

Author Bio



Tony Kordyban
The Storytelling Engineer

The nun who taught 5th Grade Arithmetic and doubled as the school's Guidance Counselor gave his mother the disheartening assessment. "Tony is a good student, but he'll never amount to anything. He's a writer." His parents did their best to overcome this character flaw. His mother took him to visit the graves of his favorite authors. She'd say, "Edgar Allen Poe was found dead in gutter. And Hemingway blew his own face off with a shotgun." His father pointed out suspension bridges and Apollo spacecraft and would say, "Engineers did that!"

Tony obediently took up the slide rule, but he always kept the Remington typewriter in the back of the closet. He attended high school in Hamtramck, a small city of bars, churches, and Polish bakeries lodged in the heart of Detroit. He completed a mechanical engineering degree at the University of Detroit, although he occasionally snuck out of the lab to contribute to *The Varsity News* as staff cartoonist. With a graduate degree from Stanford, he settled in the Chicago area to build a career in the field of cooling of electronics.

None of his engineering accomplishments ever flew to the moon, but he became well-known for explaining arcane heat transfer concepts, not with equations, but by telling stories. "I've got this friend Herbie," he'd begin, "The guy thinks 80° is twice as hot as 40°. But he can't figure out what's twice as cold as 0°." Tony started writing down these stories for a monthly newsletter at work. Eventually they were published in book form by ASME Press as *Hot Air Rises and Heat Sinks* in 1998, and *More Hot Air* in 2005. They remain among the world's bestselling humorous engineering books (sort of like the prize for World's Sexiest Grandpa.)

Tony sees life as absurd, and humor as the only way to grasp it. He is a fan of Dave Barry, *Calvin and Hobbes*, and the odd-ball TV series *Green Acres*. His most recent work started with the idea "What if *Green Acres* had been set in Detroit?" He combined that unlikely theme with characters inspired by people he grew up with in Detroit, and in 2011 produced the humorous novel, *The Loose Meat Sandwich King of Hamtramck*.

With three books in print, Tony continues to work full time at keeping electronic systems from overheating. He lives with his wife and daughter amid the scenic strip malls of suburban Chicago. The Remington typewriter is out of the back of the closet for good.

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