



NEWSLETTER

President's Letter

Dear MKR Society Friends –

In these uncertain times, we all feel like strangers in a strange land. Everything seems to change daily. Navigating this new world and the unknown can be stressful. I am looking on the brighter side and have encountered many joyous things. There is time for all the projects I have put off. And time for catching up on reading, talking with old friends, enjoying nature, gardening, and hiking on the trails at the farm and lake.

Our trip back to Maine was the easiest ever. No traffic! We stopped in Virginia our first afternoon. At the hotel, I was greeted by a person behind plexiglass, gowned, gloved, masked, and with a full-face shield. I thought I was in a surgical unit. "Wow, this is extreme," was my first thought. She yelled "Stop" as soon as I entered the door. "Stay behind the line and only move forward when I have backed up to the wall behind the desk," she ordered. I followed the rules, putting my ID and credit card through a small slit in the plexiglass. My request had been for a first-floor room to make it easy access for our dogs. No, I was told, as first floor rooms could not be used for four days. I backed way back, and she came forward and sprayed my cards, holding them by two fingertips. After using them, she put them back through the slit along with the room key card. I was told to advance and pick them up and back quickly away.

"Stay in your room at all times unless leaving the building, no breakfasts will be served, and no socializing with anyone," she added. I agreed. We moved in. I always take our food as it is healthier, so we did not exit our room until we had to walk the dogs at bedtime. My husband and I were amused to see the seven cars that came in after us were all socially distancing too. We never saw another person during our stay.

The next morning, when I checked out early, the clerk was great. She was very friendly and only had a mask on. Traffic was so light that we drove on through, not stopping for a second night. We arrived in Maine at 4 pm with no travel stress at all.

I love walking the trails here on the farm and becoming reacquainted with the wildlife. The beavers have moved locations back to the old beaver pond, so we had flooding around one of the bridges. We will have to rebuild it. The dams are much higher. They have been busy thinning trees around the heath. Beavers are nocturnal, so we don't see them, only their work. It is amazing how rapidly they can change the landscape.

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President's Letter (cont'd)

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The spring fawns are adorable to watch scampering around with the baby turkey chicks. It is amazing how fast the little fawns can run. The big buck is back to standing on the side by the pond and listening to us. We have not seen the moose yet, only their tracks. We have seen a few coyotes and have heard their nighttime shrieking. What a din!

The biggest treat is to see all the heron babies in their nesting site. We have 29 babies that we can easily see. The nests have one to three in each one. They look like condo units on some trees with three to four lined up. If I were a Heron, I would prefer the top. The parents are constantly flying back and forth over the house as they fish in the lake to feed them. Busy time.

My gardens are glorious and ever changing all summer. I love visiting them morning and night and take so many photos. This summer, I have had time to add more plantings. The cardinals, robins, blue birds, sparrows, phoebes, and doves all nest in the trees and shrubs around the gardens, enjoying it too. The pretty goldfinches are still just socializing as they nest later when seeds appear.

I am so lucky to have wildlife all around me both in Florida and Maine. I love observing nature and people as Marjorie did. I know that is what first drew me to her writings. Her beautiful words are a gift to us all. I hope all of you are also finding some moments of joy during these difficult times.

Sincerely,
Elaine Bradbury



Maine's great blue herons

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park Update

by Scott Spaulding, Manager

Greetings Everyone:

In *Cross Creek* (Chapter 19 – “Summer”) Rawlings wrote, “Folk who have never known a tropical summer have never luxuriated in indolence, while the world around them burst out of its sheath in a mad exuberance of growth. It is at the Creek as though Nature said to us, ‘You have toiled for me, now rest quietly in the shade, and the sun and rain and I will do all that is needed.’” Indolence means the avoidance of activity or exertion, and while we do take breaks more frequently this time of year, indolence is not in our vocabulary.

A Painting We Will Go: During the park closure in April and continuing after the re-opening in May we took advantage of the opportunity we had and did quite a bit of painting inside the farmhouse. So far, we have re-painted the office, book room, both bathrooms and the ceiling in Marjorie’s bedroom. Although we don’t currently know when the house will be open to visitors, the farmhouse will certainly be ready when we do. Special thanks to all the staff involved. It was a team effort.

Bountiful Garden: Park Ranger Geoff Gates and Volunteers Joy Cotton and Martha Lynn Dilello have done a tremendous amount of work in the summer garden. What a harvest we had. As you may know, Marjorie always grew vegetables for the table and flowers for the house. What a variety we had including Golden Bantam Corn, Scarlett Runner Beans, Everglades tomatoes, Eggplant, Will Rogers Zinnias, Mexican Sunflowers and Roselle. We just added a Learn Card on the Garden on the State Parks Website at: <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/marjorie-kinnan-rawlings-historic-state-park> check it out for more information on the garden along with pictures.

