Oregon," LeCompte said. "It took a lot of community partnerships, regional partnerships, a lot of very dynamic individuals to build it and keep it going. It's not just another tourist attraction. It's a high-quality heritage site."

More than 2.2 million people, from all over the world, have visited the center.

"History is meant not to sit on a shelf collecting dust but to think about, to talk about, to share and to learn from," Roberts said.

Save the Trail

A Fascinating and Varied Slate of Convention Speakers

One of the highlights of any OCTA Convention is the opportunity to learn about the areas we visit from people who know it best. The lineup of speakers in Council Bluff will not disappoint!

It all kicks off Wednesday morning with a special presentation with **American Indian Voices**. Representatives of the Pawnee Nation will be sharing songs of the Pawnee and storytellers who will share with us Pawnee culture and lifeways.

Other Wednesday speakers will include:



Kira Gale - Astonishing Facts and Untold Stories of Lewis & Clark in Iowa and Nebraska. Kira is the author of *The Death of Meriwether Lewis*, *Lewis and Clark Road Trips*, *Lewis & Clark at Council Bluff: A Guide to Lewis & Clark in the Omaha-Council Bluffs Area*, and other titles.

Mark Kelly - Lost Voices on the Missouri: John Dougherty and the Indian Frontier. Mark is a long-term professional archaeologist and historian with a focus on the landed estates of antebellum Missouri and author of *Lost Voices on the Missouri: John Dougherty and the Indian Frontier*.

Dean Knudsen - Almost Lost Again: When the Missouri River Tried to Reclaim the 1865 Wreck of the Steamboat Bertrand. Dean is a curator for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, where one of his primary duties is to care for the Steamboat Bertrand collection, housed about 30 minutes north of Council Bluffs at the DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge. He is also the author of *An Eye for History: The Art and Life of William Henry Jackson*. He will discuss the massive 2011 Missouri River flood and efforts to keep the Bertrand collection safe.

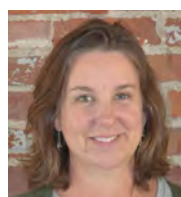
Carl Scott - Historic Pioneer Trails of SW Iowa. Carl is Chairman of the Historical Pioneer Research Group, a nonprofit focused on identifying the people, places and events of the early history of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Middle Missouri Valley and Winter Quarters.

John Krizek - Jumping Off for Oregon or California from Council Bluffs in 1844. How and why Council Bluffs became a principal launching point for the journey west, with the Stephen-Townsend-Murphy party headed for California, and the larger Thorp-Hammer party headed for Oregon.

Harlan Seyfer - Figuring Out Which White Man Got to the Platte River First. Historian for the Plattsmouth (Nebraska) National Historic District, he will focus primarily on Étienne de Veniard, Sieur de Bourgmont, who kept a journal and navigation log

recording distances as he traveled the Missouri River in 1714 to the Platte.

Bob Sharp - The Mormon Experience in the Middle Missouri Valley: Finding the Final Resting Places of Early Latter-day Saints in Iowa and Nebraska. Bob and his wife, Martha, are members of the Historical Pioneer Research Group and are among those responsible for finding early LDS settlements in the Middle Missouri Valley. There are some 120 cemeteries where LDS pioneers are thought to be buried and 85 have been identified.



Patricia LaBounty - Building America: The Union Pacific and Central Pacific Railroads. Patricia is the Manager of the Union Pacific Railroad Museum, one of the oldest corporate collections and museums in America.

Frank Norris & Lee Kreutzer - Rails and Trails: Impact of the 1863-1869 Transcontinental Railroad on the Overland Trails. Frank is a historian and Lee an archaeologist for the National Park Service National Trails Intermountain Region. They will explore how the construction of the railroad in 1863 through 1869 changed the way emigrants traveled -- and how it did not.

Lee Whiteley - The 1909 Glidden Tour: Following Nebraska's Transportation Corridor. Lee and his wife, Jane, have authored five books on the transportation history of the West. He will talk about the 1909 American Automobile Association's Reliability Tour, also known as the Glidden Tour, from Detroit to Denver, then to Kansas City. Through Nebraska, the route followed the Mormon Trail, Oregon-California Trail, the first transcontinental railroad, and the future Lincoln Highway.

Janice Gammon - The Lincoln Highway, Byway, and Future Days. Janice Gammon serves as the Coordinator of the Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway. The Lincoln Highway, developed in 1913, was the first improved transcontinental road in the United States, stretching from Times Square to San Francisco. She will explore the early days of the Lincoln Highway, the evolution of the Lincoln Highway Association, and what is next.



Historic Sites Featured on OCTA Convention Tours

No OCTA Convention would be complete without the opportunity to climb on a bus with a few dozen of friendly rut-nuts and see things you've never seen before. Since the 2017 Convention has never been this to this part of the trails, almost everything will be new. It's a once in a lifetime experience.

In addition to a Pre-Convention Tour from Fort Kearny to the Elk Horn Ferry Cross [sold out] and a Post-Convention Tour along the St. Joe Road/Independence



Lewis & Clark Monument

Route to Hollenberg Station, convention week tours will include: **Lewis & Clark in the Loess Hills** – Stops/sites will include

Railroads, Highways, Steamboats and Forts –

Lincoln Monument, Black Angel Monument, Union Pacific House, General Grenville Dodge House, Lincoln Highway Welcome Center, DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge (site of the wreck of the Steamboat Bertrand), and Fort Atkinson. (Tour available Thursday and Saturday.)

Nebraska City-Fort Kearny Cutoff and Oxbow Trail –



Fort Atkinson

Mullen's Ranch, Salt Creek Force, 1830 Jacob Astor Fur Trading Post & Marcus Whitman Cabin, Pioneer Courage Sculpture Park. (Tour available Thursday & Saturday.)

