

Keillor show delayed as price goes up

By Robert Bianco

The Pittsburgh Press

Things aren't particularly companionable these days between Garrison Keillor and the public radio stations waiting for his new show, "The American Radio Company of the Air."

"ARC," Keillor's American Public Radio successor to "Prairie Home Companion," was supposed to premiere Sept. 30. Now the debut has been pushed back to Nov. 25 while Keillor looks for a New York theater, which is bad news for those stations that planned their fall schedule around "ARC's" debut.

Even worse, says WQED-FM spokeswoman Marlene Parrish, American Public Radio has quadrupled the price of the program. For WQED, the cost has gone from \$3,600 a year to \$16,400.

The new series will be a combination of 28 "PHC" episodes and 24 live "ARC" episodes; the price increase applies to old and new shows alike. Because of the delay in production, the scheduling will

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be a patchwork of old and new shows, something else the stations hadn't anticipated.

"Programming for stations around the country was based on the good faith belief that it would be delivered on schedule and at an affordable price," Ms. Parrish says, and APR is not living up to its part of the bargain. She's also afraid a change in tone may result from moving the show to New York, but she can't tell for sure because no pilot has been produced.

Don't panic, Keillor fans, you'll still get the show. Ms. Parrish says WQED is "committed to Garrison, and we will carry him. The support has always been there."

You can't blame the station, however, if they don't sound overwhelmingly supportive.

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WPTT "PLAZMA" — Shades of "Chiller Theater!" WPTT will pre-



Garrison Keillor
Seeking New York venue

miere as a yet untitled, locally hosted Saturday night horror movie series in October.

The series, which will run Saturdays at midnight, will be

launched Halloween weekend with "Night of the Living Dead." It will be hosted by Cathy Lash, who will play "Plazma."

No, "Plazma" doesn't have quite the ring of "Chilly Billy Cardilly," but then, what does?

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ACCESS NEWS — Pittsburgh Community Television, public access Channel 21 on Pittsburgh Cable, has sent a crew to the Soviet Union to produce four hour-long documentaries on our "sister city" Donetsk. The four programs, which will feature interviews with Soviet steelworkers and miners, have not yet been scheduled.

Ah, but football has been. You thought every available football game in the United States was already televised, but you were wrong. Starting Sept. 12, PCTV will air Indiana University of Pennsylvania football games. The 11 games will run each Tuesday for 11 weeks (makes sense, when you think about it), with more games coming when the NCAA playoffs begin.

(Robert Bianco is The Pittsburgh Press TV-Radio editor.)