



‘Kentucky Life’ explores Jean Thomas’ work, meets poet Frank X Walker and visits the Kentucky Harp Society

FOR RELEASE: April 10, 2025

On an all-new episode of *Kentucky Life*, host Chip Polston kayaks at Kincaid Lake State Park and explores music and poetry.

Jean Thomas, The Traipsin’ Woman, made a name for herself by travelling the mountains of Eastern Kentucky to record and document the traditional singin’ gatherin’ of the region, which later inspired her to found the American Folk Song Festival.

Frank X Walker is one of the most accomplished writers and poets to come out of Kentucky. Originally from Danville, Walker forged his own path and gained widespread recognition for his poetry, coining the term “Affrilachia” to highlight the importance of African Americans within the Appalachian Region. He would go on to become the Kentucky Poet Laureate in 2013, the first African American to hold the honor. Now, his influence can be heard through the generations of poets to come after him, and his impact on the Kentucky writing scene cannot be understated.

The Kentucky Harp Society is a chapter of the International Society of Folk Harpers and Craftsmen that is looking to make harps become commonplace in the Commonwealth! While the instrument is often viewed as exclusive and inaccessible, this society aims to change that with hands-on workshops, more affordable harps, lessons and more!

A 2025 KET production.

Kentucky Life

KET Saturday, April 12 • 8/7 pm

KET2 Wednesday, April 16 • 2:30/1:30 pm

Watch on-demand at [KET.org](https://ket.org) and on the PBS Video app



Kentucky Life is a KET production, produced by Casey Harris. View more *Kentucky Life* episodes online, as well as those from KET's archives, at [KET.org/KentuckyLife](https://ket.org/KentuckyLife).

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