

## PRESS RELEASE

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Book News, Publishing, Health/Fitness, Children, Heart Disease

## Heart Attack Leads to a Children's Book from a Former Weekly Reader Editor

Hartford, CT - May 3, 2004 /Send2Press Newswire/ -- A delightful and bright children's book of poetry, *The Macaroon Moon* (ISBN: 0-913337-51-X), was published this year because of a sudden tragedy striking the author, her family and the publishing company she founded, Southfarm Press. Wanda Haan, the author of "*The Macaroon Moon*," was executive editor of Southfarm, which had been publishing military history for 20 years. Wanda had also been a managing editor of *Weekly Reader* children's newspapers for 16 years and had written extensively for elementary school children and teachers.

As Southfarm Press was preparing to celebrate 20 years of book publishing, Wanda, without any history of heart disease, died suddenly of a heart attack on January 30, 2003. She was 59. Her family has since learned, the hard way, that while breast cancer is well-known for causing women's deaths, heart disease is their number one killer. Southfarm Press has now set up a Web Site for Wanda's children's book, *The Macaroon Moon*. Information about this surprising literary find is at <http://www.wandahaan.com>. Five-percent of the book's sales are being donated to support research to fight heart disease in women. One woman in three in America will die of heart disease, more than eight times the number killed by breast cancer.

In grief after Wanda's death, her family went through her stacks of papers associated with her writings and editing for publishers such as Rand McNally, Benchmark Publishing, and the Pearson Education Group. To the family's great surprise, about 100 poems and short stories by Wanda for elementary school children were found hidden in these mounds of paper.

"It became clear that I couldn't throw any papers away without examining every sheet and there were thousands of sheets," said Walter Haan, her husband of 30 years.

Walter added: "I spent weeks in every room in the house examining Wanda's papers for poems. I even found a poem in a box in the garage." A customer service representative from one of Southfarm's printers, upon hearing about the lost poetry and stories, exclaimed, "This is a gift."

So in late June last year, it was decided by Wanda's family and Southfarm Press to publish her children's poetry. Nineteen poems were selected from a manuscript she had titled *The Macaroon Moon*. She had evidently written these poems while giving poetry lessons to her two daughters, Sarah and Emily, who were nine and seven years old at the time.

Southfarm Press hired Donald Christensen, an art director at *Weekly Reader* for 30 years to illustrate *The Macaroon Moon*. Don is noted for his unique illustration style, using a cut paper technique to make clear, strong images to visually appeal to readers of all ages. Besides *Weekly Reader*, Don has created illustrations for books by Doubleday and for *Fortune Magazine*.

*The Macaroon Moon* was published in April 2004. "A week or so ago, an acquaintance talked about Wanda after learning of the book," said Walter. She said, "It was never about her when you were with her. She was always making it about the other people in the room, never drawing attention to herself."

"I am now making it about her," adds Walter.

Wanda's computer had been in her kitchen. In that kitchen she cooked, edited military history and wrote for children. On the day she died, she had e-mailed a long attachment to Benchmark Publishing that she had edited. Then she made a meat loaf and lay down on the couch to watch the evening news. Her husband heard her gasping. The meat loaf was cooling in the kitchen while the

emergency personnel struggled to bring her back. But Wanda had died before Walter could call 911. Heart disease in women can strike that quickly, without warning.

BOOK SUMMARY:

Title: The Macaroon Moon: A Book of Poems and Rhymes for Children  
Author: Wanda Haan, illustrated by Donald Christensen  
Publisher: Southfarm Press  
ISBN: 0-913337-51-X; Hardcover; 32pp; 7.25 x 10.25 Full Color  
\$17.95 SRP

Jacket preview: <http://wandahaan.com/MMAActualCover.jpg>

More information about this book, visit: <http://www.wandahaan.com>

MEDIA CONTACT:

Walter Haan  
of Southfarm Press  
+1-860-346-8798  
[southfar@ix.netcom.com](mailto:southfar@ix.netcom.com)

/Note to editors: review copies, images, and interviews available on request.  
Southfarm Press. P.O. Box 1296, Middletown, CT 06457 /

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[ source of news = Southfarm Press ]

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