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Keillor looks East for permanent home

Burlington hosts show in Dec.

The Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Garrison Keillor's touring American Radio Company show is looking for a permanent home — possibly in New England, far from his prairie home, and he'll be sampling Vermont during a visit in December.

"I think the show needs to settle," Keillor said as he rehearsed for Saturday night's third-season opening broadcast from the World Theater in St. Paul, Minn. The theater was the permanent home for "A Prairie Home Companion," Keillor's live public radio variety show that ended in 1987 after 13 years.

"The show has to plant itself somewhere. We just need to find a home," said Keillor, a native Minnesotan.

The American Radio Company show has been broadcasting weekly from New York City and on the road. Three programs in December will be broadcast from Burlington.

Keillor said New England beckons as a potential permanent home because "it's always been a good area for the show and for folk music."

Keillor, who grew up in nearby Anoka, did not rule out St. Paul as a future permanent home for American Radio Company. But, he said, "I haven't talked to anybody about it."

"People are not supposed to go back," he said.

In an interview published in January by Minneapolis-St. Paul magazine, Keillor said he left Minnesota in 1987 because local media published stories that

he considered malicious. Besides stories about the breakup of his relationship with Margaret Moos, producer of "A Prairie Home Companion," Keillor objected to a newspaper story announcing that he had bought a house in St. Paul, giving its address and cost.

But the January magazine article also described Keillor as homesick and quoted him as saying it's "not right" that he's living outside his home state.

Keillor said Saturday that touring is tiring him and that the Brooklyn Academy of Music hasn't proved the best place from which to broadcast. The show's audience in that region comes mainly from Connecticut, New Jersey and Westchester County in New York. That audience is "afraid" of traveling to Brooklyn, Keillor said.

Still, New York City has been a great place for the author of the 1985 best-selling book "Lake Wobegon Days" to live and write. Besides writing for radio, he has written his first novel, "WLT: A Radio Romance," which is to be published next month, has begun a second novel and is working on a collection of short stories, he said.

In addition to finding a permanent home for his show, Keillor, 49, is hoping to get a job teaching writing at the college level.

"It's a natural thing for a writer to do when he gets older," he said.



Garrison Keillor