

# OVERTONES

Spring 2024

The Official Journal of Handbell Musicians of America

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# OVERTONES

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE  
HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA

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Handbell Musicians of America is dedicated to advancing the musical art of handbell/handchime ringing through education, community, and communication.

### OUR VISION

Uniting people to create a diverse community in which handbell musicians of all skill levels realize their full potential through a musically-respected art form.

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### NATIONAL STAFF

**Executive Director** • Linda Onorevole  
lonorevole@handbellmusicians.org

**Business Manager** • Ed Rollins  
erollins@handbellmusicians.org

**Publications Director** • J.R. Smith  
jrsmith@handbellmusicians.org

**Director of National Events** • Marie Clyatt-Larson  
mcllyatt@handbellmusicians.org

**Area Event Coordinator/Administrative Assistant** • Vickie Iverson  
viverson@handbellmusicians.org

**Regional Membership Coordinators**  
Mya Dundzila - East - mdundzila@handbellmusicians.org  
Kim Braswell - West - kbraswell@handbellmusicians.org

**Music Advisor** • Brian Childers  
bchilders@handbellmusicians.org

**Webmaster** • Michèle Sharik  
websupport@handbellmusicians.org

### OVERTONES COLUMN COORDINATORS

J.R. Smith, Editor	Beth Ann Edwards	Kathleen Wissinger
Lauran Delancy	Linda Krantz	

### OVERTONES IS PUBLISHED BY

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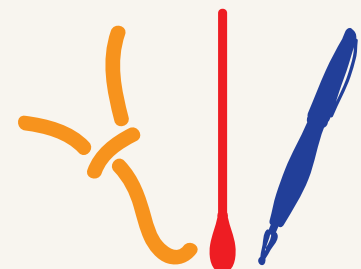
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## Handbell Musicians of America NATIONAL SEMINAR

## National Seminar Heads to Area 1 in July

# 20

## From Our Friend Valerie

*The handbell world recently lost a great friend, musician, composer, and Honorary Life member, Valerie Stephenson (see article on page 16). Those who knew her appreciated her humorous side and for a while, she authored a column in Overtones called "Potpourri From Valerie," featuring humorous stories. Following is a reprint from the July/August 2006 issue.*

### WHAT REALLY HAPPENS AT DISTINCTLY BRONZE?

by **Valerie Stephenson**



Some of you may not know about Distinctly Bronze, affectionately known as "DB". In certain circumstances, Distinctly Bonkers might be a better description. For those of you wishing complete

information on this event, please check [www.handbellmusicians.org](http://www.handbellmusicians.org), as what follows has more than a bit of tongue-in-cheek.

(But of course, it is all true!) This is a conclave of many of the best in our ringing world. So, I asked myself, HOW did I get to DB? You must apply and get references (bribery doesn't work!). Those chosen come together once a year to work on impossible music written by impossible composers and conducted by..well, ahem, let's just say...usually David Davidson, an impossibly renowned personage.

It is a unique experience in every respect, combining great ringing and instruction along with an abundance of after-hour camaraderie. Your camp list for this event includes cases of Ben-Gay, a personal masseuse, a portable hot tub, bandages, many types of oral medication and whatever else you need to get through about 6 to 7 hours of ringing a day. There is no workmen's comp offered for this event yet, even for lifting the 7-plus octaves of equipment.

But what really happens "after hours?" It is rumored that some actually go to their rooms to pore over their music and mark for

the next rehearsal. This rumor has not been substantiated by enough ringers to qualify as fact as the "witnesses" either go out for R&R or play... GAMES.

One of these is Pictionary. If you play this with the British, plan to be abolished with one swift swipe of a pencil, rightfully quoted as being mightier than the sword. The British should be banned from this game as they know too much...like the English language for one.

In one of the "all play" rounds, all teams got the word "funnel", seemingly easy enough. One Yank drew a perfectly structured funnel that anyone might use to drain oil or pour into another container. The Brits drew a boat with a thing sticking up like a round chimney? The partner got the answer instantly! In England, that's a funnel. Apparently no one in America uses a funnel anymore for anything, much less oil, unless it's in Martha Stewart's kitchen. Curses to those smart Brits who whipped us soundly, but also hurl great bass bells at DB. It's a wonder we beat King George III only to lose to again in a game like Pictionary.

The second game of choice is dominos. Watch out for persons who play this game. They are diabolical! They create their own rules and keep sleepy ringers from getting needed rests. Whatever was played, the rules changed, often within the game itself. I actually won one and have no idea how. I couldn't count the dots on the chips or remember the rules-de-jour. The aficionados finally divulged the matching color codes with canary feathers drooling from their lips. There are at least 17 versions of Dominoes. Who knew? These are scary people! They read the rules but interpret them like a well known handbell conductor; I let the chips fall where they may, preferably potato chips. WARNING! If you come to DB, come complete with the secondary camp

Continued on page 4



J.R. Smith  
Publications Director

[jrsmith@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:jrsmith@handbellmusicians.org)

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**- Dubuque, IA**





Linda Onorevole  
Executive Director

lonorevole@  
handbellmusicians.org  
937-438-0085 ext. 803

## Reaching Out With Livestreams

*For nearly three generations my maternal family lived close to each other in one town in Northern New Jersey - Nutley. And when I say "close" I mean really close – mostly on the same street!*

However, over the past few decades we have spread across the country; some inspired by job opportunities and more reasonable housing costs, others by wanderlust or moves with a partner. Thankfully, we remain connected to each other despite the geography.

I thought about our family connections during the College Ring-in concert that I attended on January 6. Many of my family members were watching the livestream from their various homes in Florida, South Carolina, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, while I was in the audience at the venue. While we were not all in the same room, we were all having the same experience for that hour. I received calls from them afterwards, where they told me about which pieces were their favorite, and how much they are continuing to learn about handbells by watching all of Handbell Musicians of America's livestream concerts.

This is just a snapshot of what was happening around the country on Saturday afternoon and in the few days following. As I write this today (January 9) there have been 746 views of the broadcast already. We know that some groups were having "watch parties" so many more than that have seen the performance.

Livestreaming concerts and posting video excerpts from these performances on our social media channels helps us bring our artform to a broader audience. We are sharing how varied the repertoire for handbells can be, and the many ensemble configurations that exist. It is our hope that these tools will help increase in-person attendance at handbell concerts across the country, and recruit ensemble participants.

But one of the very best benefits of offering our livestream concerts is being able to engage with our ageing members who may not be able to travel to events anymore. We recognize that

an organization like ours that has been active for 70 years, naturally may have members who can no longer play handbells themselves, or mobility challenges that preclude them from attending concerts in-person. By broadcasting our concerts, we are making the music accessible and keeping people more connected than ever before.

*Musically yours,  
Linda Onorevole*

P.S. An upcoming livestream concert for your calendar: Distinctly Bronze East conducted by Emily Li and Crescendo (formerly Reaching for Bronze) conducted by Tim Waugh, March 3, 2024, at 4:00 PM from New Bern, NC.

## Chiming In...

Continued from page 2

list: 3 packs of No-Doze and the official encyclopedia of rules for table games.

Third and thankfully, there were no Boggle persons around, or they were incognito in a private room. I'll try to contract the 12-hour flu for that, as the two games above were mind-"boggling" enough. Who knew that all these wonderful persons could ring bells, draw pictures, knock down dominoes and still create beautiful music with the David Davidson. It's a one-of-a-kind experience from start to finish. But, dominoes at midnight? Zzzzz...just put my red dots next to your red dots and leave me alone!

*LV (which always means "love, Valerie"  
OR "sustain until the next LV").*

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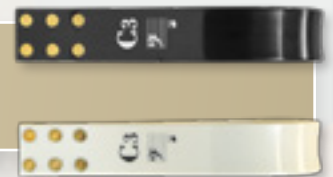
Labor Costs for Malmark/Schulmerich							Labor Cost for Whitechapel						
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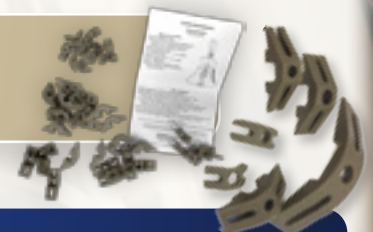
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# Membership Matters

Thoughts from Your **Regional Membership Coordinators**

## Please Keep in Touch

*Every year, I field multiple questions from members and nonmembers (aka, future members) about how to find a handbell group in an area. Sometimes, a ringer has just moved into a new city and is looking for a place to ring.*

I scour the member database and provide what information I have. When I try to confirm a group's contact person, I occasionally find no mention of the handbell program on a church or school website.

Please help me help you! If you have any influence into your group's web presence, try to get your group(s) listed with current contact information. In a school or church setting, list your group on an easy-to-find drop-down menu from your organization's homepage if privacy permits. Do these suggestions sound obvious? They are! It just takes a little time, but your group deserves the visibility (unless you never need a new ringer or a substitute ringer or a new donor or a new venue...).

Tag your digital presence so that you are the first site that comes up on a "handbells in Belltown" search. If you need help with this, you have an awesome HMA resource: JR Smith, our publications manager [jrsmith@handbellmusicians.org], can offer some tips for optimal tagging. Are web pages still relevant? In 2024, absolutely.

Another member resource is our "Handbell Ensembles" listing under the "Connect" tab on the HMA homepage. We can add your group here if you've got any kind of web listing. The ensembles are listed by state, then city.

As HMA members, you also have access to free publicity for your concerts. Check out our "Events Calendar," an easy drop-down from our Events tab on the HMA homepage. You can also post your concerts on your Area web page calendars.

If you are partnering with another group, confirm that your concert announcement appears on both groups' social media. Ensure that your host venue has your event on their event listings. Many radio stations and digital newspapers offer a free online calendar.

For several years, I have lived over an hour away from my home handbell group. This distance makes me hesitant to advertise my concerts in my own neighborhood. Big mistake! I would much rather hear, "Oh, thank you for telling me about your concert in Belltown; my sister lives there, and she loves music" instead of "Oh, I wish I had known about your concert in Belltown; I could have told my sister."

It's very disappointing when web pages, Facebook, and other social media pages are not current. Even when you are still negotiating a specific date or time, a simple post of "Watch for May 2024 Concert Dates" will let your followers know that your group is still active with plans for the future.

Are you too busy? Maybe not the most techie ringer in the group? Consider looking to non-ringers for some help. In a perfect world, you could pay someone for an hour's worth of web maintenance as needed. Not in the budget? Perhaps there are web design students nearby who are looking for free advertising. Maybe the spouse or teenager of a ringer wants to support your group and has the skills (or could learn) to keep your web presence current.

With email advertising, you generally know who you are reaching. With static web pages and other social media, you reach people you do not know. These connections can speak for your group to anyone who might be looking.

As spring concerts and summer moves are approaching, please help potential concert attendees and new ringers find you.



Mya Dundzila  
East Regional  
Membership Coordinator

mdundzila@  
handbellmusicians.org





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\*\*Subject to event eligibility



# From the President's Pen

by Greig Ashurst



Greig Ashurst  
HMA National Board  
President

gashurst@  
handbellmusicians.org

## We Are All Intertwined

One of my absolute favorite poems is one by John Donne. There are a few phrases in it that we all know and hear in everyday life. It reads:

*No man is an island,  
Entire of itself,  
Every man is a piece of the continent,  
A part of the main.  
If a clod be washed away by the sea,  
Europe is the less.  
As well as if a promontory were.  
As well as if a manor of thy friend's  
Or of thine own were:  
Any man's death diminishes me,  
Because I am involved in mankind,  
And therefore never send to know for  
whom the bell tolls;  
It tolls for thee.*

Our handbell world is so much like this poem. We are all intertwined in some way. We are all “part of the main.” Over the last 35+ years of being a part of the handbell continent, I have seen a few “clod(s) be washed away by the sea.” Not all churches worship the way they did 20 years ago. Many places have replaced handbells in a traditional setting with modern bands playing more contemporary music. Other places have remained steadfast by creating an amalgam in which they have infused the unique handbell sound into the modern worship experience. Fortunately, we have the modern conveniences and tools to share these ideas so that we can rebuild the handbell “continent.” Digital tools like social media and online learning events like the Virtual Winter Workshop are uniquely situated to advance the art of handbell and handchime ringing. I am grateful to be a part of this community of people that is constantly sharing ideas and resources for building a strong handbell community.

When I started my term on the Handbell Musicians of America board three years ago, I created a Google alert for the word “handbells.” This allowed me to receive notifications from various media outlets that

published things related to handbells. Getting these alerts is so exciting to me because I am constantly learning about new handbell ensembles and events all over the United States. There are so many great things happening with handbells in America. I can sense that handbells are uniting people through this unique musical art form.

For more than 100 years, handbells have been used to share music through teamwork in the United States. While most musical organizations do rely on some kind of collaboration, there still lies the element of independent contribution to the whole. On the contrary, a handbell ensemble is so interdependent that any musician's absence diminishes the whole. This applies to more than just the music.

We all know that playing in a music ensemble can enhance our social awareness and interpersonal skills, which are crucial for building and maintaining positive relationships with others. One of the things that I have found to be beneficial to my middle school handbell musicians is seeing them learn to appreciate and celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of each musician in the group. They are learning to develop trust and cooperation. Furthermore, they are improving social skills like empathy and using them to strengthen their social connectedness and sense of belonging.

Finally, being a part of a handbell ensemble enables people to understand their sense of responsibility and interdependence. The entire instrument cannot be played well when one is not there. Being at rehearsals and performances becomes crucial; handbell musicians “never have to send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

# Soloists, Ensembles, Bell Trees

Coordinated by **Linda Krantz**



## Soloist Dinners

Enjoy a wonderful, new tradition at events

by **Lisa Arnold**

We soloists live in a musical isolation bubble, working alone most of the time as we choose repertoire, listen to music, make choices about what we want to play, etc. Even in the process of developing our unique qualities as soloists, we mostly do this alone. So why have a soloist dinner at events? Well, let us tell you....

