

The Barn Door

Seeing the world through midwestern eyes.

Wednesday, July 16, 2014

What Goes With Orange? by Suzanne M. Brazil

Summer blooms in Technicolor all over the U.S. But Midwesterners learn to recognize the patterns of patriotic fireworks, gingham checks of picnics and the chlorine blue of the local pool as harbingers of the shortest season. City mouse or country mouse, we try to squeeze all the cheese we can out of these colorful, lush and all too brief months of sunshine.



We sleep less, eat more, mingle with the masses and risk hordes of voracious mosquitos to bask in the rainbow of activities denied us most of the year. We smear on our personal vintage of SPF, lace up our neon sneakers and try to dodge the most recognizable summer hue: Construction Cone Orange.



The minute the last snowflake melts, city, county and state officials roll out whatever series of “improvements” they’ve decided we can’t live without. Trees are planted, chopped down or trimmed, bike paths paved, sidewalks widened, potholes filled, traffic lines painted, train tracks reinforced...you name it, there’s a cone in front of it. We also get a confusing maze of detours that make our three favorite letters of the English language G.P.S.



On my one mile drive to the gym this morning, I encountered all these signs of progress. Most of us appreciate the new and improved even though we could do without the traffic delays. We all want to make the most of this brief but glorious time so we plan ahead, leave early, and avoid wearing colors that clash with orange.


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