

BOOK CLUB REPORT – March 14, 2018

Eleven members were present for a lively discussion of Bear Town by Fredrik Backman, a Swedish student of religion, turned truck driver, turned blogger, turned author of 3 novels. Bear Town is the story of a town with nothing going for it but a hockey team. The book follows the coach, general manager and many of the players and their families on their journey to win the big one. To the whole town, winning is a means to their survival. In the beginning chapters, this tale seems like just another sports novel but as it progresses, the author brings to light many issues that are often the dark underbelly of a small community struggling with its existence. The game of hockey is of such importance that when the star of the team is accused of rape, the town goes into massive group think and lives and families are torn apart. The author did a great job, however, of providing some characters that were rich in wisdom, laughter, and incite, thus providing a good balance of darkness as well as hope. This book provided the opportunity to learn what it takes to run a small town hockey team and it provided the basis for discussions around what is community, what roles women play in teaching family values to their sons, what happens when young men have to hide their true selves even from their best friends, what is a good parent, why women feel guilty when they have to work, why some people will always be outsiders, what makes a happy marriage and many other subjects too numerous to mention. Most members agreed that this was a good read and it was rated as 8.5/10. The next meeting will be on April 17, 2018 and the book is A Piece of the World by Christina Baker Kline.