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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LOCAL STORYTELLER RICHARD ROUSE PENS BOOK OF SHORT STORIES

'The Welcome Home Door and Other Stories' Receives Praise from Leading American Authors

INDEPENDENCE, Va. (May 2019) –A book of original short stories by local storyteller Richard Rouse is receiving praise from leading authors, poets and everyday folks for its down-to-earth snapshots and slices of real life.

"The Welcome Home Door and Other Stories" features nine lighthearted and humorous tales and one poem from a seasoned traveler, carpenter and beekeeper who has made his home on a mountainside in rural Southwest Virginia. For Rouse, who is now 89 years old, it was the right time to create a collection of original short stories for his wife, older brother and three sons. But the 10-year-long project has grown into something much more, generating thousands of book and e-book sales from readers around the world.

The paperback, which retails for \$9.95, is available through Rouse House Media at www.RouseHouseMedia.com. Readers can download an e-book version for \$2.99 through Amazon, Book Baby, Good Reads, and other digital booksellers.

Rouse's 132-page book opens with the inspiring short story, "The Welcome Home Door." In this easy-to-read tale, an old, hand-made door plays a touching role in a family's life.

"It's maybe the best story I have ever written," said Rouse, who credits friend and songwriting legend Rodney Crowell for the idea. "Actually it was inspired by a song Rodney wrote called 'That Ole Door.' As I read this story, I see it moving people."

Another favorite is "The Indian and the Prof," a 25-page novelette about a teacher (hunter's brother) who reluctantly accepts a beautiful gift after being shot while delivering Christmas gifts to students in a snowstorm.

"I went fairly deep into the sub-consciousness of the main character, allowing him the privilege to become whatever he needed to be," Rouse added.

What would "The Welcome Home Door and Other Stories" be without a few yarns involving pigs? The oinky, pink mammals provide hilarious moments in his tales "An Unlikely Flying Companion," "Lightning Strikes a Pig," and "Dewey's Pig Goes North."

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"When I write these stories, I have fun -- like being a pig's totem or a pig's whisper," Rouse laughed.

Although his stories are mostly make-believe, Rouse said the project would not have been possible without the encouragement of family members and friends, as well as a local group of peers known as Ridgeline Writers.

"Welcome Home Door" is dedicated to his 92-year-old brother, Dr. John Rouse, who has given up writing after penning books and short stories of his own.

"I hope my little book will encourage him to write again," the author said.

Rouse's son, Steve, wrote an inspiring foreword for the book, recalling how the father and son, only 20 years apart, would one day "be two old men sitting on a porch together grumbling about the world situation."

"When he sent it to me, I didn't change one word, and I cried," continued Rouse, who also appreciates his wife, Joyce, and two other sons for encouraging him to write.

The cover of the book features a "Welcome Home" door carving given to Rouse on his 85th birthday by friend and artist **Scott Ricketts**.

"The Welcome Home Door" book of short stores has received rave reviews from noted authors, journalists, musicians and poets.

"Richard Rouse's stories sparkle with thoughtful descriptions and homespun charm," writes *New York Times* bestselling author **Kabir Sehgal**. "His writing is clear and lucid, and you will be immensely entertained as each story unfolds with drama and intrigue. A great read!"

Author **Daniel Mallock** lauds Rouse as "a master of people and place," encouraging readers to "savor these stories as you would superior wine -- rare, complex yet uncomplicated, a real joy."

According to poet **Karen Johnson**, "His stories are told with wry wit and good humor while exposing an unabashed reverence for life."

Born in Syracuse, Rouse spent his formative years playing with his siblings in the cabbage barns and truck farm fields of peas and potatoes near Preble, New York. He was an industrious high school student, building a boat, sculpting with iron and wood, and flying planes at the local airport -- even constructing an astronomy observatory at his home. He followed his father into the field of industrial construction and structural steel fabrication, eventually leading the company to record achievements. After adventures exploring the West, rockhounding, living on the sea, and New Orleans, he dreamed of settling in a location where he could renew his childhood interests in honeybees, natural food systems, and self-sufficiency. He chose Independence, Virginia, in the Southern Appalachian Mountains.

"I love to write," Rouse concluded. "While writing, I am very emotional. I will chuckle or outright laugh. I might sob a little, or tear up, and even get angry a bit."

Rouse will read stories from his book at Oracle Books in Wytheville, Virginia (June 14) and Grayson LandCare in Independence, Virginia (Nov. 11), with public and private readings pending in Tennessee, North Carolina, and Virginia.

For more information about "The Welcome Home Door" or booking Richard Rouse for an upcoming event, visit www.earthmama.org/welcome-home-door.