**REVISED GUIDELINES (7-22-17)**

The BRWC Critique Sessions provide support and encouragement to participants and their diverse projects. All submissions from authors are held as **proprietary** and are not shared or distributed beyond the meeting group.

The deadline for submitting a piece for critique is the first Friday of the month. The critique meeting is held the third Friday of the month.

To prepare and participate in the critique process, everyone agrees to read all submissions in the two weeks prior to the meeting. Since this is a **mixed-genre group**, an exception to this agreement is understood for those who do not have interest in a specific genre or topic.

**Non-members** are invited to participate or observe one session at no cost. To continue participation, membership in the Blue Ridge Writers Chapter (BRWC) is required. Likewise, if existing members have not renewed their BRWC membership, please bring $25 dues check (payable to Blue Ridge VWC) to the next meeting or mail to: Blue Ridge VWC, Bruce Bertelsen, Treasurer, PO Box 1521, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

Please become familiar with the revised guidelines below regarding how to submit a piece for critique, how to prepare and present a critique, and meeting ground rules.

1. REQUIRED FOR ACCEPTANCE is a cover page to orient other members to your project. The cover page should include:
   1. A **brief summary paragraph** that provides the back story for a chapter if it is not the first chapter of the manuscript.
   2. What is the genre of the piece? Subject matter?
   3. Who is your intended audience?
   4. Is the submission intended for publication, performance, or family legacy?
   5. Is it part of a bigger effort? If so, explain the bigger effort briefly.
   6. What other information does the reviewer need to know?
   7. What type of feedback are you looking for?

2. E-MAIL YOUR SUBMISSION to [louise-mitchell@comcast.net](mailto:louise-mitchell@comcast.net) by the posted deadline. It will be combined with the other submissions in a **PDF** packet that is distributed to critique group members. PDF is the preferred format, but you can send it another format and we will convert it to PDF.

3. For fiction and non-fiction, submissions of **one chapter or 10 pages** must be typed **12 pt. double-spaced**. For poetry, submit **up to 10 pages**, single-spaced.

4. It is recommended that participants use this opportunity to work on a project they intend to self-publish, submit to agents/publishers, enter in a contest, etc. Allow the group to be your support group, and in some cases, serve as a resource to help you through the publication or contest process.

5. Developing and delivering your critique comments: Some participants make **handwritten comments** and edits on printed copy. Other participants use **electronic review functions**. Use the method that works for you.

In the meeting, each member has a turn presenting the highlights of his or her comments and questions for each writer, which leads to some interaction and discussion. Each member hands over their handwritten comments to the writer for use in editing their piece.

Electronically prepared comments are emailed after the meeting, for several reasons. One being the meeting site is not a WIFI site.

Most participants find they need to read each submission twice to develop insightful comments. Over the two-week period allotted for reviewing, decide what you most want to discuss with the writer of each piece during the meeting. Have supportive comments among your discussion points.

As members get to know each other’s projects, critique discussion among participants is easier, more natural, and deeper. Also, as members are exposed to the verbal critique process, their critiquing skills grow and refine.

Occasionally, a submission piece is just not *in my wheelhouse*, a member will think. If this is the case, feel free to go one of two ways at the meeting. You can say, “This is not in my wheelhouse, so my comments should be taken with a grain of salt.” You can say, “This is not in my wheelhouse and I choose to pass.”

We do not *discuss* each typo, punctuation change, or formatting suggestion. These are marked on the edited copy that goes to the writer.

We do discuss: writing style, pace, flow, character development, depth of descriptions, milieu, the effect the piece has on us, and so on.

We do not always agree on discussion points and this is okay. It is the responsibility of the writer to decide what to incorporate, which changes to make, and what direction to go in. Each writer owns their piece and the way it goes.

6. We do **not** read pieces during the meetings, unless a critique calls for reading a paragraph or short section to illustrate a point of critique.

7. We minimize **distractions**. Participants turn off cell phones and are quiet while others are speaking. Sideline chit-chat is disrespectful and distracting. All participants benefit and learn from hearing the comments, questions, and tips shared by others.

8. Hate speak and divisive interjections—personal, political, cultural, or otherwise—are not allowed. The meeting is not a place to vent **personal frustrations**. We strive to maintain a comfortable environment for everyone.

9. **Facilitators** moderate the critique process and serve as timers so everyone will have an opportunity to exchange feedback. When time allows, we take a brief **break** to stretch, use the restroom, check cell phones, or chit-chat!