



December 2025

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This Weekend!



Celebrate our 2025 accomplishments and toast the New Year with us! Our ranks have swelled: CWC Marin is now too large to fit into anyone's home, so we're graduating to Book Passage. It's free, but consider showing your love for independent bookstores like Book Passage by buying a book while you're there.

Please also bring a potluck item. RSVP today!

DETAILS & RSVP HERE

I Missed My 2025 Writing Goal

My plan for 2025 was to turn the first draft of my new novel into a solid second draft, with an eye toward finding a publisher in 2026. Did I hit my goal? No! I made progress, but I'm not where I wanted to be.

Did you miss your goal, too? Courage! What we're doing is hard. We aim high with our goals not because we think we'll hit the bullseye every time but because we MIGHT. That's why we call them goals, not slam-dunks.

Here's an example: I have a one-thousand-word daily writing goal. Every morning, I note my starting word count, then my plus-one-thousand target number. At the end of the day, I write my actual net word count, and that's where I start the next day. One day last week, after two concentrated hours of work, I netted only 124 words. Ouch.

The point is, we can't let missed goals discourage us. With a new year, we have a new opportunity to erase our slates and start over.

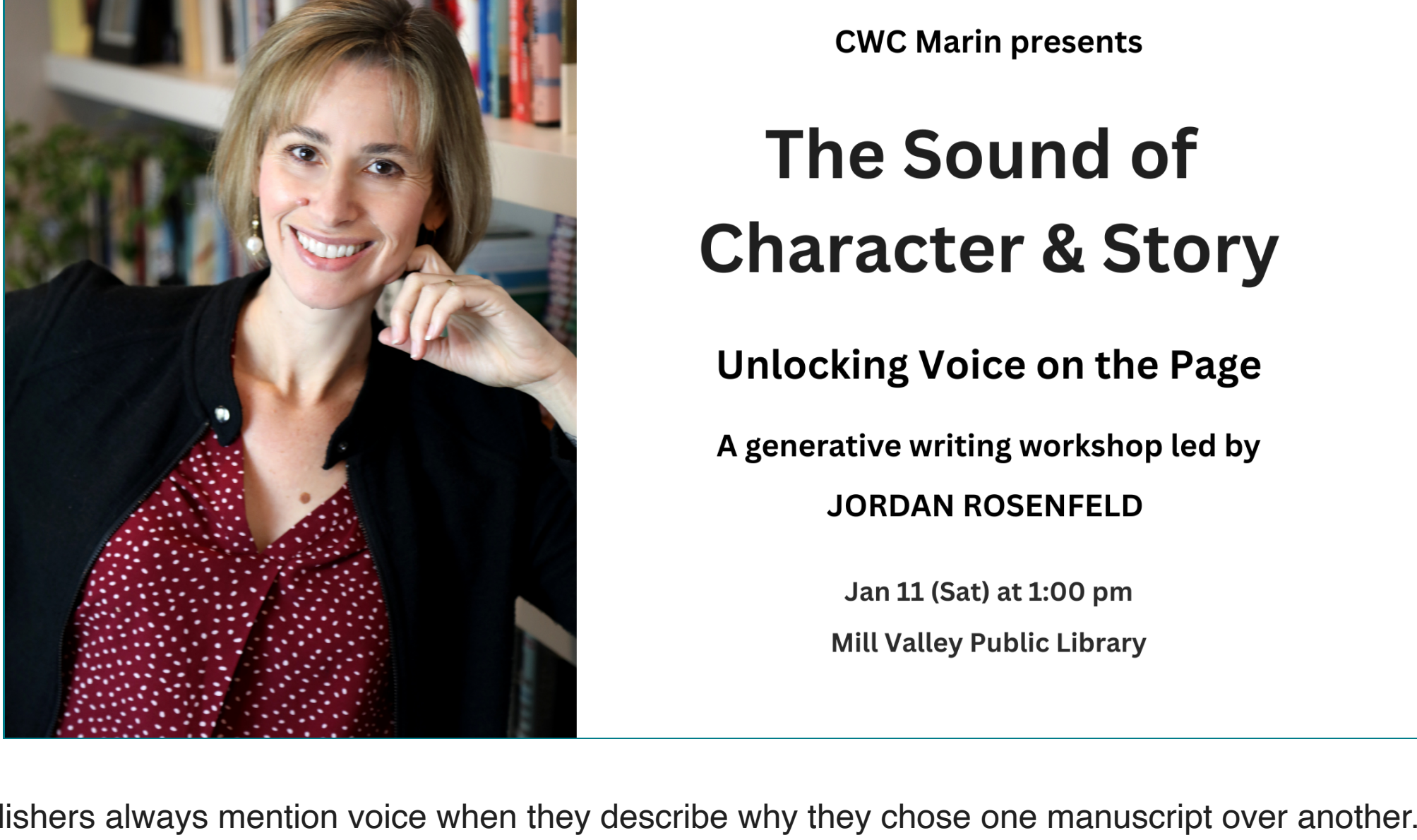
Ergo, I hereby set my new 2026 goal: a solid second draft in the hands of beta readers by next Thanksgiving.

