

THE CANDY IN MY POCKET: An Exceptional Memoir on the Wild & Crazy Life of a Type 1 Diabetic

John Robert Wiltgen, international designer, welcomes readers to join him on the roller-coaster ride of his unbelievable life and battles with Type 1 diabetes.

CHICAGO, IL., USA, February 24, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- "Imagine becoming legally blind while working at being an architectural designer. You have a mortgage on a building you are renovating, rent is due on your office, and employees you must pay every week. What would you do? Or, you have kidney disease which ultimately requires a transplant. Or, at the age of 30 you are diagnosed with heart disease and informed of several silent heart attacks. How would you cope if you fought cellulitis and osteomyelitis for 20 years and finally had to have your leg amputated?" -- John Robert Wiltgen.

These are just a few of the amazing questions resolved in John Robert Wiltgen's compelling memoir: "[The Candy in My Pocket](#)."

Wiltgen, an award-winning, international designer, welcomes readers to join him on the roller-coaster ride of his unbelievable life. The author battled many debilitating complications of Type 1 diabetes (T1D) while creating a highly sought after design firm with projects across America, Canada, Mexico-even Africa.

Wiltgen was diagnosed with T1D when he was eight years old. Like so many people who were detected at that time, his parents were told he would not live to 40.

As a modern-day renaissance man, Wiltgen details his fearless and amazing experiences from



John Robert Wiltgen describes his journey of finding joy and success amidst a life riddled with obstacles and despair due to insulin-dependent diabetes in his memoir "The Candy in My Pocket."

the time of his diagnosis. He writes about the extraordinary challenges he battled while embracing his design world blending it effortlessly with his journey leaving the reader wanting to know more with each chapter. It is a must-read that is hard to put down.

Critics describe “The Candy in My Pocket” as an inspirational but irreverent story about designing your best life despite horrifying circumstances.

His memoir journals his 40 years as an award-winning designer commissioned by celebrities, world leaders, and other luminaries; his (secret) debilitating and death-defying battle with diabetes; and the struggle to hold on to himself and those he cared about along the way.

“I first knew my life was going to be surprising when Zsa Zsa Gabor said I should be on the stage,” recalls Wiltgen.

But then Sid Caesar told him, “If you don’t have tragedy, you won’t have comedy.”

Years have taught Wiltgen they were both right.

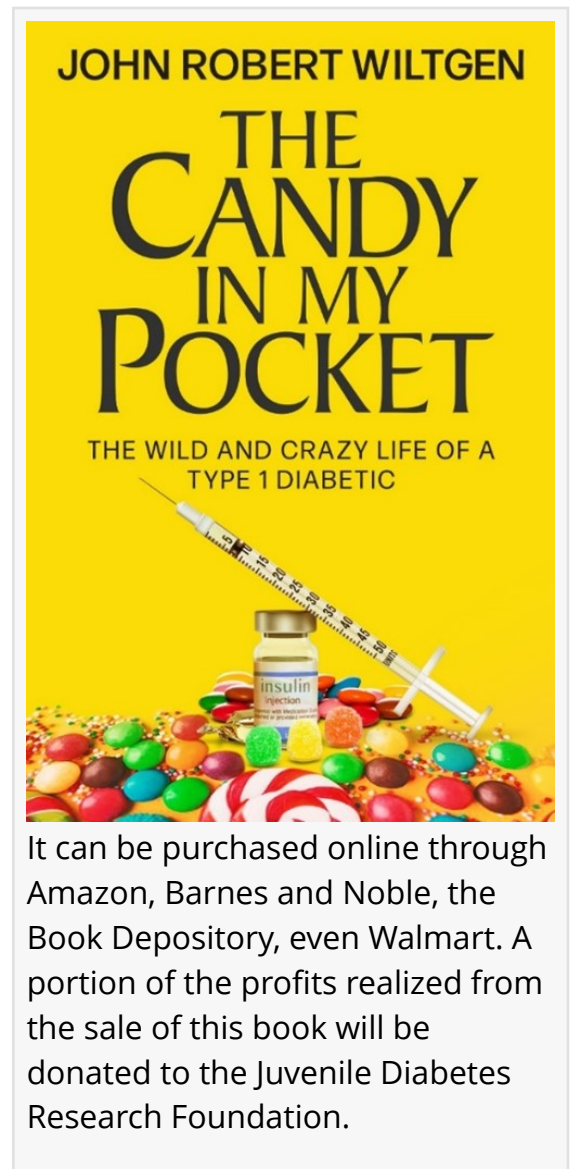
Wiltgen started his own residential design firm when he was 18 and never looked back—even when he could not see. “After all, who wants to hire a blind designer?” he laughs.

