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West Bend Library Board refuses to filter computers - responds to complaint via media

In typical West Bend Library Board fashion, the refusal to apply for free funding for porn filters on the public computers was denied, and the complainants informed via the local newspaper. Though Tyree states they "seldom" have issues with patrons using the computers for porn, I can tell you that is not what he said to us when we met with him. In fact, he said that he had more issues with people viewing porn and having to deal with asking them to leave, than he did about any complaints about books. Yes, he did.

PARENTS. YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY IS NOT A "SAFE PLACE." BEWARE.

Our fave reporter, Dave Rank, of the WB News, reports here (note: We were not asked for our thoughts concerning the decision. Nice touch, Dave. No bias THERE! LOL! Hope you don't mind my interjections despite your obvious omission...)

My notes in red (of course!):

The West Bend Community Memorial Library will not apply for funding through the federal Child Internet Protection Act so that Internet filtering software would be installed on its 10 Internet access computers.

FREE money. Shucks. Guess we don't need it. That's right. We use taxpayer money to pay for \$40-worth of phone calls from hotels (that we also pay for) when our library director goes to local conferences. We are buff with money for the West Bend Library, funded by people like Alyce and Elmore Kraemer who have no idea what their cash is being used for. A shame. A real shame.

Tuesday night, the Library Board voted unanimously not to act on a written request that it ask for CIPA funds. The request came from West Bend Citizens For Safe Libraries, the citizen group founded earlier this year by Ginny and Jim Maziarka from the town of West Bend, and was signed by the Maziarkas.

The Maziarkas have led a campaign to have certain books in the young adult section of the library moved and labeled because of homosexual themes or sexual passages.

WRONG AGAIN, Dave. Again and again and again. We have told you over and over, but you just don't get it. Sigh. Some old dogs just can't learn new tricks.

A library using CIPA funding would be required to install such filtering software, which would limit a user's ability to surf for pornographic material with that computer. “

Actually, if you talk to any KNOWLEDGEABLE "I.T." guy/gal, they would tell you that is not exactly true. Filtering today is quite sophisticated and has come a long way, and is very effective without affecting the normal usage of library patrons.

The specific request is we apply for funds so we would be eligible for (the filters),” said John Aynesworth, the Library Board's vice chairman.

CIPA funds would be used to pay for discounted Internet access (called e-rate) or for internal connection costs, according to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. “We don't need to do that because we get our Internet connection through our (Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library) System, which gets it from the state,” said Michael Tyree, library director. “We do get an e-rate discount.”

'course, we don't, Mike. We have a nice, cheap rate, so we are happy with that and don't care about the porn issue.

As for people surfing the Web for porn on a library computer, it is not a common problem, Tyree said. In his 10 years as library director, he said, perhaps 12 incidents have occurred, “if that.” Each time, the offender is asked to leave the library — police are called if necessary — and that person's library Internet access is curtailed, six months for a first offense, a year for a second. A letter is sent to the individual with a copy sent to the police, Tyree said.

Uh huh. So who are you telling the truth to, Mike? Us? Or the paper? IF there was anything we got out of our

meeting with Tyree, it was that he had bigger fish to fry with people viewing porn on the internet. Hmmm....

To use the library's Internet access computers, someone must have a library card with an Internet use sticker on it, Tyree said. The last time someone was asked to leave the library because of inappropriate Web surfing occurred two months ago, Tyree said.

OUCH, and ICK.

"All of the computers can be seen from the reference desk," he said, and library staff does keep an eye on computer use.

WHOA! They CAN? Do librarians have some mystical, magical, out-of-body vision ability? The library computers are placed in a row, back to back, with the back row obscured by the front row and facing AWAY from the librarian's desk. How the heck does she DO that? Inquiring minds want to know!

In the 27-library Mid-Wisconsin Federated Library System only two have such "porn" filters on some of their computers, Tyree said, computers located in those libraries' children's sections. "We don't have computers in our children's section."

So it CAN be done, right? That's right. It can.

A filter also has to be turned off if someone requests that to research a legitimate subject that could be limited because of the filter, Tyree explained. The filters only affect the computers in which they are installed, and not personal laptops brought in to the library to use the building's WIFI access, said Sue Cantrell, assistant library director.

This sends a huge message to the citizens, taxpayers, patrons and PARENTS of West Bend.

The West Bend Library Board does not care what you want, nor do they care about your community standards. PORN IS HERE TO STAY.

Thanks to the ALA, who even has a fund set up to fight legal challenges for CIPA funding. Nice.