



NightScripts

March 2011

Carol Johnson and
Jane Green, Co-Editors

Meet TNW Member Michael Vance



No Door Knobs Here

By Carol Johnson

If Michael Vance were as boring as he thinks he is, he'd be a door knob. Fortunately, I badgered him until he came up with some pretty darned interesting information. He's been an editor, an advertising copywriter, journalist, novelist, historian, graphic designer—I could go on and on. Some door knob, huh? Hardly.

Michael joined TNW in December in order to have more interaction with other writers, but his body of work certainly hasn't suffered from a lack of writerly company. He's been published in seven (count 'em: SEVEN) countries. I haven't even eaten food from seven countries.

He had his own comic strip for a number of years. Titled *Holiday Out*, the strip was reprinted as a comic book. He's been writing a weekly comics review column, *Suspended Animation*, for more than twenty years. That publication currently reaches more than 700,000 readers and is one of the longest continuously published comics review columns in the world.

This born-and-bred Okie not only has an impressive career, he has a lovely wife, Dianne, a married daughter and two grandchildren. Oh, and a cat.

These aren't even the highlights. They're just the details that jumped out at me as I rushed to meet my deadline. If you can get him to talk about himself, you'd be about ten times as impressed as you are right now. And you are. You know you are. He's already accomplished more than many do in their entire lives. AND he has a cat. What's not to like?

Say hi to Michael when you get a chance!

The Prez Sez by Bob Avey



A Place of Your Own

Have you ever dreamed of dropping everything, leaving your troubles behind to spend a couple weeks at a writer's retreat, secreted away in some cabin in the woods, sipping cappuccino and doing little else but writing?

I once went as far as signing up for such a getaway, though I cancelled weeks later, when I realized that neither my finances nor my time could take the hit. Chock that up as yet another writer indulgence that is no longer feasible.

However, creating an environment which is conducive to writing within your own home is not only doable, but advisable as well. Practically every writing manual has a section dedicated to the importance of having a place of your own and writing each day at the same place at the same time. I fought for years to gain the use, on a somewhat exclusive basis, of a small corner of the breakfast nook for just such a purpose.

Having established a writing area, you might give some thought to how to decorate your space. An overly distracting theme might not be the best of ideas, but something inspirational should be sought after. For example, I'm inspired by things from the past. I don't know why, exactly. I don't write historical fiction. However, old bookstores, antique shops, old buildings, old cars and Norman Rockwell drawings, just to name a few, make me want to put my feelings into words. My current writing space isn't large enough to accommodate any of these, but I'm working on adding books and artwork that will fit.

Writing daily and having a comfortable place to do it are essential elements to becoming a successful writer. You might have to work at attaining a place of your own, and at sitting yourself down to put words onto paper, but you will be a better writer for the effort!

Our members have great news!



Carla Stewart has some terrific news! *Chasing Lilacs* made the Pulpwood Queens' Bestseller List for January 2011 at the No. 20 spot. This list runs in the Dallas Morning News alongside the NYT list. Also, *Chasing Lilacs* is a finalist for the 2011 Oklahoma Book Award for Fiction. The award ceremony will be April 9 in Oklahoma City.



Dale Whisman's stage play, *Down the Road* (originally titled *Are You from Down the Road*), is going to be produced Off Broadway at the Arlight Theatre in New York City. It is scheduled to open June 1 and run for 27 performances. The Off Broadway production hasn't yet been cast. It will be directed by Juan Reinoso of Wayfinder Films. Reinoso produced and directed the original production as well as the motion picture inspired by the play.



Jackie King was interviewed on Eva's Sanctuary on March 3. Jackie was asked about her latest novel, *The Inconvenient Corpse*,

her WIP, the *Foxy Hen* series, and more! In case you missed it, you can find the interview here: <http://vampirekiss1967.blogspot.com/>.



Vickie McDonough negotiated a deal with Moody Press for two books, in collaboration with two other authors. The series, *Texas Trails: A Morgan Family Series*, features six books, two written by each author. The saga spans 50 years and several generations of a Texas family. The first three books will release this fall. Vickie's first title is *Long Trail Home*, the story of a Civil War soldier who returns home to find his home destroyed, his parents dead, and his fiancée married. Vickie also sold a three-book prairie romance series called *Whispers on the Prairie* to Guidepost Books. The first book is called *Winds of Change* and will be released in the spring of 2012.



Charles Sasser, author of more than 50 books and thousands of magazine articles and short stories, will be signing his most recent releases at Hastings Books in Muskogee on Saturday, March 12, 2011, between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m. His published books range from action adventure novels, science fiction, and romance to nonfiction in a variety of forms. His most recent release is *Predator: The Remote-Control Air War Over Iraq and Afghanistan* (with Matt Martin, Zenith Press, 2010).



