



'Just Passing Through'

Garrison Keillor goes solo

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Although National Public Radio star Garrison Keillor stepped down last summer from the radio variety show he began in 1974, "A Prairie Home Companion," he's not exactly retired. His trademark role as storyteller will continue in other forms, including a solo tour across the country.

Keillor's "Just Passing Through" tour will stop at Rutland's Paramount Theatre Monday and Burlington's Flynn Center for the Performing Arts Feb. 16.

"He tells stories, he sings, he does whatever comes to his mind," Flynn Center Artistic Director Steve MacQueen

said. "He's got a pretty open forum to do what he wants to do."

"People enjoy being spoken to when there doesn't seem to be a script," Keillor told The New York Times last summer.

In 2015, Keillor announced that he was leaving "A Prairie Home Companion," continuing on only as producer. He handpicked his successor, mandolin player and guest host Chris Thile, 35, who joined the show as a teenager and took Keillor's place last October.

Despite Keillor's radio success, he saw himself as a writer first, and his post-"Prairie" life includes columns for The Washington Post, a screenplay

■ GARRISON KEILLOR ON STAGE
Garrison Keillor's "Just Passing Through" tour comes to:

- Monday, Feb. 13: Rutland — \$46-\$66, Paramount Theatre, 30 Center St., 7:30 p.m., 802-775-0903, www.paramountvt.org.
- Thursday, Feb. 16: Burlington — \$25-\$60, Flynn Center, 153 Main St., 7:30 p.m., 802-863-5966, www.flynncenter.org.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF "A PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION"
Garrison Keillor brings his "Just Passing Through" solo tour to Rutland Monday and Burlington Feb. 16.

Keillor

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and a book, in addition to national tours.

In a recent interview with Humanities Magazine, Keillor, 73, explained his decision, saying, "I want to live a new life as a writer, a smaller life, not so many deadlines, the life I imagined when I was young, in which you sit in a room and wrangle sentences and paragraphs, a cup of coffee at hand."

"It takes a lot of money and resources to do 'A Prairie Home Companion' live," MacQueen said. "So he liked to get out and take stages in smaller communities where he could entertain."

The Peoria (Illinois) Star Journal summed up his show, reporting, "His persona of rumpled writer and English major (with) a hint of unconventionality winks at the audience."

Keillor's mix of humor, truth and wisdom traditionally started with his signature introduction, "Well, it's been a quiet week in Lake Wobegon," followed by a meandering monologue, a "homespun stream of consciousness."

Keillor's hallmark voice, which has been described as "a slow drip of Midwestern molasses," a "down-comforter," and has been parodied on "Saturday Night Live," gives his stories much of their flavor. Engaging and warmly familiar, he's been telling us stories for more than 40 years, and he still has more to tell.