The Thirty-First Annual

Children’s Book Festival
Thirtieth Anniversary Year 1997-1998

The University of Southern Mississippi
March 18-20, 1998
History of the Children's Book Festival

In 1968, Dr. Warren Tracy, chairman of the Library Science Department and University librarian for The University of Southern Mississippi, saw his vision for a children's literature conference come to life. The University, under the leadership of Dr. William D. McCain, and the Library Science Department hosted the Conference on the Writing, Illustrating, and Publishing of Children's Books, the first of what soon became the annual Children's Book Festival.

Two years earlier, Dr. Lena de Grummond, professor of Library Science, with Dr. Tracy's blessing, had begun to procure early children's books to support the Library Science program. She spent countless hours writing to authors and illustrators of contemporary children's books to acquire original material for the library. Contributions of artwork and manuscripts flowed in from across the United States and Canada. Today, more than 1,200 authors and illustrators are represented in the collection, which in 1976 officially became known as the "de Grummond Children's Literature Research Collection."

In his original vision for a children's literature conference, Dr. Tracy saw the conference as a way to highlight the de Grummond Collection. That first conference, in May 1968, was designed to announce the opening of the special children's literature collection. Librarians, teachers, parents, and other adults interested in promoting children's literature were invited for three days of exhibits, workshops, and panel discussions led by publishers and editors of children's books. Dr. Francis Lander Spain, past president of the American Library Association and former head of the children's department of the New York Public Library, spoke at the first evening session, which was open to the public.

In 1969, the conference became known as the "Children's Book Festival" and included an event that became an honored tradition—presentation of The University of Southern Mississippi Medallion, an award for distinguished service in the field of children's literature. A committee of professionals, associated with children's literature, selects the recipient each year. Unique in the literary press, the Medallion is awarded not for an individual's total body of work, rather than for one particular work, and each medallion is different. Cast in silver for the recipient and for permanent display in the de Grummond Collection and in bronze for wider distribution, a profile of the honoree is engraved on the face, or reverse, of the medallion, and an illustration from the honoree's work is engraved on the reverse side. Since the first award to author Lois Lenski at the second annual Children's Book Festival, the USM Medallion has been presented to an outstanding array of children's authors and illustrators.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the festival came into its own. Dr. Tracy continued to attract out-of-state writers and illustrators, enhancing the festival's reputation. From 1977-1980, Dr. Oniva K. Boshears served as director of the festival. Dr. Jeannine Laughlin-Porter assumed the directorship in 1980. That was the year Ezra Jack Keats, internationally acclaimed author and illustrator for children, was invited to accept the USM Medallion. Following his visit, Keats became one of the strongest supporters of the Children's Book Festival and de Grummond Collection. Since his death, the University has acquired his personal and professional papers, original artwork, typescripts, and dummy sketches for thirty-six books by Keats. The materials are now housed in the de Grummond Collection. In 1985, the Keats Foundation established an Ezra Jack Keats lectureship, with Barbara Cooney as the artist honoree and Brian Alderson as the first Keats lecturer. In years since, the lecture has become a highly regarded feature of the festival. Children's Authors Speak, a collection of speeches compiled by Dr. Laughlin-Porter and Sherry Laughlin, was published in 1993 and includes a number of Keats lectures, as well as speeches by USM Medallion honorees.

Dr. Boshears, during Dr. Laughlin-Porter's directorship of the festival, continued to work closely with her and chaired the Medallion Selection Committee through spring 1993. In 1994, he resumed directorship of the festival. This year, 1998, marks the first presentation of the Kaigler-Lamont Award to a librarian for distinguished service to children. Miss Fay Kaigler and Mrs. Ruth Lamont have funded the award to honor each year an individual who brings books and children together.

From its modest beginning of one hundred participants, the Children's Book Festival has grown to 1,000 participants representing seventeen states. Originally organized to promote the de Grummond Collection, the festival has come into its own. Both the festival and the de Grummond Collection continue to evolve together for the advancement of children's literature and, year after year, enthusiastic supporters of children's literature come together to celebrate the joy of children's books.

The University of Southern Mississippi

The University of Southern Mississippi Medallion is the highlight of the Children's Book Festival. This year's recipient is Elaine Kongsburg. The medallion is awarded annually for outstanding contributions in the field of children's literature. Silver medallions are cast for the recipient, for the President of The University of Southern Mississippi, and for the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection's permanent display. In addition, a number of bronze medallions are cast and are available for purchase during the festival.

Past Recipients of the Medallion

1969 Lois Lenski
1970 Ernest H. Shepard
1971 Roger Duvoisin
1972 Marcia Brown
1973 Lynd Ward
1974 Taro Yashima
1975 Barbara Cooney
1976 Scott O'Dell
1977 Adrienne Adams
1978 Madeleine L'Engle
1979 Leonard Everett Fisher
1980 Ezra Jack Keats
1981 Maurice Sendak
1982 Beverly Cleary
1983 Katherine Paterson

1984 Peter Spier
1985 Arnold Lobel
1986 Jean Craighead George
1987 Paula Fox
1988 Jean Fritz
1989 Lee Bennett Hopkins
1990 Charlotte Zolotow
1991 Richard Peck
1992 James Marshall
1993 Quentin Blake
1994 Ashley Bryan
1995 Tomie de Paola
1996 Patricia MacLachlan
1997 Eric Carle

The University of Southern Mississippi Medallion for distinguished contributions to children's literature is made possible by the generous support of the Ralph and Carrol Wicker Foundation.
Elaine Koningsburg

We are pleased to honor Elaine Koningsburg as the thirtieth recipient of The University of Southern Mississippi Medallion. The Medallion is given annually to honor the body of work created by an author or illustrator of children’s and young adult literature — and there is no doubt that Elaine Koningsburg’s contributions to this literature are indeed outstanding.

Author of seventeen books for young people, Ms. Koningsburg is perhaps most famous for From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiller, which won the 1968 Newbery Medal. Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth was designated as a Newbery Honor book in the same year — a feat not accomplished before or since. Even more astounding is the fact that these were the first two books she had ever written! They were published within months of each other, and the rest is literary history — a history that was recently enriched by a second Newbery Medal in 1997 for A View from Saturday.

In addition to being a critically acclaimed author, Koningsburg possesses artistic talent that allows her to illustrate her own books. Her novels are illustrated with sparse pen-and-ink drawings, and readers are cautioned to examine her illustrations closely, as they often reveal additional dimensions of the stories. Two recently published picture books, Samuel Todd’s Book of Great Colors and Samuel Todd’s Book of Great Inventions, allow her to express herself in full-color, double-page splendor.

Koningsburg was born in New York City in 1930 and grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania. She attended the Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie-Mellon University) and graduated with honors, receiving a B.S. in chemistry. She then went on to graduate study at the University of Pittsburgh. Shortly after receiving her bachelor’s degree, she married David Koningsburg, a psychologist. They then moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where Koningsburg took a position as a teacher of chemistry at Batram, a private all-girls school. Although her teaching career was cut short to raise her three children, Paul, Laurie, and Ross, her daily interaction with these girls provided Koningsburg with a remarkable insight into their personalities. This knowledge was later used to create characters in the books she would soon write.

Koningsburg’s writing career began when her youngest child entered school. She set aside time each morning to write and often shared the stories with her children when they came home for lunch. Her original intention was to write stories about the lives of middle-class children and the basic problems they face — Who am I? What makes me the same as everyone else? What makes me different? In Dictionary of Literary Biography, Perry Nodelman describes, “her writing is a witty distillation of complex experience, and she always tells her stories from an interesting point of view .... Her stories have grown out of the material closest at hand, the events of her own life.”

In addition to the two Newbery Medals, a number of Koningsburg’s books have been chosen as ALA Notable Children’s Books and ALA Best Books for Young Adults. Several of her works have been adapted to film. From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiller was released in 1973 as a motion picture, starring Ingrid Bergman. Jennifer and Me, based on Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, William McKinley, and Me, Elizabeth, was a television movie on NBC in 1973; and Father’s Arcane Daughter was adapted as Caroline? by the Hallmark Hall of Fame in 1990.

Even though Koningsburg’s books are critically acclaimed, it is the praise of her readers that is the greatest compliment. “There is no greater compliment than having your work cherished by ... someone who has read a lot and chooses your book out of a vast experience of reading.” It is equally rewarding to hear a young man say, “I never liked reading until I read you.” It is these readers who cherish the books that Elaine Koningsburg has shared with them and look to the future for new reading experiences that only the most gifted of writers can provide.

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Children’s Book Festival Speakers, 1968-1998

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Milton Meltzer</td>
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<td>Maureen White</td>
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<td>Garth Williams</td>
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<td>Kathryn Tucker Windham</td>
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<td>Taro Yashima</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Jane Yolen</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Herbert S. Zim</td>
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Ezra Jack Keats Lecturers, 1985-1998

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<tr>
<td>1985</td>
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<td>1986</td>
<td>Dorothy Butler</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>Ellin Greene</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Nancy Hands</td>
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<td>Michael Patrick Hearn</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Betsy Heanne</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>Selma Lanes</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Anne Lundin</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>Leonard S. Marcus</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>Anita Moss</td>
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Sunday, March 19, 1995
10:30 - 12:30 Registration
Bennett Auditorium

3:00 - 4:00 Autograph Session
Bennett Auditorium

First General Session
Bennett Auditorium
Presiding: Dr. Onora O. Boahen
Keynote Speaker: Eugene Anschuetz

Second General Session
Bennett Auditorium
Presiding: Dr. Onora O. Boahen
Keynote Speaker: Eugene Anschuetz

Third General Session
Bennett Auditorium

Fourth General Session
Bennett Auditorium

Fifth General Session
Bennett Auditorium

Workshops
“Discussion of Caldwell and Newbery Winning
Polymer Science Auditorium
Speakers: Dr. Pam Barron and Dr. Maureen White

“A Nonsense Approach to Storytelling”
University Union, Room H
Speaker: Rev. Patricia Doolittle

“Mother Goose for All Ages”
University Union, Room H
Speaker: Dr. Carol Doolittle

“The Power of the Word”
University Union, Room H
Speaker: Dr. Douglas H. Greenberg

“Telling the Tale”
University Union, Room H
Speaker: Dr. Douglas H. Greenberg

“Researching Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Revising Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Reading Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Reviewing Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Creating Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Reviewing Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Creating Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Publishing Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Telling the Tale”
University Union, Room H
Speaker: Dr. Douglas H. Greenberg

“Revising Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Creating Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Reviewing Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Creating Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Reviewing Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Creating Children’s Books”
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Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Reviewing Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson

“Creating Children’s Books”
McClain Library, Room 200
Speaker: Valerite Alderson
Faye Gibbons

Faye Gibbons was born in Carter’s Quarter, deep in the Georgia mountains, in 1938, and spent her childhood in mill towns and rural areas of Dalton, Savannah, and Atlanta. Because of economic hardships, her family’s lifestyle did not include running water, electricity, indoor plumbing, automobiles, or even television. Although she felt deprived and ashamed of this situation while growing up, as an author she later came to value the experiences gained through hardship.

Gibbons attended Ogletree University and Emory University and received her bachelor's degree from Berry College in 1961. She then went on to graduate study at Auburn University in 1965. She taught elementary and high school classes at several different schools in Georgia and Alabama during the 1960s.

Gibbons did not attend school until she was nine years old and it was then that she discovered, through reading, a whole new world of stories. She read to her four younger brothers and sisters and even made up her own stories to entertain them. These stories were not written down but served to express her dreams of getting an education and leaving the Georgia mountains far behind. Her professional writing career did not begin until much later, after college, teaching, marriage, and motherhood.

Her first story, Some Gift Morning (1982), was rooted deeply in the Georgia mountains and depicted the eccentric, colorful country people she had grown up with. After writing the book, Gibbons was able to acknowledge that she was part of those people and, more importantly, that she felt good about it. Favorable reviews in the New York Times, the Horn Book, and Booklist gave Gibbons the confidence to begin Mighty Close to Heaven. The idea for this story came from a trip she made in the 1940s when she and her parents, unemployed and unable to purchase bus tickets, traveled by foot through the Georgia mountains to visit her grandparents. The titles for her first two books come from gospel songs because of the large part that religion has played in her life.

When asked about how her stories begin, Gibbons comments, “My stories start with a picture—or several pictures—in my mind. There is generally a main character, but I don’t know much about him or her until I begin writing. What I am usually very sure of is the setting. It’s almost always rural. I’m a country woman, and I feel more at home surrounded by trees and fields—and so do my characters. My stories frequently involve families, because family is so important to me.”

Other works include King Shoes and Craw Pockets (1989), Night In the Barn (1995), Mountain Wedding (1996), and Hook, Moon, Night: Spooky Tales from the Georgia Mountains (1997). Her work has been recognized by the American Library Association, USA Today, and the Duke Council of Authors and Journalists. In addition, her books have often been nominated for the Alabama Children’s Book Award and the Georgia Children’s Book Award.

Many of Faye Gibbons’ dreams have come true. During school visits she tells the students to go after their dreams, whether those dreams are to write, paint, make movies, or fly jets. She has found through her own personal experience that people can do the wonderful things they want to—if they’re willing to work for their dreams.

Gregory Christie

Gregory Christie’s career as an illustrator of children’s books received an immediate and rewarding response from the children’s book community. His first book, The Palm of My Heart (Lee & Low 1996), was named the 1997 recipient of the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Award. Christie knew from an early age that he wanted to be an artist. As a five-year-old, he copied favorite characters from comic books. Even then, the process of creating art gave him a sense of joy. He received his fine arts degree from the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

When he creates a new book, the first piece that he paints is very important and acts as a foundation upon which he builds the whole book. It sets the tone of the work and becomes his “messenger.” In The Palm of My Heart, the drawing for “Black Hands” is the messenger, setting the lyrical, spiritual tone of the book.

Born in Plainfield, New Jersey, in 1971. This 25-year-old artist now lives and works in the historic Fort Greene section of Brooklyn. His second book, Richard Wright and the Library Card by William Miller, was published by Lee & Low in 1997. This picture book tells of an incident in Richard Wright’s childhood when he was denied access to the public library because of his race. The “messenger” in this book is a painting of the 17-year-old Wright sitting alone in his room, thinking. Christie says, “I like it because most creative people spend time alone, especially in their work. It’s a key element of the creative process. I spend a lot of time doing that.”

In addition to the illustrations in his two picture books for children, Christie’s artwork has appeared in the New York Times, the Village Voice, and on the covers of numerous music CDs.

Roger Sutton

Ezra Jack Keats Lecturer

The School of Library and Information Science at The University of Southern Mississippi and the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation are pleased to welcome Roger Sutton as the thirteenth Ezra Jack Keats Lecturer.

Roger Sutton became the editor in chief of The Horn Book, Inc. in 1996. As editor of The Horn Book Magazine, considered one of the authoritative journals on children’s literature and reading, he has added coverage of the paperback field and non-print media, and has expanded coverage of international children’s literature. In addition, Mr. Sutton serves as editor of The Horn Book Guide to Children’s and Young Adult Books, which contains almost 2,000 reviews of hardcover trade books for young people in each issue.

Previously editor of the Bulletin of the Center for Children’s Books at the University of Illinois at Urbana, Mr. Sutton has published reviews of children’s books and articles in national periodicals and professional journals, including the New York Times Book Review and School Library Journal.

Mr. Sutton, an active member of the American Library Association, is on the 1999 Newbery Committee. He has acted as judge for several distinguished awards and has served on numerous boards. A former consultant for the Children’s Literature Center at the Library of Congress, he has taught children’s literature at Simmons College, Columbia University, and the University of Chicago. Mr. Sutton’s book includes Hearing Us Out: Voices from the Gay and Lesbian Community (Little) and an ALA Best Books for Young Adults, reissued fall 1997. He has coedited Evaluating Children’s Books: A Critical Look and The Best in Children’s Books 1985-1990. The University of Chicago Guide to Children’s Literature. The title of this Ezra Jack Keats Lecture is “Problematic Ideologies” and Other Adventures in Children’s Book Reviewing.

Davida Adedjouma

Writer, teacher, and editor, Davida Adedjouma was already the recipient of numerous literary awards and grants, including a Bush Foundation Individual Artist Fellowship and a Jerome Foundation Travel-and-Study Fellowship when The Palm of My Heart, her first book for children, received the 1997 Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Award and the Publishers Weekly Reading Magic Award. Her collection of poems by African American children celebrates the beauty of their lives and their culture. Adedjouma met each poet through a series of writing workshops with children in Minneapolis/St. Paul from the Inner City Youth League and the African American Academy for Accelerated Learning. “Children’s voices in this country are seldom heard,” she states. “We adults speak for them, ‘to them, and about them.’ I wanted to offer a vehicle for children to express who they are, in their own words.”

The Quarterly Black Review says, “A celebration of blackness and the genius of our collective spirit, the anthology gives a dazzling glimpse of what it really means to be young, gifted, and black.” Publishers Weekly calls the poems “fierce and joyful.”

Adedjouma’s publications include Last Summer, a collection of short stories, and most recently, In Daddy’s Arms I Am Tall, an intergenerational collection of poetry by African American writers celebrating fatherhood. A native of Chicago, Adedjouma currently resides in New York City.

Workshop Presenters

Dr. Pam Barron, Associate Professor, Library Science, Florida State University
Dr. Maureen White, Associate Professor, Library Science, University of Houston
Dr. Kay Bishop, Assistant Professor, University of Kentucky
Dr. Carol Doll, Assistant Professor, University of Washington

Valerie Alderson, Richmond, Yorkshire, England

Distinguished Guests

Brian Alderson, Children’s Book Editor, the Times (London)
Oseola McCarty, USM’s beloved benefactor, Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Barbara Bryant, Executive Vice President, Phoenix Learning Group, St. Louis and New York
Elaine Konigsburg Bibliography


Journey to an 800 Number. Atheneum, 1982. (Published in England as Journey by First Class Camel. Hamish Hamilton, 1983.)


Up from Jericho Tel. Atheneum, 1986.

The View from Saturday. Atheneum, 1996.

Children's Book Review Center

Over 1,000 recently published books for children and young adults are available for examination and review at the University of Southern Mississippi Children's Book Review Center. Students in education and library science classes; faculty members, and participants in the Children's Book Festival are invited to visit the center, which is sponsored by the School of Library and Information Science. The Review Center is open at selected times during the Children's Book Festival.

Participating Publishers

Aladdin
Arcade
Atheneum
Bradbury Press
Carollrhoda
Collier
Crestwood House
Crowell
Crowell/Abelard-Schuman
Crown
Dell/Laurel-Leaf Books
Dial Books
EZ Nature
Farrar, Straus & Giroux
Four Winds
Frederick Warne
Greennovil
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
Harper Keypoint
Harper Trophy
HarperCollins
Henry Holt
Joy Street/Little, Brown
Knopf
Knopf/Bullseye
Knopf/Dragonfly
Lerner Publication
Lippincott
Little, Brown
Lothrop, Lee
Macmillan
McElderry
Morrow
Mulberry
North-South
Peaceable Kingdom
Pelican Publishing
Picture Book Studio
Puffin
Putnam & Grosset Group
Random House
Scholastic
Scrivens
Seaver Books/Henry Holt
Sierra Club
Simon and Schuster
Sports Illustrated for Kids
Viking Kestrel

The de Grummond Children's Literature Collection

The de Grummond Children's Literature Collection is one of North America's leading research centers in the field of children's literature. Although the collection has many strengths, the main focus is on American and British children's literature, historical as well as contemporary. The collection holds original materials and published works in its facility on the fourth floor of the McCain Library and Archives on the Hattiesburg campus of The University of Southern Mississippi.

The collection is named for Dr. Lena Y. de Grummond, author of several children's books, who founded the collection in 1966. She assembled materials that were sent by contributors from around the world. Over 1,200 people have generously donated their books and original materials to the collection. In addition, holdings include 55,000 published books.

A major acquisition is that of the Ezra Jack Keats collection. The original artwork, typescripts, dummies, and preliminary sketches for 36 books by the Caldecott award-winning author/Illustrator complement the archives of his personal and professional papers already housed in the de Grummond Collection.

For more information, please contact

Dee Jones, Curator
de Grummond Children's Literature Collection
McCain Library and Archives
Box 5148
The University of Southern Mississippi
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-5148
(601) 266-4349
The University of Southern Mississippi
Children’s Book Festival

Director
Dr. Onva Boshears, Distinguished Service Professor
School of Library and Information Science

Program Director
Dr. Pam Barron, Associate Professor, Library Science, Florida State University

Medallion Selection Committee Chair
Dr. Kay Bishop, Assistant Professor, Library Science, University of Kentucky

Festival Arrangements
Kalieca Henderson, Coordinator, Department of Continuing Education

Book Sales
Ernie Cowart, Senior Coordinator, Department of Continuing Education

Special Thanks

The USM Children’s Book Festival expresses appreciation to the following for their help in making this event exciting and rewarding:

Dr. Horace Fleming, President, The University of Southern Mississippi
Dr. Aubrey K. Lucas, President Emeritus, The University of Southern Mississippi
Dr. Martin Pope and Dr. Lillian Pope and the Ezra Jack Keats Foundation, New York, New York
Dr. Carrol Wicker and the Ralph and Carrol Wicker Foundation, Hattiesburg Mississippi
Miss Fay Kaigler, Gloster, Mississippi, and Mrs. Ruth Lamont, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Mrs. Dee Jones, Curator, de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection
Coleen Salley, Professor Emerita, University of New Orleans, Storytelling Convener
Members of the Medallion Selection Committee
Students from the School of Library and Information Science, for assisting our guest speakers and for providing refreshments
University employees who assisted with the book sales and the entire staff of the Department of Continuing Education, Noncredit Programming

Surely it would be less arrogant, and truer to the evidence, to say that the peculiarity of child readers is that they are not peculiar. It is we who are peculiar. Fashions in literary taste come and go among the adults, and every period has its own shibboleths. These, when good, do not improve the taste of children, and, when bad, do not corrupt it; for the children read only to enjoy. Of course their vocabulary and general ignorance make some books unintelligible to them. But apart from that, juvenile taste is simply human taste, going on from age to age, silly with a universal silliness or wise with a universal wisdom, regardless of modes, movements, and literary revolutions.

C. S. Lewis
On Juvenile Taste
The Children’s Book Festival congratulates President Horace Fleming on the occasion of his inauguration, April 14, 1998, as seventh President of The University of Southern Mississippi and expresses grateful appreciation to Aubrey K. Lucas, sixth President, from July 1, 1975 to December 31, 1996.