

WLOV CLUB OF THE MONTH, YANKEE TRAILS, JAN 2019




Writers League of The Villages

CLUB OF THE MONTH

The Writers League of The Villages (WLOV) was organized in 2011 as a club to support published and non-published writers in The Villages and promote The Villages as a cultural center for all arts.

WLOV President, Rita Boehm became a member in 2015 when she was still a snowbird. "Having recently retired and having newly rekindled a passion for writing, which had been postponed while I built my career, I was excited to find a club filled with talented writers at all levels of accomplishments," Rita stated. "I've since published four novels and one children's book and continue to learn from and be inspired by, my peers in the club." Monthly meetings feature speakers that cover a variety of topics related to writing. This year they have covered the gamut including

marketing, publishing, developing audiobooks, and an expanded presentation on legal issues specifically faced by writers.

A major annual event WLOV partakes in is the Central Florida Book and Author Expo. This year's Expo, featuring over 90 authors, will be held on December 8th from 10:00 – 3:00 at the Eisenhower Recreation Center. This exciting event has developed a large following matching thousands of readers with authors of every genre from children's books to romance, suspense, and Christian literature. "By holding the event in December, we are hoping people will decide to give the gift of reading for the holidays," Rita said.

This past summer the club took a trip to the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings State Park in Cross Creek.

The group enjoyed a lesson about Rawlings', the Pulitzer Prize winning author of *The Yearling*. They toured her home, in Cross Creek. WLOV is hoping to take on more trips, especially if they can include travel to an author or book related event or location.

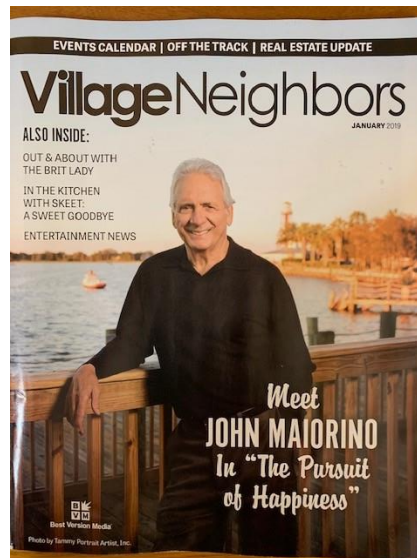



For more info, visit wlov.weebly.com

Would you like your group to be featured as Club of the Month?
Contact Kelly McKiever at kmckiever@yankeetrails.com

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RPLA WINNERS, VILLAGE NEIGHBORS MAGAZINE, JAN 2019

The Writing Bug

By Mark H. Newhouse

SUSPENSE: THE CONTEST

The suspense was killing me. Surrounded by hundreds of my fellow Florida Writers Association members, I was among the small group of Village authors waiting for the announcement of the prestigious Royal Palm Literary Awards. We all submitted works we were passionate about, editing repeatedly, and sharing with our writing groups. Now we waited to hear how the judges, many award-winning professionals, rated our work. Would any of us be winners? Suspense.

Peggy Best

Bonnybrook resident, Peggy Best submitted *Unsung Hero*, my father's story would die with him unless it was given my family," she said. A friend suggested she enter the RPLA, but her biggest challenge was silencing the little voice that said "This is your first book. It's just not good enough." Everyone who wishes to write that book in their head, should join a writers' group, listen, contribute, and critique other people's work... they will gain confidence to write their own." After months of waiting, she was notified she passed the first judging. Peggy was surprised but thought that was as far as it would go. Just knowing she made it that far was enough for her...

Tom Bender

Expert editor, Tom Bender, submitted his novel, *Avenging Alison*, because he felt he had created an intelligent, ethical but unorthodox hero; a newspaper reporter, who after his lover is killed in a bombing sets out to find out who did it. Tom tells the story, "I ran into James Jones, author of *From Here to Eternity*. Interviewing the guy inspired [me] to pursue a career in journalism and writing." Tom, who likes to keep

readers awake all night with his storytelling waited for the judges' decisions...

