



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT: Tolly Moseley, (512) 501-4399 x708, [tolly@prbythebook.com](mailto:tolly@prbythebook.com)**

## **When the thing they want most is a peaceful death**

*Inspired by her mother and by Terry Schiavo, author explores a patient's right to die*

**LARGO, Flor.** – It's the most difficult decision many of us will ever make. When a family member is dying, should we fight to keep them alive, or let nature take its course? What if that person asked *you* to pull the plug, and let them have a peaceful death?

***Finding Frances*** (April 2010, Winston-Higgins Press) by Janice Van Dyck, tells the story of a family grappling with this issue. A life-long smoker, Frances Baldwin has emphysema, heart failure, and a palpable desire to die on her own terms. But her husband and three grown children – not to mention the medical industry – aren't ready to grant this simple wish so easily.

It's an issue the author herself knows intimately.

"My critically ill mother refused medical treatment and asked me to help her die a peaceful death," says Van Dyck. "Like my book's main character, Frances' son William, I had to negotiate family and the medical system to give her that peace."

Additionally, the book echoes the national news story that whipped Americans into a heated debate on a patient's right to die.

"I was also inspired by the Terri Schiavo story, as she died just months prior, a few miles away from my house. I understood both sides of the argument," says Van Dyck. "Both of these incidents made me consider a very big question: 'How much control do we have over the terms of our own death?'"

A must-read for caretakers, those with aging parents, or anyone who has ever asked themselves the same question Van Dyck did, *Finding Frances* will no doubt spark a dialogue about ethical choices when a family member expresses a willingness to die. Especially in this age, when technology can keep us alive indefinitely with an ever-diminishing quality of life.

"The 'sandwich generation' is both facing its own mortality and dealing with aging parents," says Van Dyck. "There are more choices, and arguably less information, about dying than ever before. It is the new taboo, and we only learn about it in hospital corridors from medical professionals who are trained to help us heal, not to have a smooth passage in death. I hope this book can help open up that conversation."

Wise and deeply insightful, with surprising moments of wit, *Finding Frances* is a novel that focuses not on what is lost, but what is found in a family member's death.

**JANICE VAN DYCK** is a freelance writer and author of *The O'Malley Trilogy*. A Philadelphia native, she now lives in the Tampa Bay, Florida area. A 20-year business veteran, she has enjoyed a long career as a senior executive in a public company, as a corporate communications specialist, and as an organizational development consultant. She is currently involved with Project Grace ([www.projectgrace.org](http://www.projectgrace.org)), a non-profit devoted to advance care planning. For more information, please visit [www.janicevandyck.com](http://www.janicevandyck.com).

###

To schedule an interview or to receive more information, contact Tolly Moseley at [tolly@prbythebook.com](mailto:tolly@prbythebook.com) or (512) 501-4399 x708. Visit us at: [www.prbythebook.com](http://www.prbythebook.com) / [www.twitter.com/prbythebook](https://www.twitter.com/prbythebook)

