



**Lewis & Clark Trail News**  
*Bringing the Trail to Life*  
April 4, 2026



## **Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center**

The Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls, Montana, is one of the best interpretive sites along the 4,900-mile Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the center features a high-quality museum packed with interesting exhibits about natural history, expedition technology, tribes encountered by the explorers, and the physically punishing portage around the waterfalls that Meriwether Lewis was the first expedition member to see in June 1805.

The center has a large auditorium used for films, school programs, lectures, and special events that promote the expedition's history. The center sits on a bluff overlooking the Missouri River and has two outdoor interpretive trails through native landscape. The center, which is home to the Lewis & Clark Foundation and the national headquarters of the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance, is the venue for the popular annual Lewis & Clark Festival, to be held this year on June 19-20.

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# 2026 Annual Gathering - Great Falls

[Meeting](#) and [Hotel](#) Registration available now

Explore the updated [Meeting Guide](#)

## Early Bird Rates End April 30

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### Hasan Davis to Speak at 2026 Lewis and Clark Annual Gathering

Renowned first-person interpreter of York and nationally recognized speaker, Hasan Davis, will open this year's Annual Gathering with a compelling and thought-provoking presentation.

For more than 25 years, Davis has brought the story of York to life for audiences across the country, including his work with the National Park Service's Corps of Discovery during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. He most recently starred in the National Park Service film *Big Medicine: York Outdoors*, a powerful interpretation the Alliance has shared with audiences nationwide.



During Sunday's opening session, Davis will explore the role of York within the Lewis and Clark Expedition, connecting his story to the founding principles of the United States and prompting reflection as we approach the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. His presentation promises to deepen understanding of the Expedition while challenging audiences to consider its broader historical and cultural significance.

Attendees will have additional opportunities to engage with Davis throughout the Gathering, including a book signing on Monday afternoon at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center.

Beyond his acclaimed historical interpretation, Davis brings a distinguished career in youth development and public service. For more than two decades, he has worked to inspire and empower young people, helping shape educational environments that foster success and opportunity.

[Register Today](#)

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#### Extend Your Stay

Great Falls offers far more than can be experienced in four days. Attendees are encouraged to arrive early or stay longer to explore the region including

- 36th Annual Lewis and Clark Festival, June 19–20

- Three-day [White Cliffs canoe trip](#), June 25 - 27
- Tower Rock and Gates of the Mountains Boat Trip (on your own)
- Grand opening Montana Historical Society Museum (Helena), June 26–27
- Fort Benton Summer Celebration, June 26–27

### Pre- and Post- Tours

#### Lolo Trail Volunteer Vacation

- June 17 - 20 (Musselshell Meadows)
- July 9 - 12 (Powell Junction)

#### Guided hike to Lewis and Clark Pass (Strenuous)

- Watch for additional details

#### Additional Details

- Silent Auction: Contact [Georgia Kline](#)
- Exhibitor, Authors: Contact [Kelly Paladino](#)

### Annual Gathering Sponsors



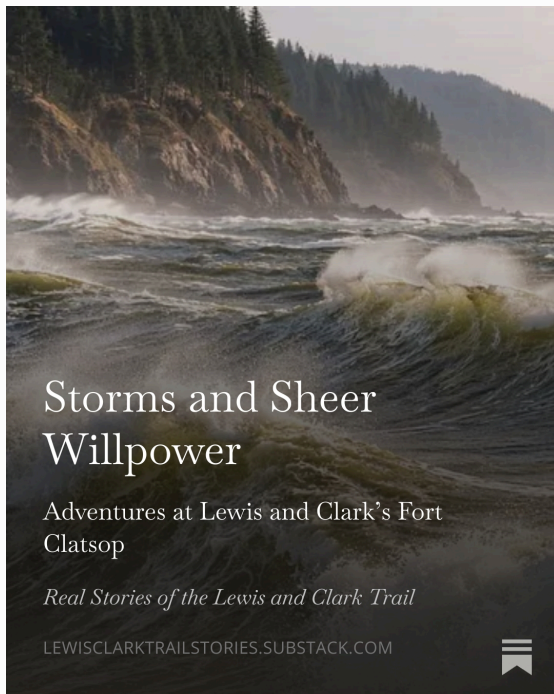
**D|A DAVIDSON**  
INVESTMENT BANKING



## Substack

The Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance’s Substack publications—[Real Stories of the Lewis and Clark Trail](#) and [Undaunted Travel](#)—are now available to explore. Both are free to subscribe and feature engaging, well-researched storytelling from across the Trail.

Here are two of our latest featured stories, with many more available to explore on our Substack pages. Consider subscribing to one—or both—to stay connected and receive new stories as they’re published.



*Two of our boats and supplies had been moved down a forested hill,*



*In January 1806, Sacagawea at last reached the Pacific coast near today’s*

below the replica of Fort Clatsop, to a narrow, muddy shoreline. Mike Cochran and I were carrying the last canoe, a heavy 16-foot cargo canoe made from durable ABS plastic.

We were partway across the parking lot when a rainstorm cascaded out of turbulent, blackened clouds. The rain was so thick I couldn't see Cochran at the front of the canoe. I couldn't even see my hand in front of my face. We stopped right then and there, set down the canoe, for fear that—blind as we were in the downpour... [read more](#)

Fort Clatsop—and in this exploration we follow her path from the expedition's winter camp to the windswept shores of Seaside, Cannon Beach, and Ecola State Park, where she finally had her long-awaited day at the beach.

Much about Sacagawea remains mysterious, and perhaps that is part of her power.

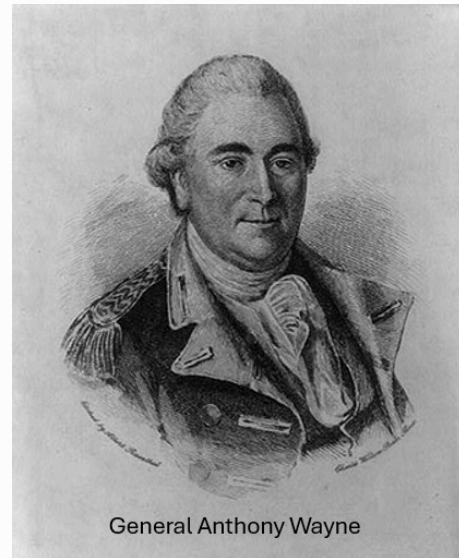
Born near present-day Idaho, she was taken east as a child, ... [read more](#)

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## Forts of the Ohio Tour

Join a unique opportunity with fellow history enthusiasts May 15–18 for a curated, expert-led motor coach tour exploring the forts of western Ohio associated with the post-Revolutionary War period and the Northwest Indian War.

The tour begins with arrival at our staging hotel near the Cincinnati airport on Friday evening, May 15. On Saturday morning, we depart by coach, tracing [General Anthony Wayne's](#) 1794 march north. Highlights include Greenville, Ohio—where Meriwether Lewis and William Clark witnessed the signing of the [Treaty of Greenville](#), formally ending the conflict—and a visit to Fort Recovery.



On Sunday, the itinerary includes Defiance, the [Fallen Timbers Battlefield](#), and Fort Meigs in Perrysburg. The day concludes with an evening dinner cruise on the Maumee River.

On Monday, we follow the reverse route of [William Henry Harrison's](#) 1813 campaign, including a visit to the site of the Loramie Trading Post, destroyed by General [George Rogers Clark](#) during the Revolutionary War, before returning to our starting hotel. Every day will include additional stops of interest.

The cost of the excursion is \$375, plus hotel accommodations, two meals on your own, and any expenses incurred on Tuesday.

For information and to register, contact [Lou Ritten](#)

### Now Streaming: The Discovery Expedition of St. Charles Video Series

The Discovery Expedition of St. Charles has released a compelling thirteen-part [YouTube video series](#) that brings the opening chapter of the Lewis & Clark Expedition to life. These short films vividly portray key moments from



## The Journey Continues Film Series

by Discovery Expedition / Lewis & Clark Boat House  
Playlist • 13 videos • 237 views

Produced by the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles, MO,  
this series of short films depicts key moments from ...more



the Expedition's earliest days, offering an accessible and engaging introduction for newcomers and enthusiasts alike.

Each episode combines storytelling and historical interpretation to illuminate the people, places, and decisions that shaped the journey west. Whether you're discovering the story for the first time or deepening your knowledge, this series provides a valuable window into the Expedition's beginnings.

Explore the [full series](#) and learn more at [LewisandClarkBoathouse.org](http://LewisandClarkBoathouse.org).

## Learn about the Expedition in St. Joseph, Mo.



The Missouri-Kansas Riverbend Chapter and Southern Prairie Region of the Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance invite you to attend a free April 11 presentation about the Lewis and Clark Expedition's two visits to the area of today's St. Joseph, Mo.

Sarah Elder, manager of [Remington Nature Center](#) in historic St. Joseph, will give the 1:30 p.m. (Central Time) presentation at the [Albrecht-](#)

[Kemper Museum](#), 2818 Frederick Avenue. Sarah is a lively speaker with a passionate interest and educational background in history.

Just a teaser on one happening she might cover: On Sept. 12, 1806, the explorers, on their way to St. Louis, encountered Robert McClellan, who was taking a trading party upriver. He notified them that the general public's belief was that they were dead since no one had heard from the expedition since early April 1805.

If you have questions about the April 11 event, please contact Kay Schaefer, [tchrkay@gmail.com](mailto:tchrkay@gmail.com).

## LCTA Grants in Action

Bicentennial Trail Stewardship

The Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance is helping preserve the Red House Interpretive Center in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, where our grant contributed to the replacement of the structure's roof—now nearing completion alongside new interpretive signage.

This site marks the expedition's November 23, 1803 arrival, when Meriwether Lewis met Commandant Pierre-Louis de Lorimier at the original Red House, the first non-

American settlement encountered on the journey (No Louisiana Purchase yet!)

Originally built in 1797 and reconstructed in 2003 using period techniques, the Red House is a designated High Potential Historic Site and a focal point for interpreting early frontier life.



“This project represents both progress and commitment,” said Executive Director Julie Grueneberg. “The LCTA grant gave us the confidence—and a small financial cushion—to move forward. Thank you for all your help and patience. ”

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## Ohio Riverway Challenge



The Ohio River Way Challenge is an interdisciplinary expedition designed to educate, connect, and celebrate the history, culture, and ecology of the Ohio River and its river towns. Through paddling, storytelling, community engagement, and shared adventure, participants embark on a journey to be inspired and expand upon the important work being done to improve the Ohio River and its neighboring communities.

[Information](#)

**May 10 – June 1, 2026**  
**Huntington West Virginia - Evansville, Indiana**

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Derived from an original photograph by the U.S. Army Center of Military History

## Day by Day Radio Episodes

At [Fort Mandan](#), amongst the [Knife River Villages](#), [the barge](#) is loaded and made ready for its return to [St. Louis](#). It is too windy to load the [pirogues](#) for their journey up the river. Canadian traders [François-Antoine Larocque](#) and [Charles McKenzie](#) say their final goodbyes. Years later, McKenzie writes his recollections of the expedition.

[April 4, 1805](#)

Listen to the full library of [Day by Day broadcasts](#)

Originally aired by [Yellowstone Public Radio](#) during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial observance. 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.

### Of Interest

[Falls of the Ohio Job](#)

[Idaho Trails](#)

[America 250](#)

[American Hiking](#)

### Grants

[EQT Foundation](#)

[Iowa Historical Foundation](#)

[Amazon Literary Partnership](#)

[Hart Family Fund](#)

### Alliance

[Photo Contest](#)

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[Support LCTA](#)

## Play Lewis & Clark Trivia



The Lewis and Clark Expedition encountered many types of wild animals. Some were killed for food; others, in self-defense. Which animal did the expedition famously describe as “extremely hard to kill”?

- A) Elk
- B) Grizzly bear
- C) Bison
- D) Mountain goat
- E) Prairie dogs

[Submit your answer](#)

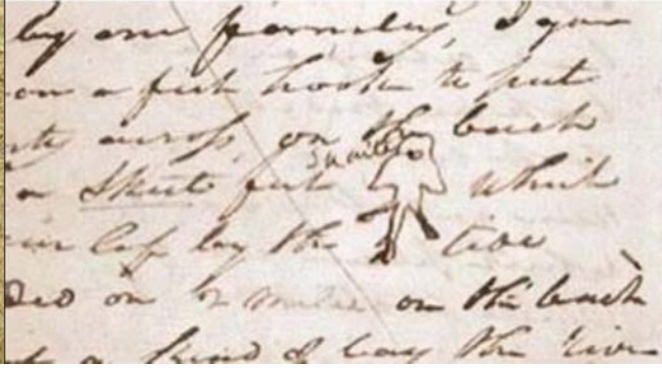
The winner will be emailed a list of Lewis and Clark books to choose one book for the prize. All books are used but in good condition.

The answer to the Trivia Game in our previous Trail News was “stole a canoe.” The theft occurred after failed negotiations with the Clatsops to acquire a canoe needed to make the journey up the Columbia River, following the explorers' 1805-06 winter at Fort Clatsop. [Learn about the theft.](#)

Eight readers submitted the correct answer. When more than one reader has the correct answer, a drawing is done. Marco Pavesi was the winner.

By the way, the National Park Service and organizers of the 2003-06 national Lewis and Clark Bicentennial—as a symbolic act of restitution—formally gave a hard-carved canoe to the Chinook Nation. This was in 2005, 199 years after the theft.

## Words of the Expedition



## Skeet

That's an interesting word. It's an example of the way Lewis and Clark journal-keepers interpreted the spoken words of natives onto paper.

