

many are all that anxious to climb to the top, but we split into two groups and head out after a good threat brief. Jenny and I find out that we just may be getting a little old. The kids breeze right along, but it just about kills us. At about the half way point, we run into Kyle and his wife, Audrey, heading back down. It's the last we see of them, since they're heading home.

We continue plodding along the trail. Maybe if we went at our own pace instead of trying to stay up with teenagers we wouldn't hurt so much. For the first time on the trip it's cloudy and sprinkling just a bit, with thunder way off in the distance. At least it keeps the heat down. Jenny finally sends me on ahead when we're approaching the top. As usual, she's

worrying about the kids. I finally reach the top where I find the entire group enjoying the view, especially a storm way off in the distance and the forest fire that's burning over near Deadwood. After a few photos I send them on down while I repack the cameras. Shortly after I start down, Joe shows up with Jenny in tow. She's too stubborn to start up a mountain without getting to the top. After they return from the top, we rejoin the group and give them instructions to meet us in the lodge at the bottom. On the way down, the rain got a little heavier and the temperature actually started to get a little chilly. When we finally joined the kids at the bottom of the trail, nobody was interested in the planned swim in Sylvan Lake. We actually had to run the heater in the bus on the way back to camp.

On the way to camp, since everyone was tired, we stopped in the town of Custer had pizza for supper. It was great, especially since we got it cheap. Customers before us left before their order was done, so we got it almost free.

Several of the kids had expressed some concern before starting up the mountain that they might not be up to the climb. I guess we made it sound too hard. Many of them had a real sense of accomplishment and did much better than they thought they would. All were impressed by the view (five states, SD, ND, NE, WY and MT). While a storm was coming in and we were covered with clouds, the Badlands we had been in several days ago were still lit up by the sun. Everybody slept extremely well that night.

Day 10 - July 6, 2002

Sad to say, we packed up camp to leave the Black Hills right after breakfast. Several comments about the we had yesterday morning. Stopped in Keystone to let the kids wander around the shops a little before we left. On the way into Rapid City we stopped at a little tourist spot where the students panned for gold. They really got into the spirit. Jessica was the only one who found gold, but several found semiprecious stone and pyrite.

Departed the gold panning area and arrived at the Journey Museum, where we saw a great IMAX Theater movie and toured the museum. Met moon and dad again for the final time. The museum is really educational, chronicling the history of the entire area from prehistoric times to present time.

After touring the museum, we ate at Golden Corral before getting on the road again, heading for Wyoming and Devil's Tower. Along the way, we pass near Deadwood where they were finally getting the forest fire there under control.

The scenery leading into Devil's

Tower is hard to describe. If anything, it's even prettier than the Black Hills, to me at least. We caught our first look at the tower when it's still about 15 miles away. For the first time this trip, I've got to admit that I'm disappointed that the group as a whole doesn't seem to appreciate the country we're passing through. Sometimes I need to remember that when I was younger, I was probably the same way. They finally get more interested as we get closer to the tower. Devil's Tower is undoubtedly the oddest terrain feature I've ever seen. Many people, to include several among our group, find the area invokes spiritual feelings. To understand, you just have to go there and see it yourself.

As soon as we arrived in the campground started a fire to cook hamburgers. Almost immediately, the campground host showed up and told me there was a state-wide ban on outdoor fires. In fact, people weren't even supposed to smoke outdoors due to the high risk of fire. So crank up the Coleman Stove again. That night we were entertained by "Buffalo Bill" Boycott, with old-time music, cowboy poetry and best of all, the story of Custer's last stand told in Indian sign language (from the Indian's side of course).

The next morning we had bacon and homemade fried apple pies, cooked over a Coleman stove. Once Jenny showed them how, the kids set up an assembly line, one rolling out the biscuits, one filling them with cooked apples and one frying the pies. It was great.

Afterwards we spent a little time in the small museum before walking around the tower. There were about 10 people climbing the tower in sev-

eral small groups. We stopped and watched each group along the way. Jenny thought we'd have to tie up Andy. He seems to be part Mountain Goat, and thinks he has to climb anything with sides. Andy swears he'll come back out and climb the tower someday and we believe him. It's really something to watch the climbers.

