HOMECOMING GAME 2019

INSIDE: BISON GAME DAY SECTION

The Forum
OF FARGO-MOORHEAD

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Photos by David Samson / The Forum

A pedestrian walks under snow-covered trees in north Fargo on Friday, Oct. 11.

FALL HALTED

Early blizzard paralyzes much of ND

By Barry Amundson
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Fargo

An early fall blizzard and snowstorm shut down many areas of central and eastern North Dakota on Friday, Oct. 11, as more than 2 feet of snow fell in some places. About 100 motorists had to be rescued off a closed Interstate 94 and other roadways just as the autumn leaves were turning colors.

The storm was expected to last into Saturday in some parts of the state, although the Fargo-Moorhead area likely won't see much more accumulation Saturday, according to WDAY meteorologist John Wheeler.

He warned that roads could be slippery Saturday, with I-94 and secondary roads possibly remaining closed west of Fargo.

The blizzard warning issued for 22 counties in central and eastern North Dakota caused the closure of I-94 from Bismarck to Fargo, Interstate 29 from Grand Forks to the Canadian border and secondary highways in surrounding areas. The North Dakota Department of Transportation reported roads were "impassable and blocked" and said motorists shouldn't travel.

The blizzard warning was expanded later Friday night to include the rural areas of the Red River Valley, with poor visibility and slick roads as snow accumulated.

Alexis Triptow clears fresh snow off her car in north Fargo on Friday, Oct. 11.

The worst of the storm, Wheeler said, was north of I-94, west of the Red River Valley and in the Devils Lake area where schools closed, accidents were reported, drivers were sliding into ditches and motorists were stranded.

North Dakota Highway Patrol Capt. Bryan Niewind said they rescued close to 100 people by early Friday night in the eastern and south-central part of the state, including 42 passengers on a Jefferson Lines bus stranded on I-94 west of Jamestown.

Stutsman County Sheriff Chad Kaiser said his department used a local school bus to make a loop on the interstate with a state plow leading the way. He said they not only picked up the bus passengers, but also another 15 drivers stuck on 45 miles of roadway between Jamestown and the county line near Medina.

Niewind and Kaiser said the problem later in the day was that motorists, with the interstate closed, were taking secondary roads into remote areas and becoming stranded.

The largest snowfall total as of Friday night was at 27 inches at Langdon in the far northeast corner of the state, about 100 miles northwest of Grand Forks in the Devils Lake Basin.

Wheeler said snowfall in that area could reach up to 36 inches, or 3 feet, by Saturday. He said it's hard to measure the snow because it's wet and drifting, adding that the wind could gust to 65 mph across central and parts of eastern North Dakota and as high as 55 mph in the Red River Valley.

BLIZZARD: Page A5

'Last Great Hunt'

Great northern buffalo herd came to an end at Standing Rock

BACK from the BRINK

This is the first of a three-part series examining the economic and cultural significance of the buffalo to certain tribes, with a focus on the Standing Rock Sioux.

By Patrick Springer
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FORT YATES, N.D. — The Standing Rock Sioux were struggling to adjust to newly constrained lives as farmers when word came that a large herd of buffalo had wandered onto the Great Sioux Reservation.

Excitement spread throughout the Fort Yates agency. James McLaughlin, the agent at Standing Rock, gave his blessing for a hunt. He knew it would be folly to try to stop the Hunkpapa Lakota and Yanktonai, whom the buffalo had sustained for generations, from such an enticing opportunity.

The hunt turned out to be one of the Last Great Hunts — a final series of large hunts in Dakota Territory, a jubilant time for the hungry Sioux, as the buffalo were rapidly approaching extinction in the early 1880s.

More than a century later, the loss of the buffalo was a shock — economic, cultural and spiritual — from which the Lakota and other plains tribes have yet to fully recover.

Activity stirred on the agency, where various bands had camped, as preparations were made for the hunt. Men cleaned their guns while the horses were tended and fed.

Then, just after dawn on June 10, 1882, a long caravan left Fort Yates, taking hours to disappear behind the buttes, as they traveled 100 miles to the west, where the buffalo were grazing on rich grasses.

Five days later, McLaughlin rode out to join the caravan, which he found camping at Cedar Creek, the south branch of the Cannonball River, where scouts for the hunt were selected. Further west, leaders gathered for a ceremony to honor the scouts. A "howling, shouting, joyous mob" numbering hundreds of hunters rode off behind the scouts as they set out once again for the herd.

One hundred riders were appointed as soldiers to enforce the rules of the hunt and a dozen leaders rode at the head of the caravan, setting an orderly pace. A signal came from the scouts, 10 miles ahead, that they had spotted the herd.

Being careful to stay downwind, the hunters made camp on low ground. When he awoke the next morning, the camp was bustling with activity as men lined up to sharpen their knives.

Six hundred hunters mounted their horses,

HUNT: Page A4

Photo courtesy of the State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1952-05611

Frank Fiske photographed a buffalo hunt on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in the early 1900s. For generations, the Lakota and Yanktonail Sioux depended heavily on the once-plentiful buffalo.

INSIDE TODAY'S FORUM

LIFE: Mow leaves rather than raking for a healthier lawn. **PAGE B1**

New rural PAC starts ads supporting Collin Peterson

Sugar-led group touts 'independent' congressman

By Mikkel Pates
Agweek Staff Writer

MOORHEAD, Minn. — Radio campaign advertisements paid for by a new super political action committee led by sugar advocates started running Thursday, Oct. 10, in western Minnesota's 7th Congressional District supporting Democratic Rep. Collin Peterson.

Peterson

The ads are paid for by the Committee for Stronger Rural Communities, a

PETERSON: Page A3

7 85186 00020 3
$1.50
(Suggested retail price)

Today's weather

Snow

36°
33°

Details, D6

HUNT

From Page A1

forming two wide columns and rode toward the herd, following ravines and draws to avoid spooking the grazing buffalo. McLaughlin looked out upon the unsuspecting buffalo, which he thought resembled an immense herd of cattle.

The Standing Rock hunters, dressed in breech-cloths, no longer resembled reservation Native Americans. Many carried repeating rifles, which some were armed with bows and arrows. The race to the herd began quietly, without shouts.

"A few of the animals looked up and sniffed, some scampered to a distance, but there was no stampede," McLaughlin wrote years later in his memoirs. "In fact, so widely were they scattered and so immense was the herd — estimated at fifty thousand — that a stamped would not have been possible.

"As the first rifle cracked, a few of the animals began to run, but the hunters followed them, and the hunt became a slaughter in less time than I have taken to tell it."