Mormon Pioneer Trail in Iowa – Kanesville Tabernacle, Mormon Battalion Muster Grounds,



Pioneer Courage Sculpture Park

Mormon Pioneer & California Trail in Nebraska – Mormon Trail Center, Mormon Pioneer Cemetery, Historic Winter Quarters, Old Florence Mill, Elkhorn



Kanesville

Nishnabotna River Crossing, Pote Farm Ruts, Mormon Trail County Park, Big Grove, Botna Bend. (Thursday only.)

Ferry Crossing, Liberty Pole Camp. (Saturday only.)

To sign up for tours, visit Convention registration on the OCTA home page at

www.OCTA-Trails.org.

Auction Items/Volunteers Needed

Your time, talent and treasure are needed for the annual Auction/Raffle at the Council Bluffs Convention.

Anyone wishing to bring items to donate or anyone wishing to volunteer for the Raffle Room and Registration can contact Jean Coupal-Smith at jcs1fun1@kc.rrcom.

Attention RVers

The closest RV park to the Council Bluffs Convention is Tomes RV Park, located at 706 Veterans Memorial Highway, ten minutes from the Headquarters hotel.

It includes 20 sites with electrical, water and sewer hookups. For more information, call (712) 366-0363 or visit www.travelcouncilbluffs.com/stay/place/tomes_rv_park.

Special Events Introduce OCTA to Council Bluffs & Omaha

Several special events are planned during convention week in Council Bluffs, August 8-12, including:

Tuesday - Joslyn Museum of Art – Reception and private guided tours of this renowned museum in Omaha. See amazing Western art by Bierstadt, Bingham, Bodmer, Catlin, Miller, Moran, Remington, Russell, Wyeth and others. The collection includes many pieces donated by one of OCTA's original members, Charles W. Martin. Other surprises are planned.

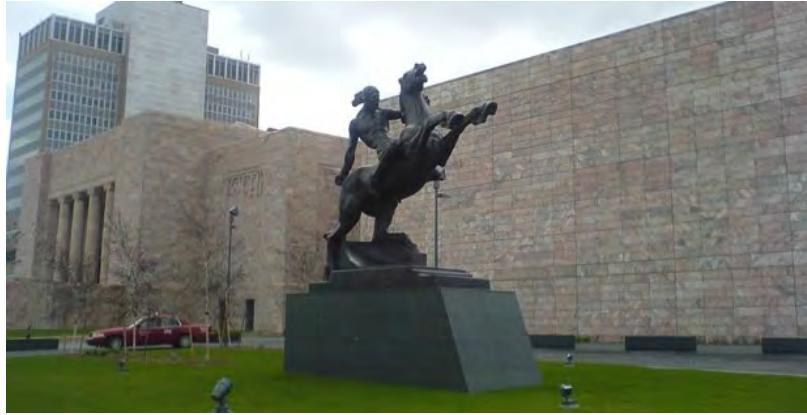
Wednesday – River City Star. [Sold out.]

An evening guided boat tour and dinner aboard a passenger river boat on the Missouri River. Capacity is limited to 110 people and tickets will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Your voyage will include interpretation related to the Lewis & Clark expedition, the California Trail, and the trans-continental railroad,

along with sweeping views of the beautiful Omaha skyline.

Friday - Mariah Monahan. In conjunction with the annual Live Auction, Cherrie-Beam Callaway will portray 'Mariah Monahan,' a 19th century Irish settler to

Nebraska. In addition, Donna Gunn will perform music of the Oregon-California Trail. **Saturday – River's Edge Park.** The site of the Convention's closing barbeque features the famed Bob Kerry Pedestrian Bridge that connects Council Bluffs to Omaha. The Nebraska side of the bridge features the NPS Lewis



Joselyn Museum of Art, site of Tuesday night's welcome reception.

and Clark National Historic Trails headquarters. Both sides of the river feature interpretive panels and large bronze artworks as well as miles of riverfront recreational trails. The Great Lawn Rays Light Show will begin at dusk and repeat every half hour.



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

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PRESERVATION

Following is excerpted from the June review of projects that impact historic trails prepared by the National Park Service National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR), which oversees historic trails, including the Oregon and California.

If you have questions, you can contact OCTA National Preservation Officer Jere Krakow (jkrakow@msn.com) or NPS archaeologist Lee Kreutzer (lee_kreutzer@nps.gov). For more information about the NTIR, visit nps.gov/ntir/.

Riley Ridge Unit Development Environmental Assessment. Bureau of Land Management, Pinedale Field Office, Wyoming. This oil and gas development west and southwest of Big Piney would entail trenching across a section of the Lander Trail. However, BLM and the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office have determined that the crossing location has been impacted by previous development and therefore does not contribute to the National Register eligibility of the trail.

Nebraska Public Power District R-Project Transmission Line Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Fish and Wildlife Service, Wood River, Nebraska. Written comments were due July 11 for a Nebraska Public Power proposal to construct a 225-mile transmission line in north-central Nebraska. The Draft EIS identifies indirect adverse impacts to historic remnants of the Mormon and California NHTs through the Nebraska Sand Hills and to the California and Pony Express NHTs at the O'Fallons Bluff.

Draft Bear River Comprehensive Management Plan. Utah Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands. The State of Utah invited public comment by July 7 on the draft Bear River Comprehensive Management Plan. The plan recognizes historic trails (California NHT and Bidwell-Bartleson route) as potential cultural resources.

Lander Road Damage Mediation (Memorandum of Agreement development). Bridger-Teton National Forest, Wyoming. Forest personnel conducting watershed restoration activities inadvertently damaged the Lander Trail section of the California NHT south of Afton. About 20 representatives from the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, OCTA, the Alliance for Historic Wyoming, the NPS, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, affected Indian tribes, and others met on May 31 to compile a list of mitigation ideas and action items, with plans to reconvene in the next several months.

Deschutes National Forest Ringo Project (Draft Environmental Impact Statement in progress). Deschutes National Forest, Crescent Ranger District, Oregon. The US Forest Service will be preparing an EIS to reduce tree density and surface fuels on 30,000 acres on the Upper Little Deschutes and other watersheds. The Free Emigrant Road feasibility study route crosses the project area. The Park Service has asked the Forest Service to mark

the route and make provisions to protect the trail during project activities.

Clackamas River Hydroelectric project (Application Notice). Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife seeks an easement to use lands and water within the Clackamas River Hydroelectric Project for a gravity-fed intake system to provide water to a state-operated fish hatchery. It appears to be located in the general vicinity of the Phillip Foster Historic Farm at the end of the Barlow Road route of the Oregon NHT. The NPS has asked that the federal lead agency identify, evaluate and mitigate any potential impacts.

Proposed Emigrant Springs Pipeline and South Plateau Pipeline Replacement and Sublette Cutoff & Associated Sites Enhancement Project (Section 106 consultation). Wyoming BLM, Kemmerer Field Office. BLM invited the NPS, OCTA, and others to consult on a proposal to replace the Emigrant Springs Pipeline and South Plateau Pipeline northwest of Kemmerer. The failing pipelines are near the Sublette and Hams Fork Cutoffs of the California NHT. BLM has identified specific steps to protect the nearby trail and to restore the historic Emigrant Springs campsite by removing a sheep trough and reseeding the disturbed area with native vegetation.

Continental Peak Grazing Fences and Enclosures (Memorandum of Agreement development). Wyoming Bureau of Land Management, Rock Springs Field Office. This project would install 26 miles of three-strand electric fence to divide the Continental Peak Grazing allotment into smaller pastures and fence off riparian areas. Two fence lines and a portable cattle guard will cross the combined Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer and Pony Express NHT within the South Pass Historic Landscape Area of Critical Environmental Concern/South Pass National Historic Landmark. BLM is developing a Memorandum of Understanding.

Gold Bar Mine Project Draft EIS. Nevada Bureau of Land Management, Battle Mountain Field Office. The Gold Bar gold mine project, located in Eureka County, Nevada, has the potential to affect the associated setting and view shed of the Pony Express National Historic Trail. A final EIS expected to be issued within the next few months. The Draft EIS determined the effects to the view shed of Pony Express National Historic Trail to be minor and short term in nature.

Long Canyon Mine Final EIS and Proposed Mitigation. Nevada Bureau of Land Management, Wells Field Office. The Long Canyon Mine is an open pit gold mine located south of Interstate 80 half way between Elko and Wendover. The final EIS found there will be an adverse effect to the Hastings Cutoff of the California National Historic Trail. Mitigation discussions with the project proponent, BLM, NPS, OCTA, Trails West, and other interested parties have been ongoing.

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA

The CA-NV Board met in Grass Valley on April 28. 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.

The Board set April 27-29, 2018 for next year's



Chapter President Dick Waugh

Chapter Symposium. The Symposium will be in the Fernley/Fallon area. Steve and Patty Knight have volunteered to Chair the event.

After a reception at the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum in Nevada City, partnering with the Nevada County Historical

Society, the Chapter's annual symposium was held the next day at the Elks Lodge. Sixty-five people attended the symposium which included a general membership meeting and speakers. The members enjoyed Welsh pasties for lunch and a buffet dinner provided by the Elks.

Speaker Rick Lemyre told the story of Dr. John Marsh and his 161-year-old Stone House, currently being restored as the centerpiece of Marsh Creek State Park. The Board has approved an interpretive panel to be installed at the House depicting the emigration of the Bidwell-Bartleson party in 1841.

Chapter member Priscilla Vanderpass spoke about Alonzo Delano, who traveled the trail to California in 1849, and keynote speaker Chuck Scimeca spoke about the development and importance of the Henness Pass Road. The afternoon concluded with author and comedian Chris Enss' entertaining presentation on women of the Wild West.

At dinner that evening, awards were presented to several Chapter members for their work within the Chapter. Jon Nolan was given a Trail Boss award for his work on the Fernley Swales project. Dan Murray, a member of the Beckwourth Trail Mapping Group, was given a certificate of appreciation for the mapping and reporting he has done for the group. The highlight of the awards was the lifetime achievement award presented to Dave Hollecker. Dave has spent years working on research, field work and most recently (the last nine years) producing our Chapter newsletter.

On Sunday morning Chuck Scimeca, assisted by Nevada County historical Society President Dan



Chris Enss presentation on women of the West at the annual CA-NV Chapter seminar

Ketcham, led a tour of the Henness Pass wagon road as far as the snow pack would allow.

For those who did not go on the tour, the Nevada County Historical Society opened several of their local museums and made docents and guides available for our members. Northern Star Mining Museum, home of the largest Pelton wheel, was an outstanding location.

Meanwhile, the chapter has been moving steadily ahead with the Fernley Sand Swales marking and restoration project. Jon Nolan has been working with the land-owner and community to work out the details for placing the interpretive panels. A dedication and area cleanup is planned for September 30, 2017

The CA-NV Chapter had a display at the 7th annual "Clarksville Day" May 6. Clarksville was a historic community in western El Dorado County on a route from Placerville, California to Sacramento that included emigrant travel as well as later the Lincoln Highway. Chapter members Steve and Donna Shaw and John Winner were on hand to greet the public and share OCTA's mission.

