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June 2026

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Sign Ups Open Today!

Summer in Marin means CWC Marin Summer Salon Open Mic soirees! Are you ready to share a short written piece with fellow club members, or maybe just sit back and enjoy others' creativity? Any original work is welcome (published or not): a short story, an excerpt, or a poem--but it must fit into five minutes (about 750 words). CWC Marin Members only.

July
Sunday, July 26 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm at a Member's home in Mill Valley.
Sign ups open today and are limited to 30 readers, so don't delay! More info and RSVP HERE.

August
Sunday, August 16 from 4:00 - 6:00 pm at a Member's home in San Rafael.
Sign ups open July 1
Priority will be given to Members who renew their Membership for 2026-27 (see below) and did not get to read in July.

Almost Time to Renew Your Commitment to the Writer Community

As summer approaches and we look toward our popular Summer Salons, we're grateful for our community. Thanks to you, CWC Marin is now the fastest growing CWC branch!

The annual Membership Renewal season starts on **July 1**. Here's what you need to know:

- **Renewal Period**: CWC at the state level recently voted to shorten the renewal period from three months (July - September) to two (July-August).
- **Renewal Fee**: CWC also voted to keep the annual membership fee at $45 (new memberships are still $65, half-year will still be $42.50). As prices go up on everything, it's nice to know that CWC has not raised its rates in more than twenty years.
- For those enrolled in **Auto-Renewal**, you don't need to do anything! Your credit card will be charged $45 on the one-year anniversary of your last renewal (anywhere from late June to early September). If you need to know the exact date, reach out to us. You should have already received an email reminder confirming the upcoming charge. If your plans have changed and you'd prefer not to renew, simply ask to be removed before July 1.
- If you didn't enroll in **Auto-Renewal,** you will receive a Paypal invoice by email.
- If you'd like to enroll in Auto-Renewal for next year, you can do so starting July 1 by going to our Membership page and choosing "**Membership Renewal**".

If you have questions, reach out to Membership Chair Gini Grossenbacher at marin@cwcmarin.com.
Thank you for being part of this creative circle. We look forward to gathering again—sharing words, ideas, and inspiration—at our Summer Salons and Coffee Socials.

Meet the Board

Editor's Note: Over the next few months, this space will be given over to members of our Board. I hope this series of essays will help you get to know them and recognize their faces. Be sure to say hello at upcoming coffees and events! This month, we're meeting our **Treasurer, Susanna Solomon**. Susanna has been guarding our finances now for several years, and she is also co-founder of the popular Writers' Night Out. Notwithstanding the title of her essay, Susanna's writing is NOT 'small potatoes' at all.

Small Potatoes

My work will never be on the New York Times Bestseller list. Nor will my books ever be a Book-of-the-Month-Club selection, or get a five star review on Kirkus Reviews, or ever really climb out of the basement at Amazon.
I'm a woman of a certain age, and just recently realized I will always be a small potatoes kind of writer.

This thinking caused a crisis of confidence and stopped me in my tracks. Every single time I sit down to write I am accompanied by my not so best friend doubt.
I may be a known person in my small community of writers, where we extoll our brethren, cheer their accomplishments, applaud their stories. But in the bigger world, no.
There are books out there with my name on them, and I have to, just have to, believe that they are valuable. And important. Or are they?

Now the bigger question is, am I okay with that? Am I okay with being a small potato?

Do I make people laugh? Sometimes. Do I make people cry? Sometimes. My characters are clamoring for attention and need to be heard. How can I ignore their voices calling out to me?

I can't. They are in me, where they will always live, eager to tell their stories, and I must listen. So I do what I can, satisfied, I guess, like most writers, with one word after another, one story after another, one year after another, one book after another, one more small potato for the pot.

- By Susanna Solomon, CWC Marin Treasurer

Don't Miss Out on Our Monthly Coffees!

June Coffee Social

June 21 @ 11 am
Studio Fourth Street
Fourth Street and F (1569 Fourth St, San Rafael)

Bring your own coffee and crumpet. The social is open to members and non-members alike, and it's free of charge, but we have an optional tip jar at the door to help defray the rental cost (a $5 tip is cheaper than your coffee these days).

