



Back in the last century it was a common practice to throw one's "two cents worth" into a conversation. Seeing as this is the new century, the new millennium even, with inflation and all, maybe 2 cents has increased to a nickels worth in 2005.

From the late 1950s to the mid 1960s I collected many different U.S. coins. By far my favorite was the Buffalo Nickel. You know, the one with the Indian on the front minted from 1913-1938.

It's been a huge joy and blessing to see my first live and in the wild buffalo on the walk across America. I know technically buffalo are bison, but until they rename the Buffalo Nickel the Bison Nickel I'm calling buffalo, buffalo. What magnificent creatures of God's creation these beasts are. My first buffalo came into view at 300 yards. Even at that distance I knew this wasn't a herd of Black Angus or Brahma's. Their massive heads and different body shape really grabbed my attention causing me to become covered with goose bumps from 300 yards away! After 54 years of living on planet Earth, I'd finally seen the real deal.

Walking America over the ensuing months I was blessed to get within 100 yards, 50 yards, and finally as close as forty feet from these animals. Wow!! One time I hopped a fence and walked within 100 feet of a bull, and many cows with their calves. The people with me at the time were thankful I didn't try to get right next to those bison. Guess it was kinda dumb of me, especially seeing as there were mommas with young-uns.

Praise God someone with power and influence said enough is enough around 1900 after countless millions had been slaughtered for thrills or a few body parts! Praise God when the buffalo numbers dipped below 1000 it became time for the wanton slaughter to cease! Praise God the count didn't fall to one or zero as it has with other species, before we changed our ways!

John Wayne, Rin Tin Tin, and the American Calvary were heroes of mine in the 1950s and 1960s. They tamed the wild west and put the savage Indians in their place. Mickey Mantle is on my American hero list too for driving a baseball wild, but he tamed New York City, not the west.

Why I enjoyed the Buffalo Nickel as a child so much is unknown, but I did. Maybe it was because of what I was privileged to learn later on as a young adult.

During the early 1970s I read "Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee" and cried for weeks and months afterwards. If only one-tenth of this book was true, I'd been seriously lied to by my government, schools, TV, newspapers, Hollywood, every thing and everybody. For whatever it's worth, more than one-tenth of that book is true!

Don't get me wrong, I'm not a rose-colored glasses person concerning Native Americans. They over-hunted the land, created pollution, fought amongst themselves, and got stoned. But the dirty rotten truth is they were mightily ripped off by white Americans and Europeans.

It's been interesting walking 15,000 miles west of the Mississippi River in Indian country out where the west was won. It's been interesting reading the many historical markers along U.S. highways. Ninety-five percent of the historical markers concerning



people of color, no matter when they were erected, or who sponsored them, are written in a prejudicial way. You know the terminology, "The Indians massacred the settlers and the soldiers quelled the Indian uprising." They don't say the whites massacred the Indians and the Native inhabitants quelled the settlers uprising.

Praise God a few of these historical markers tell it straight! One was describing a treaty that was broken. It stated the Indians could have this land they were forcibly moved to until "the sun no longer rises and the waters no longer run downhill". After two generations the Indians' new land was deemed too valuable for farmland and the treaty was broken - so much for the earth's rotation and gravity.

Some years back the Pope finally publicly apologized for the Crusades that had occurred 800 years earlier. I wonder if an American President or a big time Christian leader will publicly apologize to the original settlers of North America before 800 years roll on by for the atrocities committed against them in the name of New World Freedom, Economics, God, Jesus, and so on.

I wonder if these leaders will ever publicly apologize to the descendants of slaves for the atrocities committed

against African human beings in the name of New World Freedom, Economics, God, Jesus, and so on.

I wonder what is going on during our life times that 800 years from now some person of power and authority will publicly apologize to those wronged on this earth for the atrocities committed against them in the name of New World Freedom, Economics, God, Jesus, and so on.

I don't wonder how powerful a sincere no strings attached apology can melt away hurts. I've been seriously wronged many times on this walk by law enforcement and apologized to only once. Yes, I melted...Praise God for those who can humble themselves the way Jesus Christ did 2000 years ago and the way HE suggests we do today.

Till the next time...

In Christ's love,

Don

Miles to date: 14,471

Money picked up along road: \$1,122.72

Unsolicited money given by motorists: \$3,238.67

Of 1,169 nights:

516 nights homeless

653 nights cared for by humanity

The Last Great Buffalo Hunt - June 20, 1882

Hiddenwood Cliff, directly opposite, across Hiddenwood Creek, was an ancient landmark for buffalo-hunting Indian tribes who often camped in this valley. It was here and within a 30-mile area in 1882-1883 that the American buffalo made their last stand.

The last great buffalo hunt began on or about June 20, 1882, when some 2,000 Sioux men, women and children traveled here from Ft. Yates to hunt the 50,000 buffalo that had migrated into the area. As they jumped their horses out of Hiddenwood Creek they saw the hills black with grazing buffalo as far as the eye could see. In three days they killed 5,000 buffalo, west up this valley, farther north on Cedar Creek, and to the south. They butchered and hung the meat to dry.

Within 16 months the last of the free-ranging bison were gone. Although most of the estimated 60 to 75 million were likely killed by white hide hunters, these last buffalo were hunted by Native Americans in traditional ways on what were then Indian reservation lands.

Lt. Col. George A. Custer and the 7th Cavalry camped at the base of Hiddenwood Cliff on July 8, 1874, led here by Indian scouts on their way to explore the Black Hills for gold. The camp held 2,000 men, 1,000 cavalry horses, 900 mules, 300 beef cattle, 150 wagons. A reporter described the scene, "For a background a sunset as gorgeously beautiful as any that ever glowed... and a high, jagged bluff called Pa ha che chacha or Hiddenwood by the Indians, with a clear stream of water running at the base...in the foreground a smooth grassy plain covered with tents, hooded wagons and grazing horses, a band in the center playing familiar airs, and an atmosphere cool, fresh and bracing... and you have a picture of our camp tonight."

-Dakota Buttes Visitors Council, Hettinger, 1998