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2000.0 GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

2010.0 Mission

The mission of the Palos Verdes Library District is to provide a welcoming environment and open access to library services and materials that encourage lifelong learning, support the educational, informational, cultural and recreational needs of our diverse Palos Verdes community, and facilitate the preservation of the Peninsula's history.

Adopted April 19, 1989; Revised May 4, 2005; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010

2010.1 District Strategic Plan

The Palos Verdes Library District uses a Strategic Planning process to establish objectives and goals for the Library District. The Strategic Plan is adopted by the Board of Library Trustees and reviewed and updated as appropriate. The current Strategic Plan is posted on the PVLD website.

Adopted April 19, 1989; Revised May 4, 2005; Revised December 9, 2010

2020.0 Philosophy Statements

2020.1 Library Bill of Rights

The Board of Library Trustees subscribes to and supports the following basic principles which govern the services of all libraries in the District.

- A. As a responsibility of library service, books and other library materials selected should be chosen for values of interest information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should library materials be excluded because of the race or nationality or the social, political, or religious views of the authors.
- B. Libraries should provide books and other materials presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times; no library materials should be proscribed or removed from libraries because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- C. Censorship should be challenged by libraries in the maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment.
- D. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- E. The rights of an individual to the use of a library should not be denied or abridged because of age, race, religion, sex, national origins, or social or political views.
- F. As an institution of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members, provided that the meetings are open to the public.

Adopted March 8, 1984; Revised December 10, 1987; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010

2020.2 Intellectual Freedom Resolution

WHEREAS the Council of the California Library Association adopted on December 13, 1977, a policy statement on Intellectual Freedom and,

WHEREAS the Palos Verdes Library District endorses the four elements of this policy statement,

THEREFORE it is the policy of the Palos Verdes Library District to:

- A. Oppose Censorship
- B. Preserve the right of privacy
- C. Preserve the right of free access
- D. Aggressively convey these positions to the community.

Adopted February 15, 1978; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010

The heritage of free men is ours. In the Bill of Rights to the United States Constitution, the founders of our nation proclaimed certain fundamental freedoms to be essential to our form of government. Primary among these is the freedom of expression, specifically the right to publish diverse opinions and the right to un-restricted access to those opinions. As citizens committed to the full and free use of all communications media and as professional persons responsible for making the content of those media accessible to all without prejudice, we, the undersigned, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of freedom of expression.

Through continuing judicial interpretations of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, full freedom of expression has been guaranteed. Every American who aspires to the success of our experiment in democracy--who has faith in the political and social integrity of free men--must stand firm on those Constitutional guarantees of essential rights.

Such Americans can be expected to fulfill the responsibilities implicit in those rights.

We, therefore, affirm these propositions:

- A. We will make available to everyone who needs or desires them the widest possible diversity of views and modes of expression, including those which are strange, unorthodox or unpopular.

Creative thought is, by its nature, new. New ideas are always different and, to some people, distressing and even threatening. The creator of every new idea is likely to be regarded as unconventional--occasionally heretical--until his idea is first examined, then refined, then tested in its political, social, or moral applications. The characteristic ability of our governmental system to adapt to necessary change is vastly strengthened by the option of the people to choose freely from among conflicting opinions. To stifle non-conformist ideas at their inception would be to end democratic process. Only through continuous weighing and selection from among opposing views can free individuals obtain the strength needed for intelligent, constructive decisions and actions. In short, we need to understand not only what we believe, but why we believe as we do.

- B. We need not endorse every idea contained in the materials we produce and make available.

We service the educational process by disseminating the knowledge and wisdom required for the growth of the mind and the expansion of learning. For us to employ our own political, moral, or esthetic views as standards for determining what materials are published or circulated conflicts with the public interest. We cannot foster true education by imposing on others the structure and content of our own opinions. We must preserve and enhance the people's right to a broader range of ideas than those held by any librarian or publisher or church or government. We hold that it is wrong to limit any person to those ideas and that information another believes to be true, good, and proper.

- C. We regard as irrelevant to the acceptance and distribution of any creative work the personal history or political affiliations of the author or others responsible for it or its publication.

A work of art must be judged solely on its own merits. Creativity cannot flourish if its appraisal and acceptance by the community is influenced by the political views or private lives of the artists or the creators. A society that allows blacklists to be compiled and used to silence writers and artists cannot exist as a free society.

- D. With every available legal means, we will challenge laws or governmental action restricting or prohibiting the publication of certain materials or limiting free access to such materials.

Our society has no place for legislative efforts to coerce the taste of its members, to restrict adults to reading matter deemed suitable only for children, or to inhibit the efforts of creative persons in their attempts to achieve artistic perfection. When we prevent serious artists from dealing with truth as they see it, we stifle creative endeavor at its source. Those who direct and control the intellectual development of our children--parents, teachers, religious leaders, scientists, philosophers, statesmen--must assume the responsibility for preparing young people to cope with life as it is and to face the diversity of experience to which they will be exposed as they mature. This is an affirmative responsibility that cannot be discharged easily, certainly not with the added burden of curtailing one's access to art, literature, and opinion. Tastes differ. Taste, like morality, cannot be controlled by government, for governmental action, devised to suit the demands of one group, thereby limits the freedom of all others.

- E. We oppose labeling any work of literature or art, or any persons responsible for its creation, as subversive, dangerous, or otherwise undesirable.

Labeling attempts to predispose users of the various media of communication, and to ultimately close off a path to knowledge. Labeling rests on the assumption that persons exist who have a special wisdom, and who, therefore, can be permitted to determine what will have good and bad effects on other people. But freedom of expression rests on the premise of ideas vying in the open marketplace for acceptance, change, or rejection by the individuals. Free men choose this path.

- F. We, as guardians of intellectual freedom, oppose and will resist every encroachment upon that freedom by individuals or groups, private or official.

It is inevitable in the give-and-take of the democratic process that the political, moral and esthetic preferences of a person or group will conflict occasionally with those of others. A fundamental premise of our free society is that each citizen is privileged to decide those opinions to which he will adhere or which he will recommend to the members of a privately organized group or association. But no private group may usurp the law and impose its own political or moral concepts upon the general public. Freedom cannot be accorded only to selected groups for it is then transmuted into privilege and unwarranted license.

- G. Both as citizens and professionals, we will strive by all legitimate means open to us to be relieved of the threats of personal, economic, and legal reprisals resulting from our support and defense of the principles of intellectual freedom.

Those who refuse to compromise their ideas in support of intellectual freedom have often suffered dismissals from employment, forced resignations, boycotts of products and establishments, and other invidious forms of punishment. We perceive the admirable, often lonely, refusal to succumb to threats of punitive action as the highest form of true professionalism: dedication to the cause of intellectual freedom and the preservation of vital human and civil liberties.

In our various capacities, we will actively resist incursions against the full exercise of our professional responsibility for creating and maintaining an intellectual environment which fosters unrestrained creative endeavor and true freedom of choice and access for all members of the community.

We state these propositions with conviction, not as easy generalizations. We advance a noble claim for the value of ideas, freely expressed, as embodied in books and other kinds of communications. We do this in our belief that a free intellectual climate fosters creative endeavors capable of enormous variety, beauty, and usefulness, and thus worthy of support and preservation. We recognize that application of these propositions may encourage the dissemination of ideas and forms of expression that will be frightening or abhorrent to some. We believe that what people read, view, and hear is a critically important issue. We recognize, too, that ideas can be dangerous. It may be, however, that they are effectually dangerous only when opposing ideas are suppressed. Freedom, in its many facets, is a precarious course. We espouse it heartily.

Adopted March 8, 1984; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010

2020.4 Statement on Labeling

The Board of Library Trustees subscribes to and supports the following American Library Association statement of Labeling, which opposes the technique of labeling as a means of predisposing readers against library materials for the following reasons:

- A. Labeling¹ is an attempt to prejudice the reader, and as such it is a censor's tool.
- B. Although some find it easy and even proper, according to their ethics, to establish criteria for judging publications as objectionable, injustice and ignorance rather than justice and enlightenment result from such practices, and the American Library Association must oppose the establishment of such criteria.
- C. Libraries do not advocate the ideas found in their collections. The presence of a magazine or book in a library does not indicate an endorsement of its contents by the library.
- D. No one person should take the responsibility of labeling publications. No sizable group of persons would be likely to agree either on the types of material which should be labeled or the sources of information which should be regarded with suspicion. As a practical consideration, a librarian who labels a book or magazine might be sued for libel.
- E. If materials are labeled to pacify one group, there is no excuse for refusing to label any item in the library's collection. Because authoritarians tend to suppress ideas and attempt to coerce individuals to conform to a specific ideology, the American Library Association opposes such efforts which aim at closing any path to knowledge.

Adopted March 8, 1984; Revised December 10, 1987; Last Reviewed November 9, 2010

2020.5 Freedom to View

The freedom to view, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore, these principles are affirmed:

- A. To provide the broadest possible access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

¹"Labeling," as it is referred to in the Statement on Labeling, is the practice of describing or designating certain library materials, by affixing a prejudicial label to them or segregating them by a prejudicial system, so as to pre-dispose readers against the materials.

