

Christopher Awards Ceremony by Charlene Smith, FSPA

Informative program with many photos. Ceremony began at 7:15 p.m. with opening prayer. Excellent emcee and presenters. Everything professionally handled. Awardees were individually presented, applauded. Piano music in background. Photographers from NY press there. Christophers adopted prayer of Francis of Assisi, "Lord make me an instrument of your peace" for the closing.

After-party with desserts followed. Met Tom Hooper, Academy Award winning director of *The King's Speech*. Also met a screenwriter who liked *Thea's Song* and may explore a screen play. Pianist drew singers around the piano, mostly singing Broadway tunes. I requested "This Little Light of Mine." Many chapped rhythmically and sang along. Thea was smiling.

Tried to find out how *Thea's Song* was selected. The other four Books for Adults are all NY Times bestsellers. Seems some NY readers discovered the book, bought copies for their friends. Word of mouth reached a member of selection committee who followed up enthusiastically. As one said, "It was meant to be."

Awardees and guests were given gift bags with winning books (3) and DVDs (3) and Christopher Notes. Generous gesture from publishers.

Departed at 10 p.m. for the hotel and more dessert in the concierge lounge courtesy of the Marriott. Said goodbyes and left happy, grateful, exhausted. Adrenaline high. Not much sleep that night. Rain again Friday.

Thoroughly enjoyed NY style: fresh flowers, blossoming plants, helpful, friendly encounters. People seemed able to anticipate my every need. I like NY. God is good, all the time.

Upcoming Thea Events: 25th Thea Homecoming Memorial Anniversary, Tuesday, March 30, 2015, La Crosse, Wisconsin.



