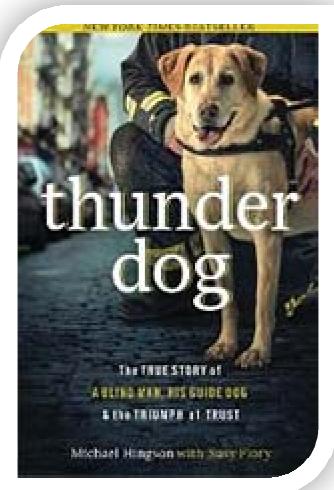


## Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- July 2012

Sure feels like summer now, doesn't it? Good thing our desert up here cools off at night since we don't have A/C. When we moved here, most houses didn't have A/C, folks said we didn't need it. But that was fourteen years ago, and the climate is indeed changing, just like it has many times in the past.

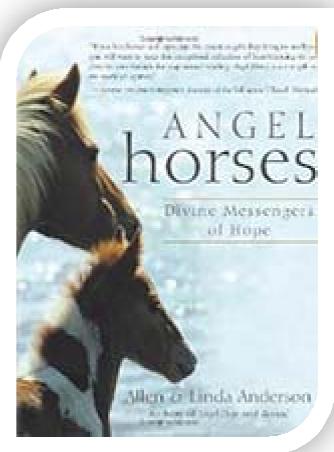


I would love to spend more time reading--for pleasure that is. I have a stack and more keep coming in. My daughter-in-law sent me this one, *Thunder Dog*, with a yellow lab guide dog on the cover and a fireman behind her.

Her name is Roselle, and this is the true story of the journey she and her owner made from his office on the 78th floor of Tower One in NYC to safety, after the plane hit that tower.

What a miraculous accomplishment in itself and what a tribute to the seeing eye dog program.

Michael Hingson, blind since birth, narrates this book with Susy Flory, and it reads like an adventure story. Needless to say, I stayed up much later than usual the nights that I was involved in their story. I used up a few tissues and reminded myself to be grateful for the gifts of our senses. It is so easy to complain when my hearing isn't quite as acute anymore and I need new glasses---again. I heartily recommend *Thunder Dog* for all readers, middle grades and up.



I guess this is animal book month, since the other book I delighted in lately was a gift from a friend, who knew I would love *Angel Horses*, stories of horses and people and the differences that horses have made in the writers' lives.

The couple, Allen and Linda Anderson, who compiled the book, asked for personal stories of people and their horses. Some of the stories were heartbreakng, others heart building. Animals make such differences in our lives, and I love books that are tributes to the values of those relationships.

It seems to me we humans think animals are lucky when we pay them attention when the truth is, we are the lucky ones. Dogs and horses both serve us well and with such loyalty that we need to learn from them.

The more I hear of horses used in all kinds of therapy, the more grateful I am for the horses I have had in my life; from my pony Polly when I was five, to my daughter's horse Cimmaron—who became the star of the first book I wrote, *Tragedy on the Toutle*, now titled *What About Cimmaron?*—and all those in between. Just like a house is not a home without a dog, acres need a horse to make life richer.

My next horse book, *Second Hand Horses*, will be out next spring. My writing partner, Kathleen Wright and I had a great time writing this one. *Dog Daze* was book one, book two, *The Great Cat Caper*, will be out in August. Such adventures our S.A.V.E Squad girls have rescuing animals.

I have two more books coming out this summer: *Whispers on the Wind* continues the saga of Cassie Lockwood in her quest for her real home in the series *Wild West Wind*. She thought she found it, but will she be able to keep it?

The second is *Reunion*, a novel, my newest contemporary, a story of family secrets and what happens when they get known. One review said this is my best novel to date. I know writing it was not easy, because parts of it are based on events from my life, but then one cannot write a book without including parts of one's own life.

Hope you are all taking extra time to read this summer. So many books, so little time.

Until next time,

*Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine*