

Lake Wobegon Tales to Be Broadcast From B.R.

BATON ROUGE (AP) — The Prairie Home Companion will be broadcast live from Baton Rouge next month and tickets are selling faster than the fictional Powder Milk Biscuits of the popular public radio show.

The two-hour program, which mixes Garrison Keillor's monologue on the latest folksy happenings in mythical Lake Wobegon with live music, will be aired at the Theater for the Performing Arts here on Oct. 25-26.

"Tickets went on sale Saturday and we're already half sold out for both performances," said Alice Toombs, in charge of ticket sales.

Each night, 2,000 people will get to watch as Keillor gives the latest on Lake Wobegon where all the men are strong, the women are good looking and the children are above average.

Generally, he likes to talk about Ralph's Pretty Good Grocery where you can purchase Powder Milk Biscuits and Raw Bits. No one is quite sure the recipe of Raw Bits but after hearing Keillor discuss the product of one of his mythical sponsors, no one wants to find out.

Powder Milk Biscuits is a different story. "Sure, we have people who really believe it's a product they can buy and they want to know where to get the biscuits," Dan Shadle, national tour coordinator, said in a telephone interview.

The program, produced by the Minnesota Public Radio, is distributed to 260 public radio affiliates in 50 states, including WRKF in Baton Rouge.

"We're now being heard in Australia,"

added Shadle.

Prairie Home Companion started in 1974 after Keillor, then a writer, did an article for the New Yorker on the old Ryman Theater, original home of the Grand Ole Opry.

"He said he could do something like that for public radio," said Shadle. "When he started, the audience would be 20 to 50 people. Now, you have to get tickets six weeks in advance."

Some of the greats of country and western music and folk music have appeared on the show to sing and discuss biscuits with Keillor.

The Bayou Wobegon show will feature guitarist Chet Atkins and several Cajun groups, including Beausoleil, as well as the show's usual band, the Butch Thompson Trio.