

# Garrison Keillor speaks at Gettysburg commencement

By T.W. BURGER  
News Editor

As commencement speaker at Gettysburg College Sunday, humorist and best-selling author Garrison Keillor recalled his own graduation from the University of Minnesota.

Nearly 4,500 persons alternately sat spellbound and rocked with laughter as "America's tallest radio humorist" spoke at the college's 152nd commencement after receiving an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from the institution.

"I sat about where you are and watched a candidate for summa cum laude walk up the stairs to be recognized, and step on the inside hem of his gown, and walk all the way up the inside of it," he said. "It was something

that we all remembered, and thought of as an object lesson in how talent and intelligence might fare in this world."

Keillor added that what was a solemn occasion for the graduates was a humorous occasion for him.

"I have arrived at the humorous age at which my friends and the people I went around with in Lake Wobegon are now old enough to have children your age graduating from college. People whom I saw in their youthful and reckless moments are now looking at the backs of your heads as you get set to commence."

Keillor was born in Anoka, Minnesota in 1929, and grew up there. He graduated from the University of Minnesota, where he studied English and began his radio career at the student



GARRISON KEILLOR  
Times photo by T.W. Burger

station.

In the summer of 1968, he became the host of an early morning program at KSJR-FM in Collegeville—the studio in the oats. "On this show, which he continued to do until 1982, he first began to talk about Lake Wobegon, the mythical Minnesota town featured in his radio monologues.

A Prairie Home Companion, produced by Minnesota Public Radio, has won numerous accolades, including a George Foster Peabody Award, one of the industry's highest honors. Keillor himself has received the Edward R. Murrow Award in 1985.

The humorist announced in February that he would quit doing the show at the end of this season and move to Denmark with his new wife and resume the life of "a shy person and writer." The final broadcast of "Prairie Home Companion" will air on June 13.

Keillor will remain on the board of advisors for The Gettysburg Review, a literary quarterly the college will publish beginning in January of next year. The editor of the journal, Gettysburg English professor Peter Stitt is a long-time friend of Keillor's.

"Peter Stitt is a good friend of mine and he asked me to accept the engagement," Keillor said. "I owed him three letters, so I said I'd accept."

"Today, I would like to speak in behalf of your parents," Keillor said. "If I may—and I will. When I saw how much tuition was here, I think they're entitled to it."

"It's a great surprise and great privilege in life to know people whom you've known since before they've existed, back when they were theoretic, and even before that. To have known their parents when their parents were contemplating having children with someone else. Ponder that for a moment," Keillor quipped. "Some of us were around when you were just sort of a notion late one night."

"It's a privilege to see you grow up and to come along."

"If this were not commencement day at Gettysburg College, but visiting day at the state prison, and we were here to bring you fruit and magazines, we would still be proud of you. But we're grateful for the difference."

"The humorist said that every parent contemplates the idea that his or her child might end up behind bars, but not, he said, because of a lack of faith in the child, but in themselves as parents."

"Being a parent is nothing you'll ever feel confident or secure about. We wanted to bring you up with information about sex that we never had. Our parents only told us that if we listened to rock and roll, we would have babies."

"They were right, and you're them."

Keillor said that having children is a process of growth, beginning with the initial arrogance of creating something "exactly like you are" and then watching with horror and then relief as the child indeed, does begin to seem like its parent, and grows towards a independence and a sense of self.

"We are awfully proud to see you here, in some ways relieved that you didn't have to live our lives all over again... To see you taking steps toward independence and to walk through that door, which you have to do, so that you can forgive us, and then walk back in sometime and something else will happen. We can be friends of some sort."

(See KEILLOR on page 2)

## NewsWatch

### 10-year-old skateboarder struck and killed Saturday

**HAMILTON TOWNSHIP** — A 10-year-old Fairfield boy was fatally injured Saturday evening in an auto-pedestrian accident on Route 116 just east of the borough.

Hamilton Township Police said an Adams County Deputy Coroner pronounced Tony Hoffman, 4177 Fairfield Road, dead at The Gettysburg Hospital about 6:50 p.m. The cause of death was listed as massive head and neck injuries.

