



# The Write News

October, 2024

A Monthly Newsletter  
Denis Hoye, Editor

## Mt. Diablo Branch



### **Beth Barany**

Beth Barany is an award-winning novelist, master neurolinguistic programming practitioner, and certified creativity coach for writers.

As a teacher, speaker, and podcaster, Beth specializes in helping writers experience clarity, so they can write, revise, and proudly publish

their novels to the delight of their readers. Her courses and programs are packed with useful hands-on information that you can implement right away.

When she's not helping writers, Beth writes magical tales of romance, mystery, and adventure that empower women and girls to be the heroes of their own lives.

More at: [www.bethBarany.com](http://www.bethBarany.com)

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### **SCHEDULE**

9:30 am Door Registration Opens

10:00 am Workshop Begins

12:00 pm Buffet Luncheon

1:00 pm Workshop Continues

### **Character-Driven Stories (Strong Plots)**

Together we'll explore these tools and connect them to your character's dialogue behavior, and how to make choices:

- GMC (Goal Motivation & Conflict)
- Key Personal Descriptors
- Emotional & Kinesthetic Palette
- Secrets, Markers & Archetypes
- Core Beliefs & Worldview

You'll come away from this workshop with a deeper understanding of your character's so that you can write them from the inside out.

### **LOCATION**

Zio Fraedo's Restaurant

611 Gregory Lane

Pleasant Hill, California

### **COST**

\$50 Members and \$55 Non-Members. Includes a buffet luncheon. Pay at the door or online with PayPal when registering. You do not need a PayPal account.

### CWC Mt. Diablo Branch President's Message

It is almost the end of September, and I'm still not fully back into the CWC routine. It is now three days after I should have sent this article to the newsletter editor.

But it will happen because I know I'm quite capable, even at a pinch. That "even at a pinch" phrase – is it an English'ism, or do Americans also say that? To be honest, I am such a mix and match of American and English that I don't know which is which. To my ear, both of them sound correct because they both feel natural to me. This might be why most editors run from the room screaming if I approach them.

Enough of my trials and tribulations. I suppose my tardiness in writing this piece is because I have been focused on my latest novel. I have been on the cusp of completing the initial draft for a while. My characters hadn't told me how the plot would be resolved. Finally, everything fell into place, and I wanted to enjoy that magic moment when the story had been told. I know it now needs rounds and rounds of editing, critiquing, and proofing. But it is complete. It might follow my previous three draft novels that sit gathering dust. Wouldn't it be nice to have a literary Tinkerbell sprinkle magic dust, and the novel would be on those tables in the entrance of Barnes and Noble? Such dreams. But never despair; we are not alone.

Yes, most of the time, it is ourselves with a computer, a notepad and pen, or a recording machine. But several times each month, we have the opportunity to gather together, no matter if it be a CWC meeting, a critique group, or a Shut-up-and-write session. That sense of belonging, community, and enthusiasm can carry us forward to resolve issues that we thought were insurmountable. Within the club, we have writers who have tackled and conquered major problems and experts who can share their knowledge, sometimes at a price but well worth the outlay.

So this sense of is-it-worth-it is answered simply with a Yes. Writing stories is an incredible way for each of us to engage with others because we share characters and storylines that can amuse, challenge, educate, or thrill our readers. Sadly, some writers can bore their readers. I would not tell those writers to quit. Writing stories opens us to learning about ourselves, and some people may take a little longer to clear their minds enough for their characters to grow and blossom. When those characters have room, they will amaze anyone who finds that book on a shelf. So dust off those shelves and draft novels that have been forgotten. They have a life that can only be enjoyed in the open. Perhaps I have something to learn myself if I read the President's Message occasionally.

Barry

### CWC Mt. Diablo Branch

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### Mt. Diablo Branch Mission

Educating writers of all levels of expertise in the craft of writing and in the marketing of their work.

