

News from the Creek

Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc.

Visit our website at: www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org

Summer Quarterly 2020

Volume 23 Number 3

President's Message

by Barbara Wingo

Looking Forward

Looking Back



I am going to repeat with emphasis what I wrote in my last column: it is my sincere hope that you and yours are doing well at this very trying time.

We have had an unusual spring at the farm – and will have an unusual summer. One reason the summer will be unusual is the cancelling of Marjorie's Birthday Party this year. This birthday celebration, which has always been accompanied by cake, ice cream, tours of the house, and a program, is the longest-standing annual event at the park so its cancellation was a particularly hard decision. However, on, August 8, I hope that each of us will have our own individual celebration of Marjorie's life – with our own cake, ice cream, and readings from Marjorie's works. Look for a special announcement from the Friends at that time.

Although the park has been closed and is now open only on a limited basis, as Park Manager Scott Spaulding points out in this newsletter, much work has been done at the farm. Like many of us whose activities outside our homes have been limited as a result of the current pandemic, the time has been used to clean, plant, organize and do research. Scott discusses several of these activities at the farm in this newsletter. I am sure we will be reporting on even more in our next newsletter.

An example of research and of exploring the resources that we have at hand is Donna Green-Townsend's transcription and description of an interview that her daughter conducted with J. T. Glisson. The first of two parts of this interview is in this newsletter. Thank you, Donna, for this and many other important contributions. And, as noted in Scott's message, we also congratulate her husband Lee on his retirement as a park ranger and thank him for his years of service.

As Scott points out, the much-needed utility cart, after some delays, has now reached the farm. The Friends appreciated the opportunity to contribute to this worthwhile project. Another Friends-funded project, trail signs with Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings' writings and accompanying drawings by Dr. Robert E. Carson have been designed. (You will recall several articles concerning Dr. Carson, including a transcription of his tour of the house, in recent issues of this newsletter.) We are looking forward to having the signs made and installed! They will make a much-welcomed addition to the park and the visitor experience there. When we can safely begin having events again, we will introduce them at such an event.

We look forward to a time when events at the park may resume. Your membership means even more in these unusual times, and we thank you for your support. Please stay safe and stay well.

Old Florida Heritage Highway Anniversary

by Kathleen Pagan, Friends of the MKR Farm Board Member

During the pandemic quarantine the 19th anniversary of the designation of the "Old Florida Heritage Highway" (OFHH) as a Florida scenic highway occurred. In early June 2001 the grass roots process requiring citizen input and compilation of data documenting the 'intrinsic resources' to qualify for this designation was successful, and a community event was held on the grounds of the Micanopy Historical Museum. The roads so designated in Alachua County are US 441 south of Williston Road,



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Park Manager Message

by Park Manager Scott Spaulding



Greetings Everyone:

I hope this edition of the newsletter finds you all well. These have been trying times, but through it all we shall persevere to endure. As you may be aware, the park re-opened to the public on May 6th, and although the farmhouse remains closed (no inside tours), visitors can still walk the grounds and peek in through the windows and doors. We are not sure when the farmhouse will re-open, but we will be sure to alert you when it does.

Summer is Here: In *Cross Creek* (Chapter 19 - Summer) Marjorie 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. 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 Dillello 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. We had quite the variety again this year 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, 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 1000 lb. payload. It will certainly come in handy with our 50-gallon tank to feed the citrus micro nutrients 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 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.

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, can fly to escape predation and blend in very well with the wood-

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Reflections: An Interview with J. T. Glisson

Edited with an Introduction by Donna Green-Townsend, Friends of the MKR Farm Board Member

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings wrote about many of her Cross Creek neighbors in her book, *Cross Creek*, including the Glisson family. She was very close to Tom Glisson and his son, J. T. Rawlings inspired J. T. to become not only a great writer, but a wonderful artist. J. T. died on April 25th of 2019. When my daughter Jessie (Townsend) Armstrong was in middle school at P. K. Yonge in Gainesville, she decided to interview J. T. for a school project. Here's part one of that interview:

Jessie: Hi, I'm Jessie Townsend and with me is Evinston resident J. T. Glisson. He's a local artist and author. He's also one of my neighbors on the other side of Orange Lake. J.T. was a friend of the late Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. She wrote a Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *The Yearling*, as well as *Cross Creek* and several others. Marjorie Rawlings helped J. T. Glisson with his own career. Can you tell us about that?

