

## Updates from the ANIMAL KINGDOM



We tried to fit in all of the D.G. Weekend attendees. Look at all the ladies wearing their peignoirs!



Scotchie was a big hit. I believe her wardrobe is twice as big as mine.



Pajama Party! I am proudly standing to BIG DADDY winner Dean James, as well the beautiful Holly Spigener-Davis and her ravishing mother Nancy Spigener.



Dear Friends and Readers,

The big news in the World of Carolyn this month was about Daddy's Girl Weekend. Dean James, in a world-class plea, won the title of Big Daddy for himself and his two aging cats. While David Sheffield entertained as Elvis and Ben LeRoy videotaped everything in the Minnesotan equivalent of a smoking jacket (flannel PJs—someone call Garrison Keeler, quick!) Dean took the prize. The deciding factor, I do believe, was Scoochie, Dixie Smith's poodle, who chose Dean from the line-up of three candidates. Of course Ben and David put treats at Dean's feet to lure the dog there.

As David said, "The only thing more humiliating than losing would be winning."

With that, Dean took the dubious honor, the panama hat and cigars, home to Houston and his ailing cats, who he said lifted their little heads up when he promised to bring home the prize. As you can see, it was a blast.

I could not have asked three better, more spirited and fun candidates to vie for the title of Big Daddy.

A surprise hit was Dixie Smith, who entertained on "the porch" with stories from her youth about Alice Jackson and me. Many involved the police. I didn't realize Dixie had the goods on me and Alice to the extent she does. If she ever decides to pen her autobiography, Alice and I are in trouble.

Alice responded with a public exhibition of Downward Facing Dog, proving yet again that though a year has passed since the DELTA BLUES launch in Clarksdale, MS, that she is just as nimble as ever. But she failed to wear a peignoir (and there were some really beautiful outfits on display!) so she was disqualified from the peignoir competition.

Videos of all the events, thanks to Priya, who worked her fingers to the bone, are available on my [website](#), my [Facebook](#), [Fan Page](#), and [My YouTube](#). Without Priya, there would be little documentation of what went on. I do believe she is accepting checks for the "low down" on everyone there. She knows all!

Seriously, it was one huge fun event. From all the things I heard, everyone learned a lot from the panelists: Dean, David, Ben, agent Marian Young, bookseller McKenna Jordan. I even rattled on a bit.

And what was really fun was that readers were



Big Daddy contestants cutting it up big time. David Sheffield, Benjamin Leroy, and Dean James. Love these men.



One of my favorite moments of the weekend was when Alice made her speech and capped it off with a Downward Facing Dog dance.



I had to put on my Big Daddy sunglasses, a gift from Cynthia Sheffield, to take a bite of the first ear of corn of 2011. Yum! Yum! Fresh corn on the cob roasted on the grill.

there. I learned a whole lot listening to readers talk about why they love certain characters, what they read for, what turns them on and turns them off. It was such an exchange of information that—We're going to do it again next year!

Sarah Bewley, who was the brains behind this event, has agreed to take on the task of making this happen again. She was everywhere at DG Weekend. And everything worked like clockwork. Sarah's play, [POWER IN THE BLOOD](#), is being produced in L.A. next month, so next year Sarah MUST talk about playwriting.

After conferring with several wise people, we are concerned that Gulf Hills Resort may not be big enough to hold us next year. So we are opening the door to suggestions. We need a place where we can party (Gulf Hills was perfect! We had the Carlisle House for our parties, and folks only had to walk across the parking lot in their peignoirs. I am sure a few golfers were wondering what in the heck was happening outside!) so we need a sort of special place.

Email any suggestions to [Sarah Bewley](#). Oh, Sarah, you glutton for punishment! (Honestly, she had a lot of fun, too, but she did work very, very hard.)

Now that the DG Weekend report is done, let me turn to other things. The Natchez book launch is looking good. Mark your calendars and book your B&B or the [Eola Hotel](#) if you want to come. June 25. The signing (and the wonderful Big Daddy himself, Dean James, will also be there signing his brand new book!) will be from 5-8 p.m., June 25, at [Turning Pages Book Store](#).

We're going to have an "open mic" night for ghost stories. So bring a ghost story. And after the signing, we'll have a bus to take us for a ghost tour of Natchez. Our special guest will be DeWitt Lobrano, a man with some very special talents. More on this as we firm up details.

**Contest news!** If you enjoy reading my *Sarah Booth Delaney* series, you'll be pleased to know the prizes of April's Freebie-of-the-Month contest are **two** Advance Reader's Copies of [BONES OF A FEATHER](#). Enter the contest by clicking here: [Freebie-of-the-Month Contest](#). And congratulations to Nancy Measles and Angela Evans for winning March's contest.

If you're on Twitter, follow me by clicking on: [DeltaGalCarolyn](#). I'll have more give-aways there.

On the animal front, it's been a little rough. My friend, Stephanie, who designed my logo and does such excellent graphic art work, lost her wonderful horse, Nugget. He was a gorgeous palomino and he came down with an illness last Spring that a dozen vets and the vet school at Auburn couldn't pin down. It was genuinely heartbreaking, and they tried everything to save him.

And my niece, Jennifer, who does the [Lab4Rescue](#), lost her horse, Starlight, in a case of acute colic. This is something every horse owner fears. One minute they're fine, the next they're in gastric distress, and it can occur over a drop in the

barometric pressure, stress, digestive upset, pain, a change in the grass—almost anything. Horses appear to be massive and indestructible, but they are so very fragile. Sometimes colic can be treated successfully, and sometimes there is simply nothing that can save them.

Send a good thought for Stephanie and Jennifer. This is a hard, hard thing.

Miss Scrapiron has given me a few bad scares. The vet tells me her heart is beginning to fail. I hardly know how I'll manage this, but she will have the most love and best care possible. And lord knows, no one ever believed she'd live to be 34 (on my birthday, May 12). So she may kick butt for another five years!

On a much happier note, I wish you all a wonderful Spring. The zinnia seeds Pam sent me are coming up and soon I will have flowers to photograph. The cycle begins again.

Love,  
Carolyn

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