

# Storyteller Keillor to stop in Wyoming

Writer, humorist is  
on a solo show tour

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Master storyteller Garrison Keillor is stopping in Wyoming on Friday on a solo show tour.

The writer and humorist is best known for his live radio variety show, "A Prairie Home Companion," which producers say attracts more than 4 million listeners on

more than 600 public radio stations each week.

Keillor announced his retirement from the program last year but offers fans and listeners an opportunity to see him live, according to a news release

from Wyoming Public Radio, which hosts the event in celebration of its 50th anniversary.

"What better way to celebrate our anniversary than with a presentation by a great American icon - Garrison Keillor?" WPM general manager Christina Kuzmych said in the release.

Keillor answered a few questions for the Casper Star-Tribune by email.

## Q&A with Garrison Keillor

**What are some highlights in the show?** I like the part where the audience sings "America." And April is Poetry Month, so I'll do a few love sonnets and a murder ballad. And of course I love talking about the first girl I loved.

**Is there anything you're looking forward to about your stop in Wyoming?** I hope to drive west and feel the vastness of high plains and the Tetons off in the distance. And I wish I'd run into my friend Alan Simpson, but he's off in Cody.

**What's the key to your long working life, which still includes big projects and touring for this show?** I am 74, almost 75, and I don't dare slow down for



Keillor

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## Keillor

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fear I might fall down. Momentum is everything; relaxation is bad for you. I know people who retired because they were sick of all the aggravation and they found out it was the aggravation that kept them alive. We need adversity to keep up our interest. A person should never retire. The world needs old people.

**What was it about radio that sparked and fueled your passion throughout your career?** It was the perfect medium for a writer who wanted to recall the lives of industrious cheerful people of the Midwest. I started out wanting to be a tragic writer and couldn't manage it and got into radio, which puts you in touch with a real audience. Writing without an audience in mind is just talking to yourself and showing off. I loved that moment in my show when I said, "It's been a quiet week in Lake Wobegon" and the audience leaned forward and listened.

**What have you enjoyed so far about semi-retirement, and what are you most looking forward to?** I'm writing a book of limericks and a memoir and a musical and a screenplay and a weekly newspaper column.

I love writing the column. It's 750 words, due on Tuesday morning, and I enjoy fussing with it. I started out writing for my town paper, the Anoka Herald, and now I've finally gotten back to it.

**This question is from a friend who's a fan: What was your inspiration for Dusty and Lefty? Your cowboy skits are hilarious, especially when they involve whiskey and floo-**

## Garrison Keillor in Laramie

**Where:** University of Wyoming Arts & Sciences Auditorium, Laramie

**When:** 7 p.m. April 7; book signing following the show

**Tickets:** at \$45 at <http://bit.ly/2oyudLp>

**Info:** [wyomingpublicmedia.org](http://wyomingpublicmedia.org)

**zies.** Dusty and Lefty were radio cowboys in the tradition of Smiley Burnette and Pat Buttram. Lefty was the singer and Dusty was the skirt-chaser and they lived on hope as they roamed the dusty godforsaken prairie. There was plenty of floozing around and some very accurate spitting and now and then I yodeled. It was a first for public radio.

**Wyoming Public Radio and Minnesota Public Radio are celebrating 50th anniversaries this year. What do you think about those milestones and being a radio icon through many of those years?** Public radio is a real treasure out in big flat places where there's so much solitude. Not every truck driver wants to listen to country music, some of them enjoy hearing a knowledgeable scholar talk for an hour about European colonialism that shaped the Middle East after World War I. Some of them get excited by Beethoven, or Duke Ellington, or the Brandenburg Concerto No. 3, the jazzy one. In New York, public radio is almost an after-thought; in Wyoming, it's essential.

**What are your thoughts about the future of public radio?** It will survive so long as it's useful to people.