



# Petersburg Borough

12 South Nordic Drive  
Petersburg, AK 99833

## Meeting Agenda Library Advisory Board Meeting

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Monday, May 22, 2023

12:00 PM

Ruth Sandvik Conference Room

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Zoom meeting link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83478306194>

**1. Call to Order / Roll Call**

**2. Approval of Minutes**

A. Minutes from the March 14, 2023 meeting are attached for review and approval.

**3. Amendment and Approval of Meeting Agenda**

**4. Persons to be Heard Related / Unrelated to Agenda**

**5. Director's Report**

The library reopened Mondays on May 1

*Programming*

April was a busy month for programming, including a basketry/weaving workshop with Kathryn Rousso from Ketchikan, art workshops with Lisa Schramek-Adams, and a new afterschool program called Maker Lab for Kids that proved to be very popular. Maker Lab is for kids in grades 1-5, they engage in self-directed activities such as Robotics, Discovery Kits, Legos, as well as arts and crafts. We also continued Yoga with Karen Malcom and Stories in Motion (formerly known as Storytime).

In April the library collaborated with Matt Geritts with a Story Walk activity for kids and families at the Early Childhood Fair. Kari wrote a children's story about Matt and StarFlower, his pet duck using Matt's beautiful photographs to illustrate it. Comic Artist, Gus Petersen, filled in the gaps with wonderful illustrations. At the end of the storywalk the kids were able to meet Matt & StarFlower.

For the month of May we have slowed down on programming as we prepare for a busy two months of Summer Reading Programs for all ages. A call for donations for the programs have been sent.

Kari will be working with Pia Reilly and Joseph Quitslund to bring a fish stream to life in the library garden. Classes will be available this summer for 10-year-olds to adult to paint fish with Pia which will then be hung on a simple metal frame constructed by Joseph. This is funded by the Alaska Community Foundation's Healthy Communities Grant.

## *Grants*

Sealaska Heritage Institute asked us to partner with them for an Institute of Museum and Library Science grant that would provide Baby Raven Reads Story Times once a month for 9 months at Petersburg Public Library. It is very similar to the program we did with them last year. If the grant is awarded, Kari will be working with Sealaska staff and Juneau Public Library staff to create public library curriculum for 9 Baby Raven Reads books. We are waiting to hear if the grant will be awarded.

## *Staff Training*

Martha and Barb are enrolled in a beginning cataloging class in June.

In March Kari participated in a two day workshop, *Leading Conversations*, hosted by the Alaska Humanities Forum.

## *Maintenance*

In March water started to come up in the server room via a telecommunications conduit that runs underground from a telephone pole on 2nd street into the facility. APT rerouted the telecommunications cables through a spare conduit and Public Works capped the leaking conduit. Public Works will have to decide whether to make further repairs to the failed conduit, or simply seal the conduit and permanently decommission it.

Library power usage has increased significantly (50%) in the last two months and we are investigating possible mechanical system changes that may explain some periods of high demand we are now seeing. The spike also coincides with the installation of a new wireless meter so there is also the possibility that our old meter was faulty, and the new meter is correct. If this is the case our utility costs will go up an estimated 12-15K in FY24 and a supplemental budget request may be needed.

The 't-shirt project' hit a few stumbling blocks – namely the challenge of finding a good unisex t-shirt. We've changed directions to explore starting with a basic black hoodie with a small design on the front and the full design on the back. These will not be ready for the summer tourist season but hopefully for Christmas! In the future we still plan to do t-shirts, possibly next summer.

## A.

### **6. Unfinished Business**

- A. The proposed FY24 General Fund Budget passed in its first and second readings. One more reading is needed for budget approval. No comments have been received on the library's budget request.

