

**Intellectual Freedom Committee Report (#17)
March 2009**

January-March 2009 Activity

January:

The book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* by John Berendt, that had been challenged at the Beulah High School last fall was officially banned by the Beulah School Board on January 15. The following week the Beulah School Board reversed the ban. The incident was reported in local and state newspapers. The high school librarian, Kathy Jo Cline (also a member of the Committee), did an outstanding job of handling this. The Committee offered her moral support and words of encouragement. John Berendt sent a letter to the editor of the *Bismarck Tribune* regarding the incident. I sent a letter to the editor of the *Bismarck Tribune* regarding the importance of intellectual freedom and the role libraries play in upholding intellectual freedom.

I completed the State Intellectual Freedom Committee Survey and submitted it to Jonathan Kelley, Program Coordinator at the Office for Intellectual Freedom, ALA.

I sent out an informational email to NDLA members about the newly published book, *Privacy and Confidentiality Issues: A Guide for Libraries and Their Lawyers* by Theresa Chmara.

The Committee received a query from a high school librarian regarding two Kurt Vonnegut titles, *Cat's Cradle* and *Breakfast of Champions*. The librarian received a request from a student to add the titles to the collection. The librarian asked the Committee for input on the books as she thought they had been banned in the past in the US. The Committee offered book reviews as well as information on book challenges and awards the author has received. We also cited the materials selection policy example in the *NDLA Intellectual Freedom Handbook for Librarians* and encouraged her to follow her own materials selection policy or create one if she doesn't have one.

February-March:

I've been emailing John Berendt's literary agent about the possibility of attending the NDLA Annual Conference in Dickinson. His agent said he is very interested in attending. I emailed her more details, i.e. airfare/hotel paid by NDLA, honorarium fee...I'm anxiously awaiting a reply!

Respectfully submitted,
Christine Kujawa