

## **“The Secret River” Comes to Life in Green Cove Springs, Honoring Phillip S. May’s Legacy**

### **Green Cove Springs, FL – June 27, 2025**

Children and grandparents gathered this summer for *Finding the Secret River*, a five-day intergenerational camp inspired by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings’ beloved book *The Secret River*. Organized by the Village Improvement Association (VIA), the camp celebrated nature, storytelling, and Florida’s literary legacy through shared learning across generations.

The program is part of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society’s growing series of memorials honoring longtime supporter Phillip S. May, whose vision was to introduce more people to Rawlings’ work and lasting impact, including her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Yearling*. His generosity helps bring Rawlings’ voice into new communities.

Campers explored Silver Springs by glass-bottom boat, visited the Clay County Courthouse, studied environmental conservation at Reparation Earth, and enjoyed the outdoors at Van Zant Memorial Park—all while drawing connections between Rawlings’ story and the natural beauty of Clay County.

A highlight of the week was the gift of *The Secret River* books to every family, made possible through the support of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society. Trustee Sandi Dunnivant, a key member of the Society’s Memorials Committee, was instrumental in organizing this donation and championing the program. Her tireless efforts and deep dedication to MKR’s legacy brought this special experience to life.

The week concluded with a lively performance of *The Secret River* during the Augusta’s Legacy Family Celebration on Saturday, August 2. Campers reenacted scenes from the book, while local children from the Augusta Savage Arts and Community Center shared original poetry, music, visual art, and dance. Though only the play was drawn directly from Rawlings’ work, the entire celebration echoed the values she shared with Augusta Savage: a belief in the power of youth, education, and the arts to shape strong communities.

### **Sponsors:**

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Society, Village Improvement Association, Green Cove Springs Preservation Society, Augusta Savage Arts and Community Center, and Lynn Lisenby

### **Partners:**

Clay County Public Library, City of Green Cove Springs Police Department, Clay County Clerk’s Office, and Reparation Earth