

# Regina Brett

## Biography

Regina Brett is a metro columnist at The Plain Dealer in Cleveland, Ohio. The PD is the largest newspaper in Ohio and the 16<sup>th</sup> largest newspaper in the country.

An award-winning columnist, Regina was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for commentary in both 2008 and 2009. Her columns are tucked in wallets, pressed in Bibles and stuck under refrigerator magnets all over Ohio. They are also forwarded all over the country in email forwards.

Regina also hosts her own radio program on Cleveland's local NPR affiliate, WCPN-FM 90.3. The hour-long show airs every Friday at 9:05 a.m. and is available live on the Internet.

Regina won the prestigious National Headliner Award for columns she wrote about being diagnosed with breast cancer in 1998. During her chemotherapy and radiation treatments, she shared extensively and candidly about her experience. The award put her in the great company of past Headliner recipients, which include Mitch Albom, Anna Quindlen, Dave Barry, Leonard Pitts and Carl Hiaasen.

Ten years later, Regina still gets requests for reprints of those columns from women newly diagnosed with cancer. As a cancer survivor, she is bombarded with requests to speak about the lessons cancer taught her.

In 2009, Regina was inducted into the Press Club of Cleveland's Journalism Hall of Fame. She is also a past president of the National Society of Newspaper Columnists.

The single most popular column ever written by Regina was "**50 Life Lessons**," written for The Plain Dealer when she turned 50 years old in 2006. You'll get to read more about the "Lessons" in April of 2010 when Grand Central Publishing releases her book, "**God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Detours**."

### **REGINA BRETT - MEDIA APPEARANCES:**

Regina has appeared scores of times on local television news shows and she has been interviewed often on local radio programs. She has also hosted her own weekly radio show on Cleveland's National Public Radio affiliate, WCPN-FM 90.3, since 2006.

### **REGINA BRETT - TEACHER**

Regina has taught feature writing and news writing at the University of Akron. She has also been a guest lecturer at John Carroll University, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University and Ursuline College.

### **REGINA BRETT – WRITER**

Regina has been writing professionally since 1986, when she covered city hall for The Lorain Journal. She then moved to The Beacon Journal in Akron, Ohio where she covered business

news, social services, breaking news. She also wrote nearly 30 magazine stories for The Beacon's Sunday magazine.

Regina became a thrice-weekly metro columnist for the Beacon Journal in 1994, moving to The Plain Dealer in 2000. Her columns now appear on Sundays and Thursdays. Over her entire career, she's written nearly 2,000 newspaper columns.

Not content to interview herself, Regina is often out on the street, grabbing local stories with appeal to narrow demographics, turning them into compelling stories with universal appeal.

Some of her columns move government policy; some move men to cry; and all move many readers to consider her a must-read.

Regina's column focuses on the issues of every day life. Sometimes touching, often funny and always provocative, Regina's columns touch people where they truly live.

When she wrote about her experience with breast cancer, she received hundreds of emails, calls and letters. The columns were circulated around the world. She still receives hundreds of responses when she writes about breast cancer.

The single most popular column ever written by Regina was "**50 Life Lessons**," written for The Plain Dealer when she turned 50 years old in 2006. You'll get to read more about the "Lessons" in April of 2010 when Grand Central Publishing releases her book, "**God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Detours**."

#### **REGINA BRETT – AWARD WINNER \*\***

Regina was one of three finalists for the Pulitzer Prize in commentary in both 2008 and 2009. In making their final awards and decisions this year, the Pulitzer jurists said this about Regina: "For her range of compelling columns that move the heart, challenge authority and often trigger action while giving readers deeper insight into life's challenges." Her nominated columns can be found at [www.cleveland.com/brett](http://www.cleveland.com/brett).

She's won two first place National Headliner Awards, one for columns about her experience with breast cancer; the other detailing her family history ("The Inheritance") with the same subject. She also won a 2<sup>nd</sup> place Headliner Award for a series of stories about the "Hicks Babies," a national story about people who were sold as babies in a black market operation at the Hicks Clinic in Georgia to adoptive parents in Ohio the late 1950's. After Regina broke the story, it ran in newspapers across the country, prompting calls from 60 Minutes, Dateline NBC, the BBC and scores of other media outlets.

Regina won the prestigious Batten Medal in 1999, awarded by Knight-Ridder for lifetime achievement. The award is given to those who embody understanding, fairness, courage and a deep concern for the underdog. In addition, Regina was a finalist for another Batten Medal in 2009, this time for her body of work last year, including columns on open discovery and

Cleveland police officer Jim Simone and her series on passing the breast cancer gene on to her daughter.