### **7. New Business**

- A. The Library has been awarded a Tier 1 Grant for \$23,000 from the Rasmuson Foundation to purchase a copy machine and expand collections with an outright grant of \$23,000.
- B. Terms expiring: Mary Ellen Anderson, Marilyn Menish Meucci and Elizabeth Thompson

## 8. Discussion Items

- A. Comments/suggestions/feedback received from members of the public.
- B. American Library Association reports record number of demands to censor library books and materials in 2022 (Article)
- C. Friends of the Library Updates
- D. Next Meeting TBD

## 9. Adjourn



# Petersburg Borough

12 South Nordic Drive  
Petersburg, AK 99833

## Meeting Minutes Library Advisory Board

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

12:00 PM

Ruth Sandvik Conference Room

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/9077723349>

### 1. Call to Order / Roll Call

### 2. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes from the Jan 25, 2023 meeting are attached for review and approval.

The minutes from the Jan 25, 2023 meeting were unanimously approved.

### 3. Amendment and Approval of Meeting Agenda

### 4. Persons to be Heard Related / Unrelated to Agenda

### 5. Director's Report

Our inventory closure was a great success! The fiction, non-fiction, DVD, and magazine collections were all inventoried. Lots of weeding was also done.

Doris Olsen has created a t-shirt design for us based on her 'Giant Squid' artwork in the children's room. Samples are attached. The plan is to sell these at the front desk to raise money for programming and projects.

Beth continues to train on Library Tech duties (learning software products, updating computers, cataloging, etc).

We are tentatively looking to replace our Xerox copier this year and will submit a Rasmuson Foundation Grant for this.

Seventy-five readers have registered for the Build A Better World Challenge. Teen participation is up significantly in this year's challenge.

March is a busy month for art and culture programs. Pia Reilly started the month with Folk Art Painting, followed by Carol Jensen teaching Ukrainian-Style Egg Decorating, Jessica Toth teaching more Baby Massage & Mama Care, and the grand finale will be Kathy Rousso giving an artist's slide show & presentation followed by a three-day basket weaving class. We currently have several of her amazing baskets on display at the library. All programs are funded by the Healthy Communities grant and the Art Education Endowment.

I will be out of the office April 17-May 4.

The Director added that over 100 people participated in the Build A Better World Challenge, over 65,000 minutes were read.

A. T-Shirt project examples

**6. Unfinished Business**

**A. FY24 Library General Fund Request**

The most significant change in the proposed budget is to turn one of our 12 hour Library Clerk positions into a 24 hour Library Tech 1 position. This change will not only increase the hours for the position, it will expand training and responsibilities. This expansion will make library operations more durable when unexpected staffing changes occur. This level of cross training and knowledge will be extremely beneficial for the long term stability of the library.

To offset the cost of this we will submit Marine Passenger Fee request for \$14,250 (\$11,250 May-Sept janitorial service, \$2,500 post season carpet & upholstery cleaning, \$500 janitorial supplies). Utilities costs have been rising steadily for the last few years, this year's budget brings the amount requested more into line with what we have been spending.

Maintenance costs are often lower than budgeted, so funds have moved from this line to accommodate the increase to the utilities budget.

The draft FY24 Budget request was approved as presented.

**7. New Business**

**8. Discussion Items**

**A. Friends of the Library Updates:** Report on the Feb book sale, plans for National Library Week (April 23 - 29).

The Book Sale continues to be a big success with the silent auction making a big impact on overall profits. Thanks to all who volunteer to make these events happen!

**B. Next Meeting:** date TBD

The next meeting will be in May, date to be determined.

