

North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department

## NEWS RELEASE

*For Immediate Release, August 11, 2016*

*For more information, contact Icelandic State Park*

### ***Book Discussion***

The Northeastern North Dakota Heritage Association will be hosting a book discussion on Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm in the Pioneer Heritage Center, located at Icelandic State Park. Everyone is invited to join Brenda Menier and Renae Erdmann, as they lead a book discussion on *The Red River Story* and *Lord of the Plains* by Alfred Silver. Brenda and Renae are sisters and Walhalla natives who grew up in a Métis family. They are also descendants of Antoine Blanc Gingras, a well-known fur trader in the area during the mid-1800s.

In his two historical novels, Alfred Silver creatively chronicles the struggles of the early settlers in our region. *The Red River Story* transports the reader to the fur trading era of competition between the French Northwest Trading Company and the English Hudson's Bay Company. Add to this the challenges faced by the Scottish settlers placed in the Red River settlement by Lord Selkirk, who dreams of establishing farming communities in the pristine wilderness to co-exist with the burgeoning fur trade. The ongoing competition between French and English interests in frontier Canada, provides the canvas to tell the stories of several dynamic characters whose lives ultimately interconnect. Key Métis players in these two historical novels, whose adventures take them from Quebec to what would become Manitoba, Saskatchewan, North Dakota and Montana, are Cuthbert Grant, Louis Riel, and Gabriel Dumont. *Lord of the Plains* documents the demise of the buffalo hunts and the plight of the Métis culture, who become deprived of their land and sustenance and are stonewalled at their attempt to seek recognition and self-government on lands that they had historically occupied for decades. Louis Riel, the founder of Manitoba, is portrayed as the very religious, scholarly man who sees himself as the "savior" of the Métis, not as the "traitor" who was hanged in Regina in 1885.

Books can be purchased online or checked out at the Cavalier Public Library.

The event is free of charge in accordance with a daily pass, annual pass, or a NENDHA membership. Icelandic State Park is located 5 ½ miles west of Cavalier, ND on State Highway 5.

For more information, please contact Molly Skadsen, at (701) 265-4561.