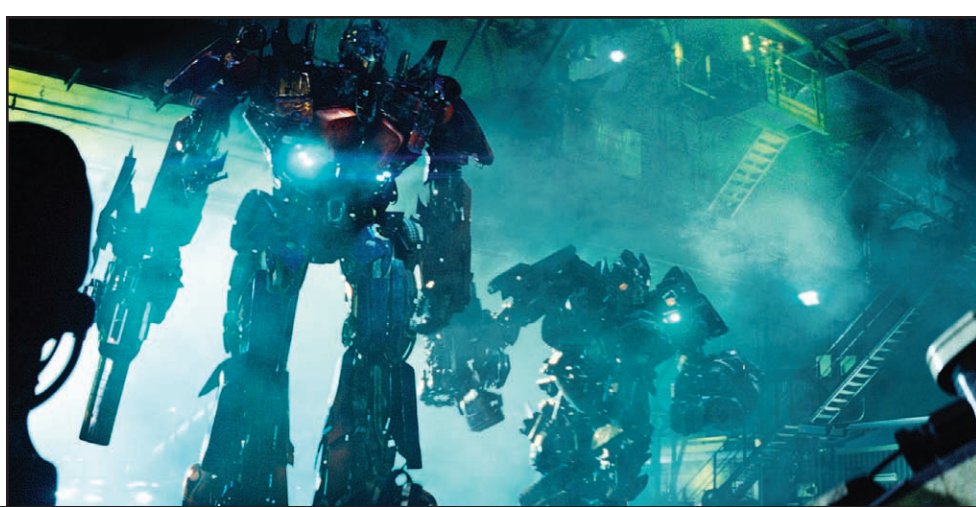


Transformers 2:  
Revenge of the  
Fallen

2c



Billboard  
Best Sellers

2c

Saturday, June 27, 2009

The Courier Herald

Section C

# Entertainment



On  
Tap

ULIANO

**What:** Second Annual "Book Affair" featuring NY Times Best-seller Sophie Uliano, author of "Gorgeously Green."

**When:** June 27, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**Where:** Dublin Mall

**Cost:** Free



## Skeeterz Coming To Cochran

The Skeeterz are coming to Cochran on Saturday, July 11 – and, appropriately, they'll be loud and hot!

These Skeeterz, a Rock and Blues group that has been building a strong musical reputation in the Macon/Atlanta area through the past five years, will appear in concert at the Cochran City Auditorium at 7 p.m.

Co-sponsors are the Cochran-Bleckley Arts Alliance and the Ocmulgee Symphony Orchestra, with proceeds – tickets are \$5 in advance, \$7 at the door – to be divided by the two organizations.

"These Skeeterz are good," said Elaine Ricks, Arts Alliance chair. "They're polished and dedicated, and their playing has been influenced by some of the best names in contemporary music." Among those: the Police, Led Zeppelin, Bob Dylan, BB King ZZ Top. A new album is now nearing completion.

Tickets are available at Headquarters, Bohannon's, and Com South.

In Laretta Hannon's New Book, "The Cracker Queen," the Author Looks to Give Southern Women The...

# ROYAL TREATMENT

By JASON HALCOMBE  
Entertainment Editor

It's Sunday morning. And, besides several lawn and garden shows and a host of cartoons and infomercials, the only programs filling up the airwaves are the early news shows on the local channels.

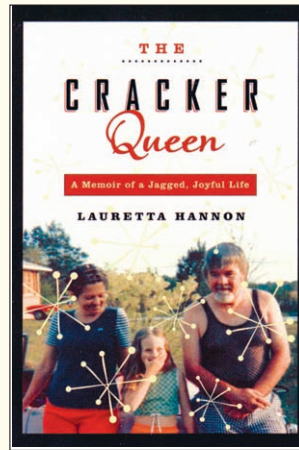
That's where we find author Laretta Hannon. The reporter works through a handful of questions, trying to cap a five minute segment sandwiched between weather and sports, and by the end of it all Hannon is left saying "Thank You" five or six times before the show goes to break.

These kind of hours aren't necessarily new to Hannon—a longtime contributor to National Public Radio's "All Things Considered"—but stepping away from the microphone and in front of the camera are fresh and exciting; all due in no small part to Hannon's latest book release: "The Cracker Queen: A Memoir of a Jagged Joyful Life."

The book encompasses Hannon's life and travels throughout the state, while uncovering exactly what it means to be a "Cracker Queen."

