



THE

AFCON

SENTINEL



Volume II, Number 3

A Quarterly of the Academic Freedom Coalition of Nebraska

September 19, 1998

AFCON OFFICERS

Mel Krutz
President

John Bender
Past President

Kathryn Stofer
Secretary

Cathi McMurtry
Treasurer

David Moshman
Policy Coordinator

Tom Black
Newsletter Editor

Purpose:
To promote academic freedom, defined as intellectual freedom, and including freedom of belief, freedom of expression, and access to information and ideas in educational and research contexts.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT: Mel Krutz

PETITE CENSORSHIP, OOPS MAKE THAT PETTIT CENSORSHIP, VS.

In 1993 columnist Mat Hentoff titled an editorial "Don't You Teach My Child to Think." He was quoting what parents in Grand Saline, Texas, told Jackie Haskew, a fourth grade teacher. These parents said they "did not want their child to deal with . . . issues." However, and undeniably, LIFE IS ISSUES. And our nation's schools' complete purpose is to prepare our youth for it. Maybe we ought to wonder if schools have succeeded all along, when parents who have attended them would rather remove materials than take advantage of the intellectual gains for which they can be used.

The August 24, 1998, Lincoln Journal Star (LJS) presented the decision of the Lincoln Public Schools concerning one of the most well-known censorship cases in Nebraska this year: the challenge of Mark Pettit's *A Need To Kill*.

The Lincoln Public School Administration has announced that this book will be removed from the Middle School Libraries and placed in the Senior High Libraries instead, although some LPS ninth graders are in the high schools with access to high school libraries, and some ninth graders are not. So there is the suggestion (the actuality?) of a double standard.

What causes me to cringe the most is the statement of the parent in the article, who is quoted assaying, "We're pretty excited about it. It's great to know it won't be there for any other kids." (I'm wondering if she has even read this book which could save her child's life.) Wrong reason for rejoicing. Wrong goal. Sad day.

The thing about her joy is that IT CONDONES ANYONE'S DECISION-MAKING ABOUT WHAT my child or your child or HER CHILD, ALSO, COULD OR SHOULD READ from libraries, which have holdings that have been selected on the basis of distinct criteria for valid intellectual

purposes. If any parent can decide for "any other kid," a Pandora's box has been unleashed, giving the right of everyone to decide for all kids as well. Thank you. I would rather leave selection of school materials to professionals who are trained for it, not to anyone coming in without that background.

Yet she is right, responsible, and to be commended to care what her child reads. Parents are directly responsible for their own children. You and I, I SURELY hope, have that same freedom of responsibility for our own children, which ought to not be abridged because the books we choose are not another person's choice. There are many discerning parents who regard it as their right to access that or any other book for the invaluable possibility of reading and discussing it with their children. PRIMARY PARENTAL AND SCHOOL ROLES ARE that we be there, to share, to discuss, to consider the tragedy of the Joubert issue or any other., to explore outcomes, to project what that tragedy means, TO CAUSE OUR CHILDREN TO THINK.

Censoring doesn't. CENSORING ELIMINATES THE OPPORTUNITY to consider, search, weigh and balance, indeed to open a venue TO THINK at all.

IT IS NOT A LITTLE PETITE THING. CENSORSHIP JUST DOESN'T ACHIEVE WHAT GOOD PARENTING AND GOOD TEACHING CAN.

The Lincoln Public Schools, as are all public schools today, is in the UNTENABLE position of having to serve as surrogate parent, and, in this case, they are asked to do it by eliminating materials rather than by making available professionals who are trained to lead analytic discussions. That's why they are hired. Sad Irony. Censorship denies the accomplishment of the very things schools are for. Has it succeeded again in Nebraska today with the Pettit case?

(See page 7 for additional commentary on this issue.)

MINUTES of the AFCON Board of Directors

June 13, 199—McMurtry reported a balance of \$1943.69, including \$1400 pledged for the survey on challenge and censorship incidents in public schools and \$390 seed money from NWSF for T-shirts.

Amy Birky is the new representative of LEA and also serves on the Anniversary Committee.

Newsletter Editor Black indicated the July Newsletter is ready for printing and distributed copies of the AFCON letterhead stationery that Board members may copy for official mailings.

