



Keillor wants to end on top

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Just as Garrison Keillor's public radio program, "A Prairie Home Companion," begins to reach a television audience, the singing storyteller from Lake Wobegon is calling it quits.

And, Keillor told reporters Sunday, the show is going out on top.

"I really think that we've begun a wonderful series of shows that in some way is made more wonderful by the fact that there's an end to it. There's a beginning and an end," said Keillor, who will broadcast his last program from the World Theater in St. Paul on June 13.

"And it is a series of shows that will not be complicated by our attempts to sustain it beyond. I don't think you'll see signs in this television series of our trying to manipulate the audience, to hold them on into the future, and reaching for guest stars, reaching for tricks, trying to find devices."

Keillor, 44, announced on his Feb. 14 program that he was ending the nationally broadcast live radio show to "resume the life of a shy person." The announcement came as a surprise, since the cable Disney Channel recently had agreed to televise the season's last 17 episodes on a tape-delay basis.

Keillor, who at nearly 6-foot-4 bills himself as the world's tallest humorist, said he already had decided to end the 13-year show before he signed the contract with Disney.

"I wouldn't do it (television) if I didn't have an end date because I think the fear of failure is so great," he said. "The thought of cancellation after 13 shows would be almost unbearable. And having done this show on radio for 13 years, I'm not about to be canceled."

The Disney Channel broadcast its first installment of Keillor's show on March 7. The pay television service, a subsidiary of The Walt Disney Co., is broadcasting 90 minutes of the two-hour Saturday show, which is produced by Minnesota Public Radio and distributed by American Public Radio to 278 affiliates.

Garrison Keillor