



Television

Nick Coleman

Garrison Keillor reportedly has wedding plans

Lake Wobegon's most eligible bachelor farmer is reportedly planning to get married but all is not well in Powdermilk Biscuit Land.

Garrison Keillor, host of public radio's "A Prairie Home Companion," the Saturday night show heard live on more than 260 public radio stations around the country, has told friends he plans to marry a Danish woman this winter.

Meanwhile, Margaret Moos, executive producer of "A Prairie Home Companion" and Keillor's housemate for the past several years, has taken an indefinite leave of absence from Minnesota Public Radio (MPR). The St. Paul-based service produces Keillor's show for the American Public Radio network.

Keillor, 43, plans to marry Ulla Strange of Copenhagen, Denmark, whom he visited last week between broadcasts of his radio show. Strange was a foreign exchange student at Anoka High School in 1960, the year Keillor graduated from the school. Strange (her maiden name) is the divorced mother of two children. Keillor, who has a 16-year-old son, was divorced in 1976 after 11 years of marriage.

Moos, who many credit for helping fashion the national success of "A Prairie Home Companion," took a personal leave of absence from her job last month. She and Keillor had shared a large, Victorian home on Goodrich Av. in St. Paul for the past several years. Keillor's current best-selling book, "Lake Wobegon Days," apparently is dedicated to Moos with an inscription that reads, "To Margaret, My Love."

The book, which has sold more than 700,000 copies, was published in August. That same month, friends say, Keillor became reacquainted with Strange at the 25th anniversary reunion of Anoka High's class of 1960. Since then, Keillor has told close friends that he plans to marry Strange and has mentioned February as a likely month for the wedding.

A spokesperson for MPR declined comment on Moos' status Monday and efforts to reach Moos through relatives were unsuccessful. Sources at MPR, however, said Moos has taken an extended leave of absence and isn't expected to return to "A Prairie Home Companion."

Officially, Moos still holds the title of the program's executive producer. MPR, however, hired a new manager for Keillor's show last week. Sources say the new manager, Christopher Cardozo, is likely to take over Moos' title if Moos doesn't return.

Friends say the sticky personal relationship be-



Garrison Keillor
1960 yearbook photos



Ulla Strange

COLEMAN: Keillor's success draws offers

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tween Moos and Keillor makes it doubtful that Moos will continue to work as executive producer of the show that was featured on the cover of last week's Time magazine.

"It's Margaret's choice but it'd be a shock if she still wanted the job," said one friend who asked not to be identified. "She may not even stay within the organization (MPR)."

Cardozo, 37, is a visual artist (he had a one-man photography show at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts) as well as an art dealer and collector. He also has a law degree from the University of Minnesota. As manager of the Prairie Home Companion division of MPR, Cardozo will be in charge of negotiating contracts between MPR and commercial companies interested in exploiting the success of Keillor's creations.

MPR, sources say, has been deluged with offers from record companies, film producers and even television networks seeking to capitalize on the popularity of "A Prairie Home Companion." Cardozo, who developed a capital giving campaign for the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, is skilled in marketing.

Cathy de Moll, director of promotion and public relations for MPR, said yesterday that the firm doesn't comment on personal or personnel matters.

"There's been no official announcement about any personnel matters at 'A Prairie Home Companion' other than we've just hired a company manager," de Moll said.

U.S. making flowers part of daily life, florist says

"A Prairie Home Companion" reaches 2 to 3 million listeners weekly.

Keillor is featured in another national magazine this month but didn't make the cover as he did with Time. In an interview in the November issue of Metropolitan Home, Keillor says the national syndication of "A Prairie Home Companion" in 1980 "gave it a few more years of life." Sometimes, he added, "A person needs a boost like that — such as an immense, inexplicable salary increase."

Last year, according to records on file with the Minnesota Department of Commerce, Keillor received a pay increase of \$98,000 from MPR. His salary for the year ending June 30, 1984, was \$173,186. A year earlier, his salary was slightly under \$75,000.

The next highest-paid official at MPR was president William H. Kling, who received a salary of \$108,000. A year earlier, Kling was paid \$71,500. By comparison, The Times of London reported last week that Alasdair Milne, the director-general of the British Broadcasting Corp., is paid about 65,000 pounds, which is about \$94,000.

Sally Pope (Kling's wife), MPR's vice president for community relations, was paid \$46,205. Other top-paid officials at MPR included: Thomas Kigin, vice president for broadcast administration and general counsel (\$50,000); Rick Lewis, vice president for news and information (\$47,837); Thomas Voegeli, vice president for productions (\$45,913); and Marilyn Heltzer, vice president for network programming (\$40,000).

MPR, a nonprofit radio service supported in part by listener contributions, reported total revenues of \$7,954,000 for the year ending in June, 1984. MPR operates a 10-station radio network including KSJN-FM (91.1) and KSJN-AM (1330) in the Twin Cities.