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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Ms. Zena Sutherland, Editor
The Bulletin for the Centes of
Children's Books
University of Chicago
1100 E. 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

Dear Zena:

I am not certain that I am really knowledgable enough about the history or the pros and cons pertaining to the issue about the Newbery-Caldecott banquet. I have attended a number of them, of course, but have never really had to participate in any of the tasks connected with preparing for them.

In general, I must say the meals at most of the banquets have been dreadful and I tolerated them only to be able to witness the awarding of the medals to the recipients and to hear each one present his/her acceptance paper. Frankly, I am terrorized at the thought of having to sit up at the headtable this year in order to issue the medals to the winners of each of the awards. You can be certain that a steam-logged banquet meal will be the very last thing I will want to bother with before those medals are presented! Actually, I suspect each of the medal winners will feel quite the same before they give their papers. The banquet is really a waste of time and money, I think.

I have given considerable thought to this question since receiving your note last week. I think my position is now stabilized enough to offer my suggestion.

- I would like to see some fine gala connected with the awarding of the medals, for this serves to emphasize a respect for "distinguished accomplishments" in aspects related to literature for young people.
- I do not think a banquet needs to be a part of the gala!
- Some time during the convention (summer) a block of time could be set aside for an ALSC Assembly (free of charge to the membership). At this assembly the medals would be presented to each of the award winners and each medal recipient could present his/her acceptance paper.

- Following the assembly there could be a reception, honoring the award recipients. (Serve cocktails, wine and cheese, desert and coffee, etc. for a nominal fee.) This special reception would give the award recipients (their editors and publishers, too) the special recognition they should have, I think, for the unique contributions that their writing and illustrations imply they have to the field of children's literature.

I don't suppose this is a very original alternative to the banquet idea. I offer it as one, nonetheless, which would be less tedious and certainly less expensive for those interested in seeing and hearing and honoring the award winning creators of children's books.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia Cianciolo
Professor

PC:mlr