15th Annual African American Celebration through Poetry

It's that time of the year again. Yes, our 15th year is almost here. The rehearsal for African American Celebration through Poetry is Saturday, Jan. 28, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The program is scheduled for Feb.

2, 1-4 p.m.

It's always hot, as in a great and highly successful program. This year we're collaborating with It's About Time in honor of the Black Panther Party for Self-Defense's 40th anniversary. If you really want to read, I suggest you come to the rehearsal. Please bring the poetry you are considering and an extra copy for me.

The event is for everyone, although the poets are all Black and African. This year's theme: "Resistance Movements: Black Panther Party Revisited on its 40th Anniversary." We will have an open mic; however, sometimes we run over and run out of time.

I think I'd like to put together an anthology this year, so bring an extra copy of your work to the rehearsal and, if you can't make it, to the event. If there are volunteers who'd like to help with the anthology, let me know. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in a couple of weeks.

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2006: Year of the Panther

by Billy X Jennings

The winds of change are blowing. The heightened contradictions by oppressive forces have brought about the conditions for the rise of a National Human Rights Organization.

The year 2006 will be the year of the Panther, marking the 40th year anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party (BPP). It is time to organize for survival, celebrate our legacy and organize for the future.

Black Panther Party Alumni will be sponsoring a series of activities throughout the year:

February: Black History event, "Revistunea," honoring the Black Panther legacy, hosted by Wanda Sabir and the West Oakland Library.

March 17 to July 2: An exhibit honoring the rank and file BPP members at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco.

April: Bobby Hutton Day at the West Oakland Library — speakers, music and exhibits.

September-November: BPP Newspaper Exhibit at the Main Library, Downtown Oakland.

Oct. 1: Black Panther Film Festival at the Parkway Theater.

October: 40 year Reunion Celebration and Conference, "Honoring the Rank and File" — speakers, workshops, exhibits, banquet.

For further information, visit www.itsaboutbebpp.com. Additional activities and updates will be available on the website and in the San Francisco Bay View newspaper.