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Butterfield, Four Trails Studies Move Ahead

By Bill Martin, OCTA Legislative Liaison

This is an exciting time for fans of the Overland Emigrant Trails, with the possibility of adding several thousand miles of historic trails to the National Trails System in the near future.

Farthest along is the Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail, which was determined by a National Parks Service (NPS) feasibility study to “meet the criteria for national significance, and is feasible, suitable, and desirable for designation as a national historic trail.”

Senator John Boozman of Arkansas has drafted legislation to add the Butterfield to the National Trails System. As this issue was going to press, Senator Boozman’s office was circulating the draft in search of co-sponsors. OCTA’s Legislative Liaison met with the staffs of several Senators in Washington, D.C. to promote the legislation, including representatives from Arkansas, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico, all states the Butterfield crossed. As soon as the bill is introduced, OCTA members will be asked to contact local Congressmen and Senators to encourage support.

Creation of the Butterfield Overland National Historic Trail would add 3,292 miles of trail in eight states, including Arizona, Arkansas, California, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. To read the entire feasibility study, go to: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?documentID=88283>

Meanwhile, in an event ten years in the making, the NPS in January released its feasibility study of 78 routes and segments along the California, Oregon, Mormon Pioneer and Pony Express routes to determine if they

could be added to existing National Historic Trails.

The long-awaited “Four Trails” study identified 26 routes and segments totaling 7,589 miles as being nationally significant and qualifying for addition to one or more of the existing National Historic Trails. Included are significant portions of the Cherokee Trail in Wyoming and Oklahoma.

The 26 approved routes include 12 on the California Trail, 12 on the Oregon Trail and two on the Mormon

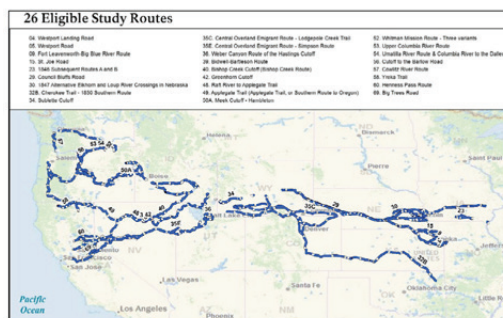
Pioneer. Among other well-known routes are the Bidwell-Bartleson, the Applegate Trail, the Westport Landing Road, the St. Joe Road, the Whitman Mission Route, and others. To read the entire feasibility study, go to: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=31277>

The next step will be to find a sponsor for legislation that will add the 26 routes to the National Trails System. Because about a dozen states will be impacted by the additional routes, OCTA is encouraged about potential success.

Also, OCTA members in Oregon, Idaho and elsewhere are considering options for adding

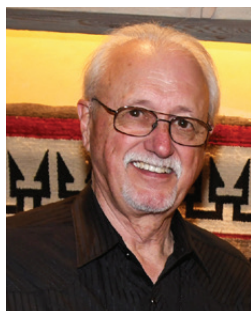
additional trail segments to the legislation that were left off because they fell outside the 1840-1848 dates for the study of Oregon Trail dates.

In addition, OCTA is continuing efforts to promote a feasibility study for the Southern Trails to California, including Cooke’s Wagon Road; the Mormon Battalion Route; Beale’s Wagon Road; the Fort Smith-Santa Fe Trail; the Fort Smith-El Paso Trail; the Lower Road from San Antonio to El Paso; the Beale Road from Albuquerque to Los Angeles; and others.



The Butterfield Trail

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greetings from the trail. Sandi and I are returning from a very enlightening and productive Symposium, Strategic Planning and Board meeting in Yuma, Arizona. Many thanks to Southern Trails Chapter President Mark Howe, Chapter leadership and Association Manager Travis Boley

for arranging a very enjoyable educational experience. One of the significant highlights of the Yuma experience was the addition of new members. My interaction with Emily from Salt Lake City and Ron from Yuma, both first time attendees, provided excellent insight into the interests of our younger population.

Every five years OCTA prepares a strategic plan. As the 2015-2020 plan nears completion work is underway to prepare a new plan for the future. Committee Chairman and OCTA Vice-President Dick Waugh, lead the process with the assistance of our very capable workshop facilitator and Western Regional Representative Sharon Brown. Committee members Ginny Disette, John Briggs and Lee Black were joined by Officers, Directors, Chapter Presidents and Committee Chairs, twenty-five in all, for the workshop. The overriding objective is to formulate a workable and fully invested plan that addresses the five specific goals of OCTA. Central to the mission is trail preservation. To accomplish the Association's objectives requires increasing and strengthening membership, leadership and financial stability. The committee presented the Plan for the Board's initial approval pending submission to the membership for further input and subsequent approval at the Elko Convention.

The mid-year Board of Directors meeting was held at the Yuma Shilo Inn. The Board heard an excellent report from Travis Boley defining the progress being made on the goals of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. One of the most significant accomplishments has been the development of greatly improved Chapter and Association web sites. In addition, OCTA is engaged

in the most effective social media outreach possible. OCTA now has a presence on YouTube with the addition of fourteen presentations delivered at the Santa Fe Convention. Increased awareness of the OCTA message and mission is being achieved through the excellent work of the Education Outreach, Public Relations and Communication committees. Capping off the Board meeting was the introduction of an editorial partnership agreement with Knowledge Tree Films for PBS airing of Southwest Stories. The thirteen episodes of season three may feature content provided by staff or members of OCTA. The regional travel production, including historical content, may be aired nationally via PBS and internationally by way of Roku. Southwest Stories presents possibly the best historic trails marketing opportunity OCTA has ever had.

There is simply no end to the good news the Association has received. Historic Trails National Park Service Intermountain Region Superintendent Aaron Mahr announced the forwarding of a *Revised Feasibility and Suitability Study for additional routes of the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, California and Pony Express National Historic Trails* to Congress. The Service found that twenty-six routes of the seventy-seven study routes are qualified for addition to one or more of the four national historic trails. For OCTA members this is the answer sought to many of the desired trail additions. It could have only been better news if all the desired trails had met the requirements. In any event, this is wonderful news. Now the work must begin to achieve Congressional approval and signing by the President.

So many OCTA members have worked tirelessly on all that has been achieved in this report. To them we say THANK YOU! To each of you who provide the financial support necessary to help make OCTA the pre-eminent National Historic Trails organization in America, a hardy and much deserved thank you.

I look forward to working with and seeing you down the trail. Lee Black, OCTA President

Lee Black, OCTA President

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PRESERVATION



By John Winner

National Preservation Officer

OCTA's Mission is to protect the Historic Emigrant Trail's Legacy by promoting research, education, **preservation activities** and public awareness of the trails and to work with others to support these causes.

As we continue to monitor the numerous activities that pose threats to the historic emigrant trails, the two major transmission line projects are still center stage. The **B2H Project** and the **R-Project**.

The Boardman to Hemingway (B2H) project, a 300 mile 500 kV transmission line in Eastern Oregon crossing the Oregon National Historic Trail seven times and causing both direct and indirect effects to the Oregon National Historic Trail is now in litigation.

On November 12th, 2019, concerned citizens including the "Stop B2H Coalition", of which OCTA is a member, filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the District of Oregon, Pendleton Division opposing the construction of the transmission line. The suit charged the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service with failure to adequately review the impact of the route Idaho Power has proposed for the B2H transmission line across five Eastern Oregon counties.

The suit addresses the federal agencies failure to adequately evaluate the need for and environmental effects of the line which would cause irreparable harm to the Oregon National Historic Trail, its historic ruts and viewshed. Additionally, the suit claims the agencies failed to adequately evaluate the environmental effect, which would cause harm to family farms, residential areas, and wildlife habitat.

The Complaint requests that the court declare and adjudge the BLM's November 17th, 2017 Record of Decision, Resource Management Plan Amendments and accompanying Final Environmental Impact Statements are unlawful. Also, request that the court declare and adjudge that the Forest Service's November 9, 2018 Record of Decision and Forest Plan Amendment and accompanying Final Environmental Impact Statement are unlawful. The Plaintiffs are also requesting the preparation of a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to address deficiencies in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and to disclose and

evaluate significant new information that was omitted.

Gail Carbiener, longtime OCTA Northwest chapter member continues his tireless effort to monitor and participate in all phases of this project in an effort to stop, alter, delay, or if approved press for significant mitigation.

The R-Project, A 225-mile transmission line proposed by Nebraska Public Power District (NPPD) that crosses the Oregon-California and Mormon National Historic Trails.

When the US Fish and Wildlife service issued an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) authorizing this project to move forward, a "Petition for Review of Agency Action" was filed in the United States District Court by the law firm of Eubanks & Associates. OCTA is one of the Plaintiffs.

On August 14th, 2019 the court approved the stipulated litigation schedule proposed by the parties that allows us to bypass the need for preliminary injunctive relief and to instead moved directly to the merits of the case. Merits briefings were scheduled and filed on time.

- November 8, 2019 – Petitioners filed their opening merit brief.
- December 13, 2019 – Federal Respondents filed their answering brief.
- December 20, 2019 – NPPD filed its answering brief.
- January 24, 2020 – Petitioners filed their reply brief.

Subsequent to filing the briefs, the government respondents filed a request for oral arguments. The case was assigned to Federal Judge Martinez said to be a good judge on the court for environmental matters.

The Court granted the Federal Respondents leave to file a surreply of no more than three pages and the Petitioners an opportunity to file a surrebuttal of no more than two pages.

We are now waiting for Judge Martinez to render a decision.

In the meantime, our attorney recently notified us that the Tenth Circuit (where our court sits) issued a strong National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) ruling on alternatives that bears directly on the claims of our case. As a result, our attorney filed a notice of supplemental authority to notify Judge Martinez of this new ruling.

Again, it's a waiting game for a decision. *(continued)*

Long Canyon Mine Project: An open pit mine project in Northeast Nevada.

In the last issue of NFP I shared with you a turn of events regarding the mitigation for this project. Our ongoing discussions had been with Newmont Mining Company and BLM where we thought there was a mitigation agreement; however when Newmont (38.5%) and Barrick (61.5%, Nevada's two largest gold mining companies formed a Joint Venture, Nevada Gold Mine, (NGM), BLM said they would have to wait and see if NGM would voluntarily agree to the proposed mitigation along with other issues including BLM now reviewing their Instruction Memorandum Policy on Compensatory Mitigation.

Here again is a brief history, this project came to my attention in 2013 as an open pit mine in Northeast Nevada proposed by Newmont Mining Company impacting The California National Historic Trail, Hastings Cutoff. The Area of Potential Effect (APE) included Big Springs a frequent emigrant stopping place on the Hastings Cutoff.

The project is mostly on public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Over the years we have been engaged in a series of mitigation discussions. Early on BLM determined there would be no Direct Effects since they were unable to see any visible trail remnants. Although the Hasting Cutoff trail corridor is presumed, the trail has not been mapped to OCTA's MET standards. OCTA was denied the opportunity to try to validate the actual trail location within the APE with the use of ground truthing. BLM concluded that only Indirect Effects (visual) would be subject to mitigation. Several meetings were held to discuss possible mitigation. In 2016, I submitted on behalf of OCTA several mitigation items for consideration, including, mapping to MET standards the Hastings Cutoff emigrant trail, create Conservation Easements or similar protective provisions for emigrant trails on Newmont properties, including but not limited to Gravelly Ford, access for maintenance of trail markers and allow controlled access for guided tours to emigrant trails and historic emigrant sites. The National Park Service also submitted items of mitigation including, funding a trail corridor management plan, tours at Big Springs, an interpretive panel at Silverzone Pass.

On December 12, 2016 BLM Provided Newmont's initial response.

1. Support for OCTA's ground survey of the trail in the Goshute Valley and provide funding for OCTA's efforts.
2. Support for Google Trails Imagery for Goshute

Valley trail segments.

3. Gravelly Ford site protection and marking. The trail leading to Gravelly Ford and the site was part of the Horseshoe Ranch acquired by Newmont and is now the Elko Land and Livestock Company (ELLCO). Over the course of the next year and a half, additional meetings occurred. On April 30, 2018 Newmont provided BLM their response to the proposed Indirect Effects Mitigation for the California National Historic Trail. Briefly stated, Newmont (ELLCO) would establish the Gravelly Ford Conservation Area, (GFCA) and prepare a land encumbrance, conservation easement, or similar legal instrument to protect the GFCA. The easement would protect the trail segments for 50 meters on each side and 100 meters around the Gravelly Ford Site. The proposed mitigation would also develop imagery for a "virtual tour" from Interstate 80 to Gravelly Ford, provide access for tours and maintenance of trail markers. At Big Springs, Newmont would maintain the Settler's Cabin in a suspended state of decay.

In the meantime, BLM was preparing a Historic Properties Treatment Plan (HPTP), a plan to implement the agreed upon mitigation. A draft copy was issued on April 5, 2019 requesting comments. Comments were provided. On June 26th, 2019 BLM transmitted a copy of the final HPTP.

Subsequent to all of this we requested a meeting with the new joint venture company, Nevada Gold Mine. In response, NGM indicated they are aware of the proposed mitigation and due to the infancy of the new joint venture they needed some additional time to review the material.

We can only hope that we are beyond square one.

Wyoming: In Wyoming the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has issued a notice of intent to prepare Resource Management Plan Amendments for nine BLM-Wyoming Resource Management Plans and an Associated Environmental Impact Statement. The proposed amendments would designate pipeline corridors as part of the Wyoming pipeline corridor initiative proposed by the state of Wyoming. These amendments could have direct impacts on emigrant trails. The proposed amendments are currently being monitored by Wyoming's Chapter Preservation Officers.

The BLM issued annual reports for the following ongoing projects:

1. Monell Memorandum of Agreement – Well pads and access roads

2. Blue Forest Memorandum of Agreement – two new pipelines
3. Hiawatha Programmatic Agreement – eleven project additions, including pipelines, roads and well pads.
4. Point of Rocks Memorandum of Agreement – Transmission Line and pipeline repair.

Nevada: Lyon County Wastewater Treatment Facility Expansion: Lyon County, Nevada is proposing to expand their wastewater pipeline to provide additional capacity due to the increase in population in the Dayton Valley region east of Carson City.

Historic Maps depict the presence of historic roads within the project area. In particular, the pipeline would be adjacent to the old Fort Churchill Rd a County maintained dirt/gravel road which closely follows an alternate route of the Carson River Route of the California National Historic trail. Since there is little surface evidence of existing trail, a request has been

made to Lyon County, upon completion of the project to return the surface area to its natural condition.

Good of the Order It seems that most of the time when we talk about preservation it's threats to the trail, however preservation also takes on sharing the trail legacy with wayside exhibits, kiosks, and posts that mark the trail.

Recently members of the Trails Head Chapter noticed that several of the markers needed attention. Armed with repair tools and cleaning equipment, several members of the chapter spent three full days finding, inspecting, repairing and cleaning all the markers in their area. Way to go!

Again, these are only a few of the issues that are being monitored as a result of potential threats to our emigrant trails. While it may be impossible to preserve and protect all known trail segments, we need to be proactive. Your keen awareness of activities in your region is greatly appreciated. More to come...

Partnership for the National Trails System

National Trails Action Plan Underway

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) has endorsed an ambitious National Trails Action Plan designed to fulfill the full potential of the nation's 30 National Historic Trails and National Scenic Trails.

Spearheaded by a task force led by Ron Tipton, a PNTS Board member and former President and CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, target goals of the Plan are to secure additional federal funding for the trails, encourage a stronger commitment to funding by federal agencies and Congress, increase state and local government support, and improved communications.

While important progress has been made in recent years toward protecting and funding the trail, PNTS recognizes that it has not yet fulfilled the goals of the National Trails System Act by creating a world-class national trails system. In fact, in the last several years Federal and State funding for the national trails for land acquisition and trail management has been reduced or only slightly increased.

Goals of the plan include:

1. Increased federal funding for trail land conservation and adoption of the plans, policies, and practices necessary for the federal agencies to meet the goal of protecting priority sites and segments as identified by the federal and non-profit partners.
2. Increased federal funding for trail operations and management and a strong commitment by the

federal agencies for coordinated and sustainable effective trail management within and across agencies and with nonprofit partners and state agencies.

3. Increased state & local government support for National Trail protection and trail management; and adoption of plans, policies and practices by state and local government agencies necessary to enhance their support for both land and resource conservation and trail management.
4. A National Trails Communications Strategy designed to promote the National Historic & Scenic Trails as a special part of the American experience.

In other Partnership news, during 2019 OCTA reported almost 105,000 volunteer hours, nearly triple what was reported in 2018. Unreimbursed expenses for OCTA volunteers was \$552,805, up more than \$100,000 from 2018. OCTA volunteer hours were the most of all historic trail organizations and trailed only the Appalachian and Pacific Crest scenic trails in total volunteer hours.

OCTA's increases can be attributed directly to OCTA members' use of online resources to report their hours. These are very important numbers because we can point to them as evidence of how we add to federal resources we receive. To log your hours, visit octa-trails.org and click on the Volunteer Hours button at the top of the page.

Bill Martin, PNTS Liaison

FROM THE ASSOCIATION MANAGER



In the last issue of News From the Plains, I reported about OCTA's Board of Directors updating its five-year strategic plan in 2015 and setting numerous goals and objectives with specific action plans to ensure that the organization had a clear vision on how to set itself up for the 2020s. I also reported

that over the next several issues of News From the Plains, I planned to report the increase of our online offerings.

My previous column told you how to use www.octa-journals.org, so please refer back to the last issue if you missed that update. In this issue, I'm going to focus a bit on our main website at www.octa-trails.org. It is a very dense website and people always seem surprised at what they can find there. In the interest of brevity, I will bullet-point some of the key things you should know:

1. Reporting your volunteer hours is exceedingly important. We use those reports to leverage federal funding for our trails in Congress and to leverage funding from the National Park Foundation's Volunteers in Parks program (which has been paying for mapping software for several years). It's very easy to do with our online portal. It can be found right on the home page at the upper right under "Volunteer Hours Submission." Please do take time after every OCTA activity to report your hours, mileage, and unreimbursed expenses.
2. Under the "Discover OCTA" tab on the home page, you'll find links to our online publications and a place where you can make a donation or become a member of our Trails Legacy Society. This society is specifically for those who have set up their will to benefit OCTA. If OCTA is in your plans, please let us know so we can add you to this prestigious society.
3. Also under the "Discover OCTA" tab is a link to our "Emigrant Trails Hall of Fame." Here you will find important stories on the most famous trail emigrants as well as 20th and 21st century heroes who helped preserve and promote the historic trails we all enjoy today.
4. The final thing you'll find under the "Discover OCTA" tab are links to all eleven of our regional chapters and their websites. This is the best way to stay up-to-date with what all of our chapters are doing out on the trail each year.
5. I also want to draw your attention to the "Educational Resources" tab before closing this column. The first two items under this tab are "Virtual Trail" and "The Oregon, California, Cherokee, and Southern Emigrant Trails." These links will take you to different interactive maps that I think you'll really enjoy. They are among the most popular areas of our website, with about 25 percent of all visits landing on these maps.
6. Also under the "Educational Resources" tab are links to OCTA's award-winning film *In Pursuit of a Dream*, curriculum, and school resources. Share these liberally with your teacher friends!
7. "Trail Facts" and "People and Stories" are also incredible items found under the "Educational Resources" tab. Here you will learn all kinds of facts about the trails.
8. The final two things under the "Educational Resources" tab are our "Speakers' Bureau" and "OCTA Awards" sections. One of the topics at the Yuma Strategic Planning Session in February was getting members in each chapter who are willing to go talk about the trail and OCTA to service clubs, schools, or anyone who will have us. If you're willing to be a part of this bureau, please drop me a line at tboley@indepmo.org. We have tons of resources on our website that can help you easily craft a speech. And of course, we are always looking to honor volunteers, educators, land owners, and others who are deserving of recognition. Please head to our "OCTA Awards" section and nominate someone worthy!

I'll continue offering a primer on using our main website in the next issue, so please keep the 2019-20 series of News From the Plains as a "how-to" index for OCTA's family of websites. And if you read last month's column, you'll recall that every single issue of News From the Plains dating back to 1982 is available at www.octa-journals.org.

Travis Boley

Publication News



There's A Lot Goin' On

Bill Hill - Publications, Chair

Springtime is a time of renewal and a brighter outlook.

One member has pledged to match up to ten new Overland Journal library memberships that other members sponsor.

So now if you donate a subscription membership to a library, that library will actually receive two years instead of one – two years at no cost to them. Now all we need is for you to talk to your library, have them agree, then pay for the one. Let's show that member how we

can all participate.

The process for the publication our 2021 calendar "Dangers & Hazards Encountered Along the Trail" is under way. The due date for the student artwork is April 16. The selection will start shortly thereafter. We are looking forward to another fine calendar. It will be available later this summer.

We are also requesting theme/topic suggestions for future calendars. Please send them to Publications HQ.

The due date for any Outstanding Educator Awards applications is March 31. If a short extension is needed, please contact HQ before that date.

Once again we welcome any and all comments about all our publications.

Bill Hill

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NEWS FROM THE PLAINS

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News from the Chapters

SOUTHERN TRAILS

Greetings from the Southwest,

The Southern Trails Chapter (STC) has been busy over the last several months. Our big activity was planning for the OCTA Annual Convention in Santa Fe, NM this last September of 2019. The conference did very well with many attendees who enjoyed the speakers, tours and getting together with old friends. A great thank you to Lee Black (now OCTA President) and Cecilia Bell (STC VP and OCTA BOD) for helping make this a great success. We also redesigned a new membership brochure, revised the Southern Trails Map, finalized the Yuma Spring Conference and had many members contribute to News from the Plains.

We are working on getting the Southern Trail approved by Congress as a National Historical Trail in the future. Many emigrants traveled by boat to southern Texas and then traveled overland to California and other destinations. Bill Martin has been active in Washington D.C. on talking to legislators on OCTA, STC and the Butterfield Trail that traverses the STC in the annual "Hike the Hill" meetings.

We restarted our Chapter Newsletter with Dan

Judkins as editor. Send in your articles of events, publications and speeches with your work on the trails to our next Newsletter! A sad note is that Deborah and Jon Lawrence (Desert Tracks Editors) stepped down after 17 years of service. But, in return, we received new editors Dan Judkins and Dave Miller, PhD, to step in starting this Spring.

STC finds itself financially strong with money set aside for the Arizona memorial and Silver City, New Mexico, markers.

We had our annual STC conference from February 21st to 23rd in Yuma, Arizona. Several speakers, tours and a silent auction. We had a great turnout and our Chapter meeting had over 40 people attend. For more information on the activities of the STC and upcoming projects, please go to our updated website at: <http://southern-trails.org/>.

We hope you will send our leadership members information for activities, updates and special events to be in the newsletter and to get the information out to our membership by email. Without you, we don't succeed.

Mark Howe, STC President

GATEWAY

The early part of 2020 has been a planning time for Gateway. During January and February Gateway members attended the Tuesday Night Talk six week series sponsored by the Pony Express Museum. This year, two Gateway members presented programs – Joe Houts and Jackie Lewin. Each evening had about 200 in attendance.

Following is the Gateway Calendar for 2020. If any OCTA members are in our area, we would welcome your joining us:

March 21 – Carpool to Forest City, Mo., area of Iowa Point crossing. Program by Dr. Peggy Ann Edwards on history of Forest City.

May 9 – Gateway members support and assist the Doniphan County Historical Society for "Big Kansas Road Trip." Kansas Sampler Foundation is featuring the three northeast Kansas counties that the St. Joe Road runs through.

June 6 – National Trails Day displays at Felix Street

Square in downtown St. Joseph.

June 20 – Bus tour to Abilene, Kansas.

July 11 – Follow up tour to Holt County to learn about early trails to the Iowa Point crossing.

August 27 – Cooperative program with the St. Joseph Museums featuring speakers on the Iowa Tribe in Missouri/Kansas area.

September 19-24 – OCTA Convention

October 22 – Cooperative program with the Remington Nature Center on the history, natural, and wildlife features of the Missouri River.

November 10 – Annual membership Dinner.

In addition, Gateway is working with the Robidoux Row Museum in the creation of a temporary exhibit on the trails and with the Whistle Creek Livestock Preserve in relocation and transfer of City-owned wagons to the Preserve.

Jackie Lewin

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA

The California/Nevada Chapter of OCTA continues to be actively involved in OCTA's mission to protect the Historic Emigrant Trails legacy by promoting research, education, preservation activities, and public awareness of the trails, and to work with others to promote these causes.

Our active membership has remained stable with 288 memberships including 382 individuals, and our financial standing is good.

The year 2020 will be remembered by the CA/NV Chapter as the year of Symposia and Conventions, as many of our members have recently returned from the Yuma annual national symposium, where we enjoyed warm weather and learned about the Anza Trail and the Mormon Battalion.

Save the dates for April 17-19, as we will be hosting our chapter's annual symposium at the Gaia Hotel and Spa just off I-5 in Anderson, California. We invite all Trail Enthusiasts and Rut Nuts to attend, as the focus of the symposium will be the Nobles Emigrant Trail, which crossed the Sacramento River near the hotel on its way to Shasta. Ken Johnston will present the history of the trail and lead a tour on it. There will also be a ranger guided tour of Shasta State Historic Park.

Another focus of the symposium will be a recall of the history of African Americans participating in the 1849 Gold Rush—history that has been overlooked and nearly lost by historians. Voices of the Golden Ghosts is a group whose mission is to resurrect that history through stories, presentations, and enactments. Members of all OCTA chapters and non-members are invited to attend. **A registration form is attached on page 18.**

For registration information call Ken Johnston at 541-883-7671 or email at kljstn@msn.com

Our chapter is also well on its way to finishing up scheduling speakers and booking historic tours for the 2020 national OCTA convention in Elko, Nevada

September 19-24.

Helen Hankins is the convention chair, and the theme is Focusing on Preserving the Future Through the Lens of the Past.

Topics will be: Trail Impacts Today, Interactions Between Native Americans and Emigrants, Experiences of Europeans and Chinese on the Trail,

From Early Explorers to Iron Horse.

In June, our spring survey with Trails West, Inc. and BLM archaeologists will focus on a newly discovered route from Fernley Swales to the Truckee River. With metal detectors, we will try to map out the actual route.

Bill Holmes is working with the owners of the Johnson Ranch and Camp Far West sites and with the Wheatland Historical Society in trying to preserve that history and make it available to people in the future.

Several fun, work, and exploratory trips are in planning stages for next year:


- Dick Waugh has rescheduled a Beckwourth Trail work party for June.
- Dick also plans to lead a full moon campout on the 40 Mile Desert on August 3, 2020 for an opportunity to experience something the emigrants of 1849 and 1850 may have experienced. We will camp out on the desert (or some may choose to motel it in town), then on the morning of the 4th we'll drive to Double Wells and do some repair work before the weather gets hot.
- We will have a work party/campout at Bridge Creek on Nobles Emigrant Trail to repair fencing around the Nancy Allen gravesite June 17 and 18.
- Dee Owens will lead a trip on the Grizzly Flat Cutoff, date to be announced.
- Campout and metal detection survey at Peter Lassen's Rancho Bosquejo in October, date to be announced. Trip leaders, Dave Freeman and Ken Johnston.

Check our website for dates and details at: canvocta.org.

