



*Writers
of the*

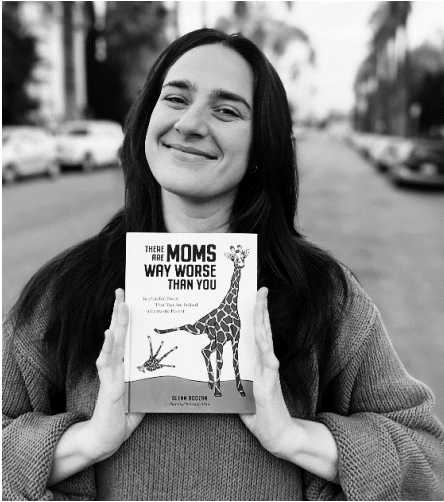
PURPLE SAGE

Newsletter of the Ridge Writers

East Sierra Branch, California Writers Club

June 2022

EMMY-NOMINATED WRITER SPEAKS JUNE 2: Glenn Boozan and *There Are Moms Way Worse Than You*



Emmy- and WGA-nominated comedy writer Glenn Boozan will give the Thursday, June 2 Ridge Writers program starting at 6:30 in the meeting room of Ridgecrest Presbyterian Church, 633 W. Las Flores. Masks required. Public invited, no admission fee.

What to expect: Being a mom is hard – and being a perfect mother is an impossible, unachievable standard. And yet, every mom has felt a creeping sense of guilt and shame. Now, Glenn Boozan offers the antidote to “mom guilt”: *There Are Moms Way Worse Than You: Irrefutable Proof That You Are Indeed a Fantastic Parent*, a deceptively playfully illustrated romp through the outlandishly terrible parenting practices of the animal kingdom. The book went viral on publication.

Glenn’s credits include “Conan,” “Comedy Central’s Lights Out with David Spade,” “Sarah Silverman’s I Love You, America” on Hulu, and TruTV’s “Adam Ruins Everything.”

A book signing follows.

Earlier the same day, she will chat informally with participants of “Read the Book, Meet the Author” at Mac’s International Restaurant (see story elsewhere in this issue).

We look forward to seeing you there. Bring your friends!

CONGRATULATIONS, IT’S A BOOK!: Danny Nielsen and Jennifer Crittenden Report on the May Meeting written by Daniel Stallings



Danny Nielsen (left) and Jennifer Crittenden (right) discuss promoting Straight Flossin’, Danny’s first book.

Ridge Writers was delighted to receive a double dose of speakers for our May 5 meeting. Jennifer Crittenden, who last spoke to Ridge Writers in February 2020, returned to speak more about her work with her publishing company, Whistling Rabbit Press.

This time, she brought along one of her newest authors, Danny Nielsen, whose first book, *Straight Flossin’ and Other Stories of the American West*, will be published by Jennifer in June 2022. This dynamic duo talked to Ridge Writers all about their publishing process together as they brought this book to life.

Their tandem talk opened with Jennifer Crittenden talking about Whistling Rabbit Press, her boutique publishing company which has now published eight books. Originally, the company published Jennifer’s books—such as *The Mammoth Letters: Running Away to a Mountain Town* and *Working Dogs of the Eastern Sierra*—but she has since branched out to bring other authors to print. Jennifer is in the business because of her passion for the East Sierra and for really good writing. That is how she met Danny Nielsen.

Mark Your Calendar...

June 2 – Glenn Boozan – Emmy-nominated author of *There Are Moms Way Worse Than You*

July 7 – Brett Battles – One of our favorite and most successful local authors returns by popular demand.

August 4 – Open Mic Night – Bring your writing to read – 5 to 7 minutes – in good taste

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And the Winner Is...



There is a story behind this new picture, and I promise you it will tie back to our lives as writers and creative people. At Master Mystery Productions, we give out an award called Diamond Mask Award for Excellence in Performance. It's our version of a Best Actor Tony. It was my way of creating a form of recognition for my amazing actors who give so much of themselves in the art of theatre. It's the most coveted and most difficult award to win at MMP as it relies on only audience voting. You have to be on your game every single night. And you're reading the message of a guy who has lost that award many times. It's the only one I am permitted to win, and while often coming close, I am even more often found just out of reach of it.

If you ever see me onstage in one of my shows, know that I always cast myself last to fill in any gaps in auditions because not enough people show up. It was just the case for my most recent show, *Closer to Heaven*, where I had to fill the role of Gabriel Baker, a wannabe SFX makeup artist in Hollywood whose scars run deeper than the ones on his skin. It was an emotionally challenging and draining role, one I couldn't play lightly or else it would lose all of its impact. Embracing the role meant being especially vulnerable with my own history, and during the show's run, I would often tear up for real delivering my monologue. On closing night, I had the worst case of butterflies.

Because I wanted to win. I have received praise for my writing, directing, designing, and producing, but I have never received an accolade for my acting. After a while...you start to feel left out. Like you are a mistake. Like you're not good enough. Those thoughts plagued me role after role and show after show. I wasn't good enough. I wouldn't be able to sit among my phenomenal acting peers who have won the award many times. I didn't belong with them.

My cast told me my performing as Gabriel was the best I had ever done. On closing night, they took away my power to count the votes for the awards, meaning I had no idea how the results played out until they were announced. That photo is of my reaction when I learned I **won** my first ever Diamond Mask Award for the role of Gabriel Baker. Shocked, incredulous, hysterical tears burst out of me. I'm covering my face to try and stifle the sobs. My cast instantly enveloped me in a group hug. The last time I felt this rush of emotion was when I won the Allison Aubin Scholarship in 2008 from Ridge Writers. Have you ever wanted recognition for your hard work so badly that, when it finally happens, your whole body explodes with emotion? That was me when I won my Diamond Mask. Because now I was good enough. My message to you is that sometimes it will take a long time to achieve something you dream about but keep the dream alive. When you find the right groove with the universe, you will achieve what you dreamed. Keep trying and keep bettering yourself.

SoCal Writers Showcase

Ridge Writers Leaders

President – Daniel Stallings
Vice President – John Anderson
Secretary – Donna McCrohan Rosenthal
Treasurer – Andrew Sound
Member at Large – Vacant
Historian – Maryann Butterfield
Newsletter Editor – Daniel Stallings
Programs & Publicity – Donna McCrohan Rosenthal
State Rep – Donna McCrohan Rosenthal
Youth Coordinator – Daniel Stallings
Webmaster – Julianne Black

To reach any of these leaders, use
ridgewriters@yahoo.com.

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



The southern region of the California Writers Club maintains the "zine"-format socalwritersshowcase.com, containing monthly content from members, ranging from fiction, nonfiction/essays, and memoir, to poetry, interviews, discussion on writers' life, the craft, and news.

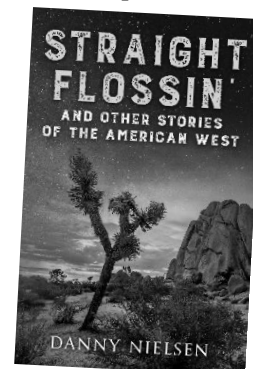
The Writers of the Purple Sage is the monthly newsletter of the Ridge Writers, East Sierra Branch of the 109-year-old California Writer Club. Except where otherwise stated, all articles in this publication may be printed without special permission in newsletters of branches of the California Writers 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.
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Contact the editor by mail at P.O. Box 484, Ridgecrest, CA 93556 or by email, ridgewriters@yahoo.com. **SPECIAL NOTICE:** 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 publicity purposes.



Danny is a doctoral student in Environment Science who has worked in the desert to study desert wood rats. To escape the doldrums of science writing, he would often craft stories and essays about the area. Over several years, he began collecting these stories surrounding a central theme of the desert. *Straight Flossin'*, the title, was a phrase taken from a friend of Danny’s named Cody described as a “poetic wit” with a hard life and a car “one pothole away from the junkyard.” Cody would say he was “straight flossin’” back home whenever he drove, and Danny adopted the phrase as a metaphor for the journey through life and being open to its possibilities. Danny took a leap of faith and sent his query and a writing sample to Jennifer and Whistling Rabbit Press. This was key in this birth of a book, because Jennifer fell in love with the writing sample. She remembered one story in particular as a favorite— “The Small Recycling Operation,” a story about a couple scavenging in Pine Tree Canyon looking for copper that is found in old bullet casings. She described Danny’s work as observant and non-judgmental...and the quality of the writing sealed the deal. And thus, their new partnership began.



Jennifer moved on to talking about her publishing practices, encouraging safe practices while also lamenting bad and predatory behavior from author services trying to capitalize on inexperienced authors. Jennifer talked about the importance of being transparent in her contracts. She’d pay herself off the top of the book sales for her editing work, and she promises three versions of the book: a paperback, an e-book, and an edition formatted for Kindle devices. She emphasized how vital it is for an author—especially a new one—to understand fully what is in their publishing contract.

Our Jack London Award Winners

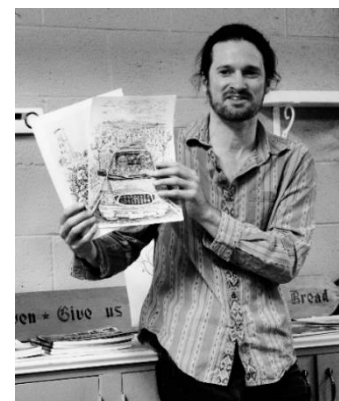
We’re proud of the Ridge Writers who have won the Jack London Award, the highest recognition each branch of CWC can give outstanding members.

The award was presented annually until 2005, and subsequently only once every two years.

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
Julianne DiBlasi Black 2017
John Anderson 2019
Andrew Sound 2021

*With a special Charmian London Award to Fran Wersan

Jennifer discussed important lessons learned from publishing a self-help book for a friend in the necessity for consistent timelines and having the author present to promote the book. Danny gave Ridge Writers an exclusive viewing of a book trailer he shot and edited with his brother using drone footage of the desert. The sweeping majesty of the landscape’s reminded me of David George’s talk about using nature in your work at our April meeting. Danny also showed us the original illustrations done by his wife, Sunny Noel Sawyer, a special treat for all of us. The program reflected many of the qualities of Danny’s first book—that of looking at the desert differently. Jennifer said that *Straight Flossin'* makes the desert in this part of the globe a whole living, breathing world unto itself. And that’s what inspires them. The book is scheduled for release on June 15, 2022, and we can’t wait! Thank you for coming, Jennifer and Danny!



Danny shows us his wife's original illustrations for his book.

READ THE BOOK, MEET THE AUTHOR, JUNE 2

Glenn Boozan, whose *There Are Moms Way Worse Than You: Irrefutable Proof That You Are Indeed a Fantastic Parent* went viral on publication two months ago, will discuss her book and career at Ridge Writers’ “Read the Book, Meet the Author” afternoon tea on Thursday, June 2, 1:30 p.m. at Mac’s International. Masks requested except while eating and drinking.

Red Rock Books has the book in stock. Participants buy and read it in advance of the get-together. The ticket price of \$32 includes tea at Mac’s with tea sandwiches, cheesecake, beverage, a copy of the book that the author will autograph, entry in a gift basket drawing, and convivial discussion with Glenn. Sign up and get the ticket at Red Rock Books.

She will give a program that evening for the Ridge Writers general meeting (see article elsewhere in this issue) covering different material. Admission free, public welcome.

The Black River Chapbook Competition

Twice each year, Black Lawrence Press will run the Black River Chapbook

Competition for an unpublished chapbook of poems or prose between 16-36 pages in length. The contest is open to new, emerging, and established writers.

The winner will receive book publication, a \$500 cash award, and ten copies of the book. Prizes are awarded on publication.

Deadline is May 31st.

blacklawrencepress.com

Ridge Writers does not endorse any contest, conference or publishing opportunity that appears in our newsletter. We merely collect and share news of opportunities for our membership. Member discretion advised.

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.



New Words in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary

Direct from Merriam-Webster (by way of Donna), we received an email about the new words added to the dictionary in the past year. Here's a glimpse at just a few of the 455 new entries:

Words from Online Culture and Communication

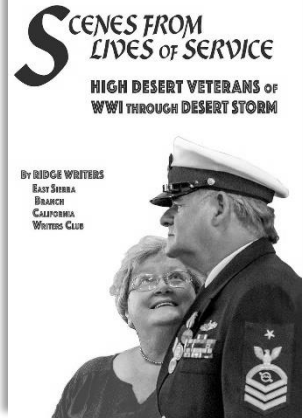
- **deplatform** : to remove and ban (a registered user) from a mass communication medium (such as a social networking or blogging website) broadly : to prevent from having or providing a platform to communicate.
- **digital nomad** : someone who performs their occupation entirely over the Internet while traveling; especially : such a person who has no permanent fixed home address.

More Coronavirus Words

- **breakthrough medical** : infection occurring in someone who is fully vaccinated against an infectious agent — often used before another noun (as in “breakthrough cases” or “breakthrough infection”).
- **vaccine passport** : a physical or digital document providing proof of vaccination against one or more infectious diseases (such as COVID-19).

Words from Tech and Science

- **bit rot** : the tendency for digital information to degrade or become unusable over time. This kind of data degradation or corruption can make images and audio recordings distort and documents impossible to read or open.
- **copypasta** : data (such as a block of text) that has been copied and spread widely online. Copypasta can be a lighthearted meme or it can have a more serious intent, with a political or cultural message.



Cover Photo by Laura Austin

Our book featuring stories of High Desert veterans, *Scenes from Lives of Service*, is on sale at Red Rock Books and through mail order. To order through mail, send a letter and check to Ridge Writers, PO Box 484, Ridgecrest, CA, 93556; buyer should state name, mailing address, number of copies wanted, and enclose a check for \$32.50 each. Ridge Writers members can buy the book for \$25 each.

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