

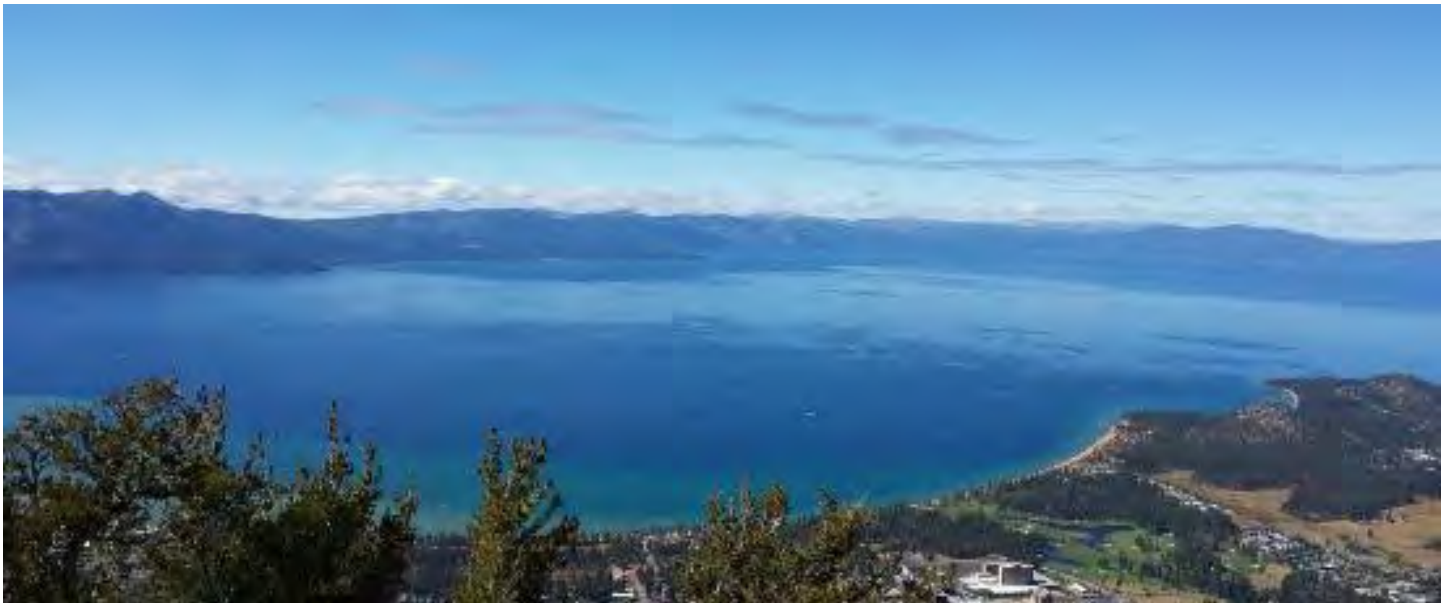
NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Summer, 2015

Volume XXX, No. 3

All Trails Lead To Lake Tahoe



"...surely the fairest picture the whole world affords" - Mark Twain, Roughing It, 1871.

Photo courtesy Paul Carter/Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority

33rd Annual OCTA Convention, Lake Tahoe, September 21-25

With 15 identified trails in the area, the 33rd Annual OCTA Convention at Lake Tahoe will truly live up to its theme of "A Bonanza of Trails."

Hosted by the California-Nevada Chapter, the convention will be headquartered at Harveys Lake Tahoe, convenient to all of the trails. Pre-convention and convention tours will allow OCTA members to see as many of the trails as they have time for.

Special events include the Welcoming Reception and Authors' Night on Monday, September 21 and a "Little Italy" Awards Dinner and Live Auction on Tuesday. The convention will wrap up with the End of the Trail "South of the Border" dinner and entertainment on Friday.

Pre-convention tours on Saturday and Sunday, September 19-20 will include the Johnson Cutoff and Carson River Route (both two-day tours) and one-day Footsteps of John Fremont (hike), Grizzly Flat Cutoff, and West Pass (hike) tours.

Wednesday and Friday are bus tour days, including the Carson-Johnson Loop, Coloma/Placerville Museum, Donner-Truckee River Route, and Hawley Grade-Luther Pass (hike).

Following the General Membership Meeting and Opening Ceremonies on Tuesday morning, Gary Kurutz, long affiliated with the California State Library and currently executive director of the California State Library Foundation, will deliver a keynote speech entitled "On the Extremity of Civilization: The Golden Words of the Argonauts."

Topics covered by speakers on Tuesday afternoon and Thursday include the Donner-Reed Wagon Party,
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FROM THE PRESIDENT



by [John Krizek](#), OCTA President

From one end of our trails map to the other, individual OCTAns and OCTA chapters are out there defending and promoting the trails.

In **Oregon**, a team led by board member and Northwest Chapter Preservation Officer Bill Symms and including such long-time experts as

Gail Carbiener and Glenn Harrison, is aggressively protesting plans for the proposed Boardman to Hemmingway transmission line project, which would negatively impact the Oregon Trail for much of its 300-mile route.

In **California**, the CA/NV Chapter is gearing up for the September convention at Lake Tahoe and getting ready to implement the long-awaited trail signage program finally approved by CalTrans, with training to be provided by National Park Service expert Steve Burns.

In **Utah**, a team of three interns from local colleges are working with the Crossroads Chapter to provide public relations support in the Salt Lake City area. (See story on page 11.)

In **New Mexico** – following up on the successful Southern Trails Chapter symposium in April in Silver City – Board member Cecilia Bell is working with local officials to create signage to mark the trail through that community, without waiting for official designation as a National Historic Trail.

In **Kansas**, the KANZA Chapter and the Alcove Spring Foundation are getting ready to promote OCTA when an expected crowd of 2,000 people visit the park to see the

Topeka Symphony Orchestra perform at a September outdoor concert.

And in **Kansas City**, the Trails Head Chapter continues to play a role in the Three-Trails Corridor project, which continues to develop with signage programs through that metropolitan area. The phenomenal success of the eighth grade student journaling program in Independence (see story on page 6) has provided a great boost to the stature of OCTA and the growth of trail education in that area.

Meanwhile, the OCTA board, with the help of several chapter leaders and committee chairs, has reviewed and updated our **Strategic Plan**, the document that guides us in all we do. We look forward to any comments you might have before the board adopts this plan at the September board meeting. (See page 19.)

I should not overlook OCTA's participation in the Partnership for the National Trail System's Biennial National Scenic and Historic Trail conference held in June in Franklin, Tennessee. Education Outreach co-chair **Audrey Elder** and headquarters intern **Kelsy Sackrey** were to lead a panel on the student journaling project and how it benefits trail education. **Ross Marshall** and **Travis Boley** led a panel on the Three-Trails Corridor project through Kansas City. And **Chris Jones**, son of fundraising chair **Melissa Shaw Jones**, attended as a recipient of a youth scholarship provided by the PNTS.

All in all, it's an exciting time to be part of OCTA. I hope you'll let that friend or relative know, so they can join us and get in on the action.

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OCTA Board Member Doug Jensen Passes

Doug Jensen, a member of the OCTA National Board of Directors since 2009 and a long-time leader of the Idaho Chapter, died unexpected at his home in Idaho Falls on May 12. He was 58.

"Doug was one of those quiet, thoughtful guys, who could always be counted on to be there when needed," said OCTA President John Krizek. "He will be sorely missed on the OCTA Board of Directors."

Doug was born in Logan, Utah, and graduated high school in Richland, Washington. After serving an LDS mission in Germany, he graduated with a degree in chemistry and a Ph.D. in analytical chemistry from Brigham Young University.

Doug served as president and vice president of the Idaho OCTA chapter and was actively involved in planning the 2016 National Convention scheduled at Fort Hall. In addition to OCTA, Doug was involved in his community. He was a member of the Eastern Idaho Photographic Society and very involved with HAM radio.

Doug loved to be outdoors. He was known for hiking, biking, mountain climbing, rock climbing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and backpacking. He dearly loved his family and his dogs.

Survivors include his mother, Ann Nelson Jensen; his wife, Kathryn Barrus Jensen; his daughters, Laura (Nicholas) Kohler and Melanie (Shiloh) Judd; his siblings, Kaylene (Doug) Kane, Mary Lynn (William) Talbot, Gary (Becky) Jensen; and three grandchildren.

Those wishing to make a donation to OCTA in Doug's name to help preserve the heritage trails he loved can visit www.octa-trails.org/donate-online

OCTA Pubs Under Study

OCTA publications are sometimes considered the showplace of OCTA. Our *Overland Journal* is known for its excellent articles, the arrival of which all of us eagerly await. *News from the Plains* keeps us informed not only about what is happening in our local chapters, but also about events that are happening in the country that have an impact on the trails and associated historical sites. Our special publications, the books we have published, provide members and the public with information about the trails' historical development and the people who traveled them. Our educational activity books have proved to be useful tools for teachers and students learning about the westward migrations.