On Saturday May 20, the Second Annual California Pioneer History Day was held in Coloma, California, at the Marshall Gold Discovery State Historic Park. Five long-time and faithful chapter members, Ellen and Ford Osborn, Frank and Mary Ann Tortorich and Tom Mahach spent the day talking with hundreds of visitors, answering questions, handing out NPS trail maps, OCTA and Chapter membership brochures.

- Dick Waugh

COLORADO-CHEROKEE

Colorado has been experiencing a late winter this year with May snowfall and hail storms. So, we were glad to finally see blue skies in late May, when we had our first event of the year, an auto tour of several stage stops along the Overland Trail.

We all met at the Miner's Museum in Lafayette, Colorado on the morning of Saturday, May 20, for a three- hour tour led by Seth White, a Lafayette resident and member of the Lafayette Historical Society and Lafayette Preservation Board. Seth took us on a tour of five stage stops along the Overland Trail including Miller, Waneka, Manning, Buford and Burlington sites.

These sites are located between Broomfield and Longmont and are parallel to Colorado 287. There is very little, if anything, left at these sites, but it was fun to see them and read the history of each along the way. This tour was a continuation north of the auto tour led by Linda Graybeal last fall.

After completing the tour and having our group lunch in Lafayette, we visited the Miner's Museum and saw many photographs of the coal mining history in the area. We also were able to ask questions of the museum volunteers, who were quite knowledgeable about the area's history.

On June 10, Camille Bradford will give a presentation on



Colorado-Cherokee Chapter members touring stage stops on the Overland Trail.

W. H. Jackson at the Westminster Historical Society building for the OCTA-Colorado Chapter and WHS members. Afterwards, Linda Graybeal will take the group to the Westminster Castle to view an original W. H. Jackson photo taken near Telluride, Colorado.

Plans are in the works for one or two more chapter events in the fall, plus our annual board meeting and election of officers.

- Mark Voth

SOUTHERN TRAILS

On Sunday, March 19, six travelers continued the 2017 Symposium's mission : to explore the trails, especially the San Antonio - El Paso Military Trail.

Fort Davis National Historic Site was our afternoon destination. After two hours of discovering the importance of the site to stages and military troops, we visited specific buildings like the hospital, commissary, and officer's quarters. We walked a short distance on the trail before checking in at the Hotel Limpia. This lovely restored hotel is located across the street from the court house.

Early the next morning we dined at Lupitas' Restaurant with symposium speaker Larry Francell before regrouping to head westward. Jud and Virginia stayed to continue with a trip to the Big Bend area. During a quick drive through the town of Fort Davis, we encountered those Texas Bluebonnets!

- Cecelia Bell



Larry Francell, Jud and Virginia Mygatt, John Eger, John and Cecilia Bell and Sue Loucks.

Save the Trail

TRAILS HEAD

In commemoration of National Trails Day on June 3, Trails Head Chapter, the Missouri River Outfitters chapter of the Santa Fe Trails Association, and the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association co-sponsored a National Trails Day Rendezvous at Lone Elm Park in Olathe, Kansas.

Trails Head Chapter President Jean Coupal-Smith welcomed about 50 visitors and gave remarks about how this day's events are a continuation of events we have had in the past. In addition a brief synopsis was given about the National Trails System Act (NTSA) and its purpose.

Our three organizations are part of the 30 trails in the Partnership for the National Trails System. As we look forward to 2018 and the 50th Anniversary of the NTSA we hope to make this a larger celebration.

Our featured speaker Kevin Corbett, retired Olathe Parks and Rec Director, the key person in the purchase of Lone Elm Park site 15 years ago. He reviewed the process of the development and what it is today. After lunch Mr. Corbett lead a walking tour of the Lone Elm Trail and the interpretations along the trail.

Ross Marshall followed giving insight about how Lone Elm Park on a National Historic Trail was a key igniter of promoting local interest in trail site preservation and interpretation.

Shirley Coupal, Past State Regent Kansas Daughters of the American Revolution, presented the history and preservation of the site about of the Santa Fe Trail DAR marker that is placed there.

Travis Boley, OCTA Association Manager, talked about the broader expansion of regional trails in our area and how other areas are doing the same, such as in the Omaha-Council Bluffs area where our OCTA Convention will be held in August.

Larry Short, President of Missouri River Outfitters and Vice President of the Santa Fe Trail Association, gave the closing account of the Local Tour Route Signage projects that have been placed in the last two years



Tim Talbott of the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop & Farmstead shows a yoke during his presentation on oxen, their training and their importance on the trails.



Kevin Corbett, retired Olathe Parks and Recreation Director, discussed the purchase and development of Lone Elm Park.

connecting the Independence Route of the Santa Fe-Oregon-California Trails from Upper Independence Landing on the Missouri River through Jackson County Missouri and Johnson County Kansas to the Douglas County Kansas line.

- Jean Coupal-Smith



WYOMING

Wyoming Chapter members, the Alliance For Historic Wyoming, and others, including OCTA National President John Winner, at South Pass in mid-June.

CROSSROADS

As I wrote our last *News from the Plains* article, little did I know that our legendary Roy Tea would be the next person to pass on. At his request, I wrote a brief about the passing of Doug Howard. Roy said something about a glorious reunion, and I hope they are doing just that.

Roy Tea, our superhero *trailmeister*, passed away in March. I won't go into much as there was a remembrance in the last newsletter. He truly was a great legend in his own time. I met Roy in 1992 on a



Crossroad members on their field trip to Ogden-area historic sites.

bus trip across Nevada to visit the Donner Trail and Donner Lake. And, it seems, from then on Roy was always involved with trail history, writing trail guides and articles for the *Overland Journal*. He was a recipient of numerous awards both at chapter and national levels. He truly was a giant of a man in more ways than one, as he was 6'6" tall. I would kid him about being so tall that if he ever fell down he would be halfway home.

