



# Leap Day

*Wendy Mass*

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This fascinating, surprising new novel is full of everyday imaginations and truths in the life and future of every teenage girl, as it tells the story of soon-to-be-16 Josie Taylor, who was born on Leap Day.

## Leap Day Details

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Author : Wendy Mass

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# From Reader Review Leap Day for online ebook

## Amanda Bynum says

This book wasn't really good enough to merit a long description or review. Here's what's I'll tell you: Josie is turning 16. It's February 29. And every chapter is split in two, with part A told from Josie's perspective and part B told from the third-person omniscient perspective of every other character who crosses her path throughout the day. It's a clever literary device, I'll admit - you get the inner thoughts of a lot of "unimportant" characters that really flesh out the story, and I did enjoy the part B sections about the teachers at the school, Josie's parents, and a few of the other high schoolers.

But overall? MAN, is this book lame. First of all, it's set in Orlando. This gives the author plenty of opportunities to use Disneyworld as a location. Awesome? Not really. Also, no high school anywhere in the world has a much fun as the high school in this book. Josie gets to leave school during third period to take her drivers' test. A girl goes into labor at lunch. It's the day of auditions for Romeo and Juliet. It's also the day of the annual sophomore scavenger (more time at Disneyworld!) and the first day of Senior Dart Gun Wars. And later, Josie's buddies take her down to the lake for some traditional initiation (although she's the first one to turn 16, so how can they know what to do?). Thankfully, she doesn't get the guy, nor the part in the play she wanted (ooh, should I have told you there would be spoilers?), but she does go through a big change where she takes time to ponder her dreams and accept life as it happens.

One more thing: Josie feels that since she was born on Leap Day, there's absolutely no way she would die on Leap Day, too, so she's basically invincible one day every four years. But there's all this ominous stuff in the book that leads... NOWHERE. Here's an example: in one of the part B sections, Josie's friend's brother contemplates telling the girls that they shouldn't take up smoking - which leads to sentence like "Turns out he'd never have to." Now, maybe I'm just morbid, but coupled with all the references to Josie not dying on February 29, this little gem led me to think that she'd get in a car accident and die on her way home from the lake tonight. But no! The friend just takes a puff of a cig and chokes and sputters and decides on her own to never smoke! Pretty weak, if you ask me.

Thank goodness this was in the bargain bin at Borders - I only paid \$1.99 for it.

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## Robyn says

I don't have many amazing things to say about this book. It just wasn't all that great. Definitely unique, because how many times have you ever heard of a book where the main character has a birthday on Leap Day, the novel focuses on that, the entire novel takes place in one day, and you get to read about other, random people's points of view? Passers by. People that Josie has never really spoken to before. Exactly! Almost never! It's a cool idea, and it grabbed my attention at first glance. Too bad it didn't keep my attention. I didn't find myself relating to the characters because a lot of them were gone faster than they came. I didn't have time to like them. I would find myself thinking, oh yeah, she/he sounds like they might be cool... and then... they were gone. They might have shown up once more in the book, for a paragraph or two, but that's it.

Yes, getting an inside look at other people's point of view is cool. But, I donno. It just wasn't fun. The only

part of the whole book that I really liked was the scavenger hunt. Everything else was just like, "blah, I couldn't care less." The author could have made more things happen to Josie. There was no cute little romance, or even the hint of one. Oh, there could have been. It seemed like there were a lot of boys who would have very much liked to be Josie's boyfriend, but, in the end, everyone was single. Even Rob, who starts off this book with a girlfriend.

Which brings me to another point. This book was predictable. From the beginning, the first time I read about Rob's POV I knew that Rob and Anna wouldn't last. I guessed Katy's secret from the beginning. I also guessed that Josie would barely pass her driver's test, that Josie and her friends would come in at least second place in the scavenger hunt, and that Megan really didn't have an eating disorder. Everything was just too obvious.

I was wrong once, though. I figured that Zoey would end up with Greg (was that his name? I think so) by the end of the book. Didn't happen. I was surprised. But other than that, nothing surprised me.

Overall, this book was an okay read, but I wouldn't head right out and buy it. It's more of a borrow-from-the-library type of book.

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### **Ala says**

This is very much a pre-teen/teen novel. It was at first annoying, then interesting to relive everything that happens through the eyes of other characters. I'm surprised at some of the thoughts and actions of the teenagers, perhaps forgetting all the goofy things I have done/thought at that age. It was a fast & easy read, and something I would have no doubt enjoyed when I was 13, but not so much as an adult.

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### **Ruhama says**

Josie is extremely unique—she was born on Leap Day, so that means she only gets her real birthday every four years. This year she's turning both four and sixteen, and it's a big occasion. She's going to try for her driver's license, try out for the school play (where she wants the lead) and get initiated at the lake by her friends. Told in alternating chapters, we go through Josie's day and see how her morning starts, what happens throughout the school day, and finally get to see what happens at the lake. The first chapter is from Josie's POV, the following shows what everyone else is thinking, and sometimes gives clues as to what happens in the future (which is an intriguing thought—often I've wondered about characters after the story is over, but don't necessarily want a sequel book). It does make one stop and think about POV and perspectives in life, and I found this device kept me reading. The story itself is nothing spectacular and the character development is jumpy—even Josie seems to have matured a little too quickly by the end. But overall I enjoyed this book, and teens who like *Princess Diaries* or the *California Diaries* will devour this one.

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### **Karen says**

An enjoyable read, although not quite as good (in my opinion) as some of Wendy Mass's other books. The story takes place over the course of just one day (Josie's 16th birthday, which falls on February 29th) -

despite some plot holes and let-downs I think middle school girls would find it interesting.

The cleverest part of the book is the way Mass alternates chapters between Josie's first person voice and an omniscient third person voice which reveals the inner thoughts and motivations of the other characters, both major and minor (as well as occasionally revealing to the reader events that will take place in the future). Rather than get annoyed by this device, I found myself looking forward to finding out the "back story" of each character that Josie interacts with in her chapters. Definitely an interesting way to generate empathy for other people, which could be enlightening for our often self-centered teens and pre-teens :-)

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### **Hannah says**

It was a great book. I liked that it changed view from the main character, to everyone else.

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### **Ashley says**

Not as good as I hoped, but very enjoyable. I probably would actually give it 3.5 stars.

I liked the main character, Josie, in the beginning, but then I started to not like her because she was really self-centered and thought she was better than she was. Also, her and her friend Megan didn't want to jeopardize their friendship for trying out for the same roles in a play or musical, but Josie was always the one who got to try out for the main character, not Megan! So unfair. They should've switched off or something. But then later in the book she got better and I liked her more at the end. I felt like she was about to get better and be a better friend and person, although she was still ok before, at the end of the book, so that was nice.

I also really liked reading about the scavenger hunt. I thought it sounded really fun! I wish I could do it! I wonder if Domino's (or whichever pizza place that was) actually gives out free pizza on their birthday forever for people born on leap day.

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### **Tiffany says**

My daughter and I agree that this book, which is written for the YA audience, was inappropriate. We made it through a chapter or two and gave up. Not worth it.

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### **Amanda says**

I should have known from the first page when the heroine talked about wanting a boy to feel her up that this wasn't the book for me. Call it morals. Call it decency. Call it "I will flip out and go bat-crazy if my daughter turns does this!!!"

No, fifteen-just-turning-sixteen wasn't that long ago for me; I got my first kiss then and was incredibly into boys, but I knew that there were limits and purity and deciding to be a virgin till marriage could save me

from some heartbreak. So many of the characters in this book have sex as teens and get hurt, very badly. Why not avoid all of that pain?

Pros: Josie is incredibly strong in herself and not scared to be herself; she has a loving and strong family with supportive relationships. Rarely do you see this portrayed. Her friends are loving and supportive and if they have flaws, they acknowledge them. Teachers are supportive and love what they do! Love seeing what is going on in everyone's lives and what they are thinking/feeling and what the consequences for the actions will be down the road--cool narrative device.

Cons: The mom has backed out of Josie's life in a misguided attempt to "be friends" with her daughter; she is so un-involved that Josie sometimes wonders if she is even there. As a result, Josie is closer to her dad, and the Mom no longer really has any place whether it be good, bad or indifferent. The mom sometimes wonders if she is doing the right thing (duh!), but consoles herself that because she fought so much with her own mom when she was a teenager and never really reconciled that this must be the right course to take. REALLY?!

So glad things are so black and white here. \*heavy sarcasm intended\* So instead of sucking it up and dealing with problems when they come, she just backs out, and hides behind one-liners? LOUSY parenting.

Underage drinking.

Teenage sex.

Adults having affairs.

All in all this book was more of a dud for me because of the issues in it; cool premise, but it flopped instead of leaping.

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## **Christian Shiels says**

Can you imagine only having a birthday every four years? For soon to be sixteen year old Josie Taylor, this is a reality. In the contemporary fiction novel *Leap Day* by: Wendy Mass, the reader is taken through Josie's day of turning sixteen. This is only Josie's fourth real birthday, because she was born on Leap Day (meaning her birthday comes around every four years). She is a very brave, yet shy girl. Josie has three great friends: Megan, Zoey, and Katy, that accompany her throughout the day. Katy is Josie's closest friend, and is smart while having traits of a leader. Josie has multiple conflicts throughout her day, and the book is split up into parts where she addresses each conflict. She has to take her driver's test, participate in a scavenger hunt, and go to "the lake" for her sixteenth birthday initiation. In between each chapter, there are smaller conflicts that keep the story flowing. There are many underlying themes, but the one that occurred to me the most was the importance of friendship. For example, towards the end of the book Katy tells Josie one of her deepest secrets, and soon after Josie is faced with a conflict. For her sixteenth birthday initiation, she either has to tell her most private secret to her friends or jump into the lake naked. For the sake of Katy, she jumps into the lake so that nobody would ever find out about what Katy had told her. The tone of the book is often relatable to the reader, because Josie either thinks or sees things that a normal high school person would think or see. She auditions for a play that she so badly wants to win, and starts freaking out when she watches people perform better than her, which is relatable. If I were to rate this book out of ten, I would give it a 7. The book introduces the reader to so many side characters that make reappearances throughout the story, that I had trouble remembering who everybody was. I felt like the characters did not have enough distinguishing

characteristics that make the reader remember clearly who they were. For about half the book, I struggled to tell certain characters apart. Putting aside the negatives, I was very hooked after the halfway point in the book because I actually knew who everybody was. Each chapter rotates from telling the story from Josie's point of view, and then the next chapter recalling the same story but from other characters' points of view. This was very interesting when conflicts arose and I got to see what everybody was thinking. Leap Day by: Wendy Mass reminds me of a book I've read called Legend by: Marie Lu. They share the same style of rotating points of view per each chapter, which I love because you get to see what others are thinking. I would recommend this book to anybody that is looking to read a book they can read vicariously through, because Leap Day provides this.

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### **Janelle says**

This book was so interesting! I loved how it told the story from Josie's point of view for one chapter, and then it switched and would tell you what everyone was thinking during the time they spent with Josie. There wasn't really a plot, because it just went through one day which happened to be Leap Day, her birthday. Even though the mysterious lake party wasn't as big as I thought it would be, I really enjoyed this book! I finished it in about two days because I just couldn't put it down. It really made me think - just like the author said - just how much we do affect people by simply just giving them a friendly smile, or making eye contact. I recommend this book for everyone; it's a light and easy read and a really cool concept!

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### **Kristen says**

Despite some of the characters' ages and some of what happens in the book, this feels very middle grade. Honestly, it was kind of like watching an episode of a show like Lizzie McGuire or Sabrina the Teenage Witch. Cute but not particularly memorable.

I liked the two perspective idea though. I really found myself excited to find out what the other characters were thinking.

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### **Via Love says**

I have no praise for this book that you haven't already heard (it was unique, different, blah blah blah). But, I do have some critique. First off, I did not like the way it was written, how it went from pov to pov, from the main character to the pizza guy (not literally). I can understand if the author let us into the thoughts of her friends and family, but there was just too many random people who's thoughts and life stories I did not care to know about. Another issue was that the story didn't go anywhere. Nothing happened, and yet so much happened. There were a lot of unresolved issues that remained unresolved by the end of the book.

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### **firmy says**

Wendy Mass does it again! This book was eye-catching. The way she wrote it with chapters A and B, you

get to really know what goes on inside each character's head. LOVE IT!!!!!!

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### **Posie says**

Gosh, is there a single bad Wendy Mass book? This was amazing. I loved how creatively written it was, and the spirit of it keeps you reading. I loved it!

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### **Robin J. says**

I'm just starting the book Leap Day, By: Wendy Mass, I have not read a lot but, I 'am almost at the first chapter. In this book their is a girl who's name is Josie Taylor and she was born on a Leap Day, the 29th. So she is soon going to be six-teen, But since her birthday is on a Leap Day it will be her forth birthday. My friend who was born on a leap day hate's it, because she is eight, but everyone else says she is only 2. Josie is so exited to turn six-teen, so she is picking out a really nice outfit and washing her hair twice and doing all this other stuff to get ready for school and her Birthday. Lots of my friends always get all pretty and straighten there hair just like Josie on their birthday. I even do that do sometimes, one of my friends in pre-k put on lipstick, a crown, had a huge a scarf, wore a dress, and she looked pretty different, for her birthday. The setting takes place at her house, right now when she is trying to prepare for school. I can't wait until I get to the next Chapter, because I really want to find out what she does at school, and who are her friends and things like that. I hope I can finish my book Tonight or I will stay awake thinking what's going to happens next.

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### **megan fraser says**

Read it!!!!!!!!!! I love it!! It's about a girl whose birthday is on Feb. 29th, Leap day for those of you who don't get out a lot. The story takes place on her birthday and it basically tells about her very interesting life. What I love about it is that she tells something that happens and then in the next chapter the people around her (characters, I'm using my literary terms ?) tell their point of view. Pretty cool.

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### **Carol says**

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It wasn't quite a cringe book but it still was bad in my opinion

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### **Emily Krall says**

This book is about a girl named Josie who was born on leap day. This books takes place on her 16th birthday or better yet her 4th birthday. This book was so amazing and I recommend it for all



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## **Pam says**

Theoretical physicist Albert Einstein once said, “the person who follows the crowd will usually go no further than the crowd. The person who walks alone is likely to find himself in places no one has ever seen before”. This quote pertains to the book “Leap Day” by Wendy Mass because both the theme and the quote discuss self-discovery. This novel tackles the idea that in order for a person to be comfortable and understand themselves they have to stray away from the crowd and instead take part in activities and things that interest them. In this book, Josie Taylor strays away from teenage conformities and finds herself in her friends and family. Towards the end of the book, Josie realizes, with the help of the people she cares about and some adventures, that being herself and being comfortable with feeling different is a good thing.

“Leap Day” by Wendy Mass, is a fictional novel surrounding the main character, Josie Taylor and her three best friends; Zoey, Katy, and Megan, whose friendship is a major part of the book. Josie is a “leaper” which means that she is one of the few born on February 29th, because of this she considers herself special, but can sometimes feel left out too. This novel focuses on Josie's sixteenth birthday and the series of events that occur throughout the day. Turning sixteen is important to Josie because it represents her becoming an adult. As the book goes on the reader is able to see how Josie matures by becoming aware of other people's feelings, and are also able to see her discover who she truly is. In the beginning of the book, Katy attempts to give Josie a note for her birthday, but quickly retreats it hours after giving it to her. While the note is a major conflict, the climax of the story is the annual sophomore scavenger hunt. This is a tradition in Josie's town and it is something her and her three best friends have been looking forward to. After Josie takes her driver's test she is responsible for driving them across town in order to find, and retrieve the scavenger items.

Because of the items listed, the four friends get stuck in situations where they have to ask themselves if winning is really worth it. This book follows the journey filled with jokes, scavenger hunts, and driving that Josie goes on before the notes big secret is revealed at the end. At the commencement of this novel, Josie views herself as an outsider because she feels she has nothing in common with anyone because of her birthday, height, and interests. As the storyline progresses she starts to become aware of the fact that being different or having something uncommon isn't something terrible.

Wendy Mass was able to capture the essence of fun while still incorporating the internal motives and conflicts the teenage characters were going through. This aided in making the book captivating because it reflected on what the average teenage life is like so it was easy to connect my everyday life to parts of the book. The omniscient point of view also helped develop the characters because it gave a more detailed description of their life outside of Josie's point of view. However, the language used in the book wasn't as challenging as I had hoped which led to certain parts being quite boring. It also wasn't as intriguing because none of the vocabulary used was new or difficult.

I would recommend this book to anyone who is looking for a funny, relatable novel, but mostly I would recommend this book to fellow teenagers because the conflicts faced by the characters are not serious, and can be seen as ridiculous by some. I would not recommend this book to people who are looking to read an action-packed or serious book. I would also recommend this book to anyone who is serious most of the time because as the story goes on Josie is able to teach the readers that having fun is an important part of living. This book was very compelling for someone my age because it focused more on teenage problems and wasn't as serious as most books. Because of this, I would recommend this book to anyone who is looking to read a laid-back book.

“Leap Day” by Wendy Mass is a fictional novel that discusses and displays the idea of discovering oneself. The storyline is very light and humorous but the lesson is still strongly expressed. This story concerns Josie Taylor and her three best friends, but the characters personalities and conflicts can be interpreted differently by every reader. This novel greatly resembles “The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants” and is for anyone

looking to get a better understanding on what it's like to be a teenager who is finding themselves.

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