

MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE

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PERILS OF PAULINE?

NO, ROUTINE AT KSJN

You ain't heard nothin' yet

By Will Jones
Staff Writer

Although the radio station that almost always nurses me through my morning bathing and shaving and tea drinking is KSJN, it is not the station that gets me up in the morning.

That is because the public-subscription station of the Minnesota Educational Radio network does not always get up itself in the morning, and cannot be relied upon fully for radio's traditional waker-upper services via the clock radio.

So there's this regular household routine whereby the clock triggers on a blaring commercial station at the appointed hour. That gets me up. Then I turn off that radio and go turn on another that is tuned to KSJN, to see what its problems are.

I am writing these observations on a morning when KSJN, Garrison Keillor and The Prairie Home Companion have not come on the air at all.

With a telephone call, I have learned that the station may not come on for several hours. The microwave link between the studio and the transmitter is not functioning, but they're working on it.

That's pretty dull. Usually KSJN's problems are more amusing. There was the morning when no sound came from 97.1 on the FM band for half an hour or so after the designated sign-on time. That much of a delay hardly merited an inquisitive phone call, and I waited, as I have pretty much learned to do with KSJN.

Presently Keillor signed on the station and explained that he had forgotten his keys. It had taken him a long time to rouse a night watchman in the building in which the studios were located at that time, and even longer to persuade the fellow who came to the door that this weird-looking 7-foot creature outside was actually someone authorized to go in and turn on the station.

Since then, KSJN has gone through several phases of studio remodeling and moving, and the changes all have caused their morning technical hangups. All have been explained in the quietly matter-of-fact style that is the closest approximation we have in the Twin Cities to that old-fashioned kind of personal, small-town radio where, say, the owner's wife sits on her sun porch and runs the station for half the day, running her household and half the neighborhood at the same time. It's the same, that is, in the sense that there's no suggestion of panic, or, gee-whiz, we sure screwed up here at the high-powered studio today. The attitude is simply, "Isn't all radio like this?"

For a while, when the St. Paul studios were completely unusable due to remodeling, Keillor went

to the sister network station, KSJR in Collegeville, to do the broadcasts, mentioning that he got up at 2 a.m. for the long drive to work. Finally, the new St. Paul studio was supposed to be completely finished, and the happy morning arrived when Keillor could resume his normal schedule except that one or two final technical details hadn't been looked after.

With Keillor in St. Paul, and no working studio there, the station still got on the air on time. But The Prairie Home Companion was improvised from Collegeville by the staff there.

A few weeks later, when Keillor and other KSJN staffers came to work in the morning, they couldn't get the studio door open. They discovered that a speaker had fallen off the wall of the new studio and into a small stairwell next to the door, jamming it. When the station finally came on the air, voices from Collegeville blandly explained the crisis in St. Paul. Again, they improvised the program from Collegeville, with occasional telephone reports from St. Paul on the progress of a carpenter who was summoned to hack a way into the studio.

There was also that wonderful morning, back in the days before there even was a St. Paul studio, when one of the Collegeville announcers doing the morning program — I believe it was Arthur Hoehn — spilled his morning coffee all over the control console. The station didn't go off the air, but between records we listeners were given a calm, measured, running account of the blotting-up process and the imminent electrical and technical dangers. As I remember it, the 8 o'clock news also was pretty soggy.



Keillor

Buckley and Galbraith to comment on 'Today'

New York, N.Y.

One of conservatism's most articulate spokesmen, William F. Buckley Jr., will be paired with one of the country's most influential liberals, John Kenneth Galbraith, on NBC-TV's "Today" program at the Democratic and Republican national conventions in Miami Beach. Buckley and Galbraith will be featured on "Today" July 10-14, as they comment on the Democratic convention, and Aug. 21-24, when they examine the Republican convention. "Today" will originate live from Miami Beach during those periods.

"We are not putting on Buckley versus Galbraith as a debate, a cockfight or a TV entertainment," said Stuart Schulberg, executive producer. "What we want — and what these two men are uniquely able to deliver — is their vigorous wit and political insight day by day as both political parties proceed toward their ultimate positions and policies."