Intellectual Freedom Panel
Wednesday, October 4, 2017
Anne Arundel Public Library Headquarters
5 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401-7042

2:00-4:00 PM

MINUTES

Attendees

Sara Brown, Hannah Erickson, Steve Labash, Monica McAbee, Katelyn McLimans, Julie Ranelli, Mary Somers, Alex Supko
Via Google Hangouts: Mou Chakraborty, Naomi Kepler, Dianne Whitaker, Hannah Wilkes

Minutes

June 2017 & August 2017 minutes were approved.

Reports

- Executive Board: Julie attended the most recent MLA Executive Board meeting.
  - MLA plans to add a new committee focused on library advocacy.
  - The Executive Board passed back the updated Intellectual Freedom Manual with suggestions for revision- taking out references to President Trump by name & including less partisan language.
- Social Media: Naomi and Sara are currently alternating to do Facebook posts.
  - We are seeing a modest increase in the number of likes and views on the IF Panel page.
  - We currently have 199 likes
- MLA Conference: This year’s conference will run from May 2-4, 2018. It will take place at the Hyatt Regency Chesapeake in Cambridge, MD. Monica is on the Conference Committee.
  - The IF Panel is submitting three programs for this year’s conference:
    1. “Fake News in a Fact-Averse World” presented by Andrea Booth
    2. A program on supporting LGBTQ+ youth presented by Naomi Kepler, Erin Snell, & Hannah Wilkes
    3. A program on helping our patrons understand privacy and security presented by Denise Davis & Erica Jesonis (We are trying to develop a more succinct title- maybe link it to the theme of Evolve)
- Banned Books Panel: “You Gotta Fight for your Right to Read Banned Books”
  - The IF Panel hosted this program on September 28, 2017 as part of Banned Books Week.
  - The panel included a public librarian, a school librarian, a YA author, a teen, and a parent of a teen. The program consisted of small group discussions and panel sharing.
  - There were 21 attendees present, and the participants were very engaged and enthusiastic.
  - The IF Panel made a profit of $462.32 from registration costs, which exceeded the $200 the IF Panel was required to bring in by MLA for FY 18.
  - Responses to the program evaluation were very positive. The main comment many attendees mentioned was that the program could have lasted longer.
• Acronym Change: Julie reported that the new acronym (IF Panel) has been changed on all sites, and changes are still being made on the list serv. If panel members are not receiving list serv emails, Julie advised to add your name again.

Current Business

• LATI updates: Julie and IF Panel working to update intellectual freedom materials on the LATI Wiki.
  o Attendees agreed that we should look for a video showing de-escalation strategies and approaches for library staff. Mou will follow up with the Office of Intellectual Freedom to see if they have a video on de-escalation. Hannah and Sara will investigate other sources.
  o Panel members also looking for a case study, article, or example of a program that has been challenged and showing how the library handled the challenge.
  o IF Panel looking for resources to guide staff on balancing personal free speech and professionalism.
  o IF Panel members are asked to email any resources found to Julie.
  o These changes to the LATI Wiki are being done as part of our yearly work plan- to make sure that our resources are up to date.
• Work Plan: We are continuing to make progress. So far, we are on track to complete the work plan for this year. The fall program is complete, the manual revision is soon to be complete, we are increasing social media following, we have added new members, and we provided three programs for the MLA/DLA 2018 conference. We are still working on updating LATI materials and continuing to increase social media activity.
• IF Panel Webpage: We need to make sure that the page is current and reflects the current panel.
  o Update future events & programs, info. for past programs, link to annual report, and advocacy/letters section (include ALA statement on current administration).
  o Add a link to the intellectual freedom portal of ALA and link to ALA challenge reporting site.
  o Monica will work on these updates.

Discussion

• Privacy/ Photo & Video Policies:
  o Julie reported that Carrie Sanders (Maryland State Library) spoke with an attorney regarding the question of photo/video release forms for minors. The attorney told Carrie that libraries should seek permission from all parents before taking photos or videos of minors.
  o This may generate an ongoing discussion across the state. Can libraries use a blank statement to parents at the beginning of programming or do they need to have each parent sign a release form? What implications does this have for new technology such as Facebook live? The panel will continue to monitor and investigate these questions.
• Third Party Vendors:
Julie spoke about a conversation via email with Carrie Sanders and Youth Services Coordinators statewide regarding Beanstack and other 3rd party vendors and COPPA compliance. Carrie questioned the legality of auto-enrolling children in Beanstack and other 3rd party vendors without their knowledge.

As Intellectual Freedom Officer, Julie responded to advise that children under the age of 14 should not be enrolled in Beanstack or other 3rd party sites without their parent’s knowledge. Parents must have the chance to opt in to these services.

Julie noted that this is becoming a national conversation between libraries, and she will continue to monitor any updates from ALA regarding this question.

- **Current Challenges:**
  - Julie shared that *The Handmaid’s Tale* is currently being challenged in Montgomery County schools.
  - The panel discussed the Baltimore Sun article about a Banned Books display at Enoch Pratt Free Library. We discussed the importance of upholding our patrons’ privacy while we discuss intellectual freedom and the freedom to read.
  - An article from the Washington Post was shared discussing Banned Books Week 2017. The panel noted surprising figures from the article (half of the challenged books were graphic novels and all featured LGBTQ+ characters). The panel noted the importance of continuing to defend our patrons’ right to access these materials.

**Action Items**

- Hannah, Sara, Monica, and Mou will look for resources to update the LATI Wiki.
- Monica will continue working to update the Intellectual Freedom Panel webpage.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- **Wednesday, December 6, 2017** - Broadneck Grill for 12:30 lunch & meeting, 1364 Cape St Claire Rd, Annapolis, MD 21409
- **Wednesday, February 7, 2018, 2:00-3:30** - AACPL HQ - 5 Harry S. Truman Parkway Annapolis, MD 21401-7042. Google Hangouts available. Contact Julie Ranelli for information or Google Hangouts invitation: julie@qaclibrary.org
- **Wednesday, April 4, 2018, 2:00-3:30** - AACPL HQ 5 Harry S. Truman Parkway Annapolis, MD 21401-7042. Google Hangouts available. Contact Julie Ranelli for information or Google Hangouts invitation: julie@qaclibrary.org
- **Wednesday, June 6, 2018** - Broadneck Grill for 12:30 lunch & meeting, 1364 Cape St Claire Rd, Annapolis, MD 21409