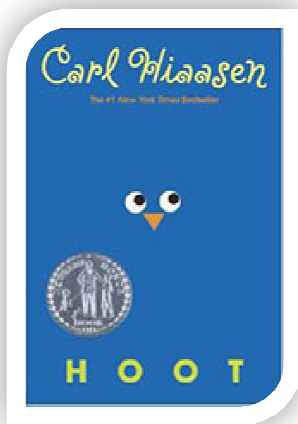


Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- June 2014

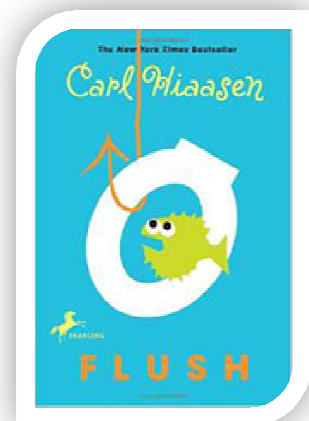


Heat wave. We're having a heat wave! I'm thinking of summer songs when it might be cooler to be thinking about winter snow songs. However, the plants are growing like crazy, the flowers are blooming and ahh, the cool down of the evenings. Pure bliss.

Summer makes me think of reading programs at libraries and my question is: how come they are only for kids? We all need more encouragement to read. Oh, well. This month I want to share three YA books that are good reading for all age groups. And besides, this particular author writes really good adult suspense novels too. If you want plenty of action, the-can't-put-the-book-down kind, read Carl Hiaasen.

Sometime ago I read *Hoot* by Carl Hiaasen and strongly suggested to my granddaughter that she should read it, I was sure she'd love it. And she did. I got both a phone call and raving text messages even before she was half finished with the story. A few weeks later she wrote to me and strongly suggested I read the next two books, *Flush* and *Chomp*. It took me awhile to get to them but then I read them back to back.

All three books are about kids who get involved in saving or at least helping wildlife. *Hoot* features burrowing owls, *Flush* is about fish in the bay where a gambling ship illegally dumps their sewage, and *Chomp* takes place in the Everglades and



includes big snakes and alligators. I know of plenty of kids today who are helping make this world a better place and that theme makes me enjoy reading these books even more.



One of many things I like about these stories is that the families of these children are involved in the adventures too. Rather unusual characters all and they sure make the stories more complex and fun. These imaginary kids have guts and determination to get the job done, in spite of bad guys, rough weather, family emergencies and any other difficulty the author can think of. Carl Hiaasen has a wild imagination and keeps the pressure on.

Whether you read them on an e-reader or as a print book, just dig in and enjoy. Don't worry about reading them in order as they are not a series. My granddaughter Addy and I can't wait for more.

As of July first my latest novel, *Heaven Sent Rain* is in bookstores. A little boy and his dog Mutt, a CEO who lives to help diabetics and a veterinarian, who draws his young clients and their pets, make up the unlikely cast and will hopefully keep readers up late and tug on their heartstrings.

Heaven Sent Rain started with a picture in my mind of a little boy and his scruffy dog sitting against a concrete wall in a city somewhere in the world. In the rain. All the usual questions bombarded me: Who? What? and how come? So the story began as I wrote to find the answers.

Hope you enjoy your adventures this summer, the real one and the ones you find in books. And who's to say, those aren't real too?

Until next time,

Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine