

State of the States Web Meeting

Minutes – November 30, 2017

This is the recording of the State IFC chairs web meeting: <http://ala.adobeconnect.com/pnc2l0qzh81g/>

Introductions

[State Roster List](#). Please send Kristin updates for the website and emails for this listserv.

Attended: Bryan Jones in Tennessee, Elizabeth Madson in Michigan; Bryan Cooper in Florida; Courtney Kincaid in Texas; Megan Kocher in Minnesota; Jay Ballenberger in Colorado; Richard DiRusso in Arizona; Julie Ranelli in Maryland; Frank McKenna in New York; Julie Oborny in California; Floyd Pentlin in Missouri; Mike Elsener in Nebraska; Hayley Tompkins in Virginia; Jim Campbell in Maine; Isabel Klein in Ohio; Ross Betzer and Candy Morgan in Oregon; Meg Harrison in Tennessee; Jim Kammerer in Montana; Tracy Ruppman in Illinois; Sam Lee in Connecticut; Jim Kammerer in Montana; Kaya Burgin in Ohio; Wanda Mae Huffaker in Utah; Brian Greene in Wyoming; Courtney Kincaid in Texas; TJ Lamanna in New Jersey; Gloria Creed-Dikeogu in Kansas; Charles Kratz is IFRT Chair and Larissa Gordon is IFRT Coalition Building Committee Chair, Megan Cusick in Chicago/OLA Staff, Deborah Caldwell Stone, James LaRue, Ellie Diaz, & Kristin Pekoll in Chicago/OIF Staff.

State Reports

Texas (Courtney Kincaid)

Two challenges; Refugee and The Hate U Give

Connecticut (Sam Lee)

Planning for their state conference and hoping to hear if their program proposals have been accepted.

Utah (Wanda Mae Huffaker)

1. Two Banned Books Week Awards
 - A school superintendent who had pulled a book from the shelves last spring, read the book over the summer, and returned it before the school year started.
 - Salt Lake County Library Board and the Director for remaining consistent and firm with an extremely angry, persistent and determined patron. They also invested money in a visible Banned Books campaign, and had a big radio, television and web presence for not just Banned Books, but Intellectual Freedom. https://youtu.be/7ig5ZaJD_aU
2. Fake News class for the City Library staff. - I've had requests to do more trainings, and have proposed one for our annual conference. Traveling through the state is hard. We talked about the possibility of creating a webinar through the state library, but I found that in my Accurate Information/Fake News Discussions, the information works better if it is current news and events, so this subject may not work well with a recorded webinar.
3. ULA webpage updates. I included my cell phone number. I have sent out a couple of mailings, for example asking about Teen Vogue, giving our entire state membership my cell phone number. I wanted people to feel I was accessible at any time, not just my odd public library hours. I have started making

sure that what I know, the ULA Executive Board knows as far as challenges. (Our president is a member of the IFC ☺)

4. Alabama Story by Ken Jones

School version of the play. It was written for 6 people, but the school version has roles for 17 people to give more students opportunities to act. For those who don't know its the story of an Alabama librarian named Emily Reed who was persecuted by segregationist politicians for protecting a children's book in the Jim Crow South of 1959. We've talked with Ken about doing a Reader's Theater of it next year during Banned Books Week. <http://www.bykennethjones.com/contact> KennethJonesNYC@gmail.com

Florida (Bryan Cooper)

- 1) Activist groups continue shaping legislation for censorship of K-12 materials and reading lists.
 1. This year the "Instructional Materials" law was amended to open up challenges by non-parents at county school board meetings.
 2. The law now conjoins processes for the public's ability to challenge school textbook selection alongside school library/media center material selections.
 3. HB 989 created a legal requirement for quasi-judicial "hearings" to be conducted by a "hearing officer" at school boards, for challengers to testify and submit affidavits that elected officials must consider in their vote, and which can bolster future lawsuits.
 4. The quasi-judicial hearings will focus on if a book or reading list is to be banned for:
 - a. Containing "pornographic" elements according to local activist definitions.
 - b. Possessing imbalance: (doesn't give equal weight to opposing Creationist or anti-climate change or other ideological viewpoints against Science).
 - c. Or is "inflammatory" (e.g. uses modern or pluralistic historical interpretations, etc.).

Recent press coverage, including Associate Press syndication:

<https://apnews.com/c24df475abdb411cb3d768577374be0f>

<http://cbs12.com/news/local/new-law-makes-it-legal-to-challenge-assigned-reading-in-schools>

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/politics/political-pulse/os-school-book-protests-20171127-story.html>

- 2) At its last meeting, FLA IFC agenda included how to better engage the library and non-library communities. Among related topics, the following web based reporting systems were discussed:
 - a. The current FLA challenge/ban reporting form is currently a Google form (with Google URL instead of on a flat web page under the FLA domain). This inhibits discoverability through search-engines. Plan now includes revising the form using the new FLA web platform – MemberClicks, and providing richer html text so the FLA form and pages can be more easily discovered by those surfing the web and needing help in the state.
 - b. Some members of the IFC and external partners have been participating in testing a crowd-sourced reporting system scalable to state, national or international scope. Testing and development is at: <http://informus.us> (flat pages) and <https://map.informus.us> (relational database). The site is hosted at Florida International University. Volunteers, partners or input is welcome; as well as sharing or downloading any future crowd-sourced data. Contact Bryan Cooper at lbcooper@fiu.edu.
- 3) In September, the Superintendent of Schools in Dixie County issued a broad ban through memo: *"No instructional materials (textbooks, library books, classroom novels, etc.) purchased and/or used by the school*

district shall contain any profanity, cursing, or inappropriate subject matter. The directive reflects the values of the Superintendent, School Board, and the community.” ALA, FLA, FAME (Florida Association for Media in

- 4) Education) all sent letters, and the local response was led by the media specialist and head of the local H.S. English Department, and the teachers union. Final outcome is still pending.

Idaho (Erin Kennedy)

- 1) Idaho Library Association Annual Conference – October 6, 2017
Digital Privacy and Intellectual Freedom Panel, sponsored by the Intellectual Freedom Committee, featuring Idaho State Legislator Luke Malek (R) and Ritchie Eppink, Legal Director for ACLU Idaho
Intellectual Freedom Silent Auction raised \$ to support speakers and events in 2018
Partnering with the Idaho Media Initiative, Boise State University, to bring Lee Rainie, Director of Internet and Technology Research at the Pew Research Center, to Boise for a seminar in February 2018
- 2) Intellectual Freedom News
Boise State University (BSU) professor in the news for publishing two academic articles with the conservative Heritage Foundation and several blog posts for The Daily Signal. BSU supported the professor against calls for his dismissal, sparking a larger conversation about academic freedom and speech on campus.
Jefferson County School District officials decided not to ban use of George Orwell’s classic, 1984, in classrooms at Rigby High School, after backlash over reports they were considering removing the novel from the curriculum. Reported in Idaho Education News.

Illinois (Tracy Ruppman)

- 1) August – The West Chicago Public Library District Board voted to retain *This Day in June* by Gayle E. Pitman, which was challenged by the Illinois Family Institute. Committee chairs sent a letter of thanks and support to the Board after the vote.
- 2) October – IFC presented the findings from a survey conducted in March 2017 among Illinois librarians of all types. The survey explored how internal and external factors create pressures for self-censorship in the selection and purchase of materials. In this first phase, the focus was on public library responses.
- 3) October – IFC Presented Intellectual Freedom award to Hinsdale Public Library at ILA conference for hosting “Freedom Sings®,” a touring group celebrating the First Amendment and intellectual freedom through rock and roll music.
- 4) Survey subcommittee will work on next steps following the survey presentation, and what to do with the data collected.
- 5) Challenges subcommittee will work on ways to streamline the challenge process, making it easier for challenges to be reported.
- 6) All committee members will work on marketing and soliciting ideas for the Intellectual Freedom award nominations.

California (Julie Oborny)

California Library Association Conference presentation on conducting a privacy audit sjpl.org/CLAprivacy2017 (includes full slide deck and spreadsheet)

Maryland (Julie Ranelli)

- 1) Maryland had a Banned Books panel on censorship with perspectives from parent, public librarian, author, English teacher, and a school librarian. Well received by 25 attendees.
- 2) Challenges to a Banned Books Week display www.cbldf.org/2017/10/library-displays-cause-controversy
- 3) Jamie LaRue is doing the Advocacy and Intellectual freedom bootcamp in Maryland this spring.
- 4) We recently revised our state IF Manual. The last revision was 2006. The 2017 version is not yet online but should be within the coming week at <http://www.mdlib.org/content.asp?contentid=224>

New York (Frank McKenna)

