



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?

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USE THE SUBJECT LINE: INTERESTING JOB.
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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.



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 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*



