

1990, digital audiotapes were sent to Taiwan. Since 1996, the show goes directly by satellite for broadcast worldwide. Now, it can be heard in dozens of European cities including Amsterdam, Berlin, Brussels, Bonn, Vienna, Geneva and London. In twenty-five years, A Prairie Home Companion has become a true national treasure with international appeal.

The origin of the name, A Prairie Home Companion, is the Prairie Home Cemetery in Moorhead, Minnesota, near Concordia College, all of which are located in my home district back in Northwestern Minnesota. Mr. Garrison Keillor, a fellow Minnesotan and the program's host, inventor, chief writer, and heart and soul, has stated, "You can't name a show Prairie Home Cemetery, so I substituted Companion for Cemetery." His legions of fans are glad he did.

Every week the two-hour live variety show is packed with musical guests, comedy sketches and Mr. Keillor's commentary about small-town life in his fictional hamlet of Lake Wobegone. Many people in this country and around the world identify Minnesota with the image of Lake Wobegone, a town "where all the women are strong, the men are good-looking, and all the children are above average." Though there are other ways to pass the time Saturday evenings, fans of A Prairie Home Companion often plan their weekends around the show. Nutritionist Leslie Cordella-Simon has said, "It's a little respite at the end of the week." Here in Washington, Ruth Harkin, the wife of Iowa Senator TOM HARKIN, has commented that they rarely miss the program. She echoes the sentiments of many when she says, "Lake Wobegone is the town we both grew up in." NBC news anchor Tom Brokaw denies the rumor that he will not admit dinner guests to his house during the Lake Wobegone segment of the show. "I just don't pay much attention to them," he explains.

The first road trip of A Prairie Home Companion was to Fargo, North Dakota, and to Moorhead, Minnesota, in October 1974. Now, they routinely travel farther down the road to places like Edinborough, Scotland, and Dublin, Ireland. In the last twenty-five years, the show's truck has traveled over 230,000 miles, and personnel have flown or driven over 385,000 miles. The traveling shows are so popular that a sponsoring station manager in Peoria, Illinois, made the following remark after A Prairie Home Companion visited his town: "I could've run for mayor and gotten elected." In 1985, Time magazine discovered A Prairie Home Companion and put Mr. Keillor on its cover. Over a span of twenty-five years there have been 941 live performances and 864 live broadcasts of A Prairie Home Companion. From February to June in 1987, A Prairie Home Companion made the jump to television, running in an un-edited time-delayed version on the Disney Channel. Since October 5, 1996, the show's audio has been delivered live over the Internet to anyone with a computer and a modem.

A Prairie Home Companion and Mr. Keillor have already received a silo-full of well-deserved national recognition, including a Grammy Award, two ACE Awards for cable television, and a George Foster Peabody Award. In 1994, Mr. Keillor was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame at Chicago's Museum of Broadcast Communication. In 1999, he was awarded the National Humanities Medal by President Clinton at the White House. Mr. Wil-

liam R. Ferris, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, said, "The 1999 National Humanities Medalists are distinguished individuals who have set the highest standards for American cultural achievement."

Mr. Keillor likes to describe Lake Wobegone as a place "that time forgot and the decades cannot improve." The same could be said about his radio show. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Minnesota Public Radio, the staff of A Prairie Home Companion, and Garrison Keillor on the occasion of the notable achievement of twenty-five years of proud representation of the art, culture and people of Minnesota.

HONORING THE LATE WILLIAM W. "BILL" GEARY, AMERICAN HERO

HON. JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to genuine American hero, William W. "Bill" Geary, who died on November 15, 1999. Bill was a veteran of World War II. He saw action in eight major campaigns throughout Europe during the war. Bill was a true friend to many people as well as a devoted husband to his loving wife "Bea".