J. Houston-Emerson will be reading and signing copies of her historical novel, *The Myth Makers*, for Friends of the Library Tahlequah Municipal Library this Thursday, March 10 at 11:30 a.m. Look for her at the Fort Smith History Center on March 19 at 2:00 p.m. Judy was interviewed on a local Fort Smith radio station and talked about the significance of doing her reading and signing within view of hanging judge Isaac Parker's court, where her great grandfather, Sequoyah Houston, a Cherokee light horse and U.S. deputy marshal, often took captured outlaws from Indian Territory.

Classes and Seminars

Peggy Fielding recently gathered information on suggested topics for her next free class and will be announcing that soon.

Carla Stewart provided information on an upcoming one-day seminar sponsored by Writers of Inspirational Novels (WIN), titled "**The Art of Brainstorming: One-Day Intensive Seminar,**" with Rachel Hauck. Hauck, an award-winning, best-selling author, will share her expertise on the use of brainstorming to move your ideas from head to paper. The deadline to register is March 26. The seminar will be held Saturday, April 2, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Fellowship Lutheran Church, 6727 S Sheridan Rd. For more info or to register: http://win-acfw.com/Writers_of_Inspirational_Novels/Rachel_Hauck_Registration_Form.html

Contests, Contests, Contests

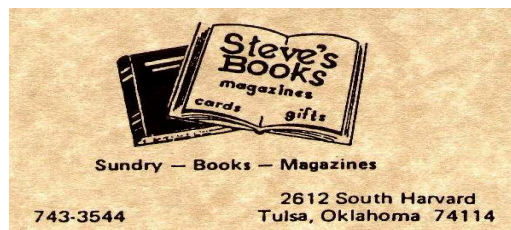
Gemini Magazine Short Story Contest. A prize of \$1,000 and publication in *Gemini Magazine* is given annually for a short story. The editors will judge. Submit a story of any length with a \$4 entry fee by March 31. Send an SASE, call, e-mail, or visit the Web site for complete guidelines. Web site: www.gemini-magazine.com.

Narrative Magazine Winter Story Contest. A prize of \$3,250 is given annually for a short story, a short short story, an essay, or an excerpt from a work of fiction or creative nonfiction. A second prize of \$1,500 is also awarded. All entries are considered for publication in *Narrative Magazine*. The editors will judge. Using the online submission system, submit up to 15,000 words of prose with a \$20 entry fee by March 31. Visit the Web site for complete guidelines. Web site: www.narrativemagazine.com.

2011 TNW Officers

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The deadline to send your brags and/or announcements to be placed in *NightScripts* is the first Sunday of each month. Please limit your brags to 25-30 words. Send **time-sensitive** announcements to nightwritersed2@gmail.com.



OUR SPEAKER FOR MARCH

Turning a Nugget of History into a Novel to Remember

with
Doug Kelley



By Carol Johnson

Hey, you know what I like to do? I like to fly some people to Florida or New Jersey or about anywhere and get back in time for church. Then when somebody says, “What have you been up to?” I can say, “Oh, not much. Had to fly a couple of guys to Florida after breakfast, then came to church.” Yeah, I like that. Kind of cool. Oh. Wait. That’s not me. That’s Doug Kelley. Dang it!

How about this, then. This was fun, too. I took about a thimble full of historical fact and wrote an entire book about it. Yep. A whole book. Called it *The Captain’s Wife*. And wouldn’t you know, somebody wanted to publish it. Actual money exchanged hands. Then darned if that book didn’t win the Oklahoma Book Award. What? That wasn’t me either? Who’s this Doug Kelley guy anyway, and why is everything always about him? Oh. Because he’s speaking at the March meeting of Tulsa NightWriters. Why didn’t you say so?

Being me is complicated and exhausting, but the real reason I want Doug Kelley’s life is because, well, who wouldn’t? He might be in New York City tomorrow, wandering around. A couple of days later he might wind up in Florida, laughing at those of us buried under six feet of snow. On the other hand, he could be stuck in an airport somewhere because he’s snowed in. And he’ll still be laughing, because he’s just one of those guys who has too much fun everywhere he goes. And he goes everywhere.

Since it appears that everything isn’t about me, I’ll let you in on what he’s got to say about this enviable life: “I have been flying business jets for 32 years, having given up my first career as sacker at the Piggly Wiggly. When I’m not flying or writing or writing about flying, I like to go outside, because that is where things happen. I like to hike, canoe, and camp. I like to build things, particularly, it seems, with stone, which is odd, considering how heavy rocks are. I also like fried chicken, but my wife never fixes it for me. I should have married that other girl.” See, he’s funny, too.

Doug will be driving all the way from Pocola, Oklahoma, which is about an inch and a half from Arkansas (his home state, but we probably ought not hold it against him), to share his considerable expertise on blending fact and fiction to create work that makes history not only palatable, but publishable and prize-winning.

TULSA NIGHTWRITERS ON TUESDAY, MARCH 15 AT 7:00 PM
AT THE **MARTIN REGIONAL LIBRARY**, 26TH AND GARNETT IN TULSA