



## For Immediate Release

# Carle Museum Receives \$1 Million Gift to Endowment

## Oelschlagers of Ohio Cite Museum's Potential as Reason for Support

---

Amherst, MA – November 1, 2007 – The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art today announced the recent gift of \$1 million in general endowment support from Jim and Vanita Oelschlager of Akron, Ohio. The gift is the first seven-figure contribution to the Museum by individual donors, and together with other important gifts to endowment received over the last year, lays the groundwork for an ambitious effort by The Carle to raise \$25 million in endowment over the next 10 years.

“We are overwhelmed by the Oelschlagers’ generosity,” said the Museum’s Founding Director, Nick Clark, “And by their strong vote of confidence in the Museum and its mission. Theirs is a gift that truly heralds the Museum’s Fifth Anniversary, from friends who have watched us grow for the past five years and want to help us realize our full potential.”

Jim and Vanita Oelschlager first became aware of the Museum in 2002 when they received a letter from Eric Carle, inquiring about the origins of their last name (which is the same as the maiden name of Carle’s maternal grandmother). What started as a friendly correspondence sparked by Carle’s recognition of the name in a magazine article, and was furthered by a side-trip to Akron by Eric and his wife Barbara during a 2003 book tour, finally resulted in the Oelschlagers’ visit to the Museum (their first) this past September.

The visit deeply touched Vanita Oelschlager and her husband Jim, who is founder of Oak Associates, Ltd., an internationally-renowned independent equity investment management firm based in Akron. In a letter to Eric Carle following their visit, Jim stated, “Vanita and I brought with us a relatively modest check, which we intended to and did present to you and your museum. However, once we were there and saw the importance of the museum, we knew we had to take a more significant role in ensuring that the museum would go on in perpetuity...”

“It is rare that donors come along who not only immediately comprehend what the Museum is trying to do, but also understand the value of creating a nest-egg for the future,” said Carle Museum Board Chair, Christopher Milne, “The Oelschlagers have effectively jumpstarted the Museum’s effort to safeguard its future. And their gift has already resulted in a greater appreciation by many in the Museum’s circle of friends and supporters that this is a resource like no other.”

## ABOUT THE MUSEUM

Founded in part by Eric Carle, the renowned author and illustrator of more than 70 books, including the 1969 classic *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, and his wife Barbara, The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art is the first full-scale museum in this country devoted to national and international picture book art, conceived and built with the aim of celebrating the art that we know first. Through the exploration of images that are familiar and beloved, it is the Museum’s goal to provide an enriching, dynamic, and supportive context for the development of literacy and to foster in visitors of all ages and backgrounds the confidence to appreciate and enjoy art of every kind.

*(continued)*

The Museum—which houses three galleries dedicated to rotating exhibitions of picture book art, a hands-on Art Studio, a Reading Library, an Auditorium, a popular Café, and a Museum Shop—is located at 125 West Bay Road, Amherst, MA. Museum hours are Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday 12 noon to 5 p.m. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$5 for children under 18, and \$20 for a family of four. For further information and directions, call 413-658-1100 or visit the Museum’s website at [www.picturebookart.org](http://www.picturebookart.org).

###

---

Contact: **Nora Maroulis**  
**Director of Development & Marketing**  
**413-658-1111**  
[noram@picturebookart.org](mailto:noram@picturebookart.org)