

TRI-STATE EXCURSION



MONTANA • SOUTH DAKOTA • WYOMING



DAY THREE

The third and final day of the excursion will be somewhat hectic at the start. Students should roll out of bed mindful of total time necessary to eat breakfast, complete personal tasks, check out of rooms, and board the bus so that departure can occur as scheduled. The single stop today is Devils Tower National Monument.

Rising abruptly over 1,250 feet above ground, the stunning monolith was designated the country's first official national monument in 1906 by President Theodore Roosevelt. Here, students will have time to enjoy one of the moderate walking trails, lined with gorgeous flora, circumventing the very base of the stunning monolith. For the surrounding Indian tribes, Devils Tower holds religious meaning. Along the pathways, walkers will no doubt encounter numerous Native American prayer bundles . . . of course, all such offerings should be culturally/spiritually respected and left completely undisturbed.

According to Kiowa legend, Devils Tower was created when a boy mysteriously turned into a giant bear. His seven frightened sisters took refuge by hopping onto a tree stump that grew bigger and bigger. The angry bear clawed the bark all around in a futile attempt to reach the girls.

While students filter back to the Visitor Center after the hiking activity, everybody is invited to partake in the Frisbee-toss festivity created in remembrance of two former APUSH Excursioners who passed on too young—Nehemiah Larimer and Thomas Pfeifle. Both young men exuded, in many ways, pure enjoyment for life in general and huge appreciation of the outdoors in particular.

If the weather is picnic-friendly, everyone can join for early lunch at the site's outdoor tables (otherwise, sustenance will occur on-the-road at McDonald's in Spearfish). Perhaps an opportune moment will arise during the Devils Tower morning for a large-group photo before skedaddling home to Rapid City.

