

## **Group Guidelines**

### **Purpose:**

The Headwaters Writers' Guild is a group where writers meet to share their writing, provide encouragement, inspiration and motivation. Our main focus is on writing. While there are no membership fees, the Headwaters Writers' Guild requires a serious commitment. Members must be willing to participate in the group's activities to the best of their abilities.

### **Membership Requirements:**

Members must maintain a code of confidentiality within the group. What is said in the group stays in the group.

Members should be able to take positive criticism of their work, and give effective, but positive, feedback of others' work. We like to maintain a positive atmosphere. We are here to encourage, inspire and support one another.

Members are encouraged to attend meetings on a somewhat consistent basis.

In order to facilitate group communication we would appreciate email addresses be shared with all members of the group. Phone numbers can be acquired directly from the member.

The Steering Committee will have access to the complete membership list including personal information and it will remain confidential.

### **Meeting Scheduling:**

Meetings are scheduled twice a month, once a month during the summer.

The Headwaters Writers' Guild meets Sunday afternoons every other week, from 1:30 p.m. until approximately 3:30 p.m.

Meeting schedules are to be set in December of each year for the following year.

Meetings currently take place at Tweedsmuir Presbyterian Church, 6 John Street, Orangeville.

### **Meeting Structure:**

Each meeting has a designated leader, determined in advance. A member can request to be added to the leadership rotation after 6 month's membership. Leadership duties are attached as an addendum to this document.

At the beginning of the meeting the leader will ask if there is any business to be discussed. After the business is discussed, anyone who has brought something with them to read will do so. Suggested 5-minute time limit, 10-minutes maximum with members' approval.

Members are free to give positive feedback.

The leader will have writing prompts for the group. These can be in the form of prompts on a page, pictures, objects, or any other creative idea the leader feels will motivate and inspire the group members. The leader determines how much time will be given to write.

Members should be **quiet and courteous** while members are reading and/or writing.

After writing everyone may read their writing to the group. Members have the option of passing if they do not feel comfortable sharing what they have written.

The next meeting will be announced at the conclusion of the meeting.

### **Member Expectations:**

Each member is encouraged to have something written for each scheduled meeting. If not they can still attend the meetings and participate.

If a member cannot attend a meeting, he or she should notify the Secretary/Coordinator or meeting leader of his or her absence.

Members are encouraged to post on the Headwaters Writers' Guild blog.

Monetary contributions are voluntary but strongly encouraged to maintain access to money for miscellaneous expenditures.

Any concerns or suggestions should be directed to any member of the Steering Committee or by placing a note in the money tin available at each meeting.

After being a member of the group for one year, any member is eligible to become a member of the Steering Committee. To seek a position they should approach a member of the Committee and their name will be put forward at the meeting of the general membership at the first meeting of November.

### **Addition of New Members:**

A welcome letter, a copy of the Guidelines, and the session schedule are given to new members. The Secretary/Coordinator should be advised of all personal information (address, phone number, email address, etc.) in order for them to be added to the membership list and invited to join the Headwaters Writers' Guild blog.

## **Retreats/Events:**

***Annual Retreat:*** Attendance is encouraged but not required. Members attending usually participate in writing, photography, and/or group activities. Members are required to bring their own lunches; coffee and tea will be provided. A fee of \$10.00 per member is charged for rental of the space.

***Christmas Luncheon:*** In lieu of gifts, the group meets on a Sunday afternoon for socializing. Family members are invited.

***Workshops:*** The Headwaters Writers' Guild sponsors writing workshops which are also offered to the general public. Attendance by HWG members is strongly encouraged, but not required. As sponsors, HWG need to have a strong showing. Occasionally there will be workshops held within the group only.

***Other Events:*** Members may advise the group of any workshops, seminars, or other writing/author events. Attendance is not mandatory.

## **The Steering Committee**

Nancy Rorke – Founding Member  
Patricia Gallant – Secretary/Coordinator  
Diane Bator – Meeting Minutes Secretary  
Shirley Bray – Web Coordinator  
Clare McCarthy – Treasurer

These guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Steering Committee and the membership will be notified.

## **Steering Committee**

Nancy Rorke – Founding Member  
Patricia Gallant – Secretary/Coordinator  
Diane Bator – Meeting Minutes Secretary  
Shirley Bray – Web Coordinator  
Clare McCarthy – Treasurer

The duties of the Steering Committee are to keep things running smoothly and discuss and vote on workshops, member issues, group guidelines.

Meetings are held on an as needed basis.

The Steering Committee membership will be reviewed on an annual basis during the first meeting in November.

## **Meeting Leader Duties**

The designated leader at a meeting must come prepared to lead.

If the designated leader is unable to lead, they must switch or find a replacement and advise the HWG Secretary/Coordinator.

The leader will provide writing prompts for the meeting. They may contact the Secretary/Coordinator, Patricia Gallant, if they need to know how many attendees to expect. A minimum of 15 members can be expected at this time.

The leader must “lead” the meeting. They must call attention to the start of the meeting and ask if there is any business to be discussed or announcements made.

The leader must keep a rein on discussion so as to maintain on topic and keep the meeting running in a timely manner.

After any business discussion, the leader asks if anyone has brought anything to read. Reading is taken in turn around the table.

After reading is shared and discussed, the leader will provide and explain the prompts for the writing exercise.

The leader will determine the length of writing time given the number of attendees and the time on the clock. Time should run between 10 and 20 minutes depending on the aforementioned conditions.

The leader will advise members when allotted time is almost up.

The leader will announce when time is up and ask who would like to be the first to read what they have written with the option of passing. Reading again will be done in turn around the table.