What's your new goal?



Jean Gordon Kocienda
President, CWC Marin

Coming in January



Agents and publishers always mention voice when they describe why they chose one manuscript over another. Jordan Rosenfeld is a fun, talented teacher, and she's coming all the way to Mill Valley to share her tips and tricks with us. You can even prepare for the event by pre-ordering her forthcoming book: [The Sound of Story](#).

DETAILS & RSVP HERE

Editor's Note: Our 2025 Left Behind Flash Fiction Contest brought in scores of submissions from CWC branches around the state. CWC Marin's own **Dana Dakin** was shortlisted, and as the only Marin member so recognized, we've posted her flash fiction story on our website. [Read it in full here](#).

My Jane Kenyon Birthday Wish

by Dana Dakin

I met the poet Jane Kenyon by accident in a bookstore,
the one found at the far end of town
in New London, New Hampshire,
one week after she died.
Walking through the open double doors,
there she was,
under a wash of fluorescent lights,
stretched out, pasted on foam board.
She was peering from under a wild bank of dark bangs,
with readers resting on her nose,
on the front cover of the Concord Monitor.
Above the fold.
I had never seen her before.
I would never meet her.
She had died at 47.
I was 51.

[CONTINUE READING...](#)



Congratulate Dana when you see her!

Member News

SHOUT OUTS!

Welcome to our Returning Members

Dotty LeMieux
Linda Joy Myers
Barbara Sapienza

We're so glad you've rejoined us!

Congratulations to CWC member **Colleen Dolan**. Her short story, "Send in the Squirrels," will be featured in the CWC Redwood Writers' 2026 anthology, *Moonshadow, tales of hidden light, Writing between Light and Shadow: Memoir and Fiction that Illuminate*, expected for a spring release. Additionally, look for Colleen's opinion piece on remembering the dead with love and the Ghost Ship community memorial in the December Bay Area News Group. <https://www.colleendolanwrites.com/>

Join fellow CWC member **Tracy Tandy** as she is the featured author for a **free kids' event at Sausalito Books by the Bay**. The day includes story time, holiday crafts, music, and complimentary food and drinks for everyone. **Sat. Dec. 6, 3:00 pm.** 100 Bay Street, Sausalito. Instagram live stream: Tracymtandy



Rosie Sorenson's *If You'd Only Listen: A Medical Memoir of Gaslighting, Grit and Grace* has been a months-long Kindle Bestseller, often ranking #1 in its category, which she credits to the thousands of monthly page views generated through the Kindle Unlimited program. Its success is also timely due to its focus on patient advocacy and medical errors—a critical issue, as 371,000 people die annually from preventable errors. <https://www.rosiesorenson.com/>

Gini Grossenbacher is pleased to announce she will be serving another year as an Author-Editor-Panelist at the 22nd annual San Francisco Writers Conference, held at the Hyatt Regency, San Francisco, from February 12-15, 2026. Gini will be consulting with authors on their manuscripts throughout the conference and will serve on various author panels. Register now; prices rise on January 1, 2026. Here is the link: hope to see you there! <https://www.sfwriters.org/conference/>



Frank Lloyd Wright called this Bay Area bridge "the most awful thing."
Lane Dooling
Underappreciated, the bridge is a marvel of its own.

We're celebrating CWC Marin member **Lane Dooling**, who was recently published in SFGate for her article, "**Frank Lloyd Wright called this Bay Area bridge 'the most awful thing.'**" Her piece details the quirky, low-fanfare debut of the Richmond-San Rafael Bridge, which included a horse and a rickety bus, and attracted immediate criticism for prioritizing function over sleek design. [Find out more about Lane and her work](#)

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.

Want to write for our blog? We recently updated our submission criteria/ to allow for a wider variety of topics. You can now submit personal essays and flash fiction in addition to writing/marketing/ publishing tips. Interested? Check out our blog page for specific criteria: <https://cwcmarin.com/blog/>

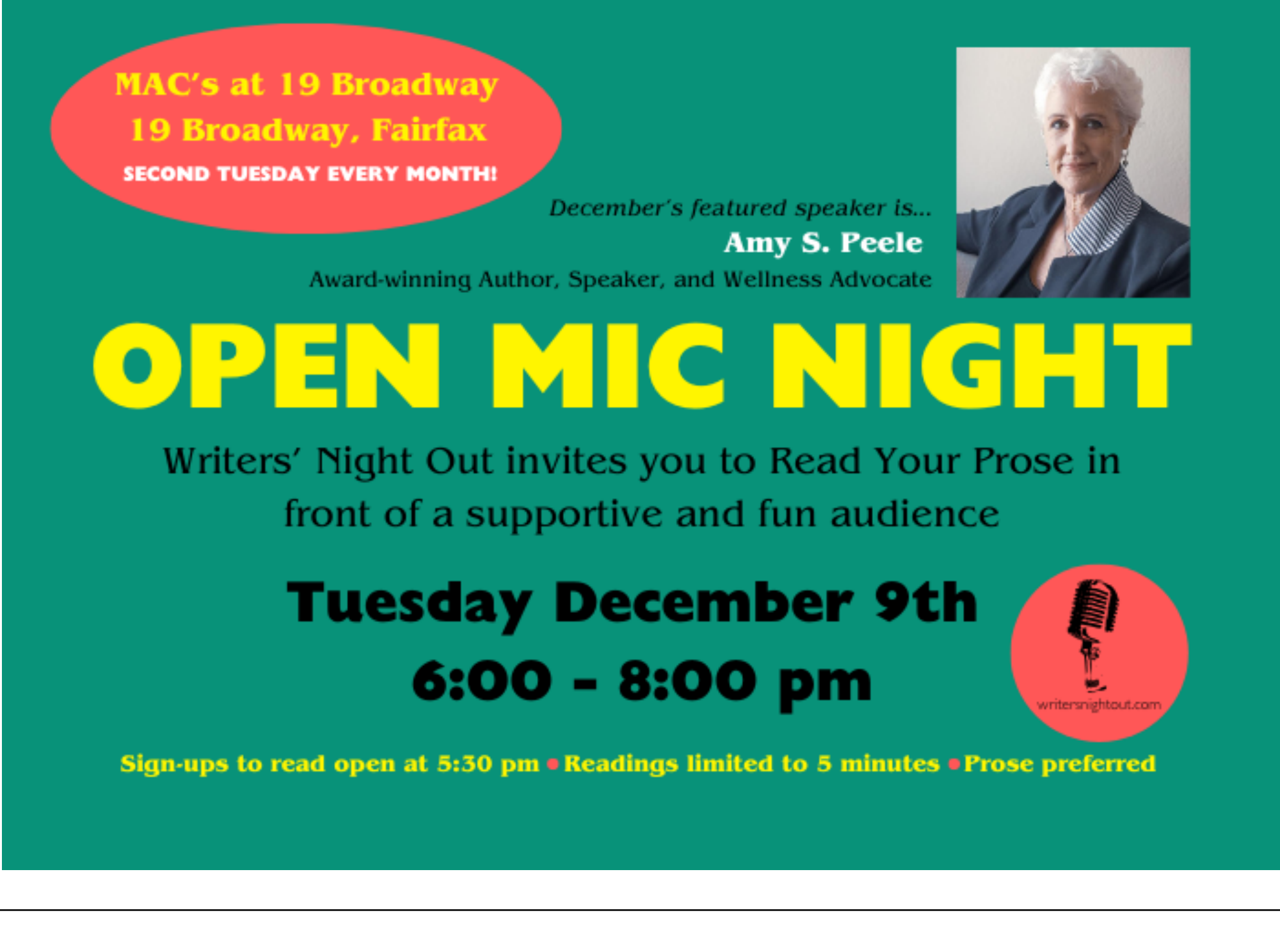
Do You Like Making Graphics?

