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Donors Proud to Help in Publishing Laura Ingalls Wilder’s “Pioneer Girl”

PIERRE, S.D.—The South Dakota State Historical Society will be releasing Laura Ingalls Wilder’s “Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography” in November, and donors to the project are honored to be a part of this momentous occasion.

“As long-time fans of her books, we are proud to help bring her story to life in new ways to inspire generations to come,” says Bobbi Schroepel, vice-president of NorthWestern Energy in Sioux Falls, a Pioneer Level donor to the Pioneer Girl Project. “Thanks to Laura Ingalls Wilder, millions of people have come to know and understand the pioneer spirit of South Dakota.”

In “Pioneer Girl,” Wilder describes 16 years of the westward journey made by the Ingalls family. The book is a result of extensive research and study over four years. The goal of the project was to present Wilder’s original words and provide further information to a modern audience through annotations, maps and photographs.

“Wilder utilized her original manuscript to write a successful children’s series,” said Nancy Tystad Koupal, director of the Pioneer Girl Project for the SDSHS Press at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. “With the release of ‘Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography,’ readers will have an opportunity to reconnect with the people and places made famous through her fiction, in addition to meeting new ones.”

“Without the support of our donors, like NorthWestern Energy, the publication of Wilder’s work would not be possible,” said Michael Lewis, president of the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation, the nonprofit fund-raising partner of the SDSHS. “They are helping us illuminate the history of South Dakota and share the story of one of our most prominent historic figures.”

“Join in as we follow the real Laura Ingalls and her family as they make their way west—and discover that truth is as remarkable as fiction,” Tystad Koupal said.

More information about the Pioneer Girl Project can be found at pioneergirlproject.org or by contacting the South Dakota State Historical Society Press at (605) 773-6009 or info@sdshspress.com. To donate, please contact the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation at (605) 773-3458 or info@sdhsf.org. Donations can also be made on the foundation website at http://www.sdhsf.org/special_projects/pioneer.html. To pre-order “Pioneer Girl: The Annotated Autobiography,” visit pioneergirlproject.org, email orders@sdshspress.com, or call 605-773-6009.

The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is comprised of Tourism, the South Dakota Arts Council and the State Historical Society. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen. The State Historical Society, an Affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, is headquartered at the South Dakota Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The center houses the society's world-class museum, the archives, and the historic preservation, publishing and administrative/development offices. Call (605) 773-3458 or visit www.history.sd.gov for more information. The society also has an archaeology office in Rapid City; call (605) 394-1936 for more information.