The Courier Herald caught up with Hannon earlier this week, putting the author on the other end of a Question and Answer session—minus the lights, camera and action of course.

**CH:** Now that the book is published (it was officially released in April), how



The book encompasses Hannon's life and travels throughout the state, while uncovering exactly what it means to be a "Cracker Queen."

has your schedule changed? In particular, events like Sunday's visit to the 11 Alive set?

**LH:** My schedule has changed in every way imaginable. I quit my day job in the spring so that I could promote The Cracker Queen and live the creative life. I've just finished a six-week book tour that took me across the Southeast and in a different city each day. It's been grueling, but it still beats real work! I've redesigned my life completely, and it's thrilling. Nothing feels better than pursuing your passion.

My typical week now involves media interviews, speaking engagements, writing, appearances at bookstores and libraries, and communicating with readers. I also do writing seminars through my Down Home Writing School.

**CH:** For those who haven't read the book, explain what it means to be a "Cracker Queen?"

**LH:** A Cracker Queen is a strong, authentic, fabulous Southern woman. She's someone who has known hard times but kept her sense of humor throughout it all. Rather than becoming a victim, a Cracker Queen advances through the bad things that happen and triumphs over them through love, forgiveness, gratitude, purpose, and fearlessness. As a result, her life is brim-full of joy and laughter. But don't cross her: She can be both the life of the party and the reason the police have to be called.

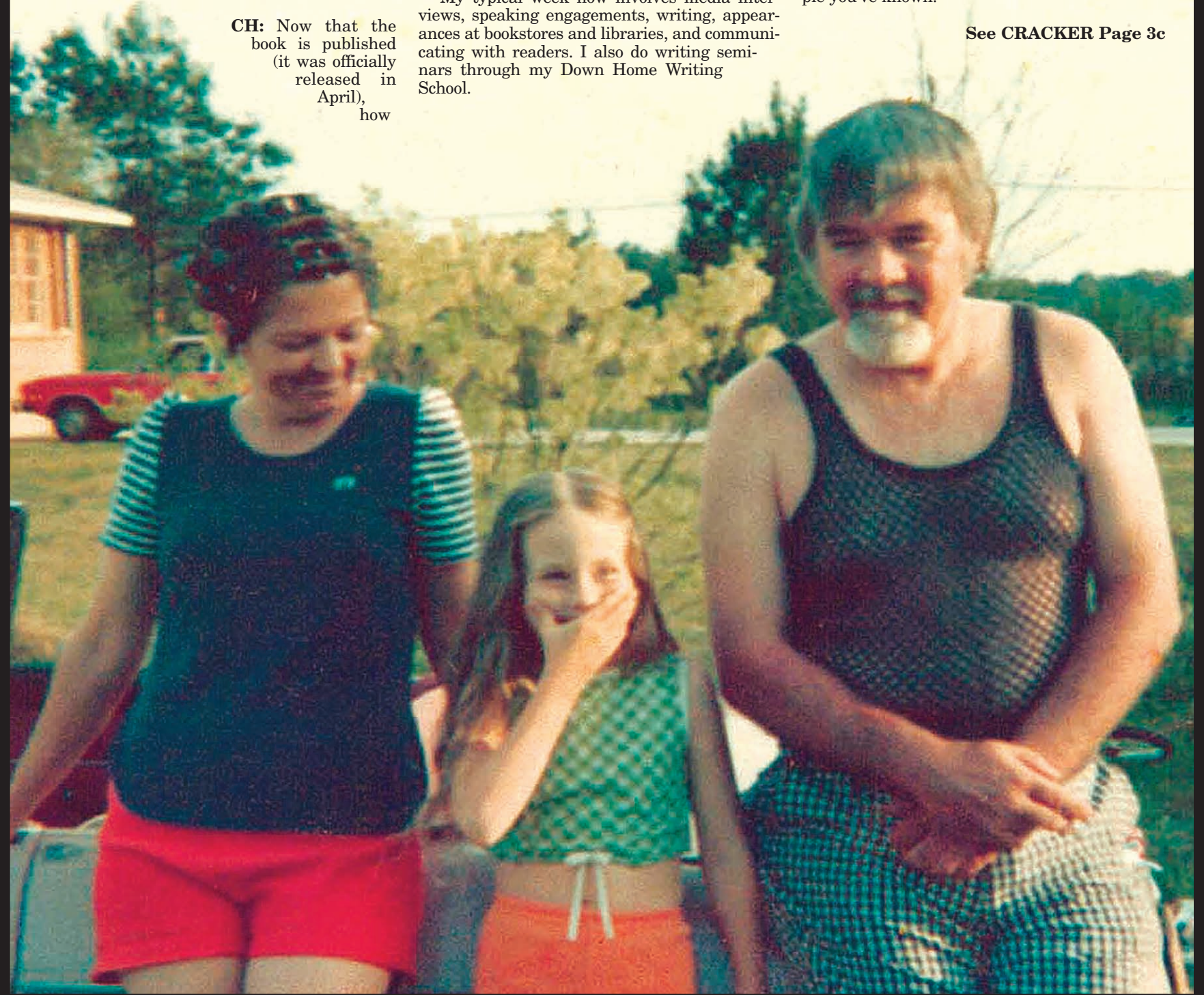
You know the kind of person I'm talking about—Dublin is full of them!