Do you have marketing or graphic design skills? In your past life, did you make Power Point slides that you were a teensy bit proud of? CWC Marin could use your help. We use [Canva](#) for our marketing graphics, and every month we have event marketing graphics to make. Canva is an easy, web-based app, and we'd be happy to train you. It helps if you have a basic background in making images that are simple, easy-to-understand, and visually balanced. It also helps if you enjoy learning new skills.



And here's the bonus—once you learn how to use Canva for CWC Marin, you can put it to work for yourself making social media posts, flyers, business cards, or newsletters for your personal writer's platform. Interested? Email us at marin@cwcmarin.com for more info.

Writers Night Out - Next Tuesday



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/cwcbbranches/>). 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 and events are free of charge, unless otherwise specified.

Sat. Dec. 6, 9:00 – 12:15 am. People judge books by their covers every day. Your cover has a very important job to do, so are you sure it's up to the job? Bay Area Independent Publishers Association presents **Cover Design Best Practices: Strategies for Every Genre.** The in-person or Zoom event includes a book cover primer, a cover contest, and a cover feedback opportunity. Features Steve Rustad, a long-time graphic designer and illustrator, and a line-up of panelists. Free for members and \$20 for non-members. [Register here.](#)

Sun., Dec. 7, 2:00 – 3:30 pm. Jane Austen's 250th Birthday: Lecture and Tea Party. Join local Mill Valley Austen scholars Kate Moore and Roxanne Eberle for a discussion on the lasting legacy of Jane Austen, from the books themselves to the seemingly infinite adaptations and the works she's inspired. Complete with tea, cookies, and Jane Austen trivia. Mill Valley Public Library, 375 Throckmorton Ave., Mill Valley. [Learn more](#)

Sun., Dec. 7, 4:00 – 6:00 pm. CWC Marin event: Holiday Party. See above for more details.

Tues., Dec. 9, 6:30 – 8:00 pm. Poems to Love, Prompts to Try. Join Marin County Poet Laureate, Francesca Bell, for a writing workshop. Participants will discuss poems and poetic devices, then spend time writing together in response to a variety of imaginative prompts. [Please register.](#)

Wed., Dec., 10. Doors open at 6 pm, show starts at 7:00 pm. **Redwood Nights: Storytelling Under the Stars.** Immerse yourself in tales that are sometimes hilarious, sometimes poignant, but always true. Hosted by Don Reed, an award-winning NPR storyteller. Heaters, blankets, drinks, and food available. Deer Park Villa, 367 Bolinas Road, Fairfax. From \$35. [Purchase tickets here.](#)

Sun, Jan. 11, 1:00 to 3:00 pm. Mark your calendars for the **CWC Marin event**, a writing workshop with **Jordan Rosenfeld, The Sound of Character and Story: Unlocking Voice on the Page.** Mill Valley Public Library, 375 Throckmorton Ave. See above for more details. [RSVP here.](#)

Sat., Dec. 20, 11 am. Redwood Writers CWC branch presents **Your Story Unleashed: A One-Hour Creative Catalyst.** Ready to ignite a short story or essay project for the new year? Join experienced author and coach Audrey Kalman for this in-person one-hour workshop, offering a concentrated burst of inspiration and practical techniques. You will engage in compelling exercises designed to unlock ideas and generate the start of your short fiction or nonfiction. 2060 W College Ave., Santa Rosa. [Register here.](#)

Sun., Dec. 21 - 3 Jan, At-home Creative Writing Retreat hosted by [author Kat Redfern](#). Free, flexible, online gathering of writers to exchange ideas and encourage each other during the holiday break. Registration deadline is Dec. 14. [Details here.](#)

