



My mother always made Halloween so special and fun for me and my brothers. The rascal in the middle of this photo is David. His birthday is this weekend which means that Halloween is always extra festive!



I love Mirage. Do you think she'd mind if I attached a unicorn's horn on her head? Wait. I sense she's giving me a dirty look.



My friends Dickce Ducote Little and An'gel Ducote Molpus (both awesome sisters!) are modeling the shirts. Dickce is wearing the Tinkie shirt and An'gel is wearing the Jitty shirt.



Dear Friends and Readers,,

With the temps sitting at 84°, it doesn't feel like fall, but Halloween is almost here—my favorite holiday of the year. My brother's birthday is Oct. 30, and so every year, Halloween was a big event in our home because we'd have costume parties. My mother loved this holiday, and we'd make coffins out of flower boxes we got from the local florist. We'd go to any amount of trouble to scare our friends and neighbors, and on Halloween night, children came from all over the county because our house was so much fun. Yes, this is a great holiday.

I haven't gotten the animals to wear costumes, though someone brilliantly suggested that Mirage would be a good unicorn. And she is certainly beautiful enough to carry it off. The cats absolutely refuse to participate, and the dogs are so ashamed if I dress them that I relent and let them out of it. But my brother, now that's another matter. I think he should wear a costume.

The new website is almost ready to launch--maybe in the next two weeks. And that means the T-shirts and polos and sweatshirts are ready for sale. I've only ordered a small amount, just to test the waters. But we'll get to all of that when it's up and ready to go.

Plans for Daddy's Girl Weekend are up and going. March 11-13. Should be fun, fun! Cost is \$175 for the conference, which will include some meals and liquor, writing classes, readers sessions, sessions by agents and writers and publishers, and a guided shopping trip by Dixie Smith, who is a real Daddy's Girl (and a good friend), and impossible to replicate entertainment from the candidates for Big Daddy. For more information, contact Sarah Bewley at Sarahbewley@sarahbewley.com Sarah is in charge and is doing me a huge friendship favor by doing this. (Sarah Booth has good friends, but mine are better!) This is going to be fun, fun, fun.

BONES OF A FEATHER is edited and ready to go into production. I've seen a sketch of the cover and it is great. When I get a finished cover, I'll pass it along to you.

[DAMN NEAR DEAD 2](#), an anthology of "geezer" noir, will be out in November. I have a short story in this anthology, which has a foreword by Charlaine Harris, and is edited by Bill Crider. It's a fun collection of characters 60+ who may be older but they aren't dead yet.



Dixie Smith and Scootchie both want YOU to attend Daddy's Girl Weekend. Oh come on, live a little! There's gonna be a BIG DADDY contest, drinks that count, shopping, and tons of literary conversations. Join me!



Let's do brunch together, shall we? I plan on burning my calories by walking all afternoon at the Peter Anderson Festival, admiring all the amazing craftsmanship that I'll come across.



Well, well, well. Remember this scene in *Fried Green Tomatoes*? I am getting giddy about meeting Fannie Flagg. I just hope we're not having barbecue at the luncheon!

And Charline McCord and Judy Tucker have put together another incredibly beautiful collection, this time of essays about Christmas in Mississippi. The book is launching November 16 with a signing at [Lemuria Bookstore](#) from 5-7 p.m. I'll be there with about 18 other contributors, so it should be a massive Christmas signing. The book, so beautifully illustrated by Mississippi watercolorist Wyatt Waters, is high on my list of gifts for Christmas.

Other exciting things going on—Fannie Flagg will be in Mobile, AL on Nov. 9, and I'm attending her [luncheon/talk](#). I love her books and her good-hearted humor. And I will never feel the same way about barbecue again, but I have to say, some men just need killin' and that one needed to be cooked up! ([Fried Green Tomatoes](#)) I've admired her work for many years, so I look forward to hearing her talk.

And Alice Jackson and I will be signing books on Nov. 12 at the [Christmas Jubilee](#) presented by the Junior League of Mobile. The Barnes & Noble in Spanish Fort is hosting the bookstore in the "shopping mall" they set up inside the Greater Gulf State Fairgrounds building. It's an amazing thing to see. Everything from pewter platters to leopard-print dresses. The Junior League does a lot of work to promote literacy, so come out and support them.

If you'll be near or in Ocean Springs, MS on Nov. 6, come have brunch with me at the [Southern Expressions Author's Conference](#). I'll be delivering the breakfast keynote at the Mary C. O'Keefe Center. This is the same weekend as the [Peter Anderson Arts Festival](#) — a huge event — so come and plan to spend the day. There will be tons of speakers for the writing event (sponsored by the MS Gulf Coast Writers Association) and you can roam the main streets to enjoy the vendors with pottery, jewelry, artwork, and all types of crafts.

That's the November news so far. I hope you all have a wonderful Halloween. I have tried to convince Priya to roll yards with me, but so far she is remaining determined not to get pulled into mischief. If my mother were alive, she'd talk Priya into it—no one could resist my mom when she was up to a prank.

Oh, and for those of you in the Southeast (or who shop online with [Southern Independent Booksellers Alliance](#) bookstores), here's the link to the [nomination form](#) for the SIBA Book Award. Categories are *fiction*, *nonfiction*, *poetry*, *cooking*, *children's*, & *young adult*. The instructions are beside the form, and it is intended for people who shop with independent booksellers (there's a place to put in the store where you shop). To be eligible, the book must be southern or written by a Southern author and published in 2010 (no reprints).

I'm off to acquire Halloween treats for the kids who dare knock on my door. Ha! May you have a spooktacular Halloween.

Love,
Carolyn



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