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***DUCKEY AND THE OCEAN PROTECTORS* SELECTED FOR
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION WEEK'S "GREEN READING" LIST**

OAKBROOK, III (Jan. 30, 2009) – The newly released oceanic adventure, [“Duckey and the Ocean Protectors,”](#) by John Sexton and Katie Gutierrez and illustrated by Maciej Zajac, has been selected to be a part of the [National Environmental Education Weeks’ “Green Reading”](#) list for 2009. Educators will look to this list as a resource for ways to bring environmentally themed reading into classroom lessons and activities. This year’s theme is “Be Water Wise!” Environmental Education Week is April 12-18.

“My goal is to bring awareness to the plight of the world’s oceans, to kids and adults alike, in a friendly, educational manner,” said Sexton. “Not only does this tale emphasize the importance of being a good steward of the environment, but it also encourages and empowers children to seek role models, overcome their fears, and work together, despite one’s differences, to achieve success.

“Duckey and the Ocean Protectors” recounts the adventures of a group of misfit creatures who are tasked by King Neptune to save the ocean, which is about to go dark forever. Along the way, they have to fight their way through toxic waste dumpers and armor-clad sharks as they each confront their inner fears, banding together to reach their common goal and live their credo: “Believe it. Achieve it.”

Other books on the Green Reading middle school suggested reading list include: “John Muir: My Life with Nature;” Gary Larson’s (Far Side) “There’s A Hair in My Dirt: A Worm’s Story;” and Kenneth Grahame’s classic “The Wind in the Willows.”

“[Duckey] had a great combination of adventure, humor, and heart and the illustrations were captivating — helping to give colorful life to the characters and story,” said Aimee Hayden-Roderiques, natural science educator and aquarium director at the Maine State Aquarium. “Middle school children are sure to be intrigued by this quirky tale, and as a result inspired with their own sense of responsibility for the state of the ocean environment. We need more tales like this out there for children — both entertaining and helping the next generations of ocean stewards take shape.”

With the release of his first children’s book, Sexton hopes the characters he created as childhood friends will be able to reach out to kids, parents, and teachers with a clear message: celebrate the simple victories and work together to make all children strong individuals, each in his own right. In an effort to encourage people to act on this theme, the Society of Children’s Book Writers member and his publisher, [Writers of the Round Table Press](#), have announced a new Youth Eco-Essay Contest to help children express, through words, ways to help conserve and save the oceans. A Teacher’s Kit is also available to complement the book.

More information about the book and essay contest or to download the Teacher’s Kit, visit www.duckeyops.com.

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