### **But first, what even is the Soloist Dinner?**

It is an evening out with other ringers with a common interest in solo ringing. Donna Countrymen offers this definition: "It is a wonderful time to see and actually meet people you only hear about or see on Facebook, YouTube, or Zoom! The experiences with these wonderful handbell soloists are amazing and unique."

**Why should you attend?** The dinner offers soloists an opportunity to gather with others who are passionate about solo ringing and learn something new, share a recent tip or new arrangement they like, or just commiserate about the most recent challenges we've encountered. According to Jan Harper, a recent recruit to solo ringing, you should attend "... to meet others who love doing this and share stories and experiences. Otherwise, you're on your own out there ringing your heart out. There is nothing better than getting together and sharing!"

**When are these dinners?** Every year since at least 2013, soloists attending National Seminar have gotten together to talk, swap stories, and share our experiences. More recently, we've added gatherings at Distinctly Bronze events. It doesn't take long to realize that there are more current and future soloists behind the ensemble tables than we realize, and we want to sit down to dinner with all of you.

**How can I sign up?** Join our Facebook group "Handbell Soloists" or send an email to

Linda Krantz (ringwithme@me.com) or Lisa Arnold (bellsontap@gmail.com) and we'll put you on the list. Then, about six weeks before National Seminar, we'll send a message and find the best night to schedule the dinner. There is always so much going on, and it will inevitably conflict with something, but we try to accommodate as many people as possible.

Join us, and you, too, can appreciate meeting other soloists from around the country (or around the world) and hearing their experiences!

And, as a little postscript, let me tell you about another community-building option for soloists. During the pandemic, Linda Krantz began a Zoom Roundtable for soloists on Wednesday afternoons. She thought we would meet once, but the group all agreed a weekly meeting was what they longed for. So we began and met every single week for almost three years. Linda now hosts this roundtable once a month and alternates between the first Wednesday and the first Thursday of the month. Email Linda if you are interested in joining us!

Lisa Arnold started ringing in 1976 with the Wesley Bell Ringers of Salt Lake City, Utah, and has rung handbells in 49 states and nine Canadian provinces. Lisa then rang with Bay Bells in San Jose, CA, before moving to Massachusetts, where she has rung with MVR since 2010. She has performed as a soloist for many MVR concerts and at National Seminar in 2014. Now retired, she and her husband Charles use handbells as an excuse to travel and ring all over the world. She spends her free time learning Italian and riding bicycles. Lisa is currently the Past Chair of Area 1 of the Handbell Musicians of America.

## Planning on Attending the International Handbell Symposium in Hamamatsu, Japan?

Go to <https://bit.ly/Symposium24Register> to register for the International Handbell Symposium.

### EQUIPMENT THAT MUST BE BROUGHT TO JAPAN BY PARTICIPANTS

- Handbells/handchimes for your position
- Music stands
- Mallets
- Gloves
- Music - must be purchased in advance
- Table covers

### PROVIDED EQUIPMENT

Tables

### EQUIPMENT TO BE PURCHASED

Foam - the total cost of foam for the HMA Ad Hoc Choir will be divided equally among the members of the ensemble.

### REGISTRATION COSTS\*

Registration for Ringers: 110,000 JPY. Includes access to all Symposium events, massed ringing, workshops, partial meals, Opening Ceremony, Closing Ceremony & banquet, all concerts, Symposium bag, etc.

Non-Ringer\*\* Program Fee: 80,000 JPY. This is for spouses and family of registrants. Non-ringers have access to most of the program except Massed Ringing. Includes ceremonies, concerts, city tour, banquet, and some meals. Additional separate tours and cultural experiences will be available.

\* Not included in registration fees: transportation to and from Hamamatsu, massed ringing music, materials for workshops, accommodations, breakfast, partial meals, travel insurance.

\*\*Chaperones cannot be registered as Non-Ringers.

### PAYMENT

Handbell Ringers of Japan will email you with payment instructions after you complete the registration form. 30,000 JPY deposit is required at the time of registration, or payment can be made in full at the time of registration.

### REGISTRATION DEADLINE

April 15, 2024 - All fees due

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel information will be provided from Kinki Nippon Tourist (KNK) soon. There are many medium size hotels within walking distance of ACT City. Room rates are expected to be 9,000 JPY-13,000 JPY per night per person with breakfast.

To learn more about International Handbell Symposium in Hamamatsu, go to <https://bit.ly/Symposium24Details>



## Hamamatsu 2024

# EVENTS!

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# Handbells in Worship

Coordinated by **Beth Ann Edwards**

## In Search Of

## Gathering Resources for Handbells in Worship

by **Beth Ann Edwards**

Beth Ann Edwards serves as Director of Arts at Plymouth Congregational Church in Des Moines, Iowa, where she assists with arts programming and directs handbell choirs. Beth Ann holds a Master of Church Music degree with Handbell Emphasis, a Bachelor of Science in secondary English education, a Bachelor of Fine Arts in visual art, and a Master of Business Administration. She attends advanced ringing events, including Bay View Week of Handbells and Distinctly Bronze. She is a founding member and co-director of Des Moines Concert Handbells. Beth Ann chairs the Donald E. Allured Original Composition Award committee, serves on the HMA National Seminar Committee, and has served on the Iowa and Area 8 HMA boards. She has held several appointed and elected positions in community and civic organizations such as the Des Moines Choral Society and Arts in the City.

As I settle into my new job as Creative Arts Director and director of the Youth Handbell Choir, I'm reminded of how much there is to learn when taking on a new job at a new church. I know how to direct and teach handbells, and how to bring creative arts to a congregation, but there is so much to learn about this new church. The church is staffed with more people and departments, and the communications systems are more sophisticated. Norms, protocols, and procedures are new to me. How do I order music? What's the procedure for getting the music titles into the bulletin? How do I maneuver the church's website and calendar? Where do I find good volunteers?

I bring this up for several reasons. Many of us have changed jobs, started a new job as a church musician, or had our current job altered in some way after the pandemic. We are in a position to make adjustments to how handbells are incorporated into worship, and we can benefit from adding new resources to our bag of tricks. Our HMA friends understand this need and want to build on our wonderful, supportive community of handbell ringers and directors.

HMA Executive Director Linda Onorevole recently sent out a communication about why we should support HMA. One bullet point immediately drew my attention: "We are working with faith-based music professionals to develop a repository of resources for incorporating handbells in worship for congregations of all sizes and denominations." Guess what! That's us! We are those faith-based music professionals, and we have been asked for our advice, our resources, and a conversation about our needs.

HMA has pushed out a new website design, allowing members to retrieve information specific to several topics. The Education and

Bell Tree committees have moved forward. The Education pages have been populated with resources and information, and the Bell Tree pages are in-progress and expected to launch in March. Now it's time to do the same for the Faith Community page. Those who read this column are the most likely to assist with this project.

