

## Readin' & Writin' with Lauraine- September 2010



Hot days, cool nights with the occasional hint of fall in the air are what I call perfect weather. But what is the perfect book?

I read stats that say readers who own e-book readers, read three times as many books now than they used to. That's exciting. Yet, I hear others say they can't let go of the feel of a real paper book in their hands. So what is the perfect book? I

believe we are in the middle of a gigantic change going on in the publishing world and at this point, no one knows how it is going to settle out.

Whatever helps people read more is an asset and I see good and bad in all the arguments. That said, I hope you've read some wonderful books this summer. I read a good one when I picked up Bonnie Leon's *Touching the Clouds*, the first book in her Alaskan Skies series.

Heroine Kate Evans, dreams of being a bush pilot in Alaska before the days when electronic devices were commonplace to assist with flying and navigation. Kate takes charge of a reader's interest from the first page and flying with her has its ups and downs (excuse the pun).

Alaska is not known for being gentle to those who fly over her incredible beauty and extensive wilderness, always throwing all manner of weather, incidents and accidents against them. While Kate willingly faces the physical challenges of her chosen field, she wonders if the emotional and spiritual costs will be too high.

I got the feeling author Bonnie Leon loves flying, and either has flown a plane or deeply wishes she could.

Which leads me into the writing segment for this month. Do you write from what you know, or from what you want to know? Most new writers hear over and over: “write what you know”, which is good advice for a beginning writer. But writing about what you want to know and dream of experiencing, adds a whole new sense of excitement to the story. If the author is excited about what is going on in the story, the reader will catch that enthusiasm and continue reading to see what will happen next.

One of the many things I've learned, is that not only is it important to know something about the subject of your story, but it's much better to at least attempt that subject or best of all do it long enough to get good at it.

Do you have something you've always wanted to do? An extraordinary something on your “Bucket List”, (as written-down dreams are called in the movie by the same title)? I had always dreamed of attending The Kentucky Derby. While researching my *Golden Filly* series I actually attended the race. It was awesome!

I've also had experiences I didn't know enough to even dream about, like sitting with a group of jockeys and listening to them talk about the trade, the experiences, the joys and the horrors, all in that unique racetrack jargon. Backstage research is very important for an author.

So why not have your characters do something you've always dreamed of? The incentive to fulfill your own dream through researching the subject will be far greater, especially if a deadline is looming.

Dig through your dream list and pull out something you can build a character around. Find out what they want and what will keep them from getting it. You'll write more realistically if you dream it and do it too. I never did ride a Thoroughbred in a race, but I've raced my own horse and know the adrenaline rush. And remember to dream big.

Speaking of big dreams, you'll find my website has something new this month. Be sure to check out my new store!

Until next time,

*Happy readin' & writin' from Lauraine*