

Community Library Network

	Victoria Bauman	Michelle Lippert
<p>1. What is your name, what office are you running for and why are you running for this position?</p>	<p>My name is Victoria Bauman and I am running for the position of Community Library Network Trustee. I am running for this position because I am committed to protecting children from sexually explicit and harmful materials in accordance with Idaho's, "Children's School and Library Protection Act," while preserving dynamic programming and supportive resources for the adult community. This Idaho law, like others which prevent or limit our children from gaining access to harmful items such as cigarettes, alcohol, certain movies and even some types of video games, is in place to protect the safety of all children through full implementation. At libraries, safety is something parents expect while continuing to provide an enriching and fun environment for the healthy development of our most vulnerable community members, our children. I am the parent of a young child who participates regularly in our local library's programming and my child's safety is paramount to me.</p>	<p>Michelle Lippert Community Library Network Trustee</p> <p>I have been attending the Community Library Network (CLN) board meetings for the past two years. What I have witnessed reminds me of the chaos that engulfed North Idaho College (NIC), where a board majority pushed the institution to the brink of losing its accreditation and embroiled it in costly lawsuits. I fear the CLN board is leading the library network down a similarly destructive path.</p> <p>While the county's population continues to grow, the CLN board has been shrinking services and reducing hours. The budget for acquiring new materials has been slashed, while spending on legal fees and insurance has soared. The board's attorney frequently warns that certain proposed actions could expose the district to litigation. Most concerning, the current board appears poised to sever ties with the Cooperative Information Network (CIN)—a consortium of 25 libraries that share resources.</p>
<p>2. How could the libraries be improved? Please provide your top 2-3 ideas.</p>	<p>I believe libraries could be improved by returning more classic literature to the children's collection. A recent study of CLN children's fiction collection shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over 87% was published after 2000 • Almost 70% was published after 2010 <p>I am an advocate for increasing CLN's selection of time-tested children's classics and my goal is to increase the balance between enduring classics and modern children's literature. I endorse a greater emphasis on books that have been enjoyed by previous generations and are familiar to Idahoan parents and grandparents.</p> <p>This ties to multi-generational programming which I would like to see expanded at libraries. Increasing opportunities for parents and especially grandparents to connect with younger generations through intergenerational programming offerings such as book clubs, storytelling sessions, and game nights. The aim is to strengthen understanding, communication, and collaboration between generations. I believe children of all ages have much to learn from connecting in fun ways with older generations.</p>	<p>Restore parental rights. Eight thousand nine hundred and six sets of parents chose the full-access minor card for THEIR child. The current board rescinded those card, essentially suggesting that they were in a better position to judge what is appropriate for these children than their own parents. I would like to see those cards restored.</p> <p>Restore library services. The current board has closed all the libraries on Sundays, reduced hours, cut programing, eliminated the Bookmobile and Discovery Bus, and reduced the budget for acquisition of books. Given the tremendous growth in our community, this seems counterintuitive.</p> <p>Restore intellectual freedom. The current board took the words "intellectual freedom" out of board policy, claiming that it doesn't exist. I didn't know that you could simply erase a right by wimply declaring that it doesn't exist. It does, and I would seek to protect that right.</p>

