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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Library sponsoring Banned Books Week**

**Kerrville, Texas (Sept. 19, 2022)** – Throughout the country, children are starting a new school year, teachers are sending out their lists of required readings, and parents are beginning to gather books. In some cases, classics like "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn," "The Catcher in the Rye," and "To Kill a Mocking Bird" may not be included in



curriculum or available in the school library due to challenges made by parents or administrators.

Since 1990, the American Library Association's (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF) has recorded more than 10,000 book challenges. A challenge is a formal, written complaint requesting a book be removed from library shelves or school curriculum. A banning is the removal of those materials. In 2021, the ALA saw a rise in requests to remove

books that address racism, racial justice, and anti-racism. Individuals organized campaigns to threaten library funding if libraries did not remove books or cancel programs. It is thanks to the commitment of librarians, teachers, parents, and students that most challenges and bans are unsuccessful and reading materials like "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings," "Of Mice and Men", "Slaughterhouse Five," and the "Wings of Fire" series remain available.

The most challenged and/or restricted reading materials have been books for children. Challenges are not simply an expression of a point of view; on the contrary, they are an attempt to remove materials from public use, thereby restricting the access of others. Even if the motivation to ban or challenge a book is well intentioned, the outcome is detrimental. Censorship denies our freedom as individuals to choose and think for ourselves. For children, decisions about what books to read should be made by the people who know them best — their parents!

In support of the right to choose books freely for ourselves, the Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library will join the ALA along with thousands of libraries and bookstores across the country in sponsoring Banned Books Week Sept. 18 – Sept. 24, an annual celebration of our right to access books without censorship. Since its inception in 1982, Banned Books Week has reminded us that while not every book is intended for every reader, each of us has the right to decide for ourselves what to read, listen to, or view. The Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library will be hosting an exhibit featuring frequently banned and challenged materials.

The American Booksellers Association, the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, the ALA, the American Society of Journalists and Authors, the Association of American Publishers, and the National Association of College Stores sponsor Banned Books Week. The Library of Congress Center for the Book endorses the observance.

Now, more than ever, celebrate the freedom to read at your library! Read an old favorite or a new banned book this week. For more information, please contact the library reference desk at (830) 258-1274.