

Banned Books Awareness and Reading for Knowledge



Back in October, 2010 author R. Wolf Baldassarro heard about Banned Books Week, a project spearheaded by the [American Library Association](#) as “an annual event celebrating the freedom to read and the importance of the First Amendment”. Held during the last week of September, Banned Book Week highlights the benefits of free and open access to information while drawing attention to the harms of censorship by spotlighting the actual or attempted banning of books across the United States.”

The ALA promotes the freedom to choose, or to express one’s opinions, even if that opinion might be considered unorthodox or unpopular; and stresses the importance of ensuring the availability of those viewpoints to all who wish to read them.

“It just astounds me that in a country where freedom of the press and expression of thought are guaranteed by a national Constitution, we have one of the highest and most self-righteous rates of censorship in the world,” says Wolf.

According to a Detroit News article (1/18/11), Detroit’s literacy rate dropped to 56th place in 2010. “That simply will not do,” Wolf explains. “Now, more than ever, we need to maintain a strong, intellectual citizenship so we can overcome the economic troubles that have befallen us.” He was struck with a fun and creative idea. Every single week during 2011 he would feature a different book that was challenged, removed, or otherwise shut out and blocked from libraries and schools, and invite everyone to discuss and debate the issue and the specific books.

“Maybe together we can raise awareness and stand up against such blatant attempts at censorship. I open the floor to all in hopes that strong intellectual and respectful debates open the lines of communication.”

Remember the wise words of Robert Quillen, “Discussion is an exchange of knowledge; an argument an exchange of ignorance.”

Since he started this, the response has been very positive around the world and it grew into an ongoing and much-larger project with long-term goals. ***Banned Books Awareness and Reading for Knowledge*** is a community education project that stresses the importance of free and open access to information in society; and to bring attention to the ongoing issue of the censorship of free thought by featuring and discussing in open forum the actual or attempted banning of books across the United States of America.

For more information, and to join the cause, please visit the BBARK website today at <http://www.deepforestproductions.com/BBARK.html>

Read on and Share the Knowledge!