

NEWS ABOUT KENTUCKY'S PEOPLE AND PLACES

# COMMUNITIES

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SECTION E



PHOTOS PROVIDED

High Bridge over the Kentucky River in Jessamine County as it looked on Sept. 26, 1910, more than 30 years after it opened as the highest bridge in North America.

## IT'S HIGH TIME



This photograph, taken between 1890-1904, shows visitors enjoying the view. "This was the place to come," said local historian Margaret Morgan. The High Bridge Homecoming Festival celebrates its legacy.

### High Bridge festival is perfect time to rediscover once 'highest' landmark

By Jeff McDaniel  
Special to the Herald-Leader

It's an unforgettable sonic assault. In a peaceful countryside where there's only the occasional squawk of a turkey vulture and the buzz of a mosquito to near your neck, you detect a faint rumble from across the hill. Then you're overtaken by a crescendo of steel wheels grinding on steel rails over a massive towering trellis that's 308 feet tall and 1,130 feet long. From the vantage point of High Bridge Park, you've just witnessed a 128-car freight train roll over High Bridge above the Kentucky River palisades — a magnificent scene that hasn't much changed since the late 1800s

when the grandeur of High Bridge made it one of Kentucky's premier tourist draws. "As far as tourism goes, it was right up there with Mammoth Cave," said Margaret Morgan, a local historian and tourism coordinator for Wilmore. "The rich came on excursion trains from the north. The ladies with their hats, their high-top shoes and their petticoats. They came out in their very best. This was the place to come. After all, it was the highest bridge in the world." The organizers of the High Bridge Homecoming Festival, now in its third year, hope to recapture some of that old-

See BRIDGE, E3

#### History of High Bridge

Located over the Kentucky River in Jessamine County, High Bridge was once the highest bridge in North America and the highest railroad bridge in the world. Work on the bridge began in the 1850s for the Lexington and Danville Railroad. It was to be a suspension bridge, designed by John A. Roebling, who later built New York's Brooklyn Bridge, but was never completed. The towers for the suspension cables were built and remained until 1929. A bridge of cantilever design was finally opened in 1877 on the Cincinnati Southern Railway, 277 feet above the low water level and 1,130 feet long. The bridge's 7,000 tons of steel are pinned together with 178,500 rivets. President Rutherford B. Hayes dedicated the bridge in 1879. Later, with bridge traffic increasing and locomotives increasing in weight, the Cincinnati Southern decided to replace the bridge. In 1911 a new track was laid 31 feet above the old track, leaving the original intact until the new track was ready. The bridge was fitted for double tracks in 1929.

#### AROUND THE REGION

##### LEXINGTON

### Take PRIDE in the Bluegrass

Bluegrass PRIDE (Personal Responsibility in a Desirable Environment) announces its second annual Bluegrass Summer Soirée: A Celebrity Benefit for Bluegrass PRIDE to be held at 6 p.m. Saturday at Fasig-Tipton. The evening will include dinner served by local celebrities and a silent auction. Bluegrass PRIDE provides environmental resources and information to schools, community groups, local governments and citizens in Central Kentucky. Tickets range from \$45 (for ages 35 and younger) to \$65, or \$400 for a table of eight. For tickets call Amy Sohner at (859) 266-1572.

More Fayette County news, Pages E2 and E5

##### GEORGETOWN

### Family Court fun

Kentucky's 14th Judicial Circuit Family Court, which serves Bourbon, Scott and Woodford counties, is hosting Family Court Community Night. The event, on the Georgetown College campus at the Fitness and Recreation Center, is 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday. Community Night will include children's activities, local church choir performances and presentations by Miss Kentucky 2007 Kaitlynn Postel and Judge Tamra Gormley. Guests of honor include more than 75 foster families from around the 14th Judicial Circuit. Community Night is an educational event meant to provide information on the new Family Court and the services/resources available to families. Call Taylor Phillips at (502) 867-4808 or (859) 229-4910.

More Scott County news, Page E7

##### NICHOLASVILLE

### Sip in a hat

A hat-themed tea will be held at Camp Nelson Heritage Park from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday in the historic White House. Fanciful hats are encouraged. The donation for the tea is \$15. Reservations are required. Call (859) 881-5716.

More Jessamine County news, Page E4



### JOIN OUR TEEN BOARD

We're looking for 25 bright teenagers to join our '07-'08 panel

APPLICATION — E3

Pick your partner: Area groups offer dance lessons

NEXT WEEK IN COMMUNITIES

Annual high school band section

AUGUST 29 IN COMMUNITIES

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