On other matters, we had our spring membership meeting in late March. Our speaker was Mark Stuart from the southern Ogden area who talked about the many prehistoric Indian sites in the northern Utah area. This is going to be a topic in our upcoming convention in 2018.

Also, our spring field trip focused on historic sites in and about the Ogden area. We had 24 participants on the one-day trip held on April 29. The trip also included the "Morrisite War" story of 1864 at South Weber and Ft. King(s)ton. We also visited old fort sites in the Ogden area. Chapter president, Terry Welch, did a splendid job according to all reports.

- A. Oscar Olson

The Crossroads Chapter has had the good fortune over the past years to develop a working relationship with other individuals and entities who share our passion for all aspects of our local trails. We are at the point where we freely consult with each other. A few examples of current joint undertakings are as follows:

1. The Santa Fe trails office requested our help in doing some of the leg work in procuring permission to place signs along a major Echo Canyon trail corridor in Summit County. A personal visit to the county road supervisor and county historian along with various other communications has brought this agreement to fruition.

2. In an agreement with our local Salt Lake Trails Office, Crossroads is undertaking a survey of interpretive panels along the four major routes through Utah. Mapping technicians have developed a pilot app whereby we can identify panel locations, take pictures, provide appropriate written data, log the GPS coordinates and then push a button to send the information to a database in Santa Fe, all while standing at the location. A group of chapter members have been trained and successfully completed a field test of this new system.

3. The local BLM office is sponsoring a June public tour along a segment of the Hastings Cutoff. Chapter trail historians will provide trail commentary.

4. Our chapter and the BLM office are in the initial stages of developing other delivery systems whereby the public can become better acquainted with the heritage, preservation, etc., of our trails.

- Terry Welch

Ben Kern Passes

Funeral services were held at the Oregon Trail State Veterans Cemetery in Evansville, Wyoming, for Ben Kern, a well-known and popular wagon master who died on June 12 at the age of 90.

Ben began leading wagon trains in Oregon in the 1960s and since 1993 took wagons over the major emigrant trails including the Oregon, Mormon, California, Goodale, Bozeman, Cherokee South Branch, Overland, and Cheyenne-Deadwood routes.

He took part in many film reenactments, including all films for the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, the "In Pursuit of a Dream" documentary for OCTA, and other films for the Discovery Channel, History Channel, BBC, and others.

In 2016 he donated his wagon to the National Historic Trails Interpretive Center in Casper, where it has become an exhibit to interpret his trail travels.

Memorials may be made to the National Historic Trails Center Foundation.

NORTHWEST

The Oregon-California Trails Association and the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation 2017 Symposium at Vancouver, Washington, March 31-April 2, was an outstanding success with over 225 OCTA and Lewis and Clark members in attendance.

The symposium was at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, a beautiful log lodge tucked in the tall firs along the north shore of the Columbia River. The lodge is reminiscent of the grand national park lodges, complete with the sounds of chirping birds in the hallways and rustic western décor.

The symposium on Saturday, "Vancouver: Layers of History on the Columbia River" had an excellent lineup of speakers on the Ice Age Floods and their influence on regional geography, local American Indian populations, early explorers, the fur trade, Lewis and Clark, the Oregon Trail, and Fort Vancouver. The keynote speaker on Saturday evening was naturalist and teacher Jack Nisbet, the author of several books on the history of the Intermountain West. The weekend event ended with a bus tour 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.

Upcoming NW Chapter Outings

Saturday August 19, 1:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m. The Philip Foster Farm is holding its annual Family History Day at 29912 SE Eagle Creek Road, Eagle Creek, OR. NW OCTA will have a booth again this year, and there will be about six booths dealing mainly with local history and genealogy. There will be free ice cream at the end of the day. Come by to talk, or if you would like to volunteer for the booth, or want more information on the festival, contact Henry Pittock at hpittock3@icloud.com

Still in the planning stages; date to be determined. Auto tour of part of the Barlow Road. We will probably meet for a short while at the Sandy Museum and Historical Society in Sandy (across from the famous Joe's Donut Shop), carpool to Government Camp, then follow the Barlow Road back to Sandy. The number of vehicles will be limited. Contact Henry Pittock at hpittock3@icloud.com for more information.

Still in the planning stages; dates to be determined. There will also be some small mapping and marking projects along the Barlow Road. Possible areas are the scout camp at Zigzag, along Marmot Road, Deep Creek, Eagle Creek Golf Course, Feldheimer Ford, Gerber Road, and Moss Hill. Because of limited access, some of these projects will most likely be limited to 5-6

KANZA



A historical marker at the junction of the Independence Route of the Oregon Trail and the St. Joe Road will be re-dedicated on Sunday, August 13, at a point about five miles west of Marysville, Kansas.

The day begins at the Wagon Wheel Café in Marysville at 11 a.m. with presentations and displays, followed by lunch (\$10).

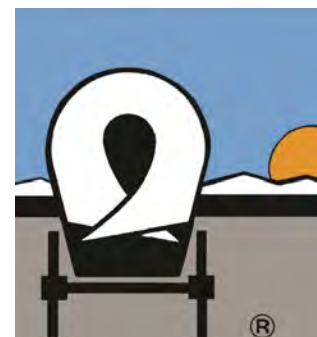
The marker was originally placed in 1941 by the Oregon Trail Memorial Association, founded in 1922 by Ezra Meeker. It marked an important site for Oregon Trail emigrants on route from Alcove Spring to Fort Kearny in Nebraska.

