



August 2025

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Where Did Summer Go?



Members Only

Summer Salon Open Mic parties are a CWC Marin tradition! They're a great opportunity to meet fellow writers and test out your writing on a supportive audience. Our July Salon was a big success, and you don't want to miss out on this last chance of the summer. This event is Free and Members Only, so be sure to renew your membership early to lock in your speaking slot. If you aren't a Member yet, what's holding you back? [Join today.](#)

August 17 (Sun) 5:00 - 7:00 pm: Our second Summer Salon will take place at the San Rafael home of a gracious Member.

Everyone is welcome to attend and read, but priority will be given in August to those who didn't get a chance to read in July.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Write Like You Mean It

When I retired from my Silicon Valley job in 2022, I had a plan for my life-after-work. I would:

- spend more time traveling,
- make time for family and friends,
- do more volunteer work, and
- WRITE THAT BOOK.



I have been executing on plan. My first novel comes out next spring, and I am well into my second. Some of you will roll your eyes and say, but Jean, you approach EVERYTHING like the captain of a cheerleading squad.

Why? It's partly just how I'm wired, but it's also because writing a book is important. Like a well-turned chair, a handmade quilt, or a painting, a book is a concrete, creative accomplishment. When my book finally comes out next spring, it will be the realization of a lifelong ambition. A friend of mine who has been ill put it like this: publishing a book will be 'proof that she lived.'

I not only want to get my book published, I want *you* to publish *yours*. At the Summer Salon in July, I offered up the word *intentionality* to our assembled group of writers. Paying for a CWC membership, attending events, and reading work out loud show intention. Well done. Seriously, pat yourself on the back.

We have so little time to waste. Set your goal and get on the writer's road. Out there, you'll meet fellow travelers. Helping them keeps you moving, too.

So! I intend to do a reading at the August Summer Salon. What about you?

- Jean Gordon Kocienda
President, CWC Marin
www.jeangordonkocienda.com

Time to Renew!

Many of you have not renewed your memberships yet! 2024-25 Members have until September 30 to renew before incurring a \$20 fee to reestablish their membership. So, pay \$45 now or \$65 starting in October. No brainer, right?

This year we're piloting a new option, meant to make life easier for everyone. In addition to the familiar One-Time Membership Renewal button on our website, you'll see a new one. The MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL will automatically renew your Membership on July 1st each year until you cancel. This way, we don't have to chase you down with reminders and you don't have to go through the whole renewal process every year. Don't worry, we'll remind you next June before your card is charged, and you can cancel anytime.

You can also choose to stick with the one-time renewal option.

Let us know what you think of the new system and bear with us as we work out any kinks.

MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

NEW MEMBERSHIP \$65	MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL \$45	ONE-TIME MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL \$45
Membership year: July 1st to June 30th Includes \$20 initiation fee Initiation: Dec thru May, use Partial-Year Membership (below)	✓ Automatically charges your card \$45 yearly on July 1. ✓ Cancel anytime. ✓ This option available for current members only.	✓ Renews membership through July 1, 2026. ✓ This rate available for current Members only. ✓ Choose this to opt out of auto-renewal

