



Northwest Trails

Newsletter of the Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Volume 37, No. 4

Fall 2022

2022 OCTA Annual Convention

Two hundred OCTA members attended the annual convention, August 28 to September 1, 2022, at Casper, Wyoming. The convention week included activities at the Ramkota Hotel, the nearby National Historic Trails Interpretive Center (NHTIC), historic Fort Caspar, and bus tours. The speakers were excellent, although many were disappointed that some speaker sessions were concurrent so that difficult choices had to be made. The thoroughly enjoyable period clothing parade, awards banquet, and live auction closed the convention.



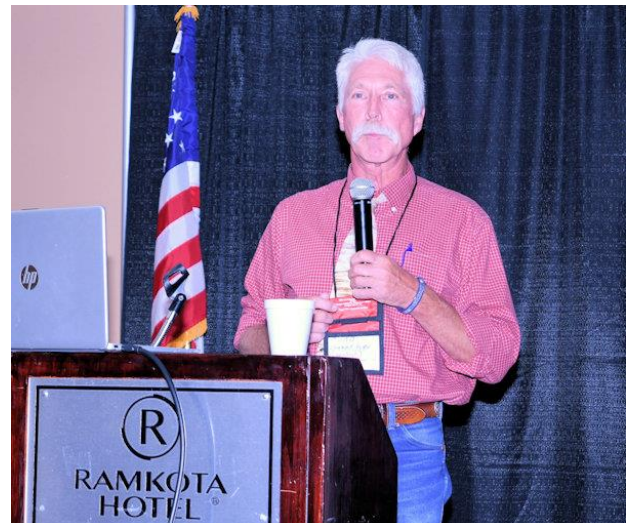
Ramkota Hotel, the convention hotel.



Welcome reception at NHTIC, Sunday evening.



One of the many impressive exhibits at NHTIC.



Keynote speaker Todd Guenther focused on the significance of South Pass in westward expansion.

Northwest OCTA Leadership

President
Sallie Riehl

Vice President
TBA

Treasurer
Glenn Harrison

Secretary
Jenny Miller
541-567-2468
rutnut@eoni.com

Directors
Andy Anderson
Polly Jackson
Dave Welch

Chapter Website
Sharon Brown

Communications Chair
Marley Shurtleff

Mapping Chair
Robert Baker

Membership Chair
TBA

Preservation Officer
TBA



President's Message

Many thanks to Dave Welch and Robin Baker for their work on the October board and chapter meetings that were held on ZOOM. I really learn a lot from Robin's use of overlaying different maps to show the location of the trail.

The board members are looking for a meeting place for the March 2023 Chapter meeting. Let us know if you have any suggestions.

I am glad that we had so many members from our Chapter at the Casper Convention. I hope we can persuade more to attend the one coming up in Gering, Nebraska, in 2023.

Work is progressing at the storage unit where we are holding our book collections. Phyllis and Rich Herman and Sherrill Beck have spent extra time there making our master list of holdings. We will be renting the space for another fiscal year, and I hope we can finish our lists so that the chapter members can see what we have. The unit keeps an even temperature, and the books are safe there.

I hope you are all enjoying the fall weather.

Sallie Riehl,
Chapter President

NW OCTA Finances Oct. 1, 2021 - Sept. 30, 2022 By Glenn Harrison, Treasurer

Beginning Balance	Oct. 1, 2021	\$23,518.92
Income		\$2,150.00
Expenses		\$5,813.46
Ending Balance	Sept. 30, 2022	\$19,855.46

Income	\$2,150.00
Dues	\$1,385.00
Donations	\$765.00
Expenses	\$5,813.46
Storage	\$3,989.59
Preservation	\$251.67
Administration	\$572.20
Donation to OCTA	\$1,000.00

Jim Riehl, A Remembrance

Jim and Sallie Riehl joined NW OCTA in 2002 and were approached by Bob Kabel to help continue the work of building a database of trail diaries and letters that had been started in 1988 by other members of OCTA. The project was called COED, and existed then as floppy discs and many, many written surveys of the diaries. Dave Welch copied the floppy discs to CDs, and then they were developed into an Access database by Looking Glass Analytics, owned by Joe Kabel.