Even though Bill witnessed atrocities and violence, he was a man of peace and he refused to accept that he was a hero among men. Fortunately, Bill's brother Joe Geary, U.S. Navy (Ret.) provided me a detailed history of Bill's service to his country. I am pleased to have this history inserted in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD for all American's to see:

WILLIAM W. GEARY, BORN FEBRUARY 8, 1921—
DIED NOVEMBER 15, 1999

William W. "Bill" Geary enlisted in the U.S. Army on October 15, 1941. After extensive training he was assigned to the 456th Battalion of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne division.

SICILY—OPERATION HUSKY

On the evening of July 9, 1943, Bill Geary, along with 3,400 other paratroopers, were en-route to Sicily. Somewhere east of Gela shortly before midnight, Bill Geary jumped and landed close to a German outpost. Advancing toward the German position he saw another paratrooper who had landed in the barbed wire. The Germans poured gasoline on him and set him on fire. Bill was shooting at the Germans and the trooper on fire was screaming. There was no way that Bill Geary could rescue the other trooper.

The next day Bill Geary was wounded by shrapnel. His wound was treated with sulfa and bandaged and he immediately returned to his platoon and resumed fighting off German counterattacks.

By 23 July, after two weeks of heavy fighting, the 82nd Airborne Division had completed its mission. The Germans had taken a severe beating from the 82nd Airborne Division.

ITALY—SALERNO—OPERATION AVALANCHE

On September 9, 1943, elements of the Fifth U.S. Army made an amphibious landing at Salerno Bay. Two German Divisions moved south to attack and exploited a gap between U.S. and British forces.

On September 13, an urgent message was sent to the 82nd on Sicily for immediate help. The next night the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment jumped into the beachhead.

Bill Geary was in his second major battle against the Germans. They saved General Clark's Fifth U.S. Army from defeat. The 82nd then pushed the Germans north to the Volturno River.

ITALY—ANZIO—OPERATION SHINGLE

An amphibious landing was carried out on January 22, 1944, at Anzio, north of the German lines. The Germans rushed in reinforcements and another stalemate developed. In late February 1944, elements of the 82nd Airborne Division, with Bill Geary taking part, were transported to the Anzio beachhead as reinforcements. They were involved in continuous heavy fighting against the Germans until mid-April 1944, when they were withdrawn to England.

NORMANDY, FRANCE—OPERATION OVERLOAD

On the evening of June 5, 1944, Bill Geary, loaded down with arms and ammunition, was boosted up into a C-47, along with 23 other paratroopers of the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. The initial objective of the 505th was the capture of the town and roads around Sainte-Mere-Eglise. Bill Geary jumped out of the C-47 into the black of night. There were tracer bullets flying up from many directions. He landed and immediately detached his "chute" and joined up with other troopers.

Some of the 505th paratroopers landed within the town of Sainte-Mere-Eglise. Most of them were killed while floating down in their parachutes. Others, that had their "chute" hung up in trees, were killed while struggling to get loose. This was not to be forgotten by the troopers of the 505th.

Bill Geary, along with others, fought their way in the dark to the outskirts of the town. They fought their way into the town and by daylight June 6, 1944, the town was in the hands of the 505th.

The 82nd then pushed south and west to block off the Contentin Peninsula. Fighting through the hedge rows of Normandy for four weeks, against stiff German resistance, capturing the high ground overlooking the town of Haye-du-Puits. There it remained in a defensive posture until it was relieved on July 11, 1944.

The 82nd Airborne Division suffered 47 percent casualties during 33 days of continuous fierce fighting without relief or replacements.

HOLLAND—OPERATION MARKET-GARDEN

The British 1st Airborne was to jump and seize the bridge over the Rhine River at Arnhem, some 64 miles into Holland. Several other bridges would be seized by the 82nd around the city of Nijmegen to the south of Arnhem. The 101st Division was to jump and capture bridges 25 miles north of the Allies front lines.

Sunday, September 17, 1944, Bill Geary, along with 23 other paratroopers in his group, was heavily burdened with all the ammunition and grenades he could possibly carry. The troopers of the 505th shouted to each other "Remember Sainte-Mere-Eglise," referring to the murder of 505th troopers by the Germans.

