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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Families can Celebrate Children's Book Week with Educational Picture Books

**Mt. Pleasant, S.C.** (Nov. 3, 2006) – This Monday, Nov. 13, is the start of Children's Book Week, an annual event sponsored by the Children's Book Council (CBC) to encourage the enjoyment of reading for young people, and children's author and marine animal enthusiast Donna Rathmell's picture books are one way families can celebrate.

Rathmell is a mother of three, author of the award-winning children's book "Carolina's Story: Sea Turtles Get Sick Too!" and co-author of "Octavia and Her Purple Ink Cloud." Both her picture books have been vetted for scientific accuracy by the South Carolina Aquarium. In addition, "Carolina's Story" has also been verified by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and "Octavia" was reviewed for accuracy by SeaWorld.

"Carolina's Story" and "Octavia" are also part of the Accelerated Reader Program used in over 57,000 schools, giving children and their parents an opportunity to learn while they read.

"I loved reading to my children when they were younger because it brought us together as a family every night, and that's the main reason I started writing picture books," explains Rathmell. Before "Carolina's Story," Rathmell wrote 16 cookbooks, four of which became New York Times best-sellers. To date, her "The Bread Machine Cookbook Series" has sold more than 3 million copies.

"Carolina's Story: Sea Turtles Get Sick Too!" was published in 2005 and relates the story of Carolina, a loggerhead that washed ashore on Kiawah, S.C., in the spring of 2004. Photos by South Carolina Aquarium and Sea Turtle Hospital volunteer, Barbara Bergwerf, document Carolina's care and release. The picture book was recently awarded "Best Children's Nonfiction" by the Florida Publishers Association, and has been endorsed by Dr. Robert Ballard, Explorer-in-Residence for the National Geographic Society.

“I know that every child can empathize with Carolina, and I hope that the ‘Carolina’s Story’ will help any sick or injured child understand that the medical treatments they are given will make them healthy again,” Rathmell continues.

“Octavia and Her Purple Ink Cloud,” was published in 2006 and features illustrations by Connie McLennan to tell the story of a young octopus who plays camouflage games to practice how she would protect herself from hungry creatures. But she can’t get her colors right when shooting her purple ink cloud—instead the cloud is yellow, then orange, green, red and blue.

“I wanted to make an educational story that was still fun,” explains Donna. “My sister Doreen and I made sure ‘Octavia’ would teach more than just colors too—Octavia octopus shows animal camouflage and protection techniques and reinforces how important it is to practice.”

“Octavia” is a Southern California Booksellers Association 2006 Children’s Book Award nominee and a 2006 Book Sense Picks nominee. The picture book has also received complimentary reviews from the *Horn Book Guide* and Baker & Taylor *Cat’s Meow*, who said, “‘Octavia’ is highly recommended for all picture book collections.”

Both books are published by Sylvan Dell Publishing, “a company on a mission to create picture books that excite children’s imaginations, are artistically spectacular and have educational value.” Each of Sylvan Dell’s 14 titles contain an educational “For Creative Minds” section that contains fun facts, games, crafts and additional information that easily integrates the pictures books into classrooms and encourages children to learn.

“Carolina’s Story’s” section includes fun facts and conservation information on endangered sea turtles in addition to a “Make-Your-Own” sea turtle craft while “Octavia’s” section contains fun facts and information about the sea animals in the story and a craft that uses primary colors to make new colors.

Sylvan Dell’s website also includes additional educational resources including “Teaching Activities” and “Learning Links.” Readers can ask for Sylvan Dell titles at their favorite local or online bookstore. For more information about “Carolina’s Story,” “Octavia” or Sylvan Dell, visit [www.SylvanDellPublishing.com](http://www.SylvanDellPublishing.com) or call Katherine Miller at (877) 958-2600. Those interested in learning more about Children’s Book Week and the Children’s Book Council can visit [www.cbcbooks.org](http://www.cbcbooks.org).