



Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature

Ohio Library Foundation, 35 E. Gay Street, Ste 305, Columbus, Ohio 43215-3138

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June \$, 1999

William Steig

Dear Mr. Steig:

I am very happy to officially announce that you are the winner of the Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature for the year 2000.

This award was established four years ago to honor the memory of Jo Osborne, a well-loved children's librarian who touched the lives of thousands of children with her own humor and with the humor of authors like you. Ms. Osborne's friends and family wanted to carry on the spirit of her life's work by recognizing the importance of this genre in Children's Literature, which has been under-valued. Children, of course, already seek out funny books, enjoy them, and even learn from them. With this award, we expect more adults to take humor seriously!

A local committee of librarians, teachers, and academicians conferred and produced a list of five nominees for a national jury; and they ultimately selected you as the winner! The jury was impressed with the broad appeal of your books, which introduce satire and a sense of irony to both younger and older readers. Your illustrations are so full of humorous details and witty perspectives that the (already charming) text is enhanced many times over. Though not a member of the jury myself, I can attest to the delight your books have stirred during story hours throughout my long years as a children's librarian.

To emphasize the importance of humor across the professions, the Jo Osborne Award is presented at the Ohio State University Children's Literature Conference each year, in front of 2,000+ teachers and librarians. I understand that you may not be able to accept the award in person, February 11, 2000, due to health concerns. Be assured that we will be celebrating the wide range of your children's books during the conference. A check for \$500 and a small trollish token accompany the award.

Mark Twain once said that the classics are something that people praise, but don't read. Humorous books seem to have the opposite problem: they are read, but not praised. As a recipient of this award, you will be instrumental in turning that attitude around.

Jo Osborne approached life with two goals in mind: to work hard and to have fun. I would like to thank you and congratulate you for all your hard work that has caused so many people to smile, chortle, and have fun while reading.

Best Regards and Grins,

Rachel Alexander

Rachel Alexander

Chairperson,

Jo Osborne Award for Humor in Children's Literature Committee