

May 19, 1979

Dear Zena Sutherland:

Your request for comments on the Newbery-Caldecott Awards celebration in my mail this morning brings back so many crowded memories. I know the times for great changes in this celebration are long overdue. But when I see that the presidency and vice-presidency of ALSC no longer carry the responsibility for the chairmanship of the NC committees and when I see separate committees for each award, I am so grateful to have had to have the experience of both committees when I was vice-president of CSD.

It was work and it was all-absorbing and I had to give up so much else to do it, but what rewards---and I always had the feeling that that responsibility was one of the great privileges given to the oncoming president for the time she/he had to put in on so many other aspects of the office. There were the 200 letters spread out on my living room floor when I came back from vacation (my filing system) which had to have some action taken on them, as one example. But along with the NC work that first year, we put on, with the help of Mariam Young and Faith Murdoch in Detroit and Minnie Motz from our Bureau and Margaret McElderry, the Cranbrook Institute on children's book illustration as a preconference and during the following year the committees for work with exceptional children (Elizabeth Nesbit's suggestion) the Mildred Hatchelder Award (Marian _____, of Michigan's idea right after Mildred had spoken) and the one on national planning of special collections (my own obsession since I had tried to set up a collection of world war II books when I went to Columbia in 1947 for comparison of attitudes in World War I and found almost all the early 1940 books o.p. and unavailable!---so I do not think we sacrificed a great deal of other work because of the NC work.

But times do change and it probably would be impossible to do both jobs adequately today---but I regret that the recent presidents have not had the excitement and the joy of both. And I could not have done it, even the next year when ESEA II came in and 50-60% of my own time was given over to trying to get and keep that huge program into control so that it was workable for our schools. Most of our ongoing programs were sacrificed to some extent because of it.

So, with this look backward, what do I suggest for the future?

Surely, the banquet is obsolete. It has become too elitist, not only because of the expense of it for tickets but because of their scarcity when whole tables are bought up by groups and the single children's or school finds it impossible to get a ticket even when she/he can afford it. I would surely opt for a large, foodless auditorium stage duplication of the regular NC festivities, with tickets of \$2 or \$3. And I would get it televised so that librarians and parents and children all over the country could participate in it. Surely, it could set an example for the EMMY and daytime television and the other awards. I bet that Public Television would make a place for it, eager as they are to improve children's programs. Why not invite some of the officials to the NC banquet in Dallas to show them what it is like? I'll be very glad to be on a NYC committee to approach people here, if I could be of help. It could be so exciting. Good luck to you and thank you for giving me the chance to think about all this.

Sincerely yours,
Helen Sattley
Helen Sattley

1.3. The very thing I was in the business is a series of things