

Open Shelf

April 2006

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city of mesa library young adult advisory council book review newsletter

Letter from the editor



With final exams and AP tests rearing their ugly heads not too far in the distant future, you may not have time to read. It's OK. We understand. It is in these times that **Open Shelf** displays its best characteristic. It's non-perishable. That is the great thing about books: they never expire. When you get around to it, enjoy these series.

Mary Beth Hutchinson
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The Wheel of Time Series

Robert Jordan

Although it seems that most modern fantasy is a poor facsimile of Tolkien, **The Wheel of Time** is one of the best series I have ever read. Drawing from mythology, Arthurian legend and the author's own creativity, the series provides detail on an epic scale while still maintaining character depth. **The Eye of the World** is an interesting and engaging beginning to the ten-book-plus series. If you can hold up past the first hundred pages, you will have built up momentum enough to catapult you through the series and still have interest to spare. In conclusion, the series will require a hefty amount of time to read, but will be well worth the effort. Good luck.

- Luke Lambert
★★★★

Naruto

Masabi Kishimoto

This series is the amazing story of a boy who has had a demon fox sealed in his body since infancy. This boy, Naruto, is training to become a ninja, with his main goal to become the Hokige (leader) of the hidden Leaf Village. In the first few volumes, Naruto is training at the ninja academy. As the series progresses, he fights to save his friends, his village, and himself.

All in all, I found this series to be one of the best mangas ever and think that anyone who enjoys fighting and ninja will love it.

- Chris Smith
★★★★

The Women of Genesis Series

Orson Scott Card

God's a jerk. That was usually the lesson I learned from reading the Old Testament. Congratulations—you're my chosen, beloved people—hope you live through the forty-year walkabout in the barren sands I've planned for you! Cursed with barrenness, deception, and war, the women especially can't ever seem to keep their heads above water. It was astonishingly acclaimed science fiction writer Orson Scott Card who gave me a deeper perspective with his **Women of Genesis** series.

The books in the series follow the generations of women in the line of Abraham. Rachel and Leah are the daughters-in-law of Rebekah, who is the

daughter-in-law of Sarah. Each of their stories is as gripping as the last, though of the three **Rebekah** is my favorite. Card is able to take two and sometimes one-dimensional biblical figures and make them cry, dance, lie, live, and hate. Realistically, I know that these stories are carefully woven figments of his imagination, but his meticulous character building makes us think it *could* have happened and wish it had.

- Mary Beth Hutchinson
★★★★



rating system

bad; needs work ★
so-so ★★
average ★★★
good ★★★★
excellent; perfect ★★★★★

Visit the Library's Web Site:
www.mesalibrary.org
and see the Teens page!

The Weetzie Bat Books

Francesca Lia Block

For the past three years, I have avidly preached the beautiful sermon of Block's skills to the world. Now (to the best of my knowledge), the **Weetzie Bat** series is complete.

The first novel, **Weetzie Bat**, follows Weetzie and her friend Dirk through high school and early adulthood, following the two's relationship. The next book follows Weetzie's daughters, Cherokee Bat and Witch Baby. In the later books, the daughters' adolescent years are speckled with steady boyfriends, love, loss, bands and typical teenage drama (but it's poetic and lyrical, so it's okay!). And the newest, long-awaited finale skips ahead to when Weetzie is in her 40's, experiencing a midlife crisis. It serves as a beautiful, sweet end to a 20 year series of everything humankind should be concerned with.

The novels are compiled in **Dangerous Angels**, but the newest **Necklace of Kisses** is only available in hardcover. Block is an iridescent author who uses her words as a tool rather than as a crutch to push forward ideas. Her prose reads like poetry, and every sentence is a gem.

I will keep preaching her greatness until all of you read her books.

-Mandi Levendowski
★★★★★

Dune Series

Frank Herbert

The **Dune** series is quite simply the greatest science fiction ever written. It steps away from the typical evil alien forces invading a black planet and destroying most of humankind until one human saves said humankind—yippee, what a thrill. Fortunately, Frank Herbert takes a different route, focusing more on betrayal and a family rising to power and the dangers of drugs. Quite simply, if you enjoy reading and have humanoid ancestors this is a series for you.

-Matthew Taylor
★★★★★

Wolfwalker Series

Tara K. Harper

I have a weak spot for wild animals

and human interactions with them, hence the reason why I picked this up in the first place. In some places Harper drags out the descriptions, but if you're willing to skim every once and again, then this is a really good series.

Dion is a Wolfwalker, a person with a special telepathic gift that bonds her to the "gray ones" and partnership to Gray Hishen. She is also a healer, practicing the almost forbidden arts of healing and yearning to learn more about those arts that have been lost to the people of her world. Her telepathy gives her a bond to her patients and better understanding of their conditions.

The story chronicles Dion's journey from teenager to adult and includes everything from slavers, harem masters, storms, and a centuries' old mystery. The beginning's description of Dion being disoriented is perhaps a little **too** good, but after that the story grabs you and Does Not Let Go. If you like human/animal stories then find a copy and start reading.

-Patricia Langevin
★★★★★

The Lenore Series

Roman Dirge

The **Lenore** series is about a little girl who dies and comes back as a zombie. Lenore is the main character but she meets a lot of friends along the way, such as the totally obsessed Mr. Gosh and a vampire turned into a stuffed animal named Ragamuffin. Over all, the **Lenore** series is a great read.

-Andrew Crandall
★★★★★

The Magician's Nephew

C.S. Lewis

In the first book of the **Chronicles of Narnia** series, we are introduced to the dying world of Charn, and watch the creation of a new world, Narnia, with the help of an eccentric "magician" (really just a crazy old mad scientist) and his nephew, Digory Kirke. Uncle Andrew tricks Polly Plummer, Digory's friend, into putting on a ring that transports her to another realm—the Wood between the Worlds. In their attempts to recover her, the three stumble into Charn, where an evil witch is waiting for them. Through a series of crazy incidents, the three wind up in

Narnia, where the Great Lion Aslan is just singing the world into existence. Yeah, it'd kind of a kid's book, but it's still a great read for teens—especially if you want to know how the lamp post got to be in the middle of the woods.

-Deidre Oberpriller
★★★★★

Where's FRANK?

FRANK Teen Literary Magazine 2005 is now on sale at all three City of Mesa Library branches for 75 cents, or read it for FREE in the library or your school media center.

Look for the 2006 issue of FRANK later this year

You can also sign up to join the teen editorial staff.

Check

<http://mesalibrary.org/teens/frank/>
for more information.

What is YAAC?



The Young Adult Advisory Council (YAAC) is a group of teens from many of Mesa's junior and senior high schools. They hold meetings twice monthly to review books for this newsletter and to plan special activities. They also help the librarians in Mesa Public Library's Young Adult Room at the Main Library as volunteers and assist with programs.

If you are interested in becoming a member of YAAC, call (480) 644-2734 or stop by the Young Adult service desk and ask for an application.

Learn more at:

 mesalibrary.org
City of Mesa Library on the Web

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Great People, Quality Service!