



Writers
of the

PURPLE SAGE

Newsletter of the Ridge Writers

East Sierra Branch, California Writers Club

November 2015

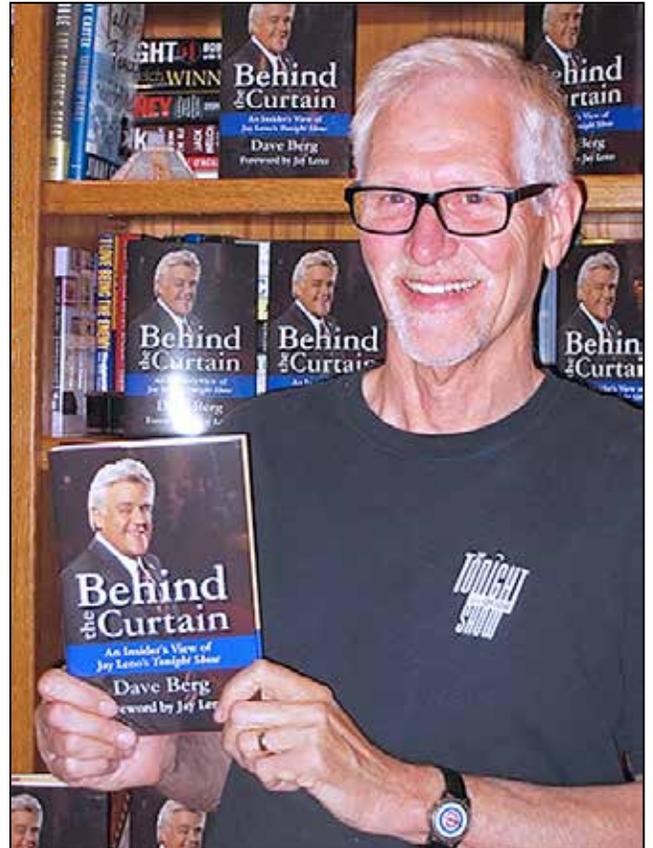
Jay Leno Producer To Speak

Dave Berg, Jay Leno's longtime co-producer and author of the new memoir, *Behind the Curtain: An Insider's View of Jay Leno's Tonight Show*, will present our program on Thursday, Nov. 5, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Ridgecrest Presbyterian Church, 633 W. Las Flores Ave.

He will discuss writing a "tell-all" and no doubt reveal, if not all, at least a tantalizing array of anecdotes about booking and working with the most erratic, barely coherent, most demanding, and most appreciated guests. Expect to hear about superstars, sports giants, presidential and vice presidential candidates, "wardrobe malfunctions," lists of celebrities' demands, and bouts of uncooperative behavior. Find out who ended a pre-interview because he considered questions such as "Where did you grow up?" too personal.

Beyond the gossip, Berg will explain Leno's contributions to late-night television, what goes into the day-to-day mechanics of putting a TV show on the air, and the roles of writers in the monologs and other aspects of "Tonight." Leno dominated late-night ratings for nearly two decades, a feat unprecedented in the modern era of tele-

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Dave Berg and his book. Photo courtesy of Mary Berg



Our October speaker, Julianne DiBlasi Black, enthralls the crowd with her talk on "Hydra Marketing." See page 6 for C. R. Rowenson's report on what she told us — good advice, whatever your target audience is!

Photo by Liz Babcock

Mark Your Calendar . . .

Holiday Party

Dec. 3, 6 p.m.
Heritage Village Clubhouse

During this potluck and opportunity for sharing our readings, we will start half an hour earlier than usual so as to have time for the goodies, both mental and culinary. Start thinking about sharing your fun 5-7-minute reading!

1st Program of 2016

Jan. 7, 6:30 p.m.
Ridgecrest Presbyterian Church

Program manager Donna is lining up a great program to launch our 2016 programs. Watch this space next month!

President's Column

by Daniel Stallings

President Daniel Stallings models the T-shirt created for his most recent production, "Hello Out There."

Photo by Liz



Do They Have a 12-Step Program for This?

We writers tend toward solitude, especially when we work. Writing takes focus and dedication. Becoming a professional writer can be a huge commitment, one that I sometimes treat as seriously as a marriage. It takes work to be a good writer. As such, those of us who were bit by "the writing bug" can find ourselves shackled to our computers, typewriters, and notebooks, eschewing the outside world for the more interesting landscapes and characters in our imaginations. We're addicted to words.

I'll stand up and be the first to admit that I have that problem. However, I also know that writers need and have to step away from the words and interact with other writers.

It can be a hard first step, especially for new writers, to take your work out into the world for critique (and sometimes criticism). It can be terrifying for an aspiring wordsmith who worked so hard and passionately on your craft to talk to people who seem so much more successful than they are, who seem like they don't care about what you have written. Self-doubt is a demon for many creative people, and it's one of my personal ones too. And it's the same for many people in these industries.

So I'm here to tell you, wonderful, creative writer that you are, that you are not alone. You are welcome with open arms and compassionate ears. We've all stood in your shoes at one time, and we would love to help you take the next step in your journey as a writer.

That's the big first step, the scary step away from the safety of the page. And why should you take it? Why talk to other writers? Simply this, is there any other person better suited to understand your fears, worries, triumphs, trials, and dreams as writer than another writer? We know the struggles. We know the successes. And we are here to help each other.

Where can you find writers? Everywhere! Don't be afraid to join a writers club or organization, like our very own Ridge Writers, which function as mentoring organizations to help grow and foster writers. Critique groups are great ways to get practical, specific feedback on your stories. Our critique group

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Ridge Writers Leaders

President — Daniel Stallings

Vice President — Julianne Black

Secretary — Donna McCrohan

Rosenthal

Treasurer — C. R. Rowenson



Historian — Maryann Butterfield

Membership — C. R. Rowenson

Newsletter — Liz Babcock

lizbab@fastmail.com

Programs & Publicity — Donna McCrohan Rosenthal

State Rep — Donna McCrohan

Rosenthal

Youth Coordinator — Daniel

Stallings

Webmaster — Julianne Black



To reach any of these leaders (except Liz), use ridgewriters@yahoo.com

Visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RidgeWriters and our website at CWC-ridgewriters.org

The *Writers of the Purple Sage* is the monthly newsletter of the Ridge Writers, the East Sierra Branch of the California Writers Club. Except where otherwise stated, all articles in this publication may be printed without special permission in newsletters of branches of the California Writers Club and in the State Bulletin, subject to the following conditions:

a. The author's name and original publication credit must be printed with the text.

b. The text must be printed in its entirety, without additions or changes.

c. You must send a copy of the newsletter bearing the reprint to the author.

Contact the editor by mail at P.O. Box 484, Ridgecrest CA 93556, or by e-mail at lizbab@fastmail.fm.

NOTE: Photographs for publicity and newsletter uses are taken at all Ridge Writers events. By entering the venue, members and guests are granting permission that their likenesses may be used for these purposes.

Decisions Pertaining to the CWC Journal

As you may know, The California Writers Club (CWC) is a 106-year-old nonprofit organization that is the oldest and largest professional writers' club west of the Mississippi. We regularly publish a member newsletter.

CWC this year is going electronic with its statewide edition of *The Bulletin*, which reaches close to 2,000 published and aspiring writers in 21 branches throughout the state.

For the first time ever, we will be publishing *The Bulletin* with advertising. We are making that advertising available to businesses, CWC members, and individuals who wish to reach our target market at reasonable prices.

CWC is offering business-card-size ads for \$35. These 2- by 3.5-inch ads will be placed in the index section of *The Bulletin*. Larger 3- by 5-inch index-card-size ads will be interspersed throughout the publication as is appropriate and will be offered at a cost of \$60 each.

Our intent is to publish *The Bulletin* three times a year with our roll-out first e-edition scheduled for mid-November 2015.

[The deadline for advertising submissions for the next issue has already passed, so you'll need to contact the editor

to find out the next deadline.] Capacity for advertising will be determined by the editor-in-chief. In case we receive more ads than can be accommodated, submitters will be notified of the option to reserve space in the next issue.

All ads submitted must be self-edited and print-ready and will be published as received. Email your ad as a jpeg file to RustyLaGrange23@gmail.com, and mail a physical copy of your ad with your payment. Please include your return address and telephone contact number.

