



## Of Wind & Sky: Illinois Author Marguerite Henry and the Wild Ponies of Chincoteague Island

The Paw Paw Public Library District will be hosting Jamie Poorman, an Illinois Road Scholar, on Monday, **May 19 at 6:00 pm** in the Community Center. There is no cost and is open to the public.

Join Jamie to explore the life and legacy of Illinois Author and pony-lover Marguerite Henry.

Henry was born in Milwaukee in 1902 and moved to Illinois after her marriage, writing many of her most famous works here. She published 59 books, mostly animal tales for children. Henry was an avid library user and conducted in-depth research before visiting the places that inspired her stories. Her works won many awards, including the Newbery Medal.

In 1946, Henry visited the island of Chincoteague off the coast of Virginia for the annual “Pony Penning” week when the wild ponies from nearby Assateague Island were rounded up, swam across the channel, and foals auctioned off. Marguerite fell in love with a tiny foal, named Misty, and purchased her. When Misty was old enough, she was shipped to Illinois to live with Marguerite on her farm near Wayne. Misty lived here in Illinois for over 10 years until returning to Chincoteague to have foals of her own. Misty was beloved by the neighborhood children, then the whole country. The pony was even invited to the American Library Association conference, and national contests were held to name her foals. In 1962, when Chincoteague Island was devastated by a terrible storm, Misty saved the town and the ponies by raising money on a tour of theaters along the Eastern Shore.

Henry once wrote “Some people, by the very tone of their voices, can make a story sound exciting. But then, when you follow up on the idea, it often turns out to be little or nothing. With Misty, the reality was more

exciting than the promise.” You won’t want to miss this incredible story of an Illinois author and her impact on generations of readers and an island community nearly 1,000 miles away.