The American Bar Association recently awarded Regina the organization's Silver Gavel award for her columns on Open Discovery. This particular award is given to media professionals who help foster the public's understanding of the law and legal system. The award to Regina was based numerous columns about how the restriction of Open Discovery rules, where prosecutors share police reports and records with defense attorneys, affected criminal cases in Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court.

She also won a humor writing award from the National Society of Newspaper Columnists.

Regina has received numerous state and local awards. The recipient of two Awards of Achievement from Northern Ohio Live, the magazine said that "Regina's column is the heart" of the paper and "represents the soul" of the community. Recently, she received the Citizen of the Year award from the Ohio Library Council for her efforts to garner support for the Save Ohio Libraries campaign.

In 2009, Regina received "Best Columnist in Ohio" from the Associated Press of Ohio. In 2003, both The Press Club of Cleveland and The Society for Professional Journalists gave Regina their "Best Columnist in Ohio" award. The latter said, "Regina Brett does what not enough local columnists are doing these days. With the righteous indignation of the muckrakers of old, she gives voice to the local issues and people who need it most. A good local columnist should be the conscience of a community. Regina Brett succeeds."

Also in 2009, Regina received a career-capping award when the Press Club of Cleveland inducted her into the Journalism Hall of Fame.

## **REGINA BRETT - EDUCATION**

Regina has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Kent State University and a master's degree in religious studies from John Carroll University.

## **REGINA BRETT - PERSONAL**

Before her writing career, Regina worked as a waitress, emergency medical technician, alcoholism counselor, traffic court clerk and legal secretary. She is married and has a daughter and two stepsons. She lives in Cleveland.

## **REGINA BRETT - ACCESS**

Regina can be reached at her Plain Dealer office (216-999-6327). Her email is [rbrett@plained.com](mailto:rbrett@plained.com)

Both current and archived columns can be found on the Internet at [www.cleveland.com/brett](http://www.cleveland.com/brett) and at [www.reginabrett.com](http://www.reginabrett.com)

Regina's radio program can be heard every Friday from 9:05 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. To listen live over the internet: <http://publicbroadcasting.net/wcpn/ppr/index.shtml>

Archived podcasts of all of her Friday morning programs can be heard here (be sure to search for the Friday shows):

2006 programs: <http://www.wcpn.org/soi/2006/index.html>

2007 programs: <http://www.wcpn.org/soi/2007/index.html>

2008 programs: <http://www.wcpn.org/soi/2008/index.html>

2009 programs: <http://www.wcpn.org/soi/2009/index.html>

Regina's radio programs are also available free at the iTunes Store.

Regina can also be found on Facebook at <http://tinyurl.com/reginabrettfacebook> and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/reginabrett>

## **\*\*Awards for Regina Brett**

### **Pulitzer Prize**

Award for Commentary	Finalist	2008
Award for Commentary	Finalist	2009

### **Batten Medal**

Lifetime Achievement		1999
Body of Work in 2008	Finalist	2009

### **National Headliner Award**

Feature Column	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2009
Feature Column	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1999
Feature Writing	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	1998

### **National Society of Newspaper Columnists**

Humor Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1996
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### **Northern Ohio Live Magazine - Award of Achievement**

Media (column writing)	Honorable Mention	1997
Writing	Finalist	1998

### **Ohio Associated Press**

Best Columnist in Ohio	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2009
Community Service Writing	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	2009
Column Writing	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	2007
Column Writing	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	2003
Column Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2000
Feature Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1998
Column Writing	3 <sup>rd</sup> Place	1995
Feature Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1991
Feature Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1987

### **The Press Club of Cleveland**

Journalism Hall of Fame	Inductee	2009
Column Writing – Best in Ohio	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2009
Column Writing – Best in Ohio	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2003
Feature Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1998
Column Writing	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	1996
Magazine Human Interest Reporting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	1993
Magazine General Reporting	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1992
Magazine Public Service Reporting	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	1992
Newspaper Feature Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1991
Magazine Human Interest	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1991
Magazine General Reporting	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1990
Magazine Human Interest	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	1989
Business Writing	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	1987

### **Society of Professional Journalists**

Best Columnist in Ohio	1 <sup>st</sup> Place	2003
Best Human Interest	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	1998
Best Coverage of Children's Issues	2 <sup>nd</sup> Place	1998

### **Miscellaneous**

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association	Liberty Award (for Regina's efforts to bring Open Discovery to Ohio)	2009
Ohio Library Council	Citizen of the Year	2009
Irish American Archives Society of N.E. Ohio	Walk of Life Award	2008