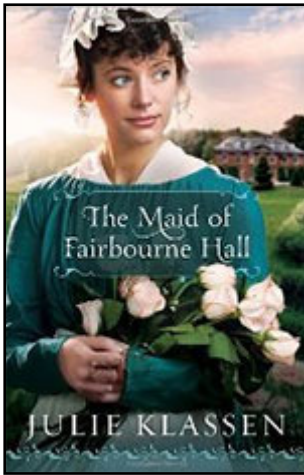


## Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- January 2012



I am on my way to LAX, and just saw that the temperature is 83 degrees. It was 65 in Tehachapi when I left. Sure hard to believe this is January. I need to water my roses and other garden plants. What a difference from last year. Maybe I won't need to travel to Arizona to get warm.

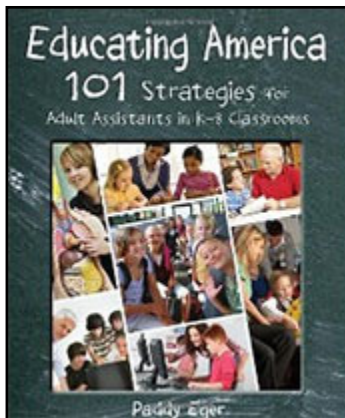
January is supposed to be the month where I snuggle in a comfortable chair—preferably in front of or near to a fire, a cup of my special coffee/chocolate/Baileys beverage in my hand—and READ. I have a stack of books waiting for just that kind of day or week. Some books have been waiting quite a while to be opened, because when certain author's books arrive, I grab and read them no matter what else is going on.

*The Maid of Fairbourne Hall* by Julie Klassen is one of those, because even though I am not a Regency fan, I love Julie's books. I was going to read just the first page, and before I knew it, I was already turning to chapter two. I didn't read straight through, because I had to finish the rewrite of my own manuscript, but I was sure tempted to do so.

Like Julie's other heroines, Margaret Macy grabs your heart and mind and won't let go until you see if and how she resolves her problems. When she runs from her stepfather's plans to marry her off to his nephew, she ends up being the lowliest maid in the country estate of a man whose marriage proposal she turned down in her haughty younger days. Talk about keeping a secret and wearing a disguise! Yes, I know this plot has been

written about many times before, but Julie's unique twists and turns had me snatching moments throughout my day to read further.

(Oh, and in spite of this page turner, I did finish my rewrite. *Whispers in the Wind*, book two in the *Wild West Wind* series will be out in August.)



We all know what trouble our schools are in, and with all the budget cuts, volunteers are needed more than ever. A longtime friend of mine, and former writing student, has written a book titled *Educating America: 101 Strategies for Adult Assistants in K-8 Classrooms*, a marvelous handbook to teach volunteers how to really assist teachers in the schools.

Paddy Eger, a former schoolteacher herself and designer of several learning programs, saw a need from both sides of the educational fence. It is a great book to give to teachers, administrators and volunteers. This is not a book on theory, but gives ideas for hands on help in a format that is easy-to-read and apply. Paddy has already received an award for this book, and letters from grateful schools, teachers and volunteers, who were assisted in their efforts. Any bookstore can order it for you and it is also available on Amazon.

That's it for this month. I often mention on Facebook some of the other books I am currently reading and enjoy swapping ideas and suggestions. Come join me, I do enjoy my FB family.

Also if you're looking for reading groups to join, I just read about one that really intrigues me. It is a cookbook group, where you choose a cookbook, try the recipes, and then have a potluck, serving those recipes. Sounds like a fun way to try new "eats."

*Dog Daze* is the first book in my new series for kids. Join the S.A.V.E. Squad in their adventures as they work in animal rescues. Watch for it in March.

Until next time,

*Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine*