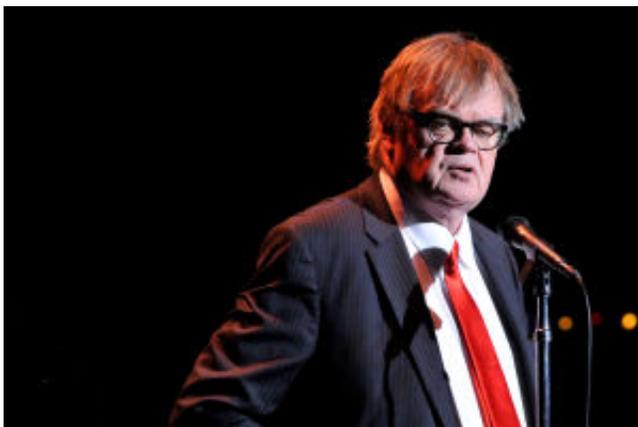


'A Prairie Home Companion' entertains Lincoln crowd



4 HOURS AGO • [BY EMILY NITCHER / LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR](#)

Garrison Keillor, red shoes on his feet and red tie around his neck, sang a few lines Saturday under the bright lights of the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

He was quickly interrupted. Lincoln resident Jackie Allen didn't like what she was hearing.

Try panting like a dog as a warm-up, Allen told the humorist, storyteller and radio personality.

"Afraid is what I'm feeling right now," Garrison said after taking her advice.

Allen was giving Keillor a lesson in torch singing -- or singing sentimental love songs -- during a live broadcast of American Public Media's "A Prairie Home Companion."

The weekly radio variety show, hosted by Keillor, is heard by four million listeners each week on more than 600 public radio stations, including NET Radio in Nebraska, and abroad on America One and the Armed Forces Networks.

The show returned to Lincoln for the first time since 1993 -- and, from the opening lines of the first song, was full of all things Nebraska.

"On the prairie of Nebraska I'll live until I die," the sold-out Lied Center crowd sang with Keillor and performer and singer Sara Watkins.

The rest of Keillor's show was peppered with Nebraska references, trivia and jokes. Kim Hachiya of NET provided the Nebraska color and fact checks.

Most of the jokes focused on Husker football. Keillor asked the Husker football team to have mercy when they travel to Minnesota next Saturday for a game against the Golden Gophers. "A Prairie Home Companion" is originally from St. Paul, Minn.

Saturday's show featured several staples, such as Private Eye Guy Noir and the Cowboys Dusty and Lefty, each of which had a Nebraska flair.

Allen, the Lincolnite and fellow performer, couldn't let Keillor leave the state without some advice.

Hold the microphone differently. Try some vocal warm-ups before singing. Pretend to blow out candles. Pretend you're a kid on a swing.

And, she said, Keillor should spend some time listening to great storytellers. And possibly

attend a poetry slam.

“You two are very good,” Allen told Keillor and Watkins. “But if you have a few more lessons, I think you could do something on the national stage.”