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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Picture Books Teach Children to Appreciate Animals

**Mt. Pleasant, S.C.** (October 2, 2006) – The PALS Foundation, a guiding entity in humane advocacy, has designated October “National Animal Safety and Protection Month,” and Audubon Society member Andrea Vlahakis has several suggestions on how to teach children animal appreciation.

Vlahakis, a retired nurse, is a children’s author who has been published in *Highlights for Children*, *Turtle*, *Ladybug* and *AppleSeeds* magazine. A large portion of her work revolves around nature and birds and her latest picture book, “Christmas Eve Blizzard,” was inspired by her own rescue of a blue jay during a Connecticut blizzard several years ago.

“I have always loved birds, and after the incredible experience of rescuing a jay, I wanted to document the experience in a way that would entertain and educate children,” explains Vlahakis. “I hope that ‘Christmas Eve Blizzard’ will teach children how important it is to care for animals of all kinds—not just cardinals or birds. I would also recommend ‘Carolina’s Story: Sea Turtles Get Sick Too!’ by Donna Rathmell, ‘Loon Chase’ by Jean Heilprin Diehl and ‘Turtles In My Sandbox’ by Jennifer Keats Curtis to any parent or teacher who would like to instill a love and appreciation for animals in their children.”

Illustrated by Emanuel Schongut, “Christmas Eve Blizzard” tells the story of a young boy and his *abuelo*, the Spanish word for grandfather, as they push their holiday traditions aside to rescue and care for a cardinal. The picture book is an Accelerated Reader title and has been vetted for scientific accuracy by the Audubon Center at Beidler Forest, S.C.

“And in addition to being accurate, Sylvan Dell Publishing included an educational section that contains a Spanish/English glossary, a bird-feeder craft, a list of what to do if you find an injured bird and a cardinal numbers math game.” Vlahakis continues. “I think that Manny’s illustrations help younger children understand the story more,”

Sylvan Dell Publishing is on a mission to create picture books that excite children’s imaginations, are artistically spectacular and have educational value. “Carolina’s Story,” “Loon Chase” and “Turtles In My Sandbox” are also scientifically accurate Sylvan Dell titles and contain a “For Creative Minds” educational section like “Christmas Eve Blizzard.” Readers can ask for Sylvan Dell titles at their favorite local or online bookstore. For more information, visit [www.SylvanDellPublishing.com](http://www.SylvanDellPublishing.com) or call Katherine Miller at (877) 958-2600.