New Set of Wheels: Thanks to the Friends of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., our job just got a little easier. With their matching funds, we were able to purchase a utility golf cart for the farm. The cart features a long bed with removable stockade sides, and a powerful 72- Volt System capable of moving up to a 1000lb payload. It will certainly come in handy with our 50-gallon tank to feed the citrus trees liquid micronutrients, when applying fertilizer and compost and for all sorts of chores around the farm. THANK YOU, FRIENDS!

Saying Goodbye to a Legacy: After more than 10 years of dedicated service, Park Ranger Dorsey “Lee” Townsend is retired at the end of June. We will miss Lee and wish him all the best with retirement. He is certainly a Legacy at the Park, and we are certain to get him back to volunteer occasionally, especially during special events. You may recall that Chapter 4 of *Cross Creek* – “The Pound Party,” was written about the Townsend Family. Lee’s father Dorsey was in that story.

George Karger Photos: In the book display room, you may remember seeing the photo of Marjorie sitting on the front porch of a cabin with an older gentleman with a beard. For the longest time, we thought the photo might be Cal Long, Marjorie’s inspiration for the story of the pet deer in *The Yearling*. But, after comparing it to another photo of Cal Long we weren’t

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Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park Update – cont'd from page 3

convinced that it was him. Then, while doing some photo searches, Park Ranger Geoff came across a treasure trove of Marjorie's pictures at Getty Images, and he found the original image that the closeup was cropped from: <https://tinyurl.com/ycvmt5k9>. We then concluded that our determination was correct. It couldn't be Cal Long because Mr. Karger took the photo in 1940, about five years after Cal Long had passed away. Thinking that the gentleman might be a local, Tour Guide Sheila Holloway shared the photo with some longtime residents, and low and behold, Julie Bass (Cross Creek Resident) recognized the child in the picture as her father, Don Bauknight. She shared the picture with her father, and he confirmed that the boy in the picture was him, in the arms of his father. Julie later confirmed that the man in the photo speaking with Marjorie was her Great Grandfather Julian Bauknight. At long last, the mystery is over.

Bird is the Word: To re-populate our chicken population, The Friends ordered 15 American Game Hen Chicks. We chose game hens because they are very alert, yet friendly and can fly and escape predation. They also blend in very well with the wooded landscape. After the game hens arrived, one of our chickens that had been missing on and off for over three weeks surprised us with 10 chicks, which she apparently brooded under the barn. In addition to this, one of our momma ducks hatched 13 ducklings. So, our combined bird population is now 51! Come out and see the birds!

Until next time, we wish you all the best! (see page 7 for more photos)



Rawlings with Bauknight family

In the News!



The historic home of Maxwell Perkins, beloved friend and editor of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, is being turned into a historical museum. Located at 63 Park Street in New Canaan, Connecticut, the house was originally subdivided into apartments by the daughter of Max Perkins and then purchased and restored by Richard and Sandra Bergmann, who came to speak at our conference several years ago. No opening date has been set for the museum, which is still waiting for a formal name. Stay tuned!

Historic Lilian Place in Daytona Beach, Florida, is staying active during COVID-19 shutdowns by offering a series of video lectures and live Winedown Wednesdays on the third Wednesday of each month. The video lectures feature Florida historians from our area. Ashley Lear will be speaking on Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Ellen Glasgow on July 15th. Lectures are offered and archived on the website at: <https://www.lilianplacehc.org/events> Please join us there virtually!



Conference Update

Trustees of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society appreciate your patience as we continue to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and consider plans for our 2021 conference. We hope to have additional news on the conference for our fall newsletter, which comes out in October. In the meantime, we wish all our members good health and peaceful days!



Updates from our Members

I first read "The Yearling" as required reading at my junior high school in Ohio. I fell in love with the story and its setting. Little did I know that one day I'd find myself living in rural Florida for over 38 years!

I've re-read that book many times & shared it with my children when they were growing up, along with the movie. We have visited the cabin, used recipes from Marjorie's cookbook & read "Cross Creek" & other writings. It was with great pleasure that I met & talked with Idella Parker, interviewing her for our local newspaper. Space on one of our bookshelves is dedicated to Marjorie's writings, and I've collected many articles related to her life.

Yet, during all this time, I never knew about this society! I'll be proud to be a member. Thanks for the opportunity!

Janet Watson

Janet Watson included this touching tribute to Rawlings when renewing her membership to the MKR Society. Thank you for letting us include your memories here, Janet! Our society thrives from our shared admiration for Rawlings and Florida!



Margaret Harris sent in a clipping of our state artist, Christopher Still, who recently transferred his 1994 painting "Changing Tides" into a mural on the wall of the Tarpon Springs Chamber of Commerce Welcome Center. The mural, unveiled on March 5, includes a shape of the state of Florida in the clouds. Still hides an outline of the state in all his paintings. Christopher Still was our guest speaker two years ago at the MKR Conference in Tarpon Springs. Thanks for sharing, Margaret!



Photos from the Farm

Courtesy of Manager Scott Spaulding



new golf cart



game hens



bounty from the garden



garden



Will Rogers zinnia



chicks and mom

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 2021.

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.

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/>