### Upcoming Events

Sit in on a Zoom Board Meeting, Next meeting: October 11th, 3 pm

Mt. Diablo Workshop, October 12th, 2024 11:00 AM to 2:00

*Writing from the Inside Out: Character-Driven Stories (Strong Plots)*

OPEN MIC on Zoom, Wednesday, October 16th, from 7 pm to 9 pm

Writers Connection, Chicken Pie Shop, October 26th, Noon to 1:30

### Writers Helping Writers Fund

CWC's motto is "Writers Helping Writers." We help in obvious ways, with professional speakers, critique groups, sharing what works and what doesn't, and other things. But we also know that a struggling writer needs a little more... practical help.

We want to help you with that, too.

Our branch has established this fund for any member who needs help with paying for a meeting or workshop, or with membership costs.

Just fill out the form on our [website](#) and our WHW committee will discreetly review your request. When approved, you will receive a coupon code to use when renewing your membership or registering for a meeting or workshop.

Your information is not shared anywhere. The [Writers Helping Writers Fund](#) relies only on donations for funding.

Donations are welcome at any time and are tax-deductible. CWC Mt. Diablo is a 501(c)3 charitable organization EIN: 94-6082827.

### Writer's Resources of the Month

40 Literary Journals Accepting Poetry Submissions

<https://authorspublish.com/40-literary-journals-accepting-poetry-submissions/>

25 Publications that Pay Writers \$350+ Per Article

<https://www.freedomwithwriting.com/freedom/uncategorized/25-publications-that-pay-writers-350-per-article>

41 Magazines and Websites that Pay \$1 Per Word

<https://www.freedomwithwriting.com/freedom/uncategorized/41-magazines-and-websites-that-pay-1-per-word/>

17 Magazines that Publish Writing for Children and Teens

<https://authorspublish.com/17-magazines-that-publish-writing-for-children-and-teens/>

## **I Think She Came to Say Good-Bye**

### **By Robin Gigoux, August 17, 2024**

Seventy-two hours after she took her last breath, my sister may have come to me to say good-bye. She and I have lived on opposite coasts for half a century, and while we saw each other often when we were young and have spoken on the phone, we have not seen each other for years.

About 1:30 in the morning last night, after a potty break, I climbed back into bed and got comfy. That's when my bedside lamp turned itself on. No "click" of the knob that usually accompanies turning the lamp on or off. Afraid of electrical malfunction, I quickly turned it off with the usual click, and lay there with an odd feeling.

I maintain a gentle blue night light, and do not use my bedside lamp once I retire, the logical question then being, "Is it possible I didn't turn the knob completely off when I went to bed?" But why would the lamp turn on so many hours later...without the usual click?

As I lay there grieving the loss of my sister, with my heart beating a little faster than normal, I remembered reading accounts theorizing that spirits of recently deceased loved ones have been credited with using electric lights, etc., to convey their presence and intent to say goodbye.

Plucked from the all-knowing internet, this phenomenon is often reported as (paraphrased):

- Flickering lights whereby bulbs or lamps flicker or dim repeatedly, indicating the spirit's attempt to connect.
- Unusual electrical occurrences such as power surges, appliances turning on and off, or static on electronic devices, as possible signs of a loved one's spirit trying to communicate.
- Photographs that have captured balls of electrical energy, known as orbs, believed to be manifestations of spirits, including those seeking to say goodbye.

I have given little credibility to those accounts, but am now a little more receptive. While there are other possible (probable?) explanations, I experienced no other electrical malfunction in my home that night, nor any other paranormal activity (although the possibility exists that there might have been, had I not turned the lamp off so quickly).

Resources went on to say that unusual electrical events can serve as a gentle reminder of a loved one's presence and their desire to bid farewell. They also cited the importance of remaining open and being attentive to subtle signs for comfort and reassurance during times of grief. By being receptive and creating a peaceful atmosphere, resources suggest the benefit of fostering a deeper connection with the deceased loved one in order to receive the closure and comfort they may be offering.

