



# News from the Creek

Friends of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Farm,

Volume 10 Number 4

Visit our website at:

Summer Quarterly 2007

## Horticultural Landmark Recognition Sought for the Grove and Garden

By Valerie Rivers, Park Manager



Dr. Daniel Cantliffe, our new President, and Murray Laurie, writer of successful nominations and grants, have placed an application with the American Society for Horticultural Science for recognition of Rawlings's farm as a National Horticultural Landmark. The application wonderfully documents Rawlings work as an agriculturalists and the agricultural restoration work done to this day on the farm. Her citrus production's success and failure, her house garden, ornamentals, and occasional forays into commercial vegetable crops are all documented in the application.

But my favorite part of the nomination is the quotes used from her books. For example, Luke in *Golden Apples*, grafts a sweet orange bud and then says, "Now it's up to ol' God and the weather." And in *Cross Creek*, Rawlings writes of planting in the fall, "We hurry to put in our fall crops: beans, English peas, squash and cucumbers; our winter crops of cabbage, lettuce, carrots, beets, broccoli, turnips, collards, kohlrabi, cauliflower and celery. The hurry now is for the fall market crops against the first frost."

These quotes begin to capture the ongoing work of staff and volunteers to recreate and maintain the grove and gardens at the farm. Thanks for keeping this small part of our heritage alive. Literally.

## Puttin' on the Ritz at Rawlings

*An old idea comes back to life*

Have you ever wondered what it was like to be a guest for supper at Marjorie Rawlings' old place and enjoy one of her famous five course meals? You can now experience it and raise money for the Friends of MKR, to help meet the unfunded needs of the park.

Tickets to the five-course dinner are on sale until October 31<sup>st</sup> for \$150 per person and will include fine wine. Most items on the menu will be from MKR's *Cross Creek Cookery*.

The dinner party will be held in January 2008. (The date will be decided shortly.) The number of guests will not exceed 16 so that each of you receives personal attention in a relaxed atmosphere. If more than 16 respond to this invitation, a second dinner party will be scheduled for February, and a third will be prepared in March if this fundraiser is a big success!

Reserve your seat at the table today by making out your check to: The Friends of the MKR Farm, Inc., and sending it to them at PO Box 337, Micanopy, FL, 32667.

You will receive a written confirmation regarding the time and date, along with a souvenir menu. Bon appetit!

Sheila Barnes, Park Ranger



## Florida State Parks Celebrate Literacy in September

By Park Manager Valerie Rivers



Free admission to all State Parks is available in September if you show a library card or book, or donate a new or gently used family appropriate book. Visit [www.floridastateparks.org](http://www.floridastateparks.org) to find out more.

To celebrate literacy at the Rawlings site there will be "Readings from Rawlings" twice during the month. Although the house is closed for preservation projects until October, the rest of the park remains open. Programs include the following:

**Readings from Rawlings, Saturday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM:** by Park Ranger Sheila Barnes. A selection of favorite passages will be read at the barn.

**Reading from Rawlings, Sunday, September 23 at 3:00 PM,** at the tenant house by Park Ranger Gail Rowley. The pieces are selected for a younger audience in mind, including *The Secret River*.

## Reading, writing and arithmetic at the Rawlings School

I've been helping out at the Rawlings Elementary school this summer. They have a voluntary attendance summer school that has about 60% normal population attending. I've enjoyed helping these children; they really seem to appreciate it and enjoy the work we do together. The four boys I worked with last semester sent me some of the sweetest get well letters ever. Right now I'm also working with another group and trying to help the first grade.

I'm putting together a group of student experts in some of the more visually exciting disciplines such as insects, geology and trees that can come to the school (with props) to talk and demonstrate to the children. The idea is to stimulate some excitement in subject matter that can lure them into learning. Any ideas are welcome.

The children and teachers will be coming to the MKR house again, probably late this fall when the oranges are ripe. That was such a success last year and the house staff was so wonderful. It was a joy all around.

I'm enjoying my MKR retirement. Doing working for my old boss at UF. There's plenty to do! I miss my friends though. Love to all of you. Call me and we can do lunch!



Phyllis with some of the Rawlings School kids visiting the park last fall.



### HELP!

The recent budget cuts throughout the State of Florida means we will be left with a dire shortage of personnel for the coming year. Our park now operates with 1-1/2 Rangers and two part-time personnel to maintain the property and escort close to 30,000 visitors through the house each year.

Although we have always had a need for VOLUNTEERS, it has now become even more crucial. Volunteering doesn't just include leading tours (alho some of our best tour guides are volunteers). During our heavier visitation times (and most beautiful out here) of October thru July, we can use assistance with collecting tour fees, giving directions to visitors and answering questions (Did she really live here? Was that her car? Where's Cross Creek?) This would be a tremendous help! Have an extra day or a few hours? Come have fun with us!

**In Memory of  
Peter John Angell  
May 27, 1938 – July 18, 2007**

Peter John Angell, known to us as just “Pete” passed away July 18, 2007. Pete was a cornerstone of the community with steadfast, unflinching, dedicated support and service to the Cross Creek Volunteer Fire Department and the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Home.



**A Significant Donation to the Friends**

By Sheila Barnes

Long time volunteer Mona James’ mother, Tommie Siesky, decided recently to donate some funds to the CSO. Knowing how much her daughter loves the Rawlings place, Mrs. Siesky was very generous with a contribution kindly made out in my name. I am honored to accept this gift on behalf of the Friends of MKR’s Farm. For further information regarding this lovely donation, please contact the Friends Treasurer, Anne Pierce, at

**Secret of the Squirrels**

By Judy Harris

Taking a page from Marjorie with her seed baskets for the red birds, baskets now hang in my trees for the birds, but alas the squirrels have moved in.



Observing one of my squirrels during a recent rainstorm I discovered one of nature’s secrets. These little fellows are not deterred even during a Cross Creek downpour. I watched while the rain pelted one of the furry little fellows sitting in my basket. He continued peeling sunflower seeds in perfect comfort in a real “frog strangler”. I wondered why he seemed so oblivious to all that water coming down and why he didn’t scurry to his nest for shelter.

Intrigued, I got my binoculars out for a closer look. I saw that he was able to avoid being drenched because of how he used his tail! He has his own little built in umbrella. The squirrel laid his tail flat against his back from his haunches to his nose, almost as though Velcro fastened it to his back. He completely covered his back and fit his tail over his head like a floppy rain hat. His glorious tail is his portable rain shelter!

Their soft gray fur obviously contains some sort of waterproofing, perhaps something like a duck’s feathers. Through my spyglass I could clearly see drops of water rolling off his tail fur, away from his face, while he continued to shell his sunflower seeds in comfort. His face, body and the food in his paws were all snug and dry.

Marjorie was known to observe and study the wild creatures, so she must have seen this little “umbrella” phenomena many times. But this was my first time to witness this diminutive miracle of design. The next time it rains, I hope you have an opportunity to see

**MEMBERS OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Officers: 2007-08**

- President: Dan Cantliffe
- Vice President: Mickey Angell
- Vice President: Robin Lauriault
- Treasurer: Anne Pierce
- Secretary: Judith Harris

**CSO Board of Directors**

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- Jim Ferguson
- Judy Harris
- Murray Laurie
- Andy Merritt
- Eleanor Merritt
- Peggy Nittel
- Steve Oelrich
- Shirley Payton
- Anne Pierce
- Liz Pooley
- Valerie Rivers
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Website: www.marjoriekinnanrawlings.org

IS IT TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP?  
Please check your address label.  
The date that you see after your  
name is the date your dues are  
due. If your membership is  
current, we thank you.



Andy  
taking a  
nap on a  
bench  
while  
waiting to  
greet our

**2007 Friends of MKR Calendar**

- September 8th Readings from Rawlings 11 a.m.  
Ranger Sheila Barnes
- September 23rd Readings from Rawlings 3 p.m.  
Ranger Gail Rowley
- October 16th Friends Board Meeting
- December 11th Christmas Party
- December 16th Charity Fruit Picking

*Membership Information*

Type	1yr	3yr	5yr	10yr	Lifetime
<b>Individual</b>	\$15	\$40	\$65	\$125	\$300
<b>Family</b>	\$25	\$65	\$105	\$200	\$450
<b>Educational</b>	\$25	\$65	\$105	\$200	\$450
<b>Corporate</b>	\$50	\$130	\$210	\$400	\$900

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

Membership in the Friends of 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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Comments: