

Dance • Film • Literature

the drag rag

by Miss Della
Q-Notes Staff

Hello boys and girls, and welcome once more to the wonderful world of pageantry. Just so happens, in my little corner, the ladies have a little something extra. Or maybe a lot, but we won't go there!

Here I am, steadily packing my bags to head off to Louisville for the Entertainer of the Year contest. It should be a great one with the likes of Tasha Long, Ashley Kruijz, Raven and Necole Luv Dupree competing. In a way, I just dread it because only one can win, of course. Congrats to my sister Roxie Hart of Oklahoma City who has done a great job as the national titleholder.

And speaking of national contests, Miss National was just held in Atlanta, and we have a new queen with a crown. Nicole DuBois of Louisiana won; her runners-up included first: Shae Shae LaReese; second: Raquel Lord; third: Anjila Richards-Cavalier and fourth: Celeste Holmes. Mr. Rick Camp of Alabama was given the Lifetime Achievement Award, and sadly enough, passed away two days later. He had owned Dixieland National and Continental, and supported such big names as Amy DeMilo, Tasha Long, and the late, great Tandi Andrews.

Leading up to Miss USofA at Large, recent prelim winners include Miss Arkansas, won by Bridgette Lee, with first RU going to Kelexis Davenport; Indiana, which Mahogany Knight won and her RU was Kitty Litter and Louisiana, which Cymone Richard won. The dates are quickly approaching for the porkfest to take place in Winston-Salem at Club Odyssey. Bring a bucket of chicken and some Little Debbie's, and let's have a pageant!

And speaking of USofA, you know the Warehouse 29 in Greensboro recently purchased the rights to hold Miss NC there. They have prelims for sale, and are looking forward to having the contest back in Guilford County! Kent, the owner, is such a doll — please plan now to support him in this endeavor. I know our reigning Miss USofA, Erika Norell, will be in attendance, hopefully working in other Tarheel cities beforehand.

With only reserved balcony seats remaining for sale, the dates for Miss Continental just gets closer and closer. The most recent prelim I know about

would be Miss Emerald Coast in Raleigh at Legends. The entertainment and the competition was wonderful and at the end of the night, Alexis Gabrielle Shearrington of Jacksonville, Florida, took top honors with a very talented and intelligent Coti Collins being first runner-up. Call and get those tickets soon now! Or you'll be bitter!

Miss NC America recently took place at Scorpio in Charlotte, and I must say, it was a good contest — one of the best in years! Melissa Montgomery was there to celebrate her twentieth anniversary as Miss NC and she was lovely as always. Too bad some girls won't ever look that good or still perform that well even after doing five or ten years. She is truly remarkable and a legend in her own time in my opinion.

Other former Misses in attendance were Brandy Alexander, Kerri Nichols, Tracy Morgan, Tiffany Storm, Kirby Kolby, Kristen Collins, Felicia Powers, and two out of drag — Courtney Cox and honorary Miss, Lauren Colby. Former Miss Gay America Tiffany Bonet was on-hand to welcome the reigning Miss America, Charity Case to the Queen City.

Michelle Warren of Greenville won, her first RU was Kendall Carlson of Raleigh and second RU was Diamond of Greensboro. Other finalists included Jennifer St. James, Monica Mitchells, Dominique O'Day and Brittany Shane. Miss Greenville won Best Prelim again, and Sam Hare won New Promoter. The Best Prelim Award has been renamed the Melissa Montgomery Award since the year following her win, all contestants had to qualify at one. The Toni Lenoir Award went to Diana Prince, Miss Central.

While on the subject of Miss America, I did want to mention a prelim coming up out in Kansas City, Missouri on Sunday, August 26 — it's the Miss Midwest contest, which has produced six Miss Americas and many finalists. If memory serves me correctly, our own Kirby Kolby was the last to win this contest in 1999. Prospective contestants can call promoter Mike Rhinehart of NC at 816-531-2511. The prize package is lovely!

In closing, I wanted to mention two things — one, have you seen our Miss Continental PLUS Angel Sheridan on the cover of that CD, *Dancin' Queens*? It's all this good drag music on one CD. Victoria Parker says you need it! Some standards and some new stuff. Also, just wanted to say hello to a dear friend in Irving, Texas, who reads faithfully — his name is Jose, and he's a Latino papi who likes drag. Imagine the smile on my face right now! Hmmm.

Write me at DragTea411@aol.com, please! ▼

As a member of a nomadic tribe of zealots, slackers, heiresses, stoners, saints, and freaks, Kelly Winters made her pilgrimage, overcoming exhaustion, hunger, injuries, and loneliness, she moved northward.

"At about the 1000-mile mark, the trip had this incredible sense of flow, despite the physical suffering that it involved," she says. "There is a shield in civilization: that make-no-eye contact, don't-get-too-close, keep-your-space thing. It keeps people out of your mental space, but it also insulates you from them. In the woods, especially if you hike alone, you don't need it, so you drop it."

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"A gripping read, ... ably conjures the smell of pine and the taste of cold oatmeal ... a rousing tale of emotional triumph written with honesty and wry insight."
— Publishers Weekly

"An inspired and inspiring read. Reader beware: Walking Home will have you packing your bags and heading out the door."
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Editor

A Woman's Path: Women's Best Spiritual Travel Writing

▼ ▼ ▼
Her account, of this journey is in the tradition of our best outdoor chroniclers from John Muir to Jon Krakauer. She captures the sense of both majestic isolation and quirky community, the moments of staggering beauty and of startling terror, and the conflicting senses of exhilaration and futility that exist in outdoor adventure.

"I think walking connects you to the world in a way that nothing else does. When you walk, it's just you, the world, your body, and your breath. It's very humble. You're defenseless, and you become very open."

Most vividly, *Walking Home* is an exceptionally truthful, often funny, exciting account of an emotional and spiritual journey filled with courage, healing, developing trust, unexpected strength, and most surprisingly, lasting love. ▼

between the covers

Walk a mile in my shoes ... or 2000 miles

by Dan Cullinane
Special to Q-Notes

Walking Home
by Kelly Winters
Alyson Publications
September 2001 \$14.95

It was a cold, drizzly, April morning in Springer Mountain, Georgia, when Kelly Winters took her first steps alone onto the Appalachian Trail. She had no idea what she would face in the next seven months. From April through September, Kelly Winters walked the Appalachian Trail through Georgia, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and on into Maine in a life-altering journey she recounts in the new book *Walking Home*.

"I felt there was a place I needed to get to," she writes in *Walking Home* her just published memoir of her journey, "not a physical place, but an emotional, psychological, spiritual one." Leaving behind a series of meaningless jobs and an unhealthy relationship, Winters headed north.

The Appalachian Trail stretches from Georgia to Maine, a grueling 2000-mile journey marked by white blazes that doggedly lead to the summit of every mountain in its path. For hikers, it represents a pilgrimage to the very heart of outdoor culture.

"From all the reading I did, I knew the trip would be incredibly difficult," Winters recalled. "I knew it would be painful, uncomfortable, exhausting, and all that. What I didn't know about was the people. Long-distance hikers have this incredible community. It's a special world that really only other hikers can truly understand. People go out of their way to help each other.



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