JOIN US	RENEW NOW	RENEW NOW
TRIAL-YEAR NEW MEMBERSHIP \$42.50	DUAL MEMBERSHIP \$25	STUDENT MEMBERSHIP \$15

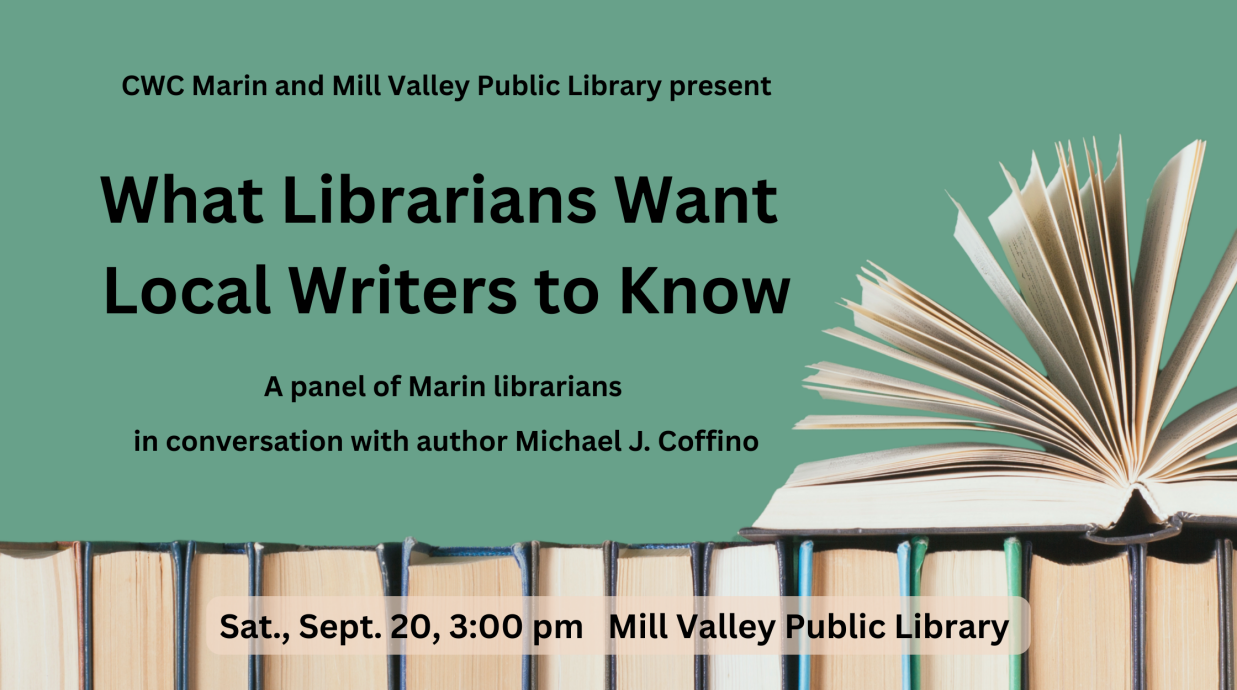
Get to Know Marin's Librarians

CWC Marin and Mill Valley Public Library present

What Librarians Want Local Writers to Know

A panel of Marin librarians
in conversation with author Michael J. Coffino

Sat., Sept. 20, 3:00 pm Mill Valley Public Library



How do you get your book onto library shelves? How do librarians choose books and what's their budget? How do you pitch an event? What can we do to support local libraries and librarians?

A panel of librarians from Marin public libraries take time from their busy schedules to answer these questions and more. Author, ghostwriter and editor Michael J. Coffino leads the discussion, leaving plenty of time for your questions.

This will be a great opportunity for CWC Marin to show our love for public libraries and our great librarians! Don't wait to reserve your seat because this one will fill up quickly.

Heads Up, Procrastinators

It's crunch time!

**FLASH FICTION
CONTEST**

CALIFORNIA WRITERS CLUB, MARIN
OPEN TO ALL CWC MEMBERS STATEWIDE



500-1000 WORD STORIES
\$10.00 ENTRY FEE

THEME: LEFT BEHIND

Opens: June 1, 2025
Closes: Midnight, September 1, 2025

INFORMATION LINK

BRAGGING RIGHTS:

- **WINNERS PUBLISHED ON CWC WEBSITE**
- **NAME AND STORY TITLE OF ALL FINALISTS ON CWC WEBSITE**
- **FRAMED CERTIFICATE TO FINALISTS**

Deadline for submission is midnight, September 1st

Writers' Night Out

MAC's at 19 Broadway
19 Broadway, Fairfax
SECOND TUESDAY EVERY MONTH!

August's featured speaker is...
Simona Carini
Author and Poet



OPEN MIC NIGHT

Writers' Night Out invites you to Read Your Prose
in front of a supportive and fun audience

Tuesday August 12th
6 - 8pm



Sign-ups to read open at 5:30pm • Readings limited to 5 minutes • Prose preferred

From the Blog

Words vs. the Frame

by Michael J. Coffino

The camera shot is to film what the sentence is to writing.

A single film shot can establish setting, mood, and character in seconds. For novelists, this presents a challenge: how can words alone compete with the immediacy and sensory force of cinema? The answer isn't to mimic the screen—but to embrace what only fiction can do.

While film relies on literal images, prose taps into the brain's ability to construct entire scenes from carefully chosen language, allowing the story to unfold in the mind's eye. Film shows us what something looks like. Fiction, at its best, shows us what it means.

Novelists possess tools that reach deeper than the visual, accessing consciousness, time, memory, and meaning, in ways film cannot. Here are some examples.

Selective Detail

Selective detail infuses visuals with a personal and emotionally charged quality. In *The Road*, Cormac McCarthy employs detail to evoke the visualization and emotional despair of a post-apocalyptic world:

Nights dark beyond darkness and the days more gray each one than what had gone before. Like the onset of some cold glaucoma dimming away the world.

The potency of the details captures not only what is seen but what matters emotionally and thematically: a world of despair and fragility.

Omission

The way silence can dwarf the power of sound or music in a film, omission in writing can evoke tension or mood. When writers choose not to describe, they create gaps that allow readers to supply what's missing and achieve greater emotional investment. [CONTINUE READING...](#)

Submit to the CWC Marin Blog

Our Blog Master Michael J. Coffino is accepting blog submissions from CWC Marin Members on a rolling basis! This is a perfect opportunity to get your writing published online. Submission criteria are on the [Blog page](#) (scroll to the bottom).

We had a BIG response on the survey. Thank you to everyone who took the time! Armed with this information, we are already working hard to bring you relevant events in 2026. Here are a few highlights:

- - the **most popular events** in the past year were #1 Literary Agent Kimberly Cameron, #2 Monthly Coffee Socials, #3 Summer Salon Open Mic Nights, and a three-way tie for #4: Building Readership with Iris Jamahl Dunkle, Literary Tour of San Francisco, and AI for Writers.
- - **most popular topic areas** are #1 Craft, #2 Marketing, #3 Publishing.
- - **most popular locations** are #1 Mill Valley Library, #2 Zoom, #3 Book Passage.
- - **most popular times** are #1 Sundays, #2 Saturdays, but a plurality of people say they are flexible.
- - as you can see below, **popular event ideas** include: software tool workshops, marketing on a shoestring, and short story writing.



Other (please specify)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

What's YOUR Superpower?

These events don't happen spontaneously. They take a lot of time and effort. What can you do to help?

- - Do you know a reputable, articulate, local literary agent who might be willing to speak with us?
- - Are you a great event organizer?
- - Do you have graphic design skills?
- - What about marketing skills?
- - Do you have a connection to a bestselling author, reputable publisher or other great speaker?

Reach out to us at marin@cwcmarin.com, or mention it to the leader at a coffee social. It's a great way to get closer to the writer community, learn new skills, and make new friends.

No Coffee Social in August



Because our Summer Salon falls on the third Sunday of August, we will not meet for coffee. Don't let that stop you from visiting Book Passage and finding another writer to chat with, though!

We'll be back at it in September. And remember, as the weather cools down again, we're moving to Aroma Café in San Rafael!

Member News

SHOUT OUTS!

Welcome to our New Members (just since May)!

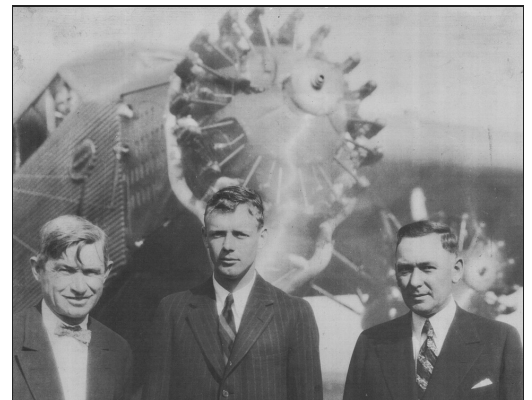
Candace Bellittera
Diane Bouchard
Alan Collenette
Mary Compagno
Rebecca DeGeorge
Joe Dunn
Emil Erickson
Lynn Gatehouse
Marilyn Geary
Karl Grossenbacher
Mark Jackson
Carol Jacobsen
Jayne McPherson

Patricia Morin
Jonelle Patrick
Laura Petracchio
M.P. Smith
Rebecca Van Horn

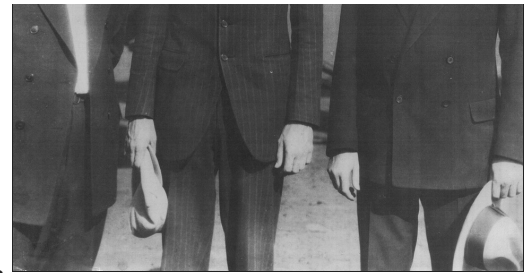
(if we forgot someone, please let us know!)

Dr. Joan Steidinger has been offered a contract by Bloomsbury publishing for *Acts of Courage: A Guide to Understanding Mental Health Struggles of Female Athletes* (working title). In addition, Elizabeth Kracht (Kimberly Cameron & Associates) has agreed to take her on as a client.

Ryann Willis has completed her manuscript, *Flying Tycoon*, and has begun querying. Her book is a rich tapestry of storytelling about her grandfather, aviation pioneer Jack Maddux, who, along with Charles Lindbergh and Amelia Earhart, founded one of America's first commercial passenger airlines. The book concludes with Howard Hughes purchasing her grandfather's airline and renaming it Trans World Airlines. (Right: Inaugural flight co-pilots Will Rogers and Charles Lindbergh with Maddux Airlines founder, Jack Maddux, after landing at Mines Field, Los Angeles, on September 22, 1927.)



Daniel Bacon's essay "It Blew My Mind", first published in our March newsletter, has been chosen for the CWC August [Bulletin](#)!



Thomes Hines of CWC Mt. Diablo Branch is looking to interview someone with expertise in **hummingbirds**! He is writing a novel about something else, not hummingbirds, but the little sprites play a role. Contact him at tnh0911@outlook.com and tell him that CWC Marin sent you.

Gini Grossenbacher has been selected as a First Round Judge for the [Historical Novel Society](#) 2025 First Chapters Competition.

Jean Gordon Kocienda's ESL student Rossana was honored by the [National High School Poetry Contest](#) for her poem "[My House in Guatemala](#)". Jean is a longtime volunteer tutor with [Refugee Transitions](#), a Bay Area nonprofit.

Have something to shout about? We want to celebrate with you. Maybe you finished a draft or found a key piece of evidence for your manuscript. Maybe you got a poem published. Whatever it is, let us know. It's good for all of us to see our peers moving forward, meeting goals, and getting recognized! Email us at marin@cwcmarin.com.

Last Chance: Summer Writing & Critique Group



Gini's Grossenbacher's Manuscript Critique Group Dates (Zoom Meetings): 6:00 -8:00 pm, August 13 and 27. Participants write together for thirty minutes, read for five minutes; the group provides guided positive feedback and suggestions for improvement. Come to listen, read, and learn your craft.

Please contact Gini through her website: <https://ginigrossenbacher.com>

Upcoming Events

This is just a sampler of things going on in our area and online. Be sure to check our fellow CWC branch websites (<https://calwriters.org/cwcbranches/>). Some events come up too quickly for this monthly newsletter, so **follow us on Facebook** as well. We appreciate your tips! If you know of upcoming events that fellow members might enjoy, please let us know at marin@cwcmarin.com.

CWC Marin offerings are highlighted in red. All times are Pacific zone unless otherwise specified.

Fri., Aug. 1, 3:00 - 5:00 pm. **Haiku in the Garden**, Marin Art and Garden Center. In this workshop, poet Jayne McPherson will guide writers in using the heightened awareness in the garden to spark creativity and a sense of well-being. There will be warm teas and cookies. Donations appreciated. [For more information](#)

Sat., Aug. 2, 2:00 – 3:00 pm. Hear local poets recite their poetry at the **Marin Poetry Center's Traveling Show**. No registration required. [For more information](#)

Sat., Aug. 9 – 4:00 pm. If you missed **Rhys Bowen** at our recent CWC event, here's your chance to meet her at Book Passage. She will be celebrating the publication of her latest book, *Mrs. Endicott's Splendid Adventure!* No registration required. **Come early and enjoy complimentary coffee/tea and cookies with Rhys.** [For more information](#)

Fri., Aug. 15, 5:00 – 7:00 pm. You are invited to an evening of readings of short and flash fiction by members of **The Writers Grotto**. It's your chance to learn more about this marvelous writing community in San Francisco. Refreshments will be provided. Registration required. [For more information](#)

Sat., Aug. 16, 1:00 – 4:00 pm. **Writing Realistic Dialogue**, Mill Valley Library. This class focuses on techniques for writing realistic dialogue for fiction or drama. Registration required. [For more information](#)

Sat., Aug. 16. Deadline for the Redwood Writers CWC **10-Minute Play Contest 2025**. Six winning plays will be performed by Off The Page Readers Theater. Entry fee \$10 per play. [For more information](#)

Sun., Aug. 17, Sun., Aug. 17, 5:00 – 7:00 pm. **CWC Summer Salon and Potluck**. See details and link for event above.

Sun., Aug. 17, 1:00 – 5:00 pm. San Jose Woman's Club and Women's National Book Association for our **CHILL OUT & READ Ice Cream Social and Summer Book Fair**. Enjoy free ice cream sundaes and meet 30 Bay Area authors in person and take a historic tour of the San Jose Woman's Club 1929 Spanish Mission revival clubhouse, a California historic landmark. [For more information](#)

Sat., Aug 30, 12:30 pm. **Bringing Culture to Life Through Fiction**. Mill Valley Library. In this program, learn how to draw inspiration from real life and turn it into a fictional narrative. [For more information](#)



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