Space is limited, and ads will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. A copy of *The Bulletin* will be emailed to each advertiser upon publication, so please include your preferred email address along with your ad submission.

Checks or money orders made payable to CWC Central Treasury for submitted ads must be mailed to:

HDCWC

The Bulletin Advertising Department

20258 Hwy 18 STE 430 PMB 281

Apple Valley, CA 92307

— Bob Isbell, High Desert CWC Rep

Our Jack London Award Winners

We're proud of the Ridge Writers who have won the Jack London Award, the highest recognition each branch of CWC can give the year's most outstanding member. Here are their names and the years they won:

Maryann Butterfield	1997
Casey Wilson	1998
Rlee Peters	1999
Judy Dutcher	2000
Curt Danhauser	2001
Judy Martin	2002
Donna McCrohan Rosenthal	2003
Holly Dworken Cooley	2004
Liz Babcock	2005
Allison Aubin	2007
Steve Wersan	2009*
Margaret Luebs	2013
Daniel Stallings	2015

*With a special Charmian London Award to Fran Wersan

◆◆◆ Announcements ◆◆◆

CWC High Desert is planning its fifth **Howl at the Moon Writers' Conference**, set for **Nov. 7** (and that's now!) in **Apple Valley**— not that far away, and a bargain at \$50 for a day's worth of workshops and presentations.

The conference will have a new venue this year, the **James Woody Community Room on Navajo Road in Apple Valley**. Go to www.hdcwc.com to register and to learn more.



Once again the ever-dependable **Donna McCrohan Rosenthal** created a month-long display in the display case at the **Ridgecrest Branch Library** to help Ridge Writers mark **California Writers Week**, the third week in October.

Established by the California legislature and gubernatorial proclamation, California Writers Week came about through the efforts of the California Writers Club in 2003. This year's exhibit highlighted California literary giants Dashiell Hammett, Jack London, John Steinbeck, Mark Twain, and others.



The 14th Oregon Coast Children's Book Writers Workshop will be held in Oceanside, Oregon, July 11–15, 2016. The course offers graduate-level credit. The instructors are all experienced and dedicated to the craft of children's book writing.

The workshop is designed to allow you to connect directly with authors, editors, and agents. More information is available at www.occbww.com.

The Book Writers Workshop also offers an online course for writers of picture books, www.publishapicturebook.com, which is also available for graduate credit.



The South Bay Writers will offer a daylong Write Short Fiction for Fun and Profit Workshop on Saturday, Nov. 14, 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m. at Harry's Hofbrau, 390 Saratoga Ave., San Jose.

Author Michael Bracken will lead the session, described as providing "all the tools necessary to write publishable short stories."

The price at the door is \$65 per CWC member (\$80 per nonmember). See more at southbaywriters.com/wordpress/#sthash.j1f16wlt.dpuf.

Nov. Speaker

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vision. Berg co-produced “Tonight” for most of those years.

Bill O’Reilly has said, “Dave Berg knows everything about late-night TV,” said Bill O’Reilly. “And if you read *Behind the Curtain: An Insider’s View of Jay Leno’s Tonight Show*, so will you.”

Berg will conclude his Nov. 5 talk with a Q&A and book signing. The public is welcome, and admission is free. So please come and bring your friends!

President’s Column

From p. 2

also has practical writing workshops to target individual areas of writing such as setting, dialogue, character development, etc.

Feeling ready to spread your wings? Writers’ conferences and showcases happen throughout the year in places all over the country. Several branches of the CWC sponsor their own, and Ridge Writers just hosted its first Local Author Showcase on Oct. 17 at the Ridgecrest Branch Library and plans to host another in the spring. Both are fantastic opportunities to connect with other writers of all levels of experience, learn new things, and build connections that can be extremely valuable.

This is a community, and we are all here to help build each other up into the next wave of talented word-weavers. So set down the pen for a bit (after I finish this one scene between my hero and the shaman) and get to know the best community ever — the world of the writers.

Family History Panel Stirs up Memories

by Donna McCrohan Rosenthal

Ridge Writers joined with the Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert on Sept. 17 to present a Family & Oral History program. With the help of a mini-grant from California Writers Club Southern Region, they presented a speaker panel combined with a potluck dinner to which participants brought dishes prepared from old community, church, school, and organization cookbooks. The cookbooks were then donated to the HSUMD collection.



Sarah Wersan

New Ridge Writers member Sarah Wersan came away inspired. The daughter of member Steve Wersan and our late, beloved Fran Wersan had been working on assembling and publishing her mother’s writings for family and friends.

When she went home, she finished typing the pieces and stepped up her search for pictures to enhance the manuscript visually. She hopes to “lead people to my mother’s writings,

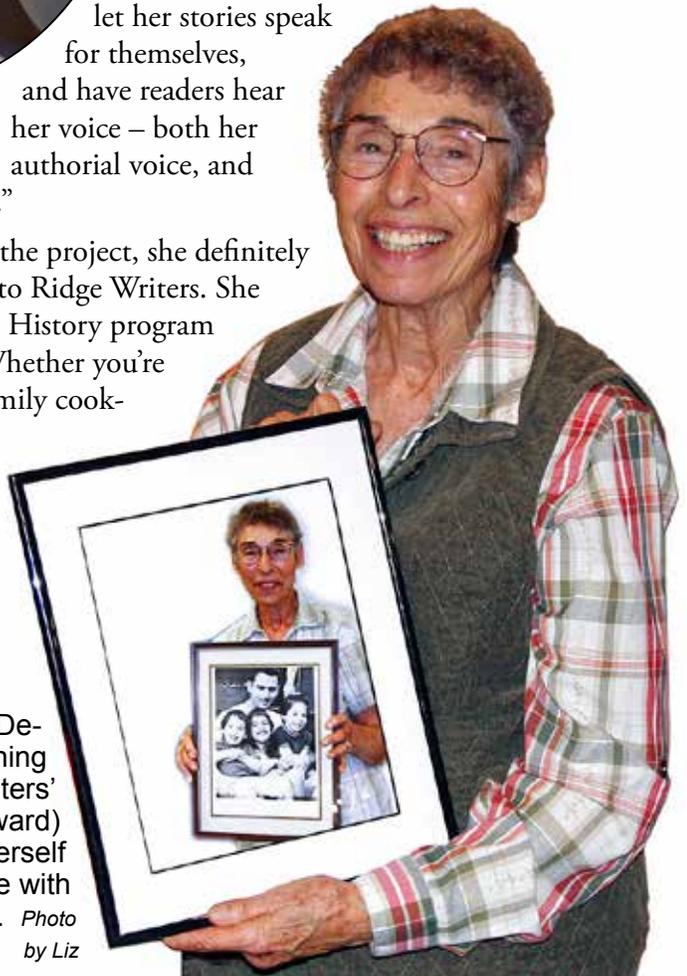
let her stories speak for themselves, and have readers hear her voice – both her authorial voice, and

the voice that’s in my ears.”

Once Sarah completes the project, she definitely plans to make it available to Ridge Writers. She credits our Family & Oral History program for the push and adds, “Whether you’re going to put together a family cookbook or be a genealogical sleuth, the program emphasized the importance of doing something. Start somewhere, then just keep taking the next step.”

Fran Wersan, shown in December 2009 (the evening she received Ridge Writers’ Charmail London Award) holds a photo of herself holding a photo of Steve with Sarah and her sisters.

Photo by Liz



CHICKEN MUA

by Svetlana LePlatt

The author, a Minnesota resident and age 11 (almost 12), was visiting her grandmother (well, OK, your editor) when Open Mike Night came along. Svetlana graciously agreed to read one of her short stories that evening. Asked if Orea ever did get to go to Chicken Mua, our author said, "Well, yes, but I had to cut the reading short because you told me to read for only five minutes!"

"Can we please go to Chicken Mua?"

"Of course we can't go to Chicken Mua!" says Mom.

"Why not?!" exclaims Orea.

"Because" says Mom, "Chicken Mua is too expensive, and plus it's late."

Mom goes to Dad, who is now counting his money. He looks up and gives Mom the "What's up?" face. She ushers him into the living room, talking about something about going to Chicken Mua.

"I just don't think that the kids want to go to Chicken Mua," I hear Mom say to Dad.

"Well, are you sure? The kids sounded like they would do anything to go to Chicken Mua."

"Oh, don't be ridiculous, Mike!" Now Mom is talking in a low whisper. "We can't go to Chicken Mua!"

"Well, we can't starve either, can we now?"

Mom and Dad come out and Dad says, "We are officially . . ."

My heart is pounding. Everything is silent except for the tick-a-tock of the old grandfather clock in the living room.

". . . not going to Chicken Mua," Dad finishes.

"Noooooooooooo!!!" I scream.

"Orea!," exclaims Mom. "There is nothing wrong about not going to Chicken Mua. And you know that!"

"But . . . But . . .," I stammer, "Everybody at school has been to Chicken Mua except for me! It is so unfair that I am the last kid not to go to Chicken Mua, and getting bullied is just extra hard as well!"

I gasp at what I said. My mouth has just exploded before I could stop it.

"Bullied?" asks Dad. "Why haven't you said anything? How long have they been doing this to you, and who is doing it to you? I demand an answer now, Orea!"

My cheeks turn bright red and small little wet drops start rolling down my cute pink rosy cheeks, which are now as red as a hot chili pepper.

Mom tries to comfort me, but I just turn my head and go running up the stairs, and while I do, Dad is calling for me, but I just ignore him as I reach my pink "Frozen"-decorated room my mom had decorated for me just when I was a baby. I flop on my bed and cry on my pillow, just waiting for the day to just be a bad dream.

THE NEXT DAY . . .

"Breakfast! Orea! Breakfast time!"

I moan as I quickly get dressed in a dark-blue, navy-blue sweatshirt with purple stripes and some blue jeans.

When I get downstairs, Mom is making baby food for Timmy, my little baby brother, who is now playing with his bear named Koala.

"Ora! Ora! Wook at me!"

I smile and pet his fuzzy little hair Mom must have brushed this morning.

As soon as Mom spots me, she gives me the look of "Take a seat."

I look around and see that Mom has given me fresh



Svetlana enjoys reading her story . . . definitely not an advertisement for Yoplait. She also enjoyed some writers' talk after the meeting with C. R. Rowenson (in the background), who had good advice for her on how-to books she might read.

Photo by Liz

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Hydra Marketing With Julianne Black

by C. R. Rowenson

There is yet another speaker that I was very excited to hear from. I know I say that every time, but hey, I offer to do the writeups for speakers I am really excited about.

In the October Ridge Writers meeting, our own Julianne Black spoke about her Hydra Marketing plan. I especially enjoyed this metaphor as, to me, tackling marketing is no less daunting than being told to fight a multi-headed beast that breathes poison and ruins the earth around it. Whether you are frightened like me or ready to get with the monster slaying, Julianne gave us nine steps toward defeating the beast.

But first, a little more about our speaker. Between her degree in fine arts, her time spent in a variety of industries, and another degree in computer animation, Julianne has a fascinating medley of abilities to say the least. In addition to being a self-published author of children's books, she is also a graphic designer, and has been since 2007. She

possesses a far greater wealth of experience and knowledge than I can hope to cover in just a few paragraphs, especially when I have all of those heads that need liberating.

All of these nine points are steps that should be taken by any author serious about publishing in the new world technology. Julianne has set her hydra up in a specific order so that the removal of each "head" gets you more prepared to handle the next. Here's where the metaphor gets even stronger. With each head that you cut off, several smaller ones will take its place. We didn't have time to cover all of these, but here are the main points that need to be handled.

Ready? Begin the assault!

Head 1: Domain Names

Before you can build that amazing website and become a famous author, you need to purchase the domain names. A number of sites are available to help you with this such as godaddy.com.

Head 2: Professional Email

You need to set up a professional email address for fans, magazines, editors, agents, and your favorite authors to contact you at.

Head 3: Social Media

Ugh... It makes me shudder just saying it, but in today's world you need an online presence. Facebook and Twitter are all but essential.

Head 4: LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a wonderful place to build contacts and work your way into profes-

See p. 7

Julianne displays her impressive array of books.