### DESIRED RESOURCES

Creative and talented readers, consider the following questions: What information would you like to see on the HMA webpage? What resources would help you in your journey as a ringer or director? The following topics have been mentioned and/or presented at seminars, festivals, and workshops:

- Examples and samples of handbell music and accompaniments that can be incorporated into worship
- Ideas for incorporating handbells into worship
- Recommendations for how to start/maintain/retain/teach/etc. handbell choirs in churches
- Advice for starting and maintaining children's and youth handbell choirs
- Blog-type articles from ringers and directors in the trenches
- Bibliography of resources available
- Reviews of tried-and-true or newer music and why it is successful for worship and the ringers
- Other resources not listed

### RESOURCES THAT CAN BE SHARED

Our instrument brings together people who are generally willing to share information and experiences that benefit us and likely will benefit others. Many of you have taught

classes on handbells in worship at national, area, regional, or denominational events. Would you be willing to share some of your resources, knowledge, perspectives, handouts, etc. on this topic? Directors, have you created resources that are used at your church? For example:

- Do you have an easy processional or other ringing opportunity that has worked well for you?
- Can you recommend resources that you have confidently turned and returned to?
- Have you developed methods of teaching or leading church handbell choirs? Can your experience help others?

### ANSWER THE CALL

Opportunities await us! If you are available and willing to help in any of the following ways, please contact me (bethannedwards@msn.com), and we will move forward on this important task. We are looking for people who are willing to help with the following:

- Share ideas for potential resources that would be helpful for faith-based handbell directors and ringers, including helpful information you would like to see on this resource web page
- Share resources that you have used in seminars, classes, and workshops
- Share resources you have used in worship
- Review music for use in worship
- Assist with gathering information and preparing it for the HMA website
- Nominate someone who might be willing to assist with this project
- Other opportunities as they arise

I look forward to hearing from you! Please let me know if you have questions (or answers). After all, even though we are the experts, we all need new resources from time to time, and we all benefit from the wisdom and experience of others.



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# Community Connections

Coordinated by **Lauran Delancy**

## Share and Follow

### Staying Connected Through Social Media

by **Linda Ellison**

Linda Ellison graduated from The University of Texas in Austin with a Bachelor of Music. She retired from Alief Independent School District, where she taught elementary and intermediate school music and private flute lessons. Linda and husband, Bob, have three grown children and six wonderful grandchildren. She began ringing with Houston Bronze Ensemble in January of 2011 and currently serves as a Member at Large on the board of HBE. She has participated at Distinctly Bronze East and West, mass ringing events sponsored by Handbell Musicians of America, and had the opportunity to be a ringer in *Virtuoso*, an event sponsored by The Raleigh Ringers in North Carolina.

When asked to write this article about social media presence, I wondered what I might have to offer. There are so many wonderful websites, Facebook pages, and newsletters out there. I have learned from each of them. I started doing this for Houston Bronze Ensemble (HBE) without any experience, and it has been a “learn as you go” and “trial by error” experience. I am still learning and adjusting as social media opportunities continue to grow and change. If you think you can’t do it, I am here to tell you, “Yes, you can!”

Start simple and ask questions. Remember: it is through these posts that we share who we are and what we are doing. We can also offer our support, in some small way, for others who share our passion. It is through these social media avenues that we hope to build a custom audience across the globe, costing very little or nothing financially with only the input of some time. We can serve as cheerleaders, supporters, spreaders of good news, and empathizers for each other as we simply “Like” a post, add a comment of concern or encouragement, or share a post on Facebook. When you do this, you help that group’s outreach grow. I think back to the importance of this during the early days of COVID as we worked together using social media to figure out ways to continue or empathize when some had to shut down. Building this network offers us friends we can go to with questions like “How did you do that?” or “Where can I find this?” knowing we will get a knowledgeable answer. Handbell people are so generous with their ideas.

One purely selfish reason for having social media, regularly published newsletters, YouTube, and an up-to-date website is that it provides a history of our organization. Instead of putting items in those big scrapbooks to take up room on the shelf, things can now be neatly filed on Facebook, within the website, in

a newsletter, or on YouTube. The pictures won’t fade or become brittle. We have ten years of newsletters, Facebook posts, and YouTube videos offering us pictures, videos, and articles. Even our website provides an insight into our past with the inclusion of those newsletters and posts about special times in our history.

HBE doesn’t use *all* the possible social media options out there, primarily due to time or not having a person willing to cover that option. Whatever platform you choose, it is crucial to be consistent and keep the sites active and up-to-date. There is nothing more frustrating than to go to a website that is months behind. Facebook posts should be made regularly; my goal is two-three per week. Pictures and videos will get the most hits and are more likely to be shared. On Facebook, by looking at the list of “Likes” on a post, you can grow your audience by inviting people who liked your post but may not have followed you. Always find the time to look at other individual’s or group’s social media posts. “Like” them and comment on them as you can. If you are new to using social media, use others as examples. I know I have and still do. These are just a few hints that come to my mind.

We often hear about the negatives of social media, and it is important to be careful, but there are so many positives allowing us to build relationships and stay connected with each other. I would be amiss if I closed and didn’t invite you to check out HBE’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/HoustonBronze>, our website at [www.houstonbronze.org](http://www.houstonbronze.org), our newsletters at [www.houstonbronze.org/newsletters](http://www.houstonbronze.org/newsletters), and our YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@houstonbronzeensemble593/featured>. FOLLOW US!



The following was originally published in the July/August 1999 edition of *Handbell Zebra*, a supplemental publication for ringers. It is an additive processional, which means Ringer One starts, then every four bars, the next ringer joins the mix. When all are in place and you're ready to stop, ring and hold the first chord of the processional. For a more detailed explanation, how to expand to more octaves, and a printable version, go to the online edition at [bit.ly/HMAOvertones](http://bit.ly/HMAOvertones).

## Processional on "Hallelujah"

Based on elements from Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus"  
for three octaves of handbells

Michael R. Keller

1 2 3 4

Ringer Eight

Ringer Seven

Ringer Six

Ringer Five

Ringer Four

Ringer Three

Ringer Two

Ringer One

*f*

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# *Farewell to Valerie Stephenson*

*The handbell community has lost an icon and good friend with the passing of HMA Honorary Life Member, composer, clinician, educator, and author Valerie Stephenson.*

*Valerie's introduction to handbells came when she discovered a set of bells in her school storage closet in 1979. She soon became a trendsetter in the world of handbells in education.*

Her school, Trinity Episcopal, received one of the first Exemplary Handbell Program in Education awards. From the surprise discovery of handbells in her school, Valerie then moved into areas of local, area, and national leadership and service as part of HMA. She was active on the area leadership team in Louisiana for over 14 years and has served as Florida state chair for the last several years. Nationally, she was a chair of the bylaws committee—reviewing, rewriting, and assisting all 12 areas in bylaw compliance and revisions—and she was a member of the original handbell notation committee. She has also served on numerous national event planning teams, including the 50th anniversary celebration. She has been a regular contributor to *Overtones* and, for three years, authored the humorous column called “Potpourri.” As a composer, her published compositions number over 250.

