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# NEWSLETTER

## President's Letter

Dear MKR Society Friends –

Marjorie's writings always seem perfect and appear to follow a logical path. Intellectually, I know her final words are after painstaking rewrites and editing. But they always look so effortless and beautiful. I start in one place but always end up way off the original thought.

In one of my many roles, I am a historian and teacher. I lecture and demonstrate on "Women in Everyday Life." My favorite time period is 1700 to 1900. Fireplace and wood stove cookery are always included. Today, I started out to discuss the book, *Cross Creek Cookery*, kitchens, and wood stove cookery in the south. This would be an easy and interesting MKR Newsletter topic. But as usual, I look out a window and "nature" takes over.

Marjorie saw nature as a source of inspiration. Nature surrounded her, and she was an excellent observer. I also love nature and with just a glance out the window, I am off on another topic. Living summers in rural New England, I have a front row seat. It never grows old, whether looking out a window, taking a walk in the woods, or boating on the waterways. Every time is always memorable and unique.

My writings often start in the middle and end there too. They meander like a moose and suddenly, moose are what I am writing about. They are wild, unpredictable, and quirky as you shall see. When I was young, moose were only seen in far northern Maine. Now, they may appear anywhere in the Northeast. Here are a few of my favorite moose stories. The hardest part is putting a limit on them.

One early morning in the northern Allagash region, I was enjoying the porch, birds and rabbits. Suddenly, I heard a noise like intermittent waterfalls down on the lake. After walking down, I saw a huge bull moose standing shoulder deep in the lake. His head was completely submerged. When he raised his head, water cascaded from his antlers and head. A few pieces of plant life continued to hang from the antlers like a decoration. I sat quietly watching. Suddenly, he noticed me. I stayed still. He met my eyes for a few seconds but then went back to feeding. I continued to watch, mesmerized.

My husband, David, and I were on the waterways when a moose and her calf stepped off the rocky shore and swam beside us. Mothers with young can be unpredictable, so we paused and waited, just watching. They swam to a granite point jutting out into the water further on. We watched as they climbed up to the point and started to feed. The little one was such fun to watch.

Another day, we were loading the canoe for a day trek when a moose and her older male offspring came out to watch. They moved right down beside us as if to oversee our packing. They acted like supervisors, ensuring we were packing correctly and not forgetting essential items. They continued watching us from only a few feet away until we moved out onto the water.

One late spring day, we had just finished building a long overhang on the back side of our barn. It had been a huge task to house farm equipment, and, as evening fell, we were glad to have it behind us. That night, we had torrential rains that continued thru the next morning. Upon awaking, our first thought was to look out the

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## President's Letter (cont'd)

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window and check the overhang. To our surprise, it was already a shelter. A huge bull moose was standing underneath, dry, sheltered, and comfortable, waiting for the rain to stop.

Nothing is more exasperating than to be driving on a narrow northern woods road close to dusk. You are anxious to return to food and shelter after a long day. Suddenly, a huge bull moose steps out onto the road and stops. You stop too as the moose stands blocking the road. There is no way around him. At first, it is fun—as you snap photos and watch his antics. But, after 30 minutes or so, an annoyance replaces the enjoyment. Night is coming fast, and the narrow dirt roads are dangerous and treacherous after dark. The moose is not moving. You honk your horn and move a little to the side, hoping to give him a hint. Nope, no movement.

Finally, he starts to move but down the middle of the road. You swear you can hear him laughing as he meanders slowly ahead. You are now doing a maddening 2 to 3 miles an hour when you know a moose can run 35 miles an hour. Not this one! The moose does not move one inch from the middle of the road. This continues for an agonizing mile. You give up and stop, hoping the moose will tire of the game and continue. After a brief rest, you resume the journey, lights on, hoping the coast is now clear. But, just up ahead, there he is again, still in the middle of the road. However, now he is waiting and facing you. Is he looking a little angry? There is no room to turn around. Finally, he turns around and oh so slowly moves on down the middle of the road. Then he quickly turns and stares at you, shaking his head. With a final shake, he moves off to the side. You wait until he finally clears the road and disappears. Proceeding cautiously, as moose have been known to batter a vehicle they took offense to, you move ahead. He seems to have given up tormenting you. The way home is clear.

These encounters are always enjoyable in the later retelling. But, they are extremely frustrating at the time. Believe it or not these same kinds of encounters are told by many. They are not a rare occurrence.

Rawlings said, "I am often lonely. Who is not? But I should be lonelier in the city." I agree. One is never lonely with nature all around you.

Sincerely,  
Elaine Bradbury



33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Conference  
St. Augustine, Florida  
March 20-21, 2020

The Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society, an organization of over 200 members worldwide, invites paper proposals on topics related to Rawlings's life and works.

Topics might include but are not limited to the following:

- Rawlings and Modernism
- Rawlings and other authors – and her place in American literature
- Landscape/environment and character in Rawlings's fiction and/or non-fiction
- The role of food in Rawlings's *Cross Creek*, *The Yearling*, or *Cross Creek Cookery*.
- Rawlings and film
- Rawlings and fine art
- Rawlings's Florida friends, such as Idella Parker and Dessie Smith Prescott
- Rawlings and Maxwell Perkins and/or the Scribners
- Sex and gender roles in Rawlings's fiction
- Rawlings's political attitudes
- Rawlings and race
- Rawlings and Florida
- Rawlings and Southern literature
- Rawlings and the literature of place

Please send 150-200-word abstracts for 20-minute papers to

Florence M. Turcotte

turcotte@ufl.edu

The deadline for submission is January 31, 2020

**Silent Fundraiser** – Elaine Bradbury is collecting items for the 2020 Silent Auction Fundraiser. Any MKR books or memorabilia you are willing to donate will be appreciated. The auction also includes books, crafts, foods, or memorabilia with a Florida theme. If you have published a book, please consider contributing a signed copy to the auction. All contributions must be in good, like-new condition. Contact Elaine at loon44@icloud.com with questions or to donate.

## News from the Society



### In Memory of Marylou Whitney

Marylou Whitney, a Life Member of the Rawlings Society and an old friend of Marjorie's widower, Norton Baskin, passed away on July 19, 2019, at her home in Saratoga Springs, New York. She was 93.

A native of Kansas City (where her father had been a classmate of Harry Truman), she was an actress before marrying Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney in 1958. That brought her into the orbit of Marineland, founded by her husband and associates in the late 1930s, and for many years one of Florida's leading tourist attractions. Norton Baskin operated the famous Dolphin Restaurant at Marineland in the decades after World War II. (His niece, Rawlings Society board member Sally Baskin Hooker grew up at Marineland.)

Marylou Whitney was a major figure in the world of horse racing, and was once the largest private landowner in New York. The University of Florida's Whitney Laboratory at Marineland was one of many projects that benefited from the family's philanthropy.

Congratulations to the creative team behind *The Marjorie* – a blog on the three Marjories who influenced conservationism in Florida (Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Marjory Stoneman Douglas, and Marjorie Harris Carr). *The Marjorie* was recently awarded First Place in the Blog category of the Sunshine State Awards from the Society of Professional Journalists.



the  
**MARJORIE**  
Reclaim #FloridaWoman



### Beacon Award

Heather McPherson, a trustee of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society, was awarded this month with the prestigious Beacon Award, presented on behalf of The Foodservice Council for Women and The Food and Beverage Portfolio Tradeshow. This award recognizes women leaders in the foodservice industry. McPherson is an award-winning cookbook author, publicist for Florida Restaurant and Food, and a Florida Farms Advocate. She has also taken on an important role within the society by helping with the hospitality planning for our annual conferences. Congratulations, Heather!

## More News and Upcoming Events

The Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm present *Cross Roads: Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Norton S. Baskin in Unguarded Moments* on **Friday, October 18, 2019**, 7:30 to 10:00 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Assembly Hall, 4225 Northwest 34th Street, Gainesville, FL 32605. Tickets are \$25.

The play by Deborah Dickey is based on the correspondence between Rawlings, the author of the American classic *The Yearling* and other books and stories about Florida, and her second husband, Norton Baskin. Most of the correspondence comes from the period after Baskin joined the American Field Service during World War II. Both partners in the marriage were articulate and insightful. Rawlings was dealing with her doubts as well as her love. In addition to her writing and other issues, she was concerned about her ability to be a good wife, considering the failure of her first marriage, and her adjustment to life as the wife of a hotel manager, believing she could simply not live in a hotel. The characters in the play talk through their own letters.



### Meet the Playwright: A Reception for *Cross Roads*

As a prelude to *Cross Roads: Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Norton S. Baskin in Unguarded Moments* the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm present a reception from 6:00 PM to 7:00 PM with the playwright, Deborah Dickey. She will join us for hors d'oeuvres inspired by recipes in Rawlings' *Cross Creek Cookery* as well as discussion of the play. Tickets are \$20 for the general public and \$10 for Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm members.

All proceeds go to support the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park in Cross Creek, Florida.

**Tickets:** For reception: [cross-roads-reception.eventbrite.com](https://cross-roads-reception.eventbrite.com)  
For play: [cross-roads.eventbrite.com](https://cross-roads.eventbrite.com)

#### Stay Tuned ...

Opera Orlando has announced its 2021 season and included is a brand-new opera based on Rawlings's *The Secret River*. Local composer Stella Sung will be creating the piece, along with Pulitzer-winning librettist Mark Campbell.

**Board of Trustees** – our next Trustees meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 26<sup>th</sup> in Winter Park. Official details will be sent to trustees via email.

## Annual MKR Society Membership Prize

We are continuing our membership campaign to double our current membership. To win, please have your name written on the bottom of the new members' registration forms or let Anne Pierce know the names of your referrals. Anne can provide extra forms to you!

The winner who registers the most new members will receive FREE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION for 2020.

Here are some ideas to solicit members:

- Encourage adult children to join;
- Give a gift of a reduced price student membership to children, grandchildren, or other students you know;
- Speak to neighbors and members of your community library or historical societies about joining;
- Local groups such as historical societies, book clubs, garden clubs, or libraries are always looking for guest speakers. Our President tailors her talks around these groups to encourage membership. MKR presents so many areas for discussion such as literary, cooking, gardening, history, travel, and wildlife. Always offer some kind of incentive as a door prize, a MKR book, local honey, soap, plant for example. This is always a big draw.

*\*Note: MKR Society Membership Year is from July 1-June 30. Consult the mailing label for your renewal date.*

To learn more about the society and information on the annual conference, visit our website, <http://rawlingssociety.org/>, or check out our Facebook page and Yahoo Group.

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Rawlings Society  
PO Box 117005  
Gainesville, FL 32611-7005

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR  
MEMBERSHIP?**

Please check your address label. The date that you see on the label is the date your dues are due. If your membership is current, we thank you! Renewal card at:  
<http://rawlingssociety.org/>

