

'Prairie' at Tanglewood unveils guest star lineup

LENOX — Minnesota Public Radio's "A Prairie Home Companion," with host Garrison Keillor, will broadcast live from Tanglewood's Koussevitzky Music Shed this Saturday as part of the program's 25th anniversary tour.

The show's entire company will make the trip to Tanglewood to transmit the show to radio audiences across the globe, reaching nearly 2.8 million American listeners on over 485 public radio stations. The program will run from 6 to 8, with an audience warm-up beginning at 5:45.

Performers for the Tanglewood broadcast include pianist Emanuel Ax and the Berkshire-based Shaker choral group Norumbega Harmony, as well as "A Prairie Home Companion" actors Sue Scott and Tim Russell, the man of many voices. Sound-effects specialist Tom Keith — a regular on the show since it began in 1974 — will also join Keillor on stage.

"A Prairie Home Companion's" house band, The Guy's All-Star Shoe Band, will set the show to music. And in addition to special guests, a highlight of the show will be Keillor's signature monologue, "The News From Lake Wobegon," an update from the little town that time forgot, where "all the women are strong, all the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average."

The Berkshire Highlanders Pipe Band will perform for the audience as well. Berkshire Highlanders band members range in age from 11 to 82. They wear the Greylock tartan which is registered in Scotland and is worn exclusively by the Berkshire Highlanders. The band is composed of pipes, snare drums, tenor drums and bass drum. The entire band is under the direction of the Drum Major, Mary Shea Knight, and the Pipe Major, Allen Forsythe.

Instruction is given by Nancy Tunnicliffe, professional piper of Lanesboro and Randy Sperl, drummer of Red Hook, N.Y. Rehearsals are open to the public every Wednesday from 7 to 9 outdoors at West and Center Street, Pittsfield, or inside at South Congregational Church, South Street, Pittsfield. Information: 447-7050.

Lawn tickets for this Saturday's "Prairie Home Companion" event remain available; the Shed is sold out.

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