

## Garrison Keillor's Fort Myers show canceled

Mann Hall offers refunds after radio star's firing

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Fort Myers News-Press  
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It's official: Humorist Garrison Keillor won't appear at Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall this February after Wednesday's allegations of "inappropriate behavior."

Mann Hall announced Friday morning that Keillor's Feb. 6 show has been canceled. The show joins Keillor's other canceled tour stops in Torrington, Conn.; Buffalo, N.Y.; and elsewhere.

Mann Hall had already removed Keillor's show from its website Wednesday, the same day Minnesota Public Radio revealed it had fired the popular creator of "Prairie Home Companion."

The 75-year-old Keillor is a regular performer in Southwest Florida and has appeared at both Mann Hall and Artis-Naples.

MPR — Keillor's longtime broadcast home — announced Wednesday that it would "end its business relationship with Keillor's media companies effective immediately." It learned of the allegations in October.

The post didn't include specific details about the allegations.

"Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) is terminating its contracts with Garrison Keillor and his private media companies after recently learning of allegations of

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## Keillor

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his inappropriate behavior with an individual who worked with him," the statement said. "MPR takes these allegations seriously and we are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful and supportive work environment for all employees and everyone associated with MPR.

"We want a workplace where anyone who experiences unwanted behavior feels comfortable in reporting concerns to MPR. Discrimination, harassment, retaliation or other inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated."

Keillor confirmed the news Wednesday in an email to the Associated Press. However, he later issued a follow-up statement saying he was fired over "a story that I think is more interesting and more complicated than the version MPR heard." He didn't elaborate.

Keillor told The Minneapolis Star-Tribune that in one case, he simply "put my hand on a woman's bare back" while attempting to console her.

"I meant to pat her back after she told me about her unhappiness and her shirt was open and my hand went up it about six inches," he said. "She recoiled. I apologized. I sent her an email of apology later and she replied that she had forgiven me and not to think about it. We were friends. We continued to be friendly right up until her lawyer called."

MPR said it will stop distributing both "The Writer's Almanac" — the daily syndicated program that Keillor writes and produces — and also rebroadcasts of "The Best of A Prairie Home Companion." The radio station plans to give a new title to "Prairie Home Companion," now hosted by Chris Thile.

Keillor created "A Prairie Home Companion" in 1974 and hosted the storytelling show until he retired last year. He's also a bestselling author whose books include "Lake Wobegon Days" and "The Book of Guys."

Refunds for the south Fort Myers show are available at the Mann Hall box office or other points of purchase, according to the Mann Hall press release announcing the cancellation. If the tickets were purchased by credit card, they'll be refunded automatically to the card.

*USA Today reporter Jayme Deerwester contributed to this story.*

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