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<p>3. What is your philosophy of selecting new books for the library and how do you plan to implement that philosophy?</p>	<p>My key philosophy for the selection of new books, including replacing older worn books with new copies, is to have all of those responsible for the selection process, the CLN Director and staff, to have complete alignment in the criteria of what is safe, quality literature. CLN has begun this process with the hiring of a director who desires to actively support the board and Idaho law.</p>	<p>Current board policy on Material Acquisition reads: The vocation of a librarian requires a commitment to freedom of speech and the celebration of diverse viewpoints unlike that found in any other occupation. The librarian curates and curtails the collection of reading materials for an entire community in a sense, and in doing so, he or she reinforces the bedrock principles on which this country was founded, I believe this is true and I would follow this policy.</p> <p>Professional librarians are in the best position to make these decision. The board hires the director, who is then responsible for hiring staff. That is the board's role. Micromanaging by a board can be extraordinarily destructive.</p>
<p>4. What is your opinion of HB710 which passed in 2024 restricting access for material harmful to minors? How do you believe this bill should be implemented?</p>	<p>The US Supreme Court maintains a precedent of upholding laws that restrict minors' access to illicit, obscene, and harmful content as not violating one's rights of parental authority. Instead, they recognize the government's compelling interest in safeguarding the physical and psychological well-being of children. This demonstrates that protecting children is the norm and it is not an extreme position! The Idaho Law, "Children's School and Library Protection Act," which requires libraries to protect children from gaining access to sexual explicit or harmful materials without parental supervision, aligns with the US Supreme Court in the protection and safety of all children. I believe this bill should be fully complied with assuring that unsafe materials are out of direct access by minors and placed in adult only secure areas. While library staff have the responsibility to review their current collection for such materials, the public also has a role to play in bringing material to the attention of staff to be reviewed. I am pleased with the progress which has been made to date by the current conservative majority CLN Board and look forward to being an active participant in this continued effort.</p>	<p>HB 710 is a flawed law. It imagines that all minors belong in a single class. As such, a book judged to be inappropriate for a five year old - according to this law- would also be inappropriate for a seventeen year old. This obviously flawed thought process is being challenged by one of the two lawsuits that have been filed against HB 710.</p> <p>The law states that the parent or guardian of a minor may request relocation of a book that they believe is harmful to minors. The law took effect on July 1, 2025. At this point there have been 16 such requests in the CLN. In my opinion, the board is legally obligated to follow its policy on relocation and move the book if it is found to be harmful.</p> <p>The law does not require the board to remove 140 titles from circulation and create a Mature Content Section. This is government overreach. The current board has taken such action. This is censorship.</p>

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<p>5. Do you support Critical Race Theory or Diversity Equity & Inclusion, why or why not?</p>	<p>My stances on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) are in alignment with the Trump administration. I view CRT as a divisive and un-American ideology that promotes the idea that the United States is inherently racist and exposure to this harmful ideology is particularly detrimental to the well-being of children. I am also opposed to DEI initiatives. DEI promotes identity politics and preferential treatment based on race or gender, instead of focusing on individual merit and equality under the law.</p>	<p>My position on Critical Race Theory would play no role in my function as a trustee. What I would argue would be that the library must have material on Critical Race Theory in it's collection. The resources must be there for patrons seeking information on the topic.</p> <p>As to diversity, the library must have a diverse collection. There must be books on Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, atheism, etc. The library needs pro-life resources as well as pro-choice.</p> <p>The collection already illustrates equity. It contains board books for toddlers, early readers, teen books and adults. This is equity.</p> <p>All patrons regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity must feel welcomed and represented in the library.</p>
<p>6. What does the phrase "free access to ideas" mean to you and why?</p>	<p>The phrase "free access to ideas" is used by the American Library Association (ALA) and recognized as a key role of theirs in the promotion of "intellectual freedom." The words sound nice enough until you delve further into the details of their intentions. In an attempt to gain greater public support, the ALA has declared intellectual freedom to be a human right. I strongly believe this idea is a slippery slope to rubber stamp everything as valuable, necessary, and harmless, thus opening the door to exposing our children to sexually explicit and harmful materials! The CLN Board of Trustees has broken ties with the ALA and I fully support this separation.</p>	<p>I believe I may have already answered that. I absolutely believe in free inquiry. The government (in this case the board) cannot restrict access to patrons based on an ideological bias. Thus all viewpoints must be represented in the collection.</p>
<p>7. How would you select those who provide reading time, materials, speakers, and activities for children? Do you believe the community should be involved in these decisions?</p>	<p>CLN Board Trustees are not directly involved with the choosing of programming and presenters. These responsibilities fall under the supervision of the CLN Director and his programming staff. By hiring a conservative, like-minded director, the board has taken action to influence safe and positive programming. Community members are welcome to request and suggest programming and speakers, but decision-making lies with the director and his staff. CLN Board Trustees have a responsibility to the public to oversee that the duties of the Director are fulfilled with integrity.</p>	<p>Obviously, a background check would be the minimum requirement. I have been attending meetings for over two years. I have heard so many program reports. This is what I know. Our library professionals are incredible. They know their community and create vibrant, well attended programs. The community plays in suggesting programming. They also play a role in voting with their feet. Poorly attended programs are discontinued.</p>