These are the vehicles through which the rest of the world has come to know OCTA. But they also can be a source of income which OCTA dearly needs if we are to fulfill our preservation and education missions. The age of the computer has also brought a new face for OCTA – our website, octa-trails.org. The Internet is also a tool we hope to use to focus attention on some of our publications. We hope to soon offer some specials available on our webpage, so be sure to visit often to see what's available.

One of the ways in which we are moving into the new electronic and digital age has already been announced. Our flagship, the *Overland Journal*, now has back issues available online to our members at octa-journals.org. You will still receive your new copies through the mail, but now past issues are available to members on the Web. We are working toward making back issues available to non-members for a fee, providing an additional source of revenue for OCTA.

We are also making the *News From the Plains* available for all our members online. I have been one of those people who have been slow to join the new age, but I know many of our members have jumped right in. There are a number of benefits in switching from print to electronic. First, you will receive it quicker. Second, electronic issues are in full color, instead of black and white. Third, it saves OCTA money, since we will no longer need to pay for postage and mailing services, saving thousands of dollars a year. Fourth, all past issues will be available online for easy reference.

You can sign up to receive the NFP electronically by notifying headquarters at octa@indepmo.org. Don't be shy, sign up now.

-- Bill Hill, Publications Chair



"Music Meets the Meadow" - Alcove Spring, September 6



Sounds of the Topeka Symphony Orchestra will echo across the hills of Alcove Spring and the Oregon Trail on Sunday, September 6. The orchestra will give a concert of familiar themes from western movies,

traditional music from pioneer days, and music typifying the American Spirit that made the settlement of the western half of America possible.

This will be a daylong event with speakers, wagon rides, re-enactors, tours of Alcove Spring with or without guides. There will be tents with displays and vendors as well as food and beverage concessions. OCTA will be a sponsor of the event and have a presence with the KANZA chapter and the National Park Service.

The Topeka Symphony is led by Kyle Wiley Pickett, a member of OCTA and the KANZA chapter, and is recognized as one of the leading music directors in the nation. He is the ideal conductor to initiate what will hopefully become an annual event since his ancestors went to California in a covered wagon and perhaps passed through Alcove Spring.

Tickets are still available, but going fast. Go to www.ooot.org, for ticket information and purchase. Don't miss this outstanding event.

NFP: Electronically

You can help OCTA and enjoy a more colorful product by signing up for free email delivery of *News From The Plains*.

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Best of all, you're helping OCTA be a good steward of its preservation resources.



Topeka Symphony Orchestra conductor Kyle Wiley Pickett doing reconnaissance of the Alcove Spring concert site.

— Photo by Tom Parker

Fundraising

The Circle of Life

In the circle of life, we expect death to be a normal event. We just want it to be far off in the future. When emigrants were walking the trail in 1856, pushing handcarts across Nebraska heading west, they had no idea how long that trail would be. They kept on walking and holding the faith.

I had to experience Independence Rock to fully understand. Climbing up that piece of granite, out in the open, seeing the very old names carved in it, and asking out loud, "Where is the trail?" The flood of voices that wanted to tell me was overwhelming.

There are so many stories on the trail, if you're willing to listen. A place is made holy by the events that take place there. The trails hold powerful DNA that can still speak to generations today. Maybe they only gave me their name, or their DNA, or their family values and traditions, their beliefs and their vocabulary. They gave me something that makes me feel good.

When I find myself "carrying the flag" for our family blood lines, it gives me a deeper sense of introspect that helps me ask myself how I'm doing. But it was having two sons that made me complete. Because I could help pass the flag on. Together, as OCTA, we help carry the flag so the stories don't die too.

The opportunity to leave a legacy and "carry the flag" for the trails we love is why OCTA established the "Trails Legacy Society." The Legacy Society is designed to encourage supporters and donors to leave a bequest to OCTA in their wills, with funds designated for OCTA Endowments. To learn more about the Trails Legacy Society, visit OCTA-Trails.org and click on the link under Preserve. - Melissa Shaw Jones, CFP, Fundraising Chair

Lake Tahoe (cont'd from page 1)

the Gold Rush drawings of J. Goldsborough Bruff, women pioneers, John Sutter, the Carson River Route, and the history of the emigrant trail from a Native American perspective. (For more details on the presentations and the speakers, please consult the convention registration booklet available on the CA-NV Chapter website at canvoca.org.)

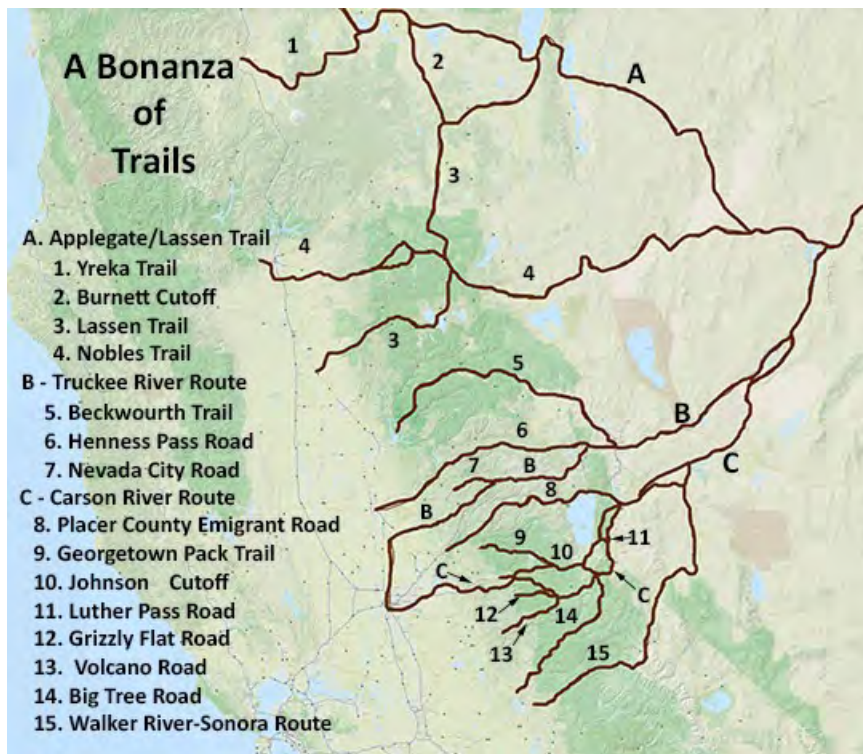
Other activities include the OCTA National Board meeting on Monday, a special showing of "The Covered Wagon," a 1923 silent



Keynote Speaker Gary Kurutz

western, during the End of the Trail dinner on Friday, and Thursday afternoon workshops on cooking on the trail, a presentation on Native American baskets, trail research methods, and a panel discussion on convention planning. The registration desk will be open beginning at 8 a.m. on Monday, September 21. Book room hours are 8 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. on Monday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Tuesday, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. on Wednesday, and 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Thursday.

More Convention registration information is available at octa-trails.org.



Grizzly Flat Pre-Convention Tour



The Grizzly Flat Road, opened in 1852, left the Carson River Route at Leek Springs.

It followed Baltic Ridge west, descending to

the North Fork of the Cosumnes River. Ascending the hill south of the river it followed ridges down to the town of Grizzly Flat. It was used as an alternative route to Placerville. Emigrant diaries describe completing the 20-mile road in one day, although some camped about half way on the river.

The Grizzly Flat Pre-Convention tour closely follows the original route. Many miles of the Grizzly Flat Road setting today is much as it was in 1852. The present-day traveler can easily visualize the emigrant experience on the Grizzly Flat Road. There are few intrusions and both the foreground and background are much as they were when the emigrants passed by. If participants do not have a 4-wheel drive vehicle they can take a paved forest road alternative, missing six miles of the Road, and meet the group at the North Fork of the Cosumnes River.

More Reading

In addition to the Suggested Reading List included in the Convention Registration Booklet, here are some books recommended by historian and convention presenter Frank Tortorich.

- Cherokee Trail Diaries* Vol. I 5² 8³ & Vol. II 5² 9⁴ – Patricia K. A. & Dr. Jack E Fletcher and Lee Whiteley
- Trail of the First Wagons Over the Sierra Nevada* (A Guide) – Charles K. Graydon
- The California Trail: An Epic with Many Heroes* – George R. Stewart
- The Mormon Battalion U.S. Army of the West, 1846-1848* – Norma Baldwin Ricketts
- Ghost Trails to California* – Thomas H. Hunt

Students Experience Trail History Through Journals

The Historic Trail Journaling Project with eighth graders in Independence, Missouri was an unqualified success and will be expanded next year to neighboring school districts, according to Education Outreach Committee co-chairs Matt Mallinson and Audrey Elder.

Some 850 students studied journals written by pioneers. In April, 125 of those students participated in a wrap-up day at the National Frontier Trails Museum where OCTA headquarters is located and toured the Wayne City Landing area where the pioneers disembarked from the Missouri River to begin their overland journey.

The committee worked with Brian Schultz, junior high curriculum director for social studies in the Independence School District, to take advantage of the recently digitized Merrill Mattes collection of emigrant journals and other documents housed at the museum.

"This whole program was made possible by the digitization of over 100 emigrant journals scanned by OCTA intern Kelsy Sackrey, who worked with a local web designer to build the website, which also includes 32-plus years of the *Overland Journal*," explains Association Manager Travis Boley. "The site [www.octa-journals.org] also includes an interactive trail map developed by the National Park Service. The OJ inventory is password protected, but the other features are free.

"We are expanding the on-line emigrant journal inventory as fast as documents can be digitized. This is an exciting tool we have not had before."

Dr. Mallinson, in his role as a school board member with the Independence School District, and Elder, owner of Past to Present Research, are the driving forces behind the creation of a "National Journaling Month" concept and were instrumental in partnering with OCTA to make this experimental program a success.

"The Independence School District and Past to Present Research deserve a huge amount of credit for making this curriculum change happen," Boley notes.

The classes began with a specific lesson of the period, then the students were matched up with a "journal buddy," explains Elder. "Once the students finished reading their assigned journal, they shared highlights."

One student reported, "My guy's wagon broke down and he got stuck on the trail for a long time because he



The William Chrisman High School Drama Club participated as re-enactors at the Independence event. The high schoolers enthusiastically guided the 8th graders during the day



Students check out one of the history panels at the Wayne City Landing, as part of the Historic Trail Journaling Project wrap-up day in Independence.

— Photos by Audrey Elder

had to wait for someone to help fix it. Another reported a pioneer had to sleep next to a dead woman on the trail.

"Beyond the unfiltered, un-romanticized version of history straight from those who lived it, students were able to apply their lessons to geography, science, and language arts," Elder says. "Each classroom created a 'word wall' where they posted specific words or terms they weren't familiar with, with pictures to assist in explanation."

"This was learning at its best," adds Mallinson. "It's a valuable topic to learn. The business community has experienced the value already. Independence Square has hired re-enactors to interact with tourists."

Plans are under way to develop a guide to help school districts elsewhere institute similar programs. Chapters are encouraged to get involved and coordinate education efforts with other community entities to promote pride in trail history, tourism, and OCTA membership.

Education Awards, Children's Calendar Planned

The Outstanding Educator Award is one method OCTA uses to fulfill its educational mission. Over the years awards have been presented to educators from all regions of the country and all levels of education, from primary schools to colleges and universities to adult and teacher education.

Programs have incorporated numerous types of techniques, including hands-on activities, the use of diaries, simulation games, role playing, first-hand trail experiences, special programs developed for the blind and special education students, video productions, pioneer days, and the utilization of the talents of known historians and local people, and teacher-oriented activities. Museums and parks have been honored for the programs developed for local schools, children's camps and visitors.

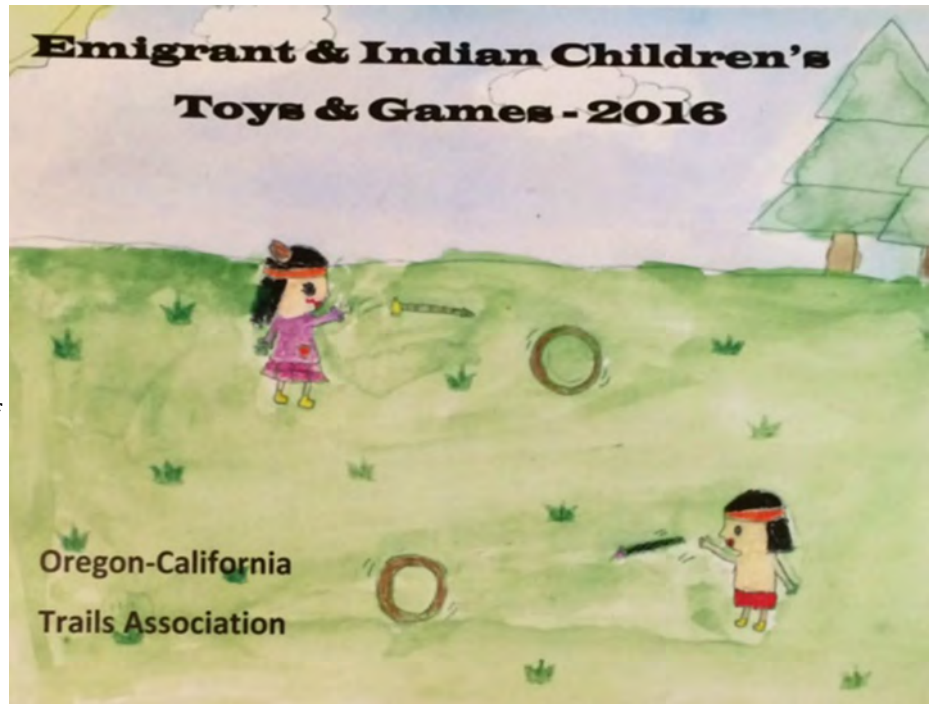
Awards for OCTA's Outstanding Educators will be presented at the September Convention at Lake Tahoe. It is sure to reflect the continuance of excellence that we have recognized in the past.

In addition, the selection of the artwork for the 2016 calendar with the theme of "Emigrant and Indian Children's Games and Toys," is now complete and the production of the calendar is underway. Fourteen drawings depicting children's games and toys have been selected. Each student artist whose work was selected will receive a check for \$50 and a copy of the calendar.

The participating artists spanned grades first through fifth. The variety of games and toys made the selection process challenging. Easily there were enough depictions of other games and toys that another calendar could have been made.

The students honored and their teachers and schools include:

Xi Nicole Wei - Mrs. Van, Golden View Elem. School, San Ramon, CA; Katie Hornbuckle - Mrs. Watts, Golden View Elem. School, San Ramon, CA; Henry Morgan - Mrs. Gorman, John Paul II, Overland Park, KS; Jasmine Brown, Arli Williams, Nick Tagge, Sally Swensen - Mrs. Nielsen, Upland Terrace Elementary, Salt Lake City, UT; Ethan Astle, Lily Barton, Kate Goodwin - Mrs. Jenkins, Canyon Rim Academy, Salt Lake City, UT; Walker Ungricht - Mrs. Lowry, Canyon Rim Academy, Salt Lake City, UT; Ashley



The children's calendar will be available for purchase at the OCTA Convention at Lake Tahoe in September.

Mathis, Alex Payne, Kelly Rice – Mrs. Romney, Canyon Rim Academy, Salt Lake City, UT. Leisha Black also works with the teachers from Canyon Rim.

The calendar will be available for purchase at the convention in Lake Tahoe. Please come prepared to support OCTA's projects and purchase a calendar.

Honoring those that pass on the knowledge and love for the trail and for encouraging budding bright minds is so important, for they are the future of both OCTA and the United States. I have enjoyed working on this for more than a quarter century and meeting all the talented students and adults involved. I have much for which I am thankful. I know that OCTA's future educational role remains bright.

-- Bill Hill



FROM THE ASSOCIATION MANAGER

By [Travis Boley](#)

Association Manager



Beginning in late summer 2014, OCTA began rethinking its position with school districts around the country. How could we position ourselves to influence curriculum design and decisions? How could we encourage the utilization of our collections housed at the National Frontier Trails Museum in

Independence? How could we begin planting seeds in the next generation of potential trail stewards?

The answer unveiled itself slowly. Last spring, the National Park Service offered to fund the digitization of our *Overland Journal* collection. OCTA took it a step further and asked NPS to also fund the digitization of our emigrant journal collection.

OCTA intern Kelsy Sackrey set to work scanning the emigrant journals, while HQ Manager Kathy Conway's husband Jim undertook the tedious task of scanning all *Overland Journals* that were not yet in digital form (former editor Ariane Smith forwarded about 10 year's worth of already-digitized copies). Then, we hired a local web designer to put together a simple, efficient website called www.octa-journals.org to house it all. The website was launched in early March 2015.

In late 2014, I and OCTA educational program committee co-chairs Audrey Elder and Matt Mallinson began working with the Independence School District's Brian Schultz, the Curriculum Director for Junior High Social Studies, as well as Audrey's firm, "Past and Present Research," to reinvent the 8th grade curriculum. Mr. Schultz designed new curriculum whereby all district 8th graders (nearly 1,000 students) would utilize our online emigrant diary collection for original research projects.

By January 2015, OCTA and the ISD were holding in-service training for teachers on the utilization of trail diaries from OCTA's library holdings. The new website contains well over 100 overland emigrant journals, free of charge to all users. In addition, the website contains 32+ years of the *OJ* as well as links to OCTA's main page and its educational holdings and a new interactive trail map launched by the National Park Service.

In March, the school district began teaching history in an interactive fashion in the classroom. Instead of using a text book, each student selected a unique trail journal as their own. They studied the journal, learning new

vocabulary, geography, math, history, and other subjects. They also kept their own journals, in keeping with OCTA Elder's dream of creating a National Journaling Month. Students provided periodic reports on their diaries and discussed them in class.

At the end of April, the ISD took 125 eighth graders for a final "wrap-up" day at the National Frontier Trails Museum. Students were taken into the library to see the actual archives and learn how to do research there. They also were taken on guided tours of the galleries, took covered wagon rides of Independence to see the historical sites firsthand, and enjoyed 19th century-era music from local musicians. In addition, 16 William Chrisman High School drama club students dressed in period clothing and interacted with the students while they ate lunch, teaching some of them dances from the period. The museum was also filled with members of a local acting troupe bringing 19th century characters to life. After their visit to the museum, the students were transported to Wayne City Landing, where they interacted with the drama club students, who recited relevant passages from actual journals.

Finally, Chrisman High School senior Rachael Mallinson made video recordings of the final day and interviewed numerous people. A 5-minute film is being edited to show our chapters and other teachers how they might adapt their curriculum to utilize OCTA's collections. We expect this film to be available this summer, and it will be added to OCTA's websites and YouTube.

At the end of June, Elder, Sackrey and I gave a panel presentation at the Partnership for the National Trails System bi-annual conference in Nashville, teaching other trail organizations how to institute something similar. We plan to add ISD's curriculum to the Journals website and start utilizing our chapters and other avenues to encourage school districts all over the nation to adapt their curriculum to include OCTA's holdings.

In year one of the program, OCTA increased usage of its collections from about ten or fifteen people annually who come in to the museum to do research to almost 1,000. We envision tens and even hundreds of thousands of school children eventually utilizing our website. And obviously, this is a valuable resource for researchers, including college students, authors, genealogists, or those who hold a general interest in the topic. We are very excited to see how we might utilize the new journals website to increase advocacy, support, membership, and revenues.

KANZA CHAPTER

KANZA Chapter has been very busy on a variety of projects this year. Partnering has long been advocated as a means of achieving greater goals. As a result, KANZA has a number of members working on projects throughout Northeast Kansas in collaboration with other groups.

Duane Durst has been working with members of a military trail group to research and mark the trail from Fort Riley, Kansas to Fort Kearny, Nebraska. Although considered a military trail, it is also known to be a Mormon route. The group is completing work on a park with interpretive signage at a sight known as Mormon Spring. They are also working with the Mormon historians to tell this small but important part of trail history.

Recently, Lee Kreutzer, Cultural Resources Specialist/Archaeologist of the National Park Service spent a week in the area. She and Charles Wieckert met with the directors of the Marysville Pony Express Museum, of which he is chairman. They are working to attain Certified Historic Trail status for the museum, since it is the original stable at the first home station on the Pony Express Trail and follows the Oregon Trail.

Lee also visited Topeka to study the Uniontown Ferry route as part of her project to perform the congressionally authorized study of trail sections to be added to the Oregon NHT. Led by Tom Ellis, a group of representatives of the Shawnee County Historical Society, Citizen Band Potawatomi Nation and the Kansas River Authority, with chapter members Bill Wagon and Jon Bursaw, they visited the Pappan, Smith and Darling river crossings as well as the Potawatomi Baptist



Archaeologists working at Alcove Spring. — Photo by Tom Parker

Mission. They toured the Uniontown ghost town, nearby wagon swales and historic resources along the Independence Trail Route of the Oregon and California Trails both north and south of the Kansas River through Shawnee County.

Many KANZA members have been working on Alcove Spring to prepare for the upcoming September 6 concert (see article on page 4), as well as working with projects funded by grants from the National Park Foundation and part of the NPS design program for the park. Projects include marking the historic walking trail, building bridges, and hosting a run/walk event this spring, with another planned for fall.

To prepare potential parking areas, an archaeological event was held. Lee Kreutzer was part of the study performed in conjunction with the Kansas State Historical Society, State Archaeologist Bob Hoard, an archaeology club and KANZA members. Many interesting artifacts were found, including a nickel from the 1860's. The historical society will study and catalog the artifacts and return them to the Alcove Spring Historical Trust.

— Duane Iles

Your Ad Here!



The *Overland Journal* and *News From The Plains* are offering special advertising opportunities. The publications are published separately four times a year.

Ad rates range from \$75 for a "business card"-size to \$325 for full page ads. Discounts are available for multiple ads.

In addition, advertisers who buy in both publications will receive a 50 percent discount on the second ad. OCTA members also receive a 10 percent discount on all advertising.

For information about advertising in OCTA publications, contact: OJ Editor Marlene Smith-Baranzini at tealblue1@gmail.com, NFP Editor Bill Martin at octanfp@gmail.com, or OCTA headquarters at octa@indepmo.org.

COLORADO-CHEROKEE CHAPTER

A chapter meeting was held on June 13 at the Douglas County Library in Castle Rock, Colorado. Special guest speaker was Larry J. Schlupp, Vice-President and webmaster of the Douglas County Historical Society, who talked about the Oliver Loving and Charles Goodnight cattle drive trails through Douglas County and the associated history of the JA Ranch (today's JA Land and Cattle Company). After the presentation, a luncheon was held at the Historic Old Stone Church in Castle Rock.

On May 3, Linda and Bob Andersen and Brian Stucky visited a Cherokee Trail Site near El Dorado, Kansas. The Walnut River Crossing of the Cherokee Trail is the whole reason the city of El Dorado exists. Just little over a mile east we found a pasture where there was trail evidence. The landowner took us around in a four-wheeler. But the big excitement is that the fellow who just bought the place a few months ago knows that his stone house (with modern additions) is from 1850 and appears it was a road house for travelers on the Cherokee Trail. That's what previous owners have passed down. 1850 is really early. Should make that the oldest house in the immediate El Dorado area.

Kansas has formed a group called Friends of the Cherokee Trail-Kansas. So far they have put up about 40 signs in Kansas marking the Trail. On June 4-6 this group planned a trip to Fayetteville and Evansville, Arkansas (where Captain Lewis Evans was from) to see where the trail started. They spent Friday at Tahlequah, Oklahoma visiting the native sites, including the Cherokee National Capitol, Cherokee National Prison, Cherokee National Supreme Court, Cherokee Heritage Center, John Ross Museum & Cemetery, and the Murrell Home.

In July, the chapter is planning a tour of the Cherokee Trail in El Paso County near Colorado Springs. Our leaders for this event will be Richard Deisch and a host of our trail mappers.


On September 23-26, Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site will host the National Fur Trade Symposium. For the first time in 27 years, this Symposium will return to the Southern trapping and trading areas of the 19th Century. Registration and a fee will be required for the on and offsite parts of the program. Numerous living history demonstrators will reveal what their life was like at the time. Period food, entertainment and other tastes of life at Bent's Fort will bring the attendees a truer feeling for the era and the lifestyle at Bent's Fort during its existence, 1833-1849. Visit Bent's Old Fort website for more information: nps.gov/beol/planyourvisit/calendar.htm

On September 15, there will be a presentation by Camille Bradford on "William Henry Jackson, Artist and Mapmaker in His Later Years" at 5:30 p.m. at the Denver Public Library, Gates Room, Fifth Floor.

In addition to his work as a photographer and artist, Jackson was Research Secretary of the Oregon Trail Memorial Association (OTMA), creating maps of pioneer trail routes and paintings of historic western scenes. A number of his paintings appeared in several books written by OTMA's president, Howard R. Driggs.

Camille Bradford is past president of the Colorado chapter of the Oregon-California Trail Association (OCTA) and an active member of the Rocky Mountain Map Society. She is also the stepdaughter of Howard R. Driggs. The presentation will include photographs, correspondence, maps and movie clips from the Howard R. Driggs Collection at Southern Utah University.

-- Berl Meyer



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UTAH CROSSROADS CHAPTER



Scott Christensen

Utah Crossroads has had a quiet spring, but events are being planned, as we speak. We had a spring membership meeting at the Salt Lake County Chambers on March 19 where our speaker was Scott Christensen. He spoke to us on Indian (Shoshone) relations with emigrants on the trail and also the relations with Chief Sagwitch.

Also, Chris Haramoto of East Canyon State Park spoke on his plans to enlarge the Hastings/Mormon Road through the park in an effort to enhance visitor knowledge and appreciation of the trail.