“Skeet” was the spelling of how the explorers heard natives in the Columbia River estuary say the word for skates, a bottom-dwelling fish with a diamond-shaped, long, slender tail, sort of like stingrays, only without a venomous stinger. Natives speared or netted skates in shallow, sandy waters, and then removed the pectoral wings and cut them into long strips to boil, roast or fry over hot stones.

William Clark saw a skate on Jan. 7, 1806, on his way from Fort Clatsop to nearby Clatsop villages along the coast. He wrote in his journal: “on the bank found a Skeet fish which had been lef by the tide.”

In his journal entry for that day, Clark sketched a native holding a large skate. His sketch is shown below the photograph of the skate above. He clearly wasn't an artist, but the sketch helped historians reconstruct the food and cultural exchanges during the expedition's time at Fort Clatsop in the 1805-06 winter.

### 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.

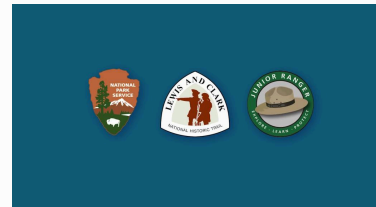
### See all the events on the [LCTE Events Calendar](#)



[Departure Event](#)  
Camp Dubois  
May 9 -10



[Run the Spiral Highway](#)  
Lewiston, ID  
May 16



[Junior Ranger Day](#)  
Big Bone Lick  
May 16

## Volunteer Vacations on the Lolo Trail



The Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance (LCTA) Idaho Chapter, in collaboration with Travelers Rest Connection, The Trust for the Nez Perce Trail, Lewis and Clark Trail Adventures, Runner's Edge Missoula, Idaho Trails Association, and the United States Forest Service, is organizing two volunteer work parties along the historic Lolo Trail this summer.

These multi-day volunteer “vacation” experiences invite participants to contribute directly to the preservation and accessibility of one of the most significant segments of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Volunteers will assist with essential trail stewardship activities, including sign maintenance and corridor clearing, helping ensure safe and meaningful access for future visitors.

The first work session will take place at Musselshell Meadows from June 17–20. A second session is scheduled at Snowbank Camp from July 9–12. Both locations lie along the rugged Lolo Trail corridor, a route historically used by the Nez Perce and traversed by the Corps of Discovery in 1805 and 1806.

Participants will not only support hands-on conservation efforts but also experience the landscape in a uniquely immersive way, working alongside partner organizations and fellow trail stewards.

Those interested in participating in either session are encouraged to contact [Richard Hunt](#) for additional information and registration details.



**Where on the Trail?**

Our newest fun feature invites you to guess the location along the Trail.

[Answer](#)

This aerial photo was taken by aviator and photographer Jim Wark, who began retracing the Lewis and Clark Trail by air in 1999. Many of his photos are featured in articles on our educational website, Discover Lewis & Clark.



[More about Jim and his photos.](#)

[Discover Lewis and Clark](#)

## The Last Word

LCTA Pacific Northwest Region has a new Meetup Group

The Pacific Northwest Region of the Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance has started a new meetup group called PNW-LCTA Meetup. The group was set up to create events that the public can be invited to participate in to better understand and be involved in keeping the story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition alive and to bring public awareness of the impact of it.

The first meetup was held on March 14 where the setup of an informational table at the Oregon Military Museum event called Ourigan to Oregon Educational Event was done. Thelma Haggemiller set up a table of interesting Lewis and Clark items and wore her buckskin outfit that was presented to her by a riverboat company that she was doing narration for in 2005.



The second meetup happened on March 15 when five individuals met at Steamboat Landing in Washougal, Washington, to hike to Captain William Clark Park and back. It was an informative hike with Glen Kirkpatrick pointing out the most likely site where the expedition camped at the mouth of the Sandy River.

The Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail—also known as The Columbia River Dike Trail—follows the Columbia River from Steamboat Landing Park to the border of the Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge.

The third meetup happened on March 22 with a hike on the Confluence Trail located on the Sandy River Delta to the Maya Lin Confluence Bird Blind. The

Maya Lin Bird Blind was part of a larger art project started during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial that showcased the tribes along the trail.

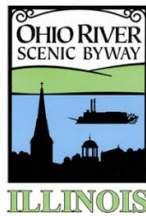
From this quiet spot, you can view birds and wildlife that inhabit the area today as you learn about the flora and fauna—some of which are now extinct, endangered or threatened—that existed there 200 years ago.



Learn about the next Pacific Northwest Meet Up meetup on May 18 at Dismal Nitch east of the Astoria Bridge at the mouth of the Columbia River. Learn more on the Lewis and Clark [Facebook Page](#) and the [LCTE Events Calendar](#).

**Alisha Hamel**  
Oregon Chapter President

## Our Corporate and Travel Sponsors



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[lewisandclark.org](http://lewisandclark.org)



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