



Lewis & Clark Trail News
Bringing the Trail to Life
October 18, 2025



Sacajawea and Jean-Baptiste

Located in Portland's Washington Park, the "Sacajawea and Jean-Baptiste" statue honors the only woman to accompany the Corps of Discovery. Created by sculptor Alice Cooper for the 1905 Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition, the bronze sculpture was commissioned by the women of Portland with support from the National American Women's Suffrage Association. Depicting Sacagawea pointing westward with her infant son on her back, the work stands as a tribute to her courage, leadership, and enduring legacy as both an explorer and a symbol of women's strength and independence.

LCTA member Laura Keller shared this inspiring photo beside the statue, capturing its spirit of perseverance and vision—a timeless image of women leading us into the future. Laura's photo is one of 14 winning photos that are published in the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance's 2026 calendar. The calendar is for sale for \$20 as a fundraiser for LCTA programs. [Order yours now.](#)

As autumn colors spread across the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, October signals more than a change in season — it marks the beginning of Giving Season. It's a time to celebrate all that we've accomplished together and to look ahead at the difference we can make in the year to come.

Your support for the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance (LCTA) helps us connect people with the landscapes, stories, and living legacy of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. From digital learning platforms and interpretive partnerships to community programs and heritage tourism initiatives, your contributions make these efforts possible.

This fall, we invite you to reflect on what the Trail means to you and consider making a gift to sustain its future. Whether it's helping to share new stories, expand educational resources, or engage the next generation of explorers, every donation strengthens our mission and extends the reach of the Trail.

Together, we can ensure that the Lewis and Clark story continues to inspire curiosity, discovery, and stewardship for generations to come.

Be part of the journey — make your gift today and help launch the season of giving.

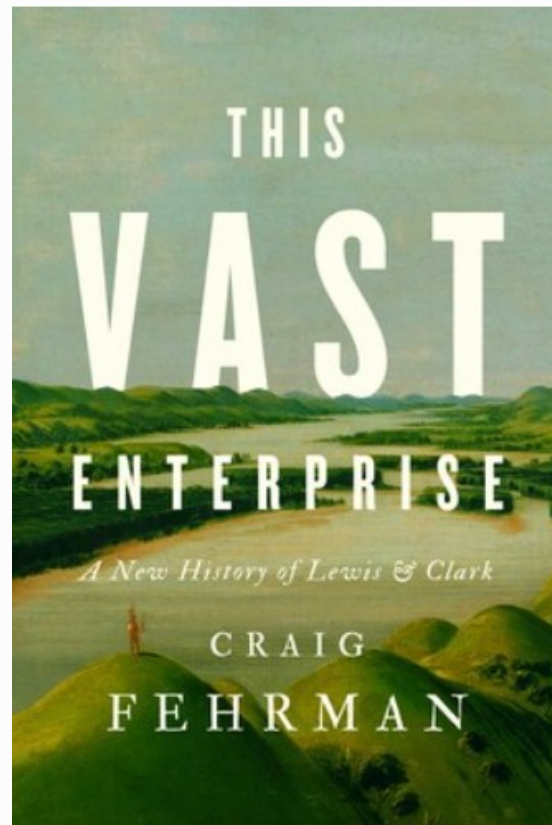
[Give Now](#)

Videocast Presentation

Join the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance for an exclusive online conversation with acclaimed historian and author Craig Fehrman. In this special event, Fehrman will introduce his groundbreaking forthcoming book, *This Vast Enterprise: A New History of Lewis and Clark* (Simon & Schuster, 2026).

Fehrman will reveal what's truly "new" about his work—not only his discovery of fresh documents but also his innovative storytelling approach, shifting perspectives chapter by chapter. He'll spotlight John Ordway, sharing new insights into his early military career (including his work on the Natchez Trace), and fresh interpretations of pivotal Corps of Discovery moments like Camp River Dubois and the portage.

Attendees will get a rare behind-the-scenes look at Fehrman's research process, including a PowerPoint of key historical documents—such as the newspaper ad that may have led Ordway to enlist. He'll discuss how he uncovered new material, shaped his narrative, and reimagined this iconic



American expedition.

Sunday, November 2, 2025 • 3 p.m. MT • via [Zoom](#)

Day by Day Radio Episodes



Have you listened to the [Day by Day Radio Episodes](#) hosted on our Discover Lewis and Clark website?

Originally aired by [Yellowstone Public Radio](#) during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial observance in 2004-2006, these 627 radio episodes parallel the expedition dates starting May 14, 1804 and ending September 25, 1806. They are narrated by Hal Hansen, scripted by Whit Hansen and Ed Jacobson, and produced by Leni Holliman.

Listen to the episode describing [October 18, 1805](#), when the expedition heads [down the Columbia](#) and camps below the Twin Sisters in [Wallula Gap](#).

Of Interest

[Uncharted Moments](#)

[Kentucky Book Festival](#)

[Keelboat Mandan](#)

[Best Day Ever](#)

Grants

[Humanities Iowa](#)

[South Dakota Mini Grant](#)

[Missouri Humanities](#)

[Idaho Action Grant](#)

Alliance

[Trip Inspirations](#)

[Event Calendar](#)

[Join LCTA](#)

[trailresearch.org](#)

Annual Gathering 2026

We hope you're as excited about Great Falls, Montana, as these two explorers are (pictured here in the stunning White Cliffs of the Missouri River, gazing west toward new horizons).



We're heading back to our home base for the 2026 Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance Annual Gathering, June 21–24—and it's shaping up to be an unforgettable experience!

Get ready for Big Sky views, fascinating field trips, engaging speakers, and plenty of time to reconnect with old friends and make new ones along the Trail.

So go ahead and mark your calendar for June 21–24, 2026.

Registration opens early next year—stay tuned!

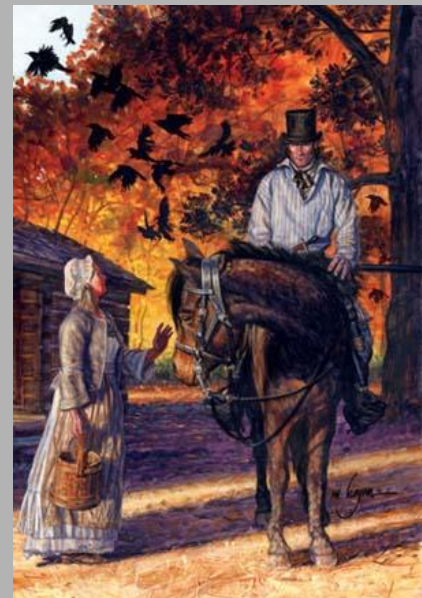
Play Lewis & Clark Trivia

On October 11, 1809, Meriwether Lewis died under mysterious circumstances in the early hours of the morning after stopping for the night at Grinder's Tavern near today's Hohenwald, Tennessee.

What was the name of the trail that he was following at the time of his death?

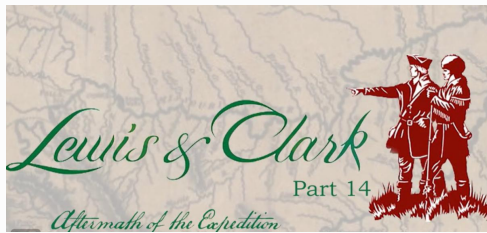
[Submit your answer](#)

The winner of this trivia contest will receive a copy of *Lewis and Clark on the Great Plains: A Natural History*, written and illustrated by Paul A. Johnsgard.



The answer to the trivia question in the last newsletter was the Nez Perce, the tribe that helped the explorers after they passed over the Bitterroot Mountains in 1805.

Fifteen readers submitted the correct answer. When more than one person submits a correct answer, a drawing is done. The winner was Jeff Magill. He will receive a copy of *Finding Lewis & Clark: Old Trails, New Directions*, edited by James P. Ronda and Nancy Tystad Koupal.



Watch

[Aftermath of the Expedition](#)

Their journey west made history — but what happened after the Corps of Discovery came home?

This episode uncovers the fascinating and often tragic stories of Lewis, Clark, Sacagawea, and York: Lewis's puzzling death, Clark's rise to power, and the unanswered questions that still surround two of the Expedition's most remarkable members.



Watch

[Moulton Lecture](#)

Dr. Stephen Aron

Dr. Aron is a renowned historian and compelling storyteller who believes that the best history stirs emotion—whether laughter, tears, or clenched fists—and leads to deeper reflection and understanding. In his lecture, he explores “an alternative history of the American West,” focusing on the peace and friendship ideals championed by Lewis and Clark.

He challenges us to consider how the Expedition's legacy might offer a counter-narrative to the violence that later defined the region.



LCTA Oregon Chapter Holiday Dinner

Oregon Chapter members and friends will gather Saturday, December 6, 2025, from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Netul Room at Fort Clatsop for the annual holiday dinner meeting.

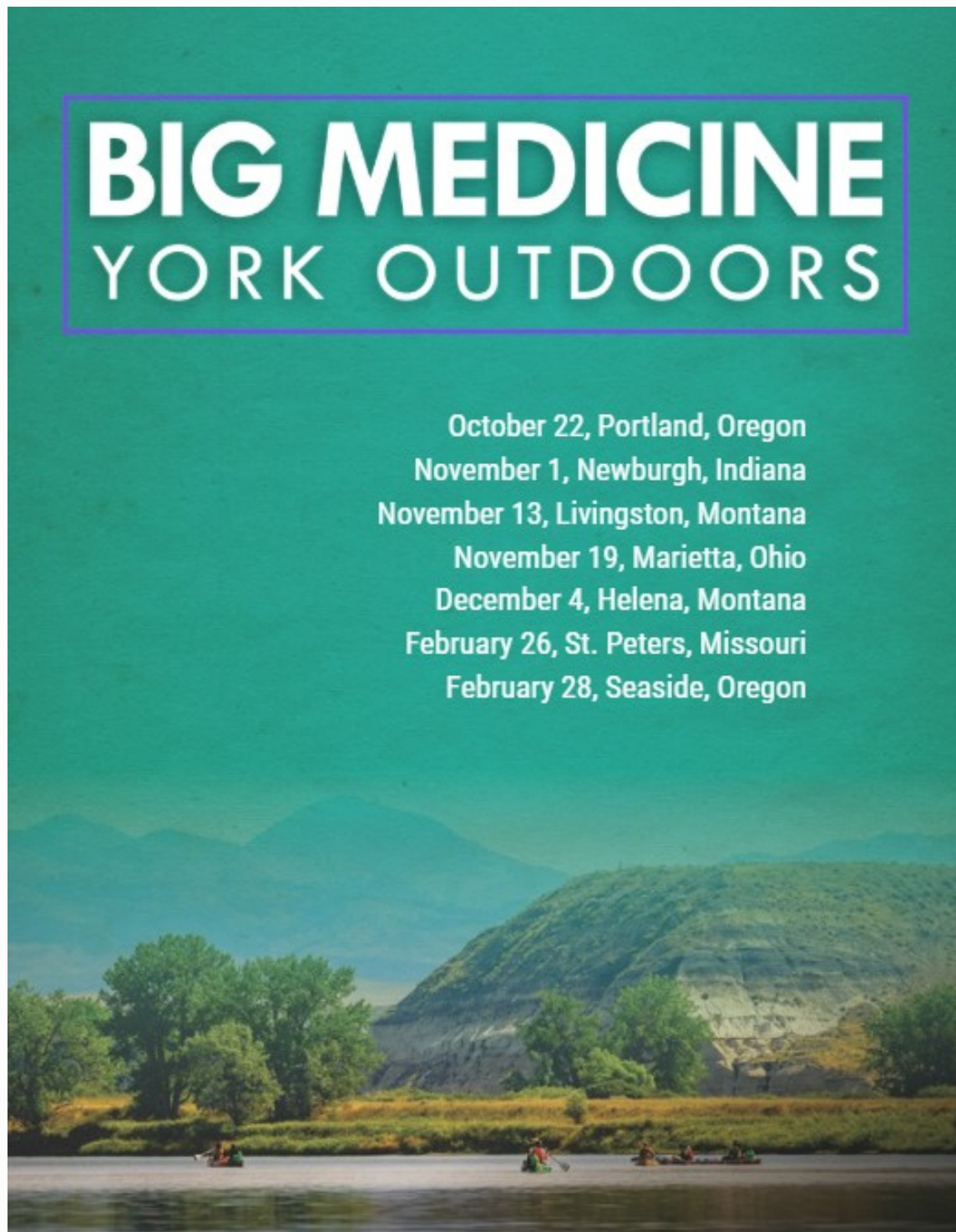
Our main speaker will be Zachary Stocks, Executive Director of the Oregon Black Pioneers and seasonal ranger at Lewis and Clark National Historic Park (Fort Clatsop). Zachary's presentation, "York, The Man", will tell the comprehensive story of York both before and after the Expedition. In addition, Lewis and Clark National Historical Park Superintendent Jon Burpee will speak about developments at the park.

The dinner will be catered by Fulio's Restaurant in Astoria and will include wild caught salmon, elk meat and other tastes the Corps of Discovery would have preferred under better circumstances that Christmas in 1805.

Guests are welcome to attend.

Cost is \$20 payable at the door by cash, or a check made out to "Oregon Chapter, Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance."

RSVP by email: SlowPokeTours@gmail.com



New screenings being added - check the [Events Calendar](#) for updates

[National Bison Day](#)

Join us on Saturday, November 1, as we

celebrate National Bison Day at Big Bone Lick State Historic Site. Festivities begin at 11 a.m. with a dedication ceremony honoring former Bison Care Specialist Paul Simpson.

Following the ceremony, the LCTA Ohio River Chapter's Adopt-A-Bison Committee will present a check to support animal care at the park. The current Bison Care Specialist will also lead a short ceremony about the park's bison herd, and the Ohio River Chapter will hold a brief business meeting.



The National Bison Legacy Act of 2016 officially recognized the bison as the National Mammal of the United States in honor of its ecological, cultural, and historical significance — especially to Native American heritage.

This event is free and open to the public. Don't miss your chance to celebrate National Bison Day with the Big Bone Bison!

[Big Bone Lick](#)

End of the Road for Old Town Bridge



from Tom Elpel, President Jefferson River Chapter

I've taken many "last" pictures of Old Town Bridge since it was condemned in 2022 and slated for replacement. Built in 1894, the bridge is a pin-connected Pratt truss design adapted from railroad use to handle horse-drawn wagons.

Originally constructed within the town of Three Forks, Montana, the bridge has stood witness to 130 years of history while the town itself migrated a mile south and re-incorporated in 1908, leaving behind the old townsite and, with it, “Old Town Bridge.”



More properly known as Old Town Bridge East to distinguish it from Old Town Bridge West, the east bridge spans the main channel of the Jefferson River. Although I had been under and over the bridge many times before, my relationship with Old Town Bridge grew deeper roots in 2014 when our Jefferson River Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance purchased the 4.4-acre parcel immediately southeast of the bridge as a walk-in fishing access site and public campsite for river paddlers.

[Continue reading](#)

Words Worth Reviving:

Expressions from the Journals of Lewis & Clark

The *Journals of Lewis and Clark* contain a language that feels raw, immediate, and strangely poetic. The spelling is eccentric, the phrasing inventive, and the tone often somewhere between military dispatch and wonder-filled diary.

In our new feature, we will share some forgotten frontier words and expressions that deserve a comeback — evocative, sturdy, and perfectly at home along the Lewis and Clark Trail today.



Cordelle -To pull a boat upstream by rope.

The ultimate image of teamwork against the current — literally and figuratively.

[Boats of the Expedition](#)

Share the Adventure!



Help us expand the community by sharing the newsletter with your network. Simply provide this [sign-up link](#) to friends, family, and fellow Trail enthusiasts.

See all the events on the [LCTE Events Calendar](#)



[Candlelight Tour](#)

Fort Atkinson, NE
November 1



[Take a Hike Day](#)

Henderson, KY
November 16



[Missouri River Cleanup](#)

Bonnots Mill, MO
October 25

The Last Word

“Plastics,” Virtual Reality, and the Future of the Trail



In the 1967 film *The Graduate*, there’s a scene that has become an enduring cultural touchstone. A well-meaning family friend, Mr. McGuire, corners the newly graduated Benjamin Braddock (played by Dustin Hoffman) to offer some career advice. “I just want to say one word to you,” he says with great seriousness. “Plastics.”

That single word, delivered with absolute confidence, captured the optimism and anxiety of a rapidly changing world. “Plastics” symbolized modernity, technology, and progress — a material that would shape the future in ways few could yet imagine.

More than half a century later, the words may have changed, but the feeling is the same. Today, if someone pulled us aside with a knowing look, they might whisper: “Virtual Reality.” Or perhaps: “Artificial Intelligence.”

At the Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance, we’re embracing those very concepts — not as fads or buzzwords, but as new tools to expand historical and cultural interpretation along the Trail. Through a partnership with Shenandoah University’s Center for Immersive Learning, we’re developing our own version of virtual reality — an experience that invites users to step into the landscapes, stories, and encounters of the Lewis and Clark Expedition in vivid, interactive form.

The project is already in beta testing and will soon be available to schools, interpretive centers, and even home users with VR headsets. Imagine exploring the confluence of the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers, standing on the shores of the Pacific, or meeting the diverse Native nations who shaped the Expedition’s success — all from your classroom or living room.

Like “plastics” in 1967, virtual reality and AI hold the power to redefine how we learn, connect, and preserve the past. The difference is that today, we can use these technologies not to replace the real world, but to deepen our understanding of it.

Want to learn more about our upcoming Undaunted Reality initiative? Let me know — we'd love to show you the future of the Trail.

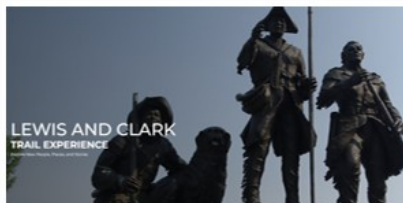
Richard Hunt



DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM



Our Network of Online Resources



[TRAVEL](#)

[ALLIANCE](#)

[EDUCATION](#)



lewisandclark.org



Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation | PO Box 3434 | Great Falls, MT 59403 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Our Privacy Policy](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!