

Garrison Keillor To Broadcast Live Show From Cather's Hometown

Alliance Times-Herald, Thursday, August 8, 1991—7

RED CLOUD, Neb. (AP) — The director of the Willa Cather Pioneer Memorial and Educational Foundation hopes Americans will be glued to their radios this Pearl Harbor Day just as they were 50 years ago.

But rather than infamy, Pat Phillips hopes it will be a day of comedy. This Dec. 7, humorist Garrison Keillor plans to broadcast a live, two-hour program from this south-central Nebraska town of 1,300 people.

The broadcast from the area where Miss Cather spent her childhood and from which she drew inspiration for

such books as "My Antonia," "O Pioneers!" and "Song of the Lark," was Keillor's idea.

Keillor suggested the broadcast from Red Cloud after doing a successful program this spring from Mark Twain's house in Hartford, Conn., said Chris Tschida, producer of "Garrison Keillor's American Radio Company" on National Public Radio. She said Keillor enjoys Miss Cather's books.

Dec. 7 was chosen because Miss Cather was born on that day in 1873. Keillor's whimsical tales of resi-

dents of the mythical Lake Wobegon, Minn., will be broadcast before a live audience of 1,000 to 1,200 in the Red Cloud High School gymnasium, Ms. Tschida said.

Miss Cather's childhood home in Red Cloud has been restored to its 1880s appearance, but is too small to accommodate the radio broadcast, Mrs. Phillips.

Keillor is expected to open the program from a room in the house and then go to the gymnasium about four blocks away, where the audience and other entertainers will be waiting.

"He thinks he can make it over there while singing his version of the 'Tishomingo Blues,'" the program's opening song, Ms. Tschida joked.

Keillor is expected to read from the works of Miss Cather and other prairie authors. Prairie humor and music are expected to be elements of the program. Guest performers have not been selected.

Red Cloud residents will have to make a few sacrifices to accommodate Keillor's broadcast.

The Red Cloud High School Warriors will have to reschedule their

season-opening basketball game against Beaver City, said principal put them at the top of the tickets list," Mrs. Phillips said. "The national exposure Red Cloud and Willa Cather will receive is tremendous. I hope the town enjoys its participation."

Luis Cass. But, "it's the least we could do," he said.

All 17 rooms and three mobile homes at Red Cloud's Green Acres Motel have been reserved for Keillor's crew Dec. 5-7.

"You wouldn't believe the number of people who tell me they are Garrison Keillor's No. 1 fan and to

NEWS TIP?
Call the Times-Herald
762-3060.