



Humanities Council Announces Pearl Buck Conference in Partnership with WVU

For Immediate Release
November 19, 2015

Contact: Mark Payne (304)346-8500
payne@wvhumanities.org

(Charleston) – The West Virginia Humanities Council and West Virginia University are planning a first-time conference honoring West Virginia author Pearl Buck. The “Living Gateway” conference will take place September 11 through 13, 2016, at the Erickson Alumni Center at WVU. Additional sponsors are the Pearl S. Buck Birthplace Foundation in Hillsboro and West Virginia Wesleyan in Buckhannon.

Pearl Buck was the first American woman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1938, and her book *The Good Earth* won the 1932 Pulitzer Prize. The Pulitzer Prize Board recently awarded \$35,000 to the West Virginia Humanities Council for the Pearl Buck conference to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Pulitzer Prizes, the first of which were awarded in 1916. The Pulitzer Prize Board awarded more than \$1.5 million to forty-six state humanities councils as part of its centennial program.

The Living Gateway conference title refers to Buck’s Pocahontas County birthplace. In her book *My Mother’s House*, Pearl Buck called for the family home to live again and said it was her own “gateway to America.” Tours of the birthplace will be offered during the conference, which is an international gathering of scholars, educators, media professionals, students, and others who have done work related to Buck or who want to learn more about her writing and activism. Additional events planned for the conference include panel discussions and concurrent sessions, “white glove” tours of the Buck manuscript collection at WVU, and a video uplink with participants in China where Buck spent much of her childhood.

“Pearl S. Buck was a native of West Virginia and a treasure for the world. WVU is proud to work with the West Virginia Humanities Council, the Pearl S. Buck Birthplace Foundation, and West Virginia Wesleyan College to promote her legacy as an author, advocate, and humanitarian. The international

(more)

conference at WVU will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate that legacy and introduce her to new audiences,” WVU President Gordon Gee said.

The Pulitzer Prizes Centennial Campfires Initiative is a joint venture of the Pulitzer Prizes Board and the Federation of State Humanities Councils. The initiative seeks to illuminate the impact of journalism and the humanities on American life today, to imagine their future and to inspire new generations to consider the values represented by the body of Pulitzer Prize-winning work. The Campfires Initiative is supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Pulitzer Prizes Board, and Columbia University.

For more information contact the West Virginia Humanities Council at (304)346-8500 or email payne@wvhumanities.org.

####