



Chester likes to curl up and dream of mischief.



Areading at Termite Hall.



That's Sam hanging out with Flicker.



Dear Friends and Readers,

A lot has happened since my March newsletter—but let's start with upcoming events. This is a really busy time, and I'm enjoying the fun and excitement of the [Alabama Writers Symposium](#) and the [Harper Lee Award](#), which will be given at a luncheon this Friday, April 30, in Monroeville, Alabama, home of the Pulitzer prize-winning writer.

The Alabama Writers' Forum, a partnership program of the Alabama State Council on the Arts, coordinates the award. This is the 13th ceremony and Symposium (April 29-May 1) at Alabama Southern Community College.

I'm really excited and honored, and I hope some of you can attend the luncheon. Photos to come next newsletter!

This coming weekend also marks the "official" release of [Delta Blues](#). The book is earning wonderful reviews and I am so proud of it. I have several book signings set up locally with some of the contributors, so look for us May 4, 6-8 p.m., at [Page and Palette Bookstore](#) in Fairhope, and May 13 at the Barnes and Noble Bookstore in Gulfport, MS. We may read or talk or *sing* the blues—you never can tell.

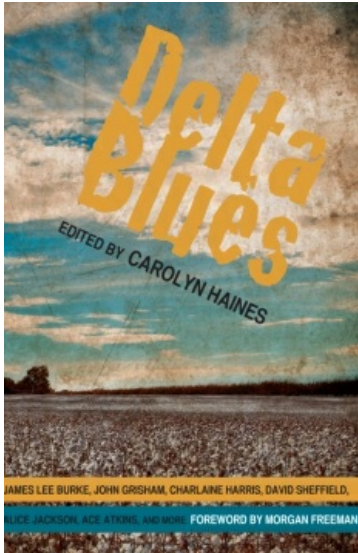
Speaking of the blues, the book launch at Ground Zero Blues Club in Clarksdale, Mississippi was a huge success. Some of you were there to witness the performance of Blues Muse, our band. I have no idea how we really sounded, because I was so busy singing my black little heart out, but we had an awesome time.

The entire weekend was incredible. The high school writing awards presentation went off without a hitch. Morgan Freeman came to support the young writers, as did gubernatorial candidate Bill Lockett, who was such a help to us. Mike Utley played keyboard for the band—just because he's one of the nicest guys in the music business. And we rocked.

Videos of our performances can be seen

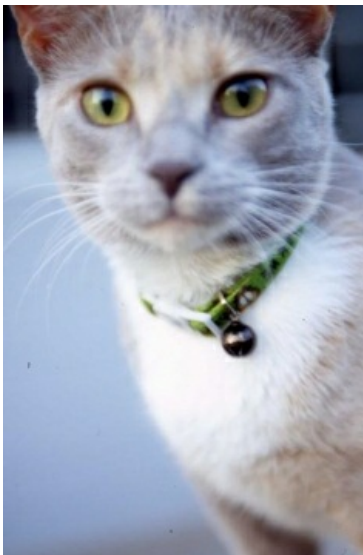


Morgan Freeman and me right before we sold advance copies of Delta Blues! **40% of all sales** went to his *Rock River Foundation*, which boosts literacy rates in Mississippi.



The Delta Blues anthology has now been released for everyone! Check out www.deltabluescollection.com to read interviews from all of the contributing authors.

We hope you marvel over each of these hand-selected stories. Lots of love went into this book. Enjoy!



Can you love me enough to adopt me? I am a Calico who wants a name and a home, and so does my sister. If you have room in your heart to take me in, please visit www.goodfortunefarmrefuge.org to get the scoop. Love, Wistful Calico.

[right here on YouTube](#). Feel free to check out some fabulous photos on my [website](#) and on my [Facebook Photo Album](#).

Right on the heels of the debut of Blues Muse, David Sheffield generously taught a one-day screenwriting seminar for the USA creative writing department at Termite Hall in Mobile. The veteran Hollywood writer imparted a lot of information, and then several of the contributors for DELTA BLUES (David, Alice Jackson, and Suzanne Hudson) read from their short stories on the gallery. It was a perfect Spring day!

Two weeks after that I attended the [Alabama Book Festival](#) in Montgomery where Don Noble interviewed me for [Bookmark](#), his 30-minute show which airs on Alabama Public Television. Television makes me nervous, but Don is a great interviewer and made it as painless as possible. I'll give you a heads up before the show airs.

The Festival was great. I reconnected with some old friends and made some new ones. As the Harper Lee recipient, I was feted and well treated (but they treat me well just on ordinary days) and I ran into [Kathy Patrick](#), the head Pulpwood Queen and a wonderful gal.

This is one of those incredible times in life when I look backward, it's fabulous, and when I look forward, it's exciting. I'm going to do what I keep telling my students to do—celebrate the successes. The small ones, the big ones. Just celebrate.

Speaking of celebrations, I'm hosting a [special contest](#) on Facebook. We just wrapped up Round Three, and every winner receives a signed hardcover of [Wishbones](#). There will be 12 rounds in total, every Tuesday until June 22. This is my way of sharing my excitement for the release date of [Bone Appetit](#).

The spring has not been without sadness. My wonderful ginger tom, Chester, died. He was diabetic and had been run over when I found him twelve years ago in the middle of Hurricane Georges. He is greatly missed on the farm.

The baby horses (*okay, so they are six and eight years old and not really babies*) are with a young man who is riding them daily to get them in shape and refine their manners and handling. I saw them last week and they look wonderful.

I also attended a meeting on trap, neuter, and release for feral or free-range cat colonies. This is something we need to urge our elected officials to put into policy. The amount of money saved in TRN versus trying to capture and euthanize these cats is staggering

(not to mention so much more humane!). Hundreds of thousands of dollars can be saved—and the cats can live happy lives. We truly must fight for this TNR program.

There is a wonderful hound named Macy who wants to be adopted. Can you provide such a home? This is her last week before she's put to sleep. If you'd like to rescue her, please e-mail Valerie Rachal at vrachal@comcast.net and visit www.goodfortunefarmrefuge.org to see all the animals who need homes.

I am passionate about animal rescue. Please consider adopting from your local shelter—and make a contribution to a spay and neuter program. While we can't solve many of the world's problems, we can positively impact the overpopulation of cats and dogs.

Take care and hope to see you in Monroeville.

Best,
Carolyn

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