J. T. Glisson: When I was a kid, drawing and so forth was almost considered a sign of laziness. Then Mrs. Rawlings had her friend N. C. Wyeth come down to Cross Creek to do *The Yearling*, the illustrations for *The Yearling*. And I saw him while he was working on those, and I was just awed. I was only 12 years old at that time, 10 or 12 years old, and I couldn't believe what he was doing-- sketches of some cabbage palmettos over in Cross Creek. I was awed by it. When the book was published, it was the first book I ever saw that had our world that we lived in illustrated and by him. He was a master of illustrators in this country. So I guess from that I always wanted to and I did. I worked and drew and drew and drew. And not being very academic it was convenient. But I do love what I do and enjoy it. I paint for myself, not for some particular style or something like that.

Jessie: So would you say that's what inspired you the most?

J. T. Glisson: Probably more. I thought back on it and "I want to paint" and that kind of thing was not in the world I was living in. So yes, I was impressed. Very much, I would say so yes.

Jessie: What are some of the way she helped to influence others?

J. T. Glisson: First of all, anyone who read *The Yearling* has to love Florida a little better after they've read it, and also with *Cross Creek*. I went into the military and I came back home and I started at the University and I had no idea what I wanted to do. The thing to do was you were supposed to go on to school. Somewhere along the way it occurred to me that if I did what I really wanted to do and would like to do most it would be to paint and draw and be an artist. And I asked one of the professors over at U of F and he suggested that ...if you want to teach this is the right place. He said if you want to just purely paint and be a totally producing artist I would suggest that you go to the New York Art Students League or to the Institute in Chicago or the Ringling down in Sarasota. Sarasota being in Florida and convenient I went down to Ringling.

My father was not delighted that his son had decided to be an artist. In the late '40s most men didn't inspire for their sons to become artists. So I went in and I was telling Ms. Rawlings about what I wanted to do, that I decided I wanted to do it and that my dad objected. And she laughed and she said, "I tell you what. You go ahead and you go. Go on to art school and I'll stay here and I'll fight with your dad for ya." So that was pretty much the arrangement. Ms. Rawlings was a very dear friend throughout all of her life up until she died in 1953."

Jessie: Do you do for others what Marjorie did for you? If so, how?

J. T. Glisson: I hope so. I hope so because I never asked her for anything to do [that] she didn't do. I never knew of her refusing to participate or be a part of anything in the area. For that reason occasionally there's something comes up that maybe I'd rather not do and I think to myself if she can always do it, I certainly, the least I can do is to do that myself.

Editor's comment: J. T. Glisson did in fact inspire others, just as Rawlings and N. C. Wyeth inspired him to write and to paint.



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Friends of the MKR Farm 2019 Financial Review

By Treasurer Anne Pierce

Assets as of December 31, 2019

Checking:	\$8,897
Savings:	\$10
CDs:	\$27,094
Newsletter postage acc:	\$37
Cash in Sales Box	\$100
Inventory (books, etc.):	\$1,866
Total Assets:	\$38,065



2019 Income sources:

Membership	\$5,100
Contributions (house box, other)	\$838
Chance Drawings	\$325
Book, DVD, Note Card sales	\$665
Interest on CDs	\$656

2019 Expenses:

Cross Roads Play Event	\$526	
Rawlings Park events	\$1,155	
Web Site	\$1,020	
Newsletter	\$1,340	
Park Expenses (garden, canning supplies, other materials)	\$455	
Organizational expenses (PO Box, CC Fire Dept, FL State Parks, supplies)		\$518
Membership Development	\$88	



What is new? When the Rawlings farmhouse reopened for tours at the beginning of October, volunteers started offering books, DVDs and note cards for sale to tour guests. In the past, we have only had sales items available at events. This new format produced an average of \$800 in sales each month during 2019. As a result, we invested in additional inventory before the end of 2019. Prior to the closing of the park due to COVID-19, the sales this year had been even better, producing about a 50% profit on sales. Visitors seemed to appreciate being able to purchase copies of *Cross Creek*, *Cross Creek Reader's Guide*, *Cross Creek Cookery*, *The Yearling*, *The Secret River*, *Here is Home* (DVD), Carson Note Cards and Friends Note Cards at the Rawlings Farm knowing that profits are benefiting the Rawlings Farm directly. This source of income for the Friends will be put to good use to benefit the Park and outreach related to Rawlings.

We expect to make some major purchases for the Park during 2020 to include a utility vehicle, signage for the trails, and replacement of the entrance kiosk. In addition, we have an on-going commitment to support the programs at the Farm, garden and canning projects, citrus maintenance, duck and chicken populations, costumes for docents and much, much more.

Thank you for being a member of the Friends. You can help by encouraging others to join the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc. As you see from the Financial Summary above, we depend on membership income for a major part of our support. And right now membership income is even more critical as we are unable to continue selling items at the Farm because of the COVID-19 restrictions on events and visitation. Memberships and, of course, donations are much appreciated. *Please spread the word!*

Noteworthy:

Anne McCutchan's *The Life She Wished to Live: A Biography of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings*, Author of *The Yearling*, is to be published on February 23, 2021. It is now available for pre-order on Amazon.



Like us on Facebook

at The Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm. Our Facebook page shares photos, videos and events related to the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm.

Park Managers Message (Continued from page 2)

ed landscape. We also know through her letters that Marjorie kept game hens. After the game hens had 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 out 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!



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and the County roads through and around Micanopy including CR 325 to Cross Creek. The Marjorie Kinman Rawlings Historic State Park was an important site allowing our area to qualify and helped make this designation possible. Soon afterwards the Rawlings site also achieved the National Historic Landmark designation.

The Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP) was established by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to showcase the outstanding intrinsic resources (cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, natural and scenic) that can be found along Florida's highway system. At present the byway collection includes 26 state designated scenic highways.

The quarantine also brought the retirement of the most recent FSHP Coordinator Jeff Caster, ASLA. In a dual role as State Transportation Landscape Architect, Jeff organized a statewide training event in Autumn 2019 concerning native pollinator plants, in particular native milkweed, held at the Butterfly Center at the Florida Museum of Natural History. Dr. Jaret Daniels at UF provided part of the training focused on his research on monarch butterflies. Planting wildflowers along FDOT and County rights of way is one benefit of the scenic designation, and landowners adjacent to the road corridors are also encouraged to cultivate wildflower seeds.

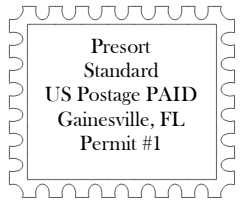
More information on this program, important to Florida tourism, is online at <https://floridascenichighways.com/>. The program is promoted with the phrase "Real Places. Real Stories." Marjorie Kinman Rawlings Historic State Park is a perfect place along the OFHH!

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 P.O. Box 337
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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!



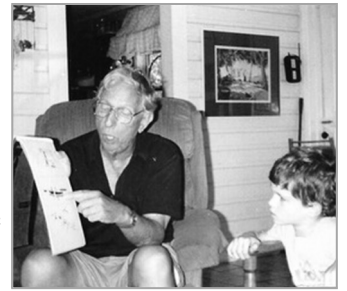
Be sure to visit us at marjoriekinnanrawlings.org Or floridastateparks.org/marjoriekinnanrawlings

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J. T. Glisson with Lee, Jessie and Donna Townsend on January 29th, 2014 at the dinner which followed the funeral for Berney Lee Bass, the son of MKR's dear friend Bernie Bass.

He was always willing to take the time to talk with young people as he did with Jessie (Townsend) Armstrong who conducted this interview when she was a middle schooler at P. K. Yonge in Gainesville nearly 20 years ago. He also took the time with grade schooler Lee Townsend (Jessie's younger brother) to mentor him about painting and sketching, just as N. C. Wyeth had inspired him at about the same age. The picture at right shows J. T. mentoring young Lee.



J.T. with Lee Townsend

<i>Membership Information</i>					
Effective July 1, 2014 new membership dues are as follows					
Type	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr	Lifetime
Individual	\$25	\$70	\$105	\$200	\$ 450
Family	\$30	\$85	\$130	\$250	\$ 550
Educational	\$30	\$85	\$130	\$250	\$ 550
Corporate	\$55	\$155	\$255	\$500	\$1,000

Please circle type of membership and send with your check to:
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P.O. Box 337
Micanopy, FL 32667-0337

Membership in the Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc.

We invite you to join or renew your membership in the Citizen Support Organization (CSO) for the MKR Historic State Park. Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., is a 501©(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer Services by calling 1-800-435-7352 (toll-free within Florida). Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the State.

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