

News from the Creek

Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc.

Volume 27 Number 2

Visit our website at: www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org

Spring Quarterly 2024

President's Message

By Scott Spaulding



Greetings Everyone:

Spring is here and as Marjorie wrote in Cross Creek Chapter 18 – Spring at the Creek: *Here in Florida the seasons move in and out like nuns in soft clothing, making no rustle in their passing. It is common for me at least to fall on a certain kind of sunny day into a sort of amnesia. I think with a start, "What is the time of year? Where was I yesterday? And is this May or October?"*

I happen to love Spring. As we move from the cooler winter months, into the heat of summer, we have a season of respite and new beginnings, as the vegetables in the garden begin to grow and orange blossoms turn to tiny green globes of citrus.

Speaking of new beginnings, we recently welcomed two new board members, Ryan Worthington and John Schaeffer.

Ryan is a Navy veteran and currently works in aviation maintenance for the Dept. of Defense in Jacksonville. Some of you may have already met Ryan at the park as he began volunteering there in March of 2022. At the park Ryan helps with the upkeep of the grounds, conducts house tours and assists during special events. He is a Florida Master Naturalist and enjoys exploring Florida, hiking its trails and paddling its waterways.

John Schaeffer is from New Port Richey and attended Florida International University, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa (the same honors society in which Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings was also a member). He is currently an ESE Support Facilitator in Pasco County schools, working with students with disabilities. John enjoys reading, learning more about his home state of Florida, and has an appreciation for nature and the environment.

Both Ryan and John, like the rest of us, have a passion for Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. What great additions to our board!

The park also welcomed a new Park Ranger, Carmen Ocasio, highlighted on page 2. Welcome Carmen, we look forward to working with you.



I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Vice President Donna Green-Townsend and Board Member Kathlyne Walkup Sheppard (pictured left) who recently received an award for the production of the documentary: *From Novel to Movie: The Yearling in Florida*. This prestigious award, sponsored by the Florida State Parks Foundation, was presented during the Annual Volunteer Awards Program held at Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park. The award was for the category of Long-Term Special Project of the Year for Exceptional Service and Dedication Documenting and Preserving Cultural Heritage. What a fitting and deserving award. This project has made such a positive impact, having aired numerous times on PBS stations across the country, creating even more ripples like we spoke about in our last newsletter. One of the newest ripples is described on page 4.

Congratulations also goes out to Park Volunteer Althea "Ginger" Carter who was recognized during the award ceremony for being nominated for a Volunteer of the Year Award. Althea has contributed greatly to our book sales program at the park and we appreciate her involvement very much.

In closing, I just want to extend a heartfelt thank you to the park staff for all they do each day to keep Marjorie's legacy alive. Speaking of which, mark your calendar for August 10th and join us as we celebrate Marjorie's 128th Birthday!

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 Michaelyn Luttge
 Elaine Carson Spencer
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The Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., would like to encourage people to become more involved in our Citizen Support Organization. If you would like to volunteer with us or become active on our Board contact us at mkrawlinsfarm@gmail.com.

BTW...

If you missed the PBS broadcast of our documentary, *From Novel to Movie: The Yearling in Florida*, you can view it online by going to PBS.org and in the [search bar](#) or with the [search icon](#) type in the word *Yearling*

**Daniel Cook
 Assistant Park Manager**



Spring arrived this year in all its pleasant beauty. Our mild winter gradually warmed and yellow jessamine vines were “suddenly a mass of golden bloom.” Orange blossoms soon followed in all their splendor. Though the grove is no longer as large as it once was, the “fragrance for which we have hungered the whole year through” did not disappoint. Amidst the beauty, oak pollen arrived in prodigious amounts brightening our clothes with yellow powder while testing the sinus passages of many.

Our garden continues to flourish as one crop gives way to another. Tomatoes, peppers, herbs, flowers and more are in various stages of growth. Freshly planted corn is starting its journey to maturity. Many wheelbarrow loads of horse manure have added vital nutrients back into the soil. In the grove, orange trees have been fertilized and pruned. We are excited to be adding ten new trees purchased by the Friends. The temperature in the house is pleasant in the mornings and occasionally a tiny bit warm by late afternoon. Visitor numbers are declining but passion and enthusiasm is not.

Maintaining the house, grove and garden are all big tasks which we could not do without the dedication of our rangers, tour guides, resident volunteers and local volunteers. I could try to list everyone and the projects they have worked on but could not do the amount of work and effort they contribute justice and do not have the space that would require. However, I do want to briefly mention resident volunteers Mark and Judy Allen. They were originally scheduled through March but extended their stay into late April contributing several hundred hours working on projects, doing chores and conducting tours. As with many of our other resident volunteers, we will miss them until we see them during their next stay. Whenever you visit, please say thank you to the paid staff and volunteers whose dedication keeps the house and grounds in such wonderful condition. As a new Assistant Park Manager I’m discovering, like Marjorie did, that maintaining the house, grove and garden takes more effort than I expected. I’m incredibly grateful we have such an amazing team of dedicated folks who are all “tenants and not possessors” helping maintain this special place for coming generations.

New Park Ranger

My name is Carmen Lydia and I’m the new Ranger at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park. I spent the better portion of my childhood growing up in the backwoods of Douglas, GA then my family moved to Starke, FL in my teens. I was the one who always had her nose in a book, where these strange places that I read about seemed so far away. Coming to Marjorie’s orange grove was the opposite of that. It was like coming home to my mother’s family farm in Puerto Rico where we spent all our summer days outside, hiding from her when she went to call us in the evening. That feeling of being home is one that I hope every visitor experiences and one that I hope to encourage when I speak about Marjorie’s life here in Cross Creek.”



Photos from the February Writers Talk which featured Kathy Salustri on her book *Back Roads of Paradise—A Journey to Rediscover Old Florida.*



The author, Kathy Salustri



Nice turnout for the Salustri Writer's Talk



Asst. Park Manager Daniel Cook (right) with Park Mgr. Kevin Patton (far left) giving special recognition to Park Ranger Geoffrey Gates for 5 years service

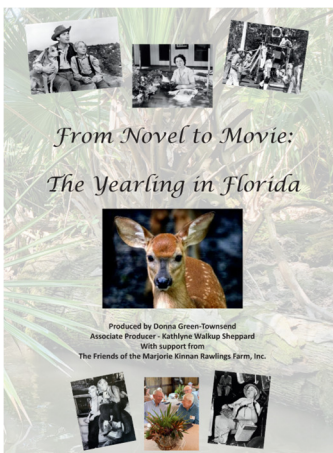
Photos from the District 2 Volunteer Awards and Appreciation Ceremony and Luncheon February 23rd at the Ellie Schiller Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park.



Board member Kathlyne Walkup Sheppard, VP Donna Green-Townsend, Pres. Scott Spaulding, Volunteer Althea Carter and Treasurer Anne Pierce



From left to right: Anne Pierce, Kathlyne Walkup Sheppard, Scott Spaulding, Donna Green-Townsend, Daniel Cook, Kevin Patton, Joy Cotton and Althea Carter.



DVDs of our award-winning documentary, *From Novel to Movie: The Yearling in Florida* are now available for purchase.

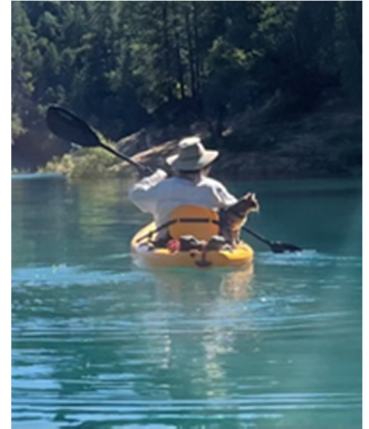
DVDs can be purchased by mail for \$24.00. Please make your check payable to Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm and mail to P.O. Box 337, Micanopy, FL 32667-0337. Postage and handling are included in the price. They will also available at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park.

Look for information about how to order the DVD on our website at <https://marjoriekinnanrawlings.org/>

The Ripple Effect...

As mentioned in our last newsletter, the ripple effect of the interest in not only the documentary, but also the original movie continues. A few weeks ago we received the unique donation of a binder filled with copies of movie scene sketches used by the movie crew for the filming of the original movie, *The Yearling* in the 1940s.

The donor (pictured right), Beverly Warren from Penn Valley, CA, says the binder had been rescued from a dumpster in California. She wanted to see it preserved. Here are just a few of the more than 50 sketches included in the binder.





We assume based on the photo of this binder labelled Vol. 8, that there were other volumes with additional sketches from the movie. Sadly, it's not known what happened to those. Thank you Beverly for this unique donation which is now being preserved in the Marjorie Kinman Rawlings Special and Area Studies Collections in the George A. Smathers Libraries at the University of Florida.



A Conversation with Bob Graham

by Donna Green-Townsend

A little more than a decade ago I set out to do a documentary on the influence three famous Marjories had on the environmental movement in Florida. Florida's former Governor and long-time Senator, Bob Graham, had deep admiration for all three women who are now honored in the Florida Women's Hall of Fame: American journalist, author and conservationist Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Environmental activist and scientist Marjorie Harris Carr and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. As a journalist myself I had written articles on all three women. Now I find myself writing about the dedicated public servant who talked with me about the three Marjories of Florida.



I was deeply saddened by the news of Senator Graham's passing on April 16th at the age of 87. I had interviewed him on many occasions through the years about his political efforts to restore the Florida Everglades and save Florida's freshwater springs. I also talked with him about many other important environmental and political topics including his role on the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and his work on the Senate Intelligence Committee investigating the 9/11 attacks. For this article I want to bring to you excerpts from our interview about the three Marjories of Florida who Senator Graham truly admired.



Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings

Though he never met Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings in person, he credits her for encouraging people to give value to the natural Florida.

Bob Graham: "She was one of the people who contributed to what eventually became the environmental revolution in Florida when in a period of less than 10 years we made the big transition from making policy based on the fact that Florida was essentially an "unspecial" place, a common place, and therefore susceptible to anything man wanted to do. A decade later we were seeing Florida as a unique treasure which carried with it the obligation to treat it in a special way. And that's a battle that is never fully won.... What Marjorie Rawlings and Marjory Douglas did with their books is they gave us a permanent photograph of what Florida looked like before man began to reshape it in his or her image. We're not going to be able to return Cross Creek to what it looked like in the 1920s

or the Everglades to what it looked like in the 1820s, but at least we now have the standard of what it used to be and we can aspire to try to be as close to that as possible and that can set the goal and destination of our current policies and actions."

Senator Graham did know Marjory Stoneman Douglas and Marjorie Harris Carr very well and shares some of those memories starting with Douglas:



Marjory Stoneman Douglas

Graham: "I can't really tell you what my first encounter was because it seems as if I had known her throughout most of my life. She wrote her signature book *River of Grass* in 1947. I was nine years old at the time. I remember going with my father to the dedication of Everglades National Park which also was in 1947, and I think that was probably the first time I met Marjory Stoneman Douglas. Then go forward 25 years and I was in the legislature interested in environmental issues and in particular the Everglades. And she like many other politicians became sort of the ultimate authority on what the state should be doing. And I learned not only some of the science of the Everglades, but I learned the psychology of Marjory Stoneman Douglas. She was a woman who set very high standards and let you know when you didn't live up to her standards which was almost all the time you didn't live up to her standards. But she kept prodding you to be better than you thought you could be."

Donna: Did you and Marjory Stoneman Douglas ever have any discussions about trying to remove all of that agricultural land (around Lake Okeechobee) and restore the Everglades. Did you have any kind of conversations about that?

Graham: "Well we both agreed that the strategy for restoration of the Everglades was for man to step back and let nature reassert its position. The Everglades is a unique ecosystem in the world and it is so unique because nature's created an infinitely sophisticated interplay of land and water, man and wind and other factors that have allowed it for centuries to be a marvel, and for the last century to be an object of our great concern because of the changes that man has made."

Donna: Do you think if Marjory Stoneman Douglas was still alive today she would be disappointed or pleased with the direction of the Everglades?

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

Graham: "She would be disappointed. That was her nature. She was not a woman who was easily satisfied and a woman that I suspect will never think that we've reached the ultimate in terms of our efforts to restore the Everglades. And thank goodness that was her attitude. She kept pushing and prodding."