According to the police report, the mishap occurred around 5:58 p.m. near the intersection of Route 116 and Bullfrog Road. Police said a late model Oldsmobile Cutlass, operated by Dorothy L. Miller, 74 Bridlewood Way, York, was eastbound on Route 116 but on the west berm of the roadway when it came in contact with the boy.

Route 116 was blocked off and traffic detoured for about two hours as police sought to gather all facts in the case. However, investigators said there are still some questions that remain unanswered.

The woman said the youth was riding a skateboard in the eastbound lane when the incident began. She said she veered into the westbound lane, as if passing another eastbound car, to avoid the boy.

Miller said the boy then swerved into the westbound lane. She told police of her efforts to pull the car further over on the west side of the road to avoid the boy, but he continued to ride to the west berm where the impact occurred.

Investigators said information is still being sought, and possible charges against Miller are pending after an investigation and interview with the Adams County District Attorney.

### Sen. Paul Simon joins scrambled Democratic field

**CARBONDALE, Ill. (AP)** — Illinois Sen. Paul Simon today officially joins a newly scrambled Democratic presidential field, saying his low-life image is right for voters tired of candidates "sleekly packaged like some new soft drink."

Simon, 56, returned to southern Illinois near his home town of Makanda for the formal announcement of his candidacy, and said he was buoyed by polls showing he's gained strength since front-runner Gary Hart dropped from the race.

Simon said he had no intention of changing a political style that's been successful, and he said voters are ready for an unconventional candidate.

After his formal announcement at Southern Illinois University, Simon was to fly to Iowa for a series of campaign stops.

In his announcement, Simon harkened back to traditional Democratic themes, while aides noted that Hart's departure from the field has scrambled the race, leaving it without a clear front-runner.

"I stand here as one who is not running away from the Democratic tradition of caring and daring and dreaming," Simon said. "I do not join those who want the Democratic Party to forget its heritage in order to become more acceptable to the wealthy and powerful."

Simon joins a Democratic presidential field that includes Missouri Rep. Richard Gephardt, Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis and former Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt as formally announced candidates. Rev. Jesse Jackson, Delaware Sen. Joseph Biden and Tennessee Sen. Albert Gore are expected to join the field by summer.

## Inside

Classified	15-18	Lottery	3
Comics	19	Our Times	6-7
Deaths	2	Sports	9-12
Letters to the Editor	4	Weather	2

MERVIN L. DUBS for District Justice. Paid for by candidate. (Adv.)

You've got a friend in Hanover, Wm. Y. Nail, Jr. Vote Rep. 23-B, Dem. 22-A. Paid for by candidate. (Adv.)

SHERRI L. FROOK, 319 Goldenville Road,

# Keillor

(From page 1)

Saying that he and the graduates parents were a few years early for the "love generation,":

"We were more practical," he said. "I'm proud of my generation, which seems to me to have been brave and loud and funny. And most of all, we're proud of having produced you. We have high hopes for you. Speaking in behalf of your parents, I want to tell you how much we love all of you.

"God bless you," he concluded. "God bless you as much as he blessed us when he sent you along. And now go, and do good."

Three others received honorary degrees from Gettysburg College at the commencement ceremonies: Elissa L. Fisher, a 1957 Gettysburg grad and founder and director of Hill Top Preparatory School, received an honorary Doctor of Pedagogy degree for her work with the learning disabled;

W. Kent Gilbert, Class of '41, received the Doctor of Humane Letters for his work as an author and executive with the Lutheran Church in America;

Edward G. Gardner, Chairman of the Board of Soft Sheen Products, received an honorary Doctor of Commercial Science degree for his humanitarian work.

Gettysburg College is a four-year, liberal arts college chartered in 1832. It is the first Lutheran-related college established in the US.

The college boasts a 200-acre campus and 44 buildings, and seeks to limit its enrollment to 1,850 students, with an equal proportion of men and women.

And that, as Garrison Keillor might say, is all the news from Gettysburg College, where all the women are strong, all the men are good looking, and all the students are above average.

## *Littlestown woman misses rabbit*