

A change for the better

IF YOU GO

Who: Garrison Keillor

What: Storytelling and comedy from the host of NPR's 'A Prairie Home Companion.'

Where: F.M. Kirby Center, Public Square, Wilkes-Barre

When: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday

Tickets: \$55, \$40. Call 826-1100 or access kirbycenter.org.

By CHRIS HEWITT
Knight Ridder Newspapers

ST. PAUL, Minn. — The "A Prairie Home Companion" movie that filmed in St. Paul concerns the end of the radio show. The real show is not ending, but creator/writer/star Garrison Keillor says there may be some changes coming to Lake Wobegon.

"When you do something for a long time, as I have, it becomes difficult to keep yourself in trim," says Keillor, who has been doing the radio show for 31 years and who plays a version of himself,

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Garrison Keillor

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known as G.K., in the movie. "You become slack, but this has been very inspiring. It makes a person resolve to do better when the radio show starts up again in the fall."

The radio show hit the road again for the first couple of weeks in August and began St. Paul

performances with a State Fair show Sept. 2. It arrives at Wilkes-Barre's F.M. Kirby Center on Tuesday.

The "Prairie Home" of the movie is not the same as the radio show. Keillor says it's darker and was influenced by collaborating with the actors (includ-

ing Meryl Streep, Lindsay Lohan, Virginia Madsen and Kevin Kline) and director Robert Altman.

Madsen, a big fan of "Prairie Home" and specifically of gumshoe Guy Noir, is relieved to hear Keillor has no plans to say goodbye to the radio program.

"I had the impression that maybe Garrison was writing this screenplay as a farewell to the show, because he doesn't like to say goodbye," Madsen says. "But now I've heard him say that that is not the case and, in fact, he has

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THE GUIDE, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2005



If you enjoy 'A Prairie Home Companion,' circle Nov. 8 on your calendar. That's the date Garrison Keillor will bring his wit and humor to the Kirby Center.

KEILLOR

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a lot of plans for the show."

Keillor isn't offering specifics on what those plans may be, but his colleagues on the movie set had a variety of takes on the radio show. Maya Rudolph, the "Saturday Night Live" regular who plays a fictional stage manager in the movie, says, "I had never heard it, but I can get by on the fact that I hadn't heard it because it's on Saturday nights and I'm busy Saturday nights."

And veteran character actor L.Q. Jones, who had never even heard of "Prairie Home" until he was asked to be a singer in the movie, says, "I was telling Garrison that — let's see, how do I say this without sounding officious? — I was saying that the show is not a knee-slapper, but it's warm and comfortable like a

quilt."

Will it be less warm and comfortable this fall? Who knows, but Keillor sounds like he's interested in being a little less comfortable.

"This is really good for us, to see this way of working," he says referring to the way the movie brings together a disparate group of artists to create something together. "On our show, we're in a weird position of doing a show that doesn't exactly have direct competition. I can't name other shows that do the same thing, so we operate without the benefit of competition."

The danger of that, Keillor says, "is that we're this little, quiet pond, undisturbed. Sort of like a museum piece. Except we don't want to be a museum piece. Listening to the radio is not a normal thing. We have to get millions of people to do something that is not normal. So we have to continue to work to deserve the attention of the millions of people who listen."

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