



Freehold Public Library

OCTOBER 2023 NEWSLETTER

Freehold Public Library

*for digital distribution; not maximized for print

Type this into your browser if links don't work:

<https://tinyurl.com/FPL-OCT2023>

Library phone number: 732-462-5135

Email: help@freeholdpubliclibrary.org

Subscribe to cancellation notices:

<https://www.remind.com/join/fplpr>

Online Calendar: <https://tinyurl.com/fpl-calendar>



NEWS & UPDATES

- 🏛️ **Library Closed Monday, 10/9 (Columbus Day).**
- 🚗 🏛️ **Parking Validation** for Borough residents while using the library is available. Give staff your license plate number and, if you're not already registered as a resident library cardholder, show proof of residence. Parking before 11:00 a.m. is free for anyone.
- 🏛️ **Toddler Time!** Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. Be ready for weather cancellations: subscribe to notices at <https://www.remind.com/join/fplpr>.
- 🏫 🏛️ **Freehold Borough resident freshmen in Freehold Regional High Schools** have been issued library cards and PINs. Students may access their credentials via the district's online portal or by contacting the library.
- 🏛️ **Come Write In!** Interested in writing? Come to the library's National Novel Writing Month ([NaNoWriMo](#)) kick-off meeting on Wednesday, November 1, 7:00 p.m. at Court Street School and Community Education Center (140 Court Street).
- 🏛️ **Book Group for Adults.** The group will meet to discuss *Before We Were Yours* by Lisa Wingate on **December 6** at 7:00 p.m. in the library (or an alternate site in town if the building isn't ready). Join the contact list now! Email kmulholland@freeholdpubliclibrary.org
- 📖 **Grow with Google Career Certificates** scholarships are still available from Freehold Public Library (the program ends in December 2024). Email kmulholland@freeholdpubliclibrary.org for information and get started today!
- 🏛️ **Library Trustees** will meet Thursday 10/12 at 8:00 a.m. at the library's temporary location (Borough Hall). Contact the library for more information.
- 🏛️ **Renovation Update.** The masonry and concrete work on the foyer, ramps, terrace, alley, front steps and plaza are substantially finished. Drywall ceilings downstairs are in. Visit our Facebook page for photos and frequent updates.
- 🏛️ **SUBSCRIBE** to weather or unscheduled closure/cancellation notices: <https://www.remind.com/join/fplpr>

Dear Library Patron

October 1-7 is Banned Books Week.

I remember when “Banned Books Week” meant that advocates for intellectual freedom (such as librarians) directed attention to protecting access to “challenged” material (usually titles that a few parents didn’t want on their child’s reading list for school). Those titles made up a big chunk of the cases on the American Library Association’s radar.

Ah, the good old days when libraries simply [shared lists of “banned books.”](#) put up displays featuring titles such as *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck; *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker; *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton; and J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series.

The time for such righteous complacency is over.

You can see via any number of media sources that today’s struggle is not just about books on shelves. There are a disturbing number of [personal threats to reputation and safety of library and education staff](#), and organized efforts to [defund libraries](#) which don’t toe the line of the book-banners. And let’s be clear: this type of attack is [not limited to far-away places](#) that you might believe don’t affect you.

As library professionals and advocates for free access and choice, it is our duty (even our *calling*) to defend your right to choose material for yourself and your own minor children. But we can’t succeed alone.

How can you help?

1. **Read up.** Become informed about the efforts to ban books and repress intellectual freedom. Maybe even read a [“banned” book](#) (you’re always free to dislike it/stop reading it!). Review the [American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights](#) to learn how important your freedom is to librarians.
2. **Think up.** Consider the literary influences—books, movies, art and music—important to your personal and cultural history. Imagine your life today without them. Would your world be as colorful or rich? What if the works of Edgar Allan Poe and Emily Dickinson were successfully suppressed? What would music be like without Elvis Presley and Eminem? How would American history have unfolded (and how might it be understood) without Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* or Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* pamphlets? What cultural references would you miss had the thought-provoking concepts presented in *The Twilight Zone* and *Star Trek* been entirely edited-out by censors? How different would our understanding of the universe be without the dissemination of works by Galileo, Darwin or Copernicus?
3. **Speak up.** Make your opinion known to friends and associates in conversation (and on social media platforms if you maintain a presence). Your opinion matters to your family and community. Sign petitions or donate to causes that align with your right to choose for yourself. Engage in conversations or lead discussions.
4. **Stand up.** Defend institutions, professionals and advocates of intellectual freedom when they are being attacked. Especially when it gets personal.

5. **Show up.** Support at public meetings those who work to promote freedom of information and access to material. School board, local governance and other public meetings are instruments for doing the people's business which are occasionally weaponized by the censorship lobby to curtail access to material others may seek, to threaten staff, or to hold-hostage funding of libraries or schools. As a stakeholder, serve as an earnest and rational witness to the importance of intellectual freedom in your schools, libraries and community. Be respectful of people with differing viewpoints (even book banners) as you remain vigilant in protecting your freedom and the freedoms of your neighbors.
6. **Warm up.** Resist the insidious propagation of the "chilling effect." Help nourish a culture rich in voices and creativity. Encourage writers and artists to express themselves and tell their stories openly and courageously. Patronize libraries and museums. Spend a little time with art.
7. **Glow up.** Probe your own story; practice a little vulnerability and explore the depths of courage it takes to honestly discuss pain, to risk exposing your creativity to scrutiny, and to offer others your own hard-won learnings and wisdom. Find and share your own voice, and through your example, encourage others. And if anyone dares try to silence you, well, we have your back.

What to do if you maybe don't like a book?

1. Don't check it out, buy it or read it.

Here are some resources:

<https://pen.org/banned-in-the-usa/>

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks>

Be well; be well informed.

Kathy Mulholland

Kathy Mulholland, MLIS

Library Director

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Library Information

- 🏛️ **Library Hours @ 30 Mechanic Street (temporary location):**
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- 📄 **Digital Products:** For an overview, visit <https://tinyurl.com/FPL-JAN2023>
- **Information that doesn't change often:**
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g8sa1tvLCYlcbj7C1RAY4tWxbTvnIQceq5IYmlNbxjs/edit?usp=sharing>



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