

Author Biography for **JANE KIRKPATRICK**



Jane Kirkpatrick



Jane Kirkpatrick grew up near Mondovi, Wisconsin, a little town not far from the Mississippi River. Her older sister Judy (now deceased) and younger brother Craig helped on the family dairy farm. Dozens of cousins lived within 50 miles providing the privilege of extended family memories.

Most of the "Rutschow" clan remained in the Wisconsin-Minnesota area. Jane moved to Oregon in 1974 after completing her master's degree in social work at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She worked in the disabilities field and became the director of the mental health program in Deschutes County and the first female president of the Oregon Community Mental Health Director's Association.

Eventually, Jane "retired" to homestead and begin a new adventure in writing, working on the Warm Springs Indian reservation, growing watermelons, and attempting to grow grapes, alfalfa and cattle. The Kirkpatrick's new life included "clearing sagebrush and wrestling wind and rattlesnakes" while homesteading land on the John Day River in a remote part of Oregon known locally as Starvation Point. "It was our 'rural 7-Eleven' since our home sat seven miles from the mailbox and eleven miles from the pavement," notes the author. Additionally, she worked for seventeen years as a mental health and educational consultant on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Central Oregon with both Native American and non-Indian communities, a position she left in 2002.

In the fall of 2010, after twenty-six years on the homestead, Jane and Jerry, her husband of 35 years, made another life change, moving back to central Oregon near Bend. "There is a season for everything," Jane notes. Their seasons on the ranch changed their lives and they left with no regrets, looking forward to new adventures in writing and life.

A lively and humorous speaker, Kirkpatrick is a frequent keynote presenter for conferences, women's retreats, fundraisers and workshops. In addition to her historical fiction that dramatizes pioneer life, including her first novel, *A Sweetness to the Soul*, originally published in 1995, and recent projects *The Daughter's Walk* (2011), *Where Lilacs Still Bloom* (2012), and *One Glorious Ambition* (2013),



Jane's memoir *Homestead* relates, with love and laughter, her own family's modern-day struggle to catch a dream in the Oregon Territory.

Jane believes that our lives are the stories that others read first and she encourages groups to discover the power of their own stories to divinely heal and transform. Visit her blog for more information about her current projects and the privilege of following one's passion wherever the dreams may lead.

Jane has two step-children. Kathleen lives in Florida with her family and youngest granddaughter, Madison. Matt lives in Wasco and works on the ranch full time when not looking after his family including his and Melissa's daughter, Mariah.