

Open Shelf

January 2006

city of mesa library young adult advisory council book review newsletter

Letter from the editor



It's a new year! Rejoice—here's your chance to renew those resolutions and maybe even keep them this go 'round. Of course, depending on the person, your new year could actually be January 29... or October 31... But humor me. Enjoy our selection of fiction works for the month.

Jenny Knatz,
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The Client

John Grisham

When I picked up *The Client* from a Barnes and Noble seller in D.C., I just wanted something to occupy my time. I was not expecting a literary Mona Lisa.

Mark and his eight-year-old brother were just out for a smoke. They weren't expecting to witness a suicide. They weren't expecting to be a part of a case so important it was attracting the police, the FBI, and even the CIA.

After Mark's brother collapses from post-traumatic stress, Mark takes matters into his own pre-pubescent hands. Not only does Mark hire the perfect lawyer, he manages to protect his mother and his brother. But can Mark manage to protect the person who knows too much—himself?

Fast-pace, engrossing action starts on page one and continues to the end. Grisham paints an

accurate portrayal of the world of the witness protection program, the FBI, the mob, the law, and those who know too much.

—Mandi Levendowski

★★★★★

Monsoon Summer

Mitali Perkins

In *Monsoon Summer*, Jazz is a Cali-born girl whose mother is a volunteer in the community. However, her mom wants to extend that volunteerism to India, to the orphanage in which she grew up. Jazz and the rest of the family head off to India for the summer, leaving behind Jazz's business and love of her life. It is in India, however, that Jazz finds herself and what it truly means to "volunteer."

—Janine Bratlee

★★★★★

Now Starring Vivien Leigh Reid: Diva in Training

Yvonne Collins and Sandy Rideout

Now Starring Vivien Leigh Reid has many colorful characters, all of whom possess amazing personalities that really fit the lives of Hollywood actors. Vivien is a fifteen-year-old girl not only named after a famous actress, but knows one—her mother. Last year, as she spent time on her mother's movie set in Ireland, she landed a small role in the film. She's not sure whether she wants to be an actress but will certainly find out this summer. She lands a role as Willow Volume—a rock star's daughter on Diamond Heights. In doing that role, she will discover what Hollywood is all

This month:

The Client John Grisham
Monsoon Summer Mitali Perkins
Now Starring Vivien Leigh Reid: Diva in Training
Yvonne Collins and Sandy Rideout
Teen Idol Meg Cabot
Baby Blue Michelle D. Kwasney
Trojan Odyssey Clive Cussler
Pretty Things Sarra Manning
Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants Ann Brashares
Each Little Bird that Sings
Deborah Wiles

about, make new friends—and enemies—and broaden her horizons.

—Britanni Dorsey

★★★★★

Teen Idol

Meg Cabot

Jenny is good at solving problems. She is so good, in fact, that she's the school's anonymous advice columnist. She finds that even though solving other people's problems doesn't solve her own, it's still fun. However, when T.V. sensation Luke Striker comes to Jen's small town in Indiana to research a role, he creates havoc that even levelheaded Jenny isn't sure how to repair—especially since she's right in the middle of it!

A good book; one I thoroughly enjoyed.

—Micki Gentile

★★★★★



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!

Baby Blue

Michelle D. Kwasney

Blue is forced to deal not only with her father dying but also with the man who took his place. Jinx, her mother's second husband, beats on Blue's mother in his rage over the simplest things. Star, Blue's sister, can't take it and runs away, leaving only Blue and her mother to stand up to Jinx's will. The worst part is that Blue's mom won't even stand up for herself. Now, what can Blue do to save her family and pull herself, her mom, and her sister back together?

- Rosalinda Albrecht

★★★★

Trojan Odyssey

Clive Cussler

This is a Dirk Pitt novel, one of the latest in the series. It begins with Dirk's kids, who, while trying to find the source of a pollutant, discover ancient artifacts from 1,100 B.C. It is discovered that they are Celtic, as in druids—not sports. It is then revealed that the fabled Trojan War took place not in Greece, but in Cambridge, England, fought over securing tin for making bronze. Then, the Odyssey took Odysseus throughout the Caribbean.

In the present, a company ironically called Odyssey, is planning on disrupting the climate in the northern Atlantic to make big bucks on cheap power. Dirk Pitt and the National Underwater Marine Agency (NUMA) work with the US Army to destroy Odyssey's plans and save the world.

- Chris Smith

★★★★

Pretty Things

Sarra Manning

Pretty Things is about four teens and their interactions. Walker is gay, Daisy's a lesbian, Brie's a shy girl obsessed with keeping thin, and Charlie is Brie's best friend. These four are brought together when they all register for an acting class. Charlie falls in love with Walker (the infamously christened Wanker), who in turn falls for Daisy. Brie and Charlie have a fallout because of his newly discovered homosexuality and her disbelief in its permanence.

Most of the story takes place as they act out Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*. It tells of a twisted love rectangle, tangled webs, and it's brilliant.

- Oonagh McQuarrie

★★★★

Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants

Ann Brashares

"Tonight, we are the sisters of the pants. Tonight we give the pants the love of our sisterhood so we can take that love wherever we go."

Once upon a time there was a pair of pants. A pair of pants that perfectly fit four best girlfriends despite their differences in height, bone structure, body shape and personality. A pair of slightly faded blue jeans that make each girl seem and feel beautiful and confident.

As this is the first summer that the four will be apart, Carmen, Lena, Bridget, and Tibby decide

that they are going to keep in touch via the traveling pants. Over the course of the summer, the pants will travel between them, witnessing and recording what is to become one of the most memorable summers of their lives.

- Patricia Langevin

★★★★

Each Little Bird that Sings

Deborah Wiles

This book was interesting enough—I mean, what book about a ten-year-old girl who can sleep easily with dead people laying downstairs isn't interesting?

Comfort Snowberger, "explorer, recipe taster, and funeral reporter," has been present at almost 250 funerals. Her family owns the local funeral parlor, and she is as accustomed to going to funerals as geese are to migrating. When one of her own family members dies, she's forced to take stock of what funerals actually mean to people.

This was a good book, though the ending left much to be desired. I felt that the conflict was not fully resolved. Aside from that, it was pretty good.

- Kayla Chandler

★★★★

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. Teen submissions for the 2006 issue will be accepted until March 31, 2006. You can also sign up to join the teen editorial staff.

Check

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

Learn more at:

 mesalibrary.org
City of Mesa Library on the Web



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Young Adult Advisory Council (YAAC)

City of Mesa Library Teen Friends Group Is Proud to Present

Author

DAVID CLEMENT-DAVIES



Discussing His Fantasy Books for Teens, including his newest *The Telling Pool* (Amulet Books).



Saturday, February
11, 2006
11 a.m.-12 noon

City of Mesa Library
Youth Activity Room
64 East First Street,
Mesa, AZ 85213

Please join us for this FREE author presentation! Geared toward ages 12-18, but other ages are invited. Bring your own copies of David's books for the signing at the conclusion of the program.

Courtesy of Amulet Books,
an imprint of Abrams Books for Young Readers
www.abramsyounreaders.com

For more information, email
yaac@mesalibraryfriends.org