Banned Books Week, which is Sept. 30-Oct. 6 this year, is an annual event celebrating the freedom to read. Typically held during the last week of September, it highlights the value of free and open access to information.

PHOTO: The Banned Books display is located in the Atlantic City Free Public Library's Youth Services Department.

Banned Books Week brings together the entire book community –- librarians, booksellers, publishers, journalists, teachers, and readers of all types –- in shared support of the freedom to seek and to express ideas, even those some consider unorthodox or unpopular.

By focusing on efforts across the country to remove or restrict access to books, Banned Books Week draws national attention to the harms of censorship. Check out the frequently challenged books to explore the issues and controversies around book challenges and book banning.

Banned Books Week 2012 marks its 30th anniversary. Thousands of individuals and institutions across the United States participate in Banned Books Week each year, and it has grown into a premier literary event and a national awareness and advocacy campaign around censorship. While books have been and continue to be banned, part of the Banned Books Week celebration is the fact that, in a majority of cases, the books have remained available. This happens only thanks to the efforts of librarians, teachers, students, and community members who stand up and speak out for the freedom to read.