In the years since the marker was placed, it had aged and become covered with lichen and mildew to the point it was barely readable. The KANZA Chapter took on the project of restoring it. Partnering with members of the Alcove family, OCTA National, and the National Park Service, the KANZA folks have been restoring the marker and designing a wayside interpretive sign to explain the significance.

people. Please contact Henry Pittock at hpittock3@icloud.com so he can put your name on the list.

Saturday, September 23, 9:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. Annual Meeting and Picnic at the Clark County Genealogical Society Annex, Vancouver, Washington. Contact Paul Massee at 253-265-3382 or emailpcmassee@centurylink.net. 2018 is the 175th Anniversary of the Oregon Trail. At the Annual Meeting and Picnic we will discuss ways to celebrate and promote this important anniversary, so please think about it and bring your ideas!

- Dennis Larson



IDAHO

The annual spring byway tour was an enjoyable success as 10 people joined me on the tour on April 15. It was followed by a great spring meeting in Burley on May 6. 25 people traveled to central Idaho for a lively meeting.

The chapter tabled the idea to undertake a project with the NPS to improve trail signage and interpretive displays in the Boise area as there was not enough member interest to continue. An outing to Parting of the Ways on Raft River was taken after lunch where two cadaver dogs confirmed the presence of human remains at two grave sites.

Several trips were taken to the suspected mass burial site on Ditto Creek where test holes were dug under the guidance of an archaeological professor from Boise State University. Excitement was generated when Paul Dinwiddie unearthed a brown object with a hole in it. In the darkness of the 2-foot deep hole, the object looked remarkably like a skull. Continued digging, however, revealed the object to be an old, rusty, tin can. No human remains have been found to date. The search will continue.

A tour of the trail sites in the Soda Springs area will be held on Saturday, July 8. The group will meet at the



Spring byway participants on the edge of a cliff with Snake River valley and Owhyee Mountains behind.

Flying J truck stop in McCammon at 9:00 am. The fall chapter meeting will be held at AJ's Restaurant in Mountain Home on Saturday, October 7. It will be followed by a tour to view the progress made of the Canyon Creek stage station restoration. Check the IOCTA website IdahoOCTA.org for more details of upcoming activities. - Jerry Eichhorst

New Software for Trail Mappers

OCTA has been approved for participation in ESRI's Nonprofit Organization Program which gives OCTA members access to ESRI's ArcGIS software for an administrative fee of \$100 per year per user.

Included is the full desktop version of ArcMap, the standard mapping program for government agencies and most companies.

At present, most of OCTA's trail mapping uses Terrain Navigator Pro (TNP), which will continue. However, ArcMap offers other capabilities as well as 100 percent compatibility with the NPS mapping products.

Please contact Dave Welch at welchdj@comcast.net for additional information on mapping software and OCTA's mapping and marking committee.



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Save the Trail

Upcoming Events

July 8 - I-OCTA tour of trail sites in the Soda Springs area. Meet at the Flying J truck stop in McCammon at 9 a.m.

August 8-12 - OCTA National Convention, Council Bluffs, Iowa

August 13 - Re-Dedication of Independence Route-St. Joe Historic Marker, five miles west of Marysville, Kansas. Meet at Wagon Wheel Restaurant in Marysville at 11 a.m.

August 19, Philip Foster Farm annual Family History Day, 29912 SE Eagle Creek Road, Eagle Creek, OR., 1-4 p.m.

September 30 - Fernley Swales interpretive display dedication and area cleanup sponsored by the CA-NV Chapter.

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. 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.

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.



Threat to Federal Funding for Historic Trails

According to the Partnership for the National Trails System (OCTA is a member), the proposed Trump Administration FY 2018 Budget could make steep cuts to federal agency programs that help support historic trails. It also would cut the important Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) by 84 percent.

Created to invest a portion of the revenue from offshore drilling leases towards protecting parks, forests, wildlife refuges, public lands, and other community spaces, the \$900 million Fund has been a crucial tool for helping historic and scenic places within the National Trails System.

Apart from LWCF funding, the National Park Service faces a proposed reduction in its trails budget of almost \$900,000 to \$12.15 million and the Bureau of Land Management trails budget could be reduced more than \$400,000 to \$5.95 million.

Trails administered and managed by the U.S Forest Service are funded from the agency's Trails Account. For FY 2017, Congress appropriated \$77.383 million. The proposed Administration Budget for FY 2018 provides just \$12.7 million to maintain over 155,000 miles of trails, reduction of 84 percent.

The Land & Water Conservation Fund is presently budgeted for at least \$450 million overall, with \$54.8 million allocated for 72 projects along 12 national scenic and historic trails. Funding to the BLM, USFS and NPS through LWCF could be reduced two thirds or more.

If Congress approves these budget proposals, all 30 National Scenic and Historic Trails will be negatively impacted. The proposed cuts are large enough to jeopardize funding assistance from the agencies to the trail organizations such as OCTA., which currently receives about half of its operating budget from NPS.

The House and Senate Interior Appropriations Committees are holding hearings with agency leaders and beginning to work on preparing the FY 2018 Interior Appropriations Bill.

Bills have been introduced to permanently re-authorize the Land & Water Conservation Fund. While these bills are receiving bi-partisan support with many members of Congress co-sponsoring them, more co-sponsors are needed to demonstrate the overwhelming support for and value of the Land & Water Conservation Fund.

