

Robert F. Kennedy visited Kentucky in a war on poverty;
36 years later, the region still fights the battles.



CHARLES BERTRAM | STAFF

Jeff Thomas, 52, taped a recording of Robert F. Kennedy's visit to Eastern Kentucky in 1968. Thomas was there when Kennedy visited the school in Barwick, and yesterday a re-creation of Kennedy's visit passed through again.

REVISITING POVERTY

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Performance prompts new look at old problems

By Greg Kocher

HERALD-LEADER STAFF WRITER

VORTEX — An unusual piece of political theater returned to its original stage yesterday as a troupe of performers re-enacted Sen. Robert F. Kennedy's 1968 visit to Eastern Kentucky.

"RFK in EKY," billed as a "multi-site re-creation" of Kennedy's two-day, 200-mile tour, is designed to foster public discussion about the region's past, progress and future.

"It reminds all of us what was going on then and makes us look at what is going on now," said Peter Edelman, a former Kennedy aide who accompanied the junior senator from New York to Kentucky 36 years ago. Edelman watched yesterday's performances in Wolfe, Breathitt, Knott and Perry

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ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Kennedy talked with students at a school in Breathitt County, on a tour of Eastern Kentucky in order to examine the "War on Poverty" act.

IF YOU GO

All events are free.

Today, 9 a.m.: Pancake breakfast at Appalshop media and cultural center in Whitesburg.

10 a.m.: Kennedy, portrayed by Jack Faust, will give a speech at the Letcher County Courthouse in Whitesburg.

11 a.m.: Re-enactment of Senate subcommittee hearing at the Fleming-Neon High School gym in Neon.

4:30 p.m.: Discussion about the "War on Poverty" and issues raised by the re-enactment, Floyd County courthouse in Prestonsburg.

Saturday: Neon Days Festival in Letcher County will have RFK memorabilia on display. Discussions of the "War on Poverty" and the RFK re-enactment at 1 and 3:30 p.m.



PHOTOS BY CHARLES BERTRAM | STAFF

Jack Faust, center, playing Sen. Robert F. Kennedy of New York, talked to Frank Taylor as Rep. Carl D. Perkins, of Hindman. At left was Mitty Owens as Kennedy aide Peter Edelman. The real Edelman was a spectator yesterday at the re-enactment of Kennedy's visit to Kentucky.

