

## Biography



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### Garrison Keillor

Best-Selling Author and Host of *A Prairie Home Companion*

Garrison Keillor was born in 1942 in Anoka, Minnesota, and began his radio career as a freshman at the University of Minnesota, from which he graduated in 1966. He went to work for Minnesota Public Radio in 1969, and on July 6, 1974, he hosted the first broadcast of *A Prairie Home Companion* in St. Paul. The show ended in 1987, resumed in 1989 in New York as *The American Radio Company*, returned to Minnesota, and in 1993 resumed the name *A Prairie Home Companion*. Over 3 million listeners on more than 450 public radio stations now hear the show each week.

Keillor's most recent role included playing himself in the movie adaptation of his show, *A Prairie Home Companion* (June 2006). It features Meryl Streep and Lily Tomlin as the singing Johnson sisters, Lindsay Lohan as Streep's daughter, Woody Harrelson and John C. Reilly as singing cowboys Lefty and Dusty, and Tommy Lee Jones as the Axeman, who is dispatched by the radio station's new corporate owners in Texas to shut down the show.

He is also the author of twelve books, including *Lake Wobegon Days* (1985); *The Book of Guys* (1993); *The Old Man Who Loved Cheese* (1996); *Wobegon Boy* (1997); *Me: By Jimmy "Big Boy" Valente As Told to Garrison Keillor* (1999); *Love Me* (2003); and 2004's *Homegrown Democrat*. His newest novel, *Pontoon*, was released in the fall of 2007.

Keillor has received numerous awards, including a Grammy Award for his recording of *Lake Wobegon Days*. He has also received two Cable ACE Awards and a George Foster Peabody Award. He is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and recently was presented with a National Humanities Medal by the National Endowment for the Humanities. In 1994, he was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame at Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communications.

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With Philip Brunelle, he has performed with many orchestras, including the Chicago, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Minnesota, Dallas, and National symphonies. He has appeared at Wolf Trap, Carnegie Hall, and other major concert halls as a member of The Hopeful Gospel Quartet, and he has performed on his own in one-man shows across the country and on tour broadcasts of *A Prairie Home Companion*.