

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Fall, 2015

Volume XXX, No. 4



OCTA's new officers, from left, Secretary Sandra Wiechert, Past President John Krizek, President John Winner, Vice President Pat Traffas, and Treasurer Marvin Burke.

John Winner is New OCTA President

John Winner of Placerville, CA, has been elected to a two-year term as President of the Oregon-California Trails Association, succeeding **John Krizek** of Prescott, AZ.

Winner, the first OCTA President from the CA-NV Chapter in nearly 25 years, just completed a two-year term as Vice President. He previously served several terms as President of the CA-NV Chapter.

Also at the Lake Tahoe Convention, **Pat Traffas** of Overland Park, KS, was elected OCTA Vice President; **Sandra Wiechert** of Lawrence, KS, was elected Secretary; and **Marvin Burke** of Northglenn, CO was re-elected to a fourth term as OCTA Treasurer. In addition, Krizek will serve on the Board as Immediate Past President.

Per OCTA bylaws, officers are elected by the Board of Directors and serve two-year terms as voting members of the Board. Directors are elected by the membership.

Winner has been an OCTA member since 1995. Before retiring in 2002, he was the elected County Assessor of El Dorado County, CA. He has studied western history for over 55 years and currently works with an OCTA team mapping the Johnson's Cutoff emigrant trail in California and Nevada. For therapy, John and his wife, Susan, own and operate a small choose-and-cut Christmas Tree Farm in Placerville, California.

Traffas, who is in line to become OCTA's second woman President, grew up on a family farm in Cheyenne County, KS. Professionally a

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OCTA Adopts \$323,000 Budget

The OCTA Board of Directors has adopted a \$323,525 budget for the 2015-2016 fiscal year, a slight increase over the \$319,290 approved for fiscal 2014-2015.

Nearly 45 percent of the budget - \$144,300 - will come from the National Park Service through a Cooperative Agreement negotiated with the NPS Long Distance Trails office.

With total revenues projected at \$308,670, the budget projects an operating loss of \$14,855, with the difference to be made up through withdrawals from various OCTA Endowment Funds as needed and approved by the Board of Directors.

In a budget discussion at the Board meeting at Lake Tahoe, incoming OCTA President John Winner noted that the budget includes nearly \$11,000 in additional revenues from the *Overland Journal* and *News From The Plains*, mostly in the form of increased advertising, new sponsorships and fundraising.

"There is no doubt we have a challenge ahead," Winner said. "We need to go out and see if we can find new revenues. It is a reachable goal, but we'll see. There are dollars out there if we are willing to look for them."

Those comments were echoed by Aaron Mahr, Superintendent of the NPS Long Distance Trails Office, who described the current federal budget situation as "pretty glum."

"We have been outrageously fortunate over the past few years in keeping a steady budget, but our expenses and costs are going up and it's having a negative overall

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



By [John Winner](#)

Greetings from Lake Tahoe and the 33rd annual convention of the Oregon-California Trails Association. My first task as the incoming president is to extend an "Atta Boy" to John Krizek for his leadership over these past two years. As he now has this silly grin on his face I wonder if it's for my benefit or

relief that his term as President is over. None the less, kudo's for a job well done.

A special thanks to the CA-NV Chapter for hosting the convention and to Chairman Dick Waugh and the entire convention committee and volunteers for a great job.

At the recent Board meeting an update of OCTA's Strategic Plan was ratified. The Strategic Plan is the footprint of OCTA's mission and the goals that are set in place to accomplish the mission.

Goal 1 of the mission is to: *Preserve the historic emigrant trails.* We do a pretty good job of promoting research, education and public awareness, but preservation is a challenge. In some instances we're not sure where the emigrant trails are. We have a good idea of the corridor, but in many areas actual trail locations are unknown or have yet to be recorded. Much of this can be attributed to subsequent land uses where there are no longer any emigrant trail traces. However, each year as we take to the field investigating and following up on research material we discover emigrant trail traces. Preserving these discoveries becomes a challenge; however, you can't preserve it if you don't know where it is.

Last year OCTA updated the MET (Mapping Emigrant Trails) manual to provide addition guidance and resources to identify and record the emigrant trails. The task before us is our continuing effort to see that the emigrant trails are mapped and classed, then preserved.

While OCTA is grateful for the financial support from the National Park Service, we must be mindful that their budget is at risk and their annual level of financial support may vary. With this in mind, it is incumbent for OCTA to look for other financial support. I have asked Mellissa Shaw Jones, chair of the Fundraising Committee, and John Krizek, chair of the Marketing/Public Relation Committee, to help identify ways of seeking sponsors, grants and other support.

Looking ahead to this upcoming year, a whole host of activities are being planned for OCTA and the trail community. The annual convention in Idaho, chapter symposiums, meetings and outings, National Park Service auto tour signage, OCTA Publications, Education Outreach, Membership, Legislative Liaison, Preservation Issues, Fundraising and much more.

Remember, tracking your volunteer hours provides financial support to OCTA. This past year OCTA reported to Congress 100,379 volunteer hours valued at \$2,263,196. This has a great impact on funding the National Trail System and translates in grants from the National Park Service to help offset some of the cost for OCTA's programs. Keep track of those hours. A form is available on the website. Be sure to report your total hours to your local chapter or to OCTA headquarters.

NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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Published quarterly by the
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OCTA is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit

Winter Issue Deadline
November 25, 2015

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New OCTA Directors Elected



New and re-elected members of the OCTA National Board of Directors are, from left, Matt Mallinson, Loren Pospisil, Vern Osborne, and Duane Iles

Officers (continued from page 1)

clinical pathologist and licensed funeral director, Pat has worked with the Nebraska Historical Society and the Daughters of the American Revolution to locate, document and inventory granite markers placed along the Trail in the early 1900s. She is a past president of the Trails Head Chapter and OCTA National Secretary. She is co-authoring two books on historic trails.

Wiechert has been fascinated by western trails since growing up near the Chisholm Trail in Kansas. A retired reference librarian for the Lawrence Public Library, she has been an OCTA member since meeting Greg Franzwa in the 1980s. She was one of the organizers of the 2012 Convention in Lawrence and has visited or hiked not only National Historic Trails, but also trails in Great Britain, Central Asia and Spain.

Ezra Meeker Life Members

If you are an **OCTA Life Member**, it is time to renew your chapter membership affiliations. For your convenience, you can renew your chapter memberships online by visiting OCTA-trails.org and click on the "Become a Member" section. You can also call headquarters at (816) 252-2276 for assistance.

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

OCTA members have elected four persons to three-year terms on the National Board of Directors in balloting held last spring. They took office at the National Convention held at Lake Tahoe.

Re-elected to their second terms were **Vern Osborne** of Cheyenne, WY, and **Loren Pospisil** of Gering, NE. **Duane Iles** of Holton, KS, and **Matt Mallinson** of Sugar Creek, MO, were elected to their first terms.

Directors serve three-year terms and cannot serve more than two consecutive terms. Doug Jensen of Idaho Falls, ID, who passed away earlier this year, would have completed his second term. Brian Larson of Paradise, CA, chose not to seek a second term.

Official election results were Osborne 262, Mallinson, 261, Pospisil 253 and Iles 252. There were five write-in votes spread among four candidates.

Iles, a retired pharmacist and U.S. Army lieutenant colonel, previous served on the Board in the early 2000s and subsequently was Vice President, President and Immediate Past President. He is one of the founders of the KANZA chapter and is active in efforts to preserve Alcove Spring.

Mallinson, also a retired pharmacist, is Mayor of Sugar Creek and serves on the Independence School Board. He is co-chair of OCTA's Education Outreach Committee and is a leader of trail marking and awareness efforts for the Wayne City Landing.

Osborne, an OCTA member since 1984, is a past president of the KANZA chapter and served as chair of the National Convention held in Manhattan in 2003. He also served on the Legislative Liaison Committee and is a former four-term member of the Kansas House of Representatives.

Pospisil has been Site Supervisor at Chimney Rock with the Nebraska State Historical Society since the center opened in 1994. He has been the Nebraska Chapter president and co-chaired the 2007 Convention in Gering-Scottsbluff.

*Save
The
Trail*

PRESERVATION

By [Jere Krakow](#)

National Trails Preservation Officer

With hundreds and hundreds of miles of historic trails to Oregon and California, threats to trail resources are abundant and ongoing. OCTA remains strongly committed to its mission of protection of trail resources through the vigilance of chapter preservation officers and the strong assistance of OCTA members near and far.

We are making a difference, though the threats are much like forest fires in the West this summer . . . they crop up everywhere! Proposals with potential impacts range from new reservoirs and power line corridors in Nebraska, oil and gas development in Wyoming, Department of Defense expansion in Utah, mining in Nevada, transmission lines in Idaho and Oregon and railroad infrastructure along rail lines in Nevada and Idaho.

Reports from OCTA chapters detail historic trail resources being at risk. Raising awareness about trail threats will help insure that future generations are able to experience heritage resources that you and I are able to presently observe.

Currently the single largest project with an outcome that may change the trail setting along the Oregon Trail in Idaho, and especially in Oregon, is the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line. A massive project in the range of a billion dollars, the proposed alignment impacts

the Oregon Trail for miles and miles. Due to the vigilance of OCTA members Gail Carbiener and Billy Symms, the lead federal agency, the Bureau of Land Management has received many, many comments in response to the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Land Use Amendments*.

Through the intervention of Gail Carbiener, the Western Environmental Law Center at the University of Oregon has prepared what is basically a legal brief in response to the draft document. This generous pro bono effort clearly and succinctly points out the lack of a demonstrated need for the transmission line, and concludes with opposition to the project which will, if constructed, forever and all time change the setting of the nationally significant Oregon Trail.

OCTA has an ongoing need to be active in expressing support for protection of trail resources for the entire length of the Oregon and California Trails. Future actions need to mirror the best example of collaboration, such as the New Fork River project on the Lander Road in western Wyoming. The financial offset and mitigation agreement of the impacts of the nearby, huge anticline energy development resulted in protection and interpretation of the historic trail for present and future generations. This project needs to be imprinted on the mind of current and future OCTA members as an exemplary collaboration of private and public interests. Let us repeat it as often as possible!

NFP: Electronically

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

It means OCTA will save thousands of dollars in printing and mailing costs each year.

Plus, each issue delivered directly to your e-mail address will include benefits such as full-color pictures and clickable links to websites mentioned in articles in the newsletter.

To sign up, just shoot an email to octa@indepmo.org and it will start with the next issue.

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

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.

Budget *(continued from Page 1)*

impact,” he said. “We are hoping we can sustain our commitment [in fiscal 2017] but it would benefit you to look at alternative funding sources.

“We are in this together,” he added. “As our budget gets impacted, your budget will get impacted too.”

OCTA Treasurer Marvin Burke reported that the organization had a loss of \$27,599 for the first nine months of fiscal 2014-2015, but that will be considerably lessened by income from the Lake Tahoe Convention in September. The 2014-2015 budget had projected an operating loss of \$22,690.

The Board also heard from Membership Chair Duane Iles that OCTA currently has 1,364 members, although there are indications that the number of dues-paying members is increasing.

In other action, the Board approved the following motions:

- Changed the OCTA Convention Manual to make the Convention Chair and Association Manager, in consultation with the OCTA President, responsible for all final decisions related to convention expenses and price setting.
- Approved a bylaws change to reflect the full and correct name of the Meritorious Achievement Award as the “Gregory M. Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award.”
- Agreed to establish a new OCTA Library at Western New Mexico University in Silver City as an archive for Southern Trails materials.
- Accepted a report from the Investment Advisory Committee, including a recommendation that OCTA Endowment funds remain at the Great Kansas City Community Foundation. As of June 30, 2015, OCTA’s endowment totaled \$1,318,984.
- Adopted a new Strategic Plan to guide the organization for the next several years.
- Approved making \$5,000 available from the Heritage Fund, as needed, as a loan to the OCTA Publications Committee for special publications projects.

IAC Vacancy

OCTA’s Investment Advisory Committee is seeking a new member. The Committee is responsible for oversight of OCTA’s endowment funds currently held by the Greater Kansas City Community Foundation.

Activities include developing investment guidelines, recommending fund allocations, monitoring performance, and coordinating with the board and officers. An understanding of investments is essential, but it may be from the perspective of a private investor. Professional experience is desirable, but not required.

Please contact IAC Chairman David Welch at welchdj@comcast.net for further details.



Aaron Mahr of the National Park Service speaks to the OCTA Board.



Gilbert and Cheryl Hoffman of Richland, WA, were welcomed as the newest members of OCTA's Trails Legacy Society by Fundraising Chair Melissa Shaw Jones and OCTA Association Manager Travis Boley. For information about how you can preserve the trails through estate planning, visit www.octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society



Gary Kurutz provided an entertaining Keynote Address at the Lake Tahoe Convention, focusing on the travails of the emigrants in their own words.

Elder, Matteucci Win Outstanding Educator Awards



Left to right, Audrey Elder, Bill Hill and Gene Matteucci.

By [Bill Hill](#)

Education Awards Chair

The 2015 recipients of OCTA's Outstanding Educator Award were announced during the Lake Tahoe convention awards program.

The winners are **Gene Matteucci** of South Lake Tahoe, CA, and **Audrey Elder** of Sibley, MO. Both were honored for their dedicated work to enhance the education of our students.

Two years ago Gene, a fourth grade teacher at Tahoe Valley Elementary School, decided to take a chance and entered OCTA's Book Raffle for a class set of one of OCTA's educational activity books. His postcard was selected and he received a class set of *Reading, Writing, and Riding along the Oregon-California Trails*.

His award is the result of caring, long and hard work, dedication to his profession, and the development of an engaging program on westward expansion for his fourth grade students.

His "Journey to California" starts the first day of class where the hard work and cooperation necessary for the successful completion of fourth grade is compared to the pioneers' arrival at Sutter's Fort, also based on the perseverance and cooperation. The culmination of the year-long work and integrated approach is a trip and stay at Sutter's Fort near the end of the school year.

Some of the activities include the study of geography; the use of the curriculum *Pioneers*, which involves a simulation

of the decision-making process about the varied aspects of wagon train travel; the in-depth study of a specific California Trail individual each student selects; extensive hands-on projects dealing with food preparation and cooking, pioneer clothing including making yarn and weaving; developing needed skills such as starting fires with flints and making rope; learning about music, dancing and story-telling both Indian and emigrant. The final two days are spent at Sutter's Fort where the students use what they have learned and also experience even more. From walking guard duty to finishing their journals their last night and riding on a riverboat on their final day, they complete the journey started that first day of school.

OCTA and Audrey were first introduced to each other a couple of years ago. She had become involved in a journaling project which has impacted OCTA's programs and the Independence School District.

She was instrumental in the development of the partnering with OCTA and the establishment of a pilot project used in the school district. Working with the district's curriculum director, they reorganized the eighth grade social studies curriculum. The program uses the primary source documents and journals held in the National Frontier Trails Center, the access to which OCTA was already working to improve. Because of the success of this earlier project, it is now being expanded to include more local school districts and their students.

However, Audrey's greater goal is to bring journaling and the use of historic journals to an ever-expanding audience of students throughout the states, and she hopes to involve OCTA's chapters. This past year about 900 students participated in the program. Her dedication and drive has resulted in other programs being developed and used by teachers and students that were not originally planned.

Not only has the eighth grade social studies been altered as students become more involved in journaling, but even high school students in the drama club have participated. She helped to plant the seed that has sprouted and begun to take off.

Leave a Legacy for the Trails

Find out how by visiting

www.octa-trails.org/preserve/trails-legacy-society

OCTA Salutes 2015 Award Winners

Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award



Penny Mulder, daughter of Al Mulder, accepted the Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award on his behalf from OCTA President John Winner.

Modern-day trails pioneer **Al Mulder** of Murray, UT, was posthumously presented with the **Greg Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award**. Mulder passed away earlier this year.

The Meritorious Achievement Award is OCTA's highest award and recognizes long-term and significant contributions to the organization. Only members can qualify for the award.

Mulder, a charter member of the Utah Crossroad chapter, is considered a pioneer in helping preserve the legacy of trails throughout the state. His activities pre-date the creation of the chapter in 1990.

"Devoting hours and days, he found and established 'trail points' along and through trail corridors in Utah, as well as Wyoming, Idaho and Nevada," stated the award nomination form. "He was an active participant in the development of the Donner Spring interpretive site... and is responsible for the stone base and interpretive marker at the Grantville Pioneer Museum."

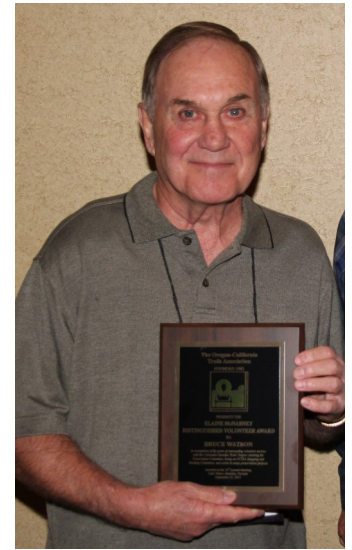
His work touched many familiar names, such as Donner-Reed, Echo Canyon, Bartleson-Bidwell, Pilot Peak and more.

"Failing eyesight has required a reduction his hands-on work," the nomination said. "However, he has always made himself cheerfully available for counsel and shared his files, maps and research material freely, eagerly and generously."

Elaine McNabney Volunteer Award



Dee Owens



Bruce Watson

Dee Owens of Placerville, CA, and **Bruce Watson** of Aurora, CO, were named winners of the **Elaine McNabney Distinguished Volunteer Award**.

Owens, a member of the California-Nevada Chapter since 2003, has been active in researching the emigrant trails, most recently researching, mapping and leading tours on the Grizzly Flat Cutoff.

Beyond her "on the ground" work, she is the creative computer mastermind behind the CA-NV chapter website. Many of the videos and maps on the website are the result of her work. She also makes maps and other graphics for chapter members and was heavily involved in planning the Lake Tahoe convention.

Watson was cited for his work as chair of the Colorado-Cherokee Chapter Preservation Committee and service on the national Mapping and Marking Committee, where he helped revise the MET manual.

He has helped mapped the Cherokee Trail through Colorado and trained new members of the Preservation Committee. A dedicated chapter member, he has never declined any task that has been asked of him. He has displayed a strong dedication both to preservation of the legacy of the trails and the mission of OCTA.

Awards Photos courtesy of Roger Blair.

David Welch Preservation Award



Dave Welch, left, with T. Michael Smith.

Long-time Utah preservationist and trails watchdog **T. Michael Smith** of Salt Lake City received the **Dave Welch Preservation Award** for 2015.

Smith joined OCTA ten years ago, served as Crossroads President, and has continuously been the Utah Crossroads Preservation Director.

As a preservation officer, he has pro-actively monitored projects that can have an impact on the multitude of trails in Utah and also has a role in monitoring, mapping and marking.

T. Michael is a familiar presenter at OCTA meetings and conventions and has been involved in projects and lectures throughout the West. He has taken the lead in helping OCTA make its position known on a variety of projects, including the recent proposal by the U.S. government to expand its influence on a Utah test range that includes Hastings Cutoff, Central Overland Route and Pony Express routes.

Distinguished Service Awards

OCTA presented **National Distinguished Service Awards** to the Bureau of Land Management office in Las Cruces, NM; Eldorado National Forest in Placerville, NM; and Liberty Utilities in Tahoe Vista, CA.

The **BLM** and its former district manager **Jim Renn** were cited for their support of Trail Turtles from the Southern Nevada Chapter and work on the Southern Emigrant/Butterfield Trail. He furnished maps and even went on trips with the Trail Turtles. (Jim recently accepted a new position in Michigan.)

The Eldorado National Forest was recognized for its long-time support of the Carson River Route, including helping secure designation as a National

Certificates of Appreciation



An OCTA Certificate of Appreciation was presented posthumously to Bob Pearce and accepted by his daughter Jan Petersen, left, and widow Pat Pearce, right.

The late **Bob Pearce** of Elko, NV, one of Northeastern Nevada's most active trail preservationist, was presented with an **OCTA National Certificate of Appreciation** at the 2015 Convention.

Pearce, along with the late Paul Sawyer, were instrumental in organizing the OCTA National Convention in Elko in 1996. They also helped organize a trails signage project along Interstate 80 and were among the first to conceive of what would become the BLM's California Trail Interpretive Center in Elko.

Pearce passed away late last year.

OCTA also presented Certificates of Appreciation to Lake Tahoe convention chair **Dick Waugh** of Oroville, CA; to Board member **Brian Larson** of Paradise, CA, who completed a three-year term on the National Board of Directors; and to **Doug Jensen**, of Idaho Falls, who passed away earlier this year just before he completed his second three-term on the Board.

Recreational Trail and National Historic Registrar. In addition, Forest Archaeologist **Katy Parr** helped trail members of the CA-NV chapter as part of the Partners In Time trail location and preservation project.

Liberty Utilities was recognized for the care it took in protecting a portion of the trail through the Carson River Canyon during a power line pole repair project. The utility consulted with OCTA on each step of the project, going so far as to not use heavy equipment in replacing the poles and allowing OCTA representatives to observe and advise as the work progressed.

Friend of the Trail



OCTA's Frank Tortorich accepts the Friend of the Trail Award on behalf of John and Patty Brissenden, who own Sorenson's Resort in Hope Valley, CA.

The **OCTA Friend of the Trail Award** is presented to groups, individual or organizations who have direct ties to lands over which the historic trails pass, with an emphasis on preservation of trail remnants, education and allowing responsible access.

At the Lake Tahoe convention, OCTA presented the 2015 Friend of the Trail Award to **John and Patty Brissenden** of Hope Valley, CA.

Since 1982, the Brissendens have owned and operated Sorenson's Resort, located on California State Route 88 in Alpine County, CA. For more than 30 years, they have offered walking and driving tours on the Carson River Route of the California Trail that runs through the campground and resort.

In addition, the Brissendens have been active in efforts to protect the area from power lines and use by snowmobiles and all-terrain vehicles. They were among the founders of the Friends of Hope Valley organization, which helped preserve 25,000 acres of open space in Alpine County.

Thanks for Great Raffle Support!

The Raffle and Silent Auction at this year's Convention at Lake Tahoe was a huge success due to the generosity of those who donated and to those who bought tickets. You can't have one without the other.

I can't tell you how many times I heard people say how nice the prizes were. I want you to know how much I appreciated your help. Thank you is just not enough.

- Susie Winner, Raffle & Auction Chair

Merrill Mattes Award



*Overland Journal Editor Marlene Smith-Baranzini and OCTA Publications Chair Bill Hill accepted the Merrill J. Mattes Award for outstanding writing in the OJ on behalf of **Randy Brown**, who was unable to attend the Tahoe Convention. He was recognized for his article "Nebraska, June 1852: Death and Coincidence on the Trail, The Fate of John Hollman and Charles Stull," which appeared in the Fall, 2014, issue.*

PNTS Lifetime Achievement Awards



Ross Marshall presented Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Partnership for the National Trails System to Dave Welch, left, and Roger Blair, right, in recognition of their long support for the work of the organization.

OCTA Convention DVDs Available

Some presentations and tours were filmed by a CA-NV Chapter member. The presenters and the videographer have given permission to sell these unedited DVDs.

Tour handouts are available, also. For list of available subjects and their cost, contact Mary Ann Tortorich, annamae1846@gmail.com, 209.296.7242.

Proceeds go to the chapter.

Publications

The good news for our members is that it appears that the practice of four issues for each the *Overland Journal* and the *News from the Plains* will continue for this year. We have all heard about OCTA's budgetary problems. We are planning on improving this situation with the work of the Publications Committee, and also with the help and cooperation of all of our members.

We are doing a number of things. Our editors are making sure that they are being as cost effective as possible while at the same time keeping quality publications. We are seeking increased revenues from new advertisements for both publications. This is a new area since in the past little thought was given to it. We are searching for new markets for both our *Overland Journals* and our published books. Although it is late in the season, we have spoken with a number of trail centers and museums about carrying some of OCTA's books in their gift shops. Two centers have agreed to try two of the books and two have said they will consider them for next year. We hope to add more outlets by next summer.

