



*Writers  
of the*

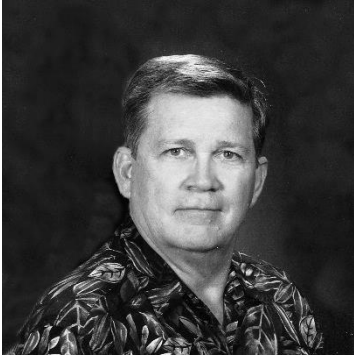
# ***PURPLE SAGE***

## ***Newsletter of the Ridge Writers***

***East Sierra Branch, California Writers Club***

***July 2024***

### **A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCI-FI, FANTASY, AND WORLD BUILDING ON THURSDAY, JULY 11**



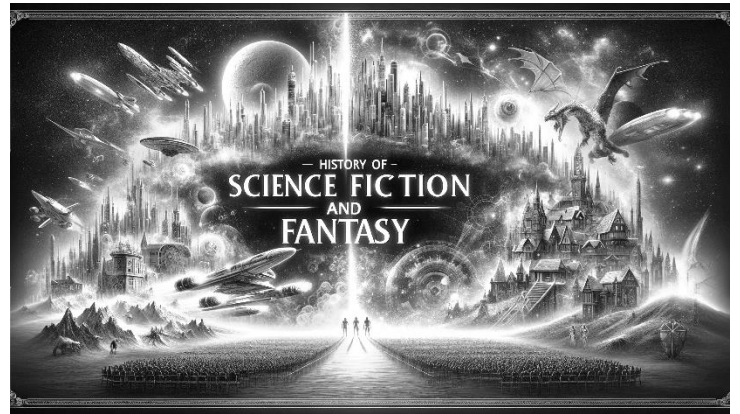
Author Richard S. Thomas will give “A Brief History of Sci-Fi, Fantasy, and World Building” on Thursday, July 11, for the Ridge Writers general meeting. The program begins at 6:30 p.m. in the meeting room of Ridgecrest Presbyterian Church, 633 W. Las Flores. Public welcome. No admission fee.

He will begin with 1608 and the first science fiction novel, then cover not only the facts but also the social and cultural impact that the genre has had on society. For world-building, he will discuss the elements needed to build a complete world; setting, technology and magic, history and culture, politics and societal structure, flora and fauna, economy and resources, language and communication, religion and mythology, conflict and plot, and aesthetic and mood.

Richard enjoyed skydiving, scuba diving, and hang gliding as a young man. At 27, he fell in love and married the woman of his dreams (today they have two daughters, six grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren). He spent the next 50 years as a serious woodworker and won many awards. When he started losing his eyesight to macular degeneration, he turned to a decades-old dream of writing.

His debut novel, *Earther Wizard, the Rise of Colin Duncan*, came out in June 2023. He expects the second book in the series to appear by the end of 2024.

A book signing will follow the talk. We hope to see you there, and please bring your friends.



### **MAKING A MOVIE IN 150 DAYS**

**Report on the June Meeting written by Donna McCrohan Rosenthal**



*Drew Muxlow discusses the importance of a production designer for any film--indie or otherwise.*

Writer/director/actor Drew Muxlow spoke for our June 6 program about making the low-budget *Coco World* in 150 days. He explained that at the time, he had a job as a Snapchat editor while writing four or five screenplays on the side and submitting them to contests and wanting to do more, and bigger. When Snapchat laid him off just at the beginning of the Writers' Strike, he saw a window of opportunity to persuade suddenly out-of-work actors and techs to join him in his project.

He contacted Christina Hilliard from the Second City stage and comedian/writer Andrew Battat. They came aboard. Together, they searched for locations and a cast, finding an office available on weekends, a parents' beach house, and family members to fill some roles.

#### **Mark Your Calendar...**

**July 11 – Richard S. Thomas** (author of the *Earther Wizard* series), “A Brief History of Sci-Fi, Fantasy, and World Building”

**August 1 – Open Mic Night**, members and public read from their own works, 5-7 minute limit, light refreshments.

***Continued on page 3***

## *Why Do I Write and What Do I Want to Do with My Writing Career?*

I believe that written communication is as vital to an individual's ability to succeed as verbal communication is, whether it is providing solid grounding and reasoning for an argument or evoking compelling emotions in their reader. To have proficiency in the assembly of the English language through writing is, in a sense, a power that can be displayed through the vast array of simple or complex words to construct fascinating literary works. Throughout my lifetime, I have read many novels, novellas, textbooks, critical essays and analyses, poetry, and historical excerpts. The English language has never ceased to amaze me with how it can be wielded; the duality of the human mind is incredibly intriguing to me. I aspire to be like many of the authors whose works I have read and been given chills because of the sole emotion and eloquence of their words or the vivid illustrations they paint in my mind. There are literary elements that I wish to master, and there are literary elements that, although some perplexing to grasp, I wish to explore.

I express my emotions through writing; it is an outlet. When I was in fifth grade, I purchased a journal from my elementary school's book fair. I loved it, and I still do. Although the cover may be slightly embarrassing now that I am no longer a child, I hold it as a dear object. My first entry was on December 18, 2015, and I have never stopped using it since. This journal has guided me through my childhood and teenagerhood, protecting my youthful naivety, teenage anger, and confusion. Every thought and emotion in this journal is raw and real. I believe this journal is the object that partially sparked my interest in writing from a young age, with the initial spark of requesting storybooks read to me daily before I could read myself. When I finally began to read, I developed a desire to write my own little stories. Later, I sought out this hobby as a mechanism for experimenting with new vocabulary and language structures through the process of trial and error. I am particularly fond of creative writing. It feels like my imagination has not changed much since I was younger; it still races many moments of each day, seeking inspiration from what my eyes perceive, what my ears hear, and what my mind is stimulated by. For several years, I have found myself journaling down ideas that I think of on a whim, some that I hope will belong to a future novel. I become absorbed when I am reading a good novel and my calmest when I am writing, and I often wonder if pursuing this enjoyable pastime as a career would bloom into a gift I could share with others. I wish to be a writer, of any sort, where my words on paper will impact a person just as I have been impacted by writing. With my writing career, I wish to help others, whether that may be simply portraying the importance of written communication or briefly transporting a reader in need of escape into another world.

### Planet Mojave Submissions

Submissions for the 2024 edition of the Ridge Writers' anthology, *Planet Mojave*, are now officially closed. We received twenty total submissions from our membership—both veteran and newbies—which promises to be an exciting addition to an already wonderful book. Thank you everyone for participating. We are in the process of finalizing edits and will give more updates in the future.

#### Ridge Writers Leaders

**President** – Daniel Stallings  
**Vice President** – Janis Kunz  
**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** – Janis Kunz  
**Webmaster** – Julianne Black

To reach any of these leaders, use [ridgewriters@yahoo.com](mailto:ridgewriters@yahoo.com).

Visit our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/RidgeWriters](https://www.facebook.com/RidgeWriters) and our website [CWC-ridgewriters.org](http://CWC-ridgewriters.org).

#### SoCal Writers Showcase



The southern region of the California Writers Club maintains the “zine”-format [socalwritersshowcase.com](http://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 over 100-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:

- The author's name and original publication credit must be printed with the text.
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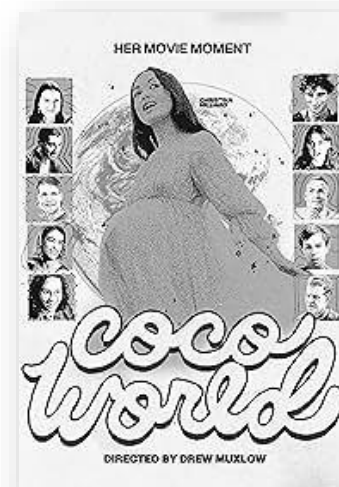
Contact the editor by mail at P.O. Box 484, Ridgecrest, CA 93556 or by email, [ridgewriters@yahoo.com](mailto:ridgewriters@yahoo.com). **SPECIAL NOTICE:** Photographs for publicity and newsletter uses are taken at all Ridge Writers events. By entering the venue, members and guests are granting permission that their likenesses may be used for publicity purposes.

Drew and Andrew did the writing and settled on “main character syndrome” as the theme. This means that in the mind of the character, everything happens to that person. They had a draft done in three weeks, then went to the internet to recruit a leading man, a director of photography (who brought his own really good equipment), and a team. Drew said, “I learned a lot about editing my words when I had to cut scenes. It boils down to not ‘what should I cut?’ but ‘what can I possibly cut?’”

Every shoot day ran 12 hours long. They completed *Coco World* on a total budget of \$30,000, held a few test screenings, and opened to a launch party and an enthusiastic audience of about 200. Now *Coco World* goes to festivals.

You can find *Coco World* on YouTube at:

[https://youtu.be/3I\\_o33Xl6AI?si=w59B-qXZcmxSY01s](https://youtu.be/3I_o33Xl6AI?si=w59B-qXZcmxSY01s).



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### From the CWC President:

#### “CWC 2024 Ekphrastic Book Update

The CWC 2024 Ekphrastic Book, *Vision and Verse, A Fusion of Art, Photography, Prose and Poetry*, is in the final stage of copy proofing. Here is a copy of the front cover. The art is “Welcome” by Briahn Kelly-Brennan. The cover was designed by Crissi Langwell.



In the book, there are 15 pieces of contest winning member art and photographs with 130 member poems and prose prompted by the art. In addition, we have included images of member art that received honorable mention in the contest that preceded the book. The final book published book will be a high-quality softback, 200-page, book with color covers and 20 pages of pages art in full-color.

It is likely the book will sell on Amazon for @ \$35.00. We expect the book will be available for purchase on Amazon on August 15, 2024. Books may also be sold at branch meetings, with a member discount, however that has yet to be determined. Once published and on sale, the book will also be available as a PDF.

The club is very excited about this new publication, and pleased to announce that Les

Berstein has agreed to serve as editor on a new ekphrastic book that the CWC board approved for 2025.

The CWC is actively seeking traditional and new ways to promote writing, publishing, marketing and selling. *Vision and Verse* was an experiment. So far, it appears a successful idea. We look forward to your feedback when the book becomes available on Amazon.

Roger C. Lubeck, CWC President”

*Editor’s Note: Two of our own East Sierra members—Janis Kunz and Daniel Stallings—will have poetry published in this new anthology, so be sure to check it out.*

## 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

Janis Kunz 2023

\*With a special  
Charmian London Award  
to Fran Wersan

## MEMBERSHIP DUES WILL BE DUE SOON

Membership dues for the California Writers Club, of which Ridge Writers is the East Sierra Branch, will be due starting July 1st.

The dues are \$45 for the year (July 1st to June 30th) and grant you special perks such as newsletters, membership discounts for branch events, *The Literary Review* published by the CWC, able to publish on SoCal Writers Showcase, and more.

If your membership expires, you will have to pay the additional \$20 initiation fee for a total of \$65 to rejoin. So plan to renew those memberships soon! Dues **MUST** be collected by September 30th at the absolute latest.

**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.



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## Dear Journal: Junior Writers Retreat



A writing mindfulness retreat

**Friday, July 12, 1:30-3:00pm**  
**Saturday, July 13, 1:30-3:00pm**  
**Grades K-12**

Join us for learning about the many ways to journal and to bring mindfulness into your life and writing!

Ridge Writers members will discuss historic journaling, epistolary journaling/storytelling, and joy journals. Then junior writers will have a quiet, guided session to write in their journals and ask questions or advice on their creation. Journaling materials will be provided. Free to Attend.

**Ridgecrest Branch Library**  
**131 E. Las Flores Ave.**

For more information contact Ridge Writers youth coordinator Janis Kunz: [janisrkunz@gmail.com](mailto:janisrkunz@gmail.com)

## SCENES FROM LIVES OF SERVICE

HIGH DESERT VETERANS OF WWI THROUGH DESERT STORM

By RIDGE WRITERS  
EAST SIERRA  
BRANCH  
CALIFORNIA  
WRITERS CLUB



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.

**The Ridge Writers**  
**East Sierra Branch**  
**California Writers Club**  
**P.O. Box 484**  
**Ridgecrest, CA 93556**

The East Sierra Branch of the California Writers Club (Ridge Writers) meets the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at Ridgecrest Presbyterian Church (633 W. Las Flores Ave.).