Daily Nebraskan

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us as we passed through Oshkosh, Lisco and Broadwater. The railroad tracks were close to the road. We passed trains constantly. When my family and I used to drive to my grandparents' houses, my mother would tell me to wave at the caboose. Well, I haven't waved since childhood, so I took a chance. A friendly conductor in an orange shirt waved back, just like in the

olden days. We arrived in Bridgeport as the sun was creeping down in a fiery red haze. It's spherical shaped seemed to flatten as it fell closer to the earth. We drove through the sleepy town. It was getting darker and our chances of reaching Chimney Rock diminished.

We pulled to the side of the road. The sunset was incredible. The sky was washed in a dusky orangepink, then smeared into a light hot pink. Butch caught the splendid science scene. He was attacked by a truckstop in Scottsbluff. The only

search of a gas station and an agenda for the rest of the evening. We encountered our first officer of the law, but only for directions.

8:30 p.m. MST Plan B

Instead of spending the night in Bridgeport or head back to Ogallala, we decided to drive onto Scottsbluff and spend the night in a truckstop.

It was dark as we passed Chimney Rock. Lights at the base of the formation added an eerie glow to the rock and the landscape

The darkness engulfed us. There were no street lights, only the moonlight that shone white, but not enough. We arrived in the metropolis of western Nebraska -Gering and Scottsbluff.

Our first plan of action was to find food. Godfather's. We eventucanvas, yet another national con- ally found out that there was not a

swarm of mosquitos as he snapped. 24-hour restaurant was Country We returned to Bridgeport in Kitchen.

Having been on the road for 17 ours, exhaustion had taken the life out of us. We found a parking lot, empty except for a state car parked under a light. We pulled up next to it, reclined the seats in the Chevette and fell asleep.

August 23, 1988 4:00 a.m. MST Good Day Sunshine We awoke to the same scene we

fell asleep to - blackness, not darkness, just black.

We headed out to Chimney Rock to await the sunrise. I forgot that we hadn't set the watch back to mountain time, so we started out too early. We pulled into the little parking area at 4:30 a.m. It was still dark, we were still tired, and we were now cold. It must have been about 40 degrees.

The sky was incredible, again. There were million and trillions and zillions of stars. It seemed like if you looked hard enough you could see

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the Milky Way.

As light started to seep into the sky about 6 a.m., I could read the historic markers.

Rising 470 feet above the North Platte River Valley, Chimney Rock stands to the south as the most celebrated of all natural formations along the overland routes of

California, Oregon and Utah. Chimney Rock served as an early landmark for fur traders, trappers and mountain

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Thursday, September 1, 1988

men as they made their way from the Rockies to the

Missouri River. To later emigrants,

the solitary spire marked the end of plains travel and

the rugged mountain portion of

ney Rock is composed of brule clay with interlayers of volcanic ash and

arickaree sandstone. It was incred-

Another marker said that Chim-

the beginning of

their journey.



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