Jim then took over the task of entering the many surveys that had not been converted to the database and with the help of many others in OCTA made *Paper Trail* as it is now. After several years of work, the project was halted, but Jim continued to help people who used the database get the most out of their searches. One person asked for help in finding diaries that mentioned one place on the California Trail. Jim was able to find 100 diaries in the database that mentioned that place and sent the list to a very surprised user. He continued to run searches for people until his death on July 16, 2022.

Jim's enthusiasm for the trail played out in his three trips to the Black Rock Desert and the many conventions he and Sallie attended from 2005 through the Elko Convention in 2021. At that convention Jim and Sallie took the pre-tour on the California Trail from City of Rocks to Wells. This tour made the last link in visiting almost all of the Overland Trail for the Riehls.

Jim was born in California but stated that he became an Oregonian the minute he crossed the border on his way to attend Oregon State College in 1957. He also loved to travel in Mexico, Guatemala, Brazil, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Italy.

A Message from Dave Welch, Chairman, OCTA Mapping & Marking Committee

In May of this year, we lost Chuck Hornbuckle. In early September we lost Dick Silva and Don Buck. All were stalwarts of OCTA's trail mapping and marking efforts.

Among many OCTA activities, **Chuck Hornbuckle** mapped and marked the trail for over twenty-five years. His work, with other OCTA team members, included the Oregon, Applegate, and Cherokee Trails. Chuck was one of the first to begin using a GPS device and computer-based mapping programs.

Dick Silva also mapped for over thirty years with most of his highly detailed work in northern California, southern Oregon and northwestern Nevada. In addition to valuable mapping of the emigrant trails, Dick provided information to the US Forest Service to aid in firefighting and protection of the trails. Dick used the latest technology (GPS, digital maps, videos, etc.) in his work but also produced detailed MET paper maps.

Don Buck's contributions to OCTA are almost beyond description. Don contributed much to promoting the scholarly side of OCTA. He could be counted upon for sound advice and the encouragement of new techniques for trail studies. As a mapper, he was the principal author of the Mapping Emigrant Trails (MET) Manual, the standard for trail research, mapping, and marking. The MET Manual is accepted as the standard by government agencies. He was also a key participant in the "Trail Turtles," which has provided extensive documentation of trails in the Southwest.

2022 Oregon Trail Explorations in the Blue Mountains

By Robin Baker

We were back in the Blue Mountains again this year for more exploration. As you may recall, we partnered with the National Park Service in 2021 to explore the ruts near Westminster Woods Church Camp and nearby areas. This year we were there in May in order to avoid the 100° + temperature experienced in late June 2021.

First on our agenda was to look for the ruts documented by Jack Evans in his 1991 book *Powerful Rocky*. We started from the Community Building in Emigrant Springs State Park and hiked southwest to and past the pipeline corridor and began a zigzag exploration to the north, ending up on the prominent gravel road going west from Highway 30 north of the park.

Since we didn't find any ruts, I decided that our group needed to remind ourselves just what a trail rut in this locality might look like. We proceeded to the Emigrant Springs Park Office location and hiked southwest out to the Toll Road. We hiked the Toll Road to Westminster Woods Church Camp and some ways beyond before returning to the park office.



Richard Hunt looking for Jack Evans' ruts.



Approaching Westminster Woods Church Camp on the Toll Road.

The next day we began at Emigrant Springs State Park, where Mark Miller (Park Superintendent) reviewed the history of the Emigrant Springs. We then proceeded north along Highway 30 across the I- 84 freeway, where we parked. Mark then took us on a hike south into upper Iskuulpa Creek where he had found another “Emigrant Spring.”



Mark Miller showing us one of the other “Emigrant Springs.”

Next, we proceeded back along Highway 30 to the junction with Westminster Lane, where Mark showed us some trail ruts he had found between the highway and the freeway.



Trail ruts along Highway 30.

After lunch, we proceeded south along Highway 30 toward Meacham to explore the Robinson property east of the freeway. I had identified possible trail ruts on this property using the LiDAR map provided by the National Park Service in 2021. These possible ruts aligned with two of the 1887 GLO surveyor notes for the “Pendleton and La Grande Wagon Road.” Once on the property, we quickly found the ruts and followed them south through small timber and a large opening covered with kouse (*Lomatium*) to a crossing of Twomile Creek and eventually the south boundary of the property.



