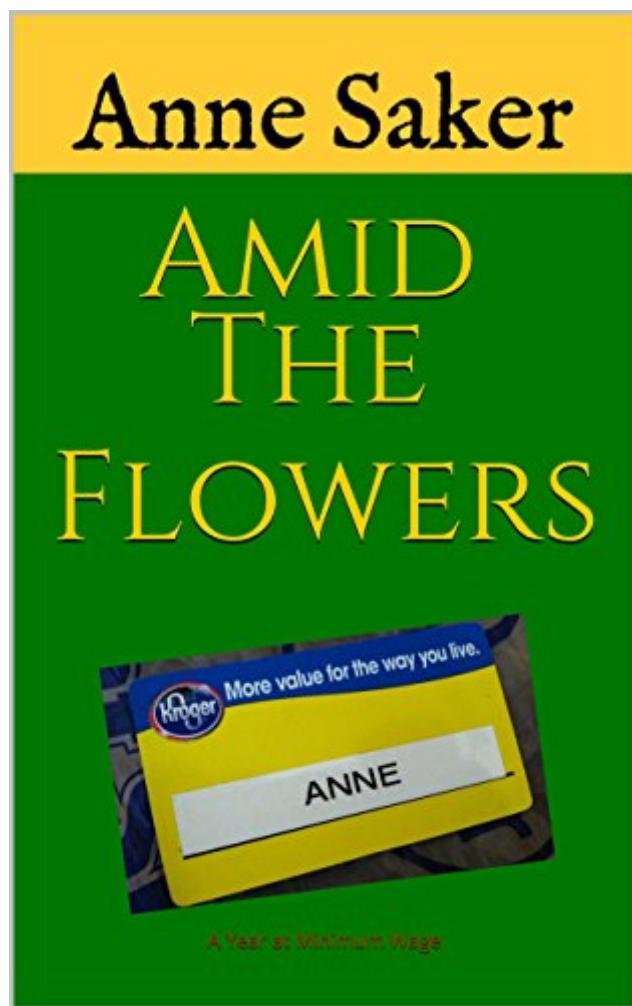


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Amid The Flowers: A Year At Minimum Wage



Synopsis

When a family emergency calls her back to her native Ohio, author Anne Saker begins a journey -- a walk through America's minimum-wage economy. She takes a job in the floral department of her local grocery. There, amid the flowers, she finds ordinary people living extraordinary lives.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Author Anne Saker has delivered an extraordinary memoir about life in the floral department of a successful grocery in Ohio -- but this is no soft bouquet of memories. Yes, with understated humor and eloquence Saker takes us through the flower holidays, Christmas to Valentines Day to Easter to Mother's Day to Prom Season. There are stories to make you laugh and others to make you cry, all told against a backdrop of her own personal tragedy and her efforts to attend to the needs of her aging parents. But "Amid the Flowers" also has a hard edge. It looks at the lives of co-workers trying to survive on minimum-wage incomes while holding high the image of one of the nation's most successful corporations. Paychecks are measured against how much gas it takes to get to and from work. The search for better jobs closer to home is constant. In all, however, Saker gives us more smiles than tears. You will never buy flowers the same way again. "Amid the Flowers" is the reason you learned to read.

I worked with Anne at my former newspaper and remember her as a wonderful human being and a fine writer, so I was not surprised to find these same qualities on display in this memoir about working in the floral department in a Cincinnati Kroger. Her sense of humor, curiosity about the human condition and passion for justice all shine through in this book, which starts modestly but gathers strength as it goes along.

This was the best \$3 I've spent all year. I started reading it as soon as I read Teri's post last night and finished it this morning. If you're ever worked Kroger like Dan Guthrie, still do like Willie L Williams, love cats or dogs like Laura Haney and Larkin Vonalt and Kelly J. Messinger, live in Mason, Ohio like Doug Parrott or once worked as a journalist like me - But it's so much more. This is such a slice of southwest Ohio aka the upper south - it's just a beautiful read. Even though it takes place in a wealthy exurb, the Krogerfolk are real as are their customers. Yes, it made me cry and it made me laugh. And it made me neglect every other thing in life till I completed it. It's a good read.

This is a heartfelt story that skillfully weaves in multiple threads that many readers will recognize. Saker takes leave from her job as a journalist to help her parents, experiencing the pull of the life she loved in Oregon and the tug of family obligations. At the same time, she writes about her minimum-wage job in the floral department of a Kroger's and what that wage means for co-workers and others. As with many things in life, there's plenty of blame to go around - the system, the union plus the plain need to pay the bills. Readers will enjoy the funny and touching portraits of customers and get a look at the changing world of print journalism. There is a lot to learn and love in this book. It's worth every penny and then some.

Anyone from Cincinnati will enjoy the references of home while non-natives will delight in the ups and downs of the lives of Midwestern men and women. I will never look at Kroger or flowers the same!

A wonderful, heartwarming read, this. I expected good stories from Anne about her Kroger floral customers -- then was utterly ensnared as she shared making the hard, personal decisions on whether to stay in Ohio and care for aging parents or return to a beloved life and career in Portland. I love this book. It's one I would treasure as a hardback on my book shelves.

Anne has really captured something that we can relate to here. Her writing is fluid and friendly. She's able to give details that set up pictures, characters, time, and place, tapping into the heart and soul of living our day-to-day lives. Not just getting through tough times, but embracing them. A very good read for these times. You go, girl!

My husband and I both loved this book, which weaves so many threads together. Anne tells the story of her personal loss and tough decisions along with honest portraits of people struggling along at minimum wage, finding joy along with way. The book also deals with the facts about working minimum wage and how hard it is for many to climb out of it. A real treat from a stellar writer.

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