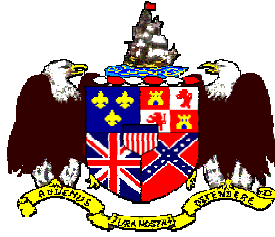


OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

BOB RILEY
GOVERNOR



STATE OF ALABAMA

BLACK BELT ACTION COMMISSION

SHELDON DAY – CO-CHAIR
SENATOR HANK SANDERS - CO-CHAIR
DONI INGRAM - DIRECTOR

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Contact
Emily Law
334-353-5185
emily.law@adeca.alabama.gov

Black Belt Commission to Hold Bed-and-Breakfast Seminar

MONTGOMERY— An informal seminar on owning and operating a bed-and-breakfast business in Alabama's Black Belt region will be held Thursday, Sept. 20 in Marion.

The seminar is a joint project of the Alabama Black Belt Action Commission's Small Business Development Committee and the Marketing and Tourism Committee, the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel and the Perry County Chamber of Commerce. It will be from 9 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. at the Marion depot, 1200 Washington St. There is a \$25 charge, which includes lunch.

"The Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel has put a great deal of effort into promoting what the Black Belt has to offer," said Sam Givhan, committee chairman. "But if we want people to visit the Black Belt, we need to be able to offer them a place to stay. We hope to encourage people to consider opening a bed and breakfast in these counties, but we also want to give them a realistic idea of what that involves."

The seminar will include a panel composed of an attorney, accountant, chef, real estate agents and bed-and-breakfast owners to discuss legal, financial, culinary and general issues in operating a bed-and-breakfast business.

"We are very excited about this upcoming seminar and hope to attract people from all over the country who might be drawn to the beautiful homes and landscape of Alabama," says Phyllis Kennedy, a member of the Small Business Development Committee. "It's my understanding that bed-and-breakfast ownership can make a very nice home an affordable investment, and we want to help people learn how to do that in the Black Belt."

The Black Belt Action Commission was formed by Gov. Bob Riley in 2004 to improve living conditions and economic opportunities in 12 counties making up most of what has historically been referred to as the Black Belt region. Counties in the commission are Bullock, Choctaw, Dallas, Greene, Hale, Lowndes, Macon, Marengo, Perry, Pickens, Sumter and Wilcox counties. The commission is chaired by state Sen. Hank Sanders of Selma, Thomasville Mayor Sheldon Day and Margaret Bentley, area manager of Alabama Power Co.

To register before the Sept. 14 deadline, call 1-800-ALABAMA