

**Black Belt African American
Genealogical and Historical Society, Inc**
PO Box 971 • Selma, AL 36702 • (334) 877-4846 • www.bbaaghs.org
Preserving Our Heritage and Creating Family Legacies

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Black Belt African American Genealogical and Historical Society
Announces its 3rd Annual Conference**

*Award-winning Novelist, Poet and Playwright Pearl Cleage to Speak at Awards Luncheon.
Author of Oprah's Legends' Weekend Poem, "We Speak Your Names."*

SELMA, AL, February 6, 2009 – The Black Belt African American Genealogical and Historical Society, Inc. will host the **3rd Annual Genealogy Conference and Family History Fair on February 20-21, 2009** in historic Selma, Alabama. In past years, this event has brought together more than 100 novice and advanced family researchers from Alabama and around the country to learn about research methods, techniques and resources, cemetery preservation, family reunion planning, using the internet, DNA and more from some of the area's foremost experts in genealogy and the heritage of African Americans in the Black Belt.

This year's theme – ***Our History is Our Strength*** – is tied to the Alabama Department of Tourism's "Year of Alabama History" campaign. In addition to workshops, presenters will showcase their family research case histories, stress the importance of collecting family stories and discuss the upcoming *Alabama African American Heritage Book* and discuss the unique sites, arts and traditions of the Black Belt National Historic Area.

Award-winning novelist, poet and playwright **Pearl Cleage** will be the keynote speaker at the Awards Luncheon to be held at the historic St. James Hotel on February 21st. Among her many works, Pearl is the author of novels *What Looks Like Crazy on an Ordinary Day* (an Oprah's Book Club selection), *I Wish I Had a Red Dress*, and her latest, *Seen It All and Done the Rest*, and of "We Speak Your Names", the poem written for **Oprah's Legends Weekend**. A book signing will immediately follow the luncheon.

The conference will take place on **Friday and Saturday, February 20-21, 2009 from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm at the Carl C. Morgan Convention Center, 211 Washington Street, Selma**. The two-day conference registration fee, including the Awards Luncheon, is \$99.00 for non-members, \$79.00 for members; Saturday-only registration is \$49.00/\$39.00. A limited number of tickets are available for the luncheon only at \$35.00.

The conference is open to anyone but should be of particular interest to those living in or with ancestry in the twelve counties of Alabama's Black Belt Region. **For information or to register visit the website www.bbaaghs.org or call 334-877-4846.**

Contact: B.J. Smothers, 334-877-4846 or 404-273-6965 (mobile), bbaaghs@bbaaghs.org

###