Ken Johnston


Oregon California Trails Association
37th Annual National Convention
Elko, Nevada
September 18-24, 2020

THEME
Focusing on Preserving the Future
Through the Lens of the Past



TOPICS
Trail Impacts Today
Mitigation of Trail Impacts
Interactions Between Native Americans and Emigrants
Experiences of Europeans and Chinese on the Trail
From Early Explorers to Iron Horse

The convention will feature tours of the California Emigrant Trails in northeastern Nevada, including cutoffs and alternates, and other related sites up to and including the building of the railroad. Workshops and presentations will interpret life and events of the Emigrant period. The BLM National Historic California Emigrant Trail Interpretive Center will be a major feature. While papers related to the above topics are preferred, any submissions related to the cross-continent emigrations in the 19th Century will be considered.



**VOICES OF THE
GOLDEN GHOSTS**
*African Americans in the Northern California
gold rush, the untold story.*

In the mountains of northern California, in Shasta and Siskiyou Counties, one of the largest gold mining events of the 19th century occurred. Within a few years miners had arrived from all corners of the globe. Among those arriving in the west were a significant number of African Americans. In fact by 1852 over 2000 men of African descent were in the California gold fields. However, today little is more mentioned about the free and enslaved black men and women who lived in the northern California wilderness by pick and shovel.

NEBRASKA

Trail Groups Meet

On the twelfth of February, representatives of trail organizations meet at the Mormon Trail Center in Florence, Nebraska. The goal was to get to know each other and to share problems and insights. Organizations represented were OCTA, Historic Pioneer Research Group (Winter Quarters and Mormon Trail), National Park Service (Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail), and Iowa-Mormon Trail Association. The OCTA attendees were Travis Boley (OCTA Director), Jim Barr (who organized the meeting), and Harlan Seyfer (Nebraska OCTA President)

We share similar concerns. OCTA continues to actively oppose the Nebraska Public Power District's proposal to place high-voltage power lines and access roads across existing trail ruts. Described below.

We are not alone in trying to preserve our trails. Robert Schutze from the Iowa-Mormon Trail Association (I-MTA), pointed out an attempt currently underway to construct a two-million-chicken-per-year industrial confinement facility adjacent to the Mormon Trail in south-west Iowa. I-MTA and others have historical markers near the planned facility, which are frequented by tour groups. In 2021, I-MTA is planning to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the Iowa portion of the Mormon Trail. Buses and a reenactment wagon train that will pass downwind of the noxious odors and wind-blown fecal matter from the facility. A hazard not encountered by the 1846 Mormons fleeing persecution.

All of the meeting attendees were familiar with the plight of the Western Historic Trials Center in Council Bluffs. The National Park Service has had its pervue removed and is no longer actively involved in the Center. However Mark Weekley maintains an active personal interest in the Center, which is mired in state and municipal politics. Many want to "develop" its 400 acres of hiking and biking trails, which wind through 400 acres of cottonwood trees and prairie along the Missouri

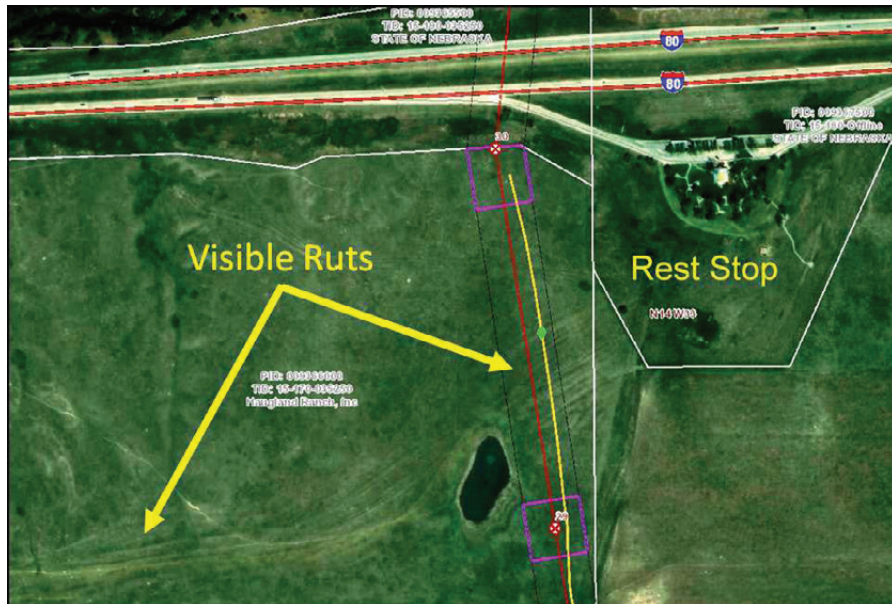
River. The center contains a gem in 200 metal sculptures by Timothy Woodman, which interpreting the Lewis and Clark, Mormon Pioneer, California, and Oregon trails.

Not all was downbeat though. The Historic Pioneer Research Group reminded the meeting that their mobile "Map-N-Tour" app is available (click on "Crossroads to the West"). The same information is available on the Internet at www.mapntour.com/view/crossroads.

The group adjourned, agreeing to meet again later this year.

Effort to Preserve O'Fallon's Bluff Ruts

OCTA continues to actively oppose the Nebraska Public Power District's proposal to place high-voltage power lines over, and access roads across, existing trail ruts adjacent to the I-80 eastbound O'Fallon's Bluff rest stop near Sutherland, Nebraska.



O'Fallon's Bluff rest stop. Annotated aerial view from Bob Puschendorf

One of Nebraska OCTA's members, Bob Puschendorf, graphically pointed out the impact this would have on remaining traces of the Oregon-California ruts. Bob, who is retired as a History Nebraska Preservation Officer, located this aerial map. Wrote Bob, "Here is the key to the notations on the map: The black dotted line is the easement, the red line is the wire, the yellow line is the path for going from structure to structure. The white circle with the red number is the [tower] structure location. The purple box is the work area by the structure. According to this aerial view, the trail ruts begin at the west boundary of the rest area and travel to the south-west. They end near the top of the hill, where there is now a center pivot... They fan out as they go in that distance. Very visible from this aerial photo."

The ruts are visible on Google Earth at approximately 41.136864° latitude and -101.099287 longitude. John Winner described OCTA's efforts to preserve these remnant ruts in detail in the Fall 2019 News from the Plains, p. 7.

Harlan Seyfer

KANZA

KANZA has lost one of its most dedicated members. Alicia Keegan left us on February 23. Alicia has been a dedicated member of the chapter since its earliest years. She and her family were always very active in preservation, mapping, and marking the trail sites in our territory.

In recent times when the number of active members declined, Alicia became the heart of the chapter keeping it engaged and together. When we held events, she was at the head of the line to work and produced most of the flyers. For years she has produced a quality newsletter that always had interesting things to read. Alicia was always ready to lead a trek or have a meeting site ready.

The giant hole she leaves in the chapter is not possible to fill. Alicia was not just a member, she was our friend. We will all miss her upbeat, dedicated efforts to keep KANZA an active, engaged group of friends. Chapters are the life blood of OCTA and the best tribute to Alicia we can make is to work to keep our chapters strong.

As we approach spring, we are looking forward to our annual spring meeting. In April with our meeting, we will do some recognition of Earth Day. We plan to do cleanup at the Trails Junction of the Independence Road and St. Joe Road marker and wayside exhibit we placed a few years ago. We had cleaned years of lichen growth from the stone monument. An Earth Day is being planned with an area school for Alcove Spring Park.

Our KANZA Rut Nuts are itching from cabin fever



to get back on the trail again. We will be taking a driving tour of our mapped area to evaluate current carsonite markers and conditions of the trail remnants. Our mappers are working to get up to speed to look at more trail that can be mapped and place markers. Preservation hawks are watching closely several groups planning to construct wind turbine farms in the area. We were successful in getting one developer to change their plans to name a wind farm after Alcove Spring.

In June, we plan to host the National Trails Day event at Alcove Spring that had to be canceled due to rain last year. We work closely with our partners, especially the Alcove Spring Association, the Pony Express Association, and other groups in the area. We had a big day of speakers, wagon rides, catered lunch, entertainers, nature walks, and so very much more planned that will be on tap this year.

Although not a trail project, we will be working with our partners at Alcove Spring to complete trail work, redesign and print park brochures, and restore bridges lost due to storm damage. We will want to have the place in top condition by August when the park hosts a concert by the great 60's group, The Beach Boys.

We hope to capitalize on all these events, giving programs, and working with schools to grow our membership.

Duane Iles

IDAHO

Winter is passing quickly this year with ideal precipitation in my opinion – snow in the mountains and rain in the valleys. The older I get, the less I like dealing with snow and ice.

Boise Schools Community Education Classes were held in January and February. Each class had about twenty participants. Plans are being made for activities for the upcoming year. Please let me know if you have special requests. These are the activities already planned or being considered:

- **March 21** Mountain Home DAR presentation
- **April 18** Annual Byway Tour
- **May 7** City of Rocks cadaver dog and metal detector searches

- **May 8** Granite Pass tour
- **May 9** Spring Chapter Meeting and outing in Burley
- **June 6** National Trails Day
- **August 15** Lander Road Marking Chapter Outing (tentative date)
- **September 19-24** OCTA Convention, Elko, Nevada
- **October 10** Fall Chapter Meeting

I encourage those of you who have not participated in activities to come out and get involved. We have a great group of people and enjoy a lot of fun and friendship with the activities.

Hope you will join me on the trails in the spring.

Jerry Eichhorst

CROSSROADS

It has been a long, wet and cold winter here at Crossroads in Utah. We are looking forward to warmer and drier days.

I have been reading and checking out our most recent newsletter (Chronicle) done by our president, Steve Allison. He is to be congratulated on a magnificent piece of work detailing much of what we have done in recent years, but also detailing many of the sites that are important to local history and to OCTA in general. It brings back a lot of good memories with many good people doing much to mark historic sites and trails. But we still have much to do to maintain and repair what is out there. Plans are yet to be made for the year.

Our last fall meeting was very good. Ron Bateman led a discussion of Wendover, Utah/Nevada, during the early days. The discussion included the history of the trails, railroad, and military out there.

Our next spring membership meeting will be March 12 at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City. Hopefully we will be able to make some plans for a field trip as well as work details. We are an aging group, but we still want to get out on the trail.

And, speaking of trails, I made a "discovery" of my own last fall when trying to sleuth out a site in southern Utah on the Dominguez-Escalante 1776 Trail. I found the "Casting of Lots" site where someone in the

party made the decision to return to Santa Fe rather than try to reach California. One of the searching problems is that roads on the ground and roads on the maps don't always agree. But the BLM had a sign to point the way, and I finally found it. It brought closure to me to find that site. It was a fateful decision for the party as they would never have made it to California

due to the lateness of the season (October). This is perhaps a trail of which we should do a little exploring some day.

Terry Welch and Gar Elison have been working with people who have organized and cataloged material from the Otto collection at the state

archives. These are recent acquisitions of files donated by the father (Milt Otto) of former Crossroads member, Ed Otto. Milt Otto spent much time scouting for lost trail diaries with Gregory Franzwa. They created files (each with a journal) and worked to get them cataloged and protected and available for scholarly and casual research. It is a most interesting and valuable collection I am sure.

I am also reminded that 2020 is the 30th anniversary of Crossroads as a chapter. It was granted a charter in January of 1990.

More later – Stay tuned!

A. Oscar Olson for Utah Crossroads



NORTHWEST

The first meeting of the Chapter for 2020 was held on Saturday, March 7th.

We had a number of issues to consider at this meeting: building our membership; planning for the installation of T-Rail signs in Eastern Oregon; suggestions for outings this coming year; and perhaps the most important, the planned wind farm very near the ruts at Echo Meadows. The Trail ruts are in Umatilla County southwest of Pendleton. The site allows visitors to see the actual trail ruts in the deep sand and to visualize how difficult it was for the wagons to travel along the bluffs of the Columbia River. The company building the wind farm has asked for our suggestions to mitigate the disturbance to the site. The main loss is the view shed of the area due to

the turbines.

Our Chapter also includes the group from Washington that has been researching the location of the Naches Trail. Several of us will be meeting in Puyallup at the Meeker Mansion on Feb. 29th to discuss ways to include other Historical organizations in the ongoing fight to preserve our trails.

The election of new officers was held in December of 2019, and those elected are Sallie Riehl, President; Bernadette Hammelman, Vice President; Jenny Miller, Secretary; Glenn Harrison, Treasurer; Roger Blair, Director; Dave Welch, Director.

We will be reporting on the outcomes of our meetings in the next issue of News from the Plains.

Sallie Riehl

COLORADO-CHEROKEE

Camille Bradford, Chapter President, has been in contact with the Colorado Tourism Office and the Colorado Department of Transportation to request addition of the Cherokee Trail to the state highway map. She recently met with the Director of the Tourism Office to discuss the request and provided further background information on the trail, including the Revised Feasibility Study recently released by the National Park Service. Lee and Jane Whiteley participated in the meeting, discussed the history of the trail, and presented copies of their books. The Cherokee Trail is presently identified on the state highway maps of Kansas and Wyoming and it is our hope that it will appear on the next edition of the Colorado map as well.

As reported in the Winter issue, the Colorado Chapter has two new mapping members from Loveland, Colorado. David May and Ethan Gannett have started mapping the Cherokee Trail in Larimer County. This represents a portion of the trail that has received less mapping attention and we are pleased that David and Ethan have accepted the challenge. Both are well-informed with OCTA's requirements for trail mapping and are eager to proceed.

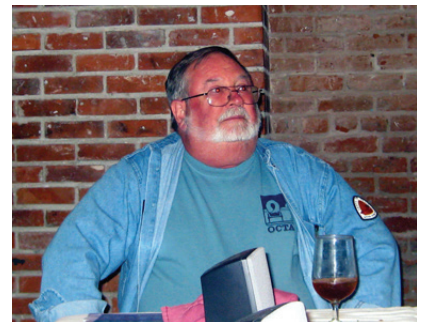
Their current efforts are centered on securing access permission from property owners, as much of the trail in Larimer County is on private land. They have done

their preliminary work in researching the township and section line crossings of the trail, which centers their attention to specific locations on which to start.

The chapter is grateful for both our well-informed and dedicated mapping members throughout the Front Range and for the leadership of Bruce Watson and Richard Deisch.

Bruce Watson and Sharon Danhauer are presently organizing an event to be held on July 18 at the Loveland Museum, highlighting the history and mapping of the Cherokee Trail. Bruce's Power Point presentation will also include photos of artifacts discovered on the trail.

Finally, we would like to pay tribute again to our beloved former chapter President, Berl Meyer, who died in January.



He was also our webmaster and newsletter editor and inspired us all with his activism, dedication to preservation of the Cherokee Trail and his hope to see it added to the National Historic Trails System. He would have been elated by the recent NPS Revised Feasibility Study!

Camille Bradford

WYOMING

Save the Date! The 2021 conference is planned for Casper, Wyoming. We're looking forward to trails treks on five Saturdays this summer, and we're happy to announce a date for the 2021 national OCTA conference running from Sunday, August 29 through Saturday, September 4, 2021. The gathering will feature two days of talks, two days of trail treks as well as pre- and post-conference treks. That's the week leading up to Labor Day weekend – a good time, we hope, for everyone to make the trip.

It's no secret Wyoming has among the longest, best-preserved stretches of historic trail in the nation. At what's now Casper, the Oregon, California, Mormon and Pony Express trails all crossed the North Platte for the last time and headed southwest across 55 miles of sagebrush. That stretch offered only two scant water sources before reaching the Sweetwater River at Independence Rock.

We will offer treks east at least as far as Guernsey to Register Cliff and the nearby trail ruts in solid rock, with

stops on the way at a variety of historic sites including the earliest known grave on the Oregon Trail, of six-year-old Joel Hembree, crushed by a wagon in 1843. To the west, treks will pass Avenue of Rocks, Willow Springs, Prospect Hill and Independence Rock on the way to Devil's Gate.

Other treks, or pre-conference treks, will include Fort Laramie on the east and South Pass to the west. We also plan a trek to the north along a remote stretch of the Bozeman Trail, which led north from the North Platte through treaty-guaranteed tribal lands to the gold fields of western Montana. Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapaho resistance to that incursion was behind Red Cloud's War in the late 1860s.

Of course we'll have speakers with detailed expertise on these and a wide range of other topics. Lots of stories to tell. I hope you can join us!

This summer we'll be collaborating with our friends at the National Historic Trails Center here in Casper on five trails treks, as follows:

June 6, 2020: Emigrant Gap Hike/Walk/Family Fun:

A unique trek aimed especially at anyone who enjoys hiking, walking, and spending time with family. We will park at Emigrant Gap just west of Casper and walk the trails west from there for two to four miles.

June 27: Rocky Ridge Area: We will observe Rocky Ridge, the main route of the trail where it paralleled the

upper Sweetwater on the way to South Pass—a difficult stretch that proved deadly to many in the Mormon handcart companies of late 1856. Trek will include stops at both the upper and lower monuments. Trekkers will need to drive about 140 miles each way, so be prepared for a long day. *Tom Rea*

TRAILS HEAD

A highlight of our November annual membership meeting was the announcement of several awards. A Meritorious Achievement award went to Craig Crease. Though he lives in South Carolina, he is still active with research in our area. He authors much of the text used in our historical markers. His outstanding knowledge has contributed over the years to insightful trail tours. Our Distinguished Partner Award was presented to the National Frontier Trails Museum in Independence. They have partnered with Trails Head and other trails groups helping to host meetings and conventions, assisting with trail research, preservation, interpretive markers, and promoting National Historic Trails locally and across the nation. They are celebrating 30 years in March. An Award of Appreciation was given to Dick Nelson in recognition of his many years of personal leadership with OCTA as a board member and awards chair, and with Trails Head as an officer including President, plus working on our trails, markers projects, meetings etc., in the KC area for many years. Lastly, an Award of Appreciation was given in memory of Lou Austin who passed away last August. Lou was a longtime leader for out trails in south KC for decades. All historic trails sites in South Kansas City bore his specific leadership.

Our meeting featured a talk by John Forbes, a

longtime volunteer at the Shawnee Indian Mission, who spoke about the 1830 Indian Removal Act and the many Indian Missions established in our area. Some tribes like the Shawnees were “Transitionalists” and adapted to the European-American traditions in new locations. Some tribes were more “Traditionalists” and did not adapt as quickly to the transitions. These tribal moves opened the door for missionary opportunities in what was then the Indian territory just west of the nearby Missouri state line. The Shawnee Methodist Mission established in 1830 was a boarding school open to various tribes. The Shawnee Baptist Mission built in 1832 and the 1836 Society of Friends (Quakers) mission had day schools.

If a Holiday Lunch is held for two years and plans again for a third, it must be an annual luncheon! We held such a luncheon in December to enjoy a buffet lunch and a chance for our groups to share their year’s activities. These groups were Trails Head, Missouri River Outfitters Chapter of SFT, and the Kansas City Area Historic Trails Association.

Our vice president, Jean Coupal-Smith, is now on OCTA’s board of directors. All of us are deeply involved with crafting material for our chapter website.

Lila Aamodt

Nominations Sought for OCTA National Board

Nominations are being accepted through April 15, 2020 for election to OCTA’s National Board of Directors. Directors serve for three-year terms and may serve no more than two consecutive terms.

Members of the Board are responsible for setting policies and priorities for the organization and electing officers. They also serve as important liaisons with OCTA chapters.

The term of Board members Cecilia Bell and Chuck Milliken will expire in 2020. Cecilia is completing her second term and is therefore ineligible to run again. Chuck is completing his first term and is eligible for re-election.

Directors are expected to attend two board meetings annually, one of which is held in conjunction with the OCTA Annual Convention. The second, Mid-Year meeting, is held usually in late winter or early

spring at rotating locations.

In order to be a candidate for the Board of Directors, all that is required is being an OCTA member in good standing. Please submit a short statement of qualifications and experience, a photograph, and the endorsement of three members of OCTA.

Candidacy papers should be sent to the Nominating and Leadership Committee Chair, Pat Traffas at traffasp@gmail.com or mailed to 6731 W. 108th Terrace, Overland Park, KS 66211-1117.

For more information about the elections process or the position you may contact other members of the Nominations and Leadership Committee who are Duane Iles at 96cruisin@embarqmail.com or Cecilia Bell at cecilialjb@aol.com. Additional information may also be found in the Members area of the OCTA website.

REMEMBRANCES

Alicia M. Keegan

Alicia was born on April 16, 1964 in Marysville to Ken and Arleta Schmitz Martin. She attended St. Gregory's Catholic School and graduated from Marysville High School in 1982. She went to work for Merry Marshall Manor for a short time during her youth. Alicia was later employed by CR Industries in Seneca, there she met Patrick.



On September 15, 1990, Alicia married Patrick G. Keegan at St. Gregory Catholic Church

in Marysville. She continued to work at CR for a couple more years; but then to this union they added two sons and a daughter, so she made the choice to be a "stay at home Mom." She was a dedicated mother first and foremost; she treasured her children. Alicia also ran a small day care out of her home.

Alicia was a member of Sacred Heart Parish, the Altar Society and was the Director of the Junior-Senior Religious Education and CYO Sponsor. She participated in Relay for Life, was a member of the KANZA Chapter of OCTA and loved her volunteer work. Alicia had many interests and hobbies – genealogy, reading, puzzles and gardening to name a few.

She was preceded in death by her father, Ken Martin and her father-in-law, Bill Keegan.

She is survived by her husband of 29½ years, Patrick; two sons, Donovan Keegan of Baileyville and Shea Keegan of Seneca; a daughter Kiera (Jordan Pulliam) Keegan of Cherokee, Kansas; her mother, Arleta Martin of Marysville; siblings, Kirk (Jodi) Martin of Marysville, Jason (Theresa) Martin of Bellevue, Nebraska and Quinn (Terah) Martin of Marysville; six nieces and five nephews; her mother-in-law, Carol Keegan of Baileyville; and a brother-in-law, Jim (Barb) Keegan of Hemingford, Nebraska.

Richard Neal Johns

Neal was born in 1931 in West Plains, Missouri. He was only three when his dad died and his mother remarried. When Neal was about eleven, his step-father was transferred to a god-forsaken place near the Glamis sand dunes in Imperial County. His mother thought she was in hell because the summer temperatures were unbearable. These rugged conditions may have

contributed to his wicked sense of humor.

He found his calling in the Navy which he joined right after graduating from Palm Springs High School in 1948. The electronics and radar classes he took in the Navy piqued his interest and provided the motivation he needed to excel.

During the Korean War, he was sent to Japan. Then, in 1954, he was sent to the China Lake Naval Weapons Base (north of Ridgecrest, California) where he was a first class electronic technician. He met and married his first wife, Louise, while there. In 1955 he became a Chief Petty Officer – the youngest Chief in the Navy. In 1956 he was sent to Boston where he worked on outfitting the Navy's first guided missile destroyer – the Gyatt. He was responsible for the guidance radar system on that ship. He went with the ship when it was sent on a trial run down to Guadalupe in the Caribbean. Unfortunately, he was not a happy sailor – he was sea sick and didn't swim well. Luckily that was the only time he was on a ship "at sea".

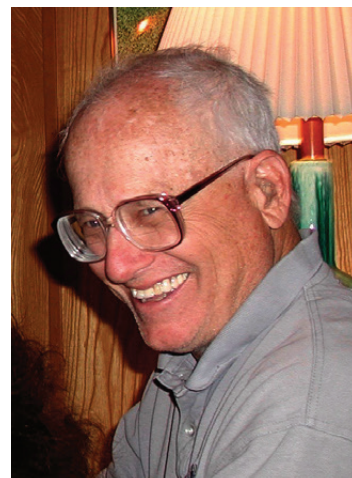
In 1958, after two stints in the Navy, he and Louise moved back to California where he went to work for General Dynamics as a guidance radar systems engineer. And although he had not gone to college, he passed the graduate engineering exam for professional engineers.

Divorced in 1977, in order to keep his sanity he bought a new Toyota Landcruiser and began his love affair with the desert.

From General Dynamics, he went to work for the Navy as a civilian in Oxnard at Port Hueneme's Naval Nemesis facility; he worked at the Naval Ordnance Test Station on the Terrier (radar) Missile System there.

Neal met Marian Kelly on a Backroad Explorers trip in 1988. She had an old CJ5 Jeep that was "locked" front and rear. That Jeep and its driver must have impressed him because he became rather attentive, helping her (a damsel in distress) when her Jeep broke down. In 1990, she ditched the Jeep and married Neal. They shared a home in Lytle Creek, California and many, many back country adventures until his passing.

Neal was a Life Member of OCTA, founded the Backroad Explorers and later the Desert Explorers,



hunted trail signs and wrote turn by turn logs for the Mojave Trail and the East Mojave Heritage Trail. He is heavily credited in the *Mojave Road Guide* and the Heritage Trail guides as well as Royal Robbins' *Basic Rockcraft*, a rockclimbing classic. He explored every dirt track and trail he could find, hiked and camped in every corner of the Southwest U.S. and Baja California.

Neal left us on December 27th. He was a friend to all and will be missed by all who knew him.

John Fromm

John Fromm, 84, passed away on December 5, 2019, at his home in Prescott, Arizona, following a short illness.

John Robert Fromm was born in Mason City, Iowa. He married Thelma Wittin 1955 and lived in their home on the farm at Mason City for the next 33 years. He served in the Army National Guard from 1957 to 1960.



In addition to farming, John was elected to two terms as a Cerro Gordo County Supervisor from 1981 to 1988, work that he found rewarding and invigorating.

They moved to Prescott Arizona in 1988. John worked for Yavapai College as a mechanic and bus driver for college athletic teams. He was also a driver for

Yavapai Bus Tours and Elderhostel.

John will be remembered as a member of Central Arizona Geology Club and as a docent at Dewey-Humboldt Historical Museum. He also served for many years as the Secretary of the Southern Trails Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association.

He was preceded in death by his father and mother, brother Charles, sister and her husband, the Reverends Marilyn and Charles Butler.

He is survived by his wife Thelma, sister and brother-in-law Geraldine and Dean Schwarz of Decorah, IA, by nieces Beverly and Anne Butler, nephew John Butler, as well as the Schwarz children and grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, suggestions for memorials would be Dewey-Humboldt Historical Society, Skull Valley Historical Society or Sharlot Hall Museum.

Pat Saxton Meyer

First thing to know about Berl is he was an educator, retiring from Crosby Middle School, but still teaching throughout the rest of his life.

He was also that rare volunteer who stepped up without asking – webmaster, presenter, field trip leader,

weather guesser (reporting daily weather observations & precipitation for CoCoRaHS daily at 7am!). He was an Aerographer's Mate when he was in the Navy, and very proud of serving his country. He was a Vietnam War veteran, serving on the USS Constellation. He said they didn't get a warm welcome when they arrived at their port. So, you don't need to tell a Vietnam veteran, "thank you for your service," but instead must say, "Welcome Home!"

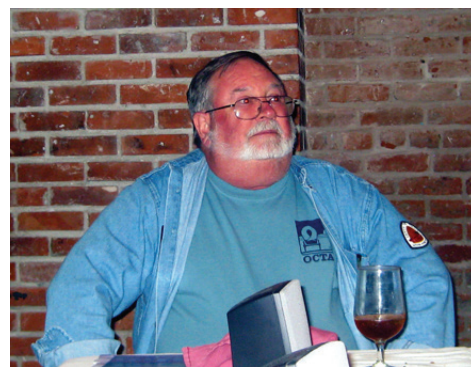
He was a leader serving as president of the Kentucky Society of National History, as well as past president of the Oregon-California Trail Association-Colorado-Cherokee Chapter.

He served as a presenter, trail guide, convention planner – you name it, he did it! He loved many things that folks who knew him might not be aware of. He loved geology, and knew at an early that he wanted to be a geologist, but he also loved history including the civil war.

As an earth science teacher, he told me that kids were not being taught about our National Parks or Civil War, so he brought them into his lesson plan using geology. KSNH members will remember him teaching the geology of Perryville Battlefield about the acoustical shadow that affected the outcome of that battle.

I was a widower having lost my husband in 1997 from a rare disease. Since we had been together for over 35 years as a couple, I had to think about what I really enjoyed. I joined

the Beckham Bird Club to learn more about birds, and the Louisville Hiking Club. While I did enjoy the hiking, I saw that I really wanted to look at plants and not



hurry through the forests. I met Len and Jan Stahlgren and they introduced me to the KY Society of Natural History. I knew this was the right place for me.

I had been going to meetings, as well as field trips, one to the Smoky Mountains when I noticed a guy who hung out in the back of the room not saying much. We began talking to one another, and eventually I invited him to go with me to see fireworks on the Louisville Waterfront. We hit it off and got married after about a year and had been married almost twenty years when he passed.

Patricia Meyer

The Joy of Living

The trails offered a real perspective on life and death. That good pioneer stock served us well, and those that survived the trail went on to leave behind some fabulous DNA in their descendants. I'm thankful for that hearty gene and the curiosity to want to learn more! 23 and me provided me with real facts and timelines that made my reality today seem truly amazing. People aren't born with a handbook that tells you about all the amazing people and events that had to happen before your arrival here on earth. But your DNA does carry that history, and it's up to you to help figure it out!

"Takers eat well, but givers sleep well!" Through the discovery process you truly do become a better human being. It is through our "giving back" that we discover the true value of what we leave behind. Together with OCTA, we become a family of people willing to give back and help people find their history and purpose in life. There is Joy in Living in these times.

It was only 200 years ago that Jedediah Smith, as a hunter and trapper, became the cartographer and explorer of the Rocky Mountains who helped discover South Pass as the dominant point of crossing the Continental Divide for pioneers on the Oregon Trail. He died at the early age of 32 in Kansas. After he went missing, it was later learned he had been killed during an encounter with the Comanche.

It was only later that we discovered all the

contributions he left behind with his 1831 map and explorations that helped the Army and western explorer John Fremont during the early 1840's. We can only hope to leave behind such valuable information that 200 years from now, they are still talking about the importance of the work done by OCTA and our team of thoughtful folks that could not only see the past, but we could also see the future!

With the longevity we enjoy these days, it is worth noting that there is more time for giving back. The new rules for Retirement Accounts allow you to designate your Required Minimum Distribution can go directly to OCTA as a Charitable Entity, and not show up on your own tax return as taxable income. This important step can be discussed with your IRA Custodian, to help you meet your obligations for mandatory RMD income, without increasing your taxable income. Since Medicare is "means tested" the amount you pay for your Part B and Part D increase with additional income over certain thresholds. A simple planning move like donating your RMD directly to OCTA can be a brilliant planning move.

If it weren't for maps, we might never know where we are going or where we have been. Take the time now to think about the trails you have crossed and remember the best may be yet to come!

Melissa Shaw, CFP®

Important Dates and Deadlines

Award Nominations – June 1

Budget Development – Budget Request – May 23 (Per OCTA Procedural Manual)

News from the Plains material – Spring issue: February 25; Summer issue: May 25; Fall issue: August 25; Winter issue: November 25

Nominating and Leadership – Announcement of election and number of vacancies on the Board of Directors: November 25 News from the Plains Deadline; Bio and ballot: April 1

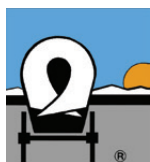
Outstanding Educator Award Application – March 31

Calendar Art for Western Calendar – April 15

National Park Service Volunteers-in-Parks (VIP) – October 1

Volunteer data (Hours, Expenses, Mileage) to Partnership – Report hours on the website at <https://www.octa-journals.org/octa-volunteer>. They can be reported as they are accumulated. If you track your hours on the paper form (available at <https://www.octa-trails.org/activity-forms/>), please report them to HQ by December 31.

Overland Journal – Spring issue to membership: approximately May 20; Summer issue to membership: approximately August 20; Fall issue to membership: approximately November 20; Winter issue to membership: approximately February 20



CA-NV Chapter OCTA

Meeting and Symposium, April 17, 18 & 19, 2020
Gaia Hotel and Spa, Anderson California



The Nobles Trail and Voices of the Golden Ghosts

Friday, April 17 The OCTA board meeting will be held from 9:00 am to approximately 3:00 pm at the Mt. Lassen Room of the Gaia Hotel and Spa on Riverside Place in Anderson, California. From 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, a wine and cheese meet and greet will take place in the Mt. Shasta room. . . Open to all.

Saturday, April 18 The symposium will take place In the Himalaya A room. The chapter membership meeting will begin at 9:00 am and will last approximately one hour. Ken Johnston will follow with a PowerPoint presentation on the Nobles Emigrant Trail that passed by the location of the Gaia Hotel on its way from a ferry crossing on the Sacramento River to Shasta City. Jeremy Tuggle, Education and Community Engagement Manager from the Shasta Historical Society will give us a presentation on the legacy of Pierson B. Reading, a prominent pioneer who received a Mexican Land Grant and discovered gold on Clear Creek in 1848, which led to a gold rush in the area. Lunch will be served buffet style followed with afternoon presentations and enactments by Voices of the Golden Ghosts, who will bring to life the history and influence of African-Americans participating in the 1849 Gold Rush. 4:00 pm will be a no host bar with entertainment. A buffet dinner will be served at 6:00 followed by chapter awards and an auction.

Sunday, April 19 We will meet at the Shasta State Historical Park for a presentation and guided tour of the museum, the remains of the ghost town, and the historic cemetery, where we will see Phoebe Colburn's grave. Then we will car caravan back along the Nobles Emigrant Trail as far as Shingletown. We will see the sites of Fort Reading, the Dersch ranch and massacre site, visit Foot of the Mountain Station that was owned by Phoebe Colburn, and stop at Charlie's Ranch where Bull and Bear Fights drew crowds from as far away as Sacramento and San Francisco.

Special hotel rates of \$99 + tax are available at the Gaia Hotel and Spa. Mention OCTA when making your reservation. (503) 365-7077, 4125 Riverside Place, Anderson, CA. Just off I-5. This is a totally smoke free facility, but some rooms are pet friendly – just ask. Other motels and RV sites are available in the area. Deadline for registration is **April 6, 2020**. For additional information or to make special needs arrangements please contact Ken or Jo Johnston at (541) 883-7671, (214) 803-2583 or kljstn@msn.com

\$85.00 per attendee x _____ number of attendee(s) = \$ _____ enclosed

Please make checks payable to CA-NV OCTA and send to :
CA-NV Chapter OCTA Phyllis Smith, 1054 Maple Ave. Yuba City, CA 95991-3324.



Attendee's Information

First Name _____ *Last Name* _____ *and*

Mailing Address _____ *City*

State _____ *Zip Code* _____ *Contact number (s)* _____ *E-mail*



From left, Plattsmouth resident Harlan Seyfer receives the History Nebraska Heritage Hero Award from History Nebraska representative Bryan Zimmer on Monday night. Seyfer is one of just 45 people in Nebraska to receive the inaugural award. The state historical society honored him for researching and chronicling dozens of Nebraska stories over the years. Brent Hardin / The Journal

Seyfer secures state honor

PLATTSMOUTH – Plattsmouth resident Harlan Seyfer has used his love of reading and research to become one of Cass County's pre-eminent historians.

Future residents will read about him in their own history books as one of the first recipients of a major state honor.

Seyfer received the History Nebraska Heritage Hero Award at the Plattsmouth Main Street Association's annual meeting on Monday night. Seyfer is one of just 45 people in Nebraska to receive the inaugural award.

History Nebraska representative Bryan Zimmer presented Seyfer with a commemorative pin and an award certificate at the meeting. He said the state historical society appreciated Seyfer's commitment to researching and chronicling dozens of Nebraska stories over the years.

"The goal of History Nebraska is to promote and share stories of the history of this state," Zimmer said. "It is people like Harlan who make this possible."

Plattsmouth Main Street Association Executive Director Charles Jones echoed those comments. He said Seyfer had been a valuable member of the organization for the past decade and was very deserving of the state honor.

"Tonight we're doing something that is long overdue," Jones said. "Over the years Harlan has been providing amazing support to this organization through his work as our historian since 2010. He has been very instrumental in this organization's success."

Brent Hardin / Plattsmouth Journal



2020 OCTA CONVENTION

ELKONV
SEPTEMBER 19-23



BUS TOURS

Long Canyon

Fort Ruby (including site tour) and Ruby Valley

Wells/Osino area (including Gun Museum)

Gravelly Ford



SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Trail Days at the

California Trail Interpretive Center

(September 19)

Basque Dancers and Cowboy Poetry



**FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS
AND MORE INFORMATION**

<https://tinyurl.com/sskr4r8>

Welcome New Ezra Meeker Life Members

Lila Aamodt • Sandra Wiechert • John and Nancy Briggs

Welcome New Members

Sherrill Beck Sisters, OR	Bruce & Gwen Dean Green Valley, AZ	Scottsdale, AZ	Michael Newton Penryn, CA	Tammy Snook Yuma, AZ
Barry Ames Felicity, CA	Laura Dean Seattle, WA	Peter Krouwel Melissant, Netherlands	Marcia Ney Pocatello, ID	Sherry Stewart Medford, OR
Donald Atkinson Eloy, AZ	Lawrence Faylor Missouri Valley, IA	Pat MacKinnon Santa Barbara, CA	Chris Novak Rio Rico, AZ	Carl Thelin Sealhurst, WA
Andrea Bell Novato, CA	Mike & Shannon Gorringe Boise, ID	Kevin Marcus North Hollywood, CA	Carol Reed Enumclaw, WA	Michael Traynor Reno, NV
Clarence Bennett Hermitage, TN	Don Henschel Wichita Falls, TX	Eileen McCloskey Sacramento, CA	Steve Rushingwind Pomona, CA	Dinah Utah Casper, WY
Steven Brown Yucca Valley, CA	Greg Heuer Nellysford, WA	Amy McGill Middlebury, VT	Ray Schneider Novato, CA	Stephen Voetsch Charlotte, NC
Jean Cenac Green Valley, AZ	Marie Holmer Idaho Falls, ID	Lucinda Meeds Boise, ID	Joseph Silvestri Green Valley, AZ	Arlen Walker Pocatello, ID
Emily Marie Crumpton Salt Lake City, UT	Robert Hovey	Ralph Mellin Boise, ID	Laura Smith Oroville, CA	Michael Williams Lima, NY

Thank You!

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

Lila Aamodt Eva Allen	Jo Anna Dale Nancy Drew	Albert Klem Jackie Lachapelle	Keith A Palmquist Lethene Parks
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Joan Conzatti Donald Cooper	Janet Kanter Joan Kelleher	Newberry Mike Novo	Dick Waugh David and Wendy Welch
Linda and Herb Crew Bruce Cruikshank	Garth Kendig Polly N Kennison	Lise` Ohlson James T Owen	Steven White John and Susie Winner



Call for Papers

**Oregon California Trails Association
38th Annual National Convention
Elko, Nevada • September 18-24, 2020**

Theme

Focusing on the Future Through the Lens of the Past

Topics

Trail Impacts Mitigation of Trail Impacts Interactions of Native Americans with Emigrants History of the Trail- From Early Explorers to Iron Horse (European/Chinese)

The convention will feature tours of the California Emigrant Trails in northeastern Nevada, including cutoffs and alternates, and other related sites up to and including the building of the railroad. Workshops and presentations will interpret life and events of the Emigrant and railroad periods. The BLM National Historic Trail Interpretive Center will be a major feature. While papers related to the topics above are preferred, any submissions related to the cross-continent emigrations in the 19th Century will be considered.

Send one page abstract by **December 1, 2019** to:

Ken Johnston, CA-NV OCTA Chapter

5709 Casa Way, Klamath Falls, OR 97603

Email: kljstn@msn.com

Awards Deadline is June 1, 2020

Nominations are due June 1 for the annual OCTA awards to be presented at the 2020 Convention scheduled in September in Elko, Nevada. Awards exclusively for OCTA members include the Greg Franzwa Meritorious Achievement Award, OCTA's highest honor, and the Elaine McNabney Distinguished Volunteer Award. Non-members are eligible for Distinguished Service Awards and Friends of the Trail Awards.

Awards nomination forms can be found on the OCTA website by visiting www.octa-trails.org/activity-forms.

Questions about the awards process should be addressed to Awards Committee Chair at AudreyLynnElder@gmail.com

Thanks to Our Business Sponsors

For \$50 a year, OCTA Business Sponsors receive a listing on the OCTA website and in *News From the Plains*, a window decal, a framed wall certificate and an OCTA trail map. To learn more, contact OCTA headquarters at (816) 252-2276. Current business sponsors include:

Blue Mountain Diagnostic Imaging

1100 Southgate, Suite 700, Pendleton OR, (541) 276-2431

Jim Blau Insurance Agency

2661 Hub Drive, Independence, MO, (816) 833-1595

Scotts Bluff Area Visitors Bureau

2930 Old Oregon Trail Rd., Gering, NE, (308) 633-1808

Wagon Wheel Café

703 Broadway, Marysville, KS, (785) 562-3784

Surveyor Scherbel, Ltd.

PO Box 96, Big Piney, WY, (307) 276-3347

Lew Printing

227-B East College St. Independence, MO, (816) 836-0219

Bite Me Barbecue

1405 Center St., Marysville KS 66508 785-619-6110

Olathe Rotary Club

P.O. Box 4376, Olathe KS

Security Bank of Kansas City

3400 E. Red Bridge Rd., Kansas City MO 64137, (816) 251-4480

Acosta Chiropractic, Acupuncture & Massage

1024 Main St., Grandview MO 64030 (816) 966-2245

Visit OCTA on the Internet

OCTA-trails.org

OCTA-Journals.org

**Report OCTA
Volunteer Hours at
[octa-journals.org/
octa-volunteer](http://octa-journals.org/octa-volunteer)**

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

SEPTEMBER 30, 2019 AND 2018

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>Assets</u>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 61,941	\$ 22,836
Accounts Receivable	2,786	3,358
Prepaid Expenses	-	384
Inventory (at cost)	26,831	29,900
Investments (Endowment Funds)	1,539,259	1,541,501
Intangible Asset-Film, net of amortization	35,754	71,507
Furniture and Equipment-Cost Less Depreciation	<u>185</u>	<u>185</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$ 1,666,756</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,669,671</u></u>
 <u>Liabilities</u>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 56,026	\$ 17,582
Deferred Revenue	<u>17,516</u>	<u>12,377</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>73,542</u>	<u>29,959</u>
 <u>Net Assets</u>		
Without Donor Restrictions	629,889	677,954
With Donor Restrictions	<u>963,325</u>	<u>961,758</u>
Total Net assets	<u>1,593,214</u>	<u>1,639,712</u>
 Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u><u>\$ 1,666,756</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,669,671</u></u>

OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

YEARS ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2019 and 2018

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Revenues, Gains and Other Support		
National Park Service	\$ 130,480	\$ 133,000
Membership Dues	69,820	71,058
Life Memberships	2,000	8,000
Convention and Symposium	88,150	87,695
Contributions and Grants	59,896	68,609
Investment Income - Endowment Funds	26,548	91,026
Book and Mdse. Sales, Net of Costs	6,406	8,822
Other	6,071	4,856
Total Revenues, Gains and Other Support	<u>389,371</u>	<u>473,066</u>
 Expenses		
Expenses Paid from Specific Contributions and Grants	14,346	33,388
Board and Officers	6,144	10,500
Committees	19,281	25,972
Administration and Management	224,584	217,464
Publications	50,187	53,752
Film Amortization	35,753	35,753
Convention and Symposium	77,587	57,486
STOPB2H - Preservation	8,000	12,000
Total Expenses	<u>435,882</u>	<u>446,315</u>
 Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	<u>\$ (46,511)</u>	<u>\$ 26,751</u>

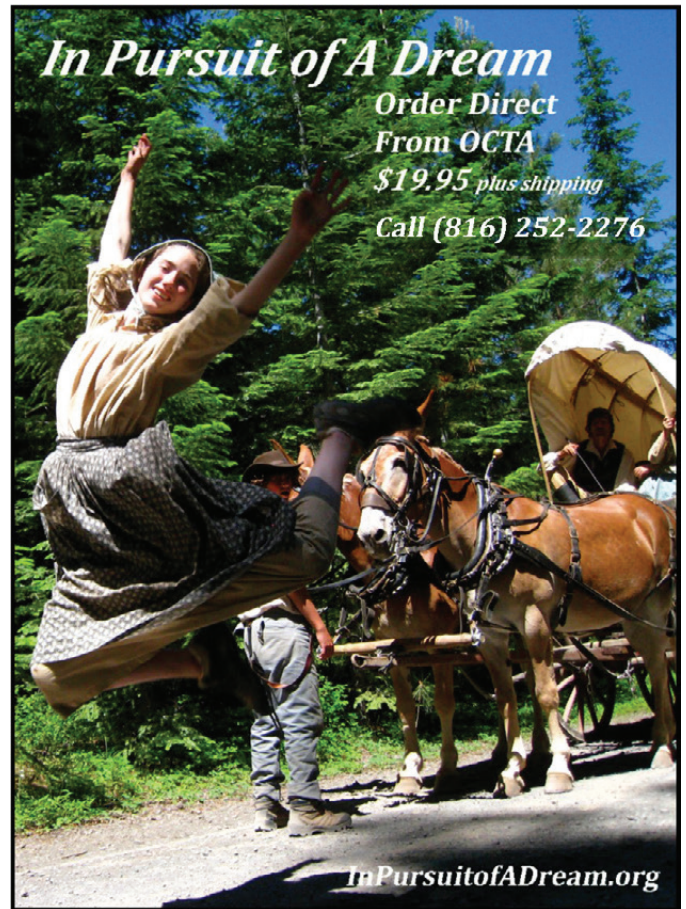


OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 1019
Independence MO 64051

In this issue:

Butterfield, Four Trails Studies Move Ahead
Partnership for the National Trails System
2020 Anderson, CA Symposium Registration
Nominations Sought for OCTA National Board



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