Photo by Liz



Report on Local Author Showcase

by Julianne Black



The Local Author Showcase held Oct. 17 at the Ridgecrest Branch Library was a lot of fun for all involved, and provided a wonderful opportunity for members of our writing community to get out from behind their desks and network with one another. Among the participants were Ridge Writers C.R Rowensen, Daniel Stallings, Theresa Goldstrand, and Julianne Black.

Opening the event was a panel discussion serving as captivating catalyst for all of the participants to introduce themselves to the public, as well as providing the perfect springboard to pool resources and inspire each other regarding current and future projects during the meet-and-greet and reception portions of the event.

The library and Ridge Writers hope to expand the event in the spring, and welcome any ideas or additional panelists. Please contact Julianne Black for more information.

Hydra Marketing

From p. 6

sional groups and networks. You never know who you might find there.

Head 5: Start a Blog

Having a blog will do many things for you. Not only can it be a place for you to discuss opinions, struggles, and achievements, but it gives you a chance to solidify your authorial voice.

It also gives readers a chance to taste some of your beautifully crafted brain-candy.

Head 6: Get Bookmarks and Business Cards

You just met an agent at a writing convention. You aren't really going to hand him/her your email scrawled onto a dirty napkin, are you?

Get custom bookmarks or business

cards to hand out and they just might remember you.

Head 7: Network

You can't do it alone. No-one can. You need to develop a network of friends, contacts, and advisors.

Fortunately, this becomes significantly easier if you have already severed the first six heads of the beast. Now people can find you and you can find them.

Head 8: Find a Mentor

People love to teach, and they love to share. It's just in our nature. Look around. See if you can find someone more experienced to take you under their wing. Lots of people want to help you.

Head 9: Write!

During the adrenaline rush of combat, it is easy to forget your main objective. We are writers, so go write something. Write everywhere and read often.

That is just a quick glimpse into the information that Julianne Black divulged at the last meeting. With these nine steps, you can slay the dreaded Marketing Hydra and be known as the Hercules of our time... well, maybe not, but it's a good start.

If you are still flummoxed and can't tell your Twitter feed from your profile picture, then you should check out Julianne's book, *Traversing the Jungles of Social Media*, now available as an ebook on Amazon.

CHICKEN MUA

From p. 5

squeezed orange juice and waffles with chocolate chips and ... Yoplait Tropical Whips!

I sigh. I hate Yoplait yogurt and I especially hate the Tropical Whips flavor. It tastes disgusting. I prefer Chobani Flips Chocolate Haze Craze or Chobani Flips Almond Coco Loco.

I guessed since we had guests over a few days ago that my cousin must have eaten the rest of the Chobani flips.

“Mom, is there any more yogurt? I mean, besides Yoplait?”

“Nope,” says Mom. “But if you don’t want yogurt, you could have a banana or a piece of toast with butter.”

I sigh again. See, I don’t like bananas or toast with butter. I guess I am just going to have to go along with the yogurt, and after school I’ll swing by the grocery store after 5th period.

“Ora! Ora! Twime fwo scwool!”

“Yes, I do think it’s time for school, Orea. I’ll see you after school, OK?”

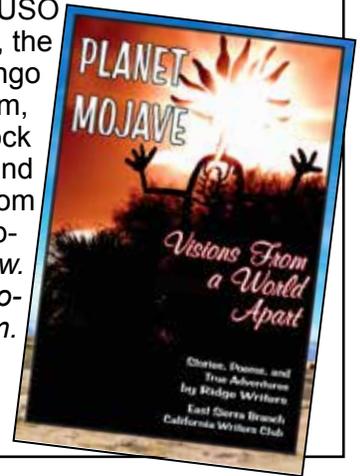
“OK, Mom!”

I shut the door behind me and climb on the yellow school bus that takes me to middle school.

Something worth pondering:

Earth without art
is just “eh.”

Our book *Planet Mojave: Visions From a World Apart* is available at Jawbone Canyon Station, the Historic USO Building, the Maturango Museum, Red Rock Books and online from our website, www.planetmojave.com.



The East Sierra Branch (Ridge Writers) is the California Writers Club branch serving the eastern part of Kern County. Over the mountains on the west side of the county is our Bakersfield-based sister branch, Writers of Kern.

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