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:

Ron Becher
E. Darleen Brown
Shirley Coupal
Amanda Gibbs
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Stephen & Marylyn Pauley
Shannon E. Perry
Tom & Barb Rea
Dan Rottenberg
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Welcome New Members

William & Joanne Boycott, Lander WY
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Chris & Judy Christofferson, Vancouver WA
Renato Colantoni, Burbank, CA
Bob & Kay Cooke, Ridgefield, WA
Jennifer DeVore, Los Angeles, CA
John Eger, El Paso, TX
John Fahey, Decatur IL
Charles Gillis, La Grande OR
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Business Sponsors

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:

Jim Blaud Insurance Agency, 2661 Hub Drive,
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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,
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MO

Weaver Hotel, 126 S Kansas, Waterville, KS

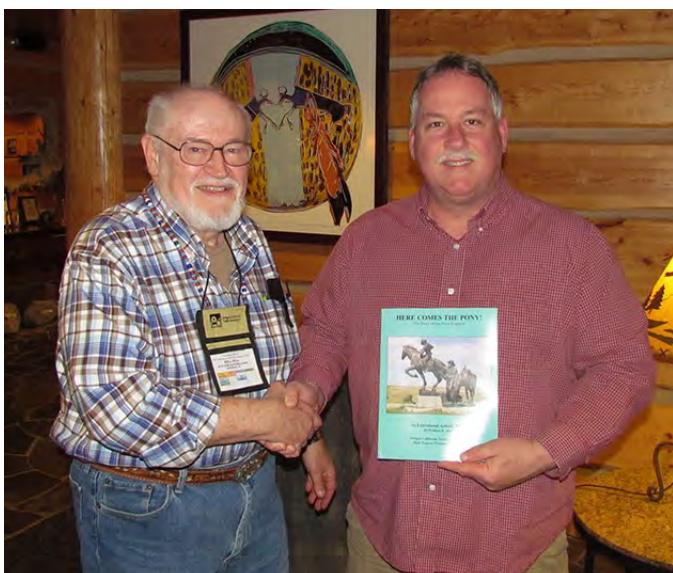
Kenneth J Weinand DDS PC - 14500 42 St, Suite 210,
Independence, MO 64057

PUBLICATIONS

We wish to welcome all our new OCTA members and hope that they are enjoying our publications. Editors of *News From the Plains* and the *Overland Journal* are working hard to keep all our members informed of what OCTA national and our local chapters are doing and to present relative, informative and interesting articles about our historic trails. We also wish to thank all of our members who have signed up for the electronic delivery of *News From the Plains*. We encourage our members who are considering it to try it. All you have to do is to contact Kathy at headquarters and request it.

We continue to work to keep our costs level and to increase our income. While we have recently

Robert Couch from Cascade Middle School in Vancouver, WA received a set of the *Here Comes the Pony* activity books. He had entered our annual raffle and his card was selected. He was most appreciative and commented that they would be put to good use with his students.



Robert Couch, right, a teacher at Cascade Middle School in Vancouver, Oregon, with Publications Chair Bill Hill.

increased the number of advertisements in the publications and our income generated by them, we constantly need long term or new advertisers to replace short term ads. Please forward any suggestions to us. Special value packages are available, including member discounts for advertising.

As many have noticed, the recent issue of the *Overland Journal* contains articles related to Nebraska and the Platte River, particularly, Merrill Mattes' earlier published article about the Great Platte River Road, part of the focused area of our August convention. Merrill was one of OCTA's founders, and the recipient for the Merrill Mattes Award for excellence in writing will be announced later this summer and presented at the Council Bluffs convention.



Cover of the 2018 OCTA student calendar.

The 2018 student calendar, entitled *Emigrant and Indian Musical Instruments*, will be available at the Council Bluffs convention or can be ordered now through headquarters. They will be available in July. Be sure to get yours before they are gone. The charge is only ten dollars. The artwork of 14 students was selected for the calendar. Participation in the project once again included students from public, private and parochial schools and students from grades first through sixth entered. Each student whose artwork was selected will receive a check for \$50 and a copy of the calendar, with another copy going to their school.

The students honored and their teachers and schools include: Yumi Warner – Mrs. Bitner 4th grade, Bennion Elementary, Taylorsville, UT; Samantha Jo Kirk- Mrs. Kolarik, 4th grade, Maggie Moloney- Mrs. Janner, 3rd grade, John Paul II, Overland Park, KS; Teddy Tak, Joshua Stevens – Mrs. Conrad, 4th grade, Brandon Xu – Mrs. Banis, 4th grade, Olivia Brandeis – Mr Thorpe, 4th grade, Golden View Elementary School, San Ramon, CA; Brooke Schwartz, Aislinn Arveseth- Mrs. Calli Hodson, 5th grade, Isaac Lowry, Treyson Ford, Stuart Pahnke- Mrs. Lowry, Grace Gibby, Amanda Wilkinson, 5th grade, Canyon Rim Academy, Salt Lake City, UT.

As in past years a number of the teachers again mentioned how much their students enjoy learning about the topic and then having a chance to draw what they learned. Information about the 2019 calendar contest will be available on the website later this summer.

- Bill Hill, Publications Chair

REMEMBRANCES

Warren L. "Tuck" Forsythe, a familiar figure at NW Chapter activities and OCTA conventions, passed away at his home in Ellensburg, Washington, on June 1, a week before his 73rd birthday and just a few weeks after celebrating his 49th wedding anniversary with his wife and companion, Kay.

A native of Alexandria, Virginia, he grew up in California and completed his undergraduate degree in math at Swarthmore, a graduate degree in biological sciences at the University of Wisconsin (where he met Kay through the Hoofers climbing club), and a doctorate in Forest Ecology at the University of Montana.

While Kay was serving as a seasonal naturalist at Arches National Park in Utah in the 1970s, they developed a life-long interest in canyons and hiking.

A residents of Ellensburg since 1983, Tuck was involved in a variety of history and genealogical organizations, including OCTA, the Kittitas Valley Genealogical Society, the Family History Center, the Ellensburg Public Library, Ecumenical Church, Quakers, Audubon Society, Ice Age Floods Institute of Oregon and Zen group of Ellensburg.

