

Badger Creek Transcript

Christina: “Wash your face and brush your teeth, okay?”

Spencer: “Michael! Walk around them cows and push ‘em through! Walk around...ah, get up here!” -

Spencer: “Walk around them cows on the other side of the fence and chase ‘em in here.”

Buzz: “We call ourselves Niitsitapi, meaning ‘real people.’” -

Buzz: “Because we’re the real people up here. The creator created us right here.”

Buzz: “Badger Creek has quite a significance of history in here.”

Buzz: “During Starvation Winter, the people were starving to death and dying. They just put ‘em anywhere.”

Spencer: “There’s graves all over on top of this ridge.”

Spencer: “See how level this is. Then all of a sudden you see like right over there on the edges...”

Spencer: “...where you see an indent like that? That’s where an old grave is.”

Buzz: “When they buried you, they buried you with everything you owned. People might have had some personal bundles...”

Buzz: “...and they buried that with you.”

Spencer: “A lot of stuff, you don’t know the songs or ceremony no more.”

Buzz: “When they died they took all that with them; that knowledge, what went with those items and things like that.”

Buzz: “And they didn’t get to transfer them, they were dying so fast...”

Buzz: “...all that stuff went with them.”

Buzz: “And then as the Europeans came they started getting put into boarding schools where they weren’t allowed to talk their language...”

Buzz: “...the Ookaan was outlawed. Their bundles were burned, all that stuff. So it just went deep underground.”

Buzz: “And there were just a few old people that was able to keep it.”

Spencer: "We've been starved. We've been beat. We've been told we were not Indian no more."

Spencer: "We're like coyotes. Coyotes they can bounce back so fast, you know..."

Spencer: "...one minute they're on your property, you think you got the last one. And then a month later there's a hundred of them."

Spencer: "...they got tough resilience."

Buzz: "My name is Charles Buzz Momberg. My Indian name is Nasoisipop. It means Holy Plume."

Buzz: "...and I'm from the Blackfeet reservation."

Buzz: "And I've lived almost my entire life here except for going to school in the government schools."

Buzz: "The family unit just shattered from that. After that I became real independent."

Buzz: "Our home right here is all our kids home."

Buzz: "It'll always be our kids and grandkids home."

Glenda: "We've raised like six kids together and we've got tons of grandkids."

Michael: Speaking in Blackfeet.

Michael: "My grandparents, when they had their Ookaan..." -

Michael: "...they sat holy at their Ookaan and their center pole stood for a very long time. On that day they presented me to the world as (Blackfeet name)..."

Michael: "...Long Time Standing"

Buzz: "Ranching has kind of always been kind of a dream of mine..."

Buzz: "My dad was a rancher. His dad was a rancher."

Buzz: "...on my mother's side, her folks they were ranchers. It was in our blood to ranch."

Buzz: "I think I started out with five cows."

Buzz: "When Spencer was old enough we just kind of started working together."

Buzz: "We don't owe any banks. We don't owe anybody anything."

Buzz: "My grandsons, the three oldest ones. We got them started in cows."

Buzz: "Unfortunately, on the reservation there's a lot of kids, they don't know how to work. You gotta learn how to work. And Michael and my other grandsons, they learned how to work."

Spencer: "That mountain, that knoll. That's called the Shoots."

Spencer: "That's where we go over..."

Goonskoo: "...and hunt."

Spencer: "And then me and my wife when we got married I would come up here and pick up flat rocks..."

Spencer: "... and that's what I made our platform, what we stood on and I gathered all our rocks up here."

Buzz: "So this has always been...one of my favorite spots to sit here and look."

Christina: "I lived a different life than Spencer lived. I grew up differently. I learned things hard."

Christina: "There was very seldom part of my family that lived to be old. I know what's out there..."

Christina: "...and that's why I keep my kids so sheltered."

Christina: "There's so much negativity here..."

Christina: "...that kids are easily influenced."

Christina: "...For my kids; Justine, Michael and Goonskoo, they are our future."

Christina: "...and you pray that they make good choices."

Male teacher: "In the Blackfeet tradition..."

Male teacher: "...there are one or two children that grow up...they're versed..."

Male teacher: "...in these teachings and a lot of that I see in Michael. He has a lot of knowledge."

Male teacher: "He really excelled in my classroom. In today's world..."

Male teacher: "...he's going to be our new traditionalist. He's gonna take..."

Male teacher: "...our culture in a different way."

Michael: "I just consider myself one part of the big picture."

Michael: "I'm just here to make sure it gets passed onto my little brother..."

Michael: "...to my little cousins, to the younger generation."

Spencer: "This is Michael's graduation invitation that we handed out to people."

Spencer: "That's a capote. That was his great grandpa's capote."

Spencer: "Come celebrate graduation of Michael Joseph Momberg (Blackfeet name) Long Time Standing..."

Spencer: "Friday May 24, 2013..."

Spencer: "...at 4:00. Reception to follow..."

Spencer: "...at Ghost Ridge Ranch."

Christina: "Are you ready? Do you have everything?"

Christina: "Cap and gown. Come on Michael."

Christina: "I got it right here."

Christina: "What do you think?"

Michael: "I like it."

Spencer: "We always raised him to just try your hardest. Just do things the best you can. That's all we expect of you."

Female student: "Growing up during our high school years we all wished..."

Female student: "...for this very day to hurry up and get here. Well, it's here..."

Female student: "...and a new feeling has developed within me – fear. Fear of broken dreams. Fear of not being able to get where we want to be. Fear of one day coming home and saying that we didn't succeed. And then hope wraps its arms around me and says everything's gonna be okay."

Female teacher: "This year, the first recipient..."

Female teacher: "...whose GPA was looked at to receive this scholarship goes to Michael Momberg."

Christina: "There are young kids..."

Christina: "...still getting that education but yet they're still..."

Christina: "...holding on to what they believe. And it can be done."

Michael: "I want to travel. I want to get off the rez. I want to do all this stuff but I still want to stay home. It comes back to family. I want to stay close to my family."

Michael: "Whoa, ho there."

Buzz: "Ho, ho."

Michael: "She kicked me. Ho there. Ho."

Buzz: "Just walk up to her."

Michael: "Ho there. Here we go."

Michael: "The way I see horses is..."

Michael: "...to me they're like people. They don't trust you."

Michael: "You gotta gain the trust when you're working with them."

Boy: "It's still going. See?"

Girl: "No!"

Boy: "Yeah, look."

Spencer: "There we go."

Spencer: "There we go. She's done."

Spencer: "Go on girl."

Buzz: "As soon as we got married, I just woke up one morning and said I'm gonna quit drinking, and she told me, 'I will, too.'"

Buzz: "And that was in 1973, '74?"

Glenda: "'75."

Buzz: "We decided we wanted to change our lifestyle from the norm on the reservation. There is a lot of drinking and drugs and abuse."

Glenda: "I don't want them to..."

Glenda: "...to wake up with people fighting. You know get up and run out in the middle of the night and stuff like that."

Buzz: "And I think we decided too that we wanted to learn about our culture more..."

Buzz: "...a lot more."

Michael: "Come here."

Buzz: "You gotta think way back before the western world came here..."

Buzz: "...the white people and the whoever."

Buzz: "We were in this area..."

Buzz: "...and we didn't let anybody in our area."

Buzz: "And there was the Crees and then there's the Cheyennes..."

Buzz: "...Crows and then the Flatheads."

Buzz: "And they were entirely different. It's like they were in a whole different country, world or whatever."

Buzz: "We have different ceremonies we have different language..."

Buzz: "...everything. We're entirely different."

Christina: "When I was younger I didn't quite understand how people viewed my grandpa."

Christina: "It's a treasure, of what my grandpa tried to pass on to the people."

Christina: "History, ceremonial life, traditional belief, traditional rules, things you live by. Pikuni values."

Male: "And so Justine, her grandfather..."

Male: "...was Mike Swims Under. There's no need to talk about Mike. You folks all know what he stood for."

Male: "We're gonna have this song at this time."

Male: "Let's put our hands together for Justine."

Justine: "Right now, I don't know what I really..."

Justine: "...wanna be. I kinda wanna be a vet or a nurse..."

Justine: "...or be a linguist. Travel the world."

Justine: "Learn different cultures and how they're similar to ours."

Darrell Kipp: Speaking in Blackfeet.

Goonskoo: "It's hard to say."

Darrell: "Our tribe is like a rope. There's continuums we want to preserve."

Darrell: "One is geographic. We are on our homeland that the creator gifted us. We have to preserve that geographic connection..."

Darrell: "...because it's one of the strands in the rope of life."

Darrell: "The second one is certainly our spirituality, our connection with the creator."

Darrell: "The third strand is biological."

Darrell: "We're biologically bonded together as a people."

Darrell: "And then the other is linguistic."

Teacher: Speaking in Blackfeet.

Darrell: "Keeping the linguistic strand in our tribal life..."

Darrell: "...is as crucial as keeping our land..."

Darrell: "...as keeping our spirituality."

Darrell: "All of those things are intertwined."

Teacher and Girl: Speaking in Blackfeet.

Male: "That's what Uncle Ben says, 'Before you try to be anything, you gotta go to the mountain.'"

Male: "Yeah, you gotta go to the mountains."

Male: "You know what we'll do. We'll go up this way..."

Male: "...you know that Slippery Hook trail? We'll go up it and up in that timber. There might be some elk up there."

Male: "We'll check those all out and come back around this way, yeah? Back over them shoots."

Male: "I thought we'd see some deer, too, i'nt?"

Male: "I wish I could have talked Blackfeet a little bit better..."

Male: "I mean I could talk it ya know, but I can't write it down though."

Male: "There ain't too many people that can really speak it anymore..."

Male: "They're dying out."

Male: "How many of those Blackfeet died on that old ridge down there?"

Male: "A lot of 'em i'nt? Starved, i'nt? They all starved."

Male: "That's rough."

Male: "Yeah."

Male: "They tried to get rid of us."

Male: "Don't you ever be ashamed of being an Indian."

Male: "...That's your life. Amazing, i'nt?"

Male: "Yeah."

Male teacher: "In one hundred years. One hundred years we're all gonna be ancestors."

Male teacher: "You're gonna be gone. Maybe your children's children will be sitting here. What are they gonna know about Pikuni?"

Male teacher: "What are you gonna teach them about who we are?"

Male teacher: "Blackfeet is a term the United States give us."

Male teacher: "But Pikuni is who we are."

Male teacher: "We're gonna be talking about a dichotomy. Two world views. We're living in a dichotomy of western society views..."

Male teacher: "...and Blackfoot ideology views."

Female student: "My grandma told me you gotta know where you come from and who you are..."

Female student: "...whether it be from your own traditional teachings, from your elders or who's around you, but also embrace..."

Female student: "...western teachings."

Goonskoo: "No Geekwa, you're staying here."

Spencer: "This is Blackfeet country here."

Spencer: "So tribes today..."

Spencer: "...out here, they still remember, they still know where there old territories were, hunting territories and stuff."

Spencer: "Come here Goonsk."

Christina: "Goonskoo."

Spencer: "Oh, look at these ones."

Christina: "Those are...nice."

Spencer: "What size you wear?"

Christina: "One?"

Goonskoo: "Yeah."

Spencer: "When Goonsk got his first pair of boots. He slept with his boots."

Spencer: "He would put them by his head and sleep with them."

Spencer: "We would go in his room and take 'em off and put 'em on the floor and he'd wake up and put 'em back up by his head and sleep with his boots."

Professor: Speaking in Blackfeet.

Michael: "Our heritage..."

Michael: "...our history, our religion's imprinted in our language. And to understand fully..."

Michael: "...what we are as a Blackfeet people is within our language."

Darrell: Speaking in Blackfeet.

Darrell: "In our world, this is a best seller. This is the most important document I've seen in years."

Darrell: "Because it really marks something that we'd hoped for..."

Darrell: "...that there would come a day when our own children could write our own books about ourselves. And he's done a wonderful job in terms of writing exactly...that's who you are. He didn't make it up! That's who he is."

Buzz: "We stopped that cycle. We stopped that cycle of violence."

Buzz: "...and drinking and drugs and all that."

Buzz: "There's us. We didn't do it..."

Buzz: "...and now my kids aren't doing it and now we see our grandchildren not doing it."

Spencer: "We have a hard time giving up. We keep trying all the time.

Buzz: "What we feel good about..."

Buzz: "...is our children picking it up. And that's the most important part of it. I wanted to learn as much as I could..."

Buzz: "...so I could have that option for my kids."

Spencer: "We still have the songs and the ceremonies..."

Spencer: "...and we still try today. We try our hardest..."

Spencer: "...to keep these things going so that our people can prosper."

Michael: "To me, my religion, it's how you live your everyday life."

Michael: "It teaches you...it teaches you how to work hard and never take anything for granted."

Buzz: "I feel real fortunate that generations down the line they can come back and say, 'Oh, that ole Buzz and Glenda Momberg...'"

Buzz: "...they did something for us."

Buzz: "And we learned a lot from those generations."

Spencer: "We've tried to teach that to our children, 'You've gotta be who you are...as an individual. But you're always a part of this tribe, this family. Because we're always Pikuni and this is where we come from.'"