

# Garrison Keillor

## holds conversation at Van Wezel

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If he isn't careful, Garrison Keillor could become a national treasure. He might be already.

America's favorite everyman, Keillor right now is a pretty hot commodity.

Maverick director Robert Altman recently completed a film about Keillor's legendary public radio program, "A Prairie Home Companion."

Keillor wrote the screenplay about — what else? — a fictional Midwestern radio show. In the movie, he plays himself, starring alongside some of America's acting elite — Meryl Streep, Kevin Kline, Lily Tomlin and Tommy Lee Jones.

And, Keillor's newly minted syndicated column and his 2003 novel, "Love Me," peg him as one of the great humorists of his time.

Not bad for a Midwestern middle-aged radio host.

Keillor will be engaging audiences in a "conversation" at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall Monday night.

An accomplished essayist and novelist, Keillor, 63, is best-known as the host of "A Prairie Home Companion," the radio program set in fictional Lake Wobegon that began airing in 1974.

More than 3 million listeners hear the show each week, broadcast by Minnesota Public Radio from the Fitzgerald Theater in St. Paul. The program is looking for a new home, and, according to the Associated Press, Keillor said the 2006-07 season for the show is "an utter blank."

The Altman movie was filmed at the Fitzgerald Theater. It stars Woody Harrelson and John C. Reilly as singing cowboys.

The author of 12 books and a Grammy Award winner, Keillor was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame at Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communications in 1994.

A sample of Keillor's humor from the Internet Movie Data Base: "I believe in looking reality straight in the eye and denying it."

"Garrison Keillor: Lake Wobegon Days," 8 p.m. Monday at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, 777 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. Tickets:

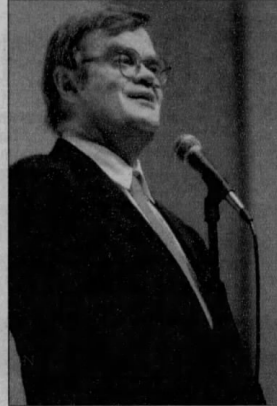


PHOTO PROVIDED

Garrison Keillor brings his tales from Lake Wobegon to the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center at 8 p.m. Monday.

\$40-\$50. Information: 953-3368.

### 'Merry Chriskwansanukah'

The playfully nutty Shana Banana returns to the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center with her own unique musical take on the holiday season, a show called "Merry Chriskwansanukah."

Banana leaves no holiday stone unturned in this multi-ethnic tribute to the winter holidays — Christmas, Kwanzaa and Hanukkah.

The message is that all three holidays have shared traditions of giving, love, food and cultural appreciation.

"Merry Chriskwansanukah" plays at 10 a.m. and noon Saturday at the TECO Theater, Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center, 1010 N. MacInnes Place, Tampa. Tickets: \$6.50. Information: (813) 229-7827 or [www.tbpac.org](http://www.tbpac.org).

### 'Annie'

"Annie," the Tony-Award-winning Broadway show, is coming to the

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Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center for a one-week engagement, just in time for the holidays.

Starring Conrad John Schuck as Daddy Warbucks, Mackenzie Phillips as Lily St. Regis and Marissa O'Donnell in the title role, "Annie" is the classic tale of Little Orphan Annie and her "never-give-up" attitude.

The musical features the songs from the original score by Martin Charnin and Charles Strouse, including "Tomorrow," "It's the Hard-Knock Life" and "Easy Street," and a newly penned tune, "Why Should I Change a Thing?"

*"Annie" plays Tuesday through Dec. 18 at Carol Mor-sani Hall, Tampa Bay Per-forming Arts Center, 1010 N. MacInnes Place, Tampa. Tick-ets: \$31.50-\$67.50. Information: (813) 229-7827 or [www.tbpac.org](http://www.tbpac.org).*