

# Libraries must protect intellectual freedom

By MARY REILLY-KLISS

A study funded by a grant from the United States Institute of Museum and Library Services and undertaken by North Star Economics was released in May 2008.

Entitled "The Economic Contributions of Wisconsin Public Libraries to the Economy of Wisconsin," the research revealed that in 2006 public libraries provided \$427,914,334 in services to the citizens of Wisconsin, a \$4.06 return for every dollar of public tax support.

April 13-19, National Library Week, provided an opportunity to recognize libraries not only for their economic value, but also for the many ways in which their resources enrich the quality of our lives by providing patrons with a wealth of information which cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

Various members of our community and the surrounding area are actively working to limit the availability of select library materials by moving, labeling or restricting access to certain books which they deem inappropriate for some patrons.

Directional labels such as those for the Dewey Decimal System or fictional genres are entirely appropriate for a library, but value-based labels intended to alert patrons to the language, themes or content of a book are not. Such labels result in de facto censorship, which is unacceptable.

While these citizens may consider certain titles to be unsuitable material for their own

children, they are not entitled to make choices for other parents, teens or young adults in the community. Much has been made of passages from particular books. Selections taken out of context may cause the purpose of the book to be misrepresented, and important teen issues centering on bullying, alienation, friendship and family relationships are lost in the process.

Books are very powerful. Informed readers learn, explore, grow and develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. Teens and young adults must have the right to read information which will help them to become adults who are secure in their personal relationships with friends, family members and co-workers.

If by moving materials we limit access, we deny patrons of their right to free access of information and are in danger of encroaching upon a core value of our democracy: intellectual freedom.

Make every week National Library Week and visit the award-winning, highly regarded West Bend Community Memorial Library. Browse the shelves, discover new authors and recognize this facility for the great economic value and indispensable community resource that it is.

But, most of all, embrace your right to read as you see fit.

*Mary Reilly-Kliss of West Bend is a Library Board member. The Common Council voted on Tuesday to not re-appoint Reilly-Kliss to another term on the board.*

## YOUR VIEWS

### Aldermen were manipulated

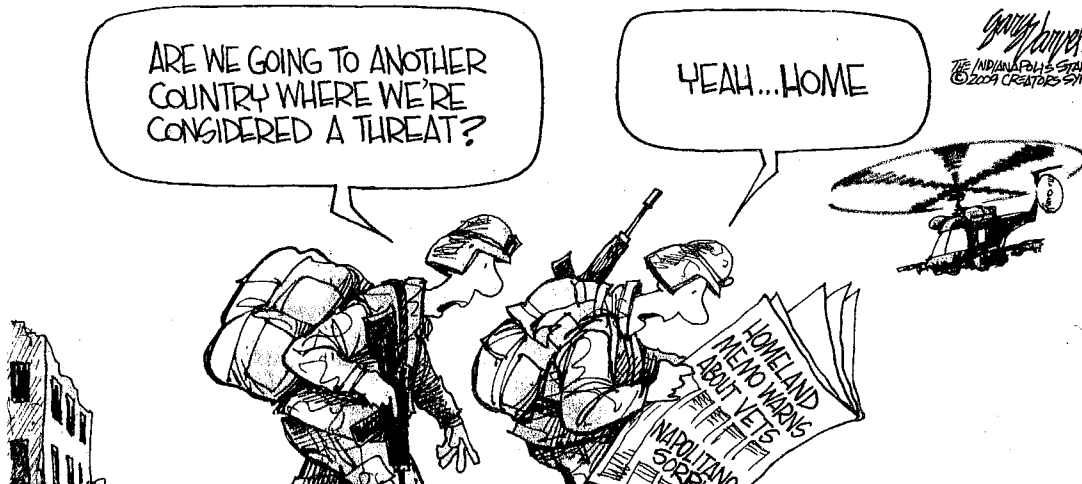
The unique genius of our democracy lies in the open exchange of opposing ideas. To seek to silence or disenfranchise those people who are in disagreement with your own thinking erodes the system and inhibits our ability to find answers to difficult questions.

It is unfortunate that a group of citizens would attempt to force their agenda by seeking to shut down any opposition to their viewpoint.

Moreover, it is appalling that the West Bend City Council could be taken in by this manipulation and vote to silence voices that brought balance to the discussion of a complex issue.

Regardless of your opinion on the library question, the decision of the Council has severely weakened our local democracy. The citizens of West Bend have a right and a responsibility to expect more from their leadership.

**Martin Gross  
West Bend**



But this is increasingly a failed states, nonstate act building - the stuff of sn generals, not diplomats.

Hence the déjà vu all o U.S. foreign policy right when it comes to our ma (Afghanistan and Pakist and Iran), we just go aroi buying the same carpets ple, over and over, but no

"We are dealing with s who either cannot delive notes the Johns Hopkins, policy professor Michael issues we have with then lems that can be solved a tions that we have to ma

The ones who can't del Afghanistan and Pakista promise to do all sorts of pull all sorts of levers, b day the levers come off t governments in these co limited powers. The ones Iran and North Korea - t us: "Yes, we need to talk. the day, their hostile rela America or the West are vival strategy of their re the core of their justifica in power, that it is not in deliver real reconciliatio tend to deliver it.