Sam Pambrun and Richard Hunt standing in trail ruts at Twomile Creek.

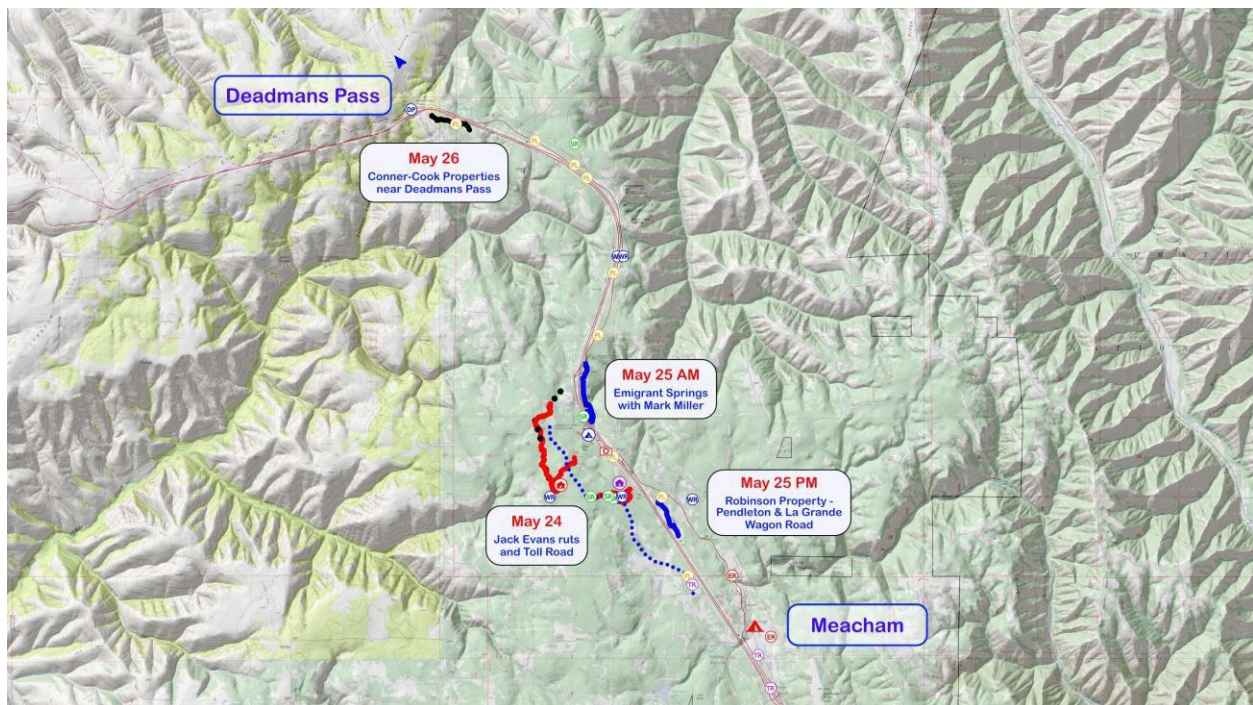
That evening we were hosted by Valerie Conner and her husband for dinner on their backyard deck at their house in Pendleton. We passed a very pleasant evening talking about our explorations and other historical topics.

The next day we explored the Conner and Cook properties near Deadman Pass. We hiked west from a gravel approach road through a meadow and up a hill, crossing a gravel road to another meadow leading to the trail ruts next to the eastbound Deadman Pass Rest Stop. We found definite trail ruts going up the hill after the first meadow.

Our May 2022 explorations were a definite success. We made several key contacts with non-OCTA people in the area who are interested in the Oregon Trail and hope to see them again when we return to the area in 2023!



Jenny Miller walking the trail ruts on the Conner property.



Overview map of our May 2022 explorations.

More Photos from Casper Convention

Photos by Roger Blair



OCTA board meeting opened the convention on Sunday.



Attendees looking at raffle and silent auction items.



From left: Bozeman Trail panelists Donovin Sprague, Dave McKee, and Susan Badger Doyle.



