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Noted author to speak at history book club meeting in Pierre

PIERRE, S.D. – An author known for bridging cultures will speak at the April meeting of the History and Heritage Book Club.

Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve of Rapid City will read from “Completing the Circle” when the book club meets at 7 p.m. CDT on Tuesday, April 12, at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre.

“Virginia has focused on realistically depicting American Indians in her writing. Her books have dispelled stereotypes and emphasized the richness of American Indian culture. In ‘Completing the Circle,’ she tells her own story and the story of the women in her family and how they have been models of integrity, courage, humor and resilience,” said Michael Lewis, president of the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation.

The foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society and, along with the South Dakota Historical Society Press, sponsors the History and Heritage Book Club. Everyone is welcome to attend the free program.

Sneve was born and raised on the Rosebud Reservation and is an enrolled member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. She has bachelor’s and master’s degrees from South Dakota State University in Brookings. Sneve was an English teacher and counselor in several South Dakota schools before retiring.

Realizing that her children were being negatively affected by stereotypes about American Indians in the books they were reading and that there were no stories of modern American Indian children, Sneve decided a change was needed. Her first book for children, “Jimmy Yellow Hawk,” was published in 1972. Her manuscript won the category for American Indian writers in an annual contest sponsored by the Interracial Council of Minority Books for Children.

Sneve has since written numerous fiction and nonfiction books for children and adults. “The Trickster and the Troll” combines her Lakota heritage with her husband Vance’s Norwegian ancestry. “The Christmas Coat: Memories of My Sioux Childhood” received honors from Smithsonian Magazine, National Public Radio and American Indian Youth Literature as an outstanding book.

Sneve is currently writing a book about Lakota women, to be published by the South Dakota Historical Society Press.

Among the many honors Sneve has received are the National Endowment for the Humanities Medalist Award, the Writer of the Year Award from the Western Heritage

Hall of Fame and the South Dakota Governor's Award in the Arts for distinction in Creative Achievement.

"Completing the Circle" is sold at the Heritage Stores at the Cultural Heritage Center and the Capitol.

Call (605) 773-6006 for more information about the program.

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About the South Dakota State Historical Society

The South Dakota State Historical Society is a division of the Department of Education. 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.

About the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation

The South Dakota Historical Society Foundation is a private charitable nonprofit that seeks funding to assist the South Dakota State Historical Society in programming and projects to preserve South Dakota's history and heritage for future generations.