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LINDENWOOD

After 40 years, beloved professor retires

Longtime Lindenwood University music professor Groff Bittner, a mainstay on the historic St. Charles campus for more than 40 years, carried the mace and lead the faculty into commencement for the final time on May 19.

Bittner received emeritus status at the commencement ceremony. He was honored by faculty and staff at a reception May 9.

"I am moved by all this attention," said Bittner. "I really don't want to make a fuss. I guess I would just as soon be like McArthur and fade away."

Bittner, 71, of St. Charles, says he won't retire completely. He's looking at working part-time as a piano instructor.

"And I'll keep playing at the horse shows all over the country," he said. "I've been doing that for years. I started it when my wife, Fern, ran the equestrian program here at Lindenwood."

Bittner started as a full-time faculty member at Lindenwood in 1961. He has taught numerous classes-- fundamentals of music, private piano, music theory, orchestration and arranging, elementary and secondary music methods and class piano.

He has played in numerous musicals at Lindenwood, including "Robber Bride Groom" and "Kiss Me, Kate" and for 25 consecutive years, performed a recital at Lindenwood. He won the St. Louis Artist Presentation Award, which including playing a concert at the St. Louis Art Museum, and has performed recitals all over the state.

"Groff has thousands of students and grand-students and even great-grand students all over the country," said Marsha Parker, dean of fine and performing arts at Lindenwood. "'He is perpetuating the love and mastery of keyboarding across the country."

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