

Humorist weaves a tale of Wobegon

BY PAM HARBAUGH
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MELBOURNE — Garrison Keillor, the well-known radio personality and host of "A Prairie Home Companion," made a stop in Brevard County on Tuesday to deliver his brand of folksy humor and Minnesota insight to a sold-out crowd at the King Center.

Dressed in his trademark low-key apparel — black suit, red tie, red socks and red shoes — the tall, lanky Keillor stepped to the microphone, sang two songs and began a long monologue about the imagined village of his youth.

Lake Wobegon is the fictional area about which Keillor weaves homespun tales laced with humor, poignancy and simple lessons.

Rather than traveling with his retinue of musicians, actors and a sound effects person, all of whom perform on the weekly NPR radio show, "A Prairie Home Companion," Keillor was a one-man show at the King Center.

"I was brought up by dark Lutherans, where nature tried to kill you in January and February," he said, referring to his home state, Minnesota.

The performance brought out Keillor fans in droves.



Garrison Keillor, host of "A Prairie Home Companion," entertained a sold-out King Center audience.

"I grew in up in Minnesota and went to Lutheran potluck dinners," said a Keillor fan from Satellite Beach, Nancy Rehwoldt. "There's no question we've got to be (at the show.)"

"Uff da," she added, using a Minnesota expression. "That's what they say in Minnesota, dontcha know."

The show ran about 45 minutes long.

After the performance, Steve Janicki, executive director of the King Center, revealed he is in negotiations with Keillor to do a broadcast of "A Prairie Home Companion" from the Melbourne auditorium. "I think it would be a great thing for the community for such a renowned artist of Mr. Keillor's stature to do a show from the King Center," Janicki said.

The King Center staff tried for more than two years to book Keillor. Tickets to his show sold out within a day. ■

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