**9. Adjourn**

# National Library Week is a good time to check out your library

By LIZZIE THOMPSON  
Pilot writer

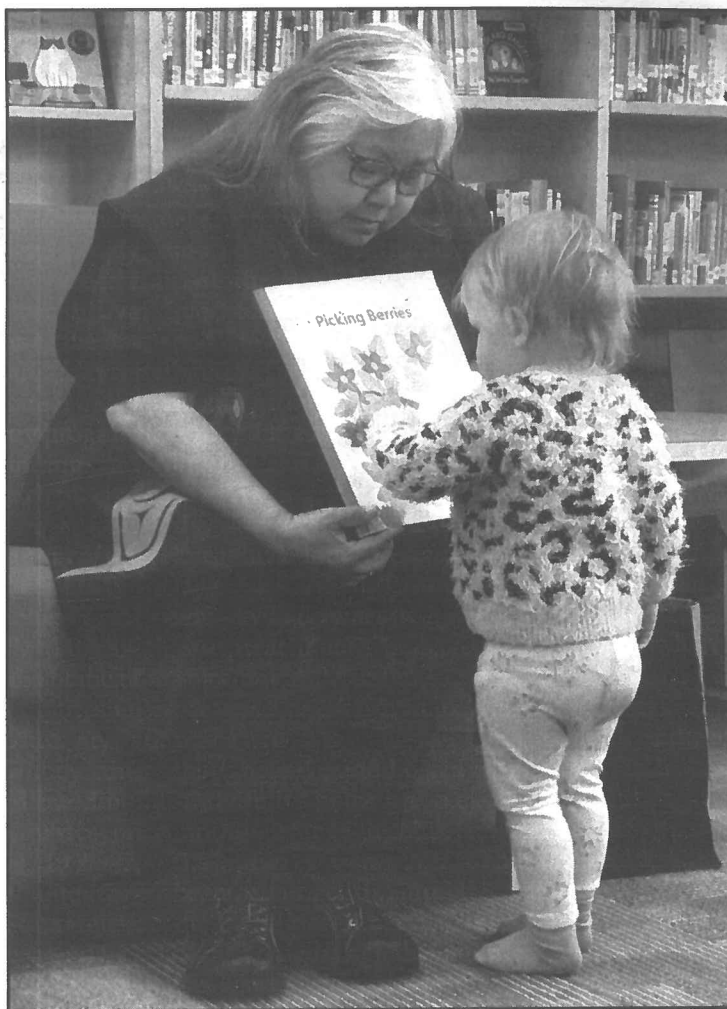
With its comprehensive slate of services and robust programming, the Petersburg Public Library is a shining example of this year's National Library Week theme, "There's More to the Story." From April 23rd through the 29th Americans are encouraged to support libraries, library workers' contributions, and the fact that today's libraries offer much more than books.

The things available for check-out from the Petersburg Public Library may surprise even frequent library patrons. Game lovers can explore a wide range of games for people of all ages, many that are new to the market and, while some are competitive, others require players to work together to win. Nestled in with the gardening books, is a new "Seed Library," where patrons may help themselves to packets of flower and vegetable seeds. Children can

take home "Discovery Kits" that come in large plastic tubs filled with hands-on learning experiences based in science, technology, engineering, art and math. One kit contains two types of play dough — one conducts electricity and one acts as an insulator. Working with them to get included lights to illuminate develops an understanding of how electrical circuits work. The popular "Code and Go Robots" kit teaches kids how to program a robot to solve a problem, providing an introduction to computer programming.

