

# Open Shelf

february  
2002

mesa public library young adult advisory council book review newsletter

## letter from the editor

February is here, and for the members of YAAC, that means only one thing. No, it is not Valentine's Day. YAAC members have no time for romance. You guessed it—Groundhog Day! Finally, a day devoted to a small woodland animal that tastes good when roasted with oregano and garlic! Happy Groundhog Day to all, and while you are waiting for your groundhog to finish turning golden brown, try one of these books.



Leon Eubanks  
open shelf Editor

Send comments and suggestions to  
tiepilot777@hotmail.com



## rating system

bad ★  
so-so ★★  
good ★★★  
excellent ★★★★★

Visit the Library's NEW Web Site:  
[www.mesalibrary.org](http://www.mesalibrary.org)  
and see the Teens page!

## The Janitor's Boy

By Andrew Clements

The old city high school is full of musty closets and mysterious passageways. Sounds like a great place to start fifth grade in, right? Jack Rankin, for one, is not too happy to be there. For his father is the janitor at the old high school. After a humiliating incident, Jack decides to get back at his father by sticking a huge, smelly wad of gum under a desk. He is caught and the principal gives him three week's detention—with dear old dad.

The author of *Frindle* returns with another tale from elementary school. *The Janitor's Boy* is a creative, humorous, and engaging story. If you don't mind that it is written towards a younger reading level, then I definitely recommend it.

—Erin Hutchinson ★★★★★

## Space Usagi

By Stan Kai

Space Usagi is a book about a bunny samurai in the future. His name is Usagi. He is part of a clan war, which is on the verge of a total galactic campaign. Usagi's enemies have employed the Neko Ninja clan, a tribe of cyborg killers. The book is good if you like the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles genre but if you don't, do not read this book.

—Tom Alonge ★★★★★

## This month:

*The Janitor's Boy* by Andrew Clements

*Space Usagi* by Stan Kai

*Black Jack—Two-Fisted Surgeon* by Osamu Tezuka

*What My Mother Doesn't Know* by Sonya Sones

*Fellowship of the Ring* by J.R.R. Tolkien

*Bone Dry* by Kathleen Karr

*Dark Mirror* by Diane Duane

*Myth-ion Improbable* by Robert Asprin

*Second Nature* by Alice Hoffman

## Black Jack—Two-Fisted Surgeon

By Osamu Tezuka

Plumb the depths of the human psyche with Black Jack, renegade unlicensed surgeon. Black Jack and his wife Pinoco travel the world, saving lives and helping anyone they can. There are eight different stories in the book and I loved them all. Pick up a copy and join the thousands of fans of Black Jack!

—Chris Carbone ★★★★★

## What My Mother Doesn't Know

By Sonya Sones

This is a lot like a diary, only written in poems. As the main character says, "This book is about my first love, my second love, and, okay, my third love too." That pretty much sums up the story. It's very much a girl's book: it is narrated by a girl, the emotions are very girly and every boy I know who read it hated it. I (and my friends) loved it. Although she was obsessive and probably insane, she was hilarious and lovable. I would recommend this to all girls.

—Alyssa Ratledge ★★★★★

## The Hogfather

By Terry Pratchett

When Death (yes, the actual Death, you know, with the black robe and the scythe), the granddaughter of Death, Oh God of Hangovers, and a bunch of messed up wizards get together, what do you get? **The Hogfather**. The only thing I can say about his book is...anyone that can read should read this book. A mixture of science fiction, adventure, fantasy, mystery and comedy, **The Hogfather** is the cream of the crop. Read it! Trust me, you will like it.

—*Beth Dormady* ★★☆☆

## Fellowship of the Ring

By J.R.R. Tolkien

Well, if you don't know the plot of the book by now you're sick and need help, but here we go. Frodo's uncle Bilbo has unknowingly left him the One Ring. Sauron, the Dark Lord, needs only that ring to cover Middle Earth with evil. The unfortunate hobbit, along with help from his friends Pippin, Merry, and Sam, must escape the Dark Riders that are attracted to the ring's power. This is an excellent book although a bit long winded. If you do read this book do yourself a favor and read **The Hobbit**.

—*Mary Beth Hutchinson* ★★☆☆

## Bone Dry

By Kathleen Karr

It's the eighteen hundreds and you're an apprentice to Dr. ABC, a doctor who studies personalities by analyzing the bumps on people's heads. Your boss wants to go to an obscure oasis and analyze Alexander the Great's personality, a trip that means certain death if you're caught by slavers, which you know will happen, or you run out of water. This is Matthew Morisey's life and it's a good thing he's a quick thinker.

Throw in some djins, a girl, and scorpions; he might as well be digging his own grave.

—*Elizabeth Steimle* ★★☆☆

## Dark Mirror

By Diane Duane

Another good Trek. Diane Duane has a lot of good stories. This one has the Next Generation crew and the Enterprise-D. They have a visitor aboard, H'wii, who is basically a dolphin-person. H'wii studies the "hyperstrings" of space. All of a sudden, he thinks that space doesn't "feel" right. The crew does some tests and realizes that there's a very good reason—they're in an alternate universe. This is the very same universe Kirk (and some of his crew) was accidentally transported to. It hasn't changed much since then. It's really interesting to see how the Enterprise-D gets back home.

—*Deidre Oberpriller* ★★☆☆

## Myth-ion Improbable

By Robert Asprin

Skeeve, an apprentice magician, bought a map for Aahz, his mentor, as a joke. It turns out that the map is real, and that it leads to the golden cow. So Skeeve, Aahz, and their friend Tananda go in search of the cow, winding up in a strange dimension inhabited with vampire cows and vegetarian cowboys. They go through many challenges and arrive at their destination, though it is not what they expected. This is a pretty good book, and I recommend it to anyone who likes fantasy.

—*Jenny Knatz* ★★☆☆

## Second Nature

By Alice Hoffman

The Wolf Man has been living in the woods with wolves since he was three. When he is captured, he is sent to a hospital run by Stuart Rubin. Stuart's sister rescues the Wolf Man on a whim, and hides him in her house until she has changed him enough to leave. She takes him out around town, until people are a little more comfortable with him. But things change. He is accused of murder, and Robin must find out whether she trusts him or not.

—*Andrea Alonge* ★★☆☆

# FRANK

The City of Mesa Library's Young Adult Room is looking for stories, articles, essays, poetry, artwork and black/white photographs for its literary magazine, FRANK. Written, edited, and produced by young adults, ages 12-18, FRANK is an annual non-profit magazine devoted to literature of all genres. The next issue is planned for fall 2002. Submissions will be accepted through March 31. For more information and submission guidelines, call FRANK Advisor Diane Tuccillo at (480) 644-2734.



## 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.

*Check out the*

# teens

*page at*

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