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CITY OF KEARNEY **PRESS RELEASE** **For Immediate Release**

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Author Jim Minick presents *Without Warning: The Tornado of Udall, Kansas* at Kearney Public Library

Mark your calendars for two programs with author Jim Minick on Tuesday, May 23 at the Kearney Public Library. At 7:00 pm he will present his newly published book, *Without Warning: the Tornado of Udall, Kansas*, which tells the story of this town's destruction and rebuilding through the eyes of those who survived, and this story provides insights into how we might move forward into our climate-changed future. On May 25, 1955, an F5 tornado struck Udall, Kansas at 10:35 PM. There was no warning. In roughly three minutes, it destroyed most of the buildings, toppled the water tower, and killed 82 people. The Udall tornado was—and still is—the worst in the history of Kansas and one of the worst in U.S history.

- At noon he will lead a writing workshop. This workshop is focused on "using family or other people's stories to make art (fiction/nonfiction)." It sounds easy, right? Just take notes from that verbose uncle and change names to protect innocents, and voila. But it usually isn't so easy, nor without risks. This session will explore the how's, why's, and hazards, interlaced with stories, advice, and discussions. Registration is requested for the workshop.

David Laskin, author of *The Children's Blizzard*, says this about it: "*Without Warning*" is a page-turning disaster narrative in the tradition of *THE PERFECT STORM* and *ISAAC'S STORM*: spare, vivid, suspenseful, meticulously researched, utterly harrowing. But the havoc an F5 tornado wrecked on this quintessential Kansas small town in the spring of 1955 is only part of the story here. By taking the arc all the way from the calm before the storm to the months-long labor of rebuilding and reanimating, Jim Minick has brought an entire community lovingly to life. At heart, this is a book about how what's best about our country confronts and overcomes the worst of our weather."

Jim Minick is the author or editor of eight books, including *Without Warning: The Tornado of Udall, Kansas* (nonfiction), "*The Intimacy of Spoons*" (poetry, forthcoming), and *The Blueberry Years: A Memoir of Farm and Family*. Minick's honors include the Jean Ritchie Fellowship in Appalachian Writing and the Fred Chappell Fellowship at UNC-Greensboro. Minick has also won awards from the Southern Independent Booksellers Association, Southern Environmental Law Center, The Virginia College Bookstore Association, Appalachian Writers Association, Radford University, and elsewhere. He's garnered grants from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, Augusta University, Georgia Humanities Council, and the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts.

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