Jenny Ferns

From across the Pond, Duval Village author Jenny Ferns was also sweating out the evening. Her *Ripple Effect* was born from her family's World War II past. She says this seed for a fictional treatment took on a life of its own. "When my computer decided to have a nervous breakdown, I had to rely on my husband to send my entry in at the last minute before midnight." *Ripple Effect - Because Of The War*, her first novel, deals with how "WWII touched and damaged many lives in England." It is the human side of a war that reverberates today, but would it reverberate with FWA's judges...

Larry Martin

Larry Martin, a former doctor, and a member of several writing groups in The Villages, entered two short stories and the third novel in his Civil War series. "When I find a new 'interest' I end up going deep and then writing a book about it." He has written books on blood gases (a medical text), intensive care patients, scuba diving, golf, gravity, the U.S. Civil War, mountain climbing, and basic music theory.

I like to joke that if you want to be (financially) successful writer, and build a following, stick to one genre. My genres are all over the place." *The Boy Who Dreamed Mount Everest* won 2nd place for unpublished middle grade fiction in the 2016 RPLA, but would *Liberty Street*, A Novel of Late Civil War Savannah, his third novel that he says is completely different from any of his other books, be able to pass muster...

Mark H. Newhouse

And finally... me. I'd entered my middle grade mystery, *The Case of the Crazy Chickenscratches*, the sequel to my RPLA winning novels, *Welcome to Monstrovania* and *The Case of the Disastrous Dragon*. Perry Mason style courtroom mysteries that pitch a teenage boy and girl into cases that can only take place in a land of monsters and fictional folk. The first two had won awards, but would the third? My second entry, *The Devil's Bookkeepers*, is the story of the ghetto in Poland where my parents survived when more than 200,000 died. Based on the little-known *Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto*, I'd shared chapters with the *Creative Writing Group* and was encouraged by their response to its gripping suspense...

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

Villager Chris Coward, RPLA Chairperson, is able to organize more than 100 judges, hundreds of entries, endless documentation, and is also a charming emcee... unless you are

waiting in suspense, as we all were after a wonderful dinner. Nail-biting abounded as we saw our hugely enlarged faces on giant screens and waited for the results.

I could leave you in suspense until next month... but the winners were:

Peggy Best: 2nd Place Biography (Published) for *Unsung Hero*

Jenny Ferns: 1st Place for Book Length Fiction (Unpublished) Blended Genre for *Ripple Effect*.

Tom Bender: 1st Place Blended Genre for *Avenging Alison*

Larry Martin:

- 2nd Place Publishes Historical Fiction for *Liberty Street*
- 3rd Place Flash Fiction for "I Hit a Deer"
- 3rd Place Short Story for "Crusade"

SOMEONE'S MISSING?

But what about me? I was thrilled that *The Case of the Crazy Chickenscratches* won 3rd Place middle grade fiction. But I was still waiting for *The Devil's Bookkeepers*, my tribute to the victims and survivors of hate and genocide.

Chris announced the 3rd Place winner in historic fiction. It wasn't me.

When 2nd place wasn't my book, I closed my eyes and said a silent prayer.

When I looked up at the screen, I saw my book hadn't won. I was, of course, disappointed. But what

makes FWA's contest unique is that all entrants get the anonymous judges' scores and comments, a huge help to improve work. Winning is wonderful, but I'd still enter this contest just to know what impartial judges, experts, think will help my work. I'll study the judges' comments carefully before I enter again next year or send it to an agent or publisher. I want my books to be the best they can be. That is something all the authors I know want for their creations.

Suspense and disappointment are expected companions of being an author. You wait to hear from an agent, a publisher, critics, reviewers, and the public and know you may be disappointed. So why do so many of your friends and neighbors write? Passion. Once you're bitten by that writing bug, you are truly 'bitten'. Please visit www.wlcv.org for a list of our writing clubs and authors who are eager to speak to your groups or help you achieve your dreams. •

Mark's latest award-winning mystery, *The Case of the Crazy Chickenscratches*, is now available on Kindle, Amazon and other booksellers. Co-founder and first president of Writers League of The Villages and state chairperson of The Florida Writers Association Youth Program, you can contact him at aimh@spring.com, or learn more about opportunities for adults, middle and high school writers from the Florida Writers Association at floridawriters.net.

Article about Rita Boehm, The Villages Magazine, Jan 2019



SPOTLIGHT ON A VILLAGES AUTHOR

BLUEBIRDS IN THE GARDEN

by Rita Boehm,
Village of Charlotte

GENRE: Children's picture book

Colorful photographs present young children with a charming story about a pair of bluebirds that decide to build a nest

and raise a family in a decorative birdhouse in the author's backyard garden. The book chronicles the family's story from nest building until the colorful chicks are fully grown and on their own.



WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO WRITE YOUR BOOK?

When a pair of bluebirds chose to raise a family in my backyard garden, the story practically wrote itself. The book provided me with an opportunity to merge my passion for photography with my innate desire to tell a story.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE READERS TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR BOOK?

I hope this story will teach young children to appreciate nature as they witness the commitment and dedication of the bluebirds raising their family. "Bluebirds" was my first foray into writing for children. I've written

four books in the romantic suspense and general fiction/mystery genres. All are available on Amazon.com or through my website: ritamboehm.com.



Available on Amazon

Article about Dan Kincaid, The Villages Magazine, Jan 2019



Dan Kincaid
UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE FORESTER

The motto of the United States Forest Service is: "Caring for the land and serving people." As a forester for more than 30 years, Dan Kincaid got to do just that.

During his time with the Forest Service, Kincaid had a variety of responsibilities — fighting fires, maintaining hiking trails, wildlife/wilderness management and running various recreation centers and properties around the country.

"Over the years I had a lot of opportunities to do a lot of unique things," Kincaid said.

Before They Were Villagers

RESIDENTS SHARE THEIR INTERESTING JOBS
STORY BY RICA LEWIS & MARK ANDERSON

The Villages hosts a hodgepodge of interesting people. Prior to retiring in Florida's Friendliest Hometown, residents had rich, full lives — raising families and climbing the ladders in various careers. These days, rounds of golf, recreation activities and club involvement consume their time. But these remarkable Villagers have stories to tell of less leisurely days in the working world. Here are a few examples.

CARE TO SHARE WHAT YOU DID BEFORE YOU WERE A VILLAGER?
SEND A BRIEF EMAIL WITH YOUR NAME, VILLAGE AND A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR FORMER CAREER TO THEVILLAGESMAGAZINE@THEVILLAGESMEDIA.COM
USE THE SUBJECT LINE: INTERESTING JOB. PHOTOS ARE WELCOME.

Kincaid's love of forests began at a young age growing up in the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia — where he would often make trips with his family.

"We were out there a lot," Kincaid recalled. "We'd go on picnics or go hiking or camping, and my dad liked to go hunting and fishing. He took me fishing a lot when I was young. My grandfather managed a little country store in a small town and his property butted right up against the forest, so I was always around."

Kincaid went to school for forestry, receiving his bachelor's degree in Forestry management from West Virginia University and his master's degree in forestry and environmental management from Duke University.

Kincaid often worked alone or with a small team on assignments, but he says the solitude is what drew him — and many of his peers — to the job.

"(On certain jobs) there would usually be two of us who went out," Kincaid said. "He'd go this way and I'd go that way. I was by myself all day long and we'd take plots. We brought our lunch with us and we'd meet back by the truck in time to drive back home at the end of the day."

"I liked being out in the woods," he continued. "Most of the people who get into forestry aren't too keen on working with a lot of people. They like being out with the trees and the solitude and animals — they're more comfortable that way. They're more at ease with trees and deer than they are with people."



While with the U.S. Forest Service, Kincaid also had the opportunity to oversee the tree selection for the annual Christmas tree displayed on the lawn of the U.S. Capitol Building. Kincaid lobbied successfully for a nearly-century-old Norway Spruce tree in Wayne National Forest in Ohio, and he received a special plaque made from the tree's wood at the end of the season to commemorate the work he and his team did selecting the tree.

No matter what position he was filling as a forester, Kincaid enjoyed them all — as long as he was able to spend time in the forest.

"Not everybody gets to do a job like that," Kincaid said. "All of the things I did were special." — By Mark Anderson

