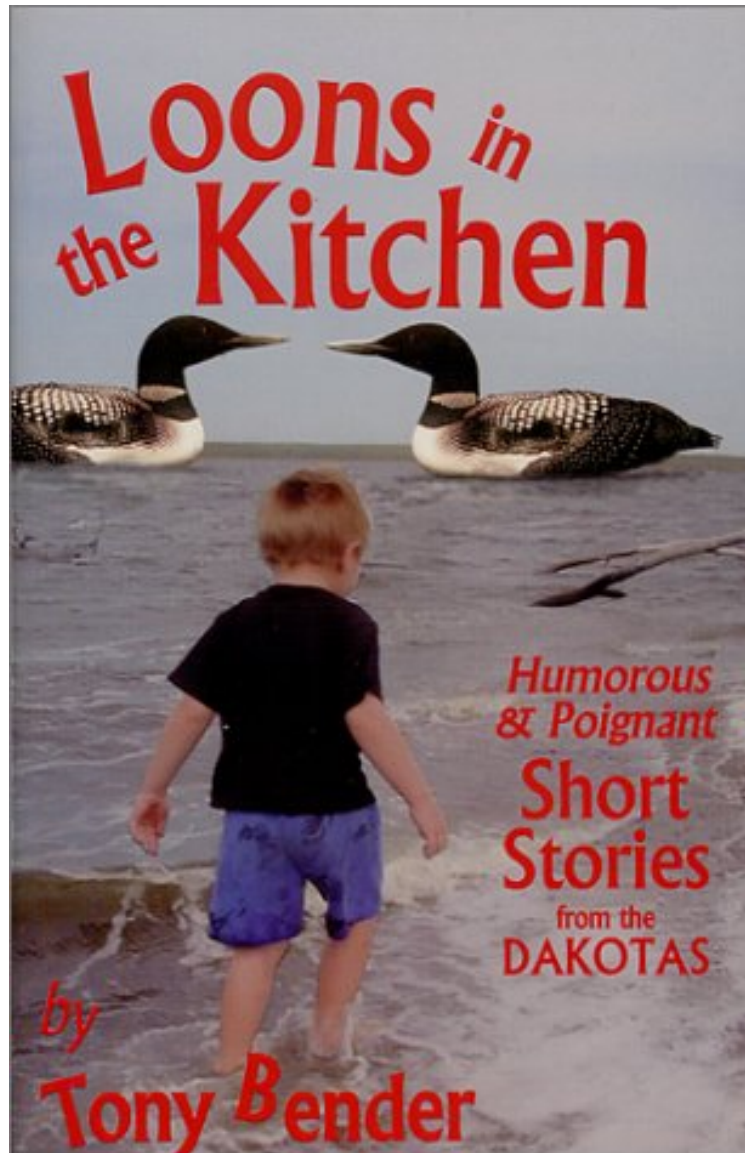


(Mobile book) Loons in the Kitchen: Humorous Poignant Short Stories from the Dakotas

Loons in the Kitchen: Humorous Poignant Short Stories from the Dakotas

Tony Bender

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Tony Bender : Loons in the Kitchen: Humorous Poignant Short Stories from the Dakotas before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Loons in the Kitchen: Humorous Poignant Short Stories from the Dakotas:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Loons, Looney - or Wise? By Scott A. Bender I am a fan of human

interest stories, especially those with wry humor and insight into the human spirit. If you are also a fan of that style, this is a must read. The subtitle, "Humorous and Poignant Stories from the Dakotas", says it all; I'm not sure if the emphasis should be on "poignant" or "humorous". "Wednesday's Ashes" is about a prairie Lutheran church, built in 1886, which withstands a tornado, but burns down on Ash Wednesday as its congregation of 50 or less stands by helplessly. "It Was a Good Thing" is about a transplanted Russian, a North Dakota cowboy, who dies with his dignity intact, having dodged the nursing home experience. That story is followed by, "Chopper", which is about the crusty cowboy's equally crusty stallion who threw "Cowboy" the first ride of each spring, just to remind "Cowboy" who was boss. "Boys of Summer" is about the author's Little League Baseball team - the Bad News Bears before Walter Matthau's great movie. "Letter to Mike" is a deeply moving tribute to the author's brother, who lives a dignified life in spite of his Williams Syndrome, and who has inspired all who know him with his purity and enthusiasm (you very well may cry as you read this one). These stories are relieved by tales of the writer's frustration with "tech support", and a letter exchange with Dave Barry as to whether or not North Dakota is still there, complete with details about a giant milk cow, liver sausage, Lawrence Welk and Bobby Vee. The Fix-It Man fixes, the mom steals clothes and then mails them to her neighbor, a pathetic dog finds a (pathetic?) friend - it's all here, and at the click of a mouse! It gets a 4 rather than 5 star because frankly, Tony has a sense of humor that evades me sometimes! Is this what they mean by "prairie humor"? 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Rare insight By Bob Booker For anyone with a small town or Midwestern background, this is a must read. Bender touches the heart and tickles the funny bone with his columns on the feats and foibles of real people in real life situations. As a compilation of his newspaper columns, "Loons" is an easy read, yet I limited myself to one or two stories per day, in order to savor the emotion conveyed by each. I have given several copies as gifts, and have always been thanked by the recipient for introducing them to this new, gifted author. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A Fun Read By A Customer Mr. Bender writes in manner that flows so well he draws you into his stories whether you know the real-life characters or not. It is amazing that in the span of a few well worded paragraphs, your heart and soul can be moved so easily. Just read one of Mr. Bender's stories and I'm sure you'll have to read another. Please keep writing Tony!

After 11 years arguably as North Dakota's most widely read columnist Tony Bender has finally done it. The Ashley newspaperman compiled the Best of Bender into one book, *Loons in the Kitchen*. Subtitled *Humorous and Poignant Short Stories from the Dakotas*, Benders work between 1990-2000 ranges widely in emotion from serious and thoughtful to buoyant and witty. From *Lives Collide*, the beautifully haunting story of a plane crash in Prairie City, SD, to the dignified anguish of *Dreams For Sale*, the tale of a North Dakota farm auction, Tony Bender rivets the reader to the page with masterful story-telling. His classic essays about family will tug heartstrings. And in raucous pieces like *The Redheads Tractor* and *Jukebox Blues*, Bender proves he is a first-rate humorist. *Loons in the Kitchen* is great entertainment.

Tony's stories, his original style, is a distinct reflection of life on the prairie. -- Allan Burke, publisher, Emmons County Record, Linton, ND A blisteringly funny sense of humor... -- Lauren Donovan, Bismarck Tribune, 2001 A great story teller. -- Colorado Newspaper Association Models of human interest reporting and commentary by a gentleman and a devoted journalist. -- Robert Armstrong, Minneapolis Star-Tribune, 2001 One of those rare writers capable of deeply touching the full spectrum of human emotions. -- Patrick Kellar, publisher, News-Examiner, Connersville, IN About the Author Long recognized as one of the finest writers in the Dakotas, Tony Bender gained national recognition in 2001 when he was awarded a first place prize for humor writing by the National Newspaper Association for his piece entitled, *The Redheads Tractor*, which is contained in his first collection of writing, *Loons in the Kitchen*. While acclaimed for his humor writing, Benders ability to present more serious, heart-warming and introspective aspects of life on the Great Plains also helped him win seven first place newspaper association awards for his column in the 90s. Bender began publishing his weekly syndicated column, *That's Life*, in 1991, writing for his hometown paper, the *Brown County News* in Frederick, SD. That very first year, Bender scored a first place award for his column in the South Dakota Newspaper Associations annual contest. Born in 1958 in Ashley, ND, Bender grew up in Frederick, a tiny community on the North Dakota-South Dakota border, 26 miles north of Aberdeen, SD. That community with a population of 400 provided Bender with a Tom Sawyer existence that surfaces in his writing as he tells the tales of the characters he grew to love. After a year of journalism at South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD, Bender, in 1977, opted for hands-on experience and embarked on a radio career including stops at KSDN and KKAA in Aberdeen and KQDJ in Jamestown, ND. In 1983, Bender moved to Denver where he worked at legendary radio stations KHOW and KIMN. His sense of adventure took him to Juneau, AK in 1986, where he starred at KTKU with his unique morning show featuring alter-egos like obnoxious newsman Irving R. Osgood and the unscrupulous Rev. Billy Joe Jim-Bob. In 1988, Bender was awarded the Goldie, a top honor from the Alaska Radio and Television Association, for his accomplishments at KTKU. In 1989, Bender accepted a morning drive position at WBPR in Myrtle Beach, SC. Shortly after his arrival, Hurricane Hugo struck. While all other broadcast stations evacuated, Bender and his newsman elected to stay to broadcast to the many listeners who had not been able to

evacuate in time. As the only station on the air for hundreds of miles delivering crucial information, the effort was widely applauded by South Carolina officials and citizens. In 1990, Bender returned to North Dakota to be closer to his family, accepting a position as news director at KYYY, Bismarck. In 1991, he took a position as a reporter at the Williston Daily Herald. Six months later he was offered the publishership of the floundering Adams County Record in Hettinger, ND. Bender sparked a resurgence in the Adams County Record leading it to two General Excellence Awards, the highest honor from the North Dakota Newspaper Association. He served as executive news director for the parent company, Dickson Media, until 1997. Bender was presented the first-ever North Dakota Newspaper Association First Amendment Award in 2000 for his continuing fight for the public's right to know what their governments are doing. He has championed open meetings through the NDNA Legislative Affairs Committee. I think government works better under a spotlight rather than in the shadows, he has said. In 2000, Bender was elected to the NDNA board of directors. Bender led the Ashley Tribune to NDNA Sweepstakes Awards in 2000 and 2001. He is a two-time winner of the North Dakota Heritage Writing Contest. His writing has been published in North Dakota Outdoors, The National Newspaper Associations Publishers Auxiliary, The Journal of Indian Wars and newspapers in many states. Bender and his wife, Julie, have two children, Dylan and India. The couple owns Redhead Publishing, which includes The Wishek Star and Ashley Tribune. The company publishes niche publications including Mighty Mac Hunting Fishing Guide and Spring and Fall Ag Outlook.