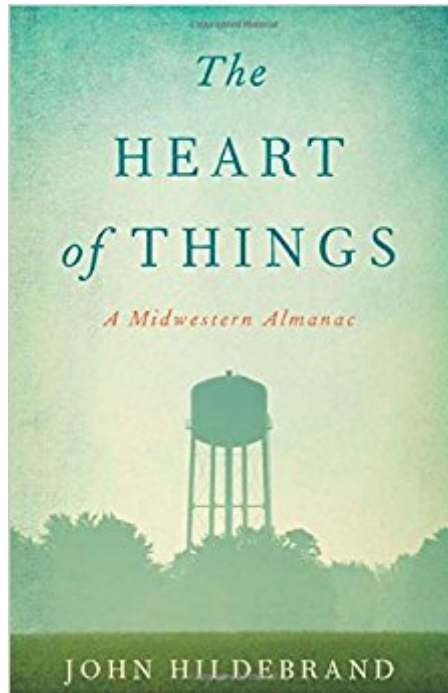




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The Heart Of Things: A Midwestern Almanac



Synopsis

I've never believed that living in one place means being one thing all the time, condemned like Minnie Pearl to wear the same hat for every performance. Life is more complicated than that. • In this remarkable book of days, John Hildebrand charts the overlapping rings of home, town, countryside of life in the Midwest. Like E. B. White, Hildebrand locates the humor and drama in ordinary life: church suppers, Friday night football, outdoor weddings, garden compost, family reunions, roadside memorials, camouflage clothing. In these wry, sharply observed essays, the Midwest isn't The Land Time Forgot but a more complicated (and vastly more interesting) place where the good life awaits once we figure exactly out what it means. From his home range in northwestern Wisconsin, Hildebrand attempts to do just that by boiling down a calendar year to its rich marrow of weather, animals, family, home; in other words, all the things that matter.

Book Information

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#2957 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Essays & Correspondence > Essays

Customer Reviews

The Heart of Things By John Hildebrand I listen to WPR a ton. Recently I was tuned in to a Larry Meiller show and author Hildebrand was on sharing from his new collection of short stories and I was so impressed. His stories have appeared in the Wisconsin Trails magazine (which is now only available online) and have been organized by seasons into a beautiful book that I think every Wisconsinite should consider reading over the long winter. With little fanfare and tons and tons of beautiful adjectives, Hildebrand shares his journeys of being so present in the moment I found it hard to stop reading. This is a book that reminds me of a box of chocolates. You need to savor one,

then consider the next. Like taking a step forward, finding your way while the sun slowly sets.

"...Given the option, I'll take a paper map over an electronic navigation system anytime--unless I'm circumnavigating the globe or traversing the Alps--because following a GPS amounts to tunnel vision." "Place matters but probably less than other externals like family or friends or work. That's because the space we carve out for our lives is more about time than geography, and since most lives follow a similar trajectory, it's reasonable to assume you can be happy (or not) anywhere." I'm working on a new novel, as I seem to every winter, and the setting is always a crucial character in my work. Because of that, I noticed a story called 'Lilacs' in this collection and it hit me square in my writing-heart. Not only am I intrigued by the reality that an island SW of Eau Claire, in the Chippewa River, now lies in ruins, but that there's proof of a town.

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