



**You may know Dan Kincaid from the softball fields or for the books he has written, but what you may not know is that he is a professional forester and spent over 31 years with the U.S. Forest Service working primarily in national forests.**



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Thirty-one years is a long time to spend in the trees.

Dan Kincaid made his career out of it, both as a forester and a published author specializing in forestry and outdoor recreation.

"People love the national forests. I did a little bit of everything — timber management, wilderness management, recreation and fighting forest fires," said Kincaid, of the Village of Dunedin.

**K**incaid's passion for the trees and the outdoors came in his early years, living in Virginia in an area surrounded by the Monongahela National Forest.

"My grandfather had property that butted up against the forest," he said. "When we would go there, we'd hike around the area and fish."

He lived there until he was 8 years old, when his family relocated to Huntington, West Virginia.

Spending time outdoors made Kincaid want to study it and make a career out of it. So when he attended classes at West Virginia University, he majored in forest management.

He got his bachelor's degree there, then went to Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, for his master's in forestry and environmental management.

Kincaid's next stop was the U.S. Forest Service, starting in 1974 working in the same forest where he spent his youth.

While at Monongahela, he focused on forest inventory, which includes measuring tree growth rates, recording species and identifying forest health issues.

"I would also make notes regarding wildlife habitat, soil and water conditions, and make any recommendations for treatments," he said.

Other duties included fighting

wildfires and leading summer camps.

**K**incaid was transferred to Wayne National Forest in Ohio, then to Superior National Forest in Ely, Minnesota. His primary role there was overseeing recreation opportunities like canoeing and boating in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

Kincaid recalled encounters with moose, black bears, and one wolf during his time at Superior.

"It was an interesting job, and the fishing was really good there," he said. "But it was cold, cold, cold!"

The outdoors wasn't Kincaid's only passion. He enjoyed writing, too.

Specifically, writing about the outdoors.

From 1978 to 1990, he wrote a weekly newspaper column about forestry for newspapers

in Ohio and Georgia.

And from 1985 to 1990, he also wrote a weekly hunting and fishing column for the Marietta Times in Ohio.

Kincaid wrote 13 books, mostly about or inspired by his forest service experiences.

**O**ne book, "A Gift to the Nation: From Ohio and Wayne National Forest," is about one of his most cherished career moments: finding, maintaining and providing the Capitol Christmas Tree in 1987. His supervisor put him in charge of identifying and taking care of the tree that would be displayed at the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

"No one thought we could find a suitable Christmas tree in Ohio, we had oaks and hickories and maples," he said. "But we found a Norway spruce that qualified."

Kincaid spent most of 1987

## GETTING TO KNOW DAN KINCAID

**Age:** 72

**Village:** Dunedin

**Spouse:** Vicki, 51+ years

**Family:** three children, eight grandchildren

**Moved Here When:** 2014

**Moved Here From:** Athens, Ohio

**Favorite Villages**

**Activities:** Softball, Writers League of The Villages, billiards with his wife, West Virginia Club

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taking care of the tree, a project that he said involved "everyone in the state." He shipped the tree to Washington with help from a grounds crew.

**H**e attended the tree lighting ceremony, where he had a chance to meet the late astronaut John Glenn, the first American to orbit the earth and an Ohio senator.

Kincaid's later career included working with the Fire Prevention

Education Team during a drought in Colorado. He also fought one of that state's largest wildfires, the Hayman Fire.

Today, Kincaid isn't working the forest anymore, but enjoys the warmer temperatures living in Florida and the assortment of activities The Villages offers.

You're most likely to find him on the softball fields — and, like the forests, he wrote a book about that, too.