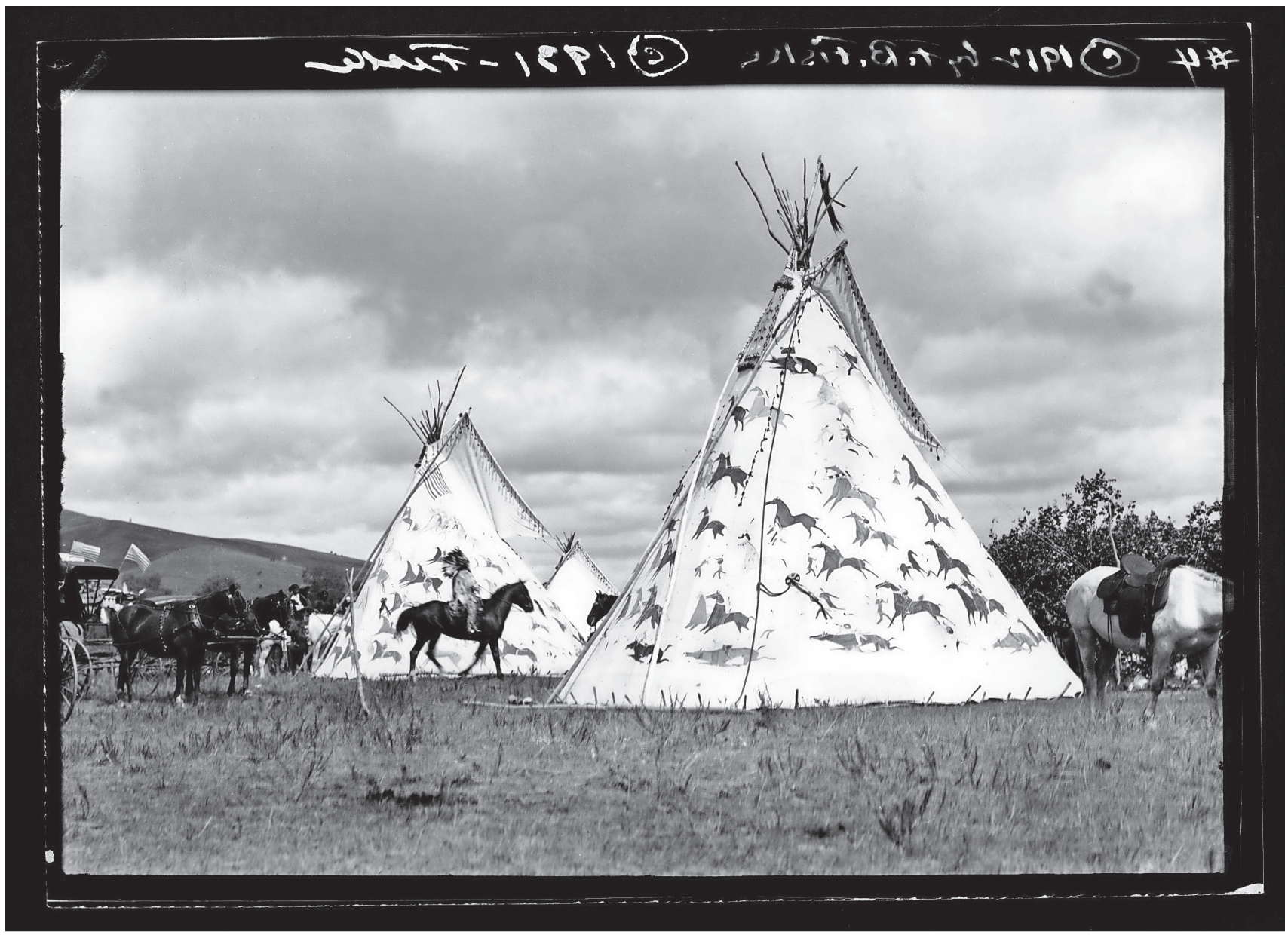

Photo courtesy of the State Historical Society of North Dakota, 1952-05530

Buffalo hides were used to make the tipis that sheltered the Lakota, Yanktonais and other Plains tribes as they roamed in search of buffalo and other game. These tipis were photographed by Frank Fiske at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation.

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By the 1860s, the Lakota were beginning to worry about the loss of the buffalo, which were mostly gone east of the Missouri River south to the Platte River, having begun a sharp and steady decline in the 1840s.

As buffalo became scarce, it became clear that it was possible that the buffalo would someday be gone forever.

The Lakota and Yanktonai were drawn from the Minnesota woodlands onto the plains by the availability of the horse and the abundance of beaver and buffalo. By the 1770s, the Lakota were living on the Missouri River, then crossed to enter the rich buffalo ranges, where they became dependent on *tatanka*, as they called the buffalo.

The buffalo were a commissary and hardware store on hooves, providing a primary food source, as well as hides for their tipis and clothing, sinews and bones for tools, utensils and weapons.

The Lakotas felt a special connection to the buffalo, which they believe originated beneath the ground and were related to people. The buffalo embodied sacrifice, offering itself to the Lakota when they were hungry.

In fact, the Lakota of Standing Rock believed it was no accident that the massive herd had migrated onto the Great Sioux Reservation, which then covered part of what is now southwestern North Dakota and all of western South Dakota.

