



CRAIG RUTTLE

Heather Clay grew up in Midway but left at age 15 for school and then career. Her debut novel, *Losing Charlotte*, due out this week, is set in the Bluegrass and in Manhattan, where she lives now.

HOME ON THE PAGE

Heather Clay harnesses her homesickness for Midway in her debut novel

COPIOUS NOTES

Lexington would have liked to see even more of theater gathering



RICH COPLEY
HERALD-LEADER
CULTURE COLUMNIST

The Southeastern Theatre Conference and Central Kentucky took notice of each other a couple weekends ago.

Conference organizers were wowed by the accommodations and hospitality that Lexington had to offer when SETC brought 4,000 conventioners to town for the first time in more than 30 years. And conference officials noticed Lexington artists, giving a career achievement award to Larry and Vivian Snipes, naming Balagula Theatre runner-up in the Community Theatre Festival, and naming and Paul Laurence Dunbar High School student Susan Creech to the High School Theatre Festival all-star cast.

And Lexington noticed the conference, particularly anyone who went near Lexington Center for the three days that the conference was in full swing.

As conventions at Lexington Center go, SETC was "one of the largest ever in Lexington and the largest in the past decade," said Bill Owen, the center's president and chief executive.

Lexington Center leaders think SETC is the biggest convention since the Worldwide

See **COPLEY, E8**

LEXGO.COM

Rich Copley writes about local and national arts and entertainment daily at his blog, Copious Notes, at LexGo.com.



SARAH HOSKINS

Mac by Sarah Hoskins. When she started her project, "I didn't know a soul."

Photographer's project took her on a journey of trust

By **Rich Copley**

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Equine photography brought Sarah Hoskins to Lexington. African-American hamlets around the city and in Central Kentucky made the Bluegrass feel like home.

"I was introduced to one woman named Lydia Talbert, and I was introduced to Maddoxtown Church," Hoskins, left, says of her friend from the New Zion community who has since died. "And from there, what happens is, it gets to be a trust thing. I met one person and they led me to somebody else, and they led me to somebody else. I never thought I would be doing this for 10 years."

Now, the results of her decade of visiting New Zion, Uttingertown and other communities are on display at The Art Museum at the University of Kentucky. Hoskins will give an address at UK's

See **HOSKINS, E3**

IF YOU GO

Sarah Hoskins

What: Talk as part of the Robert C. May Photography and Lecture Series.

When: 4 p.m. March 26.

Where: Worsham Theatre, University of Kentucky Student Center, Euclid Avenue and South Limestone.

Tickets: Free.

Exhibit: Through April 11. The Art Museum at UK, inside the Singletary Center for the Arts, 405 Rose St. Hours: noon-5 p.m. Tue.-Thu., Sat., Sun.; noon-8 p.m. Fri. Admission is free.

LEXGO.COM

Watch an audio slide show of works from Sarah Hoskins' *The Homeplace* at LexGo.com.

By **Amy Wilson**

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Author Heather Clay left the Bluegrass when she was 15 and has been "desperately homesick ever since," she says.

The daughter of the owners of Three Chimneys Farm in Midway, Clay left to go to Groton, a boarding school in Massachusetts, and then to Middlebury College in Vermont. She earned a master's degree from Columbia University in New York and stayed there.

Three Chimneys is where Seattle Slew lived out his elegant days and where Smarty Jones and Big Brown now share the fields that Clay could walk in her sleep.

Clay married a man in 1998 whose family is deeply rooted in the East, through politics and business, so maybe there is no coming home for good. In June 2003, when Clay was 32, her short story,



Original Beauty, made *The New Yorker* magazine's debut fiction issue. She lives on the Upper West Side. Her daughters, ages 3 and 6, are so thoroughly Manhattan that they are already handy at hailing cabs.

Still, those 15 years in the Woodford County countryside that launched Clay are "so deeply idealized that I sometimes want to repeat them with my girls," she says.

Every year, the Kentuckian comes home and brings her husband and two daughters with her. It is usually June, when the air is freshly spring-cleaned, the colts and fillies are growing and the land is fertile enough for everything. In recent months, Clay's 6-year-old, Amelia, told her mother that she is "not a city person," Clay says.

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IF YOU GO

Heather Clay reads from and signs *Losing Charlotte*

When: 7 p.m. April 21.

Where: Joseph-Beth Booksellers, 161 Lexington Green Cir., The Mall at Lexington Green.

Admission: Free.

Learn more: (859) 273-2911. www.josephbeth.com.

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