



Poet shares work on stage with Keillor

By Margie Cady
Winona Daily News

After writing poetry for a quarter century, Orval Lund is thrilled about appearing with writer and broadcaster Garrison Keillor at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 23 in St. Paul.

"I am really delighted, and feel very honored to be reading with Garrison Keillor," said Lund, a recently retired Winona State University English professor.

Keillor, Lund and three other Minnesota poets will perform at the Fitzgerald Theater to celebrate Keillor's new book, "Good Poems." Keillor compiled his poems from selections he made for his National Public Radio show, "The Writer's Almanac."

Lund is expected to read a poem from his book, "Casting Lines," he said. He has met Keillor on several occasions.

Lund said Keillor has done an excellent job of promoting Minnesota poetry. He described Keillor's work as "accessible," making it easy to comprehend.

"I myself try to write poetry that is accessible," Lund said. "It's poetry that I think you can take fairly well on hearing it the first time."

Lund has performed many readings, but said he's never done anything at the level of the Oct. 23 appearance.

In addition to Keillor, Lund will read with poets Tom Hennen, Louis Jenkins and Joyce Sutphen.

Lund described the performers as image-based poets. It's a style that uses sensory details to present an experience, he said.

Lund's poetry subjects include families and nature. He grew up in Lancaster, Minn., a small farming community in northwest Minnesota. His roots gave him a real fondness for nature.

"Almost everything I write is based on my own experience," Lund said.

Some of Lund's poems include a character name Swede, a creation

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Eric Young of the Winona Daily News

Local poet and retired WSU English professor Orval Lund will read poems with other Minnesota poets.

■ Poet

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that shares many of his own characteristics. Lund said he and Swede are both "lapsed Lutherans," and share a Swedish heritage.

But Lund also lives vicariously through his character. "One of the fun things is Swede can do things I'll never do," Lund said. Climbing Mount Everest, for example.

Lund, 62, said he wrote his first poem when he was a high

school sophomore.

But he didn't take writing seriously until he was in his 30s. His poetic achievements include a stay at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks as a visiting writer.

Although he's read his work in places such as St. Louis and Japan, most of his readings have taken place in Minnesota.

Lund began teaching at WSU in 1968. He said he hopes to get more time to write in retirement.