The only thing that co greater exercise of U.S. a the case of Afghanistan; power would have to be t rebuild these states from ern nations. We would li the institutions - the pul that when the leaders of lever something actually lever wouldn't just break

And in the case of the and North Korea - we w much more effective leve side to get them to chang along the lines we seek. I though, success surely w ger and longer U.S. inves power; not to mention all

Instead, I fear that we : dle-ground strategy - doi avoid collapse but not en problems. If our goal in . Pakistan is nation-buildi self-sustaining moderate surely don't have enough inside devoted to either. I ing regime behavior in I Korea, we surely have no leverage from outside. N missile launch and Iran' ment of its nuclear capa

So, in sum, we have fo at the heart of U.S. foreig we don't have the will or seem to lack the leverage sively change. The big w mass of people who shar inside these countries, ri the fight, which is ultim Iraq for the better - I dor fear we are sliding into c Afghanistan and Pakista national debate about th or the exits. That is a rec

Given all that is on his blame President Obama middle ground - not war gressives and women in Pakistan, but not wantin deeply. But history teach

# OPINION

DAILY  
EDITOR

Phil Pai  
Steve Ciccant  
Jill Badzins  
Dan Muckelba

WS  
ewspaper

THURSDAY

## GUESTVIEWS

# Library discussion is really about moral values

By BRUCE DUNFORD

Much has been written regarding the matter now before the West Bend Community Library. Some have attempted to define the issue as a matter of personal liberty or rights. Others desire to make the issue a debate on sexual preference.

The issue at hand is much larger than either personal liberty or sexual preference. The issue facing this community is one of moral values and how to determine what those values are. We have heard from many individuals and one thing that is undeniably clear is that there are a plethora of diverse opinions with a great deal of emotional energy invested in each opinion. Is there a right answer? I believe there is.

This community and this country cannot long exist without a moral and ethical standard that is more certain and unchanging than personal preference or popular opinion. Our founding fathers understood this. In his farewell address to the nation, George Washington issued this warning: "Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle. It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government."

Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence said: "Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time; they, therefore, who are decrying the Christian religion ... are undermining the solid foundation of morals, the best security for the duration of free governments."

William Penn wrote: "We will either be governed by God, or ruled by tyrants." John Adams: "Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

This country was founded upon the premise that man's personal liberties would be guided and governed by the voluntary submission to the rule of law and to the rule of God upon whose Word those laws were founded. Reject either and we will have tyranny and chaos and confusion.

The issue before us is not about book banning, nor gay bashing. The issue before us is about public policy. It is about the morals and standards of this community, not some national association or some author in Washington state, nor even what one might chose in the privacy of his own home.

The principles that guide our public policy are not popular opinion or personal preference, but the eternal truths and commands of our Lord God that teach us what is best for all. As our founding fathers observed, we will not long enjoy freedom if we cast aside the truths and values that guide our liberty.

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you." (1Thess 4:3-8)

If we choose to reject God and His values, whose values are we embracing and what are the consequences? The responsibility of our community leaders is clear - protect the innocent among us and promote what is moral and right.

Label the books that have sexually explicit content. Move them out of the children's section into the adult section and let parents choose what they want their children to be exposed to.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin [is] a reproach to any people." (Proverbs 14:34)

*Bruce Dunford is pastor of First Baptist Church in West Bend.*



## Middle g or sinking

I've been thinking lately about the school of foreign service students. My school, though, would consist of a desk and a chair. A teacher, pretending to be a student. The student would come and try to persuade the foreign leader to pull this or that lever. At the end of the day, the foreign leader would nod his head and then reach behind his back - and it would come out of his hands. Or, he would nod his head and say, "Yes, yes, of course, I will then would only pretend to be a diplomat."

The student would then wonder what to do next. ... I'm wondering if President Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, those students, trying to get the leaders of Pakistan, Afghanistan, and North Korea. I say that not to criticize, but to pathize. "Mama, don't let me go to be a diplomat."

This is not the great game of international relations. A secretary of state cannot make other states or parts of the world to make them. In the cold war, the great powers, grand bargains, solid client states, there were no winners for that - whether it was the Soviet Union or peace with our respective client states. But this is increasingly a failed states, nonstate actors, building - the stuff of snipers, not diplomats.

Hence the déjà vu all over again. U.S. foreign policy right now when it comes to our major powers (Afghanistan and Pakistan and Iran), we just go around buying the same carpets, ple, over and over; but no one is really listening. "We are dealing with states who either cannot deliver on their promises," notes the Johns Hopkins University policy professor Michael

# Libraries must protect intellectual freedom

By MARY REILLY-KLISS

A study funded by a grant from the United States Institute of Museum and Library Services...

children, they are not entitled to make choices for other parents, teens or young adults in the community. Much has been made of passages from particular books. Selections taken out of...