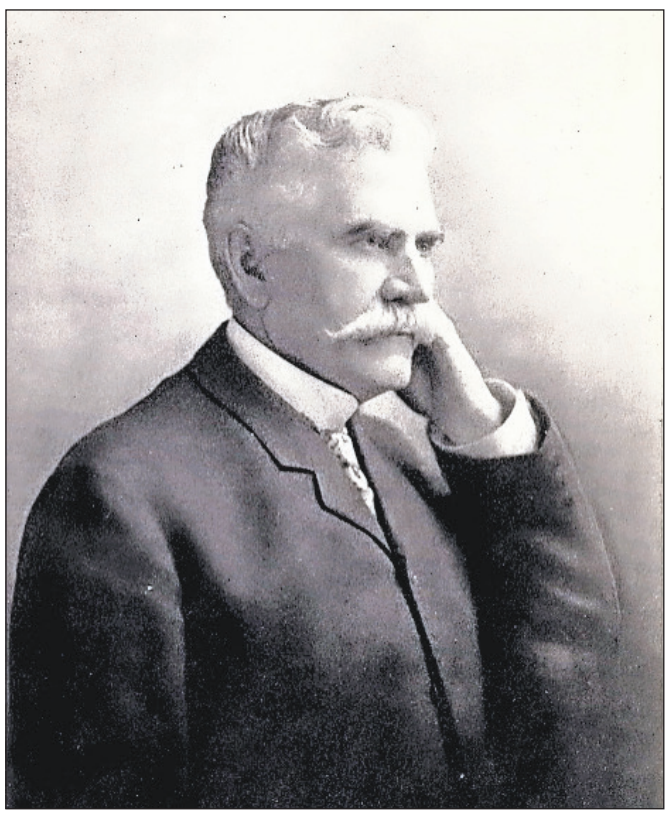
Once again, the buffalo was offering itself to the Lakota.

But advances in tanning methods placed the buffalo under relentless hunting pressure. Buffalo hides were in demand to make leather shoes, boots and belts used by an increasingly industrial economy.

By 1879, hide hunters had eliminated buffalo from the Southern Plains. The commercial hunters' ruthless gaze then shifted to the northern herd, in Montana and Dakota territories, recently made accessible by the Northern Pacific Railway.

Once teeming in herds estimated to number 30 million that migrated throughout the Plains, the buffalo had been reduced to remnant groups totaling perhaps a few hundred thousand on the Northern Plains.

The drastic reduction in the herds forced the Lakota and other Plains tribes to give up their wandering lifestyle and submit to reservation life, where they were expected to become farmers and ranchers.



Wikipedia / Special to The Forum

James McLaughlin was the first agent at Standing Rock Indian Reservation. McLaughlin authorized a massive buffalo hunt carried out by Standing Rock hunters in June 1882, killing 5,000 from a herd of 50,000.

Without buffalo and other game, the Lakotas and other tribes depended on government rations, which were often late and inadequate.

The disappearance of the buffalo led many Lakotas to believe that the buffalo had returned underground, perhaps because they were distressed by the actions of whites and Native Americans alike. Buffalo were believed to emerge from many sites, including Buffalo Gap, a passage from the Black Hills, Heart Butte west of Mandan and Buffalo Butte near Dixon, S.D.

Many Lakotas believed that the buffalo could be persuaded to return through prayer and ritual.

The return of the buffalo to the Great Sioux Reservation was especially welcome at Standing Rock, where a severe winter in 1881 resulted in the loss of almost a third of cattle and horses. Heat and drought caused crop failure two years later.

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The Standing Rock Sioux hunters efficiently thinned the herd, usually downing each buffalo with a single shot.

The killing went on all day, ending only when the hunters became exhausted or were dismounted.

Several hunters were injured by enraged buffalo, including one whose horse was disemboweled and whose own leg was lacerated from the knee to the ankle. Another had a badly injured hand, including three missing fingers that were blown off when his gun exploded.