CWC Marin Author Meet-and-Greet at Copperfield's

Author Meet and Greet

Saturday, June 27
11 am - 2 pm
Copperfields Larkspur Landing

Drop by Copperfield's at Larkspur Landing on Saturday the 20th to support your fellow CWC Marin authors. Three of our ranks will be on hand to sign books. It's also Farmers' Market Day. Come join the festive atmosphere and pick up a basket of fresh strawberries as well.

The three featured books and authors are:

Love Brain & Other Minefields - Alan Collenette
Short stories and poetry exploring intimacy, longing, and consequence. Book of the Year Finalist INDIES International Awards

Druck and Mita - Tracy Tandy
A heart-opening, transformative experience for readers of any age. Rich in authentic Bhutanese and Buddhist imagery.

The Badass Widows - Valerie Saul
Riveting and utterly charming—a perfect blend of Killers of a Certain Age and The Thursday Murder Club.

Two other books by CWC Marin members will also be available for purchase:

Wild Heart - Patricia Cannon
Discover new layers of meaning in the conversations between poems and photography in this deeply heartfelt work.

Away to See - Liz and Paul Norwood
Captures the beauty and spirit of Martha's Vineyard through lyrical vignettes and vibrant, full-color art. Great gift!

Your presence will not only support our CWC writers, it will also help ensure that Copperfield's will continue to offer CWC members a space to sell our books. And perhaps your book will be featured there one day.

Want to get your book on THE COPPERFIELD'S SHELF? Submit now!
We are accepting submissions now for the next group of CWC Marin authors to be featured on the Larkspur Landing Copperfield's Local Author shelf. Submit details about your book to Daniel Bacon (daniel_bacon@prodigy.net).

Shout Outs!

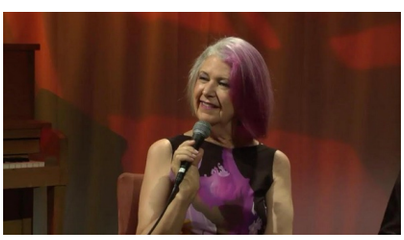
Welcome to our New and Returning Members

Kit Cameron
Adrienne Amundsen
Jay Exstein

We appreciate you!

Robin Cohn received an Honorable Mention for the Ancient to 10th Century category in the Historical Novel Society 2026 First Chapters Competition for her novel *Junia: The Forgotten Apostle.*

Dr. Jen Ferris' book *Parenting with Self-Compassion* was named a 2026 American Legacy Book Awards Finalist in the Parenting & Family and Self-Help categories. In addition, she was a guest recently on the Neurodiversity podcast with Emily Kircher-Morris. Listen here



Camille Cusumano, author of the 2026 novel, *The Mystique of the Last Cannoli*, has been featured on KQED Perspectives (May 12) and Pacific Coast TV (April 23). Both are choice opportunities to promote her new work and her memoir, *Tango: An Argentine Love Story.*

Jean Gordon Kocienda celebrated her second book launch of her novel *Girl in a Box*, held at Books Inc. in Campbell, CA. The event included *onna-de* style calligraphy and a calligraphy demonstration as well as a musical performance. A one-of-a-kind book launch!

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 **Robin Cohn** at marin@cwcmarin.com. (Members Only)

Got a book coming out this year? We know a few of you have books launching this year, and we want to highlight them. Send us an image of your book cover and a 50-word (or less) description of the book, along with any launch event information, and Robin will make sure it gets featured. (Members Only)

Writer's Night Out

Featuring CWC Marin's own Membership Chair and Board Member, Gini Grossenbacher! Come on down to support her -- and bring something you're working on to read aloud to a supportive, pleasantly inebriated audience of fellow writers. Dress warmly; we're out on the patio. Questions? Check www.writersnightout.com

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We've been putting together groups to critique each other's writing. So far we have three groups, each with four to six members. Since these are full, we're building a fourth, and several people are interested in a face-to-face group. If you are, contact me and I'll match you up with others.

Here's how the groups operate:

- Meet monthly by Zoom (or in person)

- Submit a piece of writing a week before the meeting to all members. Make sure it's well-edited. The group decides the maximum length--could be 2500 words or more.

- Read and critique each member's piece before the meeting. Make comments or corrections on the submission.

- At the meeting, focus on each member's piece one at a time. Focus on major feedback, not little typos. Meetings might run for two hours.

- After the meeting, email back the pieces with minor corrections noted.

- Diverse genres are welcome. Actually, it's a benefit.

CWC Members only. Groups need committed writers. Critiques should be positive with suggested improvements. Somebody must coordinate meetings and send out Zoom links.

Interested? Contact me, Mike Van Horn. mvh@businessgroup.biz

Gini's Zoom Writing Classes

Hi CWC Marin Writers and Authors,

I am offering the following writing classes this year. All classes meet on Zoom on Wednesday evenings, 6-8 pm, except for Drop In to Write, which meets at my house or a cafe in or near San Rafael.

SAN RAFAEL WRITERS & ARTISTS
CLASSES, COACHING, COMMUNITY

Gini Grossenbacher
CWC Marin Membership Chair

Zoom classes are $25 per class (attend one or all); Drop In to Write is $10/class.Drop in to Write is held to five participants due to space considerations. All classes are enrolling now.

June - Flash Fiction (novelists, memoirists, short story authors welcome, too).
July - Drop In to Write
August - Art-Inspired Poetry (Ekphrastic) co-taught with award-winning poet, Robin Gabbert
September - On Vacation
October - Voice & The Novel with special guest, Jordan Rosenfeld
November - Drop In to Write (no class Thanksgiving week), Wednesdays, 4, 11 & 18.

About Drop In to Write: I provide prompts, and we work side by side on our current projects, then share our writing in a safe space without pressure.

Let me know what questions you may have. We would love to have you join us!
Contact me through my website, www.ginigrossenbacher.com
All my best,
Gini🍀

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 and events are free of charge, unless otherwise specified.

Tues. June 2, 6:00 - 7:00 pm, **Start of Summer Book Party with Five Sibylline Authors** including CWC Marin President **Jean Gordon Kocienda**, Sausalito Books By the Bay, 100 Bay Street, Sausalito.

Sat., June 6, 7:00 - 9:00 pm. **Naked Truth: Real, Stories, Live.** Don Reed emcees a Saturday night edition of true, live, storytelling featuring Kristen Cosby, Dixie de la Tour, Jeff Greenwald and one other storyteller to be announced. Start practicing now to tell a one-minute story in the Lightning Round. Registration highly recommended. Adults and high school students only. Free wine reception at 6:30pm for pre-registered guests. Waitlist line opens up at 6:45 on a first come, first served basis. Mill Valley Public Library, 375 Throckmorton Ave., Mill Valley.
For more info and to register for program.

Sat., June 6, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. **Write Together.** Gather to set intentions, write in silent community for 90 minutes, then check in with each other. This event takes place at **Page Street SF** - a co-working space exclusively for writers. 297 Page Street (at Laguna) in San Francisco. Register here

Sat., June 20, 1:00 pm. **Michael Coffino** will make his fourth appearance at Book Passage on June 20 to celebrate the publication of his new book, *The Great Train Heist: The California SMART Taxpayer Rip-off.* He will discuss how unlimited budgets and good intentions can lead to transit disasters that burden working families. Book Passage, 51 Tamal Vista Blvd., Corte Madera. For more information

Sat., June 27, 2026, 1:00 pm, **Out-of-the-Box Research: Pro-Tips for Writers** with authors Jonelle Patrick and **Jean Gordon Kocienda**. Mill Valley Public Library, 375 Throckmorton Ave., Mill Valley. Register here

Sat., June 27, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. **Free Write-Ins at Left Margin Lit**. This is an opportunity to sample the workspace, meet some writers, and get some words on the page. 1543 Shattuck Ave., Suite B, Berkeley. Register here

CWC Marin Board Members

Jean Gordon Kocienda, President
Susanna Solomon, Treasurer
Gini Grossenbacher, Membership
Daniel Bacon, Copperfield's Partnership, Coffee Social Leader
Mike Van Horn, Writing and Critique Groups POC
Robin Cohn, Newsletter Shout Outs, Calendar of Events, Meetup

Tracy Tandy, Events Chair
Carol Bruce, New Member Ambassador

We also received valuable assistance from

Erik Cederblom
Valerie Saul

Curious about helping us steer the club? Attend an upcoming Board meeting. Email us at marin@cwcmarin.com for details!

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