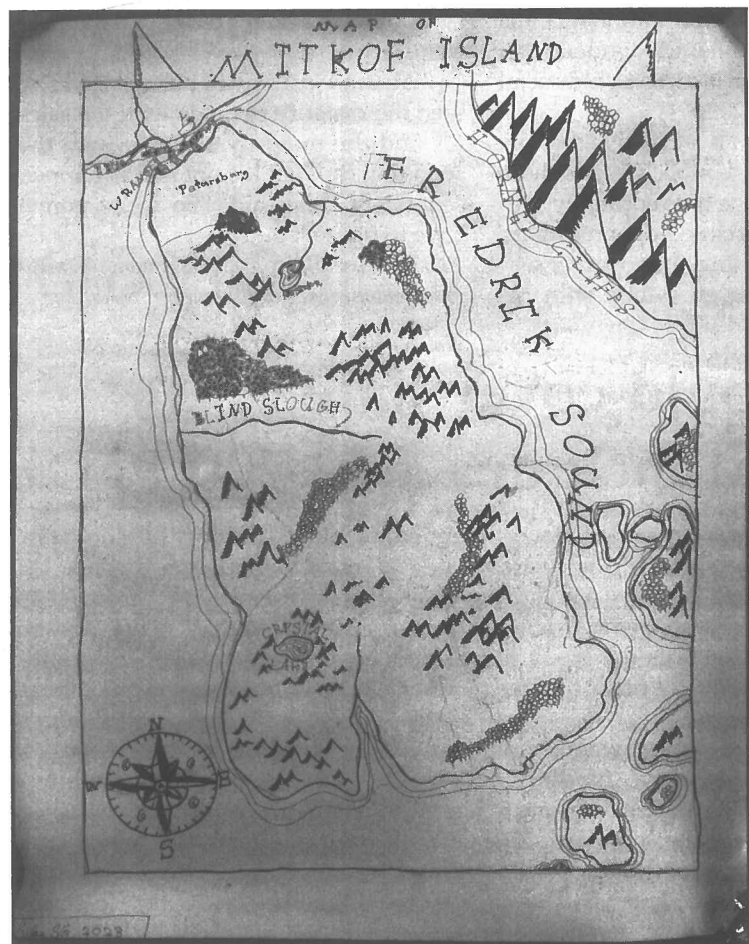
Local musician Dan Sullivan donated eight guitars to the library's collection. He feels, "Having quality musical instruments to check out at the library is a wonderful opportunity to learn a new skill without having to invest anything more than your time."

There are also five ukuleles available and both instruments come with a packet of information and links to free on-line



Courtesy of Kari Petersen

Tephra Clemens learns from Cultural Specialist Jeanette Ness during a special library program in partnership with Sealaska Heritage Institute called Baby Raven Reads.



Courtesy of Lea Stanton-Gregor

Silas Stanton-Gregor, 11, often takes advantage of Petersburg Library programming and recently participated in Fantasy Map Making, a workshop taught by Nicholas Larsen and Dan Sullivan. He says, "I love the unique aspect of drawing your own fantasy maps, but I also made Mitkof Island and some other cool fantasy maps. So did the other children there."

classes.

The library's exciting programming schedule is funded by an arts endowment donated by library supporter John McCabe and through grants like the Petersburg Community Foundation's Healthy Communities grant. Opportunities have included folk art painting with Pia Reilly, basket weaving with Kathryn Rouso, baby massage with Jessica Toth, writing workshops led by Orin Pierson, fantasy map making with Nicholas Larson, as well as knitting and art lessons with Lisa Schramek, to name just a few.

Schramek has several upcoming classes and says, "The library is a wonderful place to teach and I really enjoy working with [Program Director] Kari Petersen. I feel that art is an important thing for people to have in their lives. For me, it's a stress relief — something I can do to explore my inner landscape. I think it's nice to see [participants] question their limiting beliefs and to maybe laugh a bit at themselves. Making art is really a series of choices, and only the artist is in control of them. These classes are a great opportunity for people with differing levels of ability to share what they know and to find answers to their questions."

Eleven year old Silas Stanton-Gregor has participated in programs that "range from gui-

tar classes all the way to fun art projects," he says. "I feel like the library has a lot of fun things and it's good for kids."

The library also offers travelers the opportunity to book an appointment with a licensed passport agent and those struggling with a technological challenge can make an appointment with an information technology librarian.

Surrounded by landscaped gardens, the beautiful, light-filled facility houses a collection of local artists' works. An LCD screen adjacent to the front desk displays slideshows by local photographers, and in the lobby, patrons will find interesting displays in large glass cases. Next to the wide-ranging collection of periodicals is a gas fireplace and comfortable seating. Throughout the library, remarkably large and thriving indoor plants are well cared for by volunteers Beverly Richardson and Julianne Thompson. Many of them belonged to the late Father Thomas and were donated by the Catholic Church.

