

## OCTOBER 2018 NEWSLETTER

By Lori Shuck

Hello Friends!

The anticipated arrival of October is what keeps me going through muggy, Mississippi summers, because it usually contains the long-awaited cool-down. It certainly took it's sweet time cooling down this year! Finally, here at the end, it's started to happen.

### **Recap of the Month:**

I was honored to sing and play with [Luke Fisher](#) at the **RISE** (formerly Pinebelt Christian Women and Men's Job Corps) Banquet of Light on October 4th. Luke won a songwriting contest shortly after that. Go, Luke!

Brad, Mama, and I slipped away to Pensacola for a few days after the banquet. We lazed around mostly, with the exception of a day trip to Seaside, Florida. It's a quaint and charming place—though they were experiencing “Red Tide”—which amounted to the air being full of critter toxins\* that caused the three of us (and everybody else there who wasn't wearing a face mask) to cough uncontrollably when walking around outside. We knew nothing of this aspect of Red Tide. Oh, and Brad almost ran over one of the 9,000 people riding bikes. After the initial shock at so many face masks and widespread coughing fits, we enjoyed our Seaside experience (I especially enjoyed the trip back to good-ole, Red Tide-free Pensacola, as we stopped by Whole Foods in Destin, where I reloaded on my [Lily's](#) stevia-sweetened candy bars, which were on sale. Yay!). Alas, Hurricane Michael cut our trip a day short and, to add drama to the dramatic, on the way home I discovered that my cell phone number had been stolen. So, there's that. (This little saying, “so there's that,” is bound to be the bane of English teachers everywhere. I think it's the *new* bane, perhaps taking the place of that other *fading* bane, “I know, right?” I mean, do you know, or, are you asking *me* if you know? Right? All I can say is, anyway, or any who—my high school English teacher's version of “anyway,”—which, knowing her, is bound to be thoroughly, grammatically correct.

Brad and I did some much needed yard work the other day, and our little garden is still producing okra, butter beans, and peppers, which Brad has faithfully harvested all summer. He's even put up tomatoes! (He's retired, now, you know.) He finished putting the tin roof on the porch he's been building for the last few months. Soon he'll be working on a big farm table, so we can enjoy eating outside in the cool weather. He'll also be building a couple more Adirondack chairs. He's quite the carpenter and handyman.

I've been writing a good bit this month. I decided to participate in NaNoWriMo—National Novel Writing Month. Participants sign up at [nanowrimo.org](http://nanowrimo.org) and try to write 50,000 words in November. I've been preparing for this quest by working on my novel outline, scene descriptions, and character development. I'll let you know more about that over time. My goal is to finish my book by next fall. It has been so good for me to study about writing stories, story structure, and character arcs. It's all so fascinating!

My musical pursuits fell off a bit after my daddy passed on August 18, but I know I'll find a new normal and niche. I'm hoping to start working on another recording project in the next few months.

Finally, I've been helping Mama paint my brother's old bedroom, which is cool. We refer to our old bedrooms as if we still sleep there—Bryan's room, Lori's room. I had a nostalgic moment when I filled the thirty-something year-old bullet hole in Bryan's bedroom door with wood putty. Old quick-draw Parker was in his room one night, back in the 80's, and got carried away, pretending to be Clint Eastwood, I guess. I was in my room, Mama and Daddy were in their room, and BOOM! We all froze in silence, wondering who'd been shot. I still remember checking my abdomen for a wound. Finally, somebody said something brilliant, trembling, and high-pitched like, "Bryan? Are you alive?" (I think it was Daddy.) Thankfully, Ole Clint was perfectly intact, except for the big bug eyes and sweat beads. It's a good thing no one was in the hall or bathroom, because the bullet went straight through his door and lodged in the bathroom wall. And now, if the house ever becomes a historical landmark, the tour guide will have to point to the spot where the bullet hole *used* to be. Dang. I should've

left it like it was. It's too bad we don't have his old Chevy S-10 anymore. We could just show all the tourists the bullet hole in *it*, instead. Yeah. He did it more than once. And yet, they all call *me* the dramatic one. I know, right?

I hope you'll sit outside and relax in this gorgeous weather sometime soon, with a blanket and a cup of something warm and sweet, reminiscing about the good old days in your own crazy family.

Peace,

Lori

\*([\*K. brevis\*](#), to be exact. It is a neurotoxin called brevetoxin, which is released by the dinoflagellate called *Karenia*, which causes Red Tide in the Gulf, in case you care.)

I found this out on: [blogs.scientificamerican.com](https://blogs.scientificamerican.com), Web. Oct. 26, 2018.

#### **LINKS TO:**

[October 2018 Blog Post: "Have You Changed Your Password Lately?"](#)

[October 2018 Devotional: "Protecting Your Spirit from Identity Theft"](#)

[October 2018 Lori's Bookshelf](#)