



Garrison Keillor will appear at Books & Co. at The Greene in Beavercreek on Oct. 1. Associated Press photo by Ann Heisenfelt

Our Prairie Home companion

Garrison Keillor set for another visit to Miami Valley

By Laura Dempsey
Staff Writer

BEAVERCREEK — Garrison Keillor, one of the most recognizable faces in radio, will be stepping up to the Books & Co. microphone at 7 p.m. Oct. 1, where his equally notable voice will read from his latest novel, "Pontoon: A Novel of Lake Wobegon."

Keillor, well known to public radio listeners for his "Prairie Home Companion" variety show, owns a rich, singular baritone voice that's won him a Grammy in the Spoken Word category. His tales of the fictional Lake Wobegon are "Prairie Home" staples; his books about the town, "Lake Wobegon Days,"

"Wobegon Boy," "Lake Wobegon Summer 1956" and now "Pontoon" extend the stories of the town, where all the men are strong, all the women good-looking and all the children above-average.

Keillor knows Dayton pretty well for a Minnesota boy: In 1997, he stopped by in support of "Wobegon Boy;" in 1998, Keillor and the Hopeful Gospel Quartet performed at Kettering's Frazee Pavilion; in June of 2002, he broadcast his radio show live from Frazee Pavilion and in October, he came back to hawk "Good Poems."

All his book-tour stops have been at Books & Co.'s Town & Country location, but this time he'll be stationed at Books & Co. at The Greene

in Beavercreek, according to Sharon Kelly Roth, the store's director of public relations, who met Keillor 17 years ago.

"We won him in a contest back in 1990," she recalled. "(Books & Co.) did a display of his book for a national contest, and he was the prize."

"We had about 1,500 people in — it was a great crowd — and he signed everybody's book. He didn't leave — he didn't sit down! — from about 5 o'clock to after midnight. I got him back to his hotel at about 3 a.m. When you stand in front of him, he's yours for a while. He cemented himself in the hearts of Dayton that night."

Roth said there will

more than likely be a party planned around Keillor's October appearance.

"It'll be close to our first anniversary at the new store," she said. "It will be fun."

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