**CH:** The book is about your life, growing up in places from Warner Robins to Savannah and everywhere in between. In some cases it seems very unique, but then again there seem to be familiarities that anyone from this area can find comfort in. What made you decide to pen all of these stories into "Cracker Queen?"

**LH:** Why did I write this book? Because I had to. These stories had been in my head for many years and had to come out. I knew that I had an entertaining story to tell, one that would hopefully make folks laugh out loud and maybe even touch their hearts and minds. Now I hear from at least one reader every day who tells me that the book has had that effect. It's so satisfying to know that my instinct about this story was right.

I also tried to write it with complete honesty, and I think readers are hungry for that kind of authenticity. Southerners especially love the true ring of the language and the real-life characters. The book is full of hellions, heroines, bad seeds, and renegades—all of whom are like people you've known.

See CRACKER Page 3c



# Girl Who Needs Adult Help Swears Friend to Secrecy

DEAR ABBY: I'm 10 years old and worried about my friend "Kelly." Her father has fought in two wars and suffers from PTSD, and when he loses it, he hits her.

I really want to tell someone who can help her, but she wants to "keep it a secret." I'm afraid if I tell, my best friend will get separated from her family. What should I do? — HOPING TO HELP A FRIEND

DEAR HOPING TO HELP: Some secrets are meant to be kept, but physical abuse isn't one of them. One of the saddest things about abuse is that the victims often come to believe they deserve it because that's what the abuser tells them (This is YOUR fault — YOU made me do this!). Of course, when someone loses control, it isn't the victim's fault but rather the abuser's, because the abuser is unable to control his (or her) emotions.

There are worse things than being removed from a violent family situation, among them the risk of serious injury. That's why it's important that you tell a trusted adult what's happening to Kelly. This needs to be reported so her father can get the help he so desperately needs.

DEAR ABBY: In our school, we're not allowed to have our cell phones out or turned on, but of course, people do it anyway. Some of these students have extremely high-pitched ring tones. They are at such a frequency that the older teachers cannot hear them. Many adults do not hear the noise.

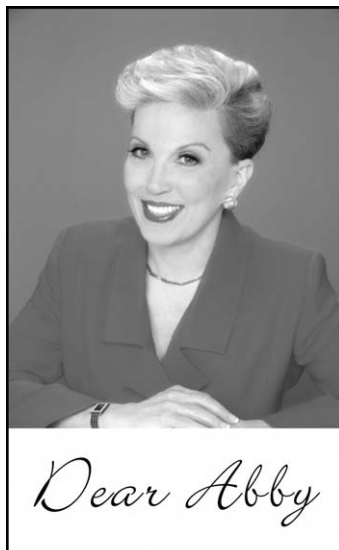
These "mosquito" tones hurt my ears, and just about everyone in the room cringes when someone gets a text message. I'm not sure what to do. The teachers are oblivious, and there are far too many cell phones out to report them all. Should I endure it until I graduate? — HATING THE INVISIBLE NOISE

DEAR HATING THE NOISE: Have a private chat with the teacher, tell him or her what's going on, and explain that the tones are a distraction in class. Then talk to some of the other students you see cringing when the "mosquitoes" start buzzing. If a number of you start visibly reacting to the noise, your teacher should notice and begin to take action.

P.S. Some electronics-savvy educators insist that all cell phones be placed on their desks when students enter the classroom.

DEAR ABBY: My husband and I married in an impromptu ceremony while visiting his parents. We didn't have a ring, so his mother offered to give me the wedding ring she had inherited from her mother as a gift.

About a year ago, my husband gave me an anniversary band, which I decided to wear with the ring from my mother-



in-law. However, when she heard about my new ring, she asked me to return her mother's ring. I am hurt that she wants it back because I'd like to keep it. What should I do? — TWO-RING CIRCUS

DEAR TWO-RING: First, let me tell you what not to do. Although the ring was a "gift," do not allow it to become a bone of contention. In the interest of family harmony, return it to your mother-in-law with a sweet note thanking her for letting you wear it all this time, and telling her how much that "symbol of her love and acceptance" has meant to you all these years. Maybe she'll leave it to you in her will.

DEAR ABBY: I'm 15 and have a 6-month-old daughter who is my everything. Her father is 16, and he does drugs and drinks. He says he loves me and the baby, but given the choice, he'd rather be stoned or drunk at his friends' houses than see his daughter.

I want him involved in our lives, but the only time he sees us is when I take the baby to his house. I won't allow my daughter to spend the night with him because he smokes, and so does the rest of the family. I need your help. I don't know what to do. — TEEN MOMMY IN ILLINOIS

DEAR TEEN MOMMY: It appears your baby's father is in no condition to be a parent in any sense of the word. What you're going to have to do is grow up quickly and realize that at the rate he's going, he has no future.

Teenagers who spend their time drinking and drugging can't study, can't work and can't hold a job. Whether your baby's father will even graduate from high school is questionable. That is why it is doubly important for you to apply yourself to your studies and get all the education you can — because the odds are great that you will be supporting your daughter emotionally and financially until she's an adult.

Some schools offer programs for teen mothers and dads. I urge you to reach out and find out what is available in your community.

## All My Children

Annie dumped Aidan and tried to get romantic with Adam. At the memorial for David's baby, Amanda nearly lost it and spilled the beans about the baby not having died after all. Liza pretended to go into labor to create a distraction. Colby bonded with her mother, believing that she was really about to give birth. Meanwhile, Tad retrieved Amanda's baby from Jake to complete the illusion. Krystal was there for a distraught David. Zach hit a nerve with Madison when he mentioned her marriage to North. North asked Randi to run away with him, but she was committed to her marriage to Frankie. Taylor told Tad that she and Brod had called it quits. Aidan and Ryan conspired against Annie.

THIS WEEK: Amanda demands answers from Jake.

## As the World Turns

Craig proposed to Carly. Carly said yes only after Rosanna gave her approval. Jack wasn't happy about the engagement because he suspected Carly was still drinking. Rosanna agreed to live at Milltown to watch over Carly. Margo learned Riley lied about his true identity. Luke and Noah went to a military base to shot footage for the film. In a confrontation with Noah's father — Colonel Mayer — Margo was shot. Henry continued playing Geneva. Kim named Geneva the interim replacement for an injured Vienna. Larry was able to find Emily's frozen eggs in



the hospital lab. Damian tried to win over Meg by gaining control of WorldWide. Fed up with Paul, Dusty and Damian, Meg swore off all men.

THIS WEEK: Susan suspects that Larry is up to no good.

## The Bold & the Beautiful

Brooke was worried that giving Ridge his space was the wrong move. Nick warned Owen not to bring Jackie to Nick and Bridget's wedding. Jackie told Nick that her future with Owen would happen despite Nick's objections. Taylor and Ridge agreed to keep their night together a secret. Nick and Bridget exchanged vows and were married again. Nick asked Clarke to keep an eye on Owen while Nick's on his honeymoon. At the wedding, the Forrester children delivered some bad news to Eric, while Bill flirted with Katie. Taylor told Stephanie the painful truth about her night with Ridge. Guilt-ridden Ridge was tempted to confess everything to Brooke.

THIS WEEK: Brooke and Ridge come to a decision about their relationship.

## Days of Our Lives

EJ promised Sami that his temporary custody of Johnny would become permanent. A desperate Sami pleaded with Stephanie to testify against EJ. Stephanie took a fall and knocked herself unconscious. Mia told her ex-boyfriend to leave her alone, but Chad said he wasn't going anywhere. Stefano warned Nicole to never tell EJ the truth about Sydney being Sami's daughter. Kate placed poisoned treats on the set for Hearth and Home broadcast, but Lucas nearly ate them instead of Chloe. Stephanie overdosed on anti-anxiety medication. Rafe suspected Nicole mourning Grace. Philip asked Lucas to be his best man. Bo has a vision of Zack and fears for Ciara.

