



For Immediate Release

**Contact: Nancy Marasco
410-430-8351**

2009 National Green Earth Book Award Winners Announced

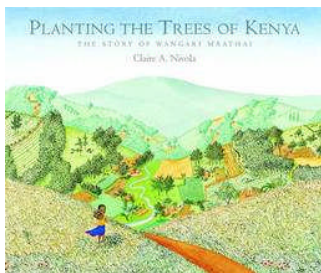
February 2, 2009, -- McLean, Va. -- The Newton Marasco Foundation (NMF) has announced the winners of the leading national environmental book awards for literature that inspires young readers to appreciate and care for the environment. The 2009 Green Earth Book Awards highlight the best in environmental reading for children and young adults.



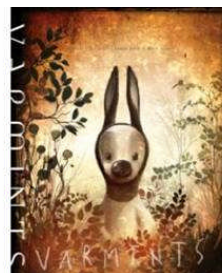
NMF, a non-profit public environmental charity, partners with Salisbury University in Maryland to honor and promote environmental books that not only raise awareness of environmental issues, but also instill a sense of responsibility for nurturing, protecting and defending the natural environment. The Green Earth Book Award is the nation's first environmental stewardship book award for children and young adult literature.

There are six winners who will receive this year's 2009 Green Earth Book Awards:

Co-Winners – Picture Book Category



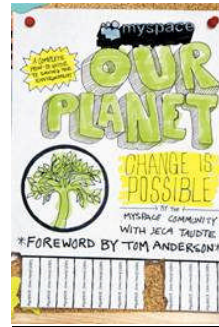
Planting the Trees of Kenya
written and illustrated by Claire A. Nivola
(published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux Books
for Young Readers)



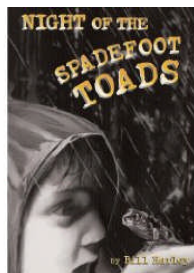
Varmints
written by Helen Ward and
illustrated by Marc Craste
(published by Candlewick Press)

Winner – Nonfiction Category

My Space/Our Planet
written by the Myspace Community,
Jeca Taudte, and Dan Santat
(published by The Bowen Press)

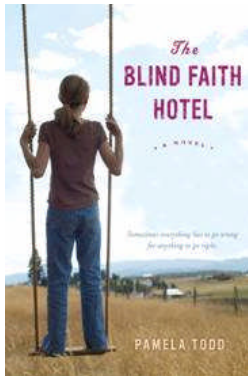


Winner – Children’s Fiction Category

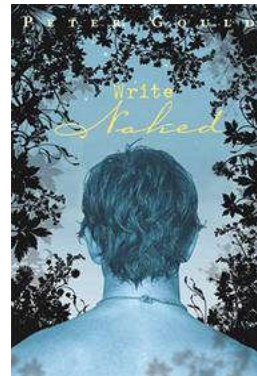


Night of the Spadefoot Toads
written by Bill Harley
(published by Peachtree Publishers)

Co-Winners – Young Adult Fiction Category



Blind Faith Hotel, written by Pamela Todd
(published by Margaret K. McElderry
Books/Simon and Schuster Children's
Publishing)



Write Naked, written by Peter Gould
(published by Farrar, Straus, and Giroux Books
for Young Readers)

“Each of these books are worthy of the Green Earth Book Award because they inspire our children – our next generation of environmental stewards – to care for the earth,” said Amy Marasco Newton, president and founder of the Newton Marasco Foundation. “Whether through lively storytelling, beautiful illustrations, or timely eco-tips, these award winning books teach our youth how they can make a difference in protecting our planet. Parents and teachers can turn to these books throughout the year to give important environmental lessons to children.”

Planting the Trees of Kenya, written and illustrated by Claire A. Nivola, recounts the story of how Wangari Maathai, winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize and founder of the Green Belt Movement, encouraged and taught villagers in Kenya to replant the life-sustaining trees that were cleared over many years.

In *Varmints*, written by Helen Ward and illustrated by Marc Craste, striking, surreal illustrations and a haunting, evocative text tell a mysterious tale of a threatened natural world — and a hopeful new start. *Varmints* tells of a pastoral world in need of protection and of the souls who love it enough to ensure its regeneration.

My Space/Our Planet, written by Myspace Community, Jeca Taudte, and Dan Santat, is a valuable eco-guide that outlines the steps that we can take every single day to save our environment from damage and destruction. Geared for ages 14 and up, the book reminds us that we each have the power to make a difference and includes tips from MySpace users around the globe on subjects ranging from the clothes we buy to the food we eat.

In *Night of the Spadefoot Toads*, written by Bill Harley, newcomer Ben and his eccentric fifth grade science teacher explore the varied habitat in Massachusetts and the endangered spadefoot toads that make their home there. This story tells of a courageous and impulsive act that Ben takes to protect the toads' habitats from land developers.

In *Blind Faith Hotel*, written by Pamela Todd, fourteen-year-old Zoe feels like her whole world is going to pieces when her family moves halfway across the country to a run down farmhouse in the Midwest. A petty thievery puts her into a program for juvenile delinquents, and places her under the guidance of an elderly man determined to save the prairies and the indigenous plants that grow there. Funny and poignant, sharp-eyed and real, this is a portrait of a girl looking for her own true self and a place she can call home.

Write Naked, written by Peter Gould, begins when Victor sneaks off with an old typewriter to test out the saying "You have to be naked to write." He expects solitude; instead he meets Rose Anna, a free spirit with an antique fountain pen and a passion to save the planet. Their unexpected encounter marks the beginning of an inspired writing partnership – featuring a quirky love story and an ecological fantasy featuring a tiny heroic newt. Together, the teens explore the possibility of connections – to one another, the woods outside, and the world beyond.

Over 100 books were submitted across the four categories. Each award includes \$2,000 to the winning author and illustrator, as well as the contribution of winning books to schools and youth organizations in the Greater Washington DC area.

Since 2005, the Newton Marasco Foundation has honored 15 books with the Green Earth Book Awards and recognized 29 Honor Books. The awards are part of the annual Children's and Young Adult Literature Festival at Salisbury University, located on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

In addition to the award winners, the **2009 Honor Books** are:

10 Things I Can Do to Help My World

written and illustrated by Melanie Walsh (published by Candlewick Press)

Cam Jansen and the Green School Mystery

written by David A. Adler and illustrated by Joy Allen (published by Viking Children's Books, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group)

Fern Verdant and the Silver Rose

written by Diana Leszczynski (published by Random House Children's Books)

Generation Green: The Ultimate Teen Guide to Living an Eco-Friendly Life

written by Linda Siversten and Tosh Siversten (published by Simon Pulse/Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing)

How We Know What We Know About Our Changing Climate: Scientists and Kids Explore Global Warming

written by Lynne Cherry and Gary Braasch (published by Dawn Publications)

Science Warriors: The Battle Against Invasive Species

written by Sneed B. Collard III (published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt)

The Last Wild Place

written by Rosa Jordan (published by Peachtree Publishers)

The Wolves Are Back

written by Jean Craighead George and illustrated by Wendell Minor (published by Dutton Children's Books, a division of Penguin Young Readers Group)

Tin Lizzie

written and illustrated by Allan Drummond (published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux Books for Young Readers)

Whirlwind

written by David Klass (published by Farrar, Straus, and Giroux Books for Young Readers)

When Santa Turned Green

written by Victoria Perla and illustrated by Mirna Kantarevic (published by Thomas Nelson Inc.)

The 2009 Green Earth Book Awards are supported by Salisbury University, Constellation Energy, Comcast, Delmarva Recycling, Affiliated Power Purchasers International, and Pepsi Bottling Ventures of Delmarva.

Awards will be presented to the winning authors on April 14, 2009 at the Ward Museum in Salisbury, Maryland.

###

The Newton Marasco Foundation's mission is to inspire responsible environmental stewardship. NMF designs innovative programs that foster learning, appreciation and caring for our natural environment. The foundation promotes awareness and responsibility for the environment by individuals, schools, businesses and communities. The foundation educates companies on sustainable green business practices and promotes the conservation and restoration of unique community ecosystems and habitats. The foundation conducts award programs that recognize small deeds and great acts that promote environmental awareness and further sustainable, environmental solutions. For more information, visit www.newtonmarascofoundation.org.