

# From prairie to Flagstaff, again

Garrison Keillor and his live radio show come to town Saturday.

By BETSEY BRUNER  
Arts & Culture Editor

He was a big hit last August, and by the strong ticket sales this spring, the appearance Saturday of Garrison Keillor and his "Prairie Home Companion" show will be a huge success again.

Since 1974, Keillor, radio host of the popular and quirky variety program, has been entertaining listeners of public radio stations across the nation.

Some 4 million people listen each week to the long-running show on nearly 600 public radio stations in the U.S.

Only lawn seating remains for the upcoming performance at Pine Mountain Amphitheatre in Fort Tuthill County Park.

#### KNAU TO BENEFIT

This show is a fundraising event to benefit KNAU and Arizona Public Radio, and is sponsored by Lowell Observatory and NAU, said



GARRISON KEILLOR, host of "A Prairie Home Companion," presents his show at the Pine Mountain Amphitheatre last year to a sold-out crowd. (Alexis Ward/Arizona Daily Sun, file)

John Stark, general manager at KNAU.

"He's going to be making jokes about Flagstaff and Arizona, and it's going to be broadcast nationwide, from Schenectady, N.Y., to Thermopolis, Wyo., and points beyond," he said.

Stark said he sat in the front row last summer at the show.

"Garrison Keillor and crew

has such a wonderful time in Flagstaff, they asked to come back and do the show live for the nationwide audience," he said.

In addition to being the host and writer of "A Prairie Home Companion" and "The Writer's Almanac," both heard on public radio stations across the country, Keillor is the author of more than a dozen books, including "Lake

#### IF YOU GO ...

**WHAT:** "A Prairie Home Companion" live national broadcast with The Wranglers with Jimmie Dale Gilmore

**WHEN:** Saturday, June 4; show start 2:45 p.m.

**WHERE:** Pine Mountain Amphitheatre, Fort Tuthill County Park

**TICKETS:** Lawn seating only remaining and selling fast

**INFO:** Visit [www.knau.org](http://www.knau.org) for ticket information

Wobegon Days" and "Home-grown Democrat."

#### TEXAN TO PLAY

Jimmy Dale Gilmore and The Wranglers are guest performers for the show here.

Gilmore is a native of the Texas Panhandle.

His music is a rich blend of traditional country, folk, blues and rock styles, and his lyrics reflect both his philosophical interests and his inherent down-home nature.

See PRAIRIE B2

#### Comments from Keillor on boycott of Arizona show

Posted to the KNAU website May 26:

"Suddenly one night last week, there was a tidal wave of e-mails urging us to cancel the June 4 broadcast in Flagstaff in line with a boycott of Arizona - I hadn't been aware of any boycott, but evidently there is one - by people opposed to the new state law authorizing state troopers to stop the cars of people who appear to be Mexican and asking to see their papers.

The suddenness of the onslaught of mail from people who were "shocked" or "horrified" or "outraged" by the idea of "A Prairie Home Companion" going to Flagstaff suggested an organized campaign and many of the letters seemed to have been copied from a form. None of them tried to argue that our cancellation would actually affect real people in some positive way; mostly, they were just plain angry righteous letters.

I questioned our decision to do a show in Flagstaff months ago, the day after Congresswoman Giffords was shot in the parking lot in Tucson, and I spoke to our friends in public radio in Flagstaff and, while they completely understood my concerns, they argued that Flagstaff is a hotbed of moderation, a college town, a very different place. Cancellation of the show would hurt the Flagstaff station financially. It would be a slap in the face. And I think that now is no time for public radio to retreat in the face of extremism. And the Flagstaff station is a loyal friend. So we're going to go.

The law in question strikes me as reminiscent of the old East Germany, but at the moment, it is making its way through the courts and isn't affecting anybody."

- For more of his comments, visit the KNAU website.

## PRAIRIE

from Page B1

His warbling tenor voice is warm and folksy.

Since moving to Austin and reviving his career in the 1980s, Gilmore has in many ways come to represent the current Austin music scene, with

its rootsy mix of country, rock and folk music (www.jimmiegilmore.com).

### NO BOYCOTT HERE

Keillor said he will be coming to Flagstaff despite many e-mails he received recently urging him to boycott Arizona because of the controversial SB1070 immigration bill (see sidebar).

Keillor was born in Anoka, Minn., in 1942 and graduated from the University of Minnesota.

He lives in St. Paul, Minn., with his wife and daughter. He has two grandsons.

He is a member of the American Academy of Arts & Letters and the



**A CROWD GATHERS** at the Pine Mountain Amphitheatre to watch Garrison Keillor and his show, "A Prairie Home Companion," last summer. (Alexis Ward/Arizona Daily Sun, file)

Episcopal church.

Keillor and his cast and crew will be moving on to broadcast June 11 from a winery in Seattle after

their appearance here.

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# Feb 5

Things to do this week

**ZUNI FESTIVAL OF ARTS & CULTURE:** Today, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. The Ashwi or Zuni people share Zuni language, lifeways, traditional music, and dances. \$7 adults, \$6