



# Northwest Trails

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

Volume 36, No. 3

Summer 2021

## Urgent Chapter Needs

Northwest Chapter of OCTA has three positions of leadership that urgently need to be filled. Currently three positions are vacant: Vice President, Membership Chair, and Trail Mapping and Marking Chair. Here is a brief description of each:

**Vice President** assists the president when needed; assumes the duties of president when he/she is absent; coordinates chapter tours, outings, and activities; and serves as chair of the elections committee.

**Membership Chair** maintains the chapter membership roster with data received from OCTA headquarters; reports membership numbers to the board; ensures notices for events are prepared for distribution.

**Trail Mapping and Marking Chair** coordinates trail mapping and marking plans for the year and is responsible for technical details relating to such activities.

Please consider filling one of these positions. The chapter needs you. Contact Sallie Riehl for more information.



## Fall Membership Meeting

A long-awaited in-person meeting is being planned for Saturday, October 9, 10:00 to 3:00 at Borst Park in Centralia, Washington. If you have an idea for a program presentation, please contact Sallie Riehl.

Registration material will be sent in September.

## NW Chapter Directory

**President**  
Sallie Riehl

**Vice President**  
TBD

**Treasurer**  
Glenn Harrison

**Secretary**  
Jenny Miller

**Directors**  
Roger Blair  
Polly Jackson  
Dave Welch

**Chapter Website**  
Sharon Brown

**Communications Chair**  
Marley Shurtleff

**Mapping and Marking Chair**  
TBD

**Membership Chair**  
TBD

**Newsletter Editor**  
Susan Badger Doyle

**Preservation Officer**  
Gail Carbiener



**Northwest OCTA**

## President's Message

I hope that all of you are staying cool in this most unusual weather for the Northwest. I don't think that we have experienced this type of heat since we moved back to Oregon 20 years ago.

We enjoyed our tour of the early trail with Dave Welch and Sam Pambrun in late June. Of course, it was the weekend of the "heat Dome," but we all survived and saw a lot of country that we hadn't seen before. Dave and Sam told us stories about the early settlers in the region, and we learned how many people were living in the area when Whitman established his mission.

We are saddened by the fact that our very successful Membership Chair, Chuck Hornbuckle, had to leave his home in Washington and move to Tennessee. Chuck had enticed 45 new members to join our chapter since the beginning of COVID in 2020. Many thanks to Chuck for all his hard work. We are now looking for a new Membership Chair and hope that one of you will be able to take over the position.

I am making plans to hold a member's Chapter Meeting in October when travel is less restricted, and we can meet in person again. If any of you have any suggestion for a presentation, please let me know.

Jim and I are planning to attend the Elko Convention and a pre-tour "California Trail Highlights" (Burley, ID to Elko, NV). This section of the trail is one we have wanted to see since we started with OCTA. It leaves from the City of Rocks and comes out near Wells, NV. It is the first time it has been offered with an overnight in a motel instead of camping. We hope that the heat will have abated by that time.

I appreciate the help that many of you have given me during our lockdown and hope that you will continue to support the chapter and its work in preserving the trails.

Sallie K. Riehl,  
Chapter President

## Finance Report

*By Glenn Harrison*

We are three-fourths of the way through the NW OCTA Fiscal Year. We are still doing fine financially. Our balance as of June 30, 2021, is \$23,855.72.

Five more steel rails with engraved plates have been purchased and are ready to be placed. Thanks to Jenny, Gail, and the crew including scouts working on this.

# TRAILS DAY DEDICATION

*By Roger Blair*

On National Trail Day, June 5, 2021, a group of about a dozen OCTA members met at OCTA headquarters in Independence, Missouri, to celebrate the occasion by dedicating a memorial bench to OCTA's founder, Greg Franzwa.

Association Manager Travis Boley welcomed the group and introduced Owen Schultz, an Eagle Scout nominee who undertook the installation of the bench as his Eagle Scout project. Next, charter member and former national president Ross Marshall spoke about Greg and his contributions to OCTA and historic trails. Greg was born February 27, 1926, and died March 29, 2009. He began his career as a public relations specialist in St. Louis. However, authorship and interest in historic topics eventually led him to establish The Patrice Press, and he moved his business to Gerald, Missouri. In 1972 Patrice Press released his first trail-related book, *The Oregon Trail Revisited*. With the 1978 amendment of the National Trails Act to recognize historic trails, Greg's career focus narrowed to historic trails.



He was a member of the consulting/advisory historians working with the National Park Service in formulating a *Comprehensive Management and Use Plan* for the Oregon Trail in compliance with requirements of the National Historic Trails Act. Completion of the plan in August 1981—and increasing loss of trail mileage—led Greg to convene a meeting of like-minded trail enthusiasts in Denver, August 12, 1982. The meeting resulted the founding of the Oregon-California Trails Association, one of the earliest fulfillments of a recommendation of the comprehensive plan. Franzwa served as the organization's first president, as well as performing executive secretary functions and acting as editor of its new scholarly quarterly, *Overland Journal*. Franzwa later served on the OCTA Board of Directors.

His interest in historic trails and his interest in The Patrice Press led Franzwa to expand into mapping and studying the Santa Fe Trail, the California Trail, and eventually the historic Lincoln Highway.

Following Marshall's information summary about Greg, I told of working with Greg's widow, Kathy Franzwa, and how the idea of a memorial bench to Greg came to fruition. Following Greg's death in 2009, I conceived of the idea of somehow memorializing Greg's role in the founding of OCTA. At the Rock Springs convention in 2011, I approached Kathy concerning the idea. She heartily approved of the idea and even had given thought to the same idea. She indicated she would like a memorial bench similar to Merrill Mattes' bench at Scottsbluff National Monument. She desired that the bench be installed at Scottsbluff as well. She stated that she even had thought of suggested wording. I therefore contacted the Scottsbluff superintendent regarding the proposal and was informed that it could not be installed there, as Franzwa had no association with the Park Service while Mattes had been a Park Service employee with Scottsbluff ties. The next logical choice for Franzwa's bench was OCTA headquarters/National Frontier Trails Center.

I then started a fund-raising effort with an *NFP* request. Contributions trickled in over the ensuing years. At the 2018 Ogden convention, Will Bagley took up the effort, made a plea, and passed a hat. We soon reached our goal. At that point, Travis Boley took over the effort of contracting with a local monument company for the stone and etching, working with the City of Independence for siting the memorial, and making arrangements for installation. The result is a beautiful black granite bench located outside OCTA headquarters, sited on the previous location of the Pioneer Mother statue that had been vandalized and stolen.

Along with the OCTA logo, the bench is inscribed:

In Memory of  
**Gregory Mathew Franzwa**  
*Founder of the Oregon-California Trails Association*  
February 27, 1926 – March 29, 2009

Franzwa’s widow Kathy, a NW OCTA chapter member, would be pleased. She unfortunately died fairly recently but was fully aware of the ongoing effort to fulfill her dream.

## Speakers



*Travis Boley*



*Owen Schultz*



*Ross Marshall*



*Roger Blair*



*The memorial bench to Greg Franzwa sits in a landscaped alcove between OCTA headquarters and the National Frontier Trails Museum in Independence, Missouri, a fitting location for the founder of OCTA.*

# NW OCTA Pendleton to Fort Nez Perce Oregon Trail Auto Tour June 26–27, 2021 Tour Leaders Dave Welch and Sam Pambrun

*By Susan Badger Doyle*

In the midst of the triple-digit heat wave, Dave Welch and Sam Pambrun led a delightful and informative auto tour for the enthusiastic group who braved the heat. The group was fewer than had originally signed up because of the extreme heat.

The group met at 7:30 a.m. at Umatilla County Historical Society Museum in Pendleton on Saturday. We started with eleven people (Dave and Wendy Welch, Vernon and Sharon Elsasser, Bob Clark, Sallie and Jim Riehl, Sam Pambrun, Roger Blair and Susan Doyle, and Rich Herman) in five cars, and later we were joined by Brian VonBorstel for part of the day. We ended at Whitman Mission where we met again on Sunday morning at 7:30 a.m. to continue along the trail to Fort Nez Perce on the Columbia River.

From the base of the descent from the Blue Mountains to Cayuse on the Umatilla River, the tour traveled mostly back roads along the original route of the Oregon Trail that went by way of Whitman Mission to the Columbia River. In summer 1847, just a few months before Marcus and Narcissa Whitman were killed, the plateau route from Cayuse to The Dalles was opened and has been designated by the National Park Service as the primary route of the trail. Much of the original Whitman Mission route was used again in 1853 and 1854 by emigrants headed to Puget Sound on the Naches Trail.

The Whitman Mission route of the Oregon Trail passed through land long occupied by the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla people. French-Canadian voyageurs with the Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Fort Nez Perce (later Fort Walla Walla) settled in the Walla Walla Valley with their Métis families beginning in 1823. The native and trader trails that crossed through the region underlie the emigrant routes.

Dave, Sam, and Brian have worked several years on determining the Whitman trail route.

Dave provided excellent maps that had both the trail and the driving route. Sam Pambrun, a descendant of Hudson's Bay employees and Métis families, told us about these routes, the settlement at Frenchtown, and Fort Nez Perce.

The tour ended near the site of Fort Nez Perce/Walla Walla that is now under Lake Wallula behind McNary Dam. We especially enjoyed seeing and walking in a visible swale leading to the fort. We were through around noon. Most of the group gathered for a picnic lunch at the school campus in Touchet before going home. Dave and Wendy Welch weren't so lucky, as they stayed in the area to meet with the group to survey the Oregon Trail near Emigrant Springs over the next few days.



## Photos from the Whitman Trail Tour



*Early morning at Whitman Mission parking lot.*



*Susan Doyle, Sam Pambrun, and Bob Clark at Frenchtown.*



*Rich Herman and Brian VonBorstel.*



*Stopping along a road.*



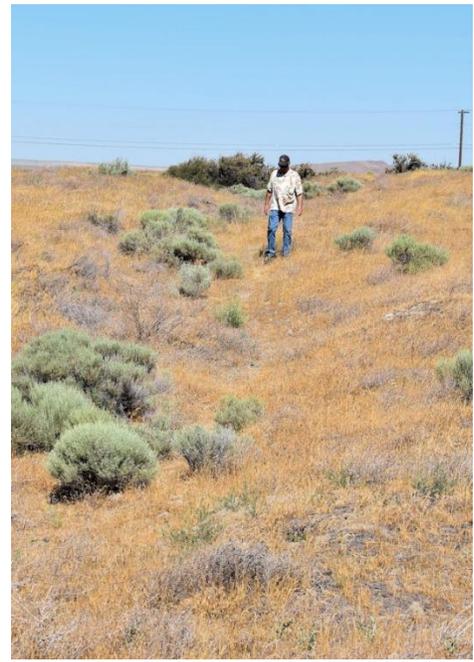
*Listening to Dave Welch (center, in hat).*



*In the kiosk at Marie Dorian Park, Washington.*



*The group looking straight up the swale near the Columbia River at the end of the tour.*



*Bob Clark walking down the middle of the swale.*



*Photograph that Brian VonBorstel took looking through a telescope from the hill at Whitman Mission to the hill emigrant wagon descended.*

## **Jenny Miller Receives Ackerman Award**

In a Covid-modified presentation, Jennie Miller came to Pendleton to receive the Richard and Trudy Ackerman Meritorious Achievement Award for 2020 from Roger Blair. Because we had no in-person meetings in 2020, the presentation was delayed for a year. Jenny's name will be added to the plaque at the National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Baker City that has all the award recipients since 2000. Congratulations, Jenny!



# Westminster Woods Trail Survey

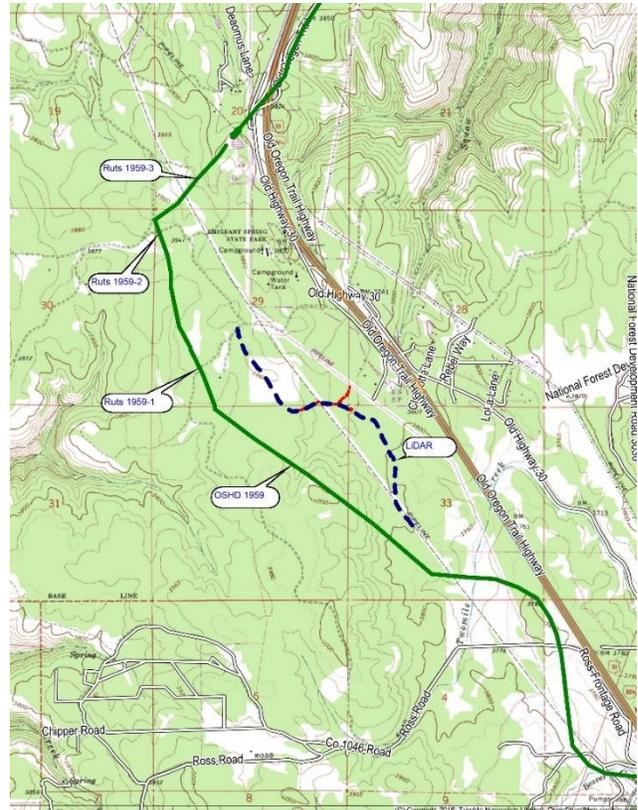
By Dave Welch

At the request of the National Park Service (Lee Kreutzer), OCTA conducted a four-day survey of the Westminster Woods property and adjacent areas to ascertain the route (or routes) of the Oregon Trail through the area. The location is south of Emigrant Springs State Park, near Meacham, OR. Westminster Woods is a Presbyterian conference center overseen by Dave Powell while the state park is managed by Mark Miller.

OCTA participants were Dave Welch, Robin Baker, Steve Bingold, Frank Sadlon, and Jenny Miller. The green line in the map by Robin Baker is the approximate location of the trail as shown in NPS documentation and in studies by Aubrey Haines, Greg Franzwa, and Jack Evans. The documentation shows visible ruts in the locations noted in the figure. All land in the area outside of the state park is private. Permission to access Sections 20 and 29 was not obtained but hopefully the area will be examined later this year.

No evidence of the green line trail or the “1959” ruts was found. However, a landowner provided important information on trail routes and emigrant camping areas as related by his father and grandfather to him. He retains ownership of likely trail-related property in Section 32.

The dashed blue line is visible in a lidar image of the area. It was verified on the ground in many areas. Since there are other roads and trails in the area (stage, wagon, and toll roads), we are not prepared to identify it as an Oregon Trail route at this time. Research is ongoing.



We welcome input from anyone who has knowledge of this area. Please contact Dave Welch [welchdj@comcast.net](mailto:welchdj@comcast.net).



*The team in the field.*

## Welcome New Member Dawn Alexander

Hello everyone! My name is Dawn Alexander and I'm a new member to OCTA and NW OCTA. I'm currently finishing up my 36th year as a classroom teacher and will retire after this school year ends. I plan on substitute teaching for a few years.

I live in Redmond, Oregon, and have been married to my husband Ron for 29 years. We have one son, Cooper. We live on five acres and raise a few head of Hereford cattle, which is one of my passions! I grew up living on a couple of ranches in Oregon, Southern California, and Nevada. I am passionate about teaching agriculture in my classroom as I believe everyone needs to know more about the food they eat and the importance of farmers and ranchers and the ag industry.

My very first book, *Farm Anatomy Activities for Kids*, was just published in March! Two years ago, I was honored to receive the National Agriculture in the Classroom Excellence of Teaching Award. I serve as vice president on the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Board of Directors, and I'm also on the board of directors for the Deschutes County Farm Bureau and a member of Oregon Women for Agriculture.

My other passion is history. I love teaching our young people the importance of our country's history and hopefully getting them hooked on learning more about where they live and their roots. Some of my roots are traced back to family coming across on the Oregon Trail. My three times great grandfathers on my mother's side came out here in 1852. They first settled in Benton County and then made their way back to Crook County and were some of the original settlers in Prineville. William Heisler was the first postmaster and my other great-great-great grandfather, Dr. Larkin Vanderpool was the first doctor. Although he wasn't licensed at the time, he was all the town had for someone with medical knowledge. The family left Prineville at some time and went to Dufur where I have several relatives living today. I am very proud of those roots and am currently serving on the Crook County Bowman Museum Board of Directors. If you have not had a chance to visit this awesome museum, I encourage you to put it on your bucket list! They are celebrating their 50th year and this fall have some fun activities planned!

Since I have relatives that traveled on the Oregon Trail, I became a member of The Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers. I am currently serving as their secretary and enjoy going to meetings during the year where we meet several times at museums around the state. I have gained so much knowledge of our state's history and meeting wonderful people who share a connection of our ancestor's heritage. One of our activities is an essay contest for any Oregon 4th grader, since that is typically the year when they study the Oregon Trail in classrooms. We feel it is a way for students to really reflect on their history, learn more about SDOP as we invite them to share their essay at our annual July picnic at Champoeg Park and receive an award for excellent writing.

I am looking forward to having more time to go camping and four wheeling with Ron in Oregon and surrounding states, discovering more interesting places and history as we love exploring ghost towns and taking pictures of old schoolhouses. I'm also looking forward to becoming involved in NW OCTA and helping to educate others and to preserve our history and heritage.



*Ron and Dawn Alexander.*

# *Northwest Trails*

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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.



## **38th OCTA Convention**

*Through the Lens of History  
- Preserving the Past -  
Focusing on the Future*

**September 13-16, 2021**

**Elko, Nevada**

***NW Trails* Editor  
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