Valerie’s son, Kevin Witherspoon, shared the following:

I rarely post on Facebook but wanted to share the sad news of my mother’s passing last Thursday in Jacksonville. Many of you knew her as our generous host for Mardi Gras gatherings in New Orleans, or the lady who tried to look out for me across various adventures. I’ll remember her as the person who called me at midnight on every birthday, so she could be the first. She offered teaching advice right to the end, even though I’ve been in front of the classroom for almost 30 years myself. And in general, she was my biggest cheerleader and fan (pretty sure she’s still the only person to offer a review of my first book on Amazon!). She asked constantly about my family and her grandkids, and wanted the best for all of us. She will be missed.

She did not want a public funeral, but feel free to share your fond memories on her Facebook page or with others in our circle of friends/family.

In addition, he wrote:

We mourn the passing of Valerie W. Stephenson, a teacher, musician, composer, mom and grandma. She passed away peacefully in Jacksonville, FL on Nov. 8, 2023.

The daughter of Doris and Eric “Bud” Wilson, she was born on Feb. 28, 1943 in Orange, New Jersey, joined eight years later by her beloved younger sister, Pam. As the family relocated to Jacksonville, FL, she attended Florida State University, completed a music degree, and spent many Saturdays on the field as a member of the world-renowned Marching Chiefs. She met and married her first husband, Lynn Witherspoon, and bore two sons, Eric and Kevin Witherspoon.

It is impossible to number the lives she impacted and shaped in her career. Completing higher degrees in music at the University of Wisconsin and Duke University, she became a music teacher. For 13 years, she taught music

to almost every student at Trinity Episcopal School in New Orleans and gave private piano lessons to many. She co-wrote three children’s musicals based on the theme of environmental awareness. She was also a member of the choir at Parkway Presbyterian Church in Metairie, LA. In New Orleans, she married her second husband, William “Monroe” Stephenson, and helped to raise her three stepchildren, Shelley, Monroe, and Scott.

At Trinity, she discovered her next passion in a storage closet: a set of handbells. After retiring from teaching, she pursued a second career with equal vigor, as a handbell composer/arranger and instructor. No one seems to know how many handbell pieces she composed or arranged. Various accounts of her life mention 250; she said it was more than 400 – perhaps there were hundreds left unpublished in her mind. The songs she published have been played by thousands of musicians all over the world. She was equally capable of writing reflective, introspective songs or upbeat, festive ones, and she was celebrated for her fearlessness in incorporating new and innovative techniques (and cursed by some for crafting fiendishly difficult pieces!). In 2014, Handbell Musicians of America recognized her with an Honorary Life Membership, an award she cherished. For years, she took a leadership role in the handbell community, and she directed many clinics and workshops for audiences both large and small.

Privately, we remember a mom and grandma who for many years was the organizer-in-chief for family gatherings. She was, at times, pushy in bringing us all together, and we affectionately nicknamed her “Bossypants.” At those gatherings, she directed the menu and the entertainment, establishing family customs and traditions that we honor today.

In addition to her music, she loved movies and horses. She never missed watching the Kentucky Derby or the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. She cheered for her Seminoles and her New Orleans Saints, and even a bit for the Jacksonville Jaguars.

Late in life, she cherished her pets almost as much as her human companions (and, depending on the day, perhaps more than her human companions!). Her beloved dogs Clara, Bonnie, and Bailey await her warm lap, and an extra treat from her kind hand, on the other side.

Valerie is predeceased by her parents Doris and Eric, her sister Pam and her brother-in-law Everett. She is survived by her two sons and their wives, Eric and Carol, and Kevin and Jacky, and grandkids Lila, Evan, Alexis and Andrew, and her stepchildren and their families. Also her dear cousin Gary and his wife Judy, a nephew Stephen and his family, and close friends Francis and Nettie. We will all miss her profoundly.

Quoting her favorite movie line, “And there you have it.”



# Handbells in Education

Coordinated by **Kathleen Wissinger**

## How We Learn

### Re-thinking Learning Practices

by **Kathleen Wissinger**

During my travels this summer, my constant companion book was *How We Learn* by New York Times science reporter Benedict Carey. The introduction of the book boldly states, “Most of our instincts about learning are flat-out wrong,” and continues to list traditional teaching practices that research is now proving to be ineffective, and even a hindrance, to the learning process. As I attended different ringing events throughout the summer, I was able to apply some of these radical new ideas in person. Surprise! They worked! Perhaps some of these new concepts will help your ringers grasp and retain new ideas, recover more easily from memory lapses and become more confident and independent performers. I’m lightly touching the material from the book, but you’ll get the idea.

#### INTERRUPTIONS CAN BE HELPFUL IN LEARNING

“Breaking up study time....deepens learning without the learner investing more time or effort.” So often in my classroom, an interesting question out of the blue from a student would skew the current lesson to a different track, and I would find myself explaining how modes or sound waves work, beating out a rhythm on a drum, or teaching the history of a sea shanty. These little side-bars gave my students a break from the task at hand with time to laugh and talk a little—and then we’d get back to the lesson at hand. For individuals, counting “backward from 547 by threes” is a good palate cleanser to clear refresh the mind. Maybe we should be more open to these mini-breaks to give our ringers time to collect, file, and own new skills.

#### CHANGING THE SCENERY HELPS WITH RETENTION OF NEW MATERIAL

Our brains are full of interconnections. The more touch points a particular memory has in its creation, the easier it will be to find and

recreate. If a new skill is only experienced in one setting (for example: standing in position 1 at the front table, ringing the new rhythm), recalling that skill offers only narrow sliver of possible touch points to help retrieve the memory. But if that same skill is experienced in a number of different settings (including, say, walking around the room while clapping and counting the rhythm, or playing the cup game with the rhythm), that memory now has multiple touchpoints that can help recall the experience. The current educational concept of scaffolding is similar—reinforcing a new skill in a variety of ways.

If your choir always uses the same set-up in the same room with the same lighting and the same positions, your ringers may not retain new information as well as if they would experience it in a number of different rooms, settings, lighting situations and positions. Even playing something on chimes or tone bars instead of bells—or using marts instead of ringing—will create a new level of context to help remember.

#### FORGETTING CAN BE A GOOD THING

“Any technique that causes forgetting (is) a ‘desirable difficulty’ in that it forces the brain to work harder to dig up a memory...(which)...intensifies subsequent retrieval and storage strength (learning).” Forgetting is a part of learning, since our brains sort information, compartmentalizing and filing, but some concepts slip through. By forgetting and then having to retrieve these concepts, they leave more bread crumb trails behind, making them easier to find next time around.

