

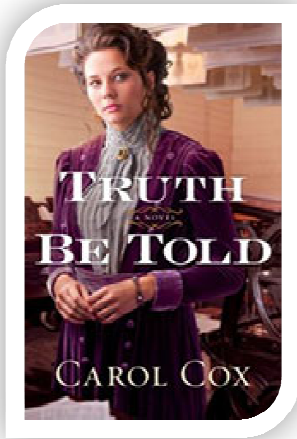
Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- October 2014

Fall always makes me think of children dancing and jumping in raked-up piles of leaves. And it makes me think of laughter. Always laughter. It doesn't really take a lot to entertain kids, a pile of leaves, a clod of dirt, a shovel and permission to dig, or even a large cardboard box to play in. At least it used to be that way, or am I showing my age?

One of the first hints of fall, besides the lengthening shadows and the Liquid Amber trees starting to turn color, is that special feeling in the air, especially in the evening or the early morning. Not quite a chill, more like a crispness. Fall just feels different than summer.

The smells of fall bring back memories too, as do the tastes. No one makes pumpkin pie like my mother used to bake. I even have her recipe but somehow it never turns out the same as hers. One year I learned the value of including the sugar called for in the recipe by omitting it. No takers on that pie for sure.

For me, fall means travel because my husband and I attend Norsk Høstfest, the largest Scandinavian celebration of its kind in the United States and possibly even the world. Held in Minot, North Dakota for over twenty-five years, it is my favorite place to personally meet with my readers. The only public event where all of my books in print are on display for sale, along with my watercolor prints and cards. The *Four Seasons at the Soddy* cards and prints go well with the Blessing books, showing life back in the pioneer days. Of course, they are also available locally in my online store.



This month I thought I was going to review only one book: *Truth Be Told* by Carol Cox, a northern Arizona historical writer, who brings to life stories and characters of the late 1800s.

Truth be Told stars a young woman who takes over her father's newspaper when he dies, and oh the difficulties she faces in a time when women just did not run newspapers. Carol's well-portrayed characters get in all kinds of trouble when evil rears its ugly head. All of Carol's stories are pure entertainment, leaving the reader glad they found her.

And then I read *Chasing Hope* by Kathryn Cushman. I have reviewed her books before because she comes up with great characters and unique storylines. She outdid herself with this one. The story features two young women who are both gifted runners, but one is sidelined with a debilitating illness. This one, much against her will, ends up coaching the other, a younger runner, who is throwing away her chances with a well-earned bad attitude and a surety that no one cares about her.



Two strong stubborn girls, who help bring out both the worst and the best in each other. I am not a runner, but the story is so totally believable, it almost made me want to jog along. These are the kind of characters who can become heroes for both younger athletes and readers alike. They sure encouraged me to continue to strive for my goals, even those I've held on to for a long, long time.

Two such different books, but both will stir up your desire to fight for what matters, and will also have you looking for other titles by these authors.

Speaking of books, I have good news for you if you've been waiting for the first book in my new *Song of Blessing* series. *To Everything A Season* has just released, and is in stores now. I hope you enjoy your time in the year 1905 with all our friends (old and new) in the town of Blessing, ND.

So happy reading, my friends. How about digging out some abandoned goals that you have, dust them off and see, if perhaps now is the time to pursue them? Blessings to all as we move towards shorter days, cooler weather and the crisp delights of fall.

Until next time,

Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine