

# Keillor Comes to Clowes

Lake Wobegon  
Visits Indy for  
'Prairie' Concert

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**I**NDIANAPOLIS — Devotees of National Public Radio's late, lamented *A Prairie Home Companion* filled Clowes Hall Tuesday night to witness that show's magic first-hand.

Two buses filled with fans from Muncie made the journey, on a trip sponsored by public radio station WBST-FM 92.1.

The trip was part of the 13-city *A Prairie Home Companion Third Annual Farewell Tour* that will end in Los Angeles June 10 with a broadcast on National Public Radio.

Garrison Keillor probably felt more at home in Clowes than he has in New York since he left the show in 1987. (It has been airing in reruns ever since.) He seemed to enjoy being with Midwesterners, and even lingered during the intermission to sing with the audience.

The set was centered on the facade of a two-story Victorian-style clapboard house, intricate down to the gingerbread trim on the porch and the lace curtains.

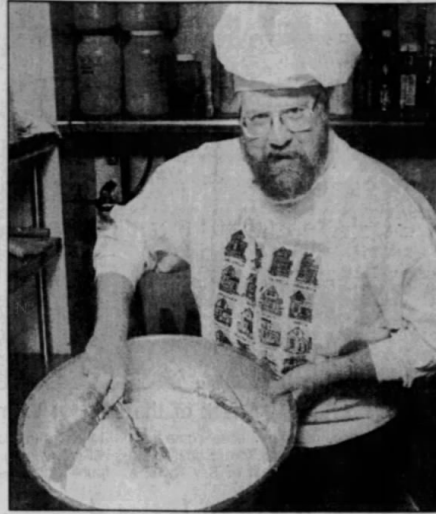
Keillor was joined in the show by old friends, including musicians Robin and Linda Williams, sound-effects guy Tom Keith, pianist Richard Dworsky, drummer Randy Hauser, bass player Molly Mason, Dan Rowles and singer Kate MacKenzie.

Keillor knew immediately how to win his audience's heart, leading the congregation in a rousing chorus of *On the Banks of the Wabash*, then reading a letter from a lady in Indianapolis whose family name was Keillor.

From that, he joined the Hopeful Gospel Quartet (he and Robin, Linda and Kate) for a few gospel tunes, ending with his theme song, *Hello Love*.

Included in the evening were songs like the Carter family's *Will You Miss Me When I'm Gone* and *My Lord, He's Real*, plus a musical parody of TV music collections, *Broadway Bluegrass*, in which Mavis and Marvin Smiley (Robin and Linda) sang bluegrass versions of *Give My Regards to Broadway*, *Shall We Dance* and *Tonight*.

Comedy bits included "What



Star Photo by David Thurston

KIRK ROBEY BAKING POWDERMILK BISCUITS TUESDAY

## Concert Review

It's Like to Be a Shy Person," which Keillor illustrated with a hilarious skit in which the cast members, backs to the audience, were supposedly on an elevator, speaking aloud what people normally think in such a situation.

Keillor and Co. also performed another installment of the long-running radio drama *Buster the Show Dog*, complete with overwrought dramatics and live sound effects, and a "news special" called *There They Were*, "sponsored" by the National Federation of Associations.

Funniest bit of the night was the induction of the audience, en masse, into the mystical and myopic Sons of Knute Lodge, with Keillor, Rowles and Keith as appropriately attired sons.

The second half, of course, was highlighted by Keillor's monologue recounting the latest news from his mythical hometown of Lake Wobegon, Minn. As he began to spin the tale, some people slouched down in their seats to get comfortable. Some even closed their eyes to listen more closely.

Jon and Barb Moll rode in one of the buses from Muncie,

munching on a box lunch that included actual Powdermilk Biscuits, like those "advertised" on Keillor's radio show. (These biscuits, however, were baked Tuesday morning in the Radisson Hotel kitchen by Kirk Robey, director of foreign student programs at Ball State University.)

Jon and Barb both said they enjoyed the show.

"I'm overwhelmed by it," said Jon, a Muncie attorney.

"The diversity of his talent is just incredible," Barb added.

Cliff Johnson, a Muncie city councilman, said: "It was great. I loved it. It's different watching his storytelling."

Betty, his wife, added, "You can see the expression on his face."

*A Prairie Home Companion* aired on NPR for 13 years, broadcast from St. Paul, Minn. Keillor announced May 18 that he would be returning to radio Sept. 30 with *Garrison Keillor's American Radio Company of the Air*, a weekly series somewhat akin to *APHC*.

Lake Wobegon will be a part of the show, as will some of the town's characters.

The show, to be broadcast live at 6 p.m. Saturdays, will have an initial run of 12 episodes.