

Keillor done for real this time?

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When reports began to trickle out on the Internet this past weekend that Garrison Keillor would be giving up "A Prairie Home Companion" next season, my first thought was: "Uh-oh. Here we go again."

Keillor has announced an upcoming retirement so many times that he could be called the Brett Favre of broadcast radio — a veteran who probably means to hang up his sneakers, but just can't quite seem to leave the game.

There are some signs, however, that Keillor really, really, really, really means it this time.

Not only did Keillor tell the Berkshire (Mass.) Eagle newspaper that he would fade out



Garrison Keillor

sometime next year, but he went so far as to say that mandolin player Chris Thile, a fill-in during past shows, would be his full-time replacement.

"Chris is my man, and I'm eager to stay home and read books," Keillor said in an e-mail interview with a reporter.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. The idea of Keillor spending his weekends holed up in his living room is the equivalent of announcing

that Mick Jagger and Keith Richards are calling it quits.

But ... on Sunday, the Mandolin Cafe, an Internet site for all things, well, mandolin, got a few comments from Thile, who confirmed that he indeed is the new host. "Everything Garrison said is true, and I'm really excited," Thile said.



Thile

Thile is a top-notch musician and a quick wit, but does he have the writing chops to take over ALL "Prairie Home" duties? Don't be surprised if Keillor continues to submit stories from "Lake Wobegon" and be even less surprised if he eventually decides to hold off that retirement.