Petersen is planning a new public art-project that will connect local biologists, painter Pia Reilly and artists from age 10 and up. Participants will paint wooden cutouts shaped like salmon that will eventually be attached to a metal structure that will wrap around a portion

of the garden along Haugen Drive.

On Thursday mornings, from 11 am to 12 pm, Petersen hosts "Stories in Motion," a toddler story time in the children's room. "I don't want parents to think that story time is something that their kids have to be quiet and sit through. From what we know about the development of reading skills, you really do want it to be interactive, to have the kids talk with you about what is going on in a story. So we allow interruptions and a lot of movement, because kids are wiggly. It's more kinesthetic learning — we have a lot of fun songs and dances that are related to the story," Petersen explains. "After the story, the kids all line up and let me know what they want me to take out of the toy closet."

The Children's Room is also a popular venue for playdates. Separated from the main library, it allows kids to be kids and the comfortable seating gives caregivers a place to visit while their kids explore the impressive selection of games and toys, like the little kitchen and the small scale, but very realistic grocery store, complete with cart, a cash filled register, and a working credit card scanner.

Local teens also enjoy their own room. Its ceiling is decorated with an art installation of their own making and the shelves, set up like a welcoming bookstore, include a new non-fiction collection. There are computers, a large screen TV and a cozy booth where G.O.A.T., the Group of Advisory Teens, meet. "It should be 'Greatest of all Time,' because that's what we are," says Junior Logan Haley. "Typically we have a bit of a party, with pizza, and talk about things we want to work on and things we want to change about our weekly radio show. We go to the radio station to play music, read PSAs and give the weather for the week. We have some fun and listen to music."

This year the popular summer reading challenge is being expanded to include all ages. "We've created a baby program for ages 0-3," Peterson says, "The babies who complete the challenge will receive a gift certificate to Sing Lee Alley Bookstore and their caregiver will be entered in a drawing for a massage."

The age to participate in the Summer Stream Reading Program is being lowered to age three. "We've had so many preschoolers who want to participate," Peterson explains. "So there will be prizes that appeal to three year olds, prizes that appeal to thirteen year olds and prizes for all the ages in between. And, of course, there will be a teen to adult program as well — so, all ages!"

Library Director Tara Alcock and her staff have repeatedly earned the Library Journal's four star rating, a testament to their outstanding work. As the Friends of Petersburg's Libraries would say, "You should check it out! Check it out!"

**2023 Circle of Life**  
Petersburg Medical Center Foundation's  
Cabin Creek 5K/3.1mile Run/Walk Race  
proceeds benefit Beat the Odds

**Saturday, April 22nd**  
Registration from 8-8:45a  
Run/Walk starts @ 9:00a  
Day of race registration  
at Sandy Beach Shelter #1  
Pre-registration at Lee's Clothing

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SCAN ME:



# Ketchikan-based artist connects with Petersburg weaving community

Posted by Shelby Herbert | May 10, 2023



Kathy Rousso pictured with "The View From my Window," a basket she created during her Alaska State Parks Artist Residency at the Ernest Gruening Cabin near Juneau, Alaska. (Photo courtesy of Kathy Rousso)

A master fabric artist and basket weaver from Ketchikan led a workshop in Petersburg in late April, where she connected with local artists. Kathy Rousso combines basket weaving styles and materials from Southeast Alaska and Central America.

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Rousso came to Southeast Alaska for a job with the U.S. Forest Service in the 70s. Then, in the late 80s and early 90s, Rousso was one of the first students who learned traditional Ravenstail weaving, which had been lost for 200 years.

"The main techniques I use are twining and knotless netting in my work," said Rousso. "The twining is the technique that

is used for the traditional Northwest Coast basketry, and the Ravenstail and Chilkat.”

Rousso was mentored by legendary weavers in Southeast Alaska, like Delores Churchill. She went on to teach the technique for Indigenous organizations across the Southeast. Rousso said weaving helped ground her during her husband’s recovery from a liver transplant.

“The good thing is that I can weave anywhere,” said Rousso. “When my husband was in the hospital, I wove in the hospital, in his room, the whole time I was there. There’s a whole series of baskets that I did during that time.”

Rousso is a non-Indigenous person and is hesitant to explain the difference between Ravenstail and Chilkat weaving, for fear of misrepresenting a culture she doesn’t belong to.

Debra O’Gara said the two styles of weaves are similar, but Ravenstail came first. O’Gara is a Petersburg-based tribal government scholar and artist. Her Lingít name is Djik Sook and she is a Raven of the Teey Taan clan. She’s weaved for fifteen years and has her work on display at the Juneau-Douglas City Art Museum — though she still calls herself a beginner. O’Gara attended Rousso’s basket-weaving workshop in late April.

“Ravenstail actually predates Chilkat,” said O’Gara. “It’s woven from left to right on warps that are made out of mountain goat wool that’s been processed and spun.”

The warp is the yarn stretched out vertically on a loom before the weaver passes more yarn, or “weft,” horizontally through the fabric. O’Gara said that out of the Ravenstail style evolved the Chilkat design.

“What happened is the process of Formline, which is Indigenous to this area,” said O’Gara. “The weavers started doing curves and ovoids and circles. And they weave in both directions — left to right, and right to left.”

Another difference between the two designs is that the Ravenstail warp doesn’t contain yellow cedar bark. Debra said Southeast Alaska weavers are dealing with a shortage of yellow cedar. According to the U.S. Forest Service, the species is in decline across its range due to something called [fine root freezing injury](#), which occurs when low snowpack exposes the tree’s roots to lethally-cold temperatures in early spring.



O’Gara said the yellow cedar shortage has inspired some weavers to experiment with new fibers. Rousso brought plant materials from Central America for her participants to work with.

“I think the thing that was most interesting was the materials that they were using to weave,” said O’Gara. “They were using those big wide leaves that come off the agave plant. [Rousso] brought some of that with her, that we were able to use for a weaving project, which was really fun.”



Debra O’Gara pictured with her child-sized finger-twined Chilkat regalia, which is currently on display at the Juneau-Douglas City Museum.  
(Photo courtesy of Debra O’Gara)

Rousso specializes in backstrap weaving, which is a type of traditional weaving that originated in South and Central America. She learned these textile techniques during her time as a Fulbright Scholar in Guatemala.

“From then on, every year, I have been going back and forth between Ketchikan and Guatemala,” said Rousso. “Besides the net bags, I learned about hammock making, horse gear — all sorts of other things made from agave fiber.”

But Rousso has always gravitated towards baskets. O’Gara said she was excited to see all of the different styles Rousso picked up from weavers in Central America.

“I think every society, every country has people who do weaving,” said O’Gara. “It’s a universal language. It’s a universal activity.”

O’Gara is a former judge, and she’s currently researching pre-colonial Lingít justice systems for her PhD. Through her research, she’s learned that, for Lingít and Haida people, the traditional practice of weaving is about storytelling.

“Many of our weavings and carvings were really living documents that recorded historical events, relationships, or were or made to help commemorate a solution to a problem,” said O’Gara. “Weavings helped to document our history, where we’ve come from, our place in this world.”

O’Gara hopes to incorporate her practice and study of weaving into her research project — not only to learn how people solved disputes before colonization, but to explore the possibility that any of those practices can help develop present-day Tribal justice systems in Alaska.

Some of Kathy Rousso’s agave fiber and cedar bark baskets will go on sale at Ketchikan’s annual [Blueberry Arts Festival](#). A series of Chilkat robes, including one of O’Gara’s, is on display at the [Juneau-Douglas City Museum](#), and will be available to the public until October.