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<p>8. The values of rural Idaho are very different than big cities like Portland, Seattle and San Francisco. How can the library incorporate local community values in new book selection?</p>	<p>To get meaningful local community input into library book selection, it is important to encourage open communication and two-way dialogue through various means. These include ideas such as online surveys, in-person conversations, focus groups, social media, email/newsletters, and providing the public with clear policy and criteria utilized in the selection of new books.</p>	<p>Our professional librarians know their community. They tailor the selection of resources to the community. I remember the previous director giving an example. She wouldn't have a number of books on surfing in the collection. They wouldn't be totally excluded, but there simply wouldn't be as many as you would find in a San Francisco library. (Although now that they putting that wave generator in CDA lake, that may need to change.)</p> <p>The director and the professional staff are charged with selcting books for our specific community and at the sametime ensuring that collection does not limit free inquiry.</p>
<p>9. Do you support or oppose the legalization of marijuana? Why or why not?</p>	<p>I oppose the legalization of marijuana for recreational use. Many studies have shown its use to have adverse effects on mental health, intelligence (including irreversible declines in cognition), and the respiratory system. Another danger is driving while acutely intoxicated with marijuana greatly increases the risk of fatal motor vehicle accidents, and law enforcement cannot determine intoxication at the scene like they can with alcohol. Additionally, crime increases in areas where marijuana is legalized due to its addictive nature and high cost for individuals who over time are less motivated to work and have to resort to criminal means to maintain their habits.</p>	<p>Again, my position on marijuana should play no role in my position as a trustee. The libraries ought to have resources representing both sides of the debate. Patrons should be able to find information on the pros and cons of the legalization of medical marijuana and recreational. They can make their own free, informed choice.</p>
<p>10. What are your thoughts on removing historical books and classical literature from libraries?</p>	<p>As I stated in question 2, I highly value classic literature and the bringing back and restoring balance between classic and modern books is a goal of mine to overall improve our libraries. Additionally, I have a strong affection for history and believe history plays a vital role in education, therefore I am inherently opposed to the removal of historical books. I have fond memories of family reading time frequently having a historical theme while growing up and then we would take family vacations to visit many of the places we read about, bringing the history even more alive. The wonderful things about historical focused books is that even if you do not have the opportunity to travel to these places in person, your mind can take you there as you read a book.</p>	<p>What evidence exists to demonstrate that historical and classical literature has been removed? I did a very brief test. Made a list of what I would consider to be children's classics. Every book was in our collection. Dickens, Hawthorne, Alcott, Plato-all available.</p> <p>I do know that the library does remove books that are no longer checked out. In a sense, the patrons make that choice.</p>

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11. Do you support or oppose bathroom usage based on preferred gender identification? Why or why not?	I am adamantly opposed to bathroom usage based on preferred gender identification. Primarily, God created only two sexes, male and female. Additionally, the mixing of sexes in private spaces such as restrooms creates all types of safety issues.	This is complex. My personal choice would be to have three restrooms. Male, female, non-gendered. Or create bathrooms with single stalls in which the doors and sides reach the floor. I realize that would be very costly. If bathroom use is limited to one's sex, as identified at birth, and the CLN restricts bathrooms according to that, how would that be policed? Our librarians have enough on their plates.
12. What is your background and why do you feel it qualifies you for this position?	I grew up in a conservative Christian home in southern California. I met my husband in a bible study group and we married in 2009. We had the opportunity to move away from California to beautiful Coeur d'Alene in 2021. We brought with us my recently widowed grandmother and since being here our family has grown with the birth of our daughter in 2022. Prior to moving to Idaho, I was the owner/instructor of a successful Pilates studio and I currently teach Pilates parttime. I was raised by example to be an active participant in my community and politics. I am a thoughtful, articulate, quick learner who shares the common beliefs and values of our conservative community and I want to contribute in an impactful way. I believe my personal qualities and principles qualify me to run for Library Board Trustee and will make me an asset to the Community Library Network.	If elected, I will bring valuable skills and experience to the board. I served for 24 years as a trustee with the Post Falls School Board, where I gained extensive knowledge of public finance, budgeting, and policy development. I am well-versed in open meeting laws and the proper role of trustees in public governance. Additionally, my 26 years as a professor at North Idaho College have given me a deep appreciation for this community and the vital role that accessible, well-funded libraries play in promoting lifelong learning and civic engagement.