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Mrs. Zena Sutherland
Center for Children's Books
Regenstein Library
University of Chicago
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, IL 60637

Dear Zena:

Having just talked with you (Wednesday evening, May 23), I am following up by saying that I am glad there is a task force to consider alternatives to some of the things now followed as procedures for the Newbery and Caldecott Awards. Good luck with it!

I remember suggesting when I was president of CSD that we try to lighten some of the festivities by having a buffet supper instead of a formal banquet and having informal clusters of people rather than a receiving line. I was not just turned down, I was practically hissed down, primarily because of concern about the editors, publishers, etc. I think it is time this whole matter was reviewed again.

I do have to admit that it seems to me there is something pleasanter about events which are somehow connected with food or which at least allow for comfort in sitting and listening, etc. On the other hand, I believe an argument which I have not yet heard but which I think could be cogent is that more people who are not intimately concerned about children's literature might come to hear the Award winners talk than to a banquet. The point made in the recent ALSC Newsletter about the cost of tickets and your point about younger members' being left out for that reason are also significant, I think. However, I would like to explore the idea of a brunch or luncheon or cocktail party rich with goodies before wiping out that possibility entirely.

I think that for a lot of us who are invited to a lot of festivities during the ALA conference week, there is a tendency to forget that not everybody has access to those invitations and pleasures. Some people really look forward to the Newbery Banquet as the event of the week. I would still like to see people get gussied up for it and have a gracious setting. If that can be accomplished without food and/or drink and at no cost, that's fine, but I wonder!

I do wish you and your task force the best!

Sincerely,

Peggy
Peggy Sullivan

P.S. - Another thought (since dictating this last week): the record of who buys tickets + attends is somewhat misleading since Lippincott, for example, may reserve 2 tables + invite five or ten "younger members" as their guests. I realize most guests are not in that category, but some are, + it makes the statistics misleading.

P.S.