THIS WEEK: Kate makes trouble for Daniel.

## Guiding Light

Blake hired Natalia as her assistant. Phillip consulted with Rick's father, Dr. Ed Bauer, about his health. Ed informed Phillip that he has an incurable disease and only three months to live. Cyrus and Remy found the diamonds in the

water sewage treatment plant. Remy turned in the jewels to the cops, but Cyrus stole a few on the sly. Reva put a light in the window, agreeing not to chase after Jeffrey. Dinah and Jeffrey left clues that made Lara appear to be alive. Shayne learned Dinah lied to him about going to a convention. Lizzie and Bill took back control of the wedding from Vanessa and Beth. Olivia and Natalia decided to reveal their relationship at the Bauer barbeque.

THIS WEEK: Michelle Bauer returns to Springfield.

## The Young and the Restless

Sharon had the paternity test done and learned that her unborn child was Nick's. Mary Jane schemed against Phyllis by causing Summer to have an anaphylactic reaction to a peanut cookie. Victor demanded that Adam explain the Sabrina's incidents. Adam declared that Estella had set him up. Adam learned the botox injections to his eyes might result in permanent blindness. Adam tried to throw off Rafe's suspicions by making a pass at Rafe. Phyllis bailed Daniel out of jail, but Jana was denied bail. A mysterious figure reacted to the news about Daniel with anger. Cane has frozen vials of Langley's blood to fake Nina's DNA test. Mac confessed to Billy that she broke up with Raul.

THIS WEEK: Heather begins investigating Phyllis for harming Summer.

# Cracker

## Continued From 1c

**CH:** It seems like you lean heavily on stories about your mother, in fact spending the opening of one chapter talking about the near abortion that would have prevented you from coming into the world. How did your parents' hardships shape your early life?

**LH:** This might sound odd, but hardship can eventually bring tremendous lessons and gifts. I'm grateful for the people they became as a result of what they went through. Despite their "challenges," they always made me feel cherished.

I call my mother The Queen of Queens. She's the purest, highest example of a Cracker Queen. She is amazing, and I had to tell the world about her. Mama is so charming that I can't let her go to all of my events because she steals my thunder!

She gets my vote to be Dublin's next parade marshal.

**CH:** Staying with your folks, it sounds like you grew up in a pretty lively, albeit dysfunctional, household. But, when you break it down, is it much different than many other households?

**LH:** My story is universal. Everyone can relate to parts of it. But in other ways it is decidedly different. For example, you know how most folks' parents meet while they are in college or perhaps through church? Well my parents met in a moonshine stand. That should give you some idea of

what I mean.

I don't want to give away too much in the book, but let's just say that there are some wild stories that do set my family apart from others. Mama still lives in East Dublin, so you'll have to read the book to find out!

**CH:** You talk about Dublin in the book. What has made the Emerald City such a telling place that you felt it needed inclusion in your book?

**LH:** Dublin is like home to me because I have family there. But it's more than that—there's something about the quality of life and people and place. I talk about this in the book. For instance, it seemed the entire town responded when 5,000 evacuees fled from Savannah when a hurricane was threatening the coast some years ago. I saw firsthand how the members of Bethlehem Baptist Church reached out to the evacuees with such generosity and graciousness. Everyone rallied around a common purpose, and it was beautiful.

Dublin is fun, too. I write about going ghost hunting with my nephew, eating at Ma Hawkin's, and an unbelievable

trip to meet Dublin's own Karl Slover, one of the munchkins from The Wizard of Oz. I still mourn the passing of Ma Hawkin's.

The downtown area is such a gem. I consider it the heart and soul of Dublin. I did a photo shoot for Southern Living there, so be on the lookout for the photos in the October edition.

**CH:** What gave you the greatest joy in writing this book?

**LH:** The writing of the book was the greatest joy. Nothing makes me happier than to write.

**CH:** What are your future plans for the book?

**LH:** My plan is to keep the book alive by continuing to make people aware of it. The Cracker Queen became a Southern Indie Bestseller just three weeks after it was released, and I want to build on that momentum. While doing that I'm also working on a novel set in Middle Georgia.

**CH:** Would be interested in seeing your tales on the big screen?

**LH:** I can't tell you how many times I've heard, "This book should be a movie." We are exploring that possibility. And Mama has already "requested" that Susan Sarandon play her!