**NEWS RELEASE**



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Who Was Verlon “Rube” Walker?**

**FINDING MY FATHER’S VOICE: A BASEBALL LOVE STORY**

There has been an emptiness in Leigh Ann Walker’s life for as long as she can remember. Her father, Verlon “Rube” Walker, spent years in the Chicago Cubs organization, first as a player in the minor leagues and then as a coach for the major league club. He had developed a reputation as a trusted and effective coach with a dry sense of humor who put everyone at ease. He was a “man of integrity,” one of the “good guys” in baseball.

But in the spring of 1971, when he was set to become the Cubs pitching coach, Walker died of leukemia at age 42. His daughter, Leigh Ann, was just 3 at the time and the loss of her father impacted her in ways she is still trying to understand.

For the last five years, Leigh Ann has embarked on a journey of discovery, trying to unravel the man who left her and her mother far too early. ***Finding My Father’s Voice: A Baseball Love Story*** is part detective story, part baseball story and, of course, part love story.

This is a book that chronicles Leigh Ann’s efforts to find former teammates and coaches who remember her father, who still miss him and, perhaps most importantly, have put a voice to the man she never really knew. These discoveries and reflections tell the love story and describe the journey to know the baseball family that called Rube Walker one of their own. When Leigh Ann talked with her family, former baseball coaches and players -- including Hall of Famers Ferguson Jenkins and Billy Williams -- she learned about her father from the people who knew him best and after his death honored him by establishing the Rube Walker Blood Center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital.

Writing the book has been an opportunity to provide her with a little peace and some closure. It is now also a book that can hopefully offer a way forward to those who have lost someone important in their lives and have never quite known how to move ahead.

**Author Bios**

Leigh Ann Walker’s first book project has been a long time in its creation. She has told her story to various media outlets from ESPN to the MLB.com, but has always wanted to write a book that more fully explains her sense of loss and discovery. A lifelong Cubs fan, she is a graduate of Lees-McRae College in North Carolina. She lives in Charlotte, North Carolina with her two sons, Walker and Christopher.

Chuck Carlson is the author of 14 books. He spent more than 30 years as an award-winning sports writer for various newspapers around the country and is now director of media relations at Albion College in Michigan. He lives in Marshall, Michigan with his family.

Title: Finding My Father’s Voice: A Baseball Love Story

Author: Leigh Ann Walker with Chuck Carlson

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