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## American Library Association reports record number of demands to censor library books and materials in 2022

For Immediate Release

Wed, 03/22/2023

### Contact:

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### Book Challenges Nearly Doubled From 2021

CHICAGO — The American Library Association (ALA) today released new data documenting\* **1,269 demands to censor library books and resources in 2022**, the highest number of attempted book bans since ALA began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago. The unparalleled number of reported book challenges in 2022 nearly doubles the 729 challenges reported in 2021.

A record **2,571 unique titles were targeted for censorship**, a 38% increase from the 1,858 unique titles targeted for censorship in 2021. Of those titles, the vast majority were written by or about members of the LGBTQIA+ community and people of color.

Of the reported book challenges, 58% targeted books and materials in school libraries, classroom libraries or school curricula; 41% of book challenges targeted materials in public libraries.

The prevalent use of lists of books compiled by organized censorship groups contributed significantly to the skyrocketing number of challenges and the frequency with which each title was challenged. Of the overall number of books challenged, **90% were part of attempts to censor multiple titles**. Of the books challenged, 40% were in cases involving 100 or more books

Prior to 2021, the vast majority of challenges to library resources only sought to remove or restrict access to a single book.

“A book challenge is a demand to remove a book from a library’s collection so that no one else can read it. Overwhelmingly, we’re seeing these challenges come from organized censorship groups that target local library board meetings to demand removal of a long list of books they share on social media,” said Deborah Caldwell-Stone, director of ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom. “Their aim is to suppress the voices of those traditionally excluded from our nation’s conversations, such as people in the LGBTQIA+ community or people of color.

“Each attempt to ban a book by one of these groups represents a direct attack on every person’s constitutionally protected right to freely choose what books to read and what ideas to explore,” said Caldwell-Stone. “The choice of what to read must be left to the reader or, in the case of children, to parents. That choice does not belong to self-appointed book police.”

**ALA will unveil its highly anticipated list of the top 10 most challenged books in the U.S. on Monday, April 24 during National Library Week, along with its full State of America's Libraries Report. The theme of National Library Week 2023**

(<https://www.ala.org/conferencesevents/celebrationweeks/natlibraryweek#:~:text=National%20Library%20Week%202023%2C%20April,There's%20More%20to%20the%20Story.%22>), **There's More to the Story**, *Item 8B.* focuses on the essential services and programming that libraries offer through and beyond books.


ALA President Lessa Kanani'opua Pelayo-Lozada said, "Every day professional librarians sit down with parents to thoughtfully determine what reading material is best suited for their child's needs. Now, many library workers face threats to their employment, their personal safety, and in some cases, threats of prosecution for providing books to youth they and their parents want to read.

"ALA began documenting the book challenges reported to us over two decades ago because we want to shine a light on the threat of censorship facing readers and entire communities. Book challenges distract from the core mission of libraries: to provide access to information. That includes access to information and services for learners of all ages, homeschooling parents, job seekers, new computer users, budding readers, entrepreneurs, veterans, tax filers and amateur genealogists – just to name a few.

"While a vocal minority stokes the flames of controversy around books, the vast majority of people across the nation are using life-changing services that public and school libraries offer. Our nation cannot afford to lose the library workers who lift up their communities and safeguard our First Amendment freedom to read."

Polling conducted by bipartisan research firms in 2022 showed that voters across the political spectrum oppose efforts to remove books from libraries and have confidence in libraries to make good decisions about their collections. To galvanize support for libraries and respond to the surge in book challenges and other efforts to suppress access to information, in 2022 ALA launched **Unite Against Book Bans** (<https://uniteagainstbookbans.org/>), a national initiative to empower readers everywhere to stand together in the fight against censorship. The coalition will mark its first anniversary during National Library Week.

\* ALA compiles data on book challenges from reports filed with its Office for Intellectual Freedom by library professionals in the field and from news stories published throughout the United States. Because many book challenges are not reported to the ALA or covered by the press, the 2022 data compiled by ALA represents only a snapshot of book censorship throughout the year. A challenge to a book may be resolved in favor of retaining the book in the collection, or it can result in a book being restricted or withdrawn from the library.

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