

Intellectual Freedom Committee
Annual Report – Oct. 2003-Oct. 2004
Michael Greenlee, Chair

The Intellectual Freedom Committee (IFC) had a busy and productive year. As a result, the IFC achieved all but one of the goals listed in the ILA Strategic Plan for 2003-2004.

Objective 1: Continue to advocate for open access to information for all Idaho residents

All goals listed under this objective were accomplished.

1. The IFC is composed of six members from academic, public, and government libraries in the northern, southern, and southeastern regions of Idaho. It would be great if we could add a member from a school library to complete our representation.
2. A program titled, “The Censorship Challenge: Access for All at Your Library?” will be presented at the ILA 2004 annual conference. To draw trustees to the program, a short essay titled, “Intellectual Freedom and Censorship,” was printed in the March 2004 Trustees and Friends Newsletter. Thanks to Tim Hillebrand!
3. We have the beginnings of an Intellectual Freedom Speaker’s Bureau. At this point there are only a few names on the list. Ideally, we should try to have at least one speaker in each region of Idaho.
4. Information on regional and national intellectual freedom issues are posted to LIBIDAHO. In January 2004 a report was prepared and submitted to the ILA Executive Board concerning Cuban Independent Libraries. The IFC also submitted a draft letter of support to the ILA Board concerning the Joint Memorial proposed by Rep. Charles Eberle, Tom Trail, and Bonnie Douglas urging Congress to rescind portions of the USA PATRIOT Act that violate civil rights.

Objective 2: Support Idaho’s libraries and library staff on intellectual freedom issues

Goals 1, 2, 3, and 5 have been accomplished.

1. Anne Abrams did a great job organizing and promoting the intellectual freedom auction! At this year’s conference the silent and live auctions will be held earlier in the evening during the cocktail hour to address time concerns expressed after last year’s conference. Entertainment provided by Larry Sinatra and the HOTS.
2. An Intellectual Freedom Handbook is posted on the IFC web site. This handbook provides information on intellectual freedom, censorship, privacy and confidentiality, reporting a censorship challenge, basic intellectual freedom documents, and organizations to contact for assistance or information. Thanks to Leonard Hitchcock for his editing and suggestions!

3. Michael Greenlee assisted in two censorship challenges. The first was from Mullan Trail Elementary School in Post Falls concerning the inclusion of the “Scary Stories” series in the library collection. The second was from Lewiston High School in Lewiston and involved the Sports Illustrated “Swimsuit Issue.” In both cases the material was retained by the library with no subsequent appeal by the challenger.
4. No work was accomplished on promoting Banned Books week for 2004. Therefore, this goal will be carried over to next year’s strategic plan.
5. Have submitted regular reports to the ILA Board.