



# Trail Talk

*The Newsletter of the California/Nevada Chapter*

Number 74

Winter 2007

**OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION**

## OCTA CA/NV CHAPTER SPRING SYMPOSIUM

**APRIL 21-22**



April 21, the date of the symposium, will be, to the day, the 150th anniversary of the incorporation of the City of Yreka. City officials will be taking part in our event.

Although gold was discovered 100 miles south of here the same year that Marshall found it at Sutter's Mill, and other strikes were made in '49 and '50, it was not until 1851 that it was discovered within what is now Yreka. The mining camp that sprang up was called Shasta Butte City, later Wy-e-kah and ultimately Yreka.

*Historic sign and gold miner welcomes visitors to Yreka. Photo submitted by Cherie Evanhoe.*

"Gold is Where You Find It" and we invite you to the real Northern California to learn more about those who sought the precious metal and were preceded by the original Native Americans, trappers, explorers and drovers who lived in and traveled through this part of the West. Information on the Yreka Symposium see article on page 4. *Reservation deadline March 15, 2007.*

## BELOVED OCTA LEADER HAS DIED

Doyle Reed, chapter member and secretary of the CA-NV Chapter for nine years, died December 6, 2006 in San Rafael, CA. He was a two-term member of both the CA-NV Chapter Board of Directors and the National Board of Directors.

Born October 17, 1916, he was raised on a farm in northwest Kansas. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Kansas State University and a doctorate in agricultural economics from UC Berkeley. He was a member for over 30 years of the department of agricultural economics and University Extension at UC Davis specializing in farm management and rural appraisal. (\* See Doyle Reed, p. 13)

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**YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE:**

**WEB SITE  
 CA/NV CHAPTER:  
 <HTTP://CANVOCTA.ORG>**



**NATIONAL**

**OCTA WEB SITE**

**<HTTP://OCTA-TRAILS.ORG>**

*Happy New Year!*

Several important happenings are going on at the start of this year. Bob Evanhoe is finalizing all the plans for what looks to be a very exciting symposium in Yreka on April 21-22. Please spread the word to attract non-members to attend, as it is important that we build our membership to keep the legacy of trails preservation alive.

Patty and I were very happy with both the turn out and how the membership and board meeting went in San Juan Bautista. Many things go into the planning and often things still do not go right and when some of our initial plans started to fall apart, Patty and I drove down to California to put together plan "B" which resulted in meeting many wonderful folks who were very excited about our group.

My thanks to Greg Cornell, great-great-grandson of Patrick Breen for giving a wonderful, informative talk about his family. Everyone knows the Donner Party story, it is fun to meet and learn about what became of those who survived. I cannot imagine the excitement of telling about your family to an interested group in the very house your great-great-grandfather owned 150 years ago. Also, my thanks to Frank Tortorich for his wonderful and fun presentation.

Jim McMahon, with California Park Service, conducted a SUPER private tour of the building and the Mission area. I think all who attended

thoroughly enjoyed all aspects including the evening's dinner at Jardine's.

My plan was to have a fun board and membership meeting - something the general membership would enjoy and plan on attending again. I think we succeeded and I am planning to do something like it again this fall, perhaps in the Marysville area. A second reason for doing the abbreviated meeting at San Juan Bautista was, hopefully, to stir interest in having a full symposium there. I think there would be an interest in the future; at least now we have the contacts and ideas. We did generate some new memberships in our chapter; I only wish I had put an article in the local newspaper to attract more non-members.

Our chapter is still looking for an Activities Coordinator, however Tom Fee has volunteered to be the Activities Calendar Manager to keep things organized in *Trail Talk*. Please step forward if anyone out there can find the time to pitch in and help Tom. Secondly, as an outcome of our board meeting in San Juan Bautista, Kathy Buob, who is chairing our ad-hoc committee to plan how we will publish *Trail Talk* in the future, has held the first meeting with the-committee. We are looking forward to its recommendations. I am expecting lots of opportunities to get out on the trail again this summer.

See you all then.

Steve

**Chapter Board Officers:**

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# MR. BAKER GOES TO CALIFORNIA (and COED finds him!)

Sharon Manhart

In April of 1850, Benjamin C. Baker left his home in Rock County, Wisconsin and headed for California. Like thousands of others, Ben wrote a diary. From crossing at Council Bluffs on May 13 until his arrival at "the mines" on August 29, he held that "Hope, that smiling Angel" would befriend him and "spread her pinnae higher than the tall pines of the Sierra Nevada".

After fading into history for 156 years, COED (Census of Overland Emigrant Documents) has found Ben Baker's poignant tale of his trip to the Land of Gold. Although the original diary is still with Baker family descendants, COED has surveyed a copy which they generously provided to the National Frontier Trails Center library in Independence MO. Now you too can study the salient points of Ben's journey with your copy of Emigrant Names 2.

Over 3500 diaries, letters and accounts of Ben's and similar journeys are contained in the 2-disc set. When you purchase the EN2 set, you are getting all the information from the original documents:

1. The names of all the folks mentioned by the diarist
2. Trail routes, cut-offs, and location names
3. Dates and place of arrival and departure
4. Any unique happening on each trip
5. Death, birth and marriage information from the trip
6. Names of wagon train companies
7. Incidents with Indians, soldiers, traders, etc.
8. And, of course, the weather!

In addition, if you want to study the original diary, all libraries are listed where the original or a copy may be seen. Usually they are available to be copied if you find that you require further research.

The Emigrant Names 2-disc set contains over 70,000 names of people on the overland trails from the 1830's until the 1870's and a few

## Emigrant Names 2

Census of Overland Emigrant Documents



Order your EN2 set now!

Over 70,000 trail-related names from mid-nineteenth century Oregon California Trail journeys are in the 2 CD set of document surveys. Find full information from over 3200 documents found in libraries around the US. OCTA, with the financial sponsorship of the National Parks Service, US Dept of Interior, has created this incomparable research tool. The COED committee volunteers have created the program to be easy to use with Windows 98 or higher systems. Not available at this time for Macintosh. The cost is 39.95 plus postage and handling. Order from the OCTA store at 888-811-6282, or on line at [www.octa-trails.org/store](http://www.octa-trails.org/store).

from later years. The database is easy to operate and is PC-based. It is not available for Macintosh at this time.

It is said that when the last trail rut has disappeared, the overland trails will still exist with all their glory and hardship in the pages of these historic documents. Thousands hours of research and data entry have been given by the COED committee of OCTA to make this research tool available to the public. The set contains both the database from over 3500 diaries, and scans of the surveys done of each diary by the COED researcher. The EN2 set may be purchased for \$39.95 by calling the OCTA store: 888-811-6282 or by ordering online at: [www.octa-trails.org/store](http://www.octa-trails.org/store).

And what about Benjamin Baker? Fortune of the kind he had in mind eluded him, and he left CA for home in 1851 "with my purse nearly empty and my own mortal carcass clothed in rags. I will now bid adieu to thee old Bar on which I have toiled....." The gold which he left for his family and for us remains in his 40 page diary of pure history for all of us to relive.

# OCTA CA/NV CHAPTER SPRING SYMPOSIUM YREKA, CALIFORNIA -- APRIL 21/22, 2007

Before the arrival of European descendents, the lands drained by the Klamath and Pit Rivers were home to several Native American tribes, among them, the Klamath, Pit, Modoc, Shasta, and Karuk. These people traded—and fought—with each other and with tribes as far north as the Columbia River and as far south as the Sacramento Valley. Thus, trails were well established when Peter Skene Ogden and his Hudson Bay trappers arrived via the upper Klamath in 1826-27.

In the 1830s the Siskiyou Trail was established through the Sacramento River canyon, Shasta Valley and over the Siskiyou Mountains with livestock being driven from California to settlements in Oregon.

The 1840s saw military mapping expeditions, including Fremont's march north and abrupt turnaround in 1846 to return to California and the Bear Flag revolt.

The Applegate Trail was opened in 1846, cutting through both Pit and Klamath River territory in northeast California.

News of the discovery of gold was carried by ship to Oregon in 1848 and created a rush south, primarily to the Sierras. But the similar geology of the Klamath Mountains led others to prospect north, and gold was discovered on Clear Creek (south of Redding, it is also the stream dammed to create Whiskeytown Lake) by Peirson Reading in 1848. Discoveries were made north and west in drainages of the Sacramento, Trinity and Klamath Rivers.

The Lassen Trail began in 1848, leaving the Applegate Trail at the southern end of Goose Lake and striking south and west along the Pit River.

Gold was discovered in 1851 in the area that was to become Yreka (Wy-e-kah is the Shasta Indian name for Mount Shasta.) and the Yreka Trail followed shortly after in 1852, leaving the Applegate Trail at Lower Klamath Lake.

Permanent farming communities soon built up in the Scott, Shasta and Butte Valleys, and many descendents of the original settlers still occupy the land.

Throughout this time period, the native tribes of the area experienced the same problems as did their brethren on the plains and other areas of the west. Survival required ingenuity, skill and the availability of plant and animal resources. The incursions of strangers decimated many of the natural resources and much of their lands. Tribes to the east, the Pit and Modoc, offered stiff resistance. The last Indian war occurred in the lava beds of Modoc County in 1872-73.

Wagon roads followed trails and were, in turn, succeeded by graded roads, paved high-ways, and today's I-5 freeway. (How do you get to Yreka? Hop on 1-5 anywhere between Canada and Mexico, and hop off at Exit 775 in California. You will be in Yreka at the Miner's Inn Convention Center!)

This has been a very generalized and brief synopsis of the Siskiyou region. At the symposium you will learn the specifics of the history and geology of this land and its peoples. And on the tours you will see the locations talked about, many of them changed little in over 150 years.



Miner Street, Yreka, early 20th century

**Sign Up Now for OCTA-CA/NV SPRING SYMPOSIUM....**  
**APRIL 21/22, 2007 , YREKA, CALIFORNIA**

*"GOLD IS WHERE YOU FIND IT!"*  
*(But it helps to know where to look)\**

**SATURDAY-APRIL 21** Miner's Inn Convention Center

REGISTRATION & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST 7 am to 8 am

WELCOME, OVERVIEW, PRESENTATIONS 8:15 am to noon

THE GEOLOGY OF GOLD & THE CASCADE RANGE  
Dr. Bill Hirt, Geology Instructor, College of the Siskiyous

THE SHORT HISTORY OF THE STATE OF JEFFERSON  
Jim Rock, Local Historian

HISTORY UNCOVERED - CLEAR LAKE, MODOC COUNTY  
Richard Silva, Trail Expert

***TOURS & LUNCH (Saturday, 12:30 - 4:30 pm) CHOOSE ONE***

**A. SISKIYOU SEGMENT OF THE OREGON TO CALIFORNIA TRAIL —**

Richard Silva, Trail Expert, Yreka - Travel north from Yreka along old Hwy 99 and 1-5 to Siskiyou Summit. View early towns, ferry & toll road sites, stage station and trail routes of Hudson Bay Trappers & Emigrants. Return south through Montague & Grenada in Shasta Valley. Learn about Yreka Trail and the 96-mile Yreka Ditch.

**B. MINING & CASCADE GEOLOGY -** Bill Hirt, Geology Instructor, College of the Siskiyous - Travel south to Gazelle viewing Cascade volcanism, west to Callahan viewing ancient marine sediments, north through Scott Valley mining areas and along Scott River to Klamath River. Return to Yreka along Klamath and Shasta Rivers viewing rocks which were source of region's gold.

**C. QUILTS & SHASTA VALLEY HISTORY -** Pioneer Lunch at Little Shasta School (1858) and a Quilt Show at Montague Methodist Church (1902). Travel east from Yreka where Pioneer families came west in the 1850s by way of the Yreka Trail and settled in Shasta Valley. See the sites of early homes, ranches & towns, hear tales of the Emigrants, wander the town of Montague. (Proceeds from Lunch & Quilt Show to benefit American Association of University Women, Siskiyou Chapter, Scholarship Fund.)

***TRAILS DINNER & AWARDS Miner's Inn Convention Center***

(6 pm no-host social hour; 7 pm Trail dinner)

See Registration Form for Menu Choices

**SUNDAY, APRIL 22 - 9 am to noon SISKIYOU COUNTY MUSEUM**

Continental Breakfast, Presentation

& Exclusive Tours of Indoor & Outdoor Museums

\* *Where's the Gold?*

Hop onto I-5 anywhere between Canada and Mexico and hop off at Exit 775 in California.

# OCTA CA/NV CHAPTER SPRING SYMPOSIUM YREKA, CALIFORNIA -- APRIL 21/22, 2007

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The *REGISTRATION FORM* is limited to two persons. If you are a group of more than two people, please use additional forms. Please include a check for each form. We must have checks or money orders only; no credit cards.

If you do have an *EMAIL ADDRESS*, please include it. It will be a convenient, and cheap, way to communicate with you for questions and information. We will not use it for any other purpose, and it will be deleted from our mailing list at the end of the Symposium.

The *REGISTRATION FEE* includes Saturday's continental breakfast, the morning's presentations, and the Trails dinner, all at the Miner's Inn Convention Center. Our caterers have researched recipes common in the 1850's, and the menu reflects their findings. There will be a no-host bar prior to the dinner.

The *BUS TOURS* will be by comfortable coach, equipped with a restroom. A box lunch will be provided for Tours A & B; a sit-down lunch will be served by AAUW for those on Tour C. These tours are mutually exclusive; *YOU MUST SELECT ONLY ONE FOR EACH PARTICIPANT.*

The tours are a new feature for the day-and-a-half symposium, and there was no way we could string them out. (We hope to convince you to spend a few days in the area, experiencing the many aspects of the region's history and beauty which will be mentioned during the symposium.) Please indicate a first and second choice for each person intending to tour. One reason for our earlier than usual deadline is that we have no prior experience for this program and we may need to juggle schedules. (We are inviting members of the Northwest Chapter so we are somewhat confident of a good turnout.)

On *SUNDAY, THE SISKIYOU COUNTY MUSEUM* will be open exclusively for us to tour both the indoor and outdoor Museums.

A continental breakfast will be served in the Museum meeting room, as will a presentation by a member of the museum's staff. The cost of \$10 provides the breakfast and access to the Museum facilities.

The box lunches and the continental breakfasts will be provided by members of Epsilon Sigma Alpha, Gamma Pi Chapter, and proceeds from this project will support local philanthropic activities. The Pioneer Lunch will benefit the Siskiyou Chapter, AAUW Scholarships.

We do want to know of your special needs, so do not hesitate to tell us what they are. *NOTE ON REGISTRATION FORM.*

The *REGISTRATION DEADLINE OF MARCH 15*, is to allow coordination of scheduling and activities. We will accept later registrations, but we will not be able to guarantee participation in all activities.

Each *REGISTRATION WILL BE CONFIRMED* and additional information concerning lodging, local attractions and reading references will be provided in the mailing of your registration confirmation. While we are not spokespersons for AAA, we do recommend their Northern California & Nevada Tour Book for lodging recommendations and area attractions. There are many online services available. See [www.YrekaChamber.com](http://www.YrekaChamber.com).

We also recommend the AAA Northern California map as an excellent source for travel information. We use it to plot the old trails in relation to current roads. It extends through Black Rock Desert on the east and to Grants Pass on the north. Thus you can plot all of the Applegate through Nevada and California and well into Oregon; and all of the Yreka, Lassen, Nobles and Beckwourth Trails. We will be referring to this often. You will see a copy of this at the Symposium.

**REGISTRATION FORM**  
**OCTA - CA/NV CHAPTER SPRING SYMPOSIUM**  
**APRIL 21-22, 2007, YREKA, CALIFORNIA**

NAMES (Will be used on name tags): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday, April 21 (Registration opens at 7 a.m.)**

TOTALS  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$55.00 =  
*(Price includes registration, continental breakfast, & Trails dinner)*

Dinner Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Ham & Red-Eyed Gravy  
\_\_\_\_\_ Short Ribs & Cornmeal Dumplings  
\_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian: Savory Nutloaf

Bus Tour Choice: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$18.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Tours run concurrently 12:30-4:30 pm; indicate first & second preference for each registrant)*

\_\_\_\_\_ #A - Siskiyou Segment of Trail (Richard Silva) (Box Lunch)  
\_\_\_\_\_ #B - Mining & Cascade Geology (Bill Hirt) (Box Lunch)  
\_\_\_\_\_ #C - Quilts & History in Shasta Valley (AAUW) (Served lunch)

**Sunday, April 22, 9 to noon**

Siskiyou County Museum Tours, Presentation  
& Continental Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Grand Total of Above & Amount of Enclosed Check** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks payable to:** OCTA CA/NV Chapter  
& **Mail to:** OCTA CA/NV Symposium, PO Box 394, Yreka, CA 96097

*Please list below any special food requirements and/or other assistance you will need for us to provide you at the Symposium:* \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 15, 2007**

**FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR OTHER INFORMATION  
CONTACT:**

Bob & Cherie Evanhoe, Phone: 530-842-5563; Email: yreka98bob@sbcglobal.net

## ACTIVITIES CALENDAR 2007

When signing up for specific CA/NV Chapter outings, participants may pay a minimum fee to cover expenses and to secure a reservation. This will be up to the leader. Additional fees may be charged as needed. Registrations will be conducted through the activity leader and all participants will be required to sign a liability release form prior to the activity. For detailed information, please contact the leader.

If you have an idea for a particular outing or would like to volunteer to lead an OCTA CA/NV Chapter outing, please contact Tom Fee, <TomFee3@aol.com> or phone (775) 827-3724. Tom is serving as the Activities Calendar Manager until the Chapter finds an Activities

<b>DATE - 2007</b>	<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>CONTACT/LEADER</b>
Apr. 21-22	<u>Yreka, CA Symposium</u> "Gold Is Where You Find It" But it helps to know where to look. Miner's Inn Convention Center & Siskiyou County Museum. Yreka, California. The event will offer lectures, tours and camaraderie. The history of the emigrant trails and gold in northern California and geology of the Cascade Range and Mount Shasta will be featured topics. Check Trail Talk for further details and registration information.	Bob & Cherie Evanhoe (530) 842-5563 yreka98bob@sbcglobal.net
July 30-31	<u>Carson Trail Clean-up And Marking</u> This is a continuing project that started several years ago. Trail clearing, marking and locating will be the goal. We will be working between Maidens Grave and Leek Springs. All OCTA members will be under a US Forest Service volunteer agreement. Number of participants will be limited to 20 on a first come first served order and a waiting list maintained. There is some hard walking over uneven ground, with lopper and chainsaw work included for some.	Frank Tortorich (209) 296-7242 ftortorich@volcano.net
Aug. 7-11	<u>OCTA 2007 Annual Convention</u> Will be held in Gering-Scotts Bluff, Nebraska There will be Preconvention Tours, Speakers, Workshops, an Awards Luncheon, Bus Tours, Membership Meeting, and Chapter Meetings. Please go to <a href="http://www.visitscottsbluff.com/octa">www.visitscottsbluff.com/octa</a> for more detailed information.	
Oct. 6	<u>Fernley Great Sand Swales Cleanup</u> The annual OCTA/BLM Cleanup of the Great Sand Swales near Femley, Nevada will be held on Saturday, October 6, 2007. Details will be announced later.	Tom Fee (775) 827-3724 TomFee3@aol.com

– See Web Site Activities Calendar for additional details. –

DATE	ACTIVITY	CONTACT / LEADER
	<u>Trails West Activities</u>	
March 31	Trails West – Banquet, Reno	Sandy Theiss (775) 424-2613
June 22-24	Trails West – Work Party on Nobles Trail	Bob Black (541) 956-9041
July 14	Trails West – Board Meeting, Location TBA	
Sept. 22-24:	Trails West – Work Party on Truckee Trail	Don Buck (408) 739-8521
Nov. 3	Trails West – Board Meeting, Rocklin	
	<u>OCTA Elder Hostel - Trail Adventures</u>	
Aug. 15	OCTA is once again partnering with Elderhostel to offer 15-day tours along the Oregon Trail from the trail's head in Independence, Missouri to the trail's end in Oregon City, Oregon, a total trip of 2,000 miles. Elderhostel handles all of your travel, hotel, and meal arrangements. The tour bus you travel on has tour guides who will take you to dozens of historic sites and explain the history along the way.	Bill Breshears william.breshears@elderhostel.org (or) go to the website www.elderhostel.org
	Two treks are set next summer, one beginning 13 June and the other beginning on 15 Aug. Elderhostel can be contacted directly for more information by emailing Bill Breshears.	
	A one-year free membership to Oregon-California Trails Association is part of the package. More information on membership is available on our OCTA website. '	OCTA web site <a href="http://www.octa-trails.org/join_octa.html">www.octa-trails.org/join_octa.html</a>

## CHAPTER AWARD NOMINATIONS

*Fran Taplin*

– ***Deadline March 1*** –

The CA/NV Chapter of OCTA is currently accepting nominations for two categories of awards, the Lifetime Achievement Award and Certificates of Appreciation.

The Lifetime Achievement Award is presented once a year to honor a person for outstanding service to the chapter and trails preservation. Certificates of Appreciation are presented to five or six persons twice a year for specific contributions in chapter service and trail protection.

This year the Lifetime Achievement Award and Certificates of Appreciation will be presented during the banquet at the San Jose Symposium in May.

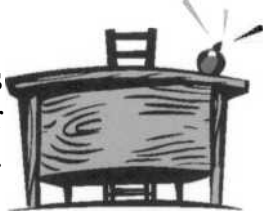
Letters of Nomination should be sent to Awards Committee chairperson Fran Taplin, 2920 Williams St., Eureka, CA 95501-4321 or email <[ftaplin@cox.net](mailto:ftaplin@cox.net)>. The letters should contain detailed information on the nominee's service that merits award consideration. Nominations must be received by March 1, 2005. This year's Award Committee members are Fran Taplin, Virginia Hammerness, and Patricia Loomis.

# Nonsensical Nellie

Shann Rupp

Nellie was an orphan with one younger brother. They had been living with an uncle, but when his business failed, Nellie had to take care of herself. Things had looked very dark for her for five years. Her diary gives no hint of her age, except that she was a young lady and was old enough to have received an education. Nellie possessed the ability to teach well, but no positions in the public schools were available. Her friends requested her to open a private sort of

school. With what limited finances she had, she rented a room and invested in a wood-burning stove and furniture for the classroom. The gloom in her life seemed to be lifting. However, when the school was in only its second week, scarlet fever broke out. Ten students became ill and many other students were withdrawn. The school could not survive without students to aid her "purse [that] ached with emptiness."



The year was 1859. Nellie was sad and in despair. A man could quite easily attain a position, but a woman had to prove herself with strong convictions. Nellie had faith in God. Her friends, who had faith in her, attended her writing school so that she could earn enough money for railroad fare and pay to join a passenger line. That was how she and her brother got to California.

Though she suffered from the ague many days of the journey, she maintained a cheerfulness and sense of humor, and did not allow the illness to keep her from enjoying the pleasures of the trip or from doing her part.



Nellie's many friends saw

her off from her home in Michigan with a great deal of kissing and embracing. "I told them that since I had received so many kisses, I would be able to open a confectionary in California."

As the wagon train moved across Iowa, she noticed "Eggs were only five cents a dozen, so we ate them, until we were completely eggs-sauce-ted,"



Nellie made some interesting observations and never left out the humor. For example: at the Platte River - "There are seventy-five islands in this vicinity. I counted forty-four as I sat in the wagon."

"As we could not find any wood, the men split up the legs- (pardon me, fastidious reader,) limbs - ahem! - of the table for fuel:"

"Passed one train in which was a two-story wagon with glass windows, stove firmly fastened, and pipe projecting through the end,"

After coming across the barren desert: "Ate our luncheon in a delightful place, where the grass was so high and plenty, it made the horses laugh."

Reading Nellie's description of her climb on Independence Rock, one can't help but get caught up in her mirthful adventure.

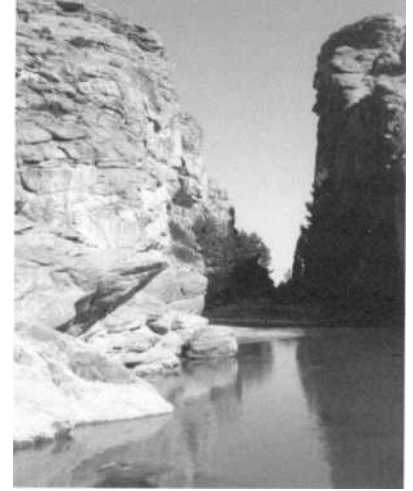
*"...we ascended its smooth, steep sides, Up we went, full of glee, and in high spirits, owing, undoubtedly, to our being elevated. Up we went among the breezes who were having a wild frolic; up, up, with here a slip and there a jump - now a masculine hand extended to help a sliding feminine - a leap-a spring-a loud hurrah!" - and we are where Fremont and his men celebrated a Fourth of July!"*

No wonder she gave herself the appellation of Nonsensical Nellie! What was it like for her to climb Devil's Gate?

*[We] commenced the ascent of the Devil's Gate. - Up we clambered over huge rocks piled one on another, with here a Cedar springing, as it were, out of the hard mass, or growing from a cleft whose rough edges seem to press the very life-sap from its trunk, - and there is a narrow winding path of earth blown hither, with tufts of flowers whose faces turn purple and scarlet with rage, at thus having their solitude broken. Now, we see a Cedar, and beneath its shade we fain would rest our weary limbs, but cannot spare the time. Here we stand near the edge of a perpendicular rock, and look downward, where we see confusion, and trees projecting from their sides, far beneath us; and we turn away, faint and dizzy, but up we go. We breathe hard - we pant - we puff- we don't walk as fast, we occasionally lean, stand still, or sit down-our faces have assumed the hue of the peony perspiration*



*moistens our phizzes, yet still we go up. going hither and thither, leaping up and leaping down, we at last come to the highest point, and by kneeling down, while others hold on to us, we leaned over and gazed into the foam-*



*ing depths below, where the Sweet Water madly rushed, lashing the rocks in its wild career. It was a grand sight! It was a sight that made our vision grow dim and our brain dizzy, and we started back in awe and wonder, that God, the mighty Creator, has piled rock upon rock, in magnificent grandeur, to please the eye of erring mortal."*

Nellie Phelps found a teaching position in Indian Diggings, CA and was a very successful teacher and proved women have their place in the work field. She wrote to the Placerville Mountain Democrat in 1860, offering her diary for publication, in hopes it might *'help to encourage the desponding, and interest those who have never enjoyed or 'suffered' tent-life... .May the new year bring you many new and prompt-paying subscribers."*

## *Sustaining Member List*

Many members have chosen sustaining membership thus far in 2006. Some have chosen to donate an additional amount. We are pleased to publicize their names and to thank them for such generosity to further OCTA's goals in the California-Nevada Chapter.

Allison,  
Everett,  
Hesse,  
Winner,

Jim  
Joyce  
George  
John & Susie

Bowser,  
Fruedenburg,  
Stovall,

Thelma  
Ed  
Jay

# PROGRESS: CALIFORNIA TRAIL CENTER NEAR ELKO

*Mile Brown, Nevada BLM*

Dec. 2006 - Walls are going up and heat pump wells are going down at the California Trail Center construction site west of Elko, Nev.

Dennis Petersen, California Trail Center Construction Project Inspector explained that a special truck was needed to get concrete in hard to reach places.

Petersen stated that, "Nine of the 16 planned underground source heat pump wells – also called geo thermal wells – have been drilled. The wells are drilled 330 feet deep. Their purpose is to dissipate heat into the ground in summer and



*Don Ponciano (left) & Josh Triner (right) tie in rebar on an exterior wall ...creating a "cage" of reinforcement for the concrete wall.*

gather or collect heat from the ground in winter ... they' re used to supplement the traditional heating/air conditioning systems that will be installed in the building."

Jan. 2, 2007 - On 100th day of the 510-day construction contract, according to Peterson, a milestone was reached. He explained that although work had slowed because of the holidays and the bad weather, "the specialty concrete firm from Boise - Spires Concrete Specialties - is nearing completion. Their final

pours for all the footings and foundations are scheduled for the week of January 15th. To date, they have poured 300 cubic yards or nearly 20 percent of the total concrete required for the job."

When completed, the Trail Center will occupy an 11-acre footprint and will include 16,000 square feet in the main facility and a similar-sized interpretive plaza east of the building. Construction is scheduled to be completed in early 2008. .

## *MORE DIARY QUOTES ...*

*Submitted by Shann Rupp*



Fletcher tells about his company seeing buffalo for the first time in their lives. -

*"... And all these in Compy that neaver [sic] before saw one of the huge Monsters of the Prairies. Can hardly contain themselves. You may all boast of river and mountain sublimities, gay and artificial inventions by Man. And in fact evry-thing imaginable grand, but one look at these monarchs of the plains is worth, to me them all. "*

*At the end of Fletcher's journey, he noted:- "... distance and money have a peculiar way of stretching friendships chord. Ore the ties, that should bind companions together!"*

*"... If there is a man on earth who can look back upon his past life and honestly confess that at some one particular time he had become a blank in creation and dead to the miring world for such a mortal length of time as eight months, it is that man who has lived or rather breathed among the bean eating, red pepper, and go to fandango people of the dead town of Soccoro. "*

- William Huff, 1849

*At South Pass, "... this is a beautiful sight snowcped mountaines all around the country from hear to the California mountaines is moutaineous and not worth thanking god for"*

- E.M. Cuningham, 1849

# DOYLE REED - A REMEMBRANCE

We will remember Doyle Reed, along with his wife, Fiona, as exemplifying the sort of people who have made OCTA into this nation's premiere historic trail preservation organization and helped us to achieve those successes which we have had.

Both Doyle and Fiona were active members in our CA/NV Chapter from its establishment as the first chapter within the national organization. Like most of us, the historic trails had been an interest of theirs even before OCTA came into being, and they wholeheartedly transferred that interest and their enthusiasm for following and mapping and preserving the trails to the Association.

If my memory is correct (and that is a dubious proposition these days), Doyle and Fiona

were charter members of our chapter. Doyle also served for many years as one of the officers of the chapter and led a number of chapter outings over the years. He had a special interest in the Henness Pass route over the Sierra Nevada and in the Hastings Cutoff route from Salt Lake City to the Humboldt River, and he contributed to the multi-year mapping effort which provided the National Park Service with the basic information needed for the enactment of the California Overland Trail legislation by Congress.

Doyle was a quiet, unassuming man, but a man always willing to share his knowledge of the trails and to volunteer his time in the cause of historic trails preservation. His contributions will live on as part of our national heritage.

*Tom Hunt*



*Doyle Reed*

( • **DOYLE REED** *from page 1*)

After his retirement from UC Davis, Doyle and his late wife Fiona adopted the entire Henness Pass Road in 1987, participated in outings on the Mojave Road in 1988 and the Hastings Cutoff in 1989. He was a bus tour leader at the 1986 Carson City Convention and at the Sacramento Convention in 1991. Doyle's accounts in Trail Talk of his outings were laced with humor, graphic

descriptions and made for good reading.

Doyle's memberships included the Southwest and Utah Crossroads Chapters of OCTA, Trails West, and the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. Doyle is survived by a daughter, two grandsons and two great grandsons; a sister and a brother. At his request no services were held.

## RECORD YOUR VOLUNTEER HOURS & EXPENSES

*Bill Watson*

Annual reports of volunteer Hours, Miles and Expenses help OCTA obtain Congressional dollars to support the Federal Agencies that manage and administer our trails plus Challenge — Cost-Share Dollars and Land & Water Conservation Grants to support chapter and national trail preservation projects.

We were asked to create a simple work sheet for recording year 2006 activities. The explanations and form are:

**HOURS:** Record activities hours, including planning, travel and activity time for attending conventions, symposiums, trail treks, trail marking, chapter meetings, etc. Record actual or estimated hours spent on these activities which may exceed 8 hours a day.

**VOTING:** You are entitled to 1 hour for every time you voted (November & June) — local, state, or national elections.

**MILES:** Record vehicle miles driven planning and participating in trail activities similar to those reported to the IRS as OCTA contributions.

**EXPENSES:** Record planning, travel and activity expenses not reimbursed, including lodging, air fare, materials & supplies, etc. Congress also gives us credit for trail related food and meal expenses.

Complete report from January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006, then send your report to Bill Watson.

## TRAILS VOLUNTEER TIME & EXPENSE REPORT - YEAR 2006

DATE	TRAILS ACTIVITY	VOLUNTEER HOURS	RELATED EXPENSES \$	MILES DRIVEN
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Send completed report to: Bill & Jeanne Watson

28 Warford Terrace, Orinda, CA 94563

# CA/NV CHAPTER OCTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

## Minutes 28 October 2006

Presiding Officer Steve Knight, President. Board Members Present: Jim Allison, Steve Knight, Leslie Fryman, Bob Evanhoe, Vince Correll, Kathy Lewin (arrived at 11:20 am.). Board Member Absent: Dave Hollecker. Officers Present: Zeke Sicotte, Treasurer; Carol March, Recording Secretary. Others Present: Jerry Dwyer, Chapter Webmaster, Norine Kimmy, Chapter Desktop Publisher for *Trail Talk*; Patty Knight, Membership Coordinator, Frank Tortorich, Luncheon speaker; Curtis Grant, retiring Board Member, and many CA/NV Chapter members and guests.

**CALL TO ORDER** — Meeting was called to order at 9:15 A.M. in the wonderful, old Pico Adobe home in San Juan Bautista, CA. Steve Knight called the meeting to order, introduced Board Members and Officers and announced a quorum of Board Members present. Minutes from July 8, 2006 Board Meeting in Reno, NV were approved as printed. The Agenda was approved as distributed.

### REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES —

*a) Chapter Board election results* — Reelected was Steve Knight. New Board Members are Bob Evanhoe and Vince Correll. Ballots were sent to members by mail and 144 were returned, an exceptionally good participation.

*b) Treasurer's Report* — 2005-06 and 2006-07 budgets were discussed with comparative figures. Net Loss for '05-'06 was less than the budgeted loss. Major Preservation projects expected during the year have been deferred to 2006-07. On the income side, reduction of Chapter dues from \$20 to \$10 did not yet have a negative impact. The reason was: 1) Continued generosity of Sustaining Members, 2) Increase in number of members due to payments collected by OCTA National for our Chapter, and 3) A "doubling" of payment by some members to both the Chapter and National. The Chapter continues to have a healthy balance in the checking account and four CDs for future trail projects. Those projects budgeted for the coming year include signs for the Carson Trail, a plaque on the Beckwourth Trail and fencing for Double Hot Springs. The other large expense for the year is for producing and mailing of the newsletter, *Trail Talk*.

*c) Preservation Officer's Report* — Leslie Fryman, Chapter Preservation Officer, noted her report is in *Trail Talk*. The main concern now is about the agreement the BLM has about the Fernley Sand Swales preservation easement, a major site on the California Trail. BLM wants out of this agreement with Wade-Fontara, the private owner, and would like OCTA or the town of Fernley to take over the responsibility. OCTA has definitely said "No." The Chapter's agreement with the BLM is limited to conducting an annual cleanup of the site and keeping a photographic record.

Ongoing problems with the easement have been people using it as a "garbage dump," and this year squatters have moved into the swales. A major additional threat to the trail is the high density housing planned for the area surrounding the easement in the next few years. It was also noted that if Wade-Fontara sells the property, the easement does not go along with the sale of the land. Discussion of ways to combat these threats and preserve the trail followed. Options voiced included 1) Buy the easement (not feasible for liability and financial reasons), 2) Pressure the

city of Fernley to take it over and make it into a park in order to preserve the swales, 3) Do nothing, hoping to force to BLM to take their responsibility. Frank Tortorich, a former National Board Member, noted that any responsibility the Chapter takes on must be approved by National.

*MOTION:* Vince Correll moved that a Chapter Committee composed of Steve Knight, Tom Fee, Dave Hollecker and Leslie Fryman meet with the city of Fernley to discuss the importance of the trail, the threats of planned high density housing surrounding the easement and to encourage the city to take it over and make it into a park. *SECONDED* by Bob Evanhoe. *MOTION PASSED.*

Steve Knight also reported that another threat to Class 1 swales now exists in Carson City where there is a proposal to reroute a railroad. It is on BLM property and includes about a 200 yard section of trail.

*d) Membership Report* — Patty Knight reported 629 OCTA members live in the states of California and Nevada, with 419 of them being members of the CA/NV Chapter. Emphasis continues to encourage these 200 folks to join the Chapter. Approximately 40 new members have joined the Chapter through OCTA National's dues program. The downside of members joining through National is loss of Sustaining Memberships. Also, the Chapter is on a January 1st dues calendar while National has a "rotating" calendar causing confusion. Patty emphasized that it is imperative that members pay dues at the Chapter level rather than through National.

*e) Activities Coordinator* — Tom Fee was unable to attend; Steve Knight reported. Activities are always put in *Trail Talk* and on the Chapter's Website. Tom is stepping down as Activities Coordinator to take on a different position, so a volunteer is needed to replace him. Tom will help advise whoever replaces him.

Steve Knight passed around proposed Name Badgers that members could wear on Chapter activities — a sort of permanent name tag. Audience reaction — make the name bigger and include only the Chapter logo.

*f) Website Report* — Jerry Dwyer, Webmaster for the Chapter, presented a written and oral report, giving background of the position, what is currently on the Website and how he does the work. He noted the most popular sites are stories about our Trail Outings accompanied by photos. Jerry was commended for the excellent job he is doing, but he said he finds it very time consuming. Particularly time consuming is putting *Trail Talk* on the Website — some 20 to 30 hours each issue — so any changes to the newsletter in the future will hopefully make this job easier and less time intense. He announced he would like to have time for some other personal projects so plans to step down from his position in two years, at the end of 2008, giving the Chapter ample time to find a replacement or arrange with National to take over management of the local site.

*g) Symposium Presentation* — Bob Evanhoe passed out flyers showing the April 21-22, 2007 Symposium in Yreka, California that he and Cherie are Chairing. With the theme, "*Gold Is Where You Find It*," major speakers include geologists and trail experts, and two bus tours are planned. Continental breakfasts will be

provided each day and the local historical museum will be open on Sunday. A Board Meeting will be planned for Friday night. Further information will be in the winter *Trail Talk*.

#### OLD BUSINESS –

1. *Revision of By-Laws* – At a Board Meeting on February 11, 2006, the Board voted to change the terms of Board Members in the By-Laws, Article IV, #3. Currently Board Members are limited to 2 consecutive terms of 2-years. The Membership was asked to approve changing this limit to 3 consecutive terms of 3-years, a total of 9-years. MOTION: President Knight called for a show of hands of Members present voting for the amendment to the By-Laws. There was no opposition. MOTION PASSED unanimously. Question arose about how the change affects current Board Members. It was explained that they would now be serving 3-years or the remainder of a term would add up to 3 -years.

2. *Trail Talk Discussion/Decisions* – President Steve Knight explained the goal is to keep *Trail Talk* in printed form, on the Website and be able to also send it by email to those who would like to receive it in that form. He noted there are no easy answers to accomplishing this goal. Zeke Sicotte, Treasurer, presented a schedule of the current *Trail Talk* expenses which is also a concern. The largest expense being for the printing.

Frank Tortorich gave a short history of *Trail Talk* which began in 1986. He suggested that the number of pages of the current *Trail Talk* might be cut back to 10, easing the burden on the folks producing *Trail Talk* and helping cut costs.

Steve suggested having an Ad Hoc Committee to look into ways to solve concerns about the various ways *Trail Talk* should be presented, about getting the costs down, and about still serving all the Chapter's members. Of particular concern is how to best get *Trail Talk* on the Website in the least time consuming way to both Norine and Jerry, and, in the future, how to get an email version of *Trail Talk* for those wanting to receive it that way.

Serving on the Ad Hoc Committee will be: Norine Kimmy, Kathy Buob, Leslie Fryman, Virginia Hammerness, Jerry Dwyer, Dave Hollecker and Pat Loomis. Kathy was asked to serve as Chairman. Recommendations will be sent to the Board.

It was also announced that Kathy Buob has agreed to take Mary Mueller's place on the *Trail Talk* staff. Kathy, as Mailing Manager will be responsible for getting *Trail Talk* in the mail.

MOTION: Vince Correll moved that we identify the people (on the Ad Hoc Committee) and give them their orders of what to do. Steve listed the Committee Members' names and added they were to meet in the next 45 days with Kathy Buob as Chairman, to make recommendations on how to streamline *Trail Talk* and work with Webmaster, Jerry Dwyer. They should also recommend any necessary software to accomplish their recommendations. SECONDED by Kathy Lewin MOTION APPROVED by Board unanimously.

#### NEW BUSINESS –

1. *Financial Audit*–Each year the Chapter's financial records are audited. One Board Member and one otherperson is needed to review the records. Hugh March and Kathy Lewin were selected to do this year's audit

2. *Activities CoordinatorPosition* –Covered under reports. See e) above.

3. *Femley Sand Swales Easement* – Covered under Preservation

Officer's report. See c) above.

4. *Compendium Ideas*– Curtis Grant was introduced and thanked for his service to the Chapter Board from which he just retired. He was also the "author" of the Chapter's July 2004 *Compendium re Future Directions* and was asked for an update on 2 or 3 major points. He commented that the ideas in the Compendium were basically those of Chapter members and that he just organized them into a read-able document. The two areas Curtis feels are the most important are membership and activities/outings. Outings get people out on the trails, get them excited about the trails and let them learn about our organization. If they have a good time, many will join OCTA and the CA/NV Chapter. He stressed that we need to find ways to link outings to membership and then do an analysis of why new members have joined to further rebuild our membership.

At Curtis' suggestion and Kathy Lewin's follow up comments, an Ad Hoc Committee was formed to focus on linking Outings and Activities and growing the Chapter's Membership. Members of the committee include: Curtis Grant, Kathy Lewin and Tom Fee. Kathy was asked to serve as Chairman and will report back to the Board with 2 or 3 do-able ideas and suggestions.

5. *Participation in Recent OCTA & Non-OCTA Activities* – Greg Cornell, great grandson of the Breen family, opened the meeting in the morning with a talk about his family's experiences settling in California after the tragedies with the Donner Party. At the end of the meeting he told of the excellent outing he and others enjoyed at the 14th annual Donner Party Hike and evening presentations. He and Steve Knight agreed that our Chapter should participate in this event in coming years. It is an opportunity for people learn about OCTA.

Steve asked that when members learn of a trail activity they let him know and let our newsletter staff and Webmaster know. It is important that OCTA members know about these activities and that there is an OCTA presence at these events.

6. *OCTA National Convention* – Jim Allison gave a review of the OCTA National Convention in St Joseph in August. Both Jim and Joyce and Zeke and Nancy Sicotte attended and agreed it was an excellent convention. They said presentations were particularly outstanding in portraying local history and the tours were well organized, getting folks back with plenty of time to get ready for evening events.

#### ADJOURNMENT –

At 2:00 P.M. it was MOTION by Kathy Lewin and SECONDED by Bob Evanhoe that the meeting be adjourned. MOTION PASSED **unanimously**. Following the meeting, members and friends enjoyed tours of historic sites in San Juan Bautista and dinner at Jardines.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol March, Recording Secretary

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DIARY QUOTE ...  
Submitted by Shann Rupp



"Winding our way to the West, we reached Independence Rock which was a veritable autograph album."

- Sarah E. Henkle, 1866

# SEEING THE ELEPHANT

Will Bagley and Dave Jamiel

Submitted by Mike Brown

The deserts of the Great Basin and the barrier of the Sierra Nevada made the California Trail the most difficult of all overland emigrant trails. Almost every emigrant recalled "seeing the elephant" somewhere on this arduous road. No one really knows where the expression, began. Some believe that the saying was first used in America in the early 1820s. European circuses at that time began touring the northeastern part of America, bringing with them elephants. These large, strange looking beasts were a huge hit and people who saw one could not find words to describe the animal. When asked if they had seen the elephant, their reply often was, "yes, I've seen the elephant and nothing else can compare."

If you had "seen the elephant," you had seen about all there was to see. The Platte River was lined with the bones of real mastodons and mammoths, but 700 miles was enough for one emigrant, who turned back. "He had seen the Elephant and eaten its ears."

For many, the encounter came on the Humboldt River - the Humbug as some called it in disgust - a narrow stream that got smaller as it bent west and south until it finally disappeared in a "sink." Others met the

beast on the Forty-Mile Desert east of today's Reno, Nevada. If travelers were lucky enough to escape the deserts and Indians of the Great Basin with animals and outfit(s) intact, they were practically certain to see the elephant among the peaks and passes of the Sierra Nevada.

In many ways, the "elephant" was the landscape of the American West itself.



People raised in the eastern states and Europe had never seen anything like its vast prairies, snow-capped mountains, and stark deserts. Almost every emigrant narrative commented on this encounter with a strange land, which must have been as alien to many over-landers as the surface of the moon.

## SUBMITTING ARTICLES & LETTERS — to TRAIL TALK

Trail Talk Staff: Virginia Hammerness (editor)

and Norine Kimmy (desktop publisher)

### Submit by the following dates

JANUARY  
APRIL  
JULY  
OCTOBER

1ST DAY OF MONTH

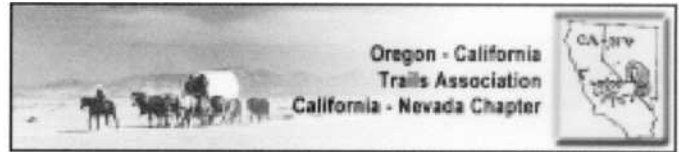


*All articles and letters (hard copies)*  
mail to: Editor, Virginia Hammerness  
1765 Hicks Ave., San Jose, CA 95125  
(408) 269-6068



*Also, send email, disk, or hard copy*  
to: Desktop Publisher, Norine Kimmy  
<nkimmy@sbcglobal.net>

1. Email, v. ith or without an attachment, is the quickest and requires the least modification to transfer the information to the *Trail Talk* format. Sending email with an attachment retains the formatting, (i.e. a document that has been formatted in MSWord can be opened and retains the formatting).
2. CDs are acceptable, but require use of the US mail service.
3. Hard copies require scanning and proofing (from an original) before being transferred to *Trail Talk* format; both the Editor, Virginia. and Desktop Publisher, Norine. use hard copies in their work.



Fellow Trail Enthusiast.

We are pleased to learn that you are a member of the Oregon -California Trails Association living within the geographic area of the California-Nevada Chapter of OCTA.

We would like to extend an invitation to you and your family to join our chapter. The dues are only \$10.00 yearly for individual or family memberships and you will receive many benefits.

- & Trail Talk, an informative 20+ page newsletter printed quarterly, featuring trail information, pictures and articles on history with news about trail issues and concerns of the chapter region.
- & Announcements on up-coming events, symposium, field trips and other activities.
- & An opportunity to be involved in trail and historic site restoration and preservation often to those hard to find sites.

Please fill out the enclosed application form and become involved with other trail and historic enthusiasts at the regional level.

*Make check payable to CA-NV OCTA and mail to:  
**Patty Knight, PO Box 1277, Carson City, NV 89702-1277***

---

**B**

Name/s \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip+4 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home \_\_\_\_\_

Work \_\_\_\_\_

\*E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to begin my membership as:  Individual/Family Membership \$10.00  
 Sustaining Membership \$35.00  
*(Sustaining Donation includes membership fee)*

Signature (Sustaining Members only) \_\_\_\_\_

*As a sustaining member I give my permission for my name to appear in Trail Talk, listed as a sustaining member*

I do NOT want any information on this form to be included in a chapter roster.

No personal information is ever shared other than with OCTA national

***Your membership donation is needed and appreciated!!*** ☺

CALIFORNIA-NEVADA CHAPTER  
OREGON-CALIFORNIA TRAILS ASSOCIATION  
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## TRAIL TALK DEADLINES

FOR SUBMITTING  
ARTICLES

JANUARY 1

APRIL 1

JULY 1

OCTOBER. 1



## WHAT'S INSIDE:

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NONSENSICAL NELLIE P 10

VOLUNTEER HOURS P 13



TRAIL TALK DEADLINE - APRIL 1, 2007