#### SINGLE TASK/BLOCK LESSONS ARE NOT IDEAL

OK, now, stick with me on this one. Focused study on one particular aspect usually produces a rapid rise in competency of that

Kathleen Wissinger is all about the bells...and bell people! Known for her creative teaching style, clear directing, and engaging compositions, she has led scores of events across the US and in Canada and Japan. She started ringing in high school, and her first directing experience was at her church with youth and teens, which turned into an almost 30-year gig. She also taught handbells in the classroom for 5th-8th graders for 18 years and presently directs Gloria Dei (an adult church group) and Mosaic Handbell Ensemble (an advanced non-profit community group). Long an outspoken cheerleader for the Guild, Kath served on the Area 3 Board for eight years and currently coordinates both the Area 3 Chime Loan program and the Handbells in Education column in *Overtones*. Her publishing company “ringTrue Handbell Music” offers a wide swath of well-crafted music from L1 to L5, solos to multiple choir pieces.

single skill—BUT when combined with other similar skills, mastery is more assured over the long haul. This practice of “interleaving” (teaching a variety of “related but distinct material” during a lesson) ends up resulting in a broader and more adaptable skill set, even though the learning curve for competency takes longer. Teaching ringers the concept of forte (loud) ringing in one loud piece is an easy lesson, but adding a piano (soft) section that requires them to adjust their ringing stroke intensity gives them a better vantage of the “general rules of motor adjustment that apply to any variation of dynamic.” From then on, they will perform diverse dynamic ranges with more prowess because they have experienced the full range of possibilities within a short period of time and could compare them.

Whatever method you use to teach your ringers, “transfer is what learning is about, really.” Transfer is “the ability to extract the essence of a skill...and apply it in another context...that may not look the same.” Those who practiced with single subject block lessons show the most improvement early on, but those who practice in a more random fashion covering more skills end up being more skillful and accurate because they are forced to “make continual adjustments...(sharpening)...each specific skill.”

## **DISTRACTIONS CAN ENHANCE LEARNING**

Music, TV, or activity in the background of a learning environment can help hone certain kinds of learning skills, especially those that require problem-solving. We have to work harder to concentrate on the job at hand if there are distractions surrounding us. This might be described as getting into “the zone.” I put this idea into practice at “Into the Forest,” the bell tree conference in Minneapolis this past summer. Individuals signed up for practice sessions in the sanctuary, during which anyone else in the room tried to be quiet. A bell tree soloist was struggling with a tricky section of her piece, and I, having just read this section of the book on distractions, took it upon myself to offer her a kindly, helpful distraction, waving my arms and talking while she worked on that small section. The results were amazing! We were both surprised at her immediate improvement in that section.

## **PRACTICE, LEARNING, AND PERFORMANCE**

Haven't we all opened music just before a performance and thought, “I've never seen this music before!”? In the few weeks prior to a performance, I often have my ringers play a piece “out of the box” at the beginning of a class, without any prep after a full week off, to see where their weak spots are or what they didn't remember. Showcasing the forgotten elements helped them recall and refile these items, with the hope of having them more readily available next time around.

Repetitive practicing in a controlled environment with a single focus, without distractions or interruptions, with

ample time to plan ahead and avoid any mishaps does not necessarily prepare us to perform well—nor does it always promote the best learning environment. Performance plunks us into a different world with distractions and mistakes, requiring quick thinking and problem solving on the fly. Consider exposing your ringers to some of these effective new learning strategies; preparing them to be flexible, adept, versatile and confident musicians.

Carey, Benedict (2015). *How we learn: The surprising truth about when, where, and why it happens.*

Random House. <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/221559/how-we-learn-by-benedict-carey/>

*Area 8 Commissions Work to Honor Kipp Willnauer*



*Kipp Willnauer*

Area 8 lost a very special friend, Kipp Willnauer, a past Area 8 board member, this past October. He was a friend to everyone, an advocate of our handbell art, and an extreme Area 8 volunteer, having helped with countless workshops and festivals. Area 8 has commissioned a handbell composition in Kipp's honor and the piece will be premiered at this summer's Area 8 Festival. Please consider donating to this effort via the QR code or send a check to Tami Kofran, Area 8 Treasurer. Donations can be sent to Tami at PO Box 15, Janesville, IA 50647.



## *Classified Ads*

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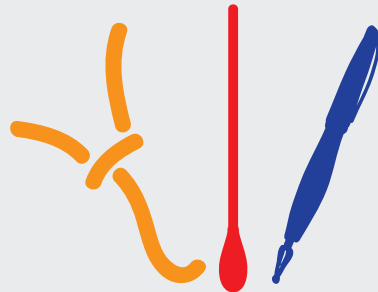
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# SPECIAL PERFORMANCE & LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

## All-Star Choir with David Harris

Selected participants will rehearse advanced music and perform in a public concert on the final day of National Seminar. Those who wish to participate must audition on Tuesday, July 9, 3:00-4:30 PM Eastern, and must attend all rehearsals if selected. One choir will be selected from those that audition. When registering for the event, those planning to audition should select a class for the planned All-Star rehearsal sessions, in the event that they are not selected.

*Festive Praises*, L5, Gramann, AGEHR, AG45043

*In the Shadow of Your Wings*, L3, Buckwalter, Beckenhorst, HB787

*I'm a Believer*, L3+, Eithun, Agape, 2808

*Gethsemane*, L3, Hascall, Red River, RRBL5022

*Four Resonances*, L5+, Payn, AGEHR, AG46008J

*Beer Barrel Polka*, L3, Morris, From the Top Music, 20721

## Beginning Ringing Track with Griff Gall

This ringing track provides hands-on experience with basic to intermediate ringing techniques in a learning-focused, stress-free environment. Work on four pieces, a selection of which will be performed in an Open House setting for fellow ringing track participants and a small audience.

*Amazing Grace*, L2, S. Eithun, Red River Music, MRRBL5056

*Calming Peace*, L2, Moglebust, Choristers Guild, MCGB439

*Clarion Call*, Joy, L2+, Choristers Guild, MCGB864

*Dawn of a New Day*, L2+, Krug, GIA Publications, Inc., MGIG9964

### Note:

Track participants must purchase music in advance and attend all sessions.

## Intermediate Ringing Track with Sandra Eithun

Stretch your ringing skills with a challenging, diverse, and engaging selection of repertoire. Multiple treble bell techniques, weaving, bass bell techniques, malleting, chime techniques, assignment strategies, stage presence, and other skills will be employed. All ringing tracks will perform a selection of their repertoire for each other and a small audience in an Open House setting.

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*, L2+, M. Eithun, GIA Publications, GIG9813

*Alleluia*, L3, Tervo, AGEHR Publishing, AG35318

*Sweet Hour of Prayer*, L3, Krug, Choristers Guild, CGB879

*The God of Abraham Praise*, L3, Lamb, AGEHR Publishing, AG35252

*Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*, L2+, S. Eithun, Hope Publishing, HP2801

## Advanced Ringing Track with Andy Wallace

Read and work on five pieces that incorporate various styles and challenges. Sessions will challenge each ringer to think conceptually about how to make their ringing even more musical. This track is appropriate for the advanced ringer or a ringer desiring assistance to move to a new level. All ringing tracks will perform a selection of their repertoire for each other and a small audience in an Open House setting.

