



Dear Friends and Readers,

2010 has gotten off to a hoppin' start. As Jitty would say, I'm rolling in high cotton. It's impossible not to brag, so I'm just going to say it—I've been named the recipient of the 2010 Harper Lee Award. This is a tremendous honor, and I'm really proud. The full press release is available at my website or on my facebook site. I hope you will all celebrate with me with a glass of bubbly or a sip of your favorite beverage. My theory about life is that we really must celebrate the moments of joy. They come and go so fast, and I want you all to share this with me.

This award is Alabama's highest writing honor and is sponsored by the Alabama Writers Forum, the Alabama State Council on the Arts and a generous grant from the George F. Landegger family.

The award will be presented April 30 at a luncheon as part of the Alabama Writers Symposium on the campus of Alabama Southern Community College in Monroeville, Alabama, the home of Harper Lee. The Symposium is a fun weekend honoring writers and readers and includes a local production of **TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD** set in the old courthouse. I've seen the play numerous times, and I don't know where they find such talented youngsters to play Scout, Jim, and Dill, but it is well worth seeing. If it works into your schedule, please plan on attending.

The complete schedule for this year's event hasn't been released, but I'll update you on the other writers and participants who will be there.

That's a big weekend for me. On top of the Harper Lee Award, May 1 is the official release date for **DELTA BLUES**, the collection of short stories I edited. The release party is set for March 27 in Clarksdale, Mississippi, at Ground Zero blues club, and books will be available there, but the official date is May 1, and books will be available at the Symposium. Way cool to have an award and a book drop in the same weekend.

On the animal front, Good Fortune Farm Refuge is gaining some hits on the website, and I want to thank everyone who has passed the info along to friends and loved ones. Finding homes for stray pets is hard, heart-breaking work. For every home we find, there are 300 animals that need a warm place to live. The three weeks of awful, [freezing](#) weather hit local shelters hard. Many had to take animals to vet clinics for boarding because of the extreme cold.

So if you can offer a home to a pet, please do so. We have new listings at www.goodfortunefarmrefuge.org. Anyone can list a pet to give away on this website. And remember to spay and neuter. We need legislation making spay and neuter mandatory, but I doubt that's going to happen any time soon. So the best we can do is stop the suffering where we can.

Many of you have asked about attending one of my classes, and in an effort to raise money for Good Fortune Farm Refuge, I'm teaching a class for 4 Sundays in February with fellow writer Suzann Ledbetter of Nixa, MO. If you're interested in more details, e-mail me and I'll let you know. The proceeds go to the animals.

More news later!

Best,
Carolyn

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