

April 29, 2009

**Fayette County Public Library Kicks Off Second Annual “Fayette on the Page,”
with Four Months of Activities Focused on *A Lesson Before Dying*
by Ernest J. Gaines**

Fayette County Public Library announces the second annual “Fayette on the Page,” a “One Book, One Community” initiative. “Fayette on the Page” is a countywide reading and discussion program that encourages all Fayette County residents to read the same book at the same time, and then participate in related cultural, educational and recreational activities. At the center of this year’s program is the 1993 novel *A Lesson Before Dying*, by Louisiana author Ernest J. Gaines.

Partnering with the Fayette County Public Library and the Friends of the Fayette County Public Library to present “Fayette on the Page 2009” are Barnes & Noble of Fayetteville, Clayton State University, and Kimbo’s Frame & Design of Fayetteville.

“Great stories can bring a community together, and that’s our goal this year with *A Lesson Before Dying*. It’s a powerful novel with a universal message about courage, human dignity, and the triumph of hope in times of despair,” says Chris Snell, director of the Fayette County Public Library. “Last year, we introduced the ‘Fayette on the Page’ idea with *Tuesdays With Morrie*. This year we hope to reach even more people with the variety of book-related activities we have planned.”

“Fayette on the Page 2009” officially kicks off on May 19 with the first screening in the Ernest Gaines Film Festival. Dr. LaJuan Simpson, associate professor of English at Clayton State University, will speak just prior to the screening at 6:00 p.m. on May 19, giving an overview of the literature of Ernest Gaines and its translation to film. The festival features four film adaptations of Ernest Gaines stories and runs through August. Licensing restrictions prohibit publication of film titles outside of the library; contact the Fayette County Public Library at 770-461-8841 and ask for film titles. A printed schedule for the Ernest Gaines Film Festival, including film titles and descriptions, is available for pickup at the library. All screenings are free and open to the public.

Visual artists are invited to create works of art in response to their reading of any of Ernest Gaines’s novels or short stories, and enter them in the “Read a Book / Create Some Art” juried art competition. The competition is open to all artists, whether student, professional, or amateur. Artwork must be submitted by August 10. Interested artists can pick up an information sheet with entry form at

the Fayette County Public Library, or at Kimbo's Frame & Design, located at 415 S. Glynn Street, across the street from Melear's Barbecue in Fayetteville. Works entered in the "Read a Book / Create Some Art" competition will be on public exhibit at the Fayette County Public Library during the final week of August and the first week of September.

The Fayette County Public Library's monthly book discussion group will read and discuss *A Lesson Before Dying* in August. The group meets that month on Thursday, August 20 at 7:00 p.m. New members are always welcome; email Sarah Trowbridge at saraht@fayettecountyga.gov to join.

The countywide reading celebration will have a grand finish on Thursday, September 10, at 6:30 p.m., when Ernest J. Gaines will "visit" the library via live two-way videoconference from his home in Point Coupee, Louisiana. Mr. Gaines will talk about *A Lesson Before Dying* and answer questions from the audience. Winners of the "Read a Book / Create Some Art" competition will be announced. This free public event will include food and live music in the Fayette County Public Library's signature festive style.

The Barnes & Noble book store in Fayetteville has partnered for the second year with the Fayette County Public Library and the Friends of the Fayette County Public Library to offer a 20% discount on copies of *A Lesson Before Dying* purchased in the Fayetteville store. To receive the discount, customers must simply mention to the cashier that they are participating in "Fayette on the Page."

Copies of *A Lesson Before Dying* are also available for checkout to PINES library card holders at the Fayette County Public Library. Any Georgia resident who does not already have a PINES card can receive one on the spot by showing proof of current address and filling out a brief application.

The Fayette County Public Library is located behind the Fayette County administration complex in downtown Fayetteville, at the southwest corner of Highways #85 and #54. For additional information about "Fayette on the Page: One Book, One Community," please contact the library at 770-461-8841 or visit online at http://www.fayettecountyga.gov/public_library.