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State Historical Society presenting Governor's Awards for History

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota State Historical Society will be presenting the Governor's Awards for History on Saturday, April 30, during its annual history conference in Pierre.

Three individuals and two organizations are being recognized by the State Historical Society for their efforts in preserving state history.

The award winners include Shebby Lee of Rapid City, Amber Nash of Waubay, Chuck Vollan of Brookings, the Mount Rushmore Society of Rapid City and the Verendrye Museum's "Bring It Home" Committee of Fort Pierre.

"These people and organizations are to be commended for their efforts at preserving our state's history," said Gov. Dennis Daugaard. "Because of their work, our past will be kept alive for future generations in South Dakota."

"We are pleased to give out these awards," added Jay D. Vogt, director of the State Historical Society. "These are just a few of the shining examples of how people across the state and beyond are helping us in our efforts to promote, nurture and sustain South Dakota history."

Lee is the individual award winner. She has been president of the West River History Conference for eight years, and guided the event to unprecedented stability and growth. Lee, a grand-niece of former South Dakota Poet Laureate Badger Clark, is a long-time member of the Badger Clark Memorial Society and other history groups. She has made several presentations at history conferences across the state and had several articles published. She also promotes South Dakota through her history related tour business.

Nash was named the 2016 History Teacher of the Year. She teaches at Waubay School, where she has taught for 13 of her 16 years. Nash was recognized for her ideas that facilitate cooperation, teamwork and discussion amongst her students. Her students and coworkers see Nash as a pillar in both their school and community. Nash's goal is to fine-tune and perfect lessons and projects in the classroom that can better challenge and inspire her students.

Vollan, an associate professor of history at South Dakota State University, is the winner of the Herbert S. Schell Award for best article in the previous year's "South Dakota History," the State Historical Society's award-winning quarterly journal. His article, "'Bone Dry': South Dakota's Flawed Adoption of Alcohol Prohibition," appeared in the Fall 2015 issue of the journal. Vollan's article explores the controversy surrounding

South Dakota voters' approval of a ban on the commercial production, sale and importation of alcoholic beverages in 1916.

The Mount Rushmore Society is an organizational winner. Formed in 1930, everything the society does is to preserve the meaning and significance of Mount Rushmore National Memorial for future generations. The society raised millions of dollars to improve the facilities at Mount Rushmore in the 1990s and does everything from publishing books and other materials to educate visitors to the mountain to organizing the annual fireworks celebration. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the completion of the carving of the monument.

A second organizational winner is the Verendrye Museum's "Bring It Home" Committee, which was responsible for returning and rehabilitating the 1906 Fort Pierre Railroad Depot. The depot was sold to a rancher and moved to his property near Mud Butte, 160 miles from Fort Pierre, in 1964. Nearly fifty years later, the depot was "discovered" and moved back to Fort Pierre. The committee raised nearly \$1 million to support the project, and the depot will now serve as a museum to educate people about the history of the Pierre/Fort Pierre area.

The Saturday awards luncheon is part of this year's State Historical Society annual history conference, taking place Friday and Saturday, April 29-30 in Pierre. This year's theme is "Everyone Eats: South Dakota's Food Heritage." Registrations are still being accepted. Call (605) 773-6000 for more information or visit www.history.sd.gov.

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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.