Donna: You have a picture on your desk.... You're holding her hand and talking to her, what do you think you're saying to her?

Graham: "I'm saying Marjory we did the best we could. Tell us how we can do better? I saw her many times in her last years. Probably the most memorable experience was we started a project in the early 80s to restore the Kissimmee River which in its natural form had been a very serpentine river that ran from south of Orlando into Lake Okeechobee. Over the years, particularly since that 1947 hurricane, it had been channelized. Instead of looking like a snake it looked like a ruler. That led to a large spike in the pollution in the Kissimmee River because it didn't have the filters of the flood plain and all that pollution ended up in Lake Okeechobee. Some of that ended up in the central and southern Everglades as it came out of the lake. So, on that day we went to see the first couple of miles of the restored Kissimmee River. People were worried could you bring back a river that had been a canal for the better part of 20 or 30 years to look like it used to look. We were just amazed at how quickly the Everglades had restored itself in that river. We were in a canoe and Marjory got out of the canoe and planted a small cypress tree on the edge of the river. I would love to go back and see how Marjory's tree is doing. I bet it's doing very well and still listening to Marjory tell it you can be a better tree."



Marjorie
Harris Carr

Senator Graham had many conversations with the late Marjorie Harris Carr during his political career and says he had great respect for her steadfastness to accomplish her goals, especially to stop the construction of the Cross Florida Barge Canal and restore the Ocklawaha River.

Graham: "I got many of those phone calls too from Marjorie Carr. She almost treated us like your first grade teacher checking in 20 years later to see how you were behaving. One of the things I liked about Marjorie is that unlike some who waved the banner of intangibility, they want you just to do something. She was a meticulous scientist at heart and she knew exactly what she wanted you to do and so when she called it was, what have you done on items 4, 11, 23 and 47 on my list of priorities."

Donna: And most of the time were you able to have the answer she wanted?

Graham: "When they said Marjorie's on the phone you got your desk out; let me get my piece of paper here so I can give her a report."

Senator Graham says he is pleased the Cross Florida Barge Canal project was stopped and changed to a Cross Florida Greenway instead. At the time of our interview in 2013 he had hopes Marjorie Carr's dream of restoring the Ocklawaha River would happen.

Graham: "I think it will happen eventually. Don't ask me when (or a) date. I hope I have sufficient life expectancy to see that."

Donna: It would mean a lot to you?

Graham: "Yes, 'cuz that would sort of be the last testimony to the contribution Marjorie made throughout her lifetime to the betterment of Florida."

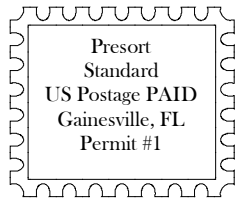
Not long before Senator Graham stepped back from his public life because of health issues he paid a visit to the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park in Cross Creek. The staff will always treasure seeing him on that visit. Rest in Peace Senator Graham.

LIFETIME MEMBERS

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Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc.
 P.O. Box 337
 Micanopy, FL 32667-0337



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.
 Visit www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org to join or renew or you may fill out and send a check with the form below.
 If your membership is current, we thank you!

Mark Your Calendar!

(updated regularly, please check website www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org)

Friday/Saturday May 3-4

25th Annual Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Conference,
 Mount Dora, FL (see www.rawlingsociety.org for details)

Saturday, August 10th

10 to 11:30am

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings 128th BIRTHDAY PARTY

All events will be held at the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park unless otherwise noted

Membership Information

Effective September 1, 2021 new membership dues are as follows

Type	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr	Lifetime
Individual	\$30	\$85	\$140	\$270	\$ 500
Family	\$35	\$100	\$165	\$320	\$ 600
Educational	\$35	\$100	\$165	\$320	\$ 600
Corporate	\$60	\$175	\$290	\$570	\$1,000

Effective 9/1/2021

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

*or visit our website at marjoriekinnanrawlings.org
 to join or renew your membership online*

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 Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park. Friends of the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm, Inc., is a 501(c)(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.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Comments:

Please Note: Our dues structure was updated September 2021