



TRAIL TAILS



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Yes, yes, I know. Where was the January newsletter? At this point, I guess you figured out it's not coming. Rick had his second major shoulder surgery December 21st and we have been busily running up and down the highways for doctor's and physical therapy. He is recovering well, so the effort has definitely worth it. I seemed to spend the remainder of my time either at work or cutting wood for the furnace, leaving little time for much else, including a newsletter!

Lots has been going since the September newsletter! First, let me welcome Duane Keim, Bernetta Foster and Steve Dodson as our newest Chapter members!

In October Association Manager Harry Myers and I want to visit the Burlingame Chamber of Commerce and the Kansas Department of Tourism. I also made contact with the Lyndon Chamber and the Osage County Economic Development office. Our purpose was to make these organizations aware of the Chapter's presence in the area and our mission statement. Our Chapter and the Association cannot interact with these entities if they don't know we exist! I will be glad to speak to any group that may have an interest in what our Chapter does to promote and protect the Santa Fe Trail. Just give me a call!

In October the Chapter held an information gathering afternoon at Burlingame, in hopes of the local residents coming forward with first hand stories of Wilmington. Announcements were placed in two papers, all municipal buildings in Burlingame, Osage City and Lyndon, and flyers were hung everywhere. And of course, there were the several websites of people involved. I sat there for six hours waiting anxiously for all these wonderful stories to come flooding in, and the only visitor I had was Al Bunting who had come to help!!!! It is quite discouraging that local citizens, who could make such a difference in the preservation of their heritage, obviously aren't interested (:

Over Veteran's day weekend the Kansas Archaeological Society conducted a dig at the Wilmington school. It's too bad more chapter members didn't participate (Virgil and Delores Scheid and myself were the only chapter members present) or just come to watch, as it was most interesting. They found pencil slates, buttons, pieces of iron desk frames, bits of leather and loads of square and cut nails. All items were taken to their facility for processing and will be returned to the Chapter when that task is complete. I have attached some photos of the day. After years of persistent effort from various Chapter members, the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review will consider the Wilmington School for nomination to the Register of Historic Kansas Places at their meeting on May 3, 2008. We are invited to attend this meeting which begins at 9 A.M. on the second floor of the Potawatomi Mission Building at the Kansas History Center, 6425 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka. I will be there and let you know the outcome!

Our January meeting was held at the Santa Fe Café in Burlingame. We had four directors' positions to fill. The new directors are: Duane Keim representing Lyon County, Jeanne Riggs from Osage County, Steve Dodson at large, and Benji Foster for Wabaunsee County. Thank you all very much for volunteering for these positions! Thank you also to Al Bunting and Virgil Scheid for doing a fine job as nominating committee. Chapter officers for 2007 were re-elected by unanimous ballot.

Two committees were appointed at the January meeting:

The History/Signage committee will be responsible for researching Trail sites that should be marked by either approved Santa Fe Trail signs or interpretive signs. They will also list which existing signs need to be replaced due to wear or vandalism. Committee members are Steve Dobson, Don Cress and Jeanne Riggs.

The Wilmington Committee is comprised of Lois DeWitt, Virgil Scheid, Duane Keim and Bernetta Foster. They will be responsible for keeping the Chapter informed of progress made in the listing of the school on the Historic Register. After such listing is finalized, they will be responsible for researching preservation contractors and grant funding.

I WANT TO THANK EACH OF YOU FOR STEPPING FORWARD TO STAFF THESE COMMITTEES!!!

The national Board of Directors meeting of the Santa Fe Trail Association was held in Council Grove March 27th – 29th. It was really good to sit and talk with the other chapter Presidents. I was delighted to see Don and Doris Cress and Deane Wright in attendance. The Association is very fortunate to have such good leadership at the national level! Our President Joanne VanCoevern, and Vice-President John Atkinson have boundless enthusiasm and commitment to the

Trail. They are to be commended for hiring Harry Meyers as the Association Manager as his experience and knowledge is so valuable. I came home energized by their examples!

Our next meeting will be April 24th in Burlingame. Unless you hear otherwise, we will meet at the Santa Fe Café at 6 P.M. for dinner with the meeting immediately following. Invite all your curious friends! Please take some time prior to the meeting to figure your volunteer hours and donations since the first of the year so I can record them. Thanks!

And last, but definitely not least ---- the 2008 trail ride will start June 12th in Edgerton, KS. We will arrive in Council Grove on Thursday, June 19th and enjoy a day ride to some of the local sites on the 20th. Members wishing to participate in the parade on Saturday are welcomed to do so. PRAY FOR GOOD WEATHER!!

That's about all for now.
Until next time – Happy Trails!

Carol Retzer