

## **Valley Pride article for March 15 Milestones** **Gene Wiggers, VP Board member**

As plans for a statue representing Chief Pocatello began to become a reality, there was discussion of what the sign marking the site might eventually look like. Originally, it was envisioned as a common sign with appropriate wording. It soon became apparent that an official state historical marker should stand there.

The reasoning was that it would eventually appear on the Idaho list of historical markers, making it a destination for travelers, students of history and tour busses. Official signs along I-15 would mark the place where the sign stands as an official historical site, drawing more travelers from the many on I-15 who pass by Pocatello, on their way to other places of interest.

There were, however, many obstacles to be overcome before the sign could become reality.

The City of Pocatello had to give permission for Valley Pride to use the site.

Both the Idaho State Highway Department and the Idaho Department of Transportation had to approve the site, the positioning of and the erection of the sign.

The wording on the sign had to be accepted by the members of the Chief Pocatello family, who served on the “Bring the Chief Home” committee, then accepted by the Idaho Historical Society as accurate and appropriate, in addition to meeting the standards for placement on an official historical marker.

The Valley Pride “Bring the Chief Home” committee had to approve of the wording.

The Department of Corrections had to build the sign and print the wording.

The sign then had to be erected by the Idaho State Highway Department.

The message that the planning committee repeatedly received was that the sign could not possibly be completed by the time that the dedication had been planned, July 26, 2008. It was early spring of 2008.

A “Bring the Chief Home” sub-committee accepted the challenge and, with a united commitment, went to work on the task, ably assisted by the Pocatello Convention and Visitor’s Bureau.

The official historical marker for the Chief Pocatello statue site, now found just south of the Pocatello Visitor’s Center on South Forth, was erected on Tuesday, July 1, over three weeks before the dedication of the statue!

For the Valley Pride Board, Gene Wiggers