Between the reader and writer lies a vast array of other folks. Foremost among them is M. Jerry Weiss, who realized that he could slip cleverly into the middle ground by using just one of his two initials. M. (as we like to call him) has a marvelous talent for getting publishers to send writers to conferences at places we'd never get to see otherwise, like New Orleans, San Francisco, Hoboken, and Toronto. For this, we all love him.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, there's that one guy who has absolutely no sense of humor. His name eludes me at the moment, but you know who I mean. The same guy who's proud of the fact that he doesn't like teens. On second thought, let's just move on. No point making him crankier than he already is. I'd rather talk about those who've chosen the light side of the Force. And they are legion. The array of folks who promote good books is amazing. There's probably no field on the planet where everyone is so cool.

Wait — it's coming to me even as I write this. Let's bag the descriptions and just do the thing we all enjoy the most: give out awards. But these will be fun awards. None of this stuff about enduring literary value or redeeming social messages.

Okay. The envelope, please. In the category of best hair on an individual over six feet seven inches tall, the winner is Walter Mayes (aka Walter the Giant Story Teller). For best hair, couples division, the winners are Don Gallo and CJ Batt. The award for best drawl on an answering machine message goes to Dr. Pamela Sissi Carroll. (Not that I'd ever admit to calling her by her two initials. M. (as we like to call him) has a marvelous talent for getting publishers to send writers to conferences at places we'd never get to see otherwise, like New Orleans, San Francisco, Hoboken, and Toronto. For this, we all love him.

Okay. Back to the awards. DI Trier Herald wins the Green Earth award for building her new house out of recycled Advanced Reading Copies (ARCs). The "It Seems Like a Good Idea at the Time" award goes to Cathi Dunn MacRae for letting me write whatever I feel like in VOYA. And, in a tightly fought contest among dozens of candidates, Richie Partington wins best grasp of YA literature by a goat farmer.

Seriously, (and I promise that this is the only time I will use that word in this article) there is nothing cooler than being at the ALAN conference, because you are the folks who actually understand what all of this is about. And I was kidding about prepositions. They're a perfectly fine thing to end a sentence with.

Important Journals

This is actually pretty simple. Every journal on the planet is important except for Kirkus Reviews. (The opinions expressed here are solely those of the author and do not reflect the opinions of NCATE, ALAN, USFL, NFL, ICBM, QWERTY, or any other individual, organization, or acronym. Which, of course, doesn't invalidate the likelihood that nearly everyone on the
P.S. Bye-bye, Dr. Sissi. You done good.

The soup recipe is way too hard. And all that cream can turn a body to lard. So allow me to offer instead:

Everything I’ve Learned about Writing for Young Adults

It’s just like writing for old adults.

And in Conclusion

The soup recipe is way too hard. And all that cream can turn a body to lard. So allow me to offer instead:

Chocolate Chip Banana Bread

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups mashed ripe bananas
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 3 large eggs
- 1 1/2 cups mashed ripe bananas
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 325 F. Grease 4 small loaf pans. Stir flour, baking soda, and salt together. Beat oil, sugar, and eggs. Add bananas and beat. Add flour mixture until moistened. Stir in chips. Pour into baking pans. Bake 45-50 minutes. Cool in pans for 10 minutes, then remove from pans and cool completely.

P.S. Bye-bye, Dr. Sissi. You done good.