

March 2 - Birthday Celebration

by Lynne Belluscio

We've started plans for the annual Dinner Auction that will be held at LeRoy House on March 2. We set the date and then tried to find a theme that would be fun.

It seems that March 2 is Theodor Giesel's birthday. Born in 1904 in Springfield, Massachusetts, Theodor began using his middle name, while attending Dartmouth College. He and some of his friends were caught drinking gin in their room and the dean insisted that Theodor resign from all of his extra curricular activities, which included being editor of the college humor magazine.

He defied the order and continued writing under his middle name, Seuss. It wasn't until a few years later that he used the prefix, Dr. that we all know him by. He is best known for his children's books, *Green Eggs and Ham*, *Horton Hears a Who*, *Ten Apples Up on Top*, *Cat in a Hat*, and *The Grinch That Stole Christmas*. He wrote and illustrated over 40 books; won two Emmy Awards, two Oscar Awards; a Peabody Award, and a Pulitzer prize. His birthday is recognized as "Read Across America Day."

I learned that in 1954, *Life Magazine* printed a report that children weren't learning to read because books were boring. The director of education at Houghton Mifflin Publishing compiled a list of 348 words that he felt were important for first graders to recognize.

He asked Geisel to cut the list to 250 words and to write a book that children "can't put down." Nine months later, Geisel, using 223 of the words (and 13 that weren't on the list), presented *Cat in the Hat*. If you haven't read it lately, it's a story about two kids who are home alone. And in walks a most unusual cat, wearing a tall red and white striped hat, who entertains them in a most surprising way. He brings in a

box with Thing 1 and Thing 2 and when everything goes awry, the cat has to hastily clean everything up before leaving, just seconds before Mother arrives. She asks what has been going on and Dr. Seuss writes: "What would you do if your mother asked you?"

I suspect that some of you are asking what Dr. Seuss has to do with LeRoy and I have to confess, that I've looked at a lot of articles about Dr. Seuss and his books, and there isn't a connection - - other than most of the people in LeRoy have read a book, or seen a movie written by Dr. Seuss.

I've talked with Sean at the D & R Depot and he is willing to go with a Dr. Seuss menu, (which we are still working on) but I do know, we'll be offering "roast beast" and some very special green eggs, (made with

green Jell-O of course!) and there will be some very tasty "pink ink drink". We also plan to offer some Thing 1 and Thing 2 cupcakes

for dessert.

So if you'd like to join us for a most unusual evening at LeRoy House, tickets are \$40 per person. A cash bar will begin at 5:30 with an auction preview, followed by dinner at 6:30, followed immediately by the live auction, under the expert guidance of Bill Kent and family. Call 768-7433 for ticket reservations.

As I was reading about Dr. Seuss, I came across some great Seuss-isms. From the book, *Oh the Places You'll Go*, written in 1990:

"You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself any direction you choose."
"You're off to Great Places!
Today is your day!
Your mountain is waiting,
So... get on your way!"

"And will you succeed?
Yes! You will, indeed!
(98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed.)"

Probably one of my favorite quotations that is attributed to Seuss - although no one knows if it appears in a book:

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind."



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