

# PRESS RELEASE

## Celebrating the Life of Cumberland House Publisher Ron Pitkin

(CHICAGO – April 29, 2022) - Ron Pitkin, founder of independent publisher Cumberland House, passed away April 6 at the age of 79.

“Ron was sort of a quiet legend with a very big heart in the publishing business,” said Todd Stocke, senior vice president and editorial director at Sourcebooks, which acquired Cumberland House in 2008. “Simultaneously creative and deeply soulful, Ron could position books like few others. He truly had the every-person’s touch. We are proud to carry on his legacy, and we share our best wishes with his family and all those who loved him.”

Pitkin co-founded Rutledge Hill Press, the famed Southern independent publisher based in Nashville that launched books including the legendary gift book *Life’s Little Instruction Book* with more than ten million copies sold and *Aunt Bee’s Mayberry Cookbook* with over one million copies sold.

Pitkin went on to found Cumberland House, also in Nashville, an independent publisher known for history, cooking, fiction, and inspirational titles including the James Beard Award–winning cookbook *Smokehouse Ham, Spoon Bread, and Scuppernong Wine* and Gregory E. Lang’s inspirational *New York Times* series led by *Why a Daughter Needs a Dad*, a project Pitkin envisioned and championed that went on to sell more than five million copies.

“Ron Pitkin was a creative genius, and one of the most caring men in our industry,” said Chris Bauerle, who worked at both Cumberland House and Sourcebooks and is currently vice president of North American sales and operations at Insight Editions. “Though reserved and out of the spotlight, he was a man who faithfully poured through piles of unagented submissions for his entire publishing career in order to bring to life those stories that deserved the love and attention of a master of positioning and editorial craftsmanship.”

In lieu of flowers, his family requests donations to a library or literacy charity of your choice.

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