

November 2015  
Beloit Daily News

Wow, I can't believe this is my 7<sup>th</sup> *Annual Great Books I Read This Year* list. Where have the last seven years gone? Oh, that's right, I spent them reading. A lot.

*Bird* by Crystal Chan. This is the story of twelve year old Jewel, born on the day her brother Bird died. She lives in a house of silence and secrets, but a new boy in her Iowa town may help find the answers she seeks... Beautifully written and full of emotion, this award-winning book was my favorite of the past year. (Children's Fiction 2015)

*The Scavengers* by Michael Perry. In this dystopian story of survival in a world of mutant-zombie-corn feed-addicts, Ford Falcon not only has to care for her younger brother, but she has to figure out her father's involvement in a government cover-up. (Children's Fiction 2015)

*Cold War on Maplewood Street* by Gayle Rosengren. Although this book is about the Cuban Missile Crisis, it relates to current events in that the main character is struggling to repair a relationship with her brother who has gone off to war. (Children's Fiction 2015)

*Stubby the War Dog: The True Story of World War 1's Bravest Dog* by Ann Bausum. This charming, engaging nonfiction title reads like a story and draws the reader in to the personal life of J. Robert Conroy and his dog Stubby. (Children's Nonfiction, 2015)

*This is a Moose* written by Richard T. Morris and illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld. I should reserve a permanent space on my list for anything illustrated by Tom Lichtenheld. Hand-lettered text, soft muted colors and double meanings abound in this clever book about a moose trying to make his dreams come true. (Children's Picture Book 2015)

*Here Comes the Easter Cat* written by Deborah Underwood and illustrated by Claudia Rueda. Cat thinks he is the perfect candidate to take over Easter. That is until he learns that the job is harder than he expected and doesn't allow for nap time. (Children's Picture Book 2015)

*All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr. Set in France in the 1940's, Marie-Laure, a young blind girl, and Werner, a German boy in Hitler's Youth, live their lives and pass each other in one stunning, heart-breaking moment. (Adult Fiction 2014)

*Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania* by Erik Larson. Once again, Larson takes two disparate stories from history, the sinking of the Lusitania and Woodrow Wilson's second marriage, and weaves them together in rich detail. (Adult Nonfiction 2015)

*The Essential Scratch and Sniff Guide to Becoming a Whiskey Know-It-All* by Richard Betts. Yeah, I think the title says it all on this one. (Adult Nonfiction 2015)

*Living the Farm Sanctuary Life: The Ultimate Guide to Eating Mindfully, Living Longer and Feeling Better Everyday* by Gene Baur. Every year I find that at least one book has had a profound, life-altering effect on my life. This is the book. (Adult Nonfiction 2015)

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