



Branches



March/April
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Book Review Newsletter of the City of Mesa Library
Dobson Ranch Branch Young Adult Advisory Council

Letter from the Editor!



Spring is here! The weather is beautiful! Doesn't it sound wonderful to just forget everything and go to a beautiful, quiet place to read a book? ☺ I would definitely be more than happy to have that kind of opportunity. Of course, school permits us to read only so much for fun. With Spring break right around the corner, take a minute to enjoy the fresh air and sunshine! Maybe you can grab a book to take along with you, and make the trip all the better! Take your pick!

--**Nehal Thakkar**
Branches Editor

Send comments and suggestions to
filmimmonkey@yahoo.com

Rating System

start a fire ★

punishment for bad children ★★

decent ★★★

I would read it again ★★★★

masterpiece ★★★★★

Death Comes for the Archbishop

By Willa Cather

★★★★★

This novel, by Willa Cather, depicts the life of a wandering Father sent from France to spread the Catholic religion throughout the new territory of Mexico and the southwestern portion of North America. Within this novel, Cather cleverly presents the everyday common life with its events, happenings, and adventures. The main character, a man by the name of Father Jean Marie Latour, along with his close friend Father Valliant, travel through this lawless region spreading their faith, dealing with rebellious priests, and aiding those in need.

I felt that this book moved fairly smoothly. The reading is quite simple except for a few phrases in Spanish and French. Cather's depiction lets me simply view the daily actions of Latour, but not in a manner that would bore the reader. Overall, this is a worthwhile read. Similar books by Cather include *My Antonia*.

Daniel Wu

What is reading but silent
conversation?

Walter Savage Landon

Return of the King

By J. R. R. Tolkien

★★★★★

If you have read the first two books in this series, *The Return of the King* is a great finish to the excitement. J.R.R. Tolkien does a magnificent job of showing how the ring has almost finished taking over Frodo Baggins. He also explains what happens to each member of the Fellowship as the trilogy comes to an end. It is a wonderful ending to a fantastic trilogy.

Niket Thakkar

Good Night, Mr. Tom

By Michelle Magorian

★★★★★

On the brink of the Second World War, Britain's capital city is plagued with nightly, chaotic bombings. Fearing for their safety, London casts its children out into the rural countryside until it is again safe to return home. Young William Beech, one of hundreds of displaced children, is sent to Little Weirwold, a small English village inhabited by folks unlike anyone Willie has ever seen before. He is taken in by Tom Oakley, a disgruntled, old recluse and his adoring mutt, Sammy, on the outskirts of the town. William is a

meek, deprived child, never having experienced such luxuries as fresh air and rich foods; however, he comes to flourish in his new environment. He stands to remind ol' Tom a thing or two about love and compassion. Willie comes to discover his incredible artistic abilities posing a revelation within his mind. He does well in his new school and awakens to his new friends, but his newfound happiness is shattered when he receives a word from his mother back in London. Where is Willie to go from here?

Kyle Pagliaro

The Last Treasure

By Janet S. Anderson

★★★★

Every family has a history, and every history has its secrets. Ellsworth Smith had never given a second thought to this fact. To him, his family was always just himself and his father, traveling around the country, promoting his father's books. On the dawning of Ellsworth's 13th birthday, however, all this takes a sudden change: first comes the dream, filled with mysterious houses bordering a grassy green square; then comes the letter, inviting him to come save a home he has never lived in, a life he has never had, and a family he never knew existed. This family was known as the Smiths of the Square, in Smith Mills, New York,

Ellsworth is needed there to find the one thing that can pull his crumbling family back together. He has come to find the last treasure, an inheritance left to the family by an eccentric old patriarch, hidden deeply within one of the thirteen houses. But while he is there, Ellsworth finds more than treasure hidden within dusty old walls. As each buried truth and sorrow is

unearthed, Ellsworth must decide how he is going to handle it, and if he should continue. But most important of all, he must decide if the treasure he finds will be powerful enough to reunite the remnants of the once proud and inseparable Smiths. Readers will come to love Ellsworth and the zany inhabitants of Smith's Square in this winding tale of a quest for truth, hope, and the true love of a family.

Hilary Waterman

Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant

By Anne Tyler

★★★★

Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant begins when the mother, Pearl Tull, is blind, old, and close to death. She goes through a flashback of the memorable moments when she met her husband, the birth of her three children (Cody, Ezra, and Jenny), and the night when her husband left, leaving her to support their children. As they grew older, her three children became different individuals as well. Cody, the oldest boy, grows up to be a handsome man with power in the business realm. Ezra, always a favorite with Pearl, grows up to be clumsy and gains a love for his restaurant. And Jenny earns a medical degree but cannot seem to stay married. This family is not perfect, though; the children are greatly affected by Pearl's daily beatings and torments, blaming them for her problems. As they follow their own dreams, Pearl realizes that she has lost them forever.

I really enjoyed reading this book because each chapter is a different person's viewpoint on a flashback. This is a really good novel for young adults to read.

Linh Nguyen

Angus, Thongs, and Full-Frontal Snogging

By Louise Rennison

★★★★★

Georgia Nicolson is a typical 14-year-old. She has a younger terror of a sister, a cat who refuses to stop harassing the next-door neighbor's poodle, and to top it all off, she is trying to win the heart of the older, hot Robbie. This book is the confessions of Georgia Nicolson. It is an incredibly funny, laugh-out-loud book. Told in first person, you get all of Georgia's thoughts on her friends, family, and school. Warning: Once you read this book, you will want all the others in the series. I highly recommend this book for anyone in junior high or high school even if it is an easy-read. I think anyone can enjoy the book.

Sarah Pate

**I have never known any
distress that an hour's reading
did not relieve.**

Montesquieu



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Great People, Quality Service!