



NEWSLETTER

President's Letter

Dear MKR Society Friends –

To everyone who attended our annual conference in Jacksonville, thank you! I would like to add a special thanks to Teri Sopp for all her help in setting up the venues. The event was inspirational in so many ways. At that meeting, we also bid adieu to our fearless leader, the Executive Director of the Rawlings Society, Dr. Anna Lillios. While her leadership in that role will be missed, Dr. Lillios will continue to serve as editor of our journal and as a Trustee. We are welcoming Dr. Leslie Poole, Assistant Professor at Rollins College in the Department of Environmental Studies, as our incoming Executive Director. Plans for next year's conference are already underway.

Announcements

- Board of Trustees Meeting, October 1, Daytona Beach, FL. Location TBA.

Earlier this year, Anne Pierce, our vice president, received a letter from a longtime member of the society and former Palatka resident reminiscing about his time in Florida. When Robert J. Cook moved to Palatka in 1985, Norton Baskin was still living on Anastasia Island and Cook visited the Rawlings home and read books by Rawlings and Idella Parker. Her work left an indelible impression on him. Here is a section of the letter he shared:

My late friend, Tom Capell, was a native of Hawthorne. He told me that when he was in high school in the 1930s, he delivered ice during the summer. Ms. Rawlings was one of his regular customers. In those days, the ice man would take the ice into the house and put it in the icebox. On one occasion, he said he went into her home to deliver ice and discovered a raccoon inside her ice box. When he told her, she said not to disturb it, that it would not eat too much.

Cook currently resides in Waterloo, Illinois, and feels privileged to be part of the Rawlings Society. He wrote that his heart still remains in Florida. Preserving memories, like the ones shared in this letter, is the reason so many of us dedicate our time and resources to the Rawlings Society. Can't you just see Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings thinking up Racket, the raccoon pet of Fodder-wing in *The Yearling*, asking the ice man to leave her household intruder alone? The story reminds us of the writer we have come to know and love and the place she represented so well, a place many of us call home, Florida.

Here's wishing you lots of ice for the hot Florida days to come and no raccoons in the house.

Cheers,

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Leslie Poole

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A Message from Our New Executive Director, Dr. Leslie Poole

Dear All:

It is with great pleasure and trepidation that I take on this new role as your executive director. Pleasure because like you I am an enormous fan of Rawlings and of all the work you do to keep her work and spirit alive. Trepidation because Anna Lillios has done such good work in this role. It is a big job and we all applaud the time and talent she offered for so many years.

Now, a little about me. I am a fourth-generation Floridian who grew up reading Rawlings. Some of my ancestors grew oranges in New Rochelle, not far from Cross Creek, and may even have known her. After all, it wasn't that big of a place...

I have happily accepted a job as assistant professor of Environmental Studies at Rollins College, starting in August. At Rollins I teach environmental literature and history; recently I taught a class called "Women and the Environment" in which my students learned about Florida's Three Marjories. It was great fun. I know that my work with the MKR Society will complement my work at Rollins—and vice versa.

That said, I have a very specific set of skills and will need the help of many of you to do the best job possible. If you have a desire to help with the web page or to organize some of our events (trustees luncheons and the annual meeting) or to help Ashley with the newsletter please contact me at Leslie.K.Poole@gmail.com. I will happily put you to work!

Thank you for all your kind wishes. Here's to a wonderful year!
Leslie



The 29th Annual MKR Conference
The Florida Yacht Club, Jacksonville, FL
April 1-2, 2016

This year's conference was filled with exceptional presentations. Lisa Kerr of the Medical University at the University of South Carolina, presented on Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and her thoughts on motherhood. Robert Bowman from Florida State University presented on poverty in "Jacob's Ladder." Christopher Nank from Ringling College of Art and Design presented on the "Imagery of Invasion and Occupation in 'Jacob's Ladder.'" Jon Bosworth and Mark Kirwan of Flagler College described their experiences working through Stetson Kennedy's papers, and we heard from Sandra Parks, Kennedy's widow, on the current state of Kennedy's *Palmetto Country*. We paid tribute to Idella Parker and her family members and listened to Ben Green at our banquet. We celebrated the winners of our graduate and undergraduate writing competitions, Lisa Grubba and Savannah Bateman. Bradley Bennett introduced us to the study of ethnobotany in Northern Florida through his reading of *The Yearling*. Keith Honeycutt explored the Florida frontier through the eyes of "The Brown Sisters" and their correspondences. Margaret Harris gave a tutorial on sewing during Rawlings's lifetime. Anne Bellissimo looked at Martha Mickens, Zora Neale Hurston, and Idella Parker. We were able to briefly see Phil May before our luncheon, which featured Dr. Dan Schafer of the University of North Florida speaking on Anna Kingsley.

Flo Turcotte, Brent Kinser, and Jim Stephens at the Florida Yacht Club during this year's conference



Shirley "Daisy" Thompson and Elaine Spencer share a glass of wine outside the Timuquana Country Club before the banquet



Betsy Towers and Anna Lillios at the Timuquana Country Club banquet

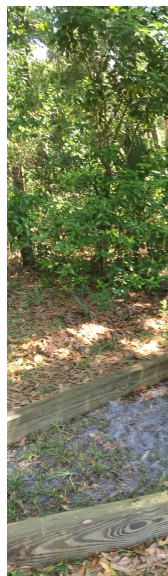


Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Rose Garden Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park

From Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm:

Rawlings loved her fragrant "Louis Philippe" roses, which she planted between her kitchen garden and the duck pen. She would be thrilled that a beautiful new rose variety has been named for her, and has been planted near the entrance to her grove.

The ribbon cutting ceremony on the new rose garden at Cross Creek took place on May 15th. It is worth a visit to see the new Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Rose. To order your own MKR Rose, contact Rose Petals Nursery at 352-215-6399 or visit their website at <http://rosepetalsnursery.com>.



Valerie Rivers preparing the MKR Rose Garden at MKR Historic State Park, Cross Creek

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

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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/>