Gulyas reported that the Bellevue West's journalism concerns have been resolved in house.

Black reported that the AFCON session at the NSEA Summer Leadership Conference in Lincoln, July 31 is set. The 90-minute program will include a Readers' Theatre version of the Hazelwood case, an update on the survey, and a discussion of local challenge and censorship issues. Krutz, Lofthus, and Black are planning the presentation.

Bender reported that the Student Freedom of Expression bill make it to general file in the 1998 session of the Unicameral. NHSPA is considering contracting with a lobbyist to promote the bill in 1999.

Krutz reported that NCB is focusing on plans for the Nebraska Literature Festival to be held September 18 (schools) and 19 (public) at Wayne State College. AFCON has applied for a sales table.

Lofthus reported that Norfolk Public Schools received a grant for sex education from the perspective of abstinence only.

Lincoln Public Schools adopted the Open Court Phonics System to be used this the fall. It appears to be a balanced approach to reading instruction.

Krutz reported AFCON completed proposals for two sessions at the ALA/NEMA fall conference to

include either Mark Pettit, author of *A Need To Kill*, or a 90-minute presentation of the Hazelwood decision and a 50-minute session on the Lofthus Nebraska survey on challenged and censorship incidents.

Cox, 10th Anniversary Committee Chair, reported observances will be shared among fall meetings of NELAC, NLA, and AAUP. At each location, AFCON will present Intellectual Freedom Awards to honorees and packets which include AFCON history and membership information. The committee asked each representative or organization to submit names of candidates for the Freedom Awards.

The Board appointed Jeff Lofthus as a member-at-large of the AFCON Board as its Membership Chairman.

Krutz suggested a general overview of the AFCON constitution to consider specifics for members-at-large and other matters. She also suggested a future discussion of online/internet access issues in public libraries.

July 13, 1998—The treasurer reported a survey fund of \$1400, an income balance of \$446.75, total membership income of \$670, an operating fund of \$101.75. AAUP-UNL & STATE, UNL Academic Senate, NELAC, & NLA owe unpaid outstanding membership dues.

The Board approved an AFCON purchase of Steve Visser's MA Thesis on Hazelwood. Haller will order it.

Mel reported T-shirt and notecards sales of \$435 income. Additional T-shirts and cards are to be ordered.

Lofthus reported on the readiness of the survey and will compose an invitational/informational letter to mail to organizations which would have a supportive interest in challenge and censorship incidents, in intellectual freedom.

Krutz reported about AFCON's participation at the NLA/NEMA Conference October 23 in Grand Island, and also about the NELAC Conference at the Wick Center in Lincoln on October 22 which will include an AFCON 10th Anniversary

Celebration planned by the Anniversary Committee chaired by Gerry Cox.

The Board needs to consider being a part of the Nebraska Press Association Conference on October 26.

With new material about the Student Freedom of Expression Act, Bender will write a handout to include on the AFCON sales table at the various conferences informing people about the importance of supporting this bill when it is re-introduced in the Unicameral in the 1999 session.

**AFCON
TENTH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATIONS**

**NELAC CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 22
WICK CENTER, UN-L**

**NLA/NEMA
CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 23
MIDTOWN HOLIDAY
INN GRAND ISLAND**

**SELECTION OF ACADEMIC
FREEDOM AWARD
HONOREES**

**AFCON MEMBERS AND
ORGANIZATIONS....
SUBMIT NOMINATIONS FOR
AFCON FREEDOM
AWARDS
TO GERRY COX
4000 WASHINGTON**

Rationality and Liberty in Secondary Education

by David Moshman

[F]reedom to differ is not limited to things that do not matter much. That would be a mere shadow of freedom. The test of its substance is the right to differ as to things that touch the heart of the existing order—West Virginia v. Barnette, p. 642.

Secondary schools typically present students with a range of information and a variety of ideas, and expect them to express themselves orally and in writing. At the same time, however, secondary schools routinely exclude from their curricula ideas that are politically unacceptable, limit student access to alternative sources of information, and censor or punish students and teachers who address controversial topics or express views that school authorities deem offensive or dangerous (Brown, 1994; Gaddy, Hall, & Marzano, 1996; Moshman, 1989, 1993.) Although historic decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court set important restrictions on censorship and indoctrination in American public schools (Tinker v. Des Moines, 1969; West Virginia v. Barnette, 1943,) recent rulings have greatly enhanced the authority of public schools to restrict intellectual freedom. In Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier (1988,) in particular, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that public schools have broad authority to censor student and faculty expression in classrooms, school newspapers, and all other curriculum-related contexts. Such authority, the Court concluded, is necessary for education (Moshman, 1989, 1993.)

Any systematic approach to education must consider (a) what we are trying to achieve through education and (b) how we can best achieve this. I have suggested throughout this book that adolescent psychological development is best understood from the perspective of rational constructivism. Extending the rational constructivist perspective to education, I propose in this chapter that the primary purpose of education should be the promotion of rationality and then argue that the single most important thing secondary schools can do to promote rationality is to provide an environment of intellectual freedom. In contrast to the Supreme Court, I conclude that censorship and indoctrination are not only unnecessary to education but are in fact counterproductive, at least if education is conceived as the promotion of rationality.

Education for rationality

Although education potentially serves many purposes, a number of theorists have argued that its core purpose should be the promotion of rationality (Lipman, 1991; Moshman, 1990b; Paul, 1990; Scheffler, 1997; Siegel, 1988, 1997.) For Harvey Siegel, this is most fundamentally a matter of moral obligation to students. There is simply no distinction between the sort of education that promotes rationality and the sort that respects students as persons:

[C]onceiving and conducting education in ways which do not take as central the fostering of students' abilities and dispositions to think

critically fails to treat students with respect as persons, and so fails to treat them in a morally acceptable way (1997, p. 4.)

[W]hat does it mean for a teacher to recognize the equal moral worth of students and to treat them with respect? Among other things, it means recognizing and honoring the student's right to question, to challenge, and to demand reasons and justifications for what is being taught (1988, p. 56.)

Education for rationality can also be justified on the basis of the needs and progress of society, especially in a democratic society. Israel Scheffler (1997) puts the matter thus:

To choose the democratic ideal for society is wholly to reject the conception of education as an *instrument* of rule; it is to surrender the idea of shaping or molding the mind of the pupil. The function of education in a democracy is rather to liberate the mind, strengthen its critical powers, inform it with knowledge and the capacity for independent inquiry, engage its human sympathies, and illuminate its moral and practical choices. This function is, further, not to be limited to any given subclass of members, but to be extended, in so far as possible, to all citizens, since all are called upon to take part in processes of debate, criticism, choice, and co-operative effort upon which the common social structure depends (.29, italics in original.)

A strong case can be made, in fact, that any form of education not aimed at the promotion of rationality tends to undermine genuine democracy. More than half a century ago, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the use of public schools to indoctrinate students is forbidden by the First Amendment:

There is no mysticism in the American concept of the State or of the nature or origin of authority. We set up government by consent of the governed, and the Bill of Rights denies those in power any legal opportunity to coerce that consent. Authority here is to be controlled by public opinion, not public opinion by authority (West Virginia v. Barnette, 1943, p.641.)

Both concern for individual students and concern for the welfare of society thus lead to the conclusion that we want our educational institutions to contribute to the development of rationality. To paraphrase Isaiah Berlin (1969,) whose conception of the rational agent was quoted in Chapter 9, we want the graduates of our educational institutions to be subjects, not objects; to be moved by reasons, be conscious purposes, which are their own, not be causes which affect them from outside. We want them to be doers—deciding, not being decided for, self-directed and not acted upon by external nature or by other people as if they were things, or animals, or slaves incapable of playing a human role, that is, of conceiving goals and policies of their own and realizing them. We want them, above all, to be conscious of themselves as thinking, willing, active beings, bearing responsibility for their choices and able to explain those choices by references to their own ideas and purposes.

(Continued on page 4.)

Rationality and Liberty (Continued from page 3)

Education for rationality, then, rests on a vision of educated persons as being, at the very least, rational and moral agents with self-constructed identities. Assuming these are indeed the sorts of individuals we want to see emerging from our educational institutions, the next question is how this purpose is best achieved.

The Role of Liberty in the Construction of Rationality

As we have seen throughout this book, research suggests that rationality is neither (a) the inevitable result of genetically-directed maturation nor (b) a set of thinking skills internalized from one's environment. Rather, the rational agent applies forms of epistemic cognition that are constructed by the individual in the course of social interaction, especially with peers, and self-reflection. Thus, one would expect the construction of rationality to be facilitated by social environments in which individuals have free access to information and ideas and are encouraged to formulate, express, discuss, and justify ideas of their own.

Research and theory on the development of rationality, autonomy, morality, and identity are fully consistent with this view (Dimant & Bearison, 1991; Kuhn et al., 1995; Moshman, 1995a, 1995b, 1998; Silverberg & Gondoli 1996; Youniss & Damon, 1992.) Consider, for example, the five students presented in Chapter 4 who were discussing which cards to turn over on the selection task. Some important features of this discussion are that (a) each student had multiple opportunities to present and defend his or her views; (b) each student was exposed to a variety of alternative views and justifications; and (c) students were encouraged to reach agreement on a conclusion they all deemed most justifiable but were not required to change their views unless they were convinced such a change was appropriate. As we saw, groups operating under such conditions were far more likely to construct justifiable solutions than were individuals working alone (Moshman & Geil, 1998.)

In contrast to this idealized experimental context, actual school discussions, especially with regard to controversial matters, often take place in contexts in which (a) the presentation of disfavored viewpoints is subtly discouraged or explicitly forbidden; (b) access to disfavored alternatives is similarly restricted or prevented; and (c) teacher authority and/or peer pressure channel thinking in socially acceptable directions (Brown, 1994; Chomsky, 1989; Gaddy et al., 1996; Moshman, 1989, 1993.) A rational constructivist perspective suggests that such contexts may maximize behavioral and ideological conformity but will not promote the rational construction of justifiable beliefs, identities, and forms of reasoning. Rationality is encouraged and enhanced by an environment of intellectual freedom.

Intellectual Freedom in Secondary Education (To be

continued in the December issue of the AFCON SENTINEL.)

This article is the concluding chapter in David Moshman's man's forthcoming book entitled *Adolescent Psychological Development: Rationality, Morality, and Identity*, to be published in 1999 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. For further information, contact the author at the Department of Educational Psychology, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, NE 68588-0345 (phone: 402-472-2226; e-mail: dmoshman@unl.edu.

1998 BILL OF RIGHTS DINNER

Friday, November 13, Lincoln

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION-NEBRASKA

Keynote Address:

FREE SPEECH IN CYBERSPACE

Chris Hansen

ACLU v. Reno, Lead ACLU Attorney

Contact the ACLU-Nebraska Office for more information, Lincoln, 402-441-3332

Mel Krutz, AFCON President, will be honored.

FOR SALE BY AFCON

T-shirts with a Paul Fell "banned books" design; Sizes M, L, XL, XXL, XXXL; \$15.00. Packaging and postage: \$2.00 each.

Note cards with a Paul Fell design; \$1.50; four for \$5.00. Packaging and postage: \$0.75 per packet.

Reader's Theatre Script of a TANGLED ISSUE: Student Freedom of Expression. \$10.00 buys the rights to produce and duplicate. Packaging and postage: \$2.00 each

Send orders to Mel Krutz
2625 Bluff Road
Seward, NE 68434-9801

Joe Raiola current associate editor of MAD Magazine on censorship.

Raiola spoke at the Nebraska Library Association pre-conference, sponsored by Nebraska's Regional Library Systems, October 29, 1997. This is the last of three installments of his presentation to appear in this newsletter.

Following the morning session, Joe Raiola, led an afternoon panel discussion with the Reverend Dale Phillips of Keystone Baptist Church in Hastings, Dr. Otis Young of the First Plymouth Congregational Church in Lincoln, and Rabbi Paul Dresden of Beth-El Synagogue in Omaha.

PHILLIPS: I hold a traditional view on censorship. Restraint by a government agency of material prior to publication doesn't seem to be a problem in this country due to the First Amendment which guarantees freedom of speech and press. Christians should be the first in upholding that amendment when a citizen objects to a story selling or a library holding certain publications. But others have the right and responsibility to view on an individual basis and to keep certain parties at certain times from a work or publication. This is not censorship, but censure, which is all right. (Phillips was introduced as being involved with the Hastings Public Library's limiting children's access on the internet to prevent them from viewing salacious material.)

Are ideas neutral? —or do they have consequences? They have consequences. Censorship is always negative. Materials may be negative or helpful. A library cannot supply all materials—budget, space, etc., so it must decide which materials are most helpful. Criteria a board may use in making choices are (1) Is it available to people elsewhere? (2) Is it helpful or harmful? (3) does it violate community standards?

A group may set reasonable restrictions, fences, etc. We need a balance between no limits, licentiousness, and prohibitive limits. People have the right to question how the public or government spends the people's money.

DRESDEN: In the study of 4000 years of Jewish tradition, I find the most common censorship is neglect. There are stories in the Bible that nobody know about, no one ever tells anyone. How many of you know about Tamar, or about Lot's daughters, or that Abraham took a young girl as wife in his old age to keep him warm in bed or what her name is? (Nobody in the audience could give her name.)

There are only two instances of prohibition in Rabbinical literature—those based on it's a waste of time for someone to read the selections and, as the Talmud says, people have an obligation to prevent someone else from committing a sin. What is a sin? Who would agree?

The open marketplace of ideas is important. We need to teach people what is worthy and how to judge what is worthy. Consider age, education, experience, etc. Teach people to judge for themselves (except for things inherently evil such as child pornography.)

YOUNG: We have a mixed history of censorship in Christianity. Religious groups are the worst offenders. Sometimes the censorship is after, not before, a work is circulated—by government or others, for example, in book burning. Sometimes the church is the best defender of works.

The Congregational Church has a strong tradition of "freedom of the pulpit," the right to say anything as a spokesman from the pulpit. "There was a young woman named Lynn/Who it's said reported to her kin/'I've examined the lot/and can say that there's not/Any original sin."

RAIOLA: The First Amendment is ambitious: Congress shall pass no law regarding...religion, speech, press, peaceable assembly, right to petition government. Thus, how do you respond to a clergyman when an item is clearly not in accordance with personal or with congregational beliefs?

YOUNG: I'm glad this country doesn't suppress sexual material.

DRESDEN: I own *Satanic Verses*. It's dull, bad literature, but I'm more concerned with people who deny the Holocaust. Any one has the right to publish as long as others have the right to protest. It's okay to have material on the internet. It is the responsibility for us to explain what is wrong, etc.

PHILLIPS: I am in basic disagreement.

RAIOLA: You (Phillips) believe government censorship is not a problem. I disagree. Consider the punishment of Howard Stern. I think it is not WHAT he says as much as WHEN. Also the Hollywood ratings. It's subtle, but censorship. What about books: The government censored *The Tropic of Cancer* which was written by an American author, but published in Britain and not in the U.S. until the 1960's.

AUDIENCE: Read George Carlin's "Seven Dirty Words You Can't Say on TV." There are common decency laws, but does the government have the right to censor anything on TV?

YOUNG: Probably "government" is an ambiguous word. There are many levels of government as well as agencies. Censorship is probably more dangerous if done at a local level than at a national level. Unless you file a lawsuit, which is too expensive and lengthy for an average citizen, it tends to run on forever.

DRESDEN: An entrepreneur may get carried away. There is no significant rating system; they are fluid, and society's toleration for garbage has changed. It's okay as long as I'm the one deciding for my family. Guidelines are useful, but the decision must be in MY hands, not someone else's

(Continued on page 6)

Joe Raiola of MAD Magazine (Cont. from p 4)

RAIOLA: What about Nebraska standards of obscenity law? What are your feelings about that?

YOUNG: It's too complicated. It hasn't been tested in court. Yes, it's very subjective; it opens the door to all kinds of lawsuits.

RAIOLA: Would you abolish obscenity?

YOUNG: Yes.

DRESDEN: Would still like it available for adults, although not to children. On a local level they could do much better.

PHILLIPS: Exclusion is not necessary, but it is important to have freedom of discussion and a conscience to live by as a community.

COMMENT FROM THE AUDIENCE: The law was tried in Lincoln this summer. A gentleman was tried for airing after prime time but before midnight on a public TV channel, a clown masturbating. People are pushing for cable TV to say no to continuing the channel and for the city council to draw the line. The man was found guilty of obscenity but is appealing. Most people find this decision frightening. The laws may work as a deterrent, and people may not behave a certain way because of fear of prosecution. Actually the clown was a public school bus driver, and he was fired after a TV station interviewed him in a school bus garage in front of a school bus. Cable TV moved the public channel to #88, the farthest out, and put other controls on public TV.

Q for PHILLIPS: All three of you discussed age-appropriate materials. You said one of the library's standards was "if the material was available elsewhere," What is a library patron in most of Nebraska to do if a person wants materials and doesn't have a bookstore, and the only internet channel is in the library which censors material?

PHILLIPS: Not too much material is excluded in the library.

COMMENT FROM THE AUDIENCE: I have a problem with our ability as humans even to discuss masturbating clowns. We're all censors in some way or another. It's usually a hard fight to get a book out of a library once it's in. In a perfect world the parents are responsible, but many kids don't have parents who guide them. The library is a dangerous place: rightly so. There's stuff on the internet that will kill over time; its detrimental to one's psychological health.

RAIOLA: (He did an informal handraising survey of audience on who would support the masturbating clown and under what circumstances. The audience voted both Yes and No although the majority favored shown it.) It's good to

have these things; it gets us to examine what we want to protect.

PHILLIPS: What bothers me is that the culture is more perverse than ever, and some see it, dwell on it, and act it out. But we don't want Big Brother. There aren't easy answers. Where is the public square nowadays where we have dialogue?

DRESDEN: Gerhard Bloch is in prison in Denmark for being a Nazi. A woman in Holland who wanted to read *Mein Kampf* had to sign for it and read it in an isolated room. The Neo-Nazism level was higher there than where she lives now in the U.S. My recommendation is to put all internet tubes next to the circulation desk where everyone may know what you're doing.

COMMENT FROM THE AUDIENCE: We are a small public library with a public screen. We are getting a small privacy screen because we believe people have the right to privacy. Parents can restrict their children from using it, but so far no one has.

COMMENT FROM AUDIENCE: One example of censorship occurred in Connecticut which has a law against artificial birth control. A doctor fitted a woman with a diaphragm and was arrested.

RAIOLA: As Devil's Advocate: Is it morally offensive to show some things? After all, we have laws against killing and against certain sexual activities.

PHILLIPS: I would hold the right of people—small groups—to have the right to censor FOR THEIR OWN MEMBERS.

DRESDEN: I can fully understand people who don't want the public library to become a cesspool. The problem is, what is a cesspool? It's one person's or one group's wanting to limit others' access.

PHILLIPS: People want to hear and be heard. I'm sorry there are people who want librarians to be on the front line and don't join with you in dialogue.

This was the conclusion of the days' conference. Remember that MAD has a web site on AOL and on the Internet (<http://www.dccomics.com/mad>), and you may send for the free newsletter "The Joy of Censorship," published twice a year, at P.O. Box 64, High Falls, N.Y. 12440.

—reported by Cathi McMurtry

LPS and the BOOK and AFCON

On page 1 of this newsletter, AFCON President Mel Krutz discusses a concern about the removal of Mark Pettit's *A Need to Kill* from the libraries of the Lincoln Public Middle Schools. The Lincoln Star Journal article referred to an LPS associate superintendent who said the "book has value to middle school parents because of its real-life account of Joubert's crimes. But it is a book that should be read with a parent or another adult."

In an August 25 letter to the editor of the Lincoln Journal Star, published on September 4, Dr. Krutz wrote "Understandable and easily read, it is a journalist's reporting of the Joubert atrocities, which, of course, are tragedies none of us would like to have to think about. But to be responsible, we must. It presents realities that should not have happened. It isn't the book that is reprehensible. It is Joubert's crimes. Knowing them gives opportunity to perceive precautions and responses. If either of the boys in

the

book had been so aware (their parents would agree,) they would not have easily (as they did) obeyed Joubert. They could have conceivably taken advantage of early opportunities to run or fight back."

In further comments to the *AFCON Sentinel*, Krutz said, "AFCON and the memberships of our constituent organizations need to go further in making information available to both children and parents, to professionals and to the general public about censoring, about the gravity of its effect, and about solutions to it. Let us pursue a viable plan of action that educates not only academia, but also beyond. Enter inter conversation within your organizations about this. Come to any AFCON Board meeting and do so there also. Meetings are always open, and are generally scheduled for the second Saturday morning of the month (except August and December.) The location of the meetings may change. Call 402-643-3464 to verify the

AFCON TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

The Academic Freedom Coalition of Nebraska (AFCON) is observing the tenth year of its founding. It evolved from the Nebraska Council of Teachers of English Committee Against Censorship that Mel Krutz headed in the 1980's and included the state's public and academic organizations that are vitally concerned with intellectual freedom.

The AFCON Tenth Anniversary Celebrations will occur at two October 1998 conferences. The first is the Nebraska English Language Arts Council (NELAC, previously NebCTC.) at the Wick Alumni Center on the UN-L campus on Thursday, October 22. English teachers, faced with implementing standards set by the State Department of Education, will meet in Lincoln to find information and help. The conference participants will find displays about censorship, as well as books, AFCON T-shirts and note cards for purchase.

During the lunch hour (the cost of lunch is included in registration,) AFCON will commemorate its Tenth Year by presenting conference participants with packets that include the history of censorship in Nebraska, history of AFCON and policy statements of coalition members regarding censorship. Academic Freedom Awards are be presented to persons who have resisted censorship of all kinds, including

self-censorship. After lunch a panel of correct and past educators will discuss attempts at censorship in schools in the last quarter century. The current teaching force includes many young teachers who will not be aware of some of the challenges people in the elementary and secondary schools have faced.

The second AFCON Tenth Anniversary Celebration will be on the following day, October 23, in Grand Island at the NLA/NEMA Conference. Jeff Lofthus is to present a censorship survey; another session will focus on controversies in schools with emphasis on the Hazelwood U. S. Supreme Court decision on publications in schools. A display of censorship issues will be on display, and books, AFCON T-shirts and note cards will be on sale.

In November, 1998, AFCON, in commemoration of its a anniversary, will contribute to the Lincoln Education Association Harvest of Books Campaign which provides a book to own for each first-grader in the Lincoln Public Schools. The programs also sponsored by the Lincoln Public Schools and the Lincoln Journal Star.

—reported by Geraldine Cox

If an individual member or an organizational member or affiliate is not receiving this newsletter, please contact Robert Haller, 4000 South 56 Street #393C, Lincoln NE 68506

AFCON

515 North Thomas Avenue
Oakland, NE 68045.

Mailing
Address
Label

ACADEMIC FREEDOM COALITION OF NEBRASKA

HELP AFCON PROMOTE ACADEMIC FREEDOM

As a member of AFCON, you can help us

- ◆ support applications of the First Amendment in academic contexts, including elementary and secondary schools, colleges, universities, and libraries.
- ◆ educate Nebraskans about the meaning and value of intellectual freedom, intellectual diversity, mutual respect, open communication, and uninhibited pursuit of knowledge, including the role of these ideals in academic contexts and in democratic self-government.
- ◆ assist students, teachers, librarians, and researchers confronted with censorship, indoctrination, or suppression of ideas.
- ◆ act as liaison among groups in Nebraska that support academic freedom.

MEMBERSHIP (To become a member, send dues, organization or individual name, address, and phone number to Cathi McMurtry, 515 N. Thomas Avenue, Oakland, NE 68045)

Organizational Membership (\$100) entitles the organization to one seat on the AFCON Executive Committee and one vote in the election of officers and at the annual meeting, provides newsletter subscription for the board member to share with the organization's information director and reduced rates to AFCON conferences for its members.

Organizational Affiliation (\$25) provides newsletter subscription and reduced rates to AFCON conferences for its members.

Individual Membership (\$10) provides newsletter subscription, eligibility for office and for chairing standing committees, reduced rates for AFCON conferences, and one vote at annual meetings.

Student Membership (\$5) entitles full-time students to the same privileges as provided by the Individual Membership.

**AFCON ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS, PLEASE DUPLICATE THIS NEWSLETTER FOR YOUR MEMBERS.
INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS, PLEASE PASS THIS NEWSLETTER TO A FRIEND AFTER YOU HAVE READ IT.
ENCOURAGE HIM OR HER TO JOIN AFCON**