Tuck and Kay loved to travel, exploring the Cascades and the sandstone canyons of the Colorado Plateau. They also traveled throughout the U.S. and to France, Norway, Mexico, and beyond.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by his daughter Rhea Brown and her husband, Tim, and his son, Tad, and his wife, Nikki, as well as five grandchildren.

Memorials contributions may be made to the Kittitas County Genealogical Society and the Oregon-California Trails Association.

Long-time Crossroads Chapter member **Dr. Robert C. Steensma**, professor emeritus of English at the University of Utah and a retired Navy captain, passed away on June 8 at the age of 87.

A native of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, he taught British and American literature at Augustana College, the University of South Dakota, Utah State University, and the University of Utah, from which he retired in 2001.

Captain Steensma served in the Naval Reserve from 1948 to 1983. He is survived by his wife Sharon, five

Historian, author, educator and Northwest Chapter leader **Jim Tompkins** passed away suddenly on June 7 at his home in Beavercreek, Oregon, at the age of 69.

Jim was proud of his heritage as a sixth generation descendent of Oregon pioneers and his family history led him into a study of the region's history. After earning Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Portland State University, he taught history at the junior high school level

for 27 years. He also taught a popular class at Clackamas Community College about the Oregon Trail.

He was a member of the Clackamas County Historical Society, OCTA and many other historical organizations. He was past president of the

Northwest Chapter and chaired the national convention in Oregon City. He was a popular tour guide and the photo shows Jim leading a tour on the Barlow Road.

He wrote several books, including histories of Oregon City, Laurel Hill and the Barlow Road, and more, and edited many trail diaries and reminiscences. He wrote frequently for The Overland Journal, winning the Merrill Mattes Award for Excellence in Writing in 2001.

Among many awards, Tompkins was named the 1990 DAR Oregon History Teacher of the Year and was the recipient of the 2007 Clackamas Heritage Partners Wilmer Gardner Education Award for lifetime achievement.

He is survived by his mother, Juanita Alf, his children, Jerry Tompkins, Wendy Stimac and Nathan Tompkins, and two grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his father, Merle, and sons Andrew and Peter.

Memorial contributions may be made in his name to the Clackamas County Historical Society.



children: Craig, Michael (Ginger), Laura Scott (Rodney Mena), Kathryn Thompson (Kyle), and Rebecca Milner (Sam), and twelve grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the J. Willard Marriott Library at the University of Utah.

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represent a wonderful way to recognize the
contributions of loved ones to the legacy of the
trails. To learn more, visit
OCTA-trails.org/donate-online

Leaving A Legacy for the Trails: Kelly Breen

A traffic jam in Donner Pass 55 years ago led to a lifetime interest in trail history which last year culminated in a new member of the OCTA's Trails Legacy Society.

Kelly Breen was 13 years old when her family was on a Greyhound bus that got stuck on Old Highway 40 (Interstate 80 was still under construction) and there wasn't much to do but contemplate the Sierra scenery.

When the tour finally stopped overnight in Reno, there were post cards depicting the story of the Donner party and their tragedy in those very mountains. The experience so piqued the interest of young Kelly that when she got home to Illinois she looked up George Stewart's book *Ordeal by Hunger*, the story of the Donner party—and that was it.

By the time Kelly discovered OCTA in 2009—by looking us up on Google—she was a retired teacher, with 25 years in the Shawnee Mission school district in Overland Park, Kansas. After experiencing various historical organizations over the years, in the Trails Head chapter she finally found a hospitable group of people who shared her lifetime interest in trail history.

"I finally found my home," Kelly comments. She relished the experience of the 2011 convention in Rock Springs, and was a key host of the 2012 convention in Lawrence.

"In Europe they do such a great job of celebrating their history," Kelly reports. "What are we doing in this country? I can't imagine what those pioneers did and how they persevered. It's very important that we do what we can to preserve that trails legacy."



One hazard she keeps encountering is having to explain that she's not related to the Breen family that was part of the Donner party.

As a single person with no heirs, she consulted with her financial advisor and decided to dedicate part of her estate to the cause "dearest to my heart" through the Trails Legacy Society, and thus help preserve that trail legacy in perpetuity.

- John Krizek

This is the latest in a series focusing on donors who have chosen to make legacy gifts to the Oregon-California Trails Association. If you would like to share your story to encourage other OCTA members, please contact John Krizek at krizek33@gmail.com.

Donating Property: Little House on the Prairie or Vacation Home

Often times folks come to the point where it is time to divest.

For many property owners, probate is an issue they would like to avoid. The good news is that the expense of probate can be avoided in many states, especially in OCTA Chapter states. Most states recognize and allow the use of a Transfer on Death Deed (TOD) or Beneficiary Deed.

When recording a TOD deed, you retain full ownership of your property during your lifetime. At death, the property will transfer to the named party on the deed by-passing probate and saving thousands of dollars.

Whether a primary residence or a vacation home, you can use this cost saving method of transfer to family or naming OCTA as the new owners). After the transfer the property can be sold and the proceeds

used for the important work you have supported during your life.

This could also provide your estate with a possible estate tax savings. To keep the process simple, you may want to access www.NOLO.com, on the internet, for a step by step process of completing a deed and transfer instructions. (This is just one of several options on-line.)

Using the TOD deed can provide peace of mind knowing you have left nothing to chance, helped family and/or OCTA's mission. All in all, like our resourceful pioneer forefathers, you will have exercised good stewardship of what you have worked hard to acquire during your life. What a beautiful lasting legacy that would be. You may want to visit with your legal counsel and/or representatives of OCTA for additional information.

- Lee Black, OCTA Fundraising Committee

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