



## Take Note

“Success and failure are equally disastrous.”

—Tennessee Williams

# Jacquelyn Mitchard opens house on Cape Cod to other writers

Novelist Jacquelyn Mitchard has been giving writers a priceless gift—silence and solitude in a beautiful locale.

For two weeks last spring, I was the sole writer in residence at One Writer’s Place, Mitchard’s house in Brewster, Mass., on Cape Cod. Most residencies charge a high price, but Mitchard’s is free, except for a cleaning fee. Writers provide their own meals and transportation during one- to three-week residencies offered each spring and fall.

The two-story house, minutes away from breathtaking beaches in Brewster, is cozy and a bit quirky. An artist friend painted a mural of a mermaid in one bedroom, paying homage to Mitchard’s love of scuba diving and the sea. The literary touches are subtle: Names of famous authors adorn the wall in the living room and name plates on bedroom doors.

As of this writing, 14 writers have had residencies, and competition has been minimal. To apply, writers submit five pages of their work and references. “They have to have an idea and the will to do it,” says Mitchard, whose first novel, *The Deep End of the Ocean*, was a bestseller.

Many of those accepted for residencies have stories similar to mine—and to Mitchard’s. They are mothers torn between a desire to write and to spend time raising their children.

I quit a 22-year newspaper career, taking a buyout from *The Boston Globe*, just weeks before going on the retreat. A first-time mother at age 43, I wanted to be home with my son and still complete a memoir on grief and faith. In the Cape house, I finished a draft of the book, my focus sharpened and my creativity heightened by a few weeks near the sea.

Mitchard says reading



Linda K. Wertheimer

**Writers in residence at One Writer’s Place, author Jacquelyn Mitchard’s house in Cape Cod, can take in the breathtaking views at nearby Breakwater Beach in between working on their writing projects. Residencies are free, except for a minimal cleaning fee.**

writers’ stories of gratitude and satisfaction in the journals left in each bedroom is like reading her own story. “It was 14 years ago that I had three little kids and nothing

and just wanted to write [a novel],” she says.

After Mitchard lost her first husband to cancer, the then Milwaukee newspaper columnist turned to writing fiction. Accepted to the Ragdale residency, she completed 100 pages of her first novel, and sold it a month later.

She most recently published *No Time to Wave Good-bye*, which revisits the characters of *The Deep End of the Ocean*.

If nothing else, Mitchard says, writers should leave One Writer’s Place with hope.

For more information, go to [www.onewritersplace.com](http://www.onewritersplace.com). Application deadlines are June 1 for fall residencies, and Dec. 1 for spring.

—Linda K. Wertheimer