He fought diabetic retinopathy in his early 20’s for four years and won. A year later he was told he needed a kidney transplant. Performed at the University of Minnesota, it is now 36 years post-surgery and still functioning! “The surgeons told me it would last 12–15 years but they were mistaken,” says Wiltgen.

In his 30s he developed heart disease, then wrestled Charcot foot, cellulitis, and osteomyelitis, finally resulting in a below-the-knee amputation. Later, Wiltgen struggled with pulmonary fibrosis and Squamous cell carcinoma (skin cancer).

He also survived COVID in April of 2020 when no one knew anything about it. “The doctors would not come into my room. Instead, they phoned me to find out how I was doing,” he recollects.

Nonetheless, his memoir includes larger-than life tales that are extremely entertaining. Though his life involves many tragedies, it also includes exciting personal and professional adventures as well as celebrity cameos with stars such as Jane Seymour, Timothy Hutton, Angelina Jolie, Sean and Robyn Wright Penn, Steve Harvey, John Cusack, the former Governor and First Lady of Lagos





The Candy in My Pocket is particularly inspiring as it shows that people with kidney disease can still live a full life like Wiltgen did--a life more interesting and authentic than reality TV shows."

*Dr. James Paparello, a
nephrologist*

State (who is now running for President of Nigeria) and Jesus.

His career also includes appearing on HGTV, NBC, FOX, WTTW etc. His completed projects have been featured in more than 200 newspapers and magazines not including the hardcover coffee table books also displaying his work. He has received 45 industry awards.

Navid Ziran, an orthopedic trauma surgeon said, "I perform many amputations due to diabetic foot infections and am very familiar with the effects of diabetes on the mental and physical quality of life as well as the overall longevity."

"The five-year mortality rate after an amputation is 62%," Ziran noted. Other individuals would have died, yet John not only survived but became a world-renown designer."

"He is a quintessential example of how the human spirit can not only adapt but also flourish and succeed despite overwhelming obstacles. Truly, his life story embraces "ad astra per aspera"—a crooked path leads to the stars," said Ziran.

Dr. James Paparello, a nephrologist, found "The Candy in My Pocket" particularly inspiring as it shows that people with kidney disease can still live a full life. "Mr. Wiltgen shares how he dealt with his diagnosis, the transplant, and life afterwards—a life more interesting and authentic than reality TV shows. He also exemplifies the health benefits of a good sense of humor."

Cynthia Rowley, global fashion designer wrote "I laughed out loud at every story. John's triumph over medical adversity is enormously uplifting. He chooses joy, happiness, and unwavering positivity in his quest to live life on his own terms. I have never met a person with more energy and pathological optimism."

Holly Hunt, founder of the celebrated luxury home furnishings and design brand reviewed Wiltgen's book stating, "John has a talent for storytelling and writing as well as for design, but the most important part of this memoir is his amazing energy and determination to live with the debilitating disease type 1 diabetes. He enjoys a full life gathering fabulous, famous and adventurous friends, and gives back to many far more than he takes. He never looks back, always forward choosing to be happy and fully engaged while hiding his scars and physically damaged parts with Versace!"

Wiltgen wrote this book to help people of all beliefs and backgrounds remain optimistic in the worst of times—no matter what personal or professional challenges they're dealing with. You might not have diabetes or know someone who does, but we all have challenges and need

stories exemplifying how to live our best lives or, at least, laugh while trying!

"The Candy in My Pocket" is an exceptional read.

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