

Doug Rose

President, The Rose Group S.C.
Member Since 2022

Doug Rose is an eclectic enigma striving to satisfy his left- and right-brain demands. How else could you describe a person who:

- Has vowed to keep the struggling Villa Terrace a public place
- Penned a five-starred tragic love story of an exotic dancer and a naval officer
- Owns a 10-attorney law firm with a robust list of clients
- Murdered his scream queen costar in a cult-classic horror movie

Talking to Doug is like talking to anyone you might meet on the street—or about 10 seconds. Then you realize this is someone you need to seriously try to understand.

Doug, who was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, grew up in five states. He attended Concordia University in Moorhead, Minnesota. Perhaps with Doug in mind, Concordia's mission is to "prepare students to be ready for anything." He took admission tests for dental, medical and law school.



"Obviously, I was not too sure what I wanted to do," Doug said. What he did do was follow a woman nursing student to Milwaukee and enrolled at Marquette Law School. He ran out of money and joined the Navy to pay the rent, serving in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. Service was uneventful as he sailed the Pacific on a carrier. Mostly uneventful, that is. He defended a seaman who was cleaning an aircraft machine gun that accidentally fired, killing two sailors and starting a flight deck fire that destroyed aircraft worth millions.



Using his left-brain logic, Doug explained how he bargained a modest sentence and discharge because the man followed his training.

"The lesson from that tragedy is that it was much like a drunk-driving charge. The person did not want to do harm, while society wants to feel better with a penalty. But the facts showed it was an accident and he was complying with the system."

Compliance with the system is Doug's stock-in-trade as a lawyer, first in civil litigation in a large firm, then trial work with a partner, then in his own firm, The Rose Group. He's racked up more than 100 jury and 200 total trials, pointing to awards in seven figures as both a plaintiff and defense attorney.

Doug's right-brain adventures are what he really likes to talk about, however. The stories that originate there are things to behold. Three examples:

His 2013 novel “Bolt. It’s description on Amazon reads: “On separate journeys of discovery, exotic dancer Ruby Clarisse Kale and naval officer Charlie McGurn encounter love, betrayal, disaster, tragedy – and one another. The compelling story...will draw you in, twist you around and won’t let you go.”

“Yeah, it’s got a little bit of me in it,” Doug said laughing. “It took three to four years to write and publish. I needed a break and just decided to do it.”

The horror movie “The Recovered” (2008): “A heavily medicated woman returns to her home after 15 years to make preparations for her estranged mother’s funeral only to be haunted by long-repressed memories of childhood horror,” says the description.

“There was a casting call and my wife encouraged me to go,” said Doug, who landed the role of the villain. “I learned a lot about how many shots it takes for one scene and when a line is flubbed how it can be dubbed in over another shot.”

He’s still looking for an agent for his latest novel “The Last Request,” which Nextbook describes as an “engaging, unpredictable character study compete with curveballs and deadly conflicts.” The story is about a girl from La Crosse with miraculous powers, who is determined to expose the faults of organized religion, resulting in a malicious and murderous response from the church, even though she is the second coming in female form with a growing cult following.

Doug is married to Jolantas, whose surname name was Roszynski, “which translates roughly to Rose, so she got her maiden name back,” Doug said. Doug’s daughter Meghan is a singer-songwriter in New York City, and is proof that the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree. Meghan, who majored in upper division mathematics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, worked for Epic Systems and now does consulting work while pursuing her music career.

Doug joined Rotary two years ago and looks forward to getting more involved, hopefully connecting members’ interest in Villa Terrace with his new role as Friends of Villa Terrace board president.

“It’s some heavy lifting but clearly worth the effort. Milwaukee has great and rich history represented by iconic places like Villa Terrace, and a bright future symbolized by a remarkable and under-appreciated skyline.”



Editor’s Note: *Rotary People of Action is a bi-monthly series written by a group of Rotarians. This feature was written by Jeff Smoller.*