As the C-47s crossed the coastline of Holland anti-aircraft fire became intense, 118 of the transports were damaged and 10 were shot down. The C-47 carrying Bill Geary reached its drop point, the high ground near Groesbeek. The green jump light came on and the 24 paratroopers exited in quick succession, as fast as they could. They were receiving small arms fire from German troops in the woods as they descended. Unbuckling their chutes and laying prone on the ground, they returned fire.

Fighting continued through the day and into the night. The 505th was spread thin on their front, a line of about 6-7 miles. By then

end of the day all but one of the bridges had been taken.

The next day 450 C-47s, towing 450 gliders heavily laden with glider troops and equipment, started landing. The 505th had been battling the Germans all that day to clear the landing area of German troops. The landing area was within one-quarter mile of the border of Germany. On Tuesday, September 19, the Nijmegen bridge was seized. The 82nd troops held off numerically superior German troops for the next two weeks.

Allied forces suffered more casualties (17,000) in Market-Garden than they did in the invasion of Normandy. The 82nd Airborne Division's casualties were heavy. More than a thousand troops were buried in a cow pasture between Molenhoek and the Maas-Waal Canal.

In mid October the 82nd moved into some old French Army barracks about 80 miles from Paris. Numerous replacement paratroopers were received to fill huge voids in the ranks.

BATTLE OF THE BULGE

On December 16, 1944, the Germans launched a massive attack through the Ardennes against a green U.S. infantry division with no previous combat. The only U.S. Army reserve divisions were the 82nd and the 101st Airborne Divisions. General Gavin soon ordered both the 82nd and the 101st Divisions to move out to the battle area.

The 82nd, was the first to move out. They passed north through Bastogne and took up a blocking position west of St. Vith, spreading out along a 25 mile front. Some hours later the 101st moved out with orders to hold the vital crossroads and the town of Bastogne.

The weather was severe, extremely cold and heavy snowfall had started. The 82nd was scattered over 100 square miles of terrain. On the 19th of December the 505th paratroopers, including Bill Geary, were occupying the best defensive positions along their six mile front. Fierce fighting against two German Divisions soon began and continued for a week. By December 27, the first phase of the Battle of the Bulge was over. The German advance had been stopped.

The First U.S. Army, of which the 82nd was the spearhead, launched a counter attack on January 3, 1945. In the first day of fighting the 82nd completely overran the German 62nd Volksgrenadier Division and the 9th S.S. Panzer Division, inflicting severe casualties on the enemy, capturing 2,400 prisoners. A German reserve column of trucks and troops moving up to support the decimated German divisions advanced straight into the 82nd's lines and was totally destroyed. On January 8, the 82nd advanced to the Salm River in heavy fighting. The Battle of the Bulge was over.

THE ARDENNES

On January 28, 1945, the 82nd and 1st Infantry Division would lead the Allied assault through the Seigfried Line. Heavy fighting ensued as the 82nd, with Bill Geary, fought it's way into Germany through the Ardennes Forest. At 4:00 a.m. on February 2, the division mounted an aggressive attack. It penetrated through two miles of the Seigfried Line in fierce fighting. The German troops were retreating in the face of a tremendous onslaught.

Three days later the 82nd was en-route to the Huertgen Forrest. The paratroopers of the 505th pressed on pushing the Germans back through the towns of Lammersdorf and Schmidt in two days of fierce fighting, moving closer to the Roer River which would be their next objective. Fighting continued all the way to the Roer River. On February 17, 1945, the 82nd was pulled out of the front lines.

RHINELAND

In late March, the 82nd fought its way to the Rhine River on a 20 mile front north and south of the city of Cologne, Germany. On April 29, 1945, the 82nd moved out of its positions and north more than 200 miles to a crossing site on the Elbe River. The 505th reached the site by dark. At 1:00 a.m. on April 30, the 505th made a crossing and caught the Germans completely by surprise. Bill Geary was now across the Elbe River and once again fighting Germans. The 505th advanced all day on May 1, as the Germans retreated.

When news of the 82nd's crossing reached General Omar Bradley's 12th Army Group headquarters, there was much delight and laughter. British General Montgomery had been complaining that the German opposition was far too great for him to cross the Elbe River.

On May 2-3 1945, the advance of the 82nd continued and a complete German Army Group of 250,000 men, with all their weapons of war, surrendered to the 82nd Airborne Division.

THE WAR IN EUROPE HAD COME TO AN END

For the 82nd Airborne Division the war in Europe had been costly. More than 60,000 men had passed through the ranks of the division. They left thousands of white crosses on foreign soil.

On November 15, 1999, Bill Geary lost a two year battle. It was a battle against Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE'S MEMOS SHOW S. 1895 MEDICARE BOARD IS A RECIPE FOR DISASTER

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, S. 1895, the Breaux-Frist Premium Support proposal to change Medicare is a recipe for administrative disaster.

Don't take my word for it. Following are quotes from two Library of Congress Congressional Research Service memos describing the many problems with S. 1895.

Just ask yourself, in the history of the world, has the administration of a large program (and Medicare is spending about \$220 billion a year) ever been successfully accomplished by a committee of seven?

As the ultimate Founding Father, George Washington said,

... wherever and whenever one person is found adequate to the discharge of a duty by close application thereto, it is worse executed by two persons, and scarcely done at all if three or more are employed therein.

The full CRS papers are available from my office at 239 Cannon HOB, Washington, DC 20515 (202-225-5065).

Following are other quotes from the studies. Describing how Medicare would be largely independent of the Secretary of HHS and the Administrator of HCFA, the CRS writes:

NEW, UNTESTED IDEAS

This organizational and administrative design is somewhat unusual when considered in light of traditional guidelines regarding the effective administration of government programs. These guidelines normally call for

placing major elements of a program in the same agency or department, and lodging authority over the program in the head of the agency or department, while authorizing the agency head to delegate that authority.

* * * * *

The Secretary of HHS and the administrator of HCFA appear to be almost totally removed from any role regarding the Division of HCFA-Sponsored Plans, although they would apparently retain supervision and authority over the Division of Health Programs.

To a large extent, the proposed organizational and administrative restructuring of the agencies that would be administering the proposed Medicare program appears to depart from the traditional guidelines for the administration of government programs.

DIVIDED ADMINISTRATION: A RECIPE FOR CONFUSION?

The administration of the Medicare program is divided between the board and the Division of HCFA-Sponsored Plans. The fact that the Division must submit its sponsored plans to the board for approval compounds the problem. . . . What happens if the Division is unwilling or unable to develop plans the board finds acceptable? The board may appeal to the President for assistance, but since he appears to have little or no administrative or supervisory authority or responsibility regarding the operations of the board, he may have little motivation to intervene on their behalf.

The CRS points out that OMB is the only independent agency "exercising considerable authority over other independent bodies . . . as the President's surrogate . . .

Even OMB, however, does not share or assume operating authority over government programs assigned to other agencies or departments.

It is difficult to find an example where independent bodies share administrative responsibility over a program, and where one body may veto the plans of another, as with the board and the Division of HCFA-Sponsored Plans.

CRS writes:

WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE? WHERE'S THE ACCOUNTABILITY?

Under S. 1895 the Secretary of HHS appears to be stripped of supervisory authority over the Medicare Program and of practically all authority over the Division of HCFA-Sponsored Plans [even though that Division is within HHS and operating under Federal laws].

Apparently, the Secretary would retain supervisory authority over only the Division's budget. Since the Secretary would have no role to play in the Division's activities, there is a possibility that its budget requests might not receive much support compared to other agencies in the Department.

The CRS memo notes "two of the most independent units existing within departments appear to be the Office of Comptroller of the Currency and the Office of Thrift Supervision," both in Treasury.

. . . such independence generally is given only to independent regulatory commissions that for convenience sake are located within departments.

But note, Mr. Speaker: Medicare is not just a regulatory program: It is an insurance program for 40 million people that spends \$220 billion a year and processes nearly a billion medical claims a year.

CRS writes: