

Excerpts from the April 2002 edition of Trail Talk:

OCTA'S TRAIL RESEARCH and PRESERVATION PROGRAM ATTACKED

Bill Webster, President CA-NV Chapter

As many of you have known for some time, Gregory Franzwa, using his *Folio* newsletter, has been very critical of several members of the CA-NV Chapter. In the February issue of *Folio*, however, Franzwa has shifted his sights to OCTA's trail preservation program being carried out by the CA-NV Chapter in Nevada and California.

Franzwa is now characterizing OCTA's trail mapping and marking program in California and Nevada as "revisionist," having "departed from the recognized emigrant trail and erected a 'fence' of forty-six Carsonite markers" along what Franzwa claims is a two mile stretch of an old logging road between Verdi, Nevada, and Dog Valley, just inside California. According to Franzwa: "Many of the CA-NV/OCTA markers are not along a trace of any kind but where a few of them happen to be, it is extremely doubtful that they indicate an emigrant trace."

Contrary to what Franzwa asserts, all the Carsonite markers placed between Verdi and Dog Valley are on trail traces that have been authenticated as the original emigrant trail from 1846 through 1849. In the 1990's, along with the original emigrant trail, the logging roads and later wagon roads that traverse this area were mapped and so noted. This research and mapping documentation was made available to the Forest Service archaeologists for trail preservation purposes, all standard procedures in carrying out OCTA's preservation goals.

Given all of this, and other erroneous trail location statements made in the *Folio*, we think it necessary to assure chapter members, and others receiving the *Folio*, that our trail researchers and mappers have exercised great care and analytical skills in conducting research in primary emigrant documents (such as diaries and maps). Our numerous chapter mappers are following the detailed procedures and guidelines set forth in OCTA's highly regarded Mapping Emigrant Trails manual (produced under the auspices of OCTA's national Trail Preservation Office). For a number of years, this MET Manual has been widely accepted and relied upon by BLM Field Offices, Forest Service Districts, and the National Park Service Long Distance Trails Office.

At the heart of OCTA and its chapter activities is its trail preservation program. The CA-NV Chapter has taken this responsibility seriously and over the years its trail

researchers have taken the lead in accurately mapping the many emigrant trails through Nevada and into California. We are justly proud of this achievement and will continue to carry out the trail preservation goals of OCTA.

President's Message

In many ways, the California-Nevada Chapter of OCTA remains on the frontier where so many emigrants sought new lives over a century and a half ago. But our frontier is of a different nature and is more of a leadership frontier as a key group in identifying and preserving trails forged by the wagon wheels, hoof prints and footprints of the hundreds of thousands who settled the West.

Today there continues to be thousands who each year come to California and Nevada seeking new lives and opportunities. but this continued population growth brings many elements that jeopardize the existing remnants of the historic trails.

More people mean expanded urban and suburban sprawl, new highways, pipelines, subdivisions, shopping centers, office parks, and housing developments. That can and often does obliterate the fragile reminders of the past. Also, causing irreparable damage, are all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles driven by people who are not deliberately destructive but, rather, ignorant of the historical significance of the areas they are traversing.

Our mission, which includes identifying and preserving trails, puts our organization on the "frontier" serving as a bulwark protecting and saving these priceless reminders of our heritage. It might be said we serve as the foot-soldier protectors of the trails as the cavalry served as protectors of those courageous trailblazers who came west to create in essence a new civilization in the Far West of the United States.

We are proud of what our organization is doing. So many new residents have little or no awareness of the roles Nevada and California played in creating a new society of opportunity, not only in early years of the westward movement, but also a realization that we continue to build on past foundations.

Preserving the trails will help all of us, including the most recent arrivals, to be aware of the rich legacy we have inherited in these two great states, and of the crucial importance of preserving physical evidence of that legacy - the emigrant trails.

Through our chapter, each of us can be an active participant in learning about and preserving the trails through chapter-sponsored activities, work parties, and field trips - times and dates of which are posted regularly in *Trail Talk*.

Bill Webster

CA/NV READY TO HOST OCTANS

By Patricia Loomis

The 20th annual OCTA convention is winding up final plans and getting ready to welcome delegates to four days of following emigrant trails and reliving history gleaned from diaries written more than 150 years ago.

Reno is a fitting setting. The dreaded deserts have been crossed and the last obstacle to trails' end in California lies west beyond the towering Sierra Nevada mountains.

Speakers will recount the emigrant experience, bus and auto/hiking tours will retrace the old trails, and social events will unite new and old friends.

The CA/NV chapter's first convention in Nevada (Carson City, 1986), was described in the *Overland Journal* as "Awesome." The California-Nevada chapter expects its fifth convention this August in Reno to be just as "Awesome". Judging from the months of planning, Chuck Dodd and his enthusiastic crew expect nothing less.

The Oregon-California Trails Association was founded in 1982. The first national convention was held the following year in Independence, MO, the beginning of the overland trail. Now, 20 years later, the convention will celebrate the western end of the long journey.

Because of OCTA, many of the old trails have been protected through legislation and public awareness. Many of the founders are gone, but many remain and continue to serve the goals established so long ago. Convention attendees will meet some of these men and women in Reno.

The California-Nevada chapter is proud to host this anniversary meeting and several of those who staged the Carson City convention in 1986 are involved in the 2002 meeting, including Tom Hunt, Don Buck, Mary Mueller, Frank Tortorich, and this

year's convention chair, Chuck Dodd, who was attending his first national convention in 1986.

One interesting aspect of the Reno convention in August is that five of the 10 speakers participating have chosen to talk about the Southern Trails.

Rose Ann Tompkins of the Southwest chapter will make a pitch to OCTA to embrace the routes to California over the Southern trails. Author LeRoy Johnson will present "Death Valley 49er Trails and How Artifacts Confound Historians."

Blaine Lamb, senior archivist with the California State Archives, will tell of travelers over the California leg of the Southern route, 1849-1852, and Terry A. Cook, freelance writer, has chosen the Gila Trail as her topic.

The bus and auto tours, along with the hikes, will take OCTA members over the old trails, beginning in Idaho and ending with a post-convention 4WD auto trip viewing historic sites along the Applegate Trail past Antelope Springs, Black Rock, High Rock Canyon and Fandango Pass.

Bus tours will explore the Forty Mile Desert, Sand Springs station, the Carson and Truckee routes, Virginia and Carson cities.

The controversy over which route the pioneers took across the Truckee Meadows in the 1840s will be addressed in a special presentation which will let OCTA members decide for themselves where the early trail went.

All is going smoothly as *Trail Talk* goes to press in April, but volunteers are still needed, according to Fred Osterhagen, convention coordinator charged with matching jobs with volunteers. He may be reached at P.O. Box 3628, Carson City, NV 89702, (775) 885-2687.

He also reminds volunteers a final bus tour guide training run is scheduled May 18, followed by a car caravan "refresher" for the Forty Mile Desert bus tour.

Fred notes that volunteers who help with the convention actually have more fun than the folks who just come for the four-day annual meeting.

Also, still needed are items for the raffle, chairman Virginia Hammemess reports.

An innovative photo essay of past conventions will be a keepsake feature of the Reno convention and will be on sale at the CA/NV chapter booth.



Along the Applegate Trail.
Alison Portello in High Rock Canyon. Photo by Mary Mueller.

THREE TO BE ELECTED

Candidates For The California-Nevada Chapter Board.



CURTIS GRANT

Curtis Grant of Modesto, a retired professor, is the new candidate for the California-Nevada Chapter's board of directors.

Don Buck, who nominated Curtis, had the following to say about the candidate:

"I've known Curtis since the chapter organized its first convention in Carson City in 1986. At that time, he coached me on how to speak to large audiences. After that he and I have been on numerous trail field trips together, even packing on the Sonora Trail in a wilderness area. Curtis has been the MC at our conventions and helped out in other ways. Now that he is retired, his administrative skills, acquired as a professor of U.S. History and dean at Stanislaus State University, would be very valuable to our chapter. I highly endorse Curtis Grant's nomination."



VIRGINIA HAMMERNESS

Virginia Hammerness is seeking a second 2-year term on the California-Nevada board of directors.

She has been a member since 1986 and first served on the chapter board in 1992-94 under presidents Judy Allen and George Hesse, she was vice-president when she became editor of *Trail Talk*.

Virginia has participated in numerous national conventions as well as many of OCTA's trail trips.

She is currently chair of the auction and raffle committee for the August national OCTA convention hosted by the California-Nevada chapter in Reno.



STEVE KNIGHT

Steve Knight was elected to the California-Nevada Chapter board in 2000 and is currently vice president.

A resident of Nevada, Steve is seeking a second 2-year term on the board. He is on the Reno national convention committee, and helped select the location for the Reno 2002 convention. Among his many accomplishments, Steve is a licensed HAM radio operator.

An avid supporter of trail preservation and marking, Steve has hiked and photographed the historic trails for a quarter of a century. He believes more people need to become aware of our emigrant history and that OCTA can serve this need by continuing to find and preserve unpublished diaries and accounts as well as preserving the old trails.

VOTE for FRAN TAPLIN



I am presently serving on the OCTA National Board of Directors, having been appointed to fill a one-year term vacancy. I would like to continue my service on the Board by being elected to a three-year term in the up-coming election.

Your vote will help me to do so!

For over forty years, one of my main recreational and educational activities has been visiting and following the overland emigrant trails with family. I still marvel at the unequalled learning experiences that these many treks provided during my children's formative years, and I find them now wanting to provide their own families with the same opportunities to learn, to experience history, and to enrich their lives as Americans. OCTA contributes greatly to making this possible, and we need to continue to develop programs which invite such participation and encourage families to support our efforts.

While I am a strong supporter of OCTA's research, marking and mapping, educational, and publishing programs, I believe that OCTA's priority goal must be trail protection and preservation of ALL historic trails as we continue to press for further additions to the national historic trails system. I am a *pro-active* trail preservationist who believes that even with our record of trail preservation successes through the years, we must remain vigilant and make every effort to ensure that what

remains of the trails be protected, marked, and interpreted as an integral part of the heritage of our country.

I believe that my community, state, and national leadership experience as an educator and my record of service within OCTA will enable me to continue to be a vital and effective member of the OCTA National Board of Directors.

TRACES OF PREHISTORIC NEVADANS FOUND AT GRIMES POINT ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE AND HIDDEN CAVE

By Richard Moreno

Even after years of study, no one is quite sure how to interpret the centuries-old Indian "petroglyphs" or rock writings that are found scratched on stone surfaces throughout the West including Nevada. Some of the best examples of these mysterious petroglyphs can be found at Grimes Point, about 12 miles east of Fallon on Highway 50. Visitors to Grimes Point will find an interpretive trail that winds for about a mile through a small forest of engraved boulders and rocks. Petroglyphs in the area date more than 7,000 years old and contain a variety of styles, reflecting different eras.



"Pit and groove" pattern along path at Grimes Point.

A series of informative signs point out theories about the writings and the different types of symbols. For instance, the oldest petroglyphs are believed to be the simplest, a "pit and groove" pattern on several boulders. Later, the native Americans who scratched these designs carved more elaborate images, such as deer, lizards and the sun.

One sign notes that while some historians believe the writing has religious significance (representing a ritual asking the supreme being for a good hunt or harvest), other experts say they are simply prehistoric rock graffiti.

Regardless, there is something unique about wandering through the field of boulders and feeling you are in the presence of things that are very ancient.

The cave, which was utilized for thousands of years as a storage cache by migrating tribes, has been a veritable treasure trove for scientists, yielding a wide variety of prehistoric artifacts.

During several digs, archaeologists have found a considerable number of ancient nets, pots, tools, seeds and food remains. In fact, part of the reason the cave remained so undisturbed over the centuries is that it was for many years home to a large number of bats, which covered the inside of the cave with centuries of bat guano.

One of the unique aspects of the cave is that it has been maintained as a dig site so visitors can see how archaeologists study a site.

The walls are tagged with small markers indicating the various stratas or levels which indicate age. For example, one layer is clearly white, showing that the cave floor was once covered with volcanic ash which a guide explains was probably from an early volcanic eruption in the Cascade Range.

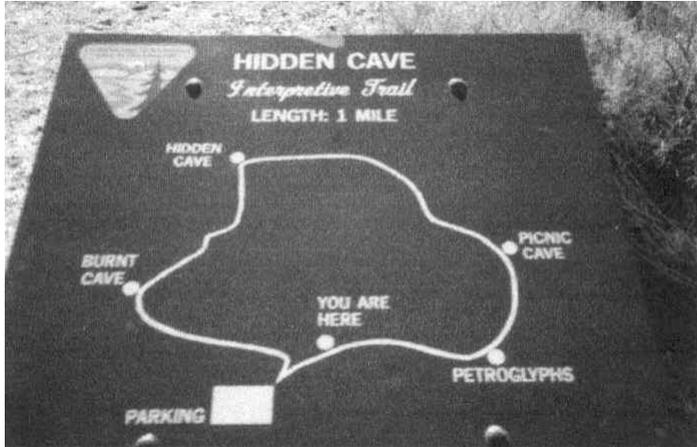


Indian Petroglyph

Photos by Norine Kimmy

The Churchill County Museum in Fallon, one of the finest small museums in the state, also has an excellent Hidden Cave exhibit that includes photographs of recent digs on the site.

For information about Grimes Point or Hidden Cave, contact the Bureau of Land Management, 1535 Hot Springs Road, Carson City 89701, 882-1631. .



Map to Hidden Cave

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Richard Moreno
Publisher, Nevada Magazine
(775) 687-0601

LESLIE FRYMAN, OUR NEW CHAPTER TRAIL PRESERVATION OFFICER,

By Don Buck

For over a year, since Tom Hunt resigned at the end of 2000, our chapter has been without a Trail Preservation Officer. Tom is a hard act to follow but Leslie Fryman looks like the one who can do it. Chapter President, Bill Webster, appointed Leslie to this office on April 1, 2002.

Leslie has worked for more than 20 years as a professional historian and archaeologist in the environmental services field. In addition to work, she is on the Board of Directors of the California Council for the Promotion of History (CCPH), and serves on the Native American affairs committee of the Society for California Archaeology.

After completing a comprehensive report on the Carson Emigrant Trail for the El Dorado National Forest, Leslie became interested in OcTA and trail preservation. While she was working in the field on the Carson Trail, I had the good fortune to meet her, and since then have received sound advice from her on trail preservation matters.

Leslie is well versed on most aspects of federal and state preservation laws and regulations, particularly how they relate to emigrant trails. She would like to provide advice on government regulatory issues for chapter members who oversee the protection and preservation of trails in Nevada and California. Also, Leslie can review government agency projects to ensure that OCTA's preservation concerns are heard and considered.

Leslie is looking forward to meeting chapter members involved in trail preservation and would like to pick up where we left off in 1999 by planning preservation workshops. She has her eye on these workshops leading to the eventual completion of a chapter trail preservation program in the form of a practical working manual. Ambitious as this may seem, it is very much needed. You'll be hearing more from her. So let's welcome Leslie Fryman and give her all the support we can.

Her address and phone numbers are:

Leslie R. Fryman
6944 Le Havre Way Citrus Heights, CA 95621
(916) 737-3000 x3451[day]
(916) 725-4149 [evening]
email: lesliel@jsanet.com

DIARY QUOTES... *from Shann Rupp ~*

"Grass is so scarce that a whipperwill would starve if he should chance to come this way."

Jacob S. Hayden, 1852

"We though[t] how our old associates in the states were strutting about the homes in ruffled shirts and laces boots- while we poor devils were driving oxen up the Rocky Mountains, with the dust flying so thickly that we could scarcely see and not a d --d bit of Bourbon to quench our thirst."

Jacob S. Hayden , 1852

"10 new graves in one place and 12 in another and 21 in another and 2 in another. Olde death has bin busily employed here of late."

George Miller, 1852

"The only wood to be got for fuel was willow, and to make a fire with this when soaked with wet and it raining all the time was sufficient work for the most patient philosopher."

T. W. Hinds, 1850

CIRCUS CIRCUS IS THE PLACE



The place to stay during the Reno convention in August is *Circus Circus*.

It is the official convention hotel and as such is giving OCTA special room rates and FREE use of convention facilities - which would cost more than \$1,000 a day IF we had to book them elsewhere, convention chair Chuck Dodd points out.

Among other reasons to stay at Circus Circus: ...
where the action is, ...
where we will all be together, and ...
where dining and entertainment needs are available.

There are 6,000 slots, 250 gaming tables, 22 restaurants... and you don't even have to leave the hotel.

GEORGE WILLSON WHITE

By Patricia Loomis



George Willson White loved history, and he and his ancestors lived a bunch of it.

George died February 18 in Gilroy, California where he was born in 1909, and where he lived all of his 92 years.

He enjoyed OCTA and its involvement with the history of the west, the trails over which his ancestors struggled more than 150 years ago.

This included the Rhoades family who made it over the Sierra just ahead of the Donner-Reed party of 1846, sending two of its members to join the relief parties who helped save the survivors.

His Willson ancestors came from Boston by ship to join the 1849 Gold Rush.

George was a farmer, served on the Gilroy city council and Gilroy school boards. He was co-founder of Gilroy Foods and remembered when processing tomatoes and garlic made the south end of Santa Clara County smell like a huge pot of simmering spaghetti sauce.

George White was legally blind the last 10 years of his life. He could no longer drive, but he knew where he was. I remember one trip up in Shasta County. "Up here where the highway dips, there's a road goes off to the right that will take you down to the lake," George said, and it did.

He was author of a history of Gilroy when that city celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1970.

It was fun and a great honor exploring with George and his wife, Evelyn, down in Baja, over Anza's route, into Nevada deserts and over the old emigrant trails.

In 1991 during the Sacramento convention, George got to the top of Roller Pass though efforts of the late Chuck Graydon where he could appreciate the trail taken by his ancestors so long ago.

**BIG DONATION TO THE CHAPTER'S
"WESTERN OVERLAND TRAILS
COLLECTION"
AT THE CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY**

By Don Buck

A Long-time OCTA members, Bert and Inez Ashton, have generously donated 184 trail books to the chapter's newly established Western Overland Trails Collection housed in the California State Library at Sacramento. The Ashtons' donation gave a big boost to the new OCTA collection and also provided a good test of the donation procedures. Thank you Bert and Inez very much.

Chapter member Tom Dougherty boxed the books at the Ashton's home in Albany, filled out all the donation forms on his computer (one for each book), and on April 1st delivered them to the Special Collections Branch of the California State Library. We owe Tom many thanks for doing this time consuming work. There are now over 200 volumes in the OCTA collection. It's really happening.

If any chapter member is thinking about making book or periodical donations to the OCTA Western Overland Trails Collection, please contact either Don Buck (408-739- 8521) or Dick Davis (415-397-2870) for procedures on making a donation. There is paper work involved but we can make that process easier.

BLACK ROCK DESERT/HIGH ROCK CANYON

By Frederick J. Osterhagen

(Ed. note: Frederick Osterhagen, a member of OCTA and chairman of volunteers for the upcoming convention, reports on a new organization to help protect Black Rock/High Rock country.)

Mission Statement of the Friends of Black Rock Desert/High Rock Canyon:

It is our purpose to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the Black Rock Desert/High Rock Canyon region for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations based on the concept of multiple use.

I am a member of the board of Friends of the Black Rock Desert/High Rock Canyon. Terry Hardwicke is also on the board so OCTA is represented.

We will be electing officers at our next meeting and Susan Lynn is a likely candidate for president. She is a very capable individual who is currently on the RAC subgroup working on the Black Rock Plan with the BLM. Susan is also the executive director of The Public Resources Association.

The BLM has had no fewer than three representatives at the last three meetings and is being very supportive.

This is a rebirth of the previous Friends group and it is full of energy and I expect it to be an influential body. I would like to see more OCTA members involved.



Bruff's Singular Rock. Photo by Norine Kimmy

For more information contact:
Frederick J. Osterhagen
PO Box 3628
Carson City, NV 89702
(775) 885-2687

PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

By Jim Allison

The two day conference in Salt Lake City included a keynote address by Karen Wade, NPS Regional Director. Dave Welch presented an overview of OCTA preservation activities while Amy Cole, of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, addressed preservation procedures. Carol Gleichman talked about the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and Tim Nowak, of the BLM, discussed Wyoming Interim Guidelines.

A panel discussion on the Private Perspective had representatives from private industry and ranchers. Two case studies were presented: Working with Private Landowners by Don Buck and Ken Martin, and Public Relations and Preservation by John Krizek. The second day had presentations on mapping by Don Buck, Frank Tortorich, and Gail Threkeld. Trail related subjects were discussed by Jere Krakow, Terry Del Bene and Dave Welch. Other speakers were Gary Werner and Kay Threkeld. A general discussion was moderated by Chuck Martin.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

The name of one of the speakers at the Placerville symposium was misspelled in *Trail Talk*. The person talking about "Road House Cemeteries Along the Coloma and Placerville Roads" was Sue Selois.

AWARDS COMMITTEE NEEDS NEW MEMBERS

By Tom Fee

Mary Mueller's term on the Awards Committee ends on August 31, 2002. The Chapter is looking for a member to serve a two year term. This is a very important position which takes relatively little time.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Awards Committee, please contact President Bill Webster at 9128 LaCroix Court, Bakersfield, CA 93311-1801, or via email BonnyBill@aol.com. Application deadline is July 1,2002.

New members shall be selected from the CA-NV membership and chosen by a three member Awards Committee Selection Subcommittee. The Selection Subcommittee shall be made up of the Awards Committee Chairperson, one member of the CA- NV Board of Directors (appointed by the Chapter President), and one member of the CA- NV membership (ap- pointed by the Chapter President).

Should you have questions regarding the amount of work and time involved, please feel free to contact the current Awards Committee Members Mary Mueller WRMMEM74@aol.com, Carol March CHMarch@aol.com, or Tom Fee TomFee3@aol.com.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As Joanne and I are no longer members of the CA/NV Chapter, we seldom see Trail Talk. However, we were sent the January 2002 issue which contained letters from Mary Ann Tortorich and James W. Dayley protesting something written by Keith Arnold. Having gotten a copy of Arnold's letter, we find his obvious prejudice and related experiences to be the exact opposite of our own.

We were at the Casper convention, and also at the former Sun Ranch where we talked at length with one of the docents at the museum. We were at the convention in Salt Lake City and have been members of the Crossroads Chapter since 1991. We have been involved in their chapter meetings and outings, and were at the recent trails preservation conference in Salt Lake City.

At none of those events did we "expect to be indoctrinated by the Mormon Church". Further, no one has tried to indoctrinate us, not even when we visited LDS headquarters, toured Brigham Young's home, or during two visits to the Mormon history museum. At LDS headquarters we were invited, politely, to see a short film on church history. Some might see that invitation as an attempt at indoctrination; we saw it as a willingness to share their history, which is integral to understanding the settlement of the west.

Arnold complains about the "Mormon Church " having acquired the Sun Ranch; but had they not, this historic site may never have been opened to the public. He also is "furious" over signs telling of the Mormon experience. Yet those very signs are in accordance with OCTA's statement of purpose, especially the first three items of that statement. Also, just as our concept of free speech gives Arnold the right to express his opinion, so does it allow the Mormons to tell their story; after all, it is their story and their money. If Arnold, or anyone else, feels left out, they can organize, dig down into their pockets and tell their side, whatever it might be.

Sincerely
Andy Hammond

EXPLORING THE OREGON TRAIL

DATES: July 29- August 12, 2002
Enrollment 17

Humboldt State University lecturer in geography, Dr. Mark S. Wilson, will present a two-day classroom session and a ten day field study along the Oregon Trail from North Platte, NE to Portland, OR.

Topics covered will concern the early westward migration of Euro- Americans, the establishment of a westward Oregon Trail had on the westward movement. The lives, motivations and experiences of the emigrants will be examined, as well as the impact of the migration on Native Americans.

Student will learn mapping techniques used on the early expeditions of John C. Fremont as well as modern Global Positioning System (GPS) techniques. Landscape analysis of geomorphic features and processes and elements of biogeography will be featured parts of the course work.

For more information contact Dr. Mark Wilson, Department of Geography,
Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521 , (707) 826-4114, email
mowl@axe.humboldt.edu.

ACTIVITIES

WANTED

A volunteer is needed to help Mary Mueller develop the Trail Talk calendar for outings, tours, and activities in 2002. We need fresh ideas and suggestions from the members or requests for a favorite activity you have missed.

Contact Mary at (408) 268- 7389
e-mail: wrmem74@aol.com
or mail to: 1112 Silver Oak Ct.
San Jose, CA 95120

Activities Trail Photos Chapter Info

Trail Talk

Links

Home

**Send questions regarding the CA-NV Chapter
to:**

Jerry Dwyer
webmaster@canvocta.org