

UH music teacher sounds final note

Arthur Harvey, who is retiring to Florida, is bid a fond farewell after 15 years at UH

By Helen Altonn

haltonn@starbulletin.com

When Arthur Harvey leaves Hawaii tomorrow to live in Florida, the music will stop for many community organizations, aged and disabled residents.

Harvey retired June 1 after 47 years of teaching music, including the last 15 years at the University of Hawaii-Manoa and Kapiolani Community College.

Yesterday's services, after 10 1/2 years as director of music and worship at Calvary by the Sea Lutheran Church, completed 50 years of ministry, and the church hosted a retirement party for him and his wife yesterday afternoon.

"Art has given a lot in his time here, not only to the university, but to Honolulu as well," said Donald Womack, acting chairman of the UH-Manoa Music Department.

"He is an excellent teacher -- patient, giving and universally liked by his students. He has also gone way beyond the call of duty in his community service activities, being involved with many and diverse community organizations."

Many people have benefited from Harvey's work in music therapy, Womack said. "In addition to being one of the nicest and most caring people I've ever met, Art has the gift of natural musicianship."

He recalled Harvey playing the piano at Christmas party sing-alongs, sight-reading carols and changing their keys to fit people's voice ranges. "That's a skill not many people have today, and it's impressive to watch," Womack said.

Harvey and his wife, Pat, are moving to a small senior adult community in Ellenton, Fla.

He said he plans to spend more time with his family, writing, recording, lecturing and consulting and will be available for national and international travel.

He will continue to teach UH-Manoa and KCC online courses on music as therapy and psychology of music for the next couple of years, he said.

Harvey, who plays 35 instruments, is proudest of his contributions in making people aware that music not only can be entertaining, but it is also important for health and therapeutic purposes, he said in a recent interview.

He has taken his music and message about the healing effects of music to many health-related organization in Hawaii, as well as to the Department of Education, doctors, nurses, hospitals and the Honolulu Zoo.

He worked with UH-Manoa music professor Joseph Ruszkowski on a study using a recording of heartbeat music to calm rambunctious young male chimpanzees.

An internationally known neuromusicologist, Harvey described in a 2004 Star-Bulletin interview how music can calm the heart rate and blood pressure, relieve pain and stress, promote healing and stimulate creative thinking.

He has created many recordings, such as "Bach in the Morning" to

help nursing home and hospital patients awaken gently, and "Island Sounds Healing Heart" for Alu Like to help care for senior Hawaiians with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

Every Monday morning for 15 years, he has played music for patients at Leahi Hospital. "Music helps people's lives and helps the staff feel better," he said. "It's a real asset to the care of aging folks."

The patients honored him with a party last week. "They were crying," he said. "Music touches their emotions very well, and for some of them it's one of few successful emotional experiences they can be involved in, particularly for those who suffer from dementia or other physical disabilities."

Harvey worked with music therapist Keiko Kajiwara to found Sounding Joy Music Therapy Inc. to educate the public about music therapy, provide clinical services and encourage research in therapeutic music.

He said he will continue to be involved with the nonprofit organization and anticipates coming back to speak and continue his research on neuromusicology and music and health.