- 1) New York [State] Library Association Annual Conference. Saratoga Springs, Nov 8-11, 2017. Among the programs sponsored or co-sponsored were:
 - *Faked Out?! Again?! A News Reader's Guide to Surviving "Fake News"*. Presenters: Nancy Roberts, Thomas Palmer & Elaine Salisbury, University of Albany.
 - *Libraries & Confidentiality: Your Privacy is Our Business*. Presenters: Kate Ross and Nancy Greco, St. John Fisher College, Lavery Library
 - *Helping Patrons Spot Fake News*. Presenter: Laura Wolven, Director, Orangeburg Public Library.
 - *Intellectual Freedom (and Social Justice) for Breakfast*. Speaker: Jamie LaRue, Director of ALA's OIF
- 2) A Banned Books Symposium will be held on Saturday, March 10, 2018 at the Hudson Hall Auditorium at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburg, NY. Keynote Speaker: Jay Asher author of *13 Reasons Why*.

Colorado (Jay Ballenberger)

- 1) Awards to Challenger Middle School for their defense of *Perfect Chemistry* and Mesa Valley School District librarians for their defense of *Thirteen Reasons Why*.
- 2) Shared intellectual freedom reading to start their virtual monthly calls.

Oregon (Ross Betzer)

Nothing exciting to report from Oregon. The usual planning for conference sessions and award nominations. I have been overhearing some talk among librarians in our state about perceived conflict between professional values like social responsibility/critical librarianship and intellectual freedom.

Arizona (Richard DiRusso)

We had a board that wanted to limit patron's access by age

Kansas (Gloria Creed-Dikeogu)

We are on a fact-finding mission attempting to create an IF Committee within KLA and find out what KS's procedures/processes are for challenged books.

Virginia (Hayley Tompkins)

Annual Conference panels

- 1) Cradle to Grave; Intellectual Freedom (covers a variety of topics and people could ask questions)
- 2) Challenge Proof your Collection

Two Banned Books Week display awards

Beloved Bill to put a warning on books in school libraries.

Please share state legislation. Use the listserv to share ideas and ask questions. stateifc@lists.ala.org
Contact Kristin if you're interested in writing up events for the OIF blog.

IFRT Report

(Chair, Charles Kratz charles.kratz@scranton.edu)

- I. Please visit www.ala.org/donate to support IFRT's awards program and continue to recognize trailblazers in intellectual freedom. All donations will be matched through 2017. Your donations will be formally recognized in the IFRT Annual Report
- II. We are very pleased to announce to you that 2018 ALA Emerging Leader Angela Ocana will be sponsored by IFRT.
- III. Virtual Meeting on Wednesday December 13 at 12pm CST
- IV. Meeting at Midwinter in Denver, CO. Sunday 2/11/2018 from 3:00 PM-5:00 PM
- V. Gerald Hodges Intellectual Freedom Chapter Relations Award consists of a citation and \$1,000 and recognizes an intellectual freedom focused organization that has developed a strong multi-year, ongoing program or a single, one-year project that exemplifies support for intellectual freedom, patron confidentiality, and anti-censorship efforts. ([Larissa Gordon](#)) <http://www.ala.org/rt/ifrt/gerald-hodges>
- VI. IFRT Interviews Idaho's IFC Chair, Erin Kennedy <http://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=11731>

OIF Report

(Staff, [Jamie LaRue](#), [Deborah Caldwell Stone](#), [Ellie Diaz](#), [Kristin Pekoll](#))

- 1) Discussion: reporting censorship at the state level.
- 2) [Advocacy and Intellectual Freedom Bootcamps](#) - upcoming dates in 2017 and 2018
- 3) Banned Books Week materials sale - <http://www.alastore.ala.org/SearchResult.aspx?CategoryID=269>
- 4) #GiveALA and your gift will count double! <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/annual-fund-2017>
- 5) Visual and Performing Arts Interpretation Feedback needed. Deadline: December 15.
<http://connect.ala.org/node/271208>
- 6) Legislation Report
- 7) Intellectual Freedom Bloggers for 2018 <http://www.oif.ala.org/oif/?p=11395> Deadline extended to December 15.
- 8) Journal of Intellectual Freedom and Privacy <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/jifp>
- 9) FTRF provides free eLearning for organizational members. Starts at \$100.
<http://www.ftrf.org/?page=Membership>
- 10) Midwinter program. <https://2018.alamidwinter.org/speaker/ala-presidents-program>

Next Web Meeting – Thursday, February 22 @ 11am CST

[Add to your calendar.](#)

A reminder will go out 1 month before.

Thank you to everyone who attended!