Bill Hill, on right, presenting Outstanding Educator Award to Grand Encampment Museum.



BBQ dinner under a tent at historic Fort Caspar on Wednesday evening.



Roger Blair (AKA Dr. Phil De Grave) and Jenny Miller at the Awards Banquet Thursday evening. Dr. Phil De Grave was the moderator for the awards.

Future Northwest Chapter Zoom Meetings 2022–2023

By Dave Welch

The next chapter Zoom meeting for this year is scheduled for **November 12** at 1:00 p.m. PST. The subject is a salute to Chuck Hornbuckle covering his many activities with OCTA, the DAR, and various community organizations. Many of you worked with Chuck on these projects and we welcome your participation in this informal session. This is a joint meeting with the Colorado Cherokee Trails chapter.

On **November 19** at 1:00 p.m. PST there will be a Zoom meeting of the national Mapping and Marking Committee. A presentation by Rob Davis on LiDAR technology and its use will be featured. LiDAR provides trail images often not seen by the human eye. This is a somewhat technical meeting but is open to all OCTA members.

On **December 10** at 1:00 p.m. PST the Zoom meeting will focus on OCTA's trail preservation activities. National preservation officer John Winner will describe his most important current activities. Dave Welch will give an update on the Boardman to Hemingway transmission line project. While the State of Oregon has approved the project from their prospective, there is still much to be done working with the Bureau of Land Management and Idaho Power.

Frank Tortorich will be our speaker on **January 14** at 1:00 p.m. PST. He will describe his “favorite rascal” (John Sutter) and Fort Sutter in Sacramento. You can count on Frank for a lively presentation.

February 11 at 1:00 p.m. PST is our annual “Family Stories of the Oregon Trail” day. Sherrill Beck will present “The Clark Family in the Willamette Valley: Tragedy, Murder, and Mayhem.” One or two other speakers are needed. I can assist with visuals if needed.

Chapter member Richard Hunt has been producing new video content for the OCTA YouTube Channel. Check out the channel with this link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5CyC-R68Izhwww1f57V-yQ> to see some great trail stories. On **March 11** at 1:00 p.m. PST, Richard will give us insight about how this idea was born during a NW OCTA trail mapping outing with Robin Baker and other NW Chapter members.

The Northwest Chapter is tentatively planning an in-person chapter meeting in Albany, OR on **March 18 or 25**. Details will appear in the next newsletter.

The **April 8** Zoom meeting at 1:00 p.m. PST will focus on the Blue Mountains. Robin Baker will describe plans for summer explorations in that area.

The topics for the **May** Zoom meeting at 1:00 p.m. PST has not been set. Please consider making a presentation. Contact Dave Welch (welchdj@comcast.net) for additional information.

Each meeting will also include a short business meeting and an update on tours and explorations.

Northwest Trails

Editor

Susan Badger Doyle
524 NW 3rd St
Pendleton, OR 97801
541-969-7660
sdoyle@oregontrail.net

**PUBLISHED QUARTERLY, SUBMISSIONS DUE
January 1, April 1, July 1, October 1**

Material may be submitted via email, on disk, or as email attachment in Word or Text format. Pictures (JPG format) may be sent via email, on disk, or originals for scanning. **Please send pictures separately from text document.**

MASTHEAD: Replica of *The Old Oregon Trail* bronze relief sculpture created in 1924 by Avard Fairbanks for Oregon Trail monuments.



41st Annual Convention

*"We Do Old in a
New Way"*

July 25-29, 2023

Gering, Nebraska

Summary of Northwest Chapter Zoom Meetings

All Zoom Meetings are at 1:00 p.m. PST

November 12 – Salute to Chuck Hornbuckle (with Colorado Chapter)

December 10 – Preservation: B2H Update (Dave Welch); National Preservation Officer Activities, John Winner.

January 14 – John Sutter and Sutters Fort (Frank Tortorich)

February 11 – Family Histories. Sherrill Beck will present "The Clark Family in the Willamette Valley: Tragedy, Murder, and Mayhem."

March 11 – Making Video Stories of the Trails (Richard Hunt)

March 18 or 25 – In-person Chapter Meeting (Albany, OR)

April 8 – Blue Mountains (Robin Baker)

May - TBD