

Musician answers door to find 'terribly lost' Garrison Keillor

By SHARYN JACKSON
sharyn.jackson@startribune.com

Nick Hallett has been listening to Garrison Keillor since he was 8. He never expected to find the radio man himself at his doorstep in the Sonoran Desert.

Hallett, a New York City-based composer, was staying at a dude ranch last week, while in residence at a performing arts center in Wickenburg, Ariz., with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company.

Hallett was having a post-rehearsal drink in a colleague's room Wednesday night when there was a knock on the door.

"It was Mr. Keillor," Hallett wrote on Facebook the next morning. Keillor said he was



Garrison Keillor
New York Times

"terribly lost."

Apparently, Keillor was searching for the main ranch house in the dark, and somehow wound up on the outer edges of the resort.

Hallett and dancer Rena Butler offered to escort Keillor to the lobby, and on the walk, they talked about what they were doing in Wickenburg. Keillor humbly told them, "I stand and I talk."

When they got to the lobby, Keillor thanked them both, and said, "You saved my life."

It turned out Keillor was scheduled to appear at the Del E. Webb Center for the Performing Arts in less than 30 minutes. "Hotel and venue staff were

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searching for him, frantically," Hallett wrote.

Hallett lived in the Twin Cities in the 1990s while he studied linguistics at the University of Minnesota. He's been a fan of "A Prairie Home Companion" since childhood. Meeting Keillor that night was "such an unbelievable situation," he said in an interview.

The next morning, Hallett ran into Keillor once again at breakfast.

"I introduced myself again, asked about his show and reminisced how one of my favorite songs of all time had been written for his radio program in the '90s, and even contains a lyric about Arizona — Tom Lehrer's 'Hanukkah in Santa Monica,'" Hallett wrote.

"We sang through the tune together up to the line 'Those Eastern winters, I can't endure 'em, so every year I pack my



Photo provided

Fan Nick Hallett and Garrison Keillor shared a song the morning after the Minnesota icon turned up at Hallett's door.

gear and stay out here 'til Purim. Rosh Hashanah I spent in Arizona.'"

Hallett added, "He remem-

bered every word."

Sharyn Jackson • 612-673-4853

@SharynJackson