When it seems that a departed loved one may be trying to communicate, and one is amenable, resources suggest creating a peaceful environment, trusting one's intuition, and validating one's feelings, even when the experience cannot be explained scientifically.

My sister and I had our differences, and whatever might have transpired, I regret turning off the lamp so quickly, perhaps cutting short an experience I may never have again. I grieve my sister's passing, and curiosity now adds to my grief. While I have doubts, I am trying to accept that all things are possible. Whatever the reality, I hope she is welcomed to the afterlife by an army of angels leading her to heaven's door, where she will revel in an eternity of happiness amid the love and peace she deserves.

## An Interview with Karen Mercury

### What part of the writing process is most difficult for you?

*The promo! I'm sure every writer would say that. It's so completely opposed to the actual writing process. Must be two different parts of the brain.*



### What are you currently working on?

*I'm attempting to write Book #9 of my Bent Zealots MM-MC series. Because MC books are gritty by nature, this one involves a recently paroled former addict falling in love with the social worker who pledged to help him. And then setting off on a revenge journey a'la Bonnie & Clyde.*

### Who or what has influenced you the most as a writer?

*As a teen, I'd take books from my mother's bookshelf. Henry Miller was the biggest influence. Such a natural born writer! More of a memoirist. So I turned my real life experiences into alleged fiction.*

### How have your background, previous work, and/or experience contributed to your writing?

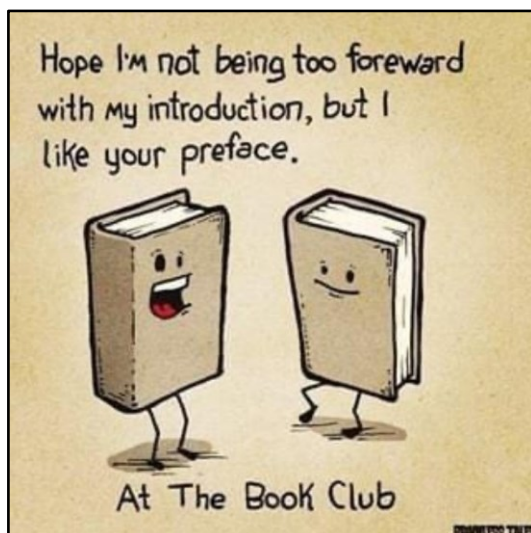
*See above! I grew up in Marin, but for some reason there were a lot of thugs and dropouts from society, maybe just in my grade level. Drama and comedy at every level. And lots of motorcycles.*

### Do you have published works?

*I have about 75 books on Amazon, both under my pen name Layla Wolfe, and real name Karen Mercury.*

### How do you define success as a writer?

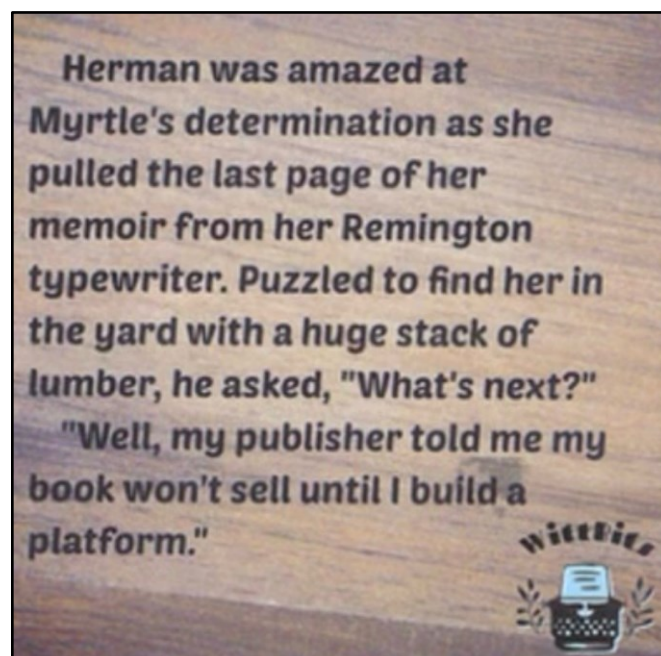
*I think it's how you define success. Some people just write to write and that's perfectly fine (and understandable!). They sell ten books to their family and friends and to them, that's success. Some cannot rest until they've sold ten thousand. Some people like to go on TV. I'd rather be fishing.*