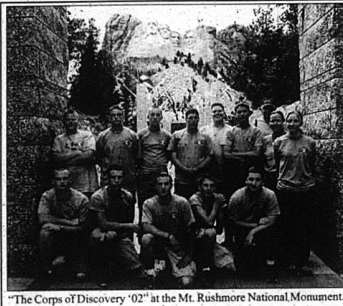
After supper, we heat up water and have supervised hair washing and good prairie baths. It's been several days since the last shower, but everyone is doing a great job of staying clean, with baths from a wash bowl. We hit the sack early for an early departure tomorrow morning. It's clouding up bad, and looks like a real bad storm coming in. Lots of wind and lightning.

Part 3: Corps of Discovery '02

Tavels West continues next week into the Little Big Horn National Battlefield, Big Horn Mountains, Yellowstone National Park, Custer State Park, Crazy Horse Monument, Wind Cave National Park and the trip home.



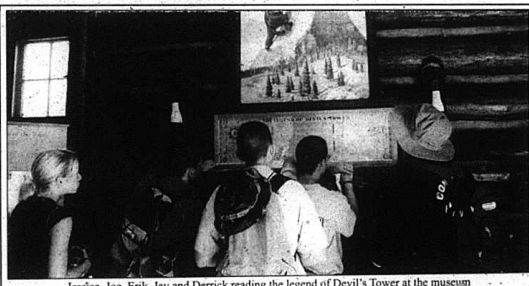
Waiting to board the 1800s train in Hill City, South Dakota



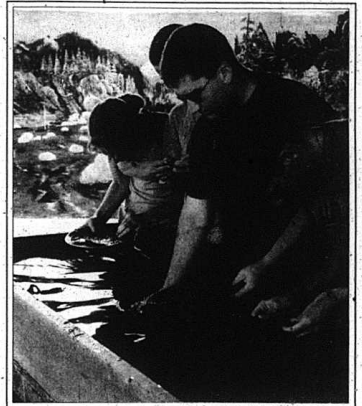
"The Corps of Discovery '02" at the Mt. Rushmore National Monument.



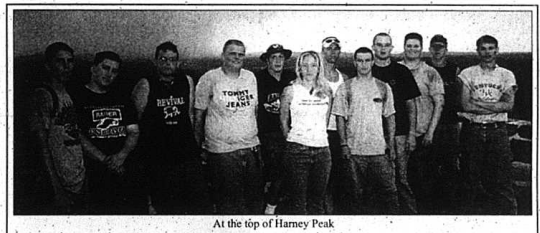
Mt. Rushmore National Monument



Jessica, Joe, Erik, Jay and Derrick reading the legend of Devil's Tower at the museum



Jessica, Jay, Justin and Joe panning for gold



At the top of Harney Peak



Corps of Discovery '02 members posing with "Buffalo Bill" storyteller at Devil's Tower

ATTENTION INCOMING 6th GRADERS

It's time for school to start. Do you have everything that you need to get the school year off to a good start? Be sure you have done your *homework* and turn everything in the first day of school.

All incoming 6th graders are required to have a second physical and an up-to-date immunization certificate.

Physical: This must be on the current Kentucky form and done since August, 2001. Students participating in any sport will be required to turn in a separate *athletic* physical form.

Immunization: This must be on a Kentucky form. Incoming 6th graders are required to have a 2nd MMR and 3 doses of Hepatitis-B. The document must be signed, dated, and have an expiration date.

The physical and immunization certificate are required the day the student enrolls for school. However, an appointment card showing that the student is scheduled for a physical in August is acceptable.

Please bring these to RCMS Orientation on August 8 (6:00 - 8:00) or turn in the first day of school, August 15.

If you have any questions concerning these, please call the District School Nurse Jeannine Parsons at 256-2125.

Health Services

Roundstone School Pre-Registration for New Students

**Dates: Monday, August 5th - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Wednesday, August 7th - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

You will need to bring the following:

- Physical (must be on Kentucky form)
- Immunization certificate
- Eye examination (only for kindergarten and preschool students) - must be from an optometrist or ophthalmologist
- Copy of birth certificate (must be certified copy from the state - if you do not have a certified copy, you may pick up an application or request one at the school)
- Social Security card

**If you have any questions,
please call the school at 256-2235**