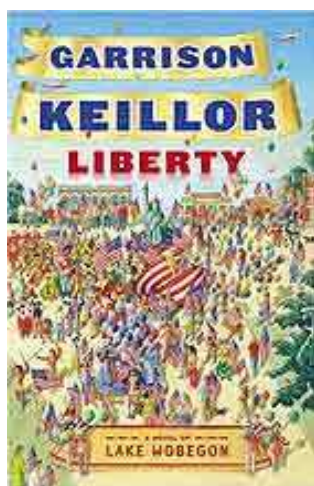


Liberty by Garrison Keillor



A national holiday in Lake Wobegon is always gaudy and joyful. But what is going on between Clint Bunsen and Miss Liberty? Clint is one of the old reliables in Lake Wobegon – the treasurer of the Lutheran church and the auto mechanic who starts your car on below-zero mornings. For six years he has run the Fourth of July parade, and has turned into an event of dazzling spectacle that has attracted the attention of CNN and prompted the governor to put in an appearance as well. The town is dizzy with anticipation. Until, that is, they hear of Clint's ambition to run for Congress. They're embarrassed for him – his unfortunate episodes involving vodka sours, his rocky marriage. And then there's his friendship with the twenty-four-year-old girl dressed up as the Statue of Liberty for the parade. It's rumoured that underneath those robes she is buck naked, and that her torch contains a quart of booze. It's Lake Wobegon as it's always been – good, loving people who drive each other crazy.