



# Carnegie

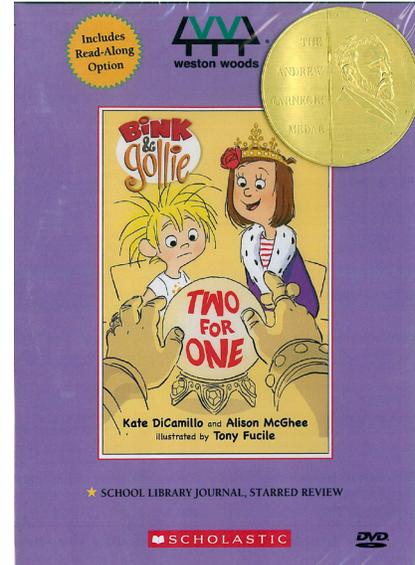
## MEDAL ACCEPTANCE SPEECHES

### Carnegie Medal Acceptance Remarks by Melissa Reilly Ellard

Who doesn't love a donut? Donuts are nature's most perfect food. Who doesn't love Bink and Gollie? Two best friends who stick together through the good and bad.

The first decision our creative team makes is choosing a book to adapt. From the time we saw the first book in the *Bink and Gollie* series, we knew we had something special. How could we go wrong with the amazing writing team of Kate DiCamillo and Alison McGhee? I have been very lucky to work with these wonderful and talented ladies on several projects now, and they are just incredible. Rounding out the trio was the talented illustrator, Tony Fucile. With Tony's experience in the world of animation, these books are almost designed like storyboards for animation, and we could easily imagine the movies unfolding right before us. When we received an F&G of *Bink and Gollie: Two for One* from Kate and Alison's agent, Holly McGhee, we thought it was even better than the first book. So thank you, Kate, Alison, and Tony; you made our jobs very easy on this one.

The heart of this series is the friendship between Bink and Gollie, two girls who discover the world together and are there for each other no matter what. I think everyone needs a friend like this in life. Someone who won't judge you when you get a bit of stage fright or you



don't win the big prize at the local fair. I am very lucky because I have many great friends in my life who stand by me no matter what, so thank you, ladies. Thank you to my best friend and husband, Bruce. I'm reminded of the scene in the book where Gollie asks Madame Prunely if the two friends she sees in her crystal ball are together in the future, and Madame Prunely responds, "without question." I can identify with Bink's reply: "That's all the future I need to know!"

When we started working on this series, we turned to illustrator Tony Fucile for recommendations about animators. Tony has over 20 years of experience in animation, including working on feature films such as *Finding Nemo* and *The Incredibles*, and he guided us to

Weston Woods was founded in 1953 by Morton Schindel with the mission to create audiovisual adaptations of books that truly capture the essence of those titles. That mission continues today. In 1996, Weston Woods became part of Scholastic. Weston Woods, headquartered in Danbury, Conn., provides materials to more than 50,000 schools and libraries nationwide and has distributors in more than 20 countries around the world.



Producers **Paul R. Gagne** and **Melissa Reilly Ellard**, Weston Woods Studios, Inc., are the 2014 recipients of the (Andrew) Carnegie Medal for *Bink & Gollie: Two for One*. They delivered their acceptance remarks at the ALSC Book and Media Awards Program on Monday, June 30, 2014, during the American Library Association Annual Conference.

For more information about the Carnegie Award, visit <http://bit.ly/carnegie-award>.



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Chuck Gammage in Ontario, Canada. It was a perfect fit. They listened to all the notes that Paul and I gave them and took our ideas to a higher level. So thank you to the whole Chuck Gammage team.

The Weston Woods team is a small one, and beyond being co-workers, we are all friends. I need to thank our Vice President, Linda Lee, for her trust and continuous support. This is the 24<sup>th</sup> year that Paul and I have worked together and I

### Carnegie Medal Acceptance Remarks by Paul R. Gagne

Good morning. I'd like to add my thanks to Joan Atkinson and the members of the 2014 Carnegie Medal Selection Committee for your hard work and dedication, and for choosing *Bink and Gollie: Two for One* to receive this wonderful honor.

It was a pure joy for us to be able to make an animated film of what I've been calling the *Godfather II* of children's books—a sequel that surpasses the original. And, in some ways, it was as easy as falling off a log—all of the key creative decisions had already been made when we produced *Bink and Gollie* the previous year, so our team was already in place and ready to hit its stride with this film. For us, each production begins with casting the right voice to read the story. We had auditioned a dozen or so actresses and were about to narrow down our choices for the two voices we needed when one of our animators, Gary McGivney, happened to be visiting our office. Gary was telling us he'd just seen a musical duo called Garfunkel and Oates on *The Tonight Show*. Melissa and I asked, "Garfunkel and who?" Gary replied, "You've never heard them?" He im-

need to thank him for all of his guidance and friendship. I am honored to accept this award alongside of you. Thank you to Steve Syarto, our sound engineer; your creativity on all of our projects is a huge asset.

Last but not least, I'd like to give a huge thank you to Joan Atkinson and the members of the 2014 Andrew Carnegie Medal and Notable Children's Videos Committee. Along with this great honor,

mediately opened his laptop, went onto YouTube, and started playing us videos of two young women performing these quirky, crazy songs with titles like "Weed Card," "Pregnant Women are Smug," and my personal favorite, "Sex with Ducks" (which simultaneously supports marriage equality and pokes fun at Pat Robertson). As we were watching the videos, all of a sudden Melissa's face lit up and she shouted, "BINK AND GOLLIE!" Instantly we were just about jumping up and down and yelling "OHMYGOD, YES, THEY'RE PERFECT!" Garfunkel and Oates turned out to be Riki Lindhome and Kate Micucci, who, in addition to their musical exploits, have a long string of acting credits on various television shows like *Raising Hope* and *The Big Bang Theory*. Melissa sent them a copy of the book, and even they reacted with "OHMYGOD, THIS IS US!!!" Kate became our Bink, Riki was Gollie, and their voices set the bar and inspired us for everything that followed in both films. Our heartfelt thanks go to both of them, and we're very much looking forward to the new "Garfunkel and Oates" sitcom that starts airing in August.

The three short stories, *Bink and Gollie: Two for One*, had enough additional characters that we felt we needed to expand

you have helped raise my cool factor as an aunt. When I found out about winning the Carnegie Medal, I asked two of my nieces if they wanted to come with me, and Tori and Lindsay, both first-timers in Vegas, are sitting in the audience today. But seriously, committee members, I can only imagine the amount of time and dedication you have put in over the past year, so thank you, thank you, thank you for this honor!

the cast of voices from the first film, and they were all easy choices. I can't imagine anyone other than Jon Carroll as the "Whack-a-Duck" man. Jon speaks fluent Duck, and recently told me he based the "Whack-a-Duck" man's voice on one of his mom's ex-boyfriends. David de Vries has been the "Golden Voice of Weston Woods" for the past ten years or so, and took out one of the many characters in his considerable vocal repertoire for the talent show judge in the second story. And we found our Madame Prunely in one of the most unlikely places—if you met Wendy Carter, you'd never believe there was a quirky old gypsy lady hiding inside her, but when we asked her to give it a try, she really brought the character to life. Thank you, Jon, David, and Wendy for bringing your amazing talents to this production.

If our actors gave this film its heart, our composer, David Mansfield, gave it a soul, taking the catchy main theme he established with the first film and further expanding upon it. Thank you, David, for contributing a vital part of the entire personality of these films.

I'd like to add my thanks to all of the people Melissa mentioned, especially



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Kate DiCamillo, Alison McGhee, and Tony Fucile for trusting us with these wonderful books. And I'd like to thank my co-producer, Melissa, for the many inspirations that were a driving force behind both *Bink and Gollie* films, and for your friendship. I'd also like to thank Steve Syarto for doing his usual brilliant job editing and mixing the soundtrack for this film, my nephew, Robert, for taking a crazy idea we had for the end title se-

quence and making it work, and all of our coworkers at Weston Woods, who make it a pleasure to come to work every day. As always, I want to thank the Scholastic family for giving us such a good home, and our Vice President, Linda Lee, for her enduring patience and support, and for the trust and faith she shows in just letting us do our jobs. And a very big thank you to my family, who are here with me today; my wife, Lynn, for your love and

support and for putting up with the crazy schedule and long hours, and our daughters, Melanie and Brianna, who are the reason I'm still here. I had always thought of Weston Woods as a temporary stepping-stone toward a career in feature films until you came into our lives. When I saw first-hand the influence that these little films have on getting you to love books, I realized I was already doing what I was meant to do.



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