## And Here from Moleda Daily thanks to Margie Witts

### Here are some fascinating facts about books that will leave you amazed:

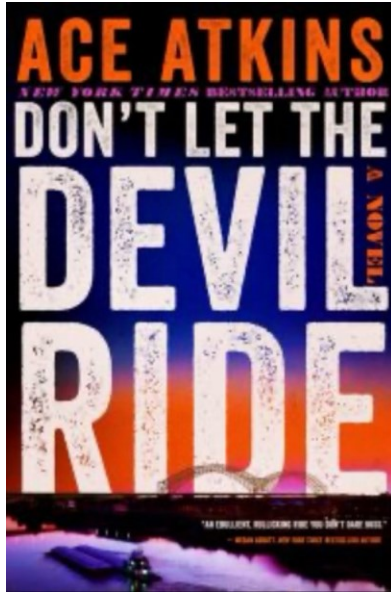
1. Roosevelt read an average of one book per day.
2. Harvard University Library has four books bound in human skin.
3. Iceland tops the world in per capita book reading.
4. People who read books are less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease.
5. In Brazilian prisons, reading a book can reduce a prisoner's sentence by four days.
6. The most stolen book is the Bible.
7. Victor Hugo's *\*Les Misérables\** contains a sentence with 823 words.
8. Virginia Woolf wrote all her books while standing.
9. Leo Tolstoy's wife hand-copied the manuscript of *\*War and Peace\** seven times.
10. There are over 20,000 books written about chess.
11. Noah Webster took 36 years to write his first dictionary.
12. The Mahabharata is the only book or epic in the world with over 1,200 characters.
13. Words like "hurry" and "addiction" were invented by Shakespeare.
14. If all the books in the New York Public Library were lined up, they would stretch 8 miles.
15. The longest novel ever written is *\*In Search of Lost Time\** by Marcel Proust, with over 1.2 million words.
16. The first book ever printed was the Gutenberg Bible in 1455.
17. J.K. Rowling is the first billionaire author, thanks to the success of the Harry Potter series.
18. Charles Dickens was paid by the word, which is why many of his books are so lengthy.



## Book Review by Lynn Goodwin

- [Don't Let the Devil Ride](#)
- Written by Ace Atkins
- ISBN 13: 978-0063293380
- William Morrow (June 25, 2024)

### Who is Dean McKellar and What Is He Hiding?



How well do you know the people you love? What about your partner? Are you sure? Addison McKellar asks herself those questions and more when her husband, Dean doesn't come home and she can't reach him in Ace Atkins new thriller, *Don't Let the Devil Ride*.

Addison McKellar's imperfect marriage is a vague imposition until her husband vanishes. Worse still, his friends and colleagues dismiss her pleas for help. Even the police are unconcerned, but as the weeks pass, she becomes increasingly concerned. When she talks to her father, he suggests that she contact his old friend, legendary Memphis PI Porter Hayes.

Together Porter and Allison discover that her husband, Dean, was never the hardworking business owner and family man he pretended to be. But who was he? And where is he now?

As they look at the connections between a hook-handed mercenary, one of Elvis's former leading ladies, and a man posing as an FBI agent, they feel like they've fallen through the looking glass until they realize that Dean was committed to a program of international intrigue with the bad guys. Tension heightens when Porter and Addison realize they aren't the only ones looking for Dean.

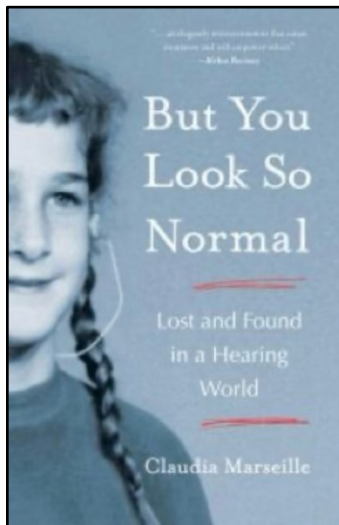
Apparently, he infuriated some killers who'll come after his family to even the score. What is a woman to do? How can she protect her family? And how could she have married this man without having a clue.

In *Don't Let the Devil Ride* thrilling adventure meets domestic drama meets deceit, lies, and breath-taking suspense. You get to watch her unscramble her life, if she can, and perhaps you'll wonder about your own. On the other hand, you might become secure as you realize what strong relationships you have. In Ace Atkins' skilled hands, this tale springs to life. Whether you have a taste for gritty Southern noir, well-crafted wit, or international travel, you'll find yourself turning pages far into the night as his imagination sparks your own.

## Book Review by Lynn Goodwin

- [But You Look So Normal: Lost and Found in a Hearing World](#)
- Claudia Marseille
- ISBN # 978-1647426262
- She Writes Press (May 14, 2024)

### Thriving Despite the Odds



Ever wondered what words sound like to those who cannot hear them? I began to get a clue with Claudia Marseille’s description when she said, “My brain was buzzing with all the new information I was able to take in with the hearing aid; I wasn’t only hearing new sounds, I was learning what things were called.”

Imagine you’re mainstreamed in school and the teacher talks while she writes on the blackboard. Imagine having to fake your responses in a group by imitating others because you were embarrassed to say that you were hard of hearing. Imagine a world in which you were unable to hear the other end of a conversation on the phone. This was Claudia Marseille world in *But You Look So Normal*. The title is taken from a line spoken by a high school teacher who was shocked when she told him she was hard of hearing, a term that was still popular in the 1970s.

When Claudia’s parents finally had her hearing tested, she was already four. Maybe they didn’t realize that her lack of speech came from the fact that she couldn’t hear.

Despite her severe hearing loss, mainstreamed her, because they wanted her childhood to be as normal as possible. Her first hearing aid, with a battery pack and a cord into her ear, made her self-conscious. That was all that was available to her. Because she was surrounded by the noise of chaos or silence, she worked hard to learn to lipread, and even though she succeeded, there were times she couldn’t hear. She loved reading though, and she had perfect pitch which is extremely rare in those with a hearing loss.

She copes with bickering parents, a strange psychoanalyst father who expresses more love for his projects than his daughter and a Jewish mother who survived the Holocaust in Munich. As a young woman brought up without religion, she explores her Jewish identity in a kibbutz and freely tells people about her hearing problems. She’s coming into her own, following her unique path, and she takes us along to experience a different way of being in the world.

Claudia emerged from her social isolation and eventually opened herself to a life of creativity and genuine love. Her story will inspire you whether you’re deaf, know people in the Deaf community, or want to open yourself to a world you have not experienced.

NOTE: This originally appeared with other book reviews at [storycircle.org](https://www.storycircle.org).

## Where to Pitch This Month!

Below, we've got editor requests from Today.com, Current Affairs, BBC Travel, Metro Weekly, and a chance to talk about cheap European trains. Plus paid opportunities in lifestyle, travel, politics, sports, business, parenting, personal essay, writing, and more.

### Business Insider

Why a section just for Business Insider? Because they ask for a lot of stories on a variety of niche topics. So, they get a place of their own.

**Financial Infidelity** - Editor Kierra Fields is looking for stories where a partner lied about their finances. Maybe they lied about debt or income or had secret, terrible spending habits. She's looking for first person essays, so if this happened to you, send your idea to [kfields@businessinsider.com](mailto:kfields@businessinsider.com).

### IPaper

Yep, it's another editor who asks for a lot of niche stories, so why not give it a whole section? Reply to these quick, they get assigned fast.

**Men Who Are Single at Heart** - Editor Maybelle Morgan would like to hear from a fella in his 30s-50s who's "single at heart." If you're happiest self is a single self and you'd like to write about your experience, opinion, or pressures to not be single, send your idea to [maybelle.morgan@inews.co.uk](mailto:maybelle.morgan@inews.co.uk).

Writers from UK Who Moved to Europe for Cheap Train Fare - The cheaper train ticket doesn't need to be your primary reason for the move, but Maybelle wants to hear from people who now save lots of money on their commute because they aren't paying UK train fees. As an American in a place extremely poor train service, I envy any place where train commute is possible. Send your ideas to [maybelle.morgan@inews.co.uk](mailto:maybelle.morgan@inews.co.uk).

### Career

**Pitches for HerAgenda** - HerAgenda is devoted to helping women move forward in their lives and careers. They need writers to cover workplace news, politics, and policies and other topic that effect working women. **Fill out the form here** to be considered as a contributor.

### Culture & Entertainment

**Freelance Contributors to Metro Weekly** - Metro Weekly covers pretty much everything and they need more freelancers available for assignments. *You* don't need to write about everything, their submission form allows you to choose which beats you focus on. If you have even a little bit of experience and might like an assignment thrown your way, **check out their detailed submission info**.

### Education

**Freelance Resource Writer/Reviewer for Lifting Limits** - Lifting Limits promotes gender equality through education and they need a freelancer to help update their resource package. You'll help create/edit lesson plans, activities, and other educational guidance materials. If you're interested, send a bit about yourself and why you'd like the role to [info@liftinglimits.org.uk](mailto:info@liftinglimits.org.uk).

## Lifestyle

**Guest Posts for As Told By Kirsty** - Kirsty herself is looking for guest posts on beauty, lifestyle, fashion, and home & interiors. If you have beauty products you'd love to write about or good tips for keeping your house not a complete mess during the holidays, send your pitches to [astoldbykirsty@gmail.com](mailto:astoldbykirsty@gmail.com).

## News/Politics

**Stories for Current Affairs** - Current Affairs gives you a lot of info, so **check out this writer's guide** before pitching. Generally, they're looking for:

- Critiques of bad premises and arguments that are infecting current debates. Strategies and suggestions for solving contemporary problems.
- · Discussions of types of human suffering that people ought to care more about than they presently do.
- Merciless verbal thrashings of bad writers, thinkers, commentators, and other such entities.

If you've got a suitable idea, **submit your pitch via this form**.

**Writing Cohort for In Our Name** - In Our Name is launching The Black Feminist Mission to End the War on Drugs campaign and they need writers to join their fall cohort. You'd research, write, and edit articles for the campaign with the goal of drafting two articles a month and collaborating with other supportive organizations. This pays at least \$150 an article, though there may be addition pay for research and collaborative time. If this sounds good, **submit your info here**.

**Pitches for Trucha RGV** - Trucha writes about immigration, reproductive justice, LGBTQ issues, climate and racial justice, and more. They're always open to pitches and very happy to hear from new writers (even if you don't have any samples). **Follow their pitch guidelines here** and send in your story.

## Personal Essay

**Lifestyle Personal Essay Pitches for Today.com** - Editor Rheana Murray is always on the lookout for lifestyle personal essays. Things like "wedding tales, relationship stories, unique parenting + health stories." If you have an idea, send it to [TODAYEssays@nbcuni.com](mailto:TODAYEssays@nbcuni.com).

## Sports

**Writer for Football League World** - Do you like English football? Would you like to write about it in great detail for money? Then Football League World wants you. They're looking for a variety of freelance football writers (NFL fans need not apply, but if you want to write *only* about Oxford United, they've got a place for you). See the **many opportunities and apply here**.

