



Lewis & Clark Trail News
Bringing the Trail to Life
August 9, 2025



A view seen by few

Winners of the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance's annual photo contest were recently announced. The [winning photos are posted on the LCTA website](#)

The photos will be used as artwork for our 2026 calendar. The calendar is for sale for \$20 as a fundraiser for LCTA programs. [Order yours now.](#)

The winning photos—the best 14 of 58 photos submitted by 16 amateur photographers—are superb in their subjects, composition and lighting, as well as connections to the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Each photo's backstory—where, why and how it was taken—is equally intriguing. We'll publish each photographer's personal story in upcoming newsletters.

Tim Crawford's photo, "High Above the Missouri River," for example, shows a stunning view that few people are fortunate enough to see in person.

Tim was the manager of the [Gates of the Mountain Boat Tours](#) for four decades. The [Gates of the Mountains](#), north of Helena, Montana, is a phenomenon where towering limestone formations give the false appearance of blocking passage on the Missouri River.

Thousands of people have taken boat tours to get close-up river views there. However, few have seen the river as witnessed and recorded by William Clark in his July 19, 1805, journal entry—the “river verry [sic] crooked.”

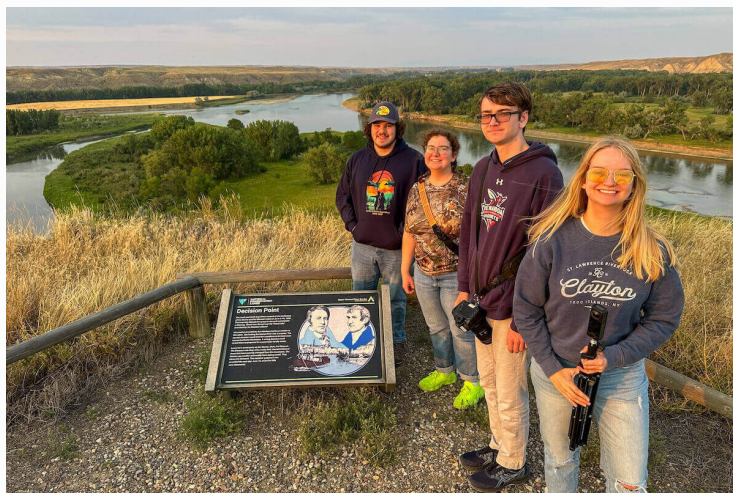
Fortunately, today’s owner of the private land where Clark had walked 220 years ago was Tim’s neighbor. With permission, Tim was able to step, as Clark did, along the same high location overlooking the curvy river. “I prowled around with my camera, taking photos of anything that touched my artistic nature,” Tim recalled. “I took the photo close to where Clark was walking.”

Tim has good advice for would-be photographers of scenery along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Don’t worry about buying expensive photo equipment, he said. “If you are interested in landscape photography, skip the equipment trap and get out there.”

Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance [Annual Gathering](#)

Kansas City, Missouri
September 14 - 17

Featured Program Virtual Reality Starring Lewis & Clark



Shenandoah University Field Video Team at Decision Point

Join us at the Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance Annual Gathering this September in Kansas City for a groundbreaking Virtual Reality demonstration led by Lee Graff of Shenandoah University.

The VR project, "Following in Their Footsteps," brings the Lewis and Clark Expedition to life using



immersive 360° video, expert storytelling, and interactive exploration of key sites from the Trail.

Lee Graff

Developed by Shenandoah students during a cross-country journey from Virginia to Oregon, this experience redefines how we engage with America's early history.

Don't miss this exclusive preview at the Gathering—see what the future of historical interpretation looks like. Also - read more in the [link](#) to Shenandoah Virtual Reality



Virtual Reality Headset

An Incredible Birding Day

On August 8, 1804, Meriwether Lewis saw an amazing sight: a magnificent flock of American white pelicans—hundreds of them—on a Missouri River sandbar.



During their expedition, the explorers identified 134 species or well-described subspecies of birds, a number that would certainly have impressed President Thomas Jefferson, an enthusiastic bird watcher.

As Lewis described in his [journal](#) 221 years ago, the explorers had seen only a few waterfowl since leaving Camp River Dubois in May. But, as the expedition moved up the river near what is today Little Sioux, Iowa, Lewis saw “a great number of feathers floating down the river...those feathers had a very extraordinary appearance as they appeared in such quantities to cover pretty generally sixty or seventy yards of the breadth of the river.”

Then, continuing upstream among floating feathers for three miles, the

explorers “were surprised by the appearance of a flock of Pillican,” covering several acres on a sandbar. Lewis decided to kill one for closer study. The flock swooped into the air, so thick that all Lewis had to do was fire a random shot to bring a pelican down.

His examination was thorough. He remarked on the qualities of plumage and measured from the beak to toe (5 feet, 8 inches), the whitish-yellow beak (1 foot, 3 inches), and, among other examined features, a wingspan of 9 feet, 3 inches. (Years later, ornithologists determined the American white pelican had the second longest wingspan, behind the California condor, of North American birds).

[Video of American white pelicans fishing](#)

Silent Auction Returns for the Annual Gathering!

A treasured tradition at the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance Annual Gathering, the Silent Auction features a unique collection of Lewis and Clark-themed items—including books, artwork, jewelry, quilts, memorabilia, and other treasures.

Proceeds from the auction directly support the William P. Sherman Library and Archives at the LCTA office in Great Falls, Montana. Home to more than 3,000 rare and contemporary books and relevant materials about the Corps of Discovery, the library is a vital resource for historians, researchers, and Lewis and Clark enthusiasts from across the country.

Featured auction items this year include:

- A rare Pendleton blanket designed exclusively for the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.
- A collectible set of five action figure dolls representing Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, York, Sacagawea, and Charbonneau—each boxed and accessorized.

Of Interest

[Sacagawea NY Times](#)

[Voices of the Plains](#)

[SCIL Virtual Reality](#)

[Sioux City Encampment](#)

Grants

[Internship Funding](#)

[Off Road Recreation](#)

[Boating Recreation](#)

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Alliance

[Apply for LCTA Grants](#)

[Travel Magazines](#)

[Event Calendar](#)

[Book Maps Exhibit](#)

Play Lewis & Clark Trivia

Meriwether Lewis began his long exploration when he departed Pittsburgh, Pa., in 1803 with the barge (some people today incorrectly call it a “keelboat”), red pirogue and a white pirogue. Most people think there were only these three boats, but...

What other boat did he have with him?

Submit the correct answer to be entered into a drawing to win James P. Ronda’s *Lewis and Clark Among the Indians*, a classic work that details the encounters between the explorers and Native Americans. The book provides an in-depth analysis of the complex relationships, cultural exchanges and political underpinnings.

[Submit your answer](#)



Christian Coppedge won the trivia contest drawing in our last newsletter. He correctly answered, “eulachon.” He won Lawrence R. Reno’s book *The Life and Times of Nathaniel Hale Pryor: Explorer, Soldier, Frontiersman and Spokesman for the Osage*.

On Feb. 24, 1806, Lewis recorded that Coboway, the Clatsop chief, visited Fort Clatsop to sell hats, sturgeon, and “a species of small fish which now begin to run and are taken in great quantities...by means of skimming [*sic*] or scooping nets.” Lewis was so impressed by the small eulachon that he drew its likeness in his journal. [Learn more about Lewis and the eulachon](#)

Explore, Learn, and Earn a Patch!

The LCTA Patch Program is part of our Youth Activity Project, serving individuals aged 10 to 17 who participate in scouting, Boys and Girls Clubs, homeschooling, or other youth organizations and programs. The program is an inspiring way to get youngsters to engage

with history and explore the outdoors.



To earn the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery Patch, an individual needs to complete five activities. None are tough, but they do require learning, planning, note-taking, reading, observing nature, sharing information, and online exploration of [Discover Lewis & Clark](#), LCTA's popular educational website.

Learn more [here](#)



Watch

[Searching for the Shoshone](#)

Episode 9 of the Shenandoah University film series. The Expedition journey continues facing the challenges of portaging around the Great Falls of the Missouri, arriving at the Headwaters, and Sacagawea contributes greatly in establishing a critical connection with the Shosone as the Expedition leaves the water route and ventures overland.



Watch

[How Watkuweis saved the Corps](#)

Discover the powerful and often-overlooked story of Watkuweis—a Nez Perce woman whose compassion changed the course of American history. Watkuweis's plea to her people to show kindness instead of hostility played a crucial role in the expedition's survival and success.

BIG MEDICINE

YORK OUTDOORS

Scheduled dates across Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

August 13 Nebraska City, NE

September 6 Hartford, IL

September 9 Columbia, MO

September 12 Hohenwald, TN

September 16 Missoula, MT

September 27 Richland, WA

October 14 Great Falls, MT

October 22 Portland, OR

November 9 Newburgh, IN

December 4 Helena, MT



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

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.



[Ohio River Cleanup](#)
New Albany, IN
August 24



[Lewis & Clark Saltmakers](#)
Seaside, OR
September 6



[Amy Grisak](#)
Great Falls, MT
September 9



Explore Greenville, Ohio

The Beginning of Lewis and Clark!
Uncover a fascinating chapter of American history in Greenville, Ohio, where the seeds of the Lewis & Clark Expedition were first planted! In August 1795, the Treaty of Greenville was signed here, officially ending the Northwest Indian War. It was also in Greenville that Meriwether Lewis first met William Clark, forming the friendship that would later power their epic Corps of Discovery journey. Lewis's court-martial trial that same year likely led to his transfer under Clark's command.

The [Garst Museum](#) now houses Lewis & Clark artifacts, Treaty items, and engaging, hands-on displays. Two brand-new exhibits, installed in 2024, recount the nearly disastrous first meeting between the explorers—a duel nearly occurred!

On August 3, 2025, Greenville celebrated the 230th anniversary of the Treaty, with Lewis and Clark portrayed during the original proceedings.

Whether you're a history buff or curious traveler, Greenville invites you to walk in their footsteps—and uncover stories rarely told.



Fresh Perspectives

New and updated articles were recently placed on [Discover Lewis & Clark](#), the Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance's popular educational website, which is accessed more than a million times a year by educators, students, researchers, and Lewis & Clark aficionados.

The website is the world's foremost online repository of information about the expedition, the lives of explorers, their interactions with Native Americans, wildlife and landscape, the historical times of the expedition's era, and a multitude of other important information. Without exaggerating, it can easily be said that the website, with more than 2,300 pages, has "all things Lewis and Clark."

The webmaster is Kris Townsend, who is also the webmaster for the [Lewis & Clark Trail Alliance](#) website and our travel website, [Lewis and Clark Trail Experience](#). Kris's volunteer work, though, goes far beyond the proverbial nuts and bolts of keeping websites running. He is also the editor and a major writer for Discovering Lewis & Clark. [Learn more about Kris](#).

As Kris notes, history is a dynamic interpretation of what may have occurred. As more research is conducted, the stories of historical events sometimes need to be revised, updated or added to for a more accurate portrayal. Such is the case with aspects of the Lewis and Clark adventure, he says.

Kris updated information or wrote new articles for the following topics on Discover Lewis & Clark:

- [Bearberry: A look at its ethnobotanical uses](#)
- [Bee Balm \(Horsemint\): Food and medical benefits](#)
- [Bulrushes: A lightweight plant with valuable uses](#)
- [Clarkia: A beautiful plant named for William Clark](#)
- [Cottonwoods: The importance of the trees to the expedition](#)
- [Sagebrush: A plant of wonderful fragrance and many uses](#)
- [Smoking on the expedition](#)
- [Tobacco used by Indians](#)
- [Western Sweet Cicely: Sacagawea's agreeable food](#)

Kris also updated 37 website pages with illustrations by Roger Cooke, an artist

whose works bring life and accuracy to the Lewis and Clark story. [View Roger Cooke's artwork.](#)

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