Spring field trip plans are set for Saturday, June 13. This will be a one-day trip to visit sites in northern Utah and explore the Bartleson-Bidwell trails in that area. A pre-run went out May 20. There is much interest in northern Utah concerning the Bartleson-Bidwell trails and some communities, such as Westin, Idaho, Newton and Tremonton, are hoping for interpretive panels in their areas. We applaud the efforts of Terry Welch and others in this endeavor.

We are also expecting to be able to set as many as 10 rail posts this year to include sites on the Hensleys Salt

Lake Cutoff (northern Utah), the Hastings Road, and the Central Overland Trail. (Jesse Petersen says four rail posts are ready as soon as needed.) We hope to enlist the interest of other local historic groups to join with us in the setting of these sites so that groups with similar interests will be aware of what we are marking.

I have personally approached the Twenty Wells Chapter of the Sons of Utah Pioneers in Grantsville and they have expressed interest. I also will recommend that we include them on our newsletter mailing lists. We also hope to be able to enlist the interest of local politicians and newspapers in our endeavors. We need to make other interested parties aware of our plans as it will help to have them knowledgeable of the trails and sites we have marked. Jesse Petersen has been marking (walking) the Central Overland and mapping according to MET procedures.

We have recently learned of the death of a long-time member, past preservation officer, and "worker bee," Charlie Burkhalter. He died last fall, and we were not aware of his death until our March meeting. Charlie had no family here. We will miss him for sure.

Let's all be aware of the Convention at South Lake Tahoe in September and encourage as many as possible to attend.

-- A. Oscar Olson

Crossroads Begins Internship Program With BLM



Left to right, Christine Lingeman, outdoor recreation major at the University of Utah; Terry Welch, president of the Crossroads Chapter; James Bland, studying for a masters in museum studies at the University of Utah; Leann Lyons, geology major at Weber State University; and Rob Sweeten, historic trails lead in the Utah State office of the BLM.

In a unique program to advance public education about the trails, a team of local college interns is working with the Crossroads Chapter on public relations projects in the Salt Lake City area this summer. The interns are working for credit, under the auspices of the Bureau of Land Management.

The interns are pursuing a variety of projects, including generating public and media audiences for the Hastings Cutoff film produced by a different team of BLM interns last summer. (The video is available free to OCTA members by contacting OCTA headquarters.)

The idea to engage college interns began last October at the Historic Trails workshop in Salt Lake City, when OCTA President John Krizek discussed the marketing potential of the film with Rob Sweeten, who has had considerable success with interns working with the BLM in Utah.

SOUTHERN TRAILS CHAPTER

Over hills and around curves, Southern Trail Chapter members and OCTA members from other chapters joined local residents on April 8-11 for a symposium held in Silver City, New Mexico.

Participants gathered Wednesday evening at the Silver City Woman's Club for a "Trail Dinner" of stew before Dave Remley's presentation on Kit Carson.

The symposium program, a timeline of southwestern New Mexico Trail History, was held at the recently restored Light Hall Auditorium on the Campus of Western New Mexico University. University President Dr. Joseph Shepard welcomed all to southwestern New Mexico and to the campus of WNMU.

Although about half of the presenters were from out-of-town, others were members of the Fort Bayard

Historic Preservation Society and the Silver City Corral 36 of Westerners International.

Featured entertainment was the Chautauqua performance of Mamie Aguirre presented by VanAnn Moore at the Pinos Altos Buckhorn Saloon. Saturday was a day of exploration and putting history covered in sessions into practice, with tours to Fort Bayard, the Gila Cliff Dwellings, and Fort Cummings.

Results of the symposium include the creation of two OCTA signs to be placed in the Silver City area and the beginning of dialogue to establish a relationship with the Library at WNMU to bring some of OCTA's archives to Silver City.

-- Cecelia Bell



Welcoming remarks were delivered by Dr. Joseph Shepard, President of Western New Mexico University, left, and Cecelia Bell, a Silver City resident and member of the OCTA National Board of Directors.



Tour guide Bill Kupke in front of the statue memorializing buffalo soldier Cpl. Clinton Greaves, a Medal of Honor Winner, at the Fort Bayard National Monument.



Left, the group on the tour from Fort Bayard to Fort Cummings, including the Butterfield Overland Stage and Southern Emigrant Trail routes.

—Photo by Scott Terry



*Time out for lunch on the Gila Cliff Dwellings Tour.
- Photo by Celia Bell*



*Tour group at the Gila Cliff Dwellings
- Photo by Annette Gray*



Presenter George Hackler shows Brock and Levida Hileman the tight fit of an 1850s stagecoach seat.



Jack and Pat Fletcher working the checklist for participants in Saturday tours in the Silver City Visitor Center parking lot.



*Left to right, Annette Gray, Chautauqua performer VanAnn Moore (as Mamie Aguirre), Reba Grandrud and Cecilia Bell at the Buckhorn Saloon and 1860s Opera House.
—Photo by Jud Mygatt*



Fort Bayard visitors in front of the historic theater at Fort Bayard.

Photos not otherwise credited taken by Bill Martin

NORTHWEST CHAPTER

The Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project (B2H) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) has received approximately 380 comments. They may be viewed at www.boardmantohemingway.com/deiscomments.aspx. Thanks to all who have taken the time and effort to comment.

The NWOCTA annual meeting was held on March 14 at the Puyallup Peace Lutheran Church, with associated events across the street at the Meeker Mansion.

Billy Symms reported on the OCTA Mid-Year Meeting and chapter preservation activities. Lethene Parks discussed the status of OCTA's four library collections with regard to a new policy on collections adopted by the national Board. Gail Carbiener spoke on the B2H project and support for the Timber Canyon alternative route.

Bob Minnich and Andy Anderson of the Puyallup Historical Society at Meeker Mansion talked about Oregon Trail connections to the area and Ezra Meeker, his mansion, and the history of the restoration project. In addition, Andy arranged a viewing at the Washington State Historical Society Research Center in Tacoma of Meeker's 1906 wagon. Also on display was the 180-foot long map of the Oregon Trail that Meeker made in 1910, intending to roll it out on the floor of Congress as a visual aid to encourage funding for trail marking. Unfortunately, Meeker never got the opportunity to make his dramatic gesture.

The Distinguished Volunteer Award was presented to Gail Carbiener for his excellent work in monitoring and reporting ongoing developments of the B2H project and the BLM DEIS. Henry Pittock, Marking and Mapping chair, received the Richard and Trudy Ackerman Meritorious Achievement Award, the chapter's highest, for his years of service to the trail.

On April 20 a Trail Inventory Project (TIP) meeting led by Dave Welch was held in Oregon City. A survey of each township, range and section along the trail is being done in an overall classification, not a yard-by-yard evaluation.

The purpose of the surveys is to distinguish promising areas from those with little or no potential for preservation, allowing for detailed work to be directed where it is needed. Two of the four survey teams have completed submission of data for inclusion in an Access database. A third team has submitted some data. For results, Contact Marley Shurtleff at shurtgarymarley@comcast.net.

— Dennis Larson



Northwest Chapter Preservation Officer and National OCTA Director Billy Symms presents a \$1,000 check to John Melgren of the Western Environmental Law Center. OCTA made the donation through the Loomis Endowment Fund in recognition of legal support for OCTA's efforts to fight the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line.

Symposium Planned for Pendleton

The Northwest Chapter will host an **Oregon Trail Symposium** at the Red Lion Hotel in Pendleton, July 25-26. The symposium will feature the history of exploration and migration out of the Blue Mountains.

Speakers will include:

- Dennis Larsen and Karen Johnson, "Edward Jay Allen and the Opening of Naches Pass"
- Ray Egan, "On the Trail of a Legend"
- Dave Welch, "Trail Routes from the Blues to the Whitman Mission and the Columbia River"
- Sam Pambrun, "Frenchtown and Its Inhabitants"
- Bonnie Sager, "Marie Dorion"
- Roger Blair, "Walter Meacham, President Harding, and the 1923 Oregon Trail Pageant"

A bus tour of Frenchtown and Whitman Mission National Historic Site is scheduled for Sunday.

The two-day registration fee of \$100 per person includes a buffet lunch on Saturday and the Sunday bus tour and box lunch. The Red Lion is offering the special rate of \$89 per night. Make reservations with the hotel by July 3 to receive the reduced rate (541-276-6111).

For questions or additional registration information, contact Roger Blair at rblair@oregontrail.net

IDAHO CHAPTER

Chapter President Jerry Eichhorst led the Annual Spring Byway Tour on April 18. The purpose of the tour is to augment the lectures he gives to the Boise Schools Community Education program. Seeing the ruts, swales and the routes the pioneers took through some difficult country and hearing some of their stories makes for a deeper appreciation of their trials and triumphs. The tour took in Hot Springs Creek and Reservoir, Teapot Dome, Immigrant Road, Canyon Creek Stage Station, Ditto Creek and Bowns' Creek. About 15 people participated.

Our first stop was at the pristine ruts where the Trail crosses Teapot Road. The second stop was at Hot Springs Creek Reservoir. There was water in the reservoir, not always the case by mid-April. We had seen both antelope and deer on the sage flats, clearly attracted by the presence of water.

We made two more stops in the Hot Springs Creek drainage. Then, fortified by the cinnamon bun offerings at the Pilot Truck Stop on Highway 20, we set off for our afternoon visits. We made our way to Immigrant Road, which carves its way through the Bennet Hills. It is not part of the Byway but is picturesque albeit very narrow and steep. Both the Kelton Road and the Oregon Trail cross Immigrant Road and we stopped to look at pristine ruts before moving on to Canyon Creek and the Stage Station renovation project there.

At Ditto Creek we hiked the Goodale Cutoff to Inscription Rock where it rejoins the main Oregon Trail. It is unfortunate that the swales of the main trail lie directly under power transmission lines. Jerry Eichhorst pointed out the names where the pioneers had marked the rock with axle grease and we discussed the possible massacre site in the draw on the Goodale Cutoff which would have not been visible to those traveling the main Trail, or indeed those on the drier Soles (sic) Rest Creek variant of the Goodale Cutoff.

We ended our day at Bowns' Creek Inscription Rock. Good weather, lively conversation and many questions had yielded an interesting day, which we hope will result in some of the participants joining OCTA and IOCTA as new members.

-- John Briggs, from the I-OCTA newsletter



At Ditto Creek Inscription Rock.



On the Back Country Byway near Mountain Home.

Business Sponsorships

For just \$50 a year, you can become a business sponsor, connecting 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 (888) 811-6282.

Current business sponsors include:

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Little Hap's Bar & Grill, Home, KS
Wagon Wheel Café, Marysville, KS
Weaver Hotel, Waterville, KS
Heritage Inn Express, Marysville, KS
First Commerce Bank, Marysville, KS
Scotts Bluff Area Visitors Bureau, Gering, NE
Morrill County Visitors Comm., Bridgeport, NE
Surveyor Scherbel, Ltd., Big Piney, WY
Barn Anew Bed & Breakfast, Gering, NE

CA-NV CHAPTER

The California-Nevada Chapter had a busy and interesting spring board meeting/convention planning meeting/membership meeting/symposium April 30-May 2 in Chico, California.

At the board meeting, the chapter authorized a lifetime chapter membership category to compliment lifetime national membership. Several proposals were put forward to establish more trail interpretive signs. One exciting sign project being explored by Frank Tortorich is to partner with Kirkwood Ski Area on the Carson Trail to establish interpretive signs on its property. Another discussion revolved around the proposal to get copies of the *Overland Journal* into public libraries in counties through which trails pass.

Convention planning is moving forward with the fine tuning of details. There was a considerable amount of discussion concerning the identification and methods of obtaining corporate underwriters (sponsors) for the convention. Suggestions ranged from local banks to national big box retailers.

Our symposium was a bit shorter than normal due to the effort working on the convention. The limited time did not detract from the interest of the topic, Peter Lassen: His trail and Rancho. Author and board member Ken Johnston, with support from media master Dee Owens, gave an insightful presentation of his personal exploration and analysis of Lassen's route.

This was followed by Dave Freeman who gave a presentation on his recent archeological studies of Lassen's Rancho and adjoining Benton City.

In the afternoon, many attendees traveled 20 miles north of Chico to the site of Lassen's Rancho, which today is a monastery. We enjoyed a tour of the medieval chapel that William Randolph Hearst brought over from Europe and was featured on the PBS program *Great Cathedrals of Europe*. The monastery is an active agricultural enterprise and one of its businesses is the cultivation of grapes and their use to produce wine. We had a very tasty tour of the winery. Peter Lassen would have approved.

In late July we shall be ground previewing the tours for the convention. We look forward to seeing all of you in the High Sierra at beautiful South Lake Tahoe in September.

-- Mark Wilson

TRAILSHEAD CHAPTER

With nice spring weather, Trails Head is participating in trail-related activities. A co-hosted membership meeting with the Missouri River Outfitters Chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association was held on March 28 at the National Frontier Trails Museum in Independence, Mo. After a short business meeting, the audience heard a fine speaker, Raymond Starzmann, who spoke on Harry Truman and his family's involvement with early trail history in Independence. A video was shown on the upcoming Convention at Lake Tahoe in Sept.

A bus tour co-hosted by Trails Head and Missouri River Outfitters was run on May 12, covering the new NPS Santa Fe Trail signage on the auto tour route in Saline and Lafayette counties in Missouri. The trek began at the origin of the Santa Fe Trail in Franklin and ended at the Rice-Tremonti site in Raytown, an important stop and camping site on the Trails through the suburbs of Kansas City. The tour was led by Ross Marshall and Larry Short, President of the Missouri River Outfitters Chapter.

I had the opportunity to attend an event sponsored by the National Frontier Trails Museum a few weeks ago. It involved about 120 eighth grade middle school students from the Independence School District, who spent the day visiting the Museum and taking guided tours of the exhibits housed there. The OCTA Education Outreach Committee was also involved and is hoping to get more students of this age group interested in the westward migration and trails history. I was there as an observer and was impressed by the interest shown by the kids as they moved among the different exhibits. This was the first time the Museum has hosted a middle school group.

-- Dick Nelson

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OCTA-trails.org

Or our new Journals site:

octa-journals.org

WYOMING CHAPTER

Around 150 lovers of Wyoming's historic trails turned out on a sunny Saturday in May for the reburial of the remains of three trails pioneers near a spring at Alder Clump on the Oregon/California/Mormon Trail, not far from the North Platte River.

The site - with a spring, trees and grass - has been used by people for millennia. Folsom points and mastodon bones dating back 12,000 years or more were discovered there in the 1960s.

In 1850, the heaviest year of travel on the trails, a group of emigrants chose not to cross the North Platte near Fort Laramie a few days after nine people had died at the spot trying to do so. Instead the travelers stayed on the north side of the river, pioneering a route that later came to be called Child's Cutoff.

The spring at Alder Clump, also called Box Elder, was attractive enough that nearly every party on the north-side trail either nooned or camped there. After a few years, enough people were buried at the site that some diarists called it a graveyard. Longtime Wyoming OCTAn Randy Brown and other researchers have discovered many trails diaries that describe the place or tell of events there. One of them may even recount the death of one of the people whose remains were reburied there in May.

Abigail Scott Duniway arrived at Alder Clump with her family on June 19, 1852. *"We are encamped this evening near some excellent springs which seem to gush from the rocks. We have good grass and wood and in a*



Anne Roelofson Scott

word have a very good camping place! ... The evening is pleasant and the sky is without a cloud." But that night tragedy struck. *"How mysterious are the works of an all wise and overruling Providence! We little thought when last Sabbath's pleasant sun shed upon us his congenial rays that when the next should*

come it would find us mourning over the sickness and death of our beloved Mother!" It was another case of cholera. Mrs. Scott took violently ill in the night and died the next afternoon.

In 1974, road construction near the site turned up the bones of a 25-33 year old woman. More bones eroded out of the ground at the site in 2001 and 2005. The skeletons have spent most of the years since their discoveries at the University of Wyoming's



Left to right, Project instigator Larry Cundall; his sister, landowner Robin Rankin; Randy Brown of Wyoming OCTA; and University of Wyoming anthropologist Dr. Rick Weathermon.

Anthropology Department, where they were closely studied by Dr. Rick Weathermon. The grave discovered in 2001 included remains of a 13- or 14-year-old boy, buried with a stone with the inscription "Jesse Cole July 14, 1862," the last digit in the year being illegible.

The remains discovered in 2005 were those of a woman aged 40 to 55, Weathermon noted during brief remarks at the ceremony. She could quite possibly have been diarist Abigail Scott Duniway's mother. The skeleton showed the woman had borne a number of children, and showed evidence as well that a recent birth had been particularly difficult, an infection had set in and the woman had continued traveling before she could properly heal, he said.

Afternoon activities included the Platte County Historical Society and the Daughters of the American Revolution, who unveiled a new historic marker at the site. Weathermon gave brief remarks; and landowner Larry Cundall spoke about the trails and ranching history of the area. The audience was treated as well to hymns, songs, a short homily and prayer from pastor and Wheatland Mayor Joe Fabian and remarks from Darla Teters of the DAR, Tamsen Hert of the Wyoming State Historical Society and Patsy Parkin of the Platte County HS. There also was a violin rendition of "Amazing Grace" by Erin Stoetz and a reading by MaryJo Birt from the Duniway diary. Sturdy, plywood boxes for the re-burial were built by Gendo Middle School 7th and 8th grade woodworking classes under the direction of their teacher Dean Finnerty.

Wyoming OCTA is especially grateful to Patsy Parkin and the Platte County Historical Society for organizing such a well-run, well-attended and fascinating event around the historic trails.

--Tom Rea

REMEMBRANCES

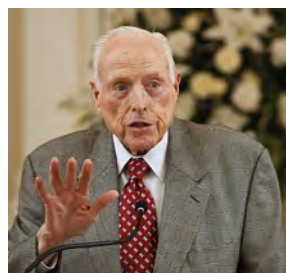


Legendary Utah Crossroads chapter leader **Al Mulder** died June 10 at his home in Murray, Utah. He was 92.

Mulder, shown at left leading a tour of landmarks in the Bidwell Pass/Pilot Peak area in 1997, was one of

the most lauded chapter historians, author of several articles tracing the overland trails through Utah.

"He'd do anything for anyone and had such a generous, and loving spirit," said former Chapter President Linda Turner. "Can't you just hear him laugh and see his smile right now. He loved county music, ranches, and making people happy."



Long-time OCTA member **Ed Lynch** of Vancouver, Washington died on May 3 after a period of declining health. He was 94 years old.

A native of Southern California and a civil engineer and construction contractor during his career, made

several generous donations to OCTA over the years, and was a well-known philanthropist in southwest Washington.



Earl Leggett, one of the few people to drive a wagon over the Oregon Trail in contemporary times, died April 8 in Aurora, Oregon.

In 1993, as part of the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial, he took a wagon sponsored by the Historic Oregon Colony Museum

from Independence, Missouri, to Independence, Oregon, one of eight people who made the entire journey.



OCTA member **Jim Luckey** died May 21 in Rock Springs, Wyoming, following a brief illness.

A native of Iowa, he worked for the Iowa State Highway Department and retired from Stauffer/OCI Chemical Company in Rock Springs in

1993. In addition to OCTA, he was a member of the Sweetwater County Historical Society, the Lincoln Highway Association, Search and Rescue and NRA. He was an expert woodworker and an avid hunter and fisherman.

Long-time OCTA member **Lloyd Russell Johnson** died on February 27. A 45-year employee with CalTrans, he

was an avid snow skier, hiker and explorer with emigrant trails groups in the Eldorado National Forest, finding evidence and mapping trails for the Forest Service. He was active in the Oregon-California Trails Association and Lincoln Highway Association.

To make a memorial gift in the name of any OCTA member, visit www.octa-trails.org/donate-online



Welcome New OCTA Members

Richard Arnold, Portola CA
Clifford Birge, Richmond Heights MO
Paul Dinwiddie, Boise ID
Sandra Emrick, Ypsilanti MI
NaKaya Fester, Hemingford NE
Ray Frank, Tucson AZ
Sue Heifner, Denver CO
Melinda Henningfield, Ashland OR
Donna Howell, McArthur CA
Joe Howell, Emmett ID
Joe and Dianne Jeffrey, Lexington NE
Craig Jones, Independence MO
Dan Judkins, Green Valley AZ
Sharon Keil, Ephrata WA
Cecily Kelly, Montgomery TX
Lorene Kesler, Hillsboro OR
Marie LaRocco, Boise ID
David Lingner, San Diego CA
Pam Longfellow, Tacoma WA

Sandra Lunceford, Folsom CA
George G McClellan, Ellijay GA
Sheila Meier, Negaunee MI
Cary Mock, Columbia SC
Kyle Wiley Pickett, Topeka KS
Fred Probst, Clay Center KS
Paul Rotterdam, Henderson NV
Brian Runyan, Vancouver WA
K J Sanderson, Lander WY
Russ Smerz, Star ID
Steve Snider, Kuna ID
Gary Sprock, Elk Grove CA
Thomas G Stoker, Olympia WA
Dr Sheri Tatsch, Orangevale CA
Lori Van Pelt, Saratoga WY
D Jerry Walker, Boise ID
Reed T Warnick, Eagle ID
Jerry West, Boise ID

Comments Sought On Strategic Plan Revisions

OCTA has completed a draft revision of its Strategic Plan, last updated in 2010. The OCTA Board, along with committee chairs and chapter presidents, spent a full day in March revising the plan, assisted by facilitator Gretchen Ward of the National Park Service Long Distance Trails Office.

The draft plan is now offered to members for

comments and/or suggestions. Please send your comments to OCTA President John Krizek (jkrizek33@gmail.com) or to Association Manager Travis Boley (tboley@indepmo.org) no later than August 21. The Board of Directors will adopt a final plan when it meets at Lake Tahoe on September 21.

-- John Krizek, OCTA President

Introduction

OCTA is updating its strategic plan to assess current achievements and accomplishments and review directions for the future.

This strategic plan describes that future direction. The OCTA mission, vision and broad goals provide the foundation for a strategy of specific objectives and actions to be implemented. These actions are considered critical for realizing the OCTA mission.

This strategic plan will be reviewed every other year at Board meetings to guide work plans and track accomplishments. Chapters are encouraged to review chapter goals and activities for compliance with the national plan.

Vision: The Oregon-California Trails Association is the pre-eminent guardian and promoter of the inspirational story of the 19th century westward migration, which is unique in world history.

Mission: Our mission is to protect the Historic Emigrant Trails legacy by promoting research, education, preservation activities and public awareness, and to work with others to promote these causes.

Goals: Five broad goals describe how OCTA will achieve its mission. Each goal is supported by objectives and implemental actions.

Goal 1. Preserve the historic emigrant trails

Goal 2. Preserve and promote the stories of the emigrant experience

Goal 3. Be an effective historic trails organization through appropriate partnerships

Goal 4. Improve organizational and management effectiveness

Goal 5. Keep OCTA's base membership energized (Don't let the fires go out.)

Goal 1. Preserve the historic emigrant trails. To accomplish this goal, OCTA will:			
Objective	Action	Time	Lead
A. Improve effectiveness of trails-related preservation activities.	i. Establish preservation organizations and chapter preservation officers in each chapter.	2015-2020 ongoing	Preservation Committee Chapters
	ii. Provide appropriate training in preservation, mapping, marking, and monitoring.	2015-2020 ongoing	Preservation Committee Mapping and Marking Committee Chapters
	iii. Measure effectiveness through semi-annual reviews and reports	2015-2017 ongoing	Preservation Committee Chapters
	iv. Develop specific action plan to respond to threats (identify partner organizations; communication strategy; media relations plan; funding; assess projects)	by 2016	Preservation Committee Public Relations Committee Staff Chapters
	v. Communicate with stakeholders and agencies regarding OCTA's role as a partner in dealing with and identifying threats to trail preservation.	2015-2017 ongoing	Preservation Committee Public Relations Committee Staff Chapters
B. Assist stakeholders in the acquisition and preservation of trails-related resources.	i. Obtain and provide funding to address resource threats.	2015-2017 ongoing	Board Preservation Committee Chapters Fundraising Committee Investment Advisory Committee
	ii. Assist with monitoring trail-related resources.	2015-2017	Chapters Preservation Committee

C. Support expansion of national historic trails within the National Trails System.	i. Support the "Additional Routes of the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California, and Pony Express Feasibility Study Update and Revision" by reviewing, commenting and advocating.	2016	Association Manager Chapters Legislative Liaison
	ii. Support and promote feasibility study sponsorship for the Southern Trails to California.	by 2020	Southern Trails Chapter Legislative Liaison Board
D. Anticipate, identify and respond to trail threats	i. Develop specific action plan to respond to threats (identify partner organizations; communication strategy; media relations plan; funding; assess projects).	by 2016	Preservation Committee Public Relations Committee Staff Chapters
	ii. Communicate with stakeholders and agencies regarding potential threats and OCTA's desire to be included.		

Goal 2. Preserve and promote the stories of the emigrant experience. To accomplish this goal, OCTA will:			
Objective	Action	Time	Lead
A. Improve and expand data collection	i. Amass data (books, literature, maps, diaries, etc.) related to trail experience.	by 2017 review and then ongoing	Publications Committee Collections Committee
	ii. Develop a warehouse of information (physically and digitally).	by 2017	Collections Committee Internet Committee
	iii. Make publications available -improve website for public access (make resources known).	by 2017	Internet Committee Publications Committee HQ Public Relations Committee
	iv. Inventory and improve access to OCTA library collections.	by 2017	Collections Committee HQ
	v. Expand online journal offerings.	by 2017	Education Outreach Committee Publications Committee Collections Committee
	vi. Optimize use of COED and Paper Trail.	by 2017	Internet Committee HQ
	vii. Receive and provide training in research methods.	by 2017	Education Outreach Committee HQ
	viii. Expand listening sessions with Tribes.	by 2017	Tribal Liaison
B. Raise public awareness.	i. Make publications available.	2015-2020 ongoing	Publications Committee Education Outreach Committee HQ Internet Committee
	ii. Expand speakers bureau.	by 2017	Public Relations Committee HQ Chapters
	iii. Create audio visual materials.	by 2017	Public Relations Committee HQ Education Outreach Committee
	iv. Create expanded outreach materials.	by 2017	Education Outreach Public Relations Committee HQ
	v. Improve use of social media.	by 2017	Internet Committee HQ Public Relations Committee
	vi. Use conventions/symposia to better relate emigrant histories.	by 2017	Public Relations Committee HQ Convention Management Committee

Goal 3. Be an effective historic trails organization through appropriate partnerships. To accomplish this goal, OCTA will:

Objective	Action	Time	Lead
A. Expand our partnering scope with a wide variety of public and private entities in order to leverage OCTA's resources.	i. Communicate regularly with SHPO, public land management staff, local and regional entities, tribal communities, other organizations, and private landowners to identify, develop, and promote projects.	2015-2020 ongoing	Association Manager President Chapters Preservation Committee Tribal Liaison Committee (*equal responsibility)
	ii. Encourage the leadership to attend meetings with the Partnership for the National Trail System.	2015-2020 ongoing	PNTS Representative
	iii. Meet and invite whenever possible with agency partners to attend (OCTA/Partnership) sponsored events.		
	iv. Be familiar with and support partner agency strategic and resource plans.		
	v. Advocate for congressional support and funding of federal agency trail administration and management.	2015-2020 ongoing	Board Chapters Legislative Liaison
B. Partner with local and regional entities to provide and promote trails-related heritage activities and tourism.	i. Consult with local and regional entities to learn of opportunities, and provide subject matter expertise and access to on-the ground resources.	2015-2020 ongoing	Chapters Board members Staff Association Manager
	ii. Develop and maintain relationships with tourism and historical societies.	2015-2020 ongoing	Association Manager Chapters
	iii. Promote and support volunteering on trails-related federal agency projects.	2015-2020 ongoing	Public Relations Committee Association Manager
	iv. Publicize volunteer opportunities and results through websites, chapter and national newsletters, direct mail, and email.	2015-2020 ongoing	Publications Committee Chapters Board Staff
C. Cooperate with educational entities and with others to develop trails-related curriculum-based materials.	i. Market documentary film with young people on the trails.	By 2016	Education Outreach Committee Marketing/PR Committee HQ
	ii. Work with state and local school boards, teachers, educational organizations, and youth related groups to develop programs that meet curriculum or their needs.	2015-2020 ongoing	Education Outreach Committee* Marketing/PR Committee Association Manager Chapters
	iii. Develop list of chapter or OCTA members with appropriate skills to work with education and preservation activities or groups (lead field trips.)	by 2017	Education Outreach Committee* Chapters
	iv. Develop online reading guides and summer reading lists for young people	2016	Education Outreach Committee* Publications Committee Internet Committee
	v. Develop electronic tools to augment educational opportunities (social media, videos, etc.).	2015-2020 ongoing	Education Outreach Committee* HQ Marketing/PR Committee

Goal 4. Improve organizational and management effectiveness. To accomplish this goal, OCTA will:			
Objective	Action	Time	Lead
A. Increase OCTA membership to increase OCTA's funding and to expand the volunteer base.	i. Define and implement a marketing strategy to increase OCTA membership.	by 2016	Membership Committee Chapters Marketing/PR Committee Association Manager
	ii. Provide incentives to join OCTA (access to OJ, In Pursuit of a Dream) (Reach out to the community).		
	iii. Send letters to service organizations offering to speak to their organizations. Improve contacts with service organizations.	by 2016	Chapters Education Outreach Committee
	iv. Be represented at ancillary symposiums and conventions. (Staff a booth.)	by 2016	Staff and appropriate committees
	v. Develop regional videos for presentations (on OCTA, trail projects/resources in the area).	by 2016	Education Outreach Committee PR/Marketing Committee Chapters Staff
B. Maintain increased membership.	i. Fill the membership committee.	by 2016	Membership Committee Chapters
	ii. Send out renewal reminders.		
	iii. Appoint a chapter membership chair.		
C. Develop marketing tools within OCTA to promote trails.	i. Develop a comprehensive marketing plan.	by 2016	PR/Marketing Committee HQ
	ii. Place articles in AARP/AMAC.		
	iii. Look for new audiences (such as schools or BSA).	by 2016	Education Outreach Committee Public Relations Committee
D. Increase revenue to insure the continued preservation of trails-related resources.	i. Fill the fundraising committee.	by 2016	OCTA President HQ Fundraising Committee
	ii. Request funds to support specific projects to complement an action plan.	by 2016	Association Manager President
	iii. Increase revenue from publication sales.	by 2016	Publications Committee
E. Maintain and increase the Endowment Funds to assure financial health in the long term.	i. Seek donations to Legacy Funds	2015-2020 ongoing	Fundraising Committee Board Officers Staff
	ii. Work to be sure investments are in the highest revenue generating funds (with least amount of risk).	2015-2020 ongoing	Investments Advisory Committee
F. Continue to hold annual conventions that attract membership and generate revenue.	i. Identify venues three years ahead.	2015-2020 ongoing	Convention Future Sites Committee* Convention Management Committee Association Manager
	ii. implement convention management committee recommendations regarding financial controls	2015-2020 ongoing	Convention Management Committee Association Manager
	iii. Look for ways to broaden appeal of conventions to attract wider audience in and outside OCTA membership.	2015-2020 ongoing	Convention Management Committee Host Chapters Association Manager
	iv. Invite community participation.		
	v. Establish and utilize the speakers bureau.	2015-2020 ongoing	Chapters Public Relations Committee
	vi. Identify opportunities for regional trails symposia.	2015-2020 ongoing	Association Manger Convention Management Committee

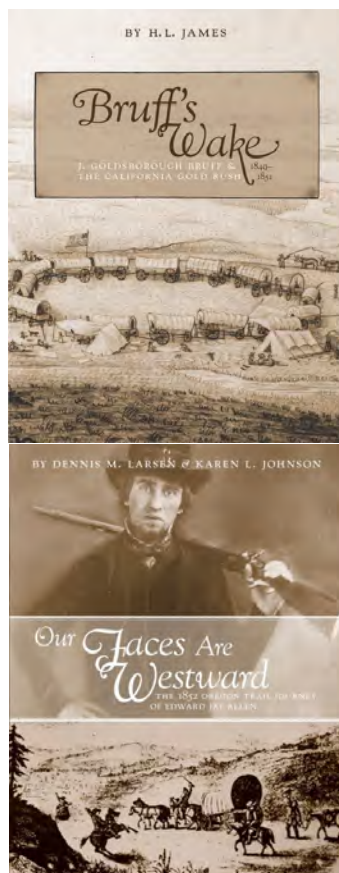
G. Fully fund the yearly operating expenses.	i. Find new sources of revenue through expanded memberships, grants, and partnerships.	by 2016	Board President Association Manager (*equal responsibility)
	ii. Seek operating efficiencies to manage financial resources effectively.		
H. Ensure board member and committee orientation and training	i. Provide training and orientation	by 2016	President and VP HQ Staff and Chairs Policy Governance Committee
	ii. Update policies and procedures manual (consolidate, make accessible, summary of board actions).		

Goal 5. Keep OCTA's base membership energized. To accomplish this goal, OCTA will:

Objective	Action	Time	Lead
A. Increase benefits to provide value for members' investment of time and money.	i. Continue to improve and update website resources.	2015-2020 ongoing	Internet Committee* Staff
	ii. Identify new added-value opportunities exclusive to members.		Membership Committee* Association Manager PR/Marketing Committee
B. Develop a committed highly energetic corps of volunteers to carry out the goals and objectives of OCTA partnership.	i. Involve members and potential members in training opportunities.	2015-2020 ongoing	Committee Chairs* Chapters
	ii. Develop service-oriented activities to recruit volunteers from within and outside OCTA membership.		
C. Develop new activities to maintain an engaged membership.	i. Widen scope of tours, speaker programs, and volunteer activities.	2015-2020 ongoing	Chapters* Committee Chairs Staff
D. Improve communication to maintain an informed, active membership.	i. Support networking through digital communication and social media.	2015-2020 ongoing	Staff* Board Chapters Committee Chairs: Internet Committee PR/Marketing Committee Education Outreach Committee
	ii. Expand E-news at both chapter and national levels.		Association Manager Chapters PR/Marketing Committee
	iii. Fully fund the maintenance of OCTA's website at current technological standards		Internet Committee
	iv. Utilize, maintain, and expand publications and publication opportunities.		Publication Committee



Please send comments to
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tboley@indepmo.org by
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