*Allegro from Solomon*, L5, Griffin, Beckenhorst Press, MBEHB270

*His Eye is On the Sparrow*, L3+, Childers, Beckenhorst Press, MBEHB709

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*, L4, Compton, From the Top Music, MFM20570

*I'm a Believer*, L3+, Eithun, Hope Publishing, MHP2808

*Spiritoso*, L5, Sherman, Hope Publishing, MHP2469P

# CLASSES AND FACULTY

Classes at National Seminar cover all aspects of handbell musicianship, including: techniques for treble to bass, solo to ensemble, musicality, percussion, and rhythm; managing and building a handbell program; and so much more.

## **50 Shades of Damping**

*Michèle Sharik*

## **Adaptive Notation: Evolving into the Digital World**

*Diana Montgomery*

## **Advanced Bass Bells: Developing the Individual Ringer and the Section**

*Justin Wooten*

## **All About That Bass: Digging Deeper**

*Leslie Lewis*

## **Arranging Rock, Pop, and Jazz for Handbells**

*Ron Mallory*

## **Audition Skills for Ringers**

*Sharon Schmidt*

## **Balloons**

*Stevie Berryman*

## **Basic Percussion Methods**

*Jack Burdwood*

## **Basics Revisited: Your 100,000 Measure Tune-Up**

*Michèle Sharik*

## **Be Prepared for the Unexpected**

*Kevin Mazimas Ko*

## **Beginner Bass Bells: Molding the Individual Ringer and the Section**

*Justin Wooten*

## **Beginning Solo Ringing**

*Ron Bellamy*

## **Behind the Baton**

*Deborah Rice*

## **Bell Trees Continued: Beyond the First Branch**

*Laura Blauch*

## **Between the Music**

*Pamela (P.L.) Grove*

## **Choosing Repertoire for the Classroom**

*Brian Seemann*

## **Class Composition: A Creative Collaboration**

*Kathleen Wissinger*

## **Conducting 101: You're the Leader, Now What!?**

*Joy Toll-Chandler*

## **Coordination Conundrums**

*Marie Loeffler*

## **Developing Spiritual Community**

*Mitchell Eithun*

## **Do Not Be Afraid: Theory is Fun!**

*Joy Toll-Chandler*

## **Easy Music Programming & Recording with GarageBand**

*Damien Lim*

## **Engaging Students with Handchimes and Literature in the Elementary Music Classroom**

*Charlotte Herbstsomer*

## **Fascinating Rhythms: System of Ta**

*Susan Capestro*

## **Fewer Hands Can Still Make Big Music!**

*Kathleen Wissinger*

## **First Look: Strategies for Sight-Reading Success**

*Stevie Berryman*

## **Going Digital: Using Technology for Music in Handbells**

*Rick Holdsworth*

## **Handbells, Data Science, and Artificial Intelligence**

*Mitchell Eithun*

## **"How Do I Conduct That?" Keeping the Bell Choir Together When the Music Gets Weird**

*Joel Plaag*

## **Instilling Musicality in the Beginning Handbell Choir**

*Daniel Moore*



**Intermediate Solo Ringing***Ron Bellamy***Introduction to Bell Trees: The First Branch***Laura Blauch***Just 2s and 3s: Rhythms Made Easy!***Brian Seemann***Keep Calm and Carillon***Mitchell Eithun***Left or Right? A Guide to Malleting***Jack Burdwood***Music Activities, Bells, and Chimes for Older Adults***Bruna Marinho de Almeida***Music Theory (and Why It's Important)***Ron Mallory***Musicality in Handbells***David Harris***Off the Table! Handbell/Handchime Activities for the General Music Classroom***Gillian Erlenborn***Plink, Plank, Plunk: 1 + 2 = Malleting***Damien Lim***Practicing at Home – With or Without Bells***Ron Mallory***Problem Solving for Rhythm Challenges***Marcelle Nuoffer***Quartet Ringing Basics***Sharon Schmidt***Refreshing and New Teambuilding Activities***Greg Urban***Repeatable Changes***Sharon Schmidt***Ringers Rehearsal Techniques***Beth Judd***Roundtable: I'm Excited, Now Where Is Everybody?***Michael Glasgow***Roundtable: Managing Performance Anxiety***Nikki Evans***Roundtable: Next Steps for Bells in Schools***Gillian Erlenborn/Bells in Schools Committee***Roundtable: The Care and Feeding of Your Handbell Clinician***Brenda Austin***Scavenger Hunt: Deciphering Handbell Notation***Lisa Arnold***Shtick Happens***Stevie Berryman***Spinning Around the Circle of Fifths***Michael Glasgow***Stage Presence and Its Importance***Hillary Marotta***Take It Up a Notch: How to Advance Beyond the Basics***Jennifer Stack***Take Me Out to the Bell Game!***Lisa Arnold***The Struggle is Real! Rehearsal Techniques and Strategies for Developing Directors***Lynn Atkins***There's More Than One Way to Peel a Banana (A Hands-On Overview of Different Assignment Methods)***Michelè Sharik***Training for Handbells: Building Strength, Endurance, and Durability***Justin Wooten***Understanding and Integrating Jazz into Handbell Music***Travis Maslen***Using Boomwhackers with Specials Needs Populations, Young Students, Seniors, and Dementia Patients***Charlotte Herbstsomer***Wakeups, Warmups & Wrap-ups***Michael Glasgow***When Left is Right: Weaving and Displacement***Pamela (P.L.) Grove*

See Class Descriptions at [Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org](http://Seminar.HandbellMusicians.org)



# 2024

July 11-13, 2024

**Erik Der, Conductor**

*A fun and exciting handbell event for ringers ages 13-18*

Spend 2½ days playing intermediate to advanced repertoire and developing skills in handbell technique and general musicianship under the leadership of Erik Der.

Perform in a shared concert with the All-Star Choir during National Seminar that will be livestreamed.

\$145/person. Scholarships available.



Details at  
[handbellmusicians.org/event/distinctly-teen](https://handbellmusicians.org/event/distinctly-teen)

# REGISTRATION OPTIONS

## Full Event Registration Options for HMA Members:

Standard Registration, \$440

Available: Jan. 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024

Connecticut Resident Standard Registration, \$420

Available: Jan. 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024

July Registration, \$475

Available: July 1, 2024 – July 9, 2024

Connecticut Resident July Registration, \$455

Available: July 1, 2024 – July 9, 2024

## Full Event Registration Options for Non-HMA

**Members:** (includes a 1-year HMA membership, \$95)

Standard Registration, \$535

Available: Jan. 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024

Connecticut Resident Standard Registration, \$515

Available: Jan. 1, 2024 – June 30, 2024

July Registration, \$570

Available: July 1, 2024 – July 9, 2024

Connecticut Resident July Registration, \$550:

Available: July 1, 2024 – July 9, 2024

## Daily Registration Options:

HMA Member Single Day Registration, \$120

Available: Nov. 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Connecticut Resident HMA Member Single Day Registration, \$105

Available: Nov. 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Non-HMA Member Single Day Registration, \$140

Available: Nov. 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Connecticut Resident Non-HMA Member Single Day Registration, \$125

Available: Nov. 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

HMA Member July Single Day Registration, \$135

Available: July 1-13, 2024

Connecticut Resident HMA Member July Single Day Registration, \$120

Available: July 1-13, 2024

Non-HMA Member July Single Day Registration, \$155

Available: July 1-13, 2024

Connecticut Resident Non-HMA Member July Single Day Registration, \$140

Available: July 1-13, 2024

## The Official Hotel for National Seminar is the Hartford Marriott Downtown

The HMA group rate is \$160 USD per night for standard single and double rooms.

