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West Bend Librarians/ Board Members reach for celebrity status among peers

Ginny Maziarka

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West Bend Librarians/ Board Members reach for celebrity status among peers

Here's the latest gossip.

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The fight over which books should be allowed in the young adult category of the West Bend library will be the subject of a panel discussion during the nation's largest gathering of librarians this month in Chicago.

West Bend Community Memorial Library Director Michael Tyree, Young Adult Librarian Kristin Pekoll, Library Board Chairman Barbara Deters, former library Board trustee Mary Reilly-Kliss and community organizer Maria Hanrahan, who started West Bend Parents for Free Speech, will conduct a panel discussion about the West Bend book controversy Monday, July 13, during the seven-day [American Library Association \(ALA\) annual conference](#).

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So, West Bend, how do you feel about the librarians that you pay to represent you appearing as "special guests" to speak about how they shut you down? Use West Bend as their example of how others can follow suit and bow to the ALA's policies instead of community standards? Reduce a community to nothing more than a "yes man" to the ALA? Not only do your tax dollars pay the salaries of these librarians, they pay for them to work against your values as a community. Apparently, they are proud of it, too.

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No city money is being used to pay for the locals to participate in the ALA conference, Tyree said. Their expenses are being covered by the organization. "It's a two-hour discussion," Tyree said, "We're a new addition to the ALA schedule." "I'm definitely excited to participate," said Pekoll, a seven-year veteran of the West Bend library. "I've never had an opportunity to go to ALA before."

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I was hoping to receive a thank you note from Pekoll for helping her along to her first ALA conference. It's the very least she could do since she would not have achieved this attention had WBCFSL not brought it to the attention of the community.

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The panel discussion is sponsored by the ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF), Intellectual Freedom Committee and the Freedom to Read Foundation.

Yes, we know them well. They are the organization that came in and trumped parent/taxpayer wishes. For some reason, the ALA/OIF seems to think they know West Bend better than it's citizens do. We shouldn't be surprised, I guess, since this is their common practice.

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“Meet the librarians and community members who are fighting to keep library materials on the shelves in West Bend, Wis.,” is how the June 30 ALA news release announcing the panel discussion describes the event.

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As opposed to WBCFSL, who is fighting to keep library materials on the shelves in West Bend, Wis. Since we agree, we think we should be able to attend, as well! We can explain why our only difference is that we would like the books appropriately placed according to community standards, and that parents really DO care what how their library represents them, and expects them to follow through, as well.

Pekoll said the library is putting together a PowerPoint presentation that includes some graphics, pictures of the library and city and clips from the June 2 Library Board meeting that included more than two hours of public comment about the YA books.

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Wow. I hope that isn't being done on taxpayer time. We will be asking that this same PowerPoint presentation be made available to the citizens of West Bend. After all, we want to know how we are being represented to the nation!