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New state poet laureate, book about Red Cloud to be featured in November history programs

PIERRE, S.D. – People can learn about South Dakota's new poet laureate and a legendary Oglala chief in programs in November sponsored by the South Dakota Historical Society Foundation.

South Dakota's new poet laureate, Lee Ann Roripaugh (ROAR-i-paw), will talk about her work at 7 p.m. CST on Monday, Nov. 16.

John McDermott will shed light on Red Cloud in a program that will be presented at 7 p.m. CST on Monday, Nov. 23.

"These programs are excellent ways to be introduced to the new state poet laureate and learn about her work, as well as learn about Red Cloud, one of the most important people in the history of the West," said Foundation President Michael Lewis.

The foundation is the nonprofit fundraising partner of the South Dakota State Historical Society, both based at the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. The programs are part of the foundation's History and Heritage Book Club.

Both programs will be available statewide via the Digital Dakota Network, a video communications system that enables people at different locations to see, hear and talk to each other. Video sites or studios are located in various government facilities, public and private universities, technical education institutes and schools.

Roripaugh will be speaking from the Cultural Heritage Center in Pierre. Her program is made possible by a grant from the South Dakota Humanities Council, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. McDermott will speak from the Public Room of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology in Rapid City, and his program will be broadcast to the Cultural Heritage Center via the Digital Dakota Network. People are welcome to join McDermott in Rapid City.

People from other communities who would like to participate in the discussions should call (605) 773-6006 in order for the program to be broadcast to a DDN site in their community.

"We encourage people throughout the state to take advantage of these free programs," Lewis said.

Roripaugh was appointed South Dakota's sixth poet laureate in July. She is a professor of English at the University of South Dakota in Vermillion, director of the university's

creative writing program and editor-in-chief of "South Dakota Review." A Wyoming native and second generation Japanese American, Roripaugh often addresses her Japanese heritage and her life in the West in her four volumes of poetry.

McDermott lives in Rapid City and served as a historian for the National Park Service. He has written numerous articles and books about western history, with his newest book, "Red Cloud: Oglala Legend," published by the South Dakota Historical Society Press.

Red Cloud was an Oglala Lakota chief who fought the encroachment of European settlers onto lands guaranteed the American Indians through treaties. In the 1860s, Red Cloud and his warriors succeeded in virtually closing down the Bozeman Trail and other overland routes from Fort Laramie, Wyo., and the east to the Montana goldfields and the Northwest. The government promised in 1868 to abandon all forts along the trail and accept territorial claims of the Lakota in exchange for Red Cloud's pledge to live in peace. Red Cloud altered his tactics from armed resistance to a long-term strategy that included diplomacy.

"Red Cloud: Oglala Legend" is available at the Heritage Stores at the Cultural Heritage Center and the Capitol.

Please call (605) 773-6006 for more information about the programs.

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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.