

Senior finds 'thrill' in Lincoln

As a University of Nebraska-Lincoln senior, I've lived in this two-horse town for four years. Four school years, that is.

The first year shouldn't even count. I spent every available moment in Omaha, talking about Omaha or thinking about Omaha ...

... when I wasn't planning what I would do when I got to Omaha, humming the Omaha song and clapping wildly when anyone mentioned my hometown.

Every Friday afternoon, as soon as my classes were over — and sometimes even before, I would grab a change of clothes and rush to meet my friend, and fellow freshman, Robbie. He also had an Omaha fixation (her name was Amy, and she was still in high school).

Robbie, who wanted to be called Rob, drove a white Geo Metro, and he drove it fast. Sometimes on the way to Omaha and home, the Metro's speedometer hovered between 80 and 90 all the way.

We would hit the interstate, leaving Lincoln by 3 p.m. — and sometimes we'd make it to the Papillion/Bellevue exit by 3:30 p.m.

Sure, it was dangerous, but I didn't care. I would lean back with my eyes closed, listening to Robbie's too, too loud Cure tapes, and imagine I was propelling homeward at the speed of light.

I would just ... thrill when I saw the little, green "Omaha City Limits" sign.

If Robbie wasn't going home for the weekend, I panicked. A fall snowstorm almost grounded me in Lincoln one Friday afternoon. But I found someone going home.

The snow and ice forced us to travel about 10 miles per hour, and, looking back, I think we almost died a few times on the way. But I didn't care. The overturned cars and semis turned to the side of the road didn't scare me.



Rainbow Rowell

"For me, Omaha was more a state of consciousness than a place."

All I could think about was getting home, going home. Nothing was as scary as imagining an entire weekend in Lincoln.

What was in Omaha that I couldn't stand being 50 miles away? My family, my best friend, a boyfriend who wasn't really a boyfriend. But it was more than that, more than them.

For me, Omaha was more a state of consciousness than a place. I could handle things better there. I could think better there. Even sleeping and breathing was easier, and the food tasted better.

Little by little, I got used to Lincoln. More than anything, it just became impossible for me to spend so much time in Omaha. I needed to study, to work on projects or at the Daily Nebraskan.

And somehow, sometime during the past three years, Lincoln became home.

I didn't even realize it until this summer while housesitting and working in Des Moines, Iowa.

When I was sitting around Des Moines, in someone else's house, on someone else's couch, wishing that

someone else's television was equipped with cable — I missed home, and that, for me, meant Lincoln.

As far as cities go, I still prefer Omaha to the capital city. It has more places, more people, more stuff.

And I stopped there for a few days on my way back from Des Moines. I walked around the Old Market district by myself one day. Everything felt familiar, the streets, the stores, the shabbily-dressed, green-haired 12-year-olds lurking in every doorway.

But I felt out of place. Like I had traveled back in time and was 16 again. If I would have stepped into the ice cream parlor, I was sure I would see all of my high school friends. We could sit together in a wooden booth long after we finished our waffle cones, making eyes at the brown-eyed soda jerk.

As I turned each corner, I half expected to run into a long-gone version of me, knowing that my younger self would probably be too cool to make eye contact.

I still know that city better than any other, remember a thousand shortcuts, and feel like I belong there. But the me that belongs there isn't me anymore.

After a day and a half in Omaha, I threw together a change of clothes and jumped in my car, hoping I would hit the interstate before rush hour.

I didn't approach Robbie speeds, but I treated the speed limit as more of a guideline than a law. I counted down the landmarks, the gas stations and rest stops along the way.

And when I came to that overpass by Memorial Stadium with the great, big, welcoming red "N", I just ... thrilled.

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... doomed to repeat it.

This week in history

Southeast Asia headlines 1975 summer world events

Highlights from the Daily Nebraskan Back-to-School Issue August 20, 1975 article titled "Summer's world events":

The World

The war in Viet Nam ended. The Saigon government surrendered unconditionally, and Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops occupied the capital. In Paris, the Viet Cong's Provisionary Revolutionary Government announced it would adopt a neutralist nonaligned foreign policy in South Viet Nam.

American Helicopters evacuated about 1,000 Americans and 6,000 Vietnamese from Saigon in the hours before the capital surrendered. In all, more than 100,000 Vietnamese fled their country.

An American cargo ship and its 39-member crew were recovered after the vessel was seized by Cambodian gunboats and taken to the island of Koh Tang, 30 miles off the Cambodian coast. A force of about 160 U.S. Marines attacked the island in the mistaken belief that the crew of

economic and diplomatic sanctions imposed in 1964 against Cuba. The United States was among the nations voting in favor of a resolution letting OAS members determine their trade and diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Portugal's military regime curtailed the role of political parties in the government and announced plans to help implement the military's goal of socialism.

Indira Gandhi, prime minister of India, was found guilty by a judge of corruption in her 1972 election campaign. Shortly afterward Gandhi began a crackdown against political opponents while assuming greater power by declaring a national emergency.

The Suez Canal was reopened to traffic eight years after its closing during the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat said the reopening of the canal constituted a "contribution to peace."

Vice President Nelson Rockefeller turned over to President Ford the Rockefeller Commission's report on the Central Intelligence Agency, and said the study turned up some CIA wrongdoing but no widespread illegalities. Meanwhile, Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said he has evidence that the CIA was involved in "murder plots." The commission recommended that external controls over the CIA be strengthened.

CIA Director William Colby released a report that admits the agency and its agents "overstepped proper bounds" and carried out "improper actions" in illegal domestic activities. But Colby said the misdeeds were "few and were quite exceptional to the thrust of the agency's activities and have been fully terminated."

Alice Olson of Frederick, MD, said she would sue the CIA for the "wrongful death" of her husband, Frank Olson, who committed suicide in 1953 after the CIA gave him LSD without his knowledge.

American and Soviet manned space vehicles were linked successfully 140 miles above the earth, Apollo astronauts Thomas Stafford, Donald Slayton and Vance Brank exchanged gifts, traded space-craft visits and shared meals with Soyuz cosmonauts Alexei Leonov and Valery Kubasov.

The three American astronauts were hospitalized in Honolulu for treatment of lung irritation caused by inhaling fumes that filled the Apollo space craft during its re-entry.

President Ford urged Americans to welcome refugees from Vietnam. Ford told a press conference that he was "disappointed and very upset" by opposition of some Americans to bringing the refugees to the United States.

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the Mayaguez was being held there. The crewmen, who had been taken to the Cambodian mainland, were released by their captors.

The Defense Department said 15 Americans were killed, 50 wounded and three were missing following the operation. In Thailand 23 other GIs were killed when their helicopter crashed while they were being flown to an air base for possible use in the Mayaguez rescue.

President Gerald Ford told other leaders of the 15-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Brussels that the United States would keep its forces in Europe at full strength until an East-West agreement on mutual troop reduction is fashioned.

Ford and the leaders of 34 other nations signed a document on European security and cooperation at a summit meeting in Helsinki, Finland. The summit made legitimate the borders of East European nations.

The Organization of American States (OAS) voted 16 to 3 to end

College not a time to float

It's difficult not to notice freshmen coming to campus.

First-year college students wear continuous grins on their faces, from the week before school starts until semester's end. This year will be no different.

This new batch of freshmen have been smiling as they move into their new living quarters. They have been smiling as they buy their books early and snatch anything embossed with the Husker logo.

Frankly, all their damned smiling is getting on my nerves. But I can hardly blame them.

They are anxious for classes to begin — so excited just to be here, so happy just for the chance at the college experience.

We upperclassmen once had those feelings. But sadly, somewhere along the collegiate road, that enthusiasm died in most of us.

Maybe we started to take ourselves too seriously. Maybe we began to worry too much. Or maybe we started taking this whole thing for granted.

Earlier this summer, one evening after helping my father at the farm, the Old Man asked me if I was really enjoying my college life.

Caught a bit off guard, I mumbled, "Mmm ... I don't know."

I stared at him.

I stared at his shirt, wringing wet with sweat. I stared at his hands, roughed and soiled from years of hard labor at the grain mill — a job he has had since the age of 17.

Then I stared at his eyes. In those eyes, I saw more age than the old man deserves. I saw some regret and a few unfulfilled dreams. And I saw



Jamie Karl

"Now, three years after my first day of college, I have finally got it put into perspective."

disappointment from the answer I had just mumbled.

My father had not been fortunate enough to go to college. As a result, he was stuck with the alternative. That alternative could have easily been my situation, as well.

Now, three years after my first day of college, I have finally got it put into perspective.

College is a time when we must succeed academically and find our full potential. It is a time when we need to learn responsibility and independence. And, yes, it is a time when we should discover who we are and what we believe.

But most importantly, it should be a time to enjoy ourselves.

College can be the most special experience of a person's life. And here, there is no reason for it not to be. UNL has so much to offer. Yet,

you must want to be a participant. So many students, mostly upperclassmen, expect college life to come to them, automatically.

They go through their college days, not wanting to meet new people, not wanting to get involved on campus. Then they graduate, not knowing what they have missed.

So perhaps it has taken a while, but at least I've figured it out in time: You must picture this campus as more than just the place where your classes are held; you need to accept this place as home.

You must see the people around you as more than just your teachers and classmates; you need to hold these folks as your friends, as your extended family.

You must do more than just take up space on this campus; you need to become a part of it.

If you go through college keeping to yourself, you will go through it very miserable. And you will graduate very bitter.

Don't take this all for granted; college is a grand time of life, indeed.

It is the time when we have few obligations, allowing us to enjoy the prime of life. It is the time for us to mature and define who we are, while we raise a little hell. It is the time for us to make our abiding friendships, inside and outside the classroom.

Bottom line: College is the time for us to have the time of our lives.

I just wish it hadn't taken me so long to figure that out.

Karl is a senior news-editorial major, and Daily Nebraskan wire editor and columnist.