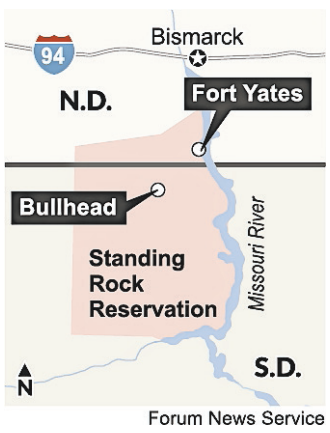
The hunt stopped at dark. Two thousand carcasses littered the plain surrounding Hiddenwood Creek, near today's Hettinger, N.D. The hunt resumed the next day, but stopped when the hunters had killed a total of 5,000.

McLaughlin, who had Native American police arrest white hunters who were poaching buffalo on the reservation, admired the Sioux hunter's restraint, suggesting they intended to conserve the herd.

"I never had known an Indian to kill a game animal that he did not require for his needs," McLaughlin wrote. "And I have known few white hunters to stop while there was game to kill."

A few subsequent hunts involving the Standing Rock Sioux took place while the last remnants of the once great northern herd lingered in the area.

Most notably, in October 1883, white hunters who were targeting a herd of 10,000 pushed the buffalo



Forum News Service

east, onto the Great Sioux Reservation between the Grand and Moreau rivers, halfway between Bismarck and the Black Hills.

A party of a thousand hunters from Standing Rock led by Sitting Bull rode out to meet the herd, scattered in small groups, killed the remaining 1,200 in what is regarded as the final of the documented last hunts.

Vic Smith, a dead-eye shot and one of the white hunters who took part in killing the herd of 10,000, also witnessed the final act by Sitting Bull and others from Standing Rock.

"When we got through the hunt there was not a hoof left," he said, according to an account by William Hornaday in his book, "The Extermination of the American Bison."

Dakota Wind Goodhouse, who teaches history at United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck and is a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, said the sudden disappearance of the buffalo came as a surprise to the Lakota.

"The people, they probably felt a sense of elation, excitement," he said. "Reliving the old days. There isn't a sense of dramatic despair that it was going to be the last. They couldn't have known."

The white hide hunters also didn't realize they had just wiped out the last of the northern herd, Hornaday wrote.

"Curiously enough, not even the buffalo hunters themselves were at the time aware of the fact that the end of the hunting season of 1882-'83 was also the end of the buffalo, at least as an inhabitant of the plains and a source of revenue."

In the fall of 1883, the hide hunters outfitted as usual, often spending hundreds of dollars, expecting another harvest of robes from the once-prolific range, but instead found the buffalo had vanished and their livelihood was gone.

"It was indeed hard to believe that not only the millions, but also the thousands, had actually gone, and forever," Hornaday wrote.

Western Dakota Territory and Eastern Montana Territory had supplied an estimated half a million buffalo robes in 1876, but the Northern Pacific Railway's arrival in 1881 in eastern Montana was the beginning of the northern herd's end.

In 1882, stations along the Northern Pacific between Miles City and Mandan shipped about 50,000 robes and hides, a number that dropped to 40,000 in 1883. In 1884, J.N. Davis of Minneapolis shipped one rail car of robes from Dickinson, which he told Hornaday was the only shipment east that year.

"And it was the last shipment ever made," Davis told Hornaday.

In 1889, a survey by Hornaday documented the population of buffalo in North America had dwindled to 1,091.

A year later, Sitting Bull was dead, killed when Indian police acting on McLaughlin's orders tried to arrest him during fervor over the Ghost Dance religion, which prophesied the elimination of whites and the return of buffalo and other game.

Readers can reach Forum reporter Patrick Springer at 701-241-5522.

Photo courtesy of Smithsonian Institution National Archives

Sitting Bull and James McLaughlin, the agent at Standing Rock Indian Reservation, participate in the 1886 dedication of the Standing Rock monument at Fort Yates, N.D. According to legend, the rock is the petrified form of a woman and her child. Sitting Bull and McLaughlin often clashed.