WHEN I THINK ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE WITH CENSORSHIP AT LINCOLNWOOD LIBRARY...
I COULD TELL YOU HOW...

AFTER A PRIDE STORYTIME IN THE PARK (PART OF A MONTH OF PRIDE STORYTIMES), THERE WAS AN UNOFFICIAL PROGRAM CHALLENGE... LEADING TO ACTUAL BOOK CHALLENGES IN THE FALL... FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS TRAINED BY THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION.

THESE BOOKS WERE CHALLENGED; THEY SAID THEY SHOULD BE RESHELVED OUT OF THE YOUTH SECTION. RESHELVING CAN BE A CENSORSHIP PRACTICE.

SO I’D RATHER FOCUS ON THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS WHO ANSWERED THE CALL TO ACTION AND STOPPED THE BOOK BANNERS... AS MR. ROGERS SAID:

“WHEN I WAS A BOY AND I WOULD SEE SCARY THINGS IN THE NEWS, MY MOTHER WOULD SAY TO ME, ‘LOOK FOR THE HELPERS. YOU WILL ALWAYS FIND PEOPLE WHO ARE HELPING.’”

YOU CAN READ MORE IN THE NEWS:
BUT YOU’LL NEVER SEE ME & MY WORK BESTIES WHO ENDURED THIS STORM BETWEEN THE LINES. THEY NEVER TALKED TO US.

EVEN NOW, IT’S HARD TO TALK ABOUT THIS TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE...

THE HELPERS
CAREGIVERS WHO ADVOCATED TO SUPPORT STAFF TO THE BOARD/ADMIN, RALLYING COMMUNITY SUPPORTERS TO COME TO THE SEPTEMBER 2022 BOARD MEETING & SPEAK UP FOR ACCESS TO LGBTQIA+ MATERIALS. MOST COMMENTS SUPPORTED THE FREEDOM TO READ.

HERE WE ARE AT ALA ANNUAL 2023 WITH ONE OF FOUNDERS OF LIBRARY DEFENSE (MORE LATER)
LOOK TO THE HELPERS: BE THE HELPERS

BY ETI BERLAND

October

So this happened...

"The board meeting quickly devolved into shouting and police dispersed attendees."

I wrote another letter.

I knew I couldn't go to a board meeting again... I needed help...

November

Library defense, a library supporters group who stand in defense of libraries, library workers, and the freedom to read, rallied support for the November meeting.

Books were NOT removed from the collection.

Southwest Bannings

When the book banners tried to take over the library board in spring 2023, every vote that supported the "freedom to read" candidates mattered. Thankfully, they won.

Most importantly, my friends and I helped each other survive, take care of each other, and find places we could shine.

Kelly Jensen, whose brilliant journalism & action guides prepared us to understand the censorship playbook.

School librarians Amanda Jones and Martha Hickson's bravery inspired me to speak up.

Some helpers don't even know how much they've supported us like...

Niles Coalition, a local civic group working to save Niles-Maine Library, showed up, including Becky Keane, a Trustee, who read a statement of support.

Local Library Workers sent letters of support to the admin/board. Community members and authors raised their voices. Friends attended the board meeting with me. I wrote a letter offering resources for the book challenge.

Important Update!
Time & Location Change
Lincolnwood Library Board Meeting
Pull Up to reject Book Banning

When 5:00p.m Monday 8/28
Where: Lincolnwood Village Hall
6900 Lincoln Avenue, Lincolnwood

Library supporters group who stand in defense of libraries, library workers, and the freedom to read, rallied support for the November meeting.

Thankfully, they won.