Research and Publishing Program Report, September 2025

By Dedra McDonald Birzer, Director

SDHS Press

Awards for *Georgia Jipp, Blizzard Pilot* keep rolling in! SDHS Press was thrilled to learn that the book received the coveted WILLA award from the Women Writing the West organization. Another recent publication that is getting a lot of attention is *Wilder Weather: What Laura Ingalls Wilder Teaches Us about the Weather, Climate, and Protecting What we Cherish*. Author Barbara Boustead has been featured on The Weather Channel and what seems like every weather-related podcast in existence. Links to these podcasts are on the book’s web page, sdhspress.com/books/wilderweather.

Press staff has spent the last several months working diligently to get our last three book releases for 2025 printed in time for the South Dakota Festival of Books. Other new book releases for 2025 include “On the Narrow Gauge and Beyond,” the third of David Wolff’s planned six-volume Black Hills History Tours series. SDHS Press is also excited to publish “Special Places, Sacred Circles,” the memoir of South Dakota literary marvel Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve, as well as a history of the White River Badlands by Philip Hall. These three books will be released in September on the opening day of the Festival of Books in Spearfish.

SDHS Press’s two newest children’s picture books will be released in early September and are both currently at the printer. First, “Badger Clark: Poetry Wrangler,” written by Nancy Bo Flood and illustrated by Jeanne Bowman, is a delightful biography of the South Dakota poet laureate and cowboy poet. Second, “Halhata na Thathanka/Magpie and Buffalo” is SDHS Press’s first board book. Written and illustrated by Alfreda Beartrack Algeo, this board book for pre-readers will appear in two versions, one in English with Lakota names for bison parts and one completely in Lakota. Linguist and Lakota language teacher Violet Catches is working on the Lakota version of the story. She will be using phonetic spellings of Lakota words and no diacritical marks (you may remember her excellent presentation on Lakota language at the SDSHS annual history conference last May).

*South Dakota History*

The summer issue of *South Dakota History*, with its journal-length article on the 1968 Republican campaign train that traversed the state, was well received, especially by the Teen-Age Republicans who staffed the campaign tour. We enjoyed hearing from them. Author Terry C. Anderson was the August History Talks speaker. He recounted his work and memorable moments as a TAR on the campaign train with 38 History Talks participants. Among these were several other TARS from the 1968 campaign train.

Work on the fall issue of *South Dakota History* continues. It will feature articles by Cindy Wilson and Nancy Tystad Koupal on topics related to Laura Ingalls Wilder.

*History Notes* newsletter

The *History Notes* newsletter was mailed out to SDSHS members in early August. It has a variety of articles that provide more in-depth accounts of happenings at the SDSHS than we are able to include in the monthly e-news.

Conferences

We are gearing up for fall conference season, with plans to attend the Northern Great Plains History Conference in Mankato, MN; the South Dakota Festival of Books in Spearfish; and the West River History Conference in Deadwood.

History Talks

For the September History Talks, we are offering a workshop on writing memoirs. This was prompted by a suggestion from Bob Kolbe at the last board meeting. Award-winning journalist Makenzie Huber will be leading the workshop on September 9 at 7 pm central time. She has asked participants to come prepared, with homework completed! This is a different approach to History Talks than we normally offer. We are excited to see how it goes. Our October History Talks speaker is David Wolff. The date for that is Oct. 21 at 7 pm central time. He will speak about volumes two and three of his Black Hills History Tours, both of which are 2025 publications.

Staff

We bid farewell to associate editor Craig Walters on Aug. 13. Craig decided to retire so that he could move to Rapid City and care for his aging mother. We have completed the application period for the associate editor position and are interviewing several excellent candidates.