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## To Whom It May Concern:

Jacob Jurss

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## Tuesday, May 19, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jacob Jurss. Over the past few months I have been following the events occurring at the West Bend Community Memorial Library over several controversial books. The debate thus far has appeared to be very civil and while I disagree with the complaint made I can understand their reasoning to an extent. However, in the past few weeks I feel that this has escalated with the addition of a lawsuit and the threat “destroying the book,” as one group has stated.

In pursuit of gaining more understand of the situation I came across a website on the social networking group called facebook. Here I found friends of the library trying to sign petitions and show their unending support for the library. I posted a suggestion of a community library sit-in to show support for the library, support for those who were rejected from the library council and for banned books in general.

The support that I have received has been amazing. People have really warmed up to this idea and are willing to come and show their support. So far the facebook group has generated great interests among many citizens of West Bend. I also wanted to alert the county newspaper to our plans and give those who do not have a facebook a chance to come and join us.

We believe that books should be open and accessible to all people regardless of what is contained between the pages. We believe that personal and parent guidance is preferred method of choosing reading material for minors. We believe that regardless of personal beliefs on homosexual, or political leanings that all books should be available to everyone in the public protected under the first amendment of free speech and under the ideal that all have the freedom to pursue knowledge. In short we believe that responsibility for what children read falls on the parents, knowledge should be available to all that seek it, and that “banned books” allow people to start important discussions about life and who we are.

As a proud resident of West Bend, a student of its elementary, middle and high school and now a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, I can say that I am proud that my library gave me the chance to read and expand my mind. In order to protect future generation’s rights to do so I propose the following:

I. I call for the people and students of West Bend to join me in supporting our right to read controversial books on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009. We plan to march from the corner of Oak and 5<sup>th</sup> ave to the library around 3 o’clock.

II. Once at the library we hope for those who have not yet checked out a book to do so and to join us in sitting and reading books, especially those that the controversy has been fought over and any book that has been challenged in the last 100 years in the United States.

III. While those reading in the library will be silent, as this is a library, we have reserved a room in the library large enough for approximately 30 people to listen to a discussion on the books being challenged and the history of banned books in general.

IV. For more information regarding this event community members are encouraged to check the facebook site at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=64270851441&ref=mf> and at <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=91830031755&ref=mf> and the new blog page Opening Books Opening Minds found at <http://openingbooksopeningminds.blogspot.com/>.

I encourage everyone to come and join us for book fun on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Again this is meant to be a peaceful way for community members to express they support for our community library. While this may have started in response to certain events in our small town I believe it is important to realize that this is not the first time that books have been banned. This is a celebration of those books as well. I encourage people to explore banned book websites such as <http://www.adlerbooks.com/banned.html>. This is by no means the only website. The easiest way to find these books is a search on the Internet for banned or challenged books.

I thank all of you already for your support and I look forward to seeing and discussing these books with you on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Yours in peace,

Jake Jurss