## Other Subject Matter

### Kenyon Review | Deadline: September 30

United States-based literary magazine founded in 1939 that publishes Fiction, Flash Fiction, Nonfiction, Flash CNF, Poetry, Translation, Play.

The Kenyon Review has been in the heart of literature since 1939 when poet and critic John Crowe Ransom started the journal on the campus of Kenyon College.

**Fee:** None | **Pay:** Yes

Accept simultaneous submissions. Respond within 180 days. Acceptance rate of 1.45% based on 138 tracked submissions.

**Noteworthy:** #has print issues #university affiliated #brecht top 1000 #extremely competitive #fiction top prize winner #krouse top 500 #50+ years old #chill subs community favorite #nonfiction top prize winner #poetry top prize winner #mega super popular. woah.

### The Cincinnati Review | Deadline: September 30

United States-based literary magazine founded in 2003 that publishes Fiction, Flash Fiction, Nonfiction, Flash CNF, Poetry, Hybrid, Translation, Play.

Since its inception in 2003, The Cincinnati Review has published many promising new and emerging writers as well as Pulitzer Prize winners and Guggenheim and MacArthur fellows.

**Fee:** None | **Pay:** \$25-\$30 per page

Accept simultaneous submissions. Respond within 180 days.

**Noteworthy:** #has print issues #nominates for industry awards #university affiliated #clmp member #extremely competitive #20+ years old #mega super popular. woah.

### The Yale Review | Deadline: September 30

United States-based literary magazine founded in 1819 that publishes Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, Review, Translation.

New perspectives, enduring writing. Join a conversation 200 years in the making.

**Fee:** \$3 | **Pay:** varies, see guidelines for details

Accept simultaneous submissions. Respond within 240 days.

**Noteworthy:** #university affiliated #brecht top 1000 #extremely competitive #engaged editors #krouse top 500 #200+ years old #super extra popular



## **REDWOODWRITERS.ORG/2024-CONFERENCE**

**SATURDAY, OCT. 19, 8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.  
FINLEY CENTER, 2060 W. COLLEGE AVE., SANTA ROSA  
EARLY BIRD PRICE OF \$125 FOR CWC MEMBERS. PRICE INCREASES OCT. 1.  
ALL THE DETAILS AND REGISTRATION LINKS CAN BE FOUND HERE:**

<https://redwoodwriters.org/2024-conference/>

The Redwood Branch of CWC invites you to this packed one-day event with keynote speaker, bestselling author and workshop leader, **Jeff Goins**, along with 14 other industry experts who will talk and teach on subjects that focus on Craft, Genre, Publishing and Marketing.

Choose from a variety of hour-long sessions and ninety-minute interactive workshops offered throughout the morning and afternoon. Please be sure to **register early to get the sessions and workshops you want (some may fill up)**, along with the best rate.

### **About the Keynote Presenter: Jeff Goins**

Jeff Goins is the best-selling author of five books, including *The Art of Work* and *Real Artists Don't Starve*. His award-winning blog [Goinswriter.com](http://Goinswriter.com) has been visited by tens of millions of people, and through his online courses and events, he's taught over 20,000 writers since 2012. Jeff lives outside of Nashville with his family, where they spend most of their free time listening to records and making homemade pasta.

### **Keynote topic: The Art of Being Interesting:**

#### **How to Succeed As a Writer**

#### **Without Selling Your Soul**

Every writer wants to write words they believe in—and not going broke doing it. It's a timeless challenge that most authors, artists, and creative professionals have struggled with since time immemorial. But what if you didn't have to choose between starving and selling out? What if you could thrive as a writer without violating your own integrity. Bestselling author, entrepreneur, and lifelong marketer Jeff Goins will share his own struggles with fame, success, and how he learned to balance the challenges of craft, market, and personal boundaries to create a writing career he can be proud of that still pays the bills.

Registration includes continental breakfast and lunch.

**[LEARN MORE & REGISTER](#)**