- B. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
- C. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
- D. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video and other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
- E. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

Adopted October 8, 1998; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010

2020.6 Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising his critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject it. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio, and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, as we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solution, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions of social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures towards conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free men will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights. We therefore affirm these propositions:

- A. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until his idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

- B. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one man can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

- C. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free men can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

- D. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

- E. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It presupposes that each individual must be directed in making up his mind about the ideas he examines. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

- F. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society each individual is free to determine for himself what he wishes to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

- G. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for his purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires of all bookmen the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all citizens the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We stake out a lofty claim for the value of books. We do so because we believe that they are good, possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

Adopted April 8, 1984; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010

2020.7 Confidentiality of Library Records

The Palos Verdes Library District adheres to the American Library Association's (ALA) recommendation that recognizes the confidentiality of information sought or received, and materials consulted, borrowed or acquired by a library user. These materials may include database search records, circulation records, interlibrary loan records and other personally identifiable uses of library materials, facilities, programs or services, such as reference interviews. It is Library policy that Internet sign-up sheets and Internet use history are confidential.

Library circulation and registration records kept for the purposes of identifying the borrower of items available in the library are confidential and shall not be disclosed to any person, local agency or state agency, except as follows in accordance with California Government Code Section 6267:

- (i) By a person acting within the scope of his or her duties within the administration of the library;
- (ii) By a person authorized in writing, by the individual to whom the records pertain, to inspect the records; and
- (iii) By order of the appropriate Superior Court.

As used in this Policy, the term "circulation records" includes any information which identifies the patrons who have borrowed particular books or other materials. The term "registration records" includes any information which the library requires a patron to provide in order to become eligible to borrow books and other materials.

Notwithstanding previous provisions of this Policy, records of fines imposed on borrowers and the name of persons against whom such fines have been imposed may be disclosed to a person making such request, provided advance authorization is obtained from the District Director. (Government Code Section 6267.)

During Administration Office hours (Mon - Fri. 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM) staff must refer any requests for such information to the District the Librarian-in-charge. After office hours, refer such requests to the Librarian-in-charge.

The person requesting library records should be referred to the District Director; if the District Director is unavailable, to the Finance Director or to the Librarian-in-charge who will accept the subpoena on behalf of the District Director.

After 5 PM and on Saturday or Sunday, any library staff member may be served with a subpoena requesting information in library records on the Director's behalf; the subpoena can be complied with at a later time. Simply accept the subpoena and forward it to the Director. The records must not be supplied at the time of the service of the subpoena.

The District Director shall determine if the request meets the conditions outlined in California Government Code Section 6267. No records shall be released unless the request is in compliance with Section 6267.

Any threats or unauthorized demands (those not supported by a process, order, or subpoena) concerning registration or circulation records will not be accepted and shall be reported to the Board of Trustees.

If the request is being made under the Patriot Act it should be handled in accordance with Policy No. 2020.8 below.

Adopted April 8, 1984; Revised December 10, 1987; Revised December 13, 1990; Revised September 10, 1992; Revised May 11, 1995; Revised May 13, 2004; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010

2020.8 Patriot Act: Subpoenas and Search Warrants

A staff member approached by a law enforcement agent with a subpoena requesting confidential patron information (circulation records, Internet registration logs or Internet activity logs) should follow the policies outlined in Policy No. 2020.7 above unless the request is made with reference to the Patriot Act.

Under the Patriot Act a request for information can come in the form of either a subpoena or a search warrant.

If a **subpoena** is presented with reference to the Patriot Act, the following exceptions to Policy No. 2020.7 should be made:

- Every attempt should be made to contact the District Director in lieu of any other manager.
- In lieu of the District Director, every attempt should be made to contact the Librarian-in-charge or the Finance Director.
- The request for information may not be shared with other staff or the public.
- The person who is being investigated must not be informed of the investigation.
- Once the Director or other authorized manager is contacted, they should follow the procedures outlined in Policy No. 2020.7 above.

If a **search warrant** is presented with reference to the Patriot Act, the following exceptions to Policy 2020.7 should be made:

- Every attempt should be made to contact the District Director in lieu of any other manager.
- In lieu of the District Director, every attempt should be made to contact the Librarian-in-charge or the Finance Director.
- If the law enforcement agent presents a search warrant under the Patriot Act, and demands information without contacting the District Director or other authorized person, staff should comply with the request and report the incident to the District Director for follow up.
- The request for information may not be shared with other staff or the public.
- The person who is being investigated must not be informed of the investigation.
- Once the District Director or other authorized manager is contacted, they should follow the procedures outlined in Policy No. 2020.7.

If the law enforcement agent is not operating under the Patriot Act, then staff should follow the guidelines outlined in Policy No. 2020.7 above.

Adopted May 13, 2004; Last Reviewed December 9, 2010