

Keillor is to sing national anthem at opening ceremony

By Cliff Haas
Staff Correspondent

Atlanta, Ga.
Former Minnesota radio personality Garrison Keillor has been tapped to sing the national anthem Monday when the Democrats convene their presidential nominating convention.

Keillor, the bard of Lake Wobegon, has dabbled in Democratic politics before by being host to a fund-raiser in New York — his current home — for Attorney General Hubert Humphrey III's Senate campaign.

Minnesotans' reputation for thriftiness apparently has reached Georgia. The suburban Atlanta hotel housing the Minnesota delegation to the convention has slapped an 8 percent surcharge on its room rates to compensate the staff for what one employee said were expected to be below-average tips.

Make no mistake, this convention is above all a television production.

The Hollywood production team that designed the 200-foot wide, three-tier podium for the convention hall shunned red, white and blue for pastel versions of those colors that look better on television.

In addition, convention planners have sought a future-oriented atmosphere. Thus, traditional items such as cardboard signs will be gone and the traditional balloon drop is being replaced with mylar confetti, which produces a better effect on television.

Special lighting effects are being orchestrated by technicians who handled the rock group Van Halen's "Monsters of Rock" tour.

Computers have been installed to tally votes quickly. However, there will be an old-fashioned call of the states when it comes time to nominate Massachusetts Gov. Michael Dukakis.

Convention notebook

Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, may be in a no-lose situation. Dukakis has chosen Bentsen to be his running mate, but Bentsen also is a candidate for reelection to the Senate.

Under a Texas law first used to accommodate John Nance Garner, a speaker of the House who was Franklin Roosevelt's running mate in 1932, Bentsen can run both for vice president and his Senate seat. Lyndon Johnson, John F. Kennedy's running mate in 1960, won both races that year and went on to become the first president from Texas.

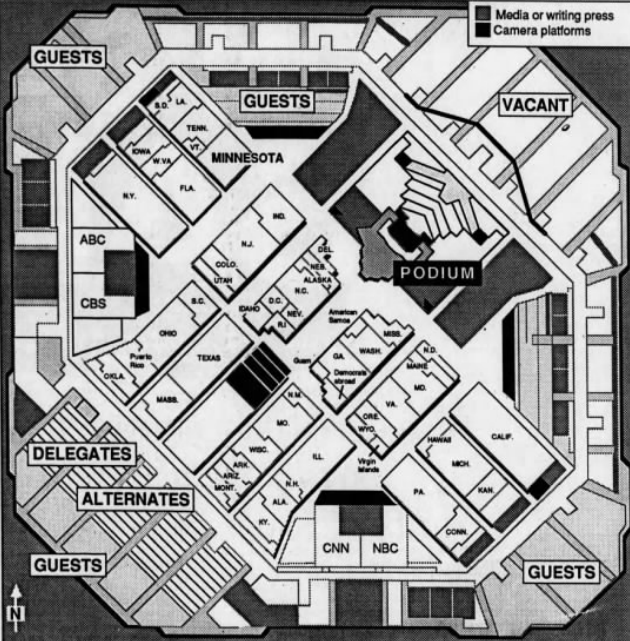
Being on the ballot as a Senate candidate will allow Bentsen to use money raised for the Senate campaign to help with the presidential campaign, which is financed with federal funds.

If elected, Bentsen will not be the first vice president in his family. Bentsen's great-great uncle, Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, a Republican senator, was elected the 18th vice president in 1872 on the ticket headed by Ulysses S. Grant.

Two public officials from Minnesota who joined the Dukakis campaign in its early stages are playing bit parts at the convention. St. Paul Mayor George Latimer will take the podium on the opening day to introduce the mayor of the host city, Andrew Young. And Minnesota Agriculture Commissioner Jim Nichols, as co-chair of the National Rural Caucus, will be a featured speaker at a "Bush-

Democratic Convention Floor/Omni Arena

Delegates: 4,651 Alternates: 722 Seating capacity: 11,000



Busters" rally tomorrow afternoon.

Both officials have been rumored to be candidates for Cabinet posts. Latimer for Housing and Urban Development and Nichols for Agriculture, if Dukakis wins the election.

A New York Times survey released Saturday indicates that delegates to the convention are more liberal, wealthier and better educated than the Democratic voters who sent them

to Atlanta and the U.S. public in general. The Times interviewed 1,059 of 4,203 delegates from June 20 to July 12.

A gift shop near the convention hall is stocked with all sorts of Democratic souvenirs. A clerk confided that prices would go up yesterday, when many delegates began arriving in Atlanta.

Proponents of recycling will be using convention garbage to prove their point.

Discarded newspapers, decorations and other paper refuse will be collected Monday, the first day of the convention, and hauled to a nearby recycling plant, where it will be made into poster paper for printing 30,000 commemorative posters featuring a Georgia peach. The posters will be distributed on Thursday, the last day of the convention.