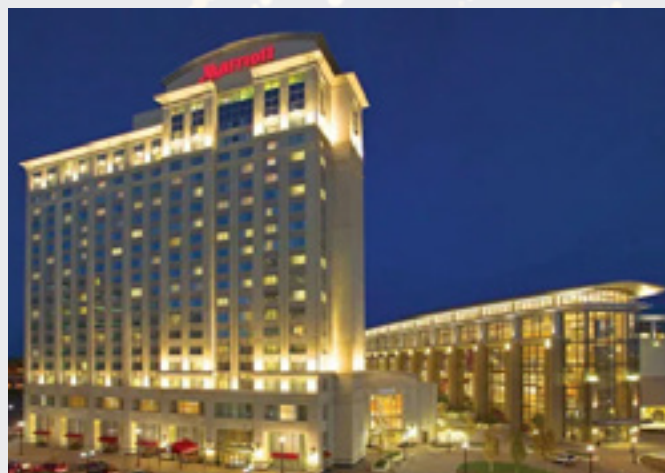
This group rate is available two days pre and post-event based on hotel availability.

Group discounted parking rates are \$19 for self-parking per overnight and \$25 for valet.

Free high-speed internet is included for Marriott BonVoy members.

Deadline to Book at Special Group Rate: Friday, June 14, 2024.

**IMPORTANT:** When following the booking link and clicking on "Check Availability" of rooms, there will be an indicator that there is "1 Room Left." That is not true and it can be ignored.



## AREA 1

### Area 1 Spotlight on Spring Rings throughout New England

# Ring in Spring!

Meet new people, become more effective in your ringing or directing skills, learn from great directors, and share experiences with fellow handbell musicians in a social atmosphere.

Registration is now open for these Spring Rings throughout New England. All are welcome! Click this QR code or visit [area1.handbellmusicians.org/spring-rings](https://area1.handbellmusicians.org/spring-rings).



**Cape Cod & Islands Spring Ring - March 16**  
Harwich, MA  
Clinician: David Harris

**Greater Boston/New Hampshire Spring Ring - April 6**  
Tewksbury Memorial High School  
Clinician: Griff Gall

**Rhode Island Ring-A-Palooza - April 13**  
Dunn's Corner Community Church  
Clinician: Jane Nolan

**Connecticut Spring Ring - April 20**  
Wethersfield United Methodist Church  
Clinician: Sam Beschta

**Maine Spring Ring - April 27**  
Auburn Middle School  
Clinicians: Michael Joy & Joy Toll-Chandler



## AREA 2



# Back to Bells

Area 2 can offer help in training directors, attracting ringers and getting bell programs started.

- Are your bells packed away and you'd like to investigate pulling them out again?
- Do you know of a church or group that has all the equipment and you would love to help them rebuild their program?

We are eager to help you, and these groups do just that, getting them **BACK TO BELLS**.

Contact me at [mentoring.area2@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:mentoring.area2@handbellmusicians.org)

**Kaye Miller**

## AREA 3

### UPCOMING AREA 3 EVENTS

MARCH 8, 2024 @ 4:00 PM - MARCH 9, 2024 @ 5:30 PM

#### OCEAN CITY AREA 3 FESTIVAL

ROLAND E. POWELL CONVENTION CENTER 4001 COASTAL HIGHWAY, OCEAN CITY, MD,  
UNITED STATES

MARCH 15, 2024 @ 4:00 PM - MARCH 16, 2024 @ 5:30 PM

#### SOUTHERN AREA 3 FESTIVAL

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 311 3RD AVE NE, HICKORY, NC, UNITED STATES

FOR DETAILS, VISIT [AREA3.HANDBELLMUSICIANS.ORG/EVENTS-CALENDAR/](https://area3.handbellmusicians.org/events-calendar/)

## AREA 4



## AREA 5

Inspiring 2024 comes to Indianapolis, Indiana on February 17-18, 2024. The event promotes community, ringing, and performance for young adult ringers from around the United States. Kyle Webber brings creative experience as a conductor and composer in choosing repertoire and thematic programming for this event. Repertoire for Inspiring 2024 features an impressive range of styles and composers supporting the theme "Inspiring Earth." Pieces include When the

Poor Ones (Kyle Webber), Transitions of the Heart (Matthew Compton), Road Trip (Ron Mallory), For the Beauty of the Earth (Brenda Austin), The Unclouded Day (Brian Seeman), Celebration Journey (Michael Mazzatenta), and Free Fall (Jason Krug). Rehearsals and the final concert are held in the Ruth Lilly Performance Hall at the University of Indianapolis. Details are available on the Area 5 website.



## AREA 6

# Scholarships available

Did you know

Area 6 offers a scholarship  
to National Seminar?

[www.area6.handbellmusicians.org](http://www.area6.handbellmusicians.org) > RESOURCES > National Seminar Scholarship  
*Scholarship is for registration fees, does not include travel or lodging*  
**Scholarship applications due by March 15**



## AREA 7

**Save The Dates!**

**YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS**

**The Incredible**

**2024 Area 7 Festival**

**"Ringing Between the Bluffs"**

**JUNE (20) 21-23, 2024**

**LA CROSSE CENTER - LA CROSSE, WISCONSIN**

**Clinicians: Sandra Eithun • Alex Guebert • Lee Afdahl**



**Dinner Cruise**



**Beer Choir Event**

Scan the QR Code for:

- Repertoire
- Schedule
- Conductors
- Options and Events

## AREA 8

**Area 8 Festival**

June 20–22, 2024  
Columbia, Missouri



Registration opens in January!

**Ringing! Classes!**  
**Concerts! Shopping!**  
**Networking!**



Check the Area 8 website for more information  
[area8.handbellmusicians.org](http://area8.handbellmusicians.org)



Stevie Berryman, Clinician



Greig Ashurst, Clinician

## AREA 9

### AREA 9--Texas/Oklahoma

June 21-22, 2024

University of Central Oklahoma  
Edmond, OK



featuring

**Matthew Compton**  
**SAVE THE DATE!**

[https://area9.handbellmusicians.org/!](https://area9.handbellmusicians.org/)

#### Massed

**Hashivenu** (Rise Up and Sing) arr. Austin  
Level 2 (3-6 oct bells; opt 3-5 oct chimes)  
Hope 3028

**Simplicity** by Matthew Compton  
Level 2 (3-6 oct bells; opt 3-7 oct chimes)  
Evergreen Music - EGM109

**Song of Assurance** arr. Arnold Sherman  
Level 2/2+ Choristers Guild  
CGB604 (2-3 oct bells or chimes) Level 2  
CGB605 (3-5 oct bells) Level