The holiday season will be upon us in a few months, please consider giving an OCTA book, or perhaps even a membership, as a gift. While the historical significance of new publications is an important factor in our selection process, as we consider them, their probable financial success will weigh more in our decision making.

Your assistance in cutting our costs is welcomed. In recent issues we announced that the *News from the Plains* can now be received electronically. All you have to do is to tell headquarters. We would also like to hear from you concerning our publications. Please inform the committee or the individual editors how they are doing, what you like, any ideas to improve the issues, or anything you see as a problem. We are here to serve our membership. We don't know if we can make every change or solve every problem, but we will look into any reasonable suggestion. And chapters, please keep telling us what you are doing!!

-- [Bill Hill](#), Publications Committee Chair



Calling All Educators!

For many the fall season signifies the coming of the end, but for OCTA it represents the beginning of a search for Outstanding Educators, a time for teachers and their students to develop a plan to research a specific aspect of trail-related materials, and for some lucky teacher to get a free class set of books.

Although we have just recently honored Gene Matteucci and Audrey Elder for their innovative programs that make history interesting, challenging and informative for students, it is time to start our search for others educators who also deserve to be so honored.

Announcements about OCTA's Outstanding Educator program are available on our website and notices are being sent to various schools in the country, but it is important that all of our members participate in our search. Your children or grandchildren, perhaps a neighbor's child, or an article in a local paper may have identified a good teacher that really sparked their students' interest. They deserve to be considered.

There are a variety of categories to which the award may relate, from elementary through adult education. The specific forms and information are available on OCTA's website under the Opportunities portion of the Learn tab. If you know or hear about a terrific teacher or teachers, please nominate them or bring the information to the attention of headquarters or the education committee. Nominations must be received by March.

Each year a theme or topic is selected which we encourage elementary teachers to integrate into their lessons on westward migration. This year the topic is the various modes of transportation used by the Indians and the emigrants.

Students would then be encouraged to draw these methods and submit their artwork to OCTA. We would like all our members and readers to encourage their local school's participation in this project for OCTA's annual calendar. More information about the calendar project is also available on the website and fliers will also be sent to a number of schools. Submission must be received by April.

A "little" luck is involved in our book raffle. All that is needed is a post card sent to OCTA with the title of the activity book desired. The books are terrific – packed with information and a wide variety of student activities about the Lewis and Clark, Oregon, California, Mormon and Pony Express trails. The lucky teacher or school will receive a class set of that book. , get your local school district or teachers to send in that postcard. The drawing is held in January and specific information about the drawing is also on OCTA's website.

- [Bill Hill](#), Education Awards Chair

FROM THE ASSOCIATION MANAGER



By [Travis Boley](#)

Association Manager

The past summer for OCTA was a time for growth and new, exciting directions. Increased attention from Rinker Buck's book *The Oregon Trail* (a New York Times best seller) showcased all that we do. From OCTA HQ helping to plan the trip four summers ago to numerous OCTA members assisting Mr. Buck as he made his way across the plains, mountains, and deserts, Rinker devoted dozens upon dozens of pages of praise upon our friendly assistance and amazing preservation efforts.

Wyoming member Randy Brown received eight full pages of effusive adulation, which has resulted in renewed interest in two of his OCTA publications, *Graves and Sites on the Oregon-California Trail* and *Historic Inscriptions on Western Emigrant Trails*. New people are finding our Facebook page, and they are both joining OCTA and buying the publications mentioned in *The Oregon Trail*.

For several years now, OCTA has led the charge to develop the 40-mile shared corridor of the Oregon/California/Santa Fe National Historic Trails through the Kansas City metropolitan area. We held two separate "Kansas City Trails" symposia to start bringing together the political and administrative powers of the region to share with them our idea of fulfilling a largely overlooked piece of the National Trails Act – a provision of the Act that allows for the building of retracement trail as close as practicable to the historic route. Steve Burns of the National Park Service and I have discussed this concept for the better part of a decade, so it is especially gratifying to see the nation's first comprehensive retracement trail take shape.

OCTA sponsored a Sunday evening pig roast at the winery of new OCTA board member (and Sugar Creek, MO mayor) Matt Mallinson that brought together around 110 elected officials at the city, county, state, and federal levels to lay out the grand plan for building this 40-mile retracement trail and connecting it the Katy Trail, a rail-trail that will soon connect St. Louis to Kansas City along the Missouri-Kansas-Texas rail corridor. OCTA President John Krizek and Burns and Kristin Van Fleet of the National Park Service joined us to present the concept to those who will eventually need to approve and help fund the plan. The broad consensus was extremely positive and the excitement for the project in the room was palpable.

The National Park Service is now entering into a \$60,000 cooperative agreement with the Mid America Regional Council (Kansas City's bi-state organization that helps design and fund myriad infrastructure projects) to hire a local landscape architecture firm to develop plans for each of the eight affected municipalities on each side of the state line.

In October, the nation's first bridge spanning an interstate highway that was built specifically to connect a National Historic Trail along a retracement trail will open in south Kansas City. (Construction photo below.)



The Boy Scouts of America are taking on multiple Eagle Scout projects in our corridor and the Independence School District has led the way in remaking its social study curriculum to utilize the hundreds of original trail diaries in our collection that are now housed on our new OCTA-Journals.org website. I recently spoke at a Kansas City realtors group about the economics of the project, and am being invited to speak to Rotary, Optimist, and other groups throughout the region. Every time we take on outreach like this, we find new members. In July alone, we picked up 26 brand new members, largely the result of these new endeavors.

It is an exciting time for our National Historic Trails, and we are truly making history as we move forward with these plans. Kansas City is serving as the model for other urban areas, and the National Park Service is fully on-board with us and our other partners to show the nation how this is done. Next summer, we plan to host the Partnership for the National Trails System's Historic Trails Workshop in Kansas City. Because it is the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, we are hoping to have the Director and entire leadership of the NPS in attendance and have the largest, most successful workshop in the history of the PNTS. This will be our opportunity to get national leaders down in the trenches, and, as OCTA often does, lead the way in preserving and promoting our nation's historic trails.

FROM OCTA HEADQUARTERS

Thank You!

Thanks to many donors who support the work of OCTA through gifts to our annual fund drive and memorial gifts to those who have passed. Gifts in the last several months include those from:

Harry Abraham	Brenda Lozier
Jacqueline Ball	Francis Madsen, Jr
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Lorraine Bennett	Ross and Shirley Marshall
Todd and Bett Berens	Bill Martin
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David Loera and Alison	Lesley Wischmann
Harvey	Gareth and Deann Wilson
Susan Loucks	John and Susie Winner
	Dick and Joan Young

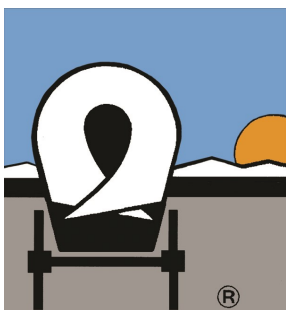
Welcome New OCTA Members

Barbara Alexander, Sutter Creek, CA
Donn Anderson, Dallas, OR
Kevin Anderson, Pendleton, OR
Kathryn Ataman, Winnemucca, NV
Ron Slepitz, Kansas City, MO
Elizabeth Bennett, Reno, NV
Juliette Bourdin, Ile-de-France
James Bourne, Concordia, KS
Wesley A Brown, Denver, CO
Robin Kraus, Orangevale, CA
Paula Cary, Weed, CA
Elizabeth Celaya, Mountaiin Home, ID
Matthew Mallinson, Sugar Creek, MO
Dick Douda, Cedar Rapids, IA
Sandra K Dunbar, Metamora, OH
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Valerie Estes, San Francisco, CA
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Grant & Maggi James, Sugar Creek, MO
Mary F Kelley, Fries, VA
Gary Kurutz, Sacramento, CA
Douglas Larrabee, Santa Fe, NM
Richard Leighty, Olivehurst, CA
Susan Lewis, Newtown, CT
Gail Lucas, Naperville, IL
David Madson, Albany, CA
Dick Markee, Florence, OR
Keith Mathews, Selah, WA
Josh Mc Garvey, Wichita, KS
John McNary, Germantown, TN
Carl & Linda Meade, Sugar Creek, MO
Dr Henry Millstein, San Jose, CA
George Miskovsky, Placerville, CA
Chris Morgret, Pollock Pines, CA
Sarah K Morrison, Lakeville, CT
Richard Nelson, Waterville, KS
Duane Neumann, Broken Arrow, OK
Mary Noble, Klamath Falls, OR
John Nordblom, Simi Valley, CA
Daniel B O'Neill, Independence, MO
Steve Olney, Reno, NV
Ray Pancharian, Grass Valley, CA

Continued on Page 13

New Members (continued)

Dave & Norma Piper, Estacada, OR
 Tim Potts, Monticello, NY
 Ben Praker, Somerset, CA
 Pat Rhine, Forest Lake, MN
 Mary Lou Roberts, Ventura, CA
 Nancy Sage, Jurupa Valley, CA
 Ann Marie Sergeant, Austin, TX
 Richard Short, Graegle, CA
 Russell Sparks, Marysville, KS
 Mark D Vangen, Lincoln, NE
 Joe Weber, Tuscaloosa, AL
 Evan White, Salem, OR
 David & Joan Witter, Portland, OR
 Robert Wood, Pioneer, CA
 Susan Zimmerman, Hanover, CT
 Ronald Zozaya, Reno, NV



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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:

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

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

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

Wagon Wheel Café, 703 Broadway, Marysville, KS

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

State Bank of Blue Rapids, P O Box 157, Blue Rapids, KS

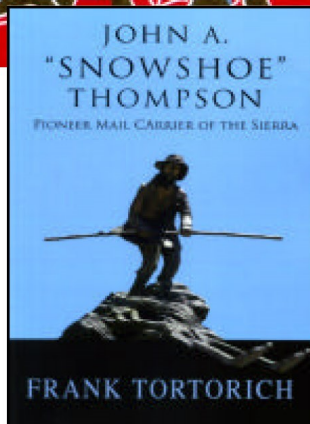
Morrill County Visitors Committee, P O Box 788, Bridgeport, NE

Lew Printing, 227-B East College St-LL, Independence, MO

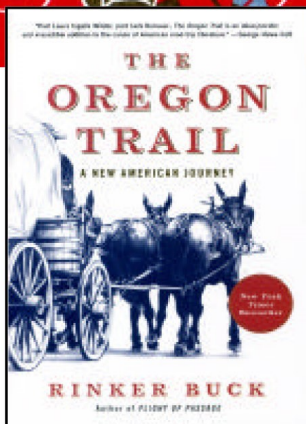
First Commerce Bank, 902 Broadway, Marysville, KS

Weaver Hotel, 126 S Kansas, Waterville, KS

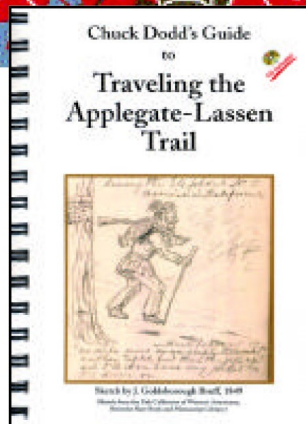
As The Holiday Season Approaches, OCTA Would Like To Offer Some Great Gift Ideas For The Trail Enthusiasts On Your List!



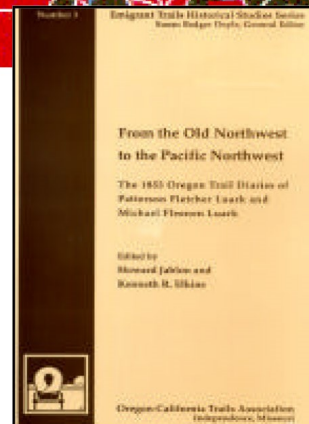
John A. Snowshoe Thompson, Pioneer Mail Carrier Of The Sierra by Frank Tortorich, \$23.95



The Oregon Trail, A New American Journey by Rinker Buck, \$28.00



Chuck Dodd's Guide to Traveling the Applegate-Lassen Trail, \$22.95



Emigrant Trails Historical Studies Series ed., Susan Badger Doyle, (3 vol. - Howell, Ebey, Luark), the set \$33.00. Not sold separately.

Call OCTA Headquarters 1-816-252-2276 to receive an overall 10% discount (not available online) for your phone order. Shipping and handling additional.

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Visit the OCTA Bookstore at www.octa-trails.org/store

Sounds Like Success — Music Meets the Meadow



By Sarah Kessinger

On the afternoon of Sunday, September 6, a line of horses with riders holding U.S. flags stood on a bluff overlooking Alcove Spring Historic Park. The scene spurred enthusiastic applause from the audience in a stirring finale to the Topeka Symphony Orchestra concert, capping a day of events that drew almost 1,600 to the historic site.

The riders, with the Kansas Division of the National Pony Express Association, were among many highlights of a day dedicated to the storied Oregon Trail.

"That was just spectacular," orchestra director Kyle Wylie Pickett said of the finale. "It was a highlight, but it was a day of highlights really."

Visitors spent the day hiking trails, enjoying music and hearing tales of history in Alcove's prairie and woodland setting.

"We heard comments throughout the day, people saying, 'Oh my gosh, this place is so beautiful,'" said Sharon Ekiss, one of the event organizers with the Marshall County Arts Cooperative.

Activities started in the afternoon with a heat index topping 100 degrees — a real 19th century experience. The air cooled some by the evening performance.

The symphony's concert featured Western-themed and patriotic tunes at sunset for an appreciative Labor Day weekend crowd.

One of the event's planners, Wayne Kruse, said the county's residents, businesses and organization made it happen.

"Seeing it come to fruition blew me away."

The concert's finale was electric, he said.

"Even though I knew the Pony Express riders were going to come to the edge of the cliff carrying the American flag during 'God Bless America,' I still audibly gasped when it happened," Kruse said. "In that moment I knew all of the work was worth it."

In review, Pickett said he loved every minute of Sunday, from Susan Werner's concert before the symphony took the stage, to the cowboy poet Don Wellborn, to the humanities meadow and activities surrounding it.

"I could not be happier about the whole thing," the director said. "We've been on a high ever since the concert. I'm kind of amazed. We were struck by the huge effort that went into putting together a really remarkable event in a really primitive setting ... It had a real festival quality to it."

Matt Mallinson, a member of the Oregon-California Trails Association Board, worked at a booth promoting preservation of the Oregon Trail. He found the event's large turnout impressive.

"With dedicated people and volunteers the impossible dreams can and do come true," he said, crediting people such as Duane Iles and his colleagues who have maintained the park for years and are partnering with the National Park Service to develop its trails and signage.

"The music was beyond wonderful, the grounds were well groomed, the re-enactors are to be commended," Mallinson said. "It was well organized and well run."

Excerpted courtesy of the Marysville KS Advocate



At left, Pony Express re-enactors on a hill overlooking the concert at Alcove Spring.

**Photos
Courtesy of
Tom Parker**



Left, Topeka Symphony Conductor Kyle Wylie Pickett leads the concert.

Right, Boy Scouts explore the terrain at Alcove Spring.



Dave Sanner, past president of the National Pony Express Association, admires the scene at Alcove Spring.

UTAH CROSSROADS CHAPTER

Fall is here and Crossroads activities are happening.

First – I am sure, by now, that everyone is aware of the passing of our stalwart supporter and organizer, Al Mulder, in June. It was a tragic loss (as are all those we lose). Al was there at the beginning of Crossroads and he stayed with us as an ardent supporter through the end.

His interests were numerous – wagons, trails, horses, western history in general. He was a full bird colonel in the Utah Air National Guard with military involvement back to WWII. He was loyal to his family, his country, and his interests. We can never forget Al Mulder. A posthumous award was given at the convention at Lake Tahoe, accepted by his daughter, Penny Mulder.

On other matters – we have had a victory of sorts as we have gained permission to install a “T-Rail” post at Salt Lake City’s city hall, locally known as Washington Square. It was an historic location during trail and pioneer days with many groups arriving and departing here for points west. Linda Turner was instrumental in achieving this.

Our fall social was held August 28 at Ft. Douglas Museum in Salt Lake City. This is our annual catered meal event and our speaker was Will Bagley talking about his book, *South Pass*. If you haven’t read this, you should!

A work day was planned for September 10 to install some more rail posts at strategic locations, which is our ongoing endeavor.

An interesting discovery has been made in Echo Canyon east of Salt Lake City (see photo at right). Historically, Echo Canyon has been a passage way into Utah and the west for nearly 200 years. A sharp-eyed photographer noticed three (count them) ladders on the “Great Eastern,” a huge monolith in Echo Canyon. These are high up on ledges and they defy explanation and approach. Some have suggested the Utah War (1857-58), but those who are familiar with that episode say there were no fortifications on the “Great Eastern.” Besides, they would not have lasted 150 years. Stay tuned for more of this mystery.

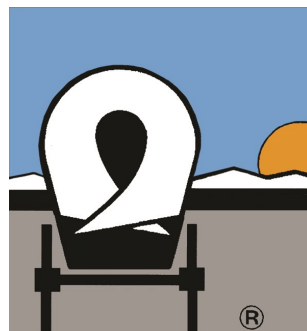
- A. Oscar Olson



A trio of ladders spotted in Echo Canyon east of Salt Lake City have created something of a mystery.

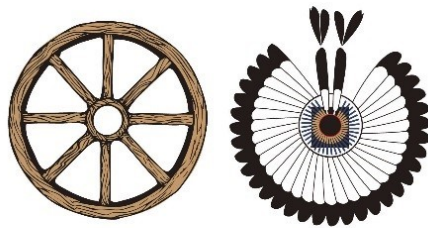


Interns who spent the summer working with the Crossroads Chapter through the Bureau of Land Management spent time on the trail, but occasionally were caught in the office. Left to right, Michael Knight of Utah State University, Christine Lingeman of the University of Utah, Grayden Bascom of Utah State, and Leann Lyons of Weber State University.



IDAHO CHAPTER

Oregon-California Trails Association
NATIONAL CONVENTION 2016



FORT HALL, IDAHO
Cultures and Changes

Mark your calendars for August 1-5, 2016, to join us at Fort Hall, Idaho, for the 2016 OCTA convention.

The theme of the convention is "Fort Hall: Cultures and Changes." The

convention will focus on the Native American history and culture in the Fort Hall area and how the influx of fur trappers and Oregon/California Trail emigrants changed their lives forever.

Active participation by the Fort Hall Shoshone-Bannock Tribe will be a key component of the convention. Speaker topics will include tribal history and cultural changes, fur trapper history, and excavations at Fort Hall.

Pre-convention tours will include the Oregon Trail through the Fort Hall reservation and the Hudspeth Cutoff. Convention bus tours will include early trapper sites in Idaho and Oregon Trail sites around Fort Hall. Post-convention tours include Goodale Cutoff and the California Trail through Idaho.

The chapter is quiet this year in terms of activities and outings because all of our resources are working to plan the 2016 OCTA convention. The tremendous amount of work required severely taxes a small chapter such as Idaho. My sincere thanks to **John Briggs**, Chapter Vice-President, for accepting the role of Convention Planning Chairman and doing a great job in leading this effort. It is difficult at best to plan a convention across the state from the membership base.

Speakers and bus tour routes are being firmed up. Arrangements have been drafted with the hotel and bus company. Cooperation with the Shoshone-Bannock tribe has been slowly evolving. They will be providing the keynote speaker and another primary speaker. A convention logo has been developed in conjunction with the Shoshone-Bannock tribe. Designs for shirts and other items have been approved and were available for sale at the Lake Tahoe convention in September.

Members have been exploring Goodale's Cutoff in order to plan a post-convention tour and exploring the Oregon Trail from Soda Springs to Raft River for the convention bus tours. Information flyers and a draft convention book have been developed.



I am attempting to coordinate replacing damaged and missing signs along the Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway. A Boy Scout has offered to perform the work for an Eagle project. Now I just need the Idaho Transportation Department to provide the signs, posts and other materials. That seems to be an ongoing problem as it has been two years with no progress being made.

We are also working with the Idaho Tourism Department to develop Oregon Trail driving guides and website materials for their publication and hosting. It is hoped these will be available before the 2016 convention.

- Jerry Eichhorst



Long-time News From The Plains Editor Candy Moulton was presented with a commemorative quill and inkwell by Publications Chair Bill Hill in recognition of her years of service.

NORTHWEST CHAPTER

Boardman Update

Gail Carbiener reports that the Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project (B2H) is currently quiet but festering. The final Environmental Impact Statement won't be published until very late this year or early in 2016 and not much can be done until then.

Gail stated, "The objections to the B2H are numerous and go far beyond the protection of the Oregon Trail. Frankly, other than our friends at National Park Service and Oregon State Preservation Office, no one commented on saving the Trail. Several were concerned about the Baker Interpretive Center. There may be a message here!

"Can we stop the B2H completely? Maybe. Can we move it off the Trail? Also maybe. Can we do it alone? Probably remote. We need the help of many of the others who are against the project for their special reasons. The vast majority of others are landowners – farmers and ranchers. Many of these multi- generational, longtime landowners also have the Trail on or near their property. They are our friends.

"If you read the letters, you can see that the counties have a strong interest in protecting farm land for their residents. The Navy is concerned about pilots and ground squirrels. U.S. Fish & Wildlife is concerned about sage grouse, migratory birds and unacceptable mitigation. Eastern Oregon University does not support either route over the Glass Hill segment. And Baker City is concerned about their view and the Interpretive Center, just to name a few."

Keeney Pass to Farewell Bend Work Party

In June, OCTA members spent four days working on the trail between Keeney Pass and Farewell Bend in eastern Oregon. The results should greatly enhance the visitor experience of the trail in this section. The group was led by Gail Carbiener and included Muriel Carbiener, Billy Symms, Chuck and Suzanne Hornbuckle, Joe and Leta Neiderheiser, Jim and Sally Riehl, Jenny Miller, Rich Herman, Kim Boddie, Randy Brown, and Drew Harvey. In addition, two BLM archaeologists, Jennifer Theisen from Vale and Nicole Lohman from Baker City, joined the group for day one, and two unexpected badgers provided lunchtime entertainment on day two.

Many new and larger directional signs and Carsonite markers were placed where needed. Most of these signs required cement and hardware work. A new Novacolor sign now marks the Henderson gravesite along with a post asking visitors to respect private property. At Alkali and Tub Springs new informational signs were installed including one telling travelers they would be on the original route for the next 14 miles. New signs were

installed at the protected swales on Tub Mountain. More directional and informational signs were put up at the Birch Creek site, and repairs were made on the posts at the Sarah King Chambers grave.

In closing, here is an email quote from Jennifer Theisen at the Vale BLM office: "Thank you so much for the work that you and the OCTA team does for the Trail. The BLM appreciates (more than you can imagine), the work OCTA has done and continues to do. It will certainly make the trail experience more enjoyable for future groups and individuals."

Oregon Lavender Festival

In the fall of 2014, while working on the Trail Inventory Project, it became apparent that the Barlow Road crossed somewhere near Oregon Lavender Farm in Upper Logan, Oregon. The owner and manager of the lavender farm were pleased to hear this and were eager to have the trail marked and interpreted. They invited NWOCTA to set up an interpretive booth at the 2015 Lavender Festival. Contact was also made with the owner of Upper Logan Nursery just west of Oregon Lavender Farm. Two Carsonite posts were subsequently pounded where the 1855 GLO surveys reported the Barlow Road crossed a section line on her property.

On June 27-28 NWOCTA manned a booth at the Oregon Lavender Festival with the Clackamas Historical Society and again looked at adjacent properties. Some promising depressions were found in the right locations to be part of the Barlow Road. Using the 1855 field notes it was possible to locate the trail in this area within a 100-foot wide corridor, but it will take additional fieldwork and perhaps the use of metal detectors to conclusively determine the precise route of the trail.

To quote Jim Tompkin's NWOCTA report, "The owner of the lavender farm and his manager would very much like a Carsonite post on their property and are considering buying an interpretive panel for their patio overlooking the purple fields. Although we did not pound a post on his property, at least not yet, we did make contacts with several neighboring property owners who are thrilled to learn the Barlow Road went on or near their land."

Thanks to Jim Tompkins, Henry Pittock, Rich Herman, Phyllis McGarry, Paul Masee, Polly Jackson, and Gail and Muriel Carbiener for their work on this project.

— Dennis Larson



NW Chapter Hosts Successful Blue Mountains Symposium

The Northwest Chapter hosted a successful “Base O’ Blue Mountains” Oregon Trail Symposium on July 25-26 at Pendleton, Oregon. Some 40-plus attended the event, including several new chapter members for whom this was their first OCTA event.

Sam Pambrum started us off with an introduction to the community of French-Canadian, Metis and Native American settlers in the Walla Walla Valley, known as Frenchtown, that was well-established before the arrival of the Whitman missionaries in 1836 and the influx of Oregon Trail immigrants beginning in the early 1840s. His lecture was supplemented by a Sunday field trip to the Frenchtown Historic Site where that heritage is being recognized and preserved by a private foundation. The field trip also included a visit to the nearby Whitman Mission National Historic Site.

Dave Welch described his work mapping the various threads of the Oregon Trail in the Pendleton-Walla Walla area. Some of these segments (the many “spaghetti strands”) still have an element of confusion and doubt as to their precise routes, adding challenge to the painstaking mapping process.

Bonnie Sager presented the story of Marie Dorian set against the backdrop of the John Jacob Astor expeditions, overland and by sea, to the Oregon coast in 1810-12 to establish Fort Astoria and gain a foothold in the lucrative fur trade of the era.

Roger Blair recounted the efforts of Walter Meacham to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the 1843 Oregon Trail migration. Under his direction, the tiny village of Meacham, (population 51) in the Blue Mountains east of Pendleton, successfully hosted the extravagant “1923 Oregon Trail Pageant” attended by no less than the President of the United States, Warren G. Harding, and approximately 30,000 visitors. This was all planned and carried out in a matter of months – less time than it took to plan this seminar. We foresee a future book in this!

Karen Johnson and Dennis Larsen spoke of the building of the Naches Pass Wagon Road in 1853 and ‘54 over the Cascade Mountains in an attempt to divert Willamette Valley-bound immigrants into the Puget Sound region.

And Ray Egan offered an excellent examination of one particularly enduring myth about the Naches Pass road: how that myth started (the guilty parties), why it endures (if it’s not true, it ought to be), and the value such myths might serve to our collective identity.

— Dennis Larson



GATEWAY CHAPTER

In July, nine members of Gateway Chapter gathered at the museum in Troy, KS, to travel to Brown County to follow the trail. We stopped to say hello to our friend Paul Dittmore, who is in an assisted living facility in Highland. He had recently celebrated his birthday, so we couldn't resist singing to him! He is the expert at mapping the sites.

We car pooled and stopped at various locations to check the condition of the Carsonite markers. With the help of some strong fellows, including Pete Duncan, Calvin Smith, Corky Smith and Glennden Hartman, we reset markers, moved one, and added one new one at a site not marked.

Colleen Duncan, Sandy Smith, Karen McClellan, Carol Smith, and I did traffic watch, gave some helpful advice and held some tools. Starting out with a thunderstorm, we thought of those many who did these trails years ago in rain, sleet and snow. As it turned out it was a beautiful day and we had lunch together on our way home.

-- Carole McClellan

SOUTHERN TRAILS

The Southern Trails Chapter has issued a call for papers for a conference and symposium scheduled for April 6-9, 2016, in Willcox, Arizona.

Speakers are invited with research on the Southern Trails through Arizona and New Mexico in the period between 1750 and 1885. Vendor tables for book sales will also be available.

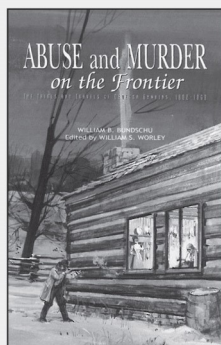
For more information, contact Doug Hocking at dhocking@centurylink.net or doug@doughocking.com no later than November 15, 2015.

ABUSE AND MURDER ON THE FRONTIER: THE TRIALS AND TRAVELS OF REBECCA HAWKINS, 1800-1860

by William B. Bundschu
Edited by William S. Worley

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COLORADO-CHEROKEE

Our last chapter meeting was held August 29 at the Douglas County Museum in Castle Rock. Our featured presenters were Richard Deisch and Bruce Watson. They talked about present day techniques for trail mapping and Susan and Duane Kniebes on cemeteries and remote burials in Larimer County. After lunch, we made a carpool field excursion along the Cherokee Trail in Douglas County.

Our mapping crew has about 50 percent of the Colorado part of the Cherokee Trail sent to the National Park Service. About 90 percent of the historical research has also been done about the trail. A real treat is to see is that 90 percent of the Cherokee Trail is now shown on the National Parks California Trail brochure. The only part missing is the beginning of the trail in Arkansas to the Kansas border. Hopefully this will be added soon.

-- Berl Meyer

KANZA CHAPTER

The KANZA Chapter of OCTA is currently researching, mapping & marking the Kansas section of the Military Road/Mormon Trail from Ft. Riley to Ft. Kearny. To call attention to our work, we started by marking the site of Mormon Springs Campground, south of Washington. A dedication of the marker was held on July 12.

-- Alicia Keegan

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OCTA-trails.org

Or our new Journals site:

octa-journals.org

Correction

The caption on a picture of page 14 of the Summer issue of *NFP* incorrectly stated the source of a donation OCTA made to the Western Environmental Law Center. The donation came from OCTA's Charles Martin Endowment Fund.

REMEMBRANCES



Jeanne Watson

Much beloved OCTA member **Jeanne Watson**, who with her husband of 61 years, Bill, made a legendary difference in preservation of the Overland trails, passed away peacefully in her Orinda, CA, home on September 2.

Jeanne was born in Oakland, graduated from Berkeley High

School and the University of California. She worked for the *Daily Cal* newspaper, which at the time was considered to be a man's profession, eventually becoming night editor and then city editor. After graduating, she was a reporter for the *Watsonville Register* before she and Bill were married in 1954.

As a child, Jeanne developed her lifelong love of nature during weeklong stays at the Stockton Municipal Camp at Silver Lake, CA. In the 1960's, she and her family were introduced to the Carson Route of the Emigrant Trail, which passes behind Silver Lake.

After she and Bill married and started a family, she would read them excerpts from Irene Paden's books while they camped at Silver Lake. For many years she worked with Jess Machado to mark the Carson trail and in the 1990s she, Bill, Frank Tortorich and others re-marked the trail from Woodfords to the Mormon Emigrant Road with National Park Service California National Historic Trail signs

Jeanne was OCTA Board Secretary from 1991-93 and served on the Board of Directors from 1994 to 2000. Bill served on the Board from 1991 to 1997 and as OCTA President from 1989-91. They were the first couple to serve on the OCTA Board.

For 30 years, Jeanne and Bill chaired OCTA's Legislative Liaison Committee and are credited as the driving forces behind Congressional authorization of the California and Pony Express National Historic Trails and the Four Trails Additional Routes Studies.

The Watsons helped create the Partnership for the National Trails System, which now includes 30 National Historic & Scenic Trails. They are recipients of OCTA's Meritorious Achievement Award, the PNTS Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Department of Interior's Take Pride in America Award.

For 50 years, the Watson family worked to interpret, mark & protect the Sierra crossing, serving 20 years as U.S. Forest Service Adopt-A-Trail volunteers on the

Emigrant Valley to West Pass and top of Horse Canyon Trail. Jeanne helped recruit the Kirkwood Homeowners to work on the Trail segment from Caples Lake to Emigrant Valley for the Forest Service. For 40 summers, Jeanne gave her California Trail slide talks at Kit Carson Lodge and later at Kirkwood Mountain Resort. For 30 years she helped lead hikes along the Carson Route.

In addition, she researched and published the diary of Lorena B. Hayes, who traveled to California in 1853 via the Carson Route before settling in the Ione valley. The resulting book, *To the Land of Gold and Wickedness*, was recognized by the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH).

A museum professional, Jeanne was professionally active through the AASLH and the International Conference of Museums (ICOM), where she helped to create and lead the International Historic House Committee. In 2012 Jeanne received the ICOM-US International Service Citation.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by daughter Ginnie (Hal) Mathews of Austin, TX, and son Jim (Barb) Watson, of San Rafael, CA; and grandsons Hunter Mathews, Kyle Watson, and Cole Watson. All three grandsons are OCTA members. She was preceded in death by her oldest son, Bruce.

A private funeral service was held. Memorial contributions in Jeanne's name can be made to OCTA, the Partnership for the National Trails System, the American Association of Museums, or the Alzheimer's Association.

Memorial & Tribute Gifts

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

It can be a meaningful way to leave a legacy on behalf of those whose lives were marked by dedication to our Western heritage.

To make a Memorial or Tribute gift, please visit octa-trails.org/donate-online.



Suzanne Hornbuckle

Dedicated Northwest Chapter member Suzanne Hornbuckle died suddenly at her home in Olympia on September 9. She was 75. Both Suzanne and her husband, Chuck, were familiar faces at chapter outings and activities.

Suzanne was born on the family farm on the Washington-Idaho border near Palouse, WA, where she met Chuck when they were high school seniors, although he attended a school a few miles away across the Idaho border. She graduated from Lewis-Clark Normal School in Lewiston and received her teacher's certificate in 1959. She taught school in Enterprise and Klamath Falls, where Chuck graduated from Oregon Technical Institute.

They moved to Yakima, where Chuck began work with the Washington State Department of Highways. Two sons, Nick and Jon, were born there. In 1967, the family moved to Olympia, where they have since resided. Suzanne was an Educational Assistant with the North Thurston School District for 27 years and retired in 1997.

A Mayflower descendent, Suzanne had 17 ancestors who came west by wagon between 1846 and 1860, which inspired the Hornbuckles to join OCTA in 1993. The following year, they became Life Members. Since that time Suzanne and Chuck were very involved with OCTA, especially the Northwest Chapter. She participated in numerous outings and trail marking and mapping PIT projects. Suzanne especially enjoyed working with Jack and Pat Fletcher in documenting the Cherokee Trail, over which Chuck's ancestor traveled with a Cherokee wagon train in 1850.

In addition to OCTA, Suzanne was a member of 13 historical groups including DAR, Sons & Daughters of Oregon Pioneers, and the Daughters of the Pioneers of Washington. They enjoyed travel and participating in each other's involvements, including the Tumwater Historical Association, the Washington State Historical Society, the Lacey and Olympia Historical Societies, and many more.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by sons Nick and Jon and their families.



Al Mulder

This is a longer version of a brief obituary that appeared in the Summer issue of NFP but was limited due to space.

Utah Crossroads icon **Al Mulder** passed away on June 10 at his home in Murray, Utah. He was 92.

Al was born September 15, 1922 in Secaugus, NJ. His love of the West probably began in 1926 when he traveled the Lincoln Highway with his parents, brother and two sisters to Salt Lake City. He married Laura Johanson on September 9, 1946 and together they raised five daughters

Al is survived by his wife, daughters, ten grandsons, 16 great-grandchildren and a sister Patt Shoemaker. Al and Laura built their home in Murray, UT, and had lived there for more than 60 years.

He graduated from West High School and attended the University of Utah before enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Corps six days after Pearl Harbor. He served for four years as an aircraft maintenance instructor and as a crew chief with the 9th Air Force in the European Theatre. He was recalled to active duty for two years during the Korean War. During the Vietnam War, his Air Guard Maintenance Squadron supported airlift missions to Vietnam, Australia and Japan.

He was a civil service Air Technician and Chief of Maintenance for the Utah Air National Guard for 35 years, retiring after 41 years of Air Force and Air National Guard service.

After retiring, he worked as a licensed remodeling contractor and did volunteer work for the National Park Service and for historic trail preservation. He was an active member of the Oregon-California Trails Association, Utah Westerners, and the Lincoln Highway Association.

He enjoyed writing articles for trail newsletters and had articles published in the *Overland Journal* and *Lincoln Highway Forum*. Through his emigrant trail explorations, marking and mapping efforts, he has left a legacy of trail markers in his footsteps.

Al loved the Wasatch and Uinta mountains and riding the trails was his favorite activity. For many years Al and Laura and their family and many friends enjoyed their Lazy M Ranch in Oakley, where he loved ranching and riding his horses. Together he and Laura enjoyed field trips, visiting historic sites, ranch parties and "getaways" to Wendover.

PARTING THOUGHTS



By [John Krizek](#)

Immediate Past President

Now that my term as OCTA President has come to end, I want to thank this organization for the privilege of serving in this role.

Our mission is vital, our organization is sound, our dedicated people are the best, and the future is as bright as it was for those pioneers who made it to their nirvana in the West.

By the time you read this, our biggest convention in years will be history and we'll be filled with memories of mountain passes, stimulating presentations, and visions of the beauty of Lake Tahoe.

Two thousand people will have attended a Topeka Symphony Orchestra concert on the trail at Alcove Spring, where they also saw a pioneer wagon and were exposed to a mini-symposium of OCTA wares.

Our outstanding preservation team is staying on top of a myriad of challenges to trail integrity, from one end of our universe to the other.

Our education outreach team is reaching out to a new generation of trail stewards, with a new internet-available arsenal of digitized pioneer journals and a new

web site that includes all 32 years of back issues of the *Overland Journal*.

A new best-selling book on the Oregon Trail by nationally-recognized author and OCTA member Rinker Buck is bringing a new round of recognition—and new members—to OCTA.

A team of interns from local colleges worked with the Crossroads chapter during the summer on a variety of trail projects, opening doors to new ways to reach out and protect trail resources.

The 40-mile three-trail corridor project through the Kansas City metropolitan area is approaching reality, and in addition to preserving several fragile trail segments, is gaining major recognition for OCTA among government and civic organizations – and new members for the organization. The October opening of a pedestrian bridge over an interstate highway, dedicated to the trails, will certainly be a FIRST in the history of trail preservation!

An updated Strategic Plan, in the works since the board met in Denver last March, will be in place to guide us as we lead this organization into the future.

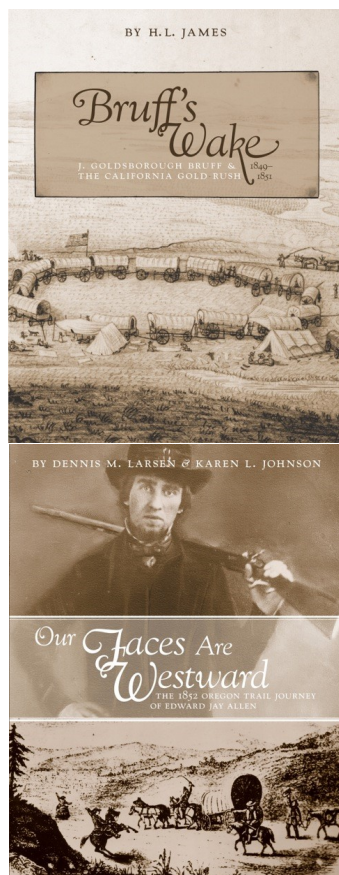
All in all, it's a good time to be here. So raise the flag, spread the word, enjoy the trails, and let's share in the satisfaction of a heritage well celebrated. Thanks for the journey.

On the Trail With Young Pioneers



Participants in a hike on Luther Pass during the Lake Tahoe Convention were pleasantly surprised to run into 30 seventh and eighth graders from in Paradise, CA, led by their teacher, Dave Vixie, a former OCTA Board member and nationally recognized educator. All were dressed in 1850s-style emigrant clothing and accompanied by six mules and three wagons. It is part of Vixie's annual trek with students. He brought them to the Convention session on Thursday. In a spontaneous pass-the-hat gesture at Thursday's luncheon, OCTA raised \$300 from convention-goers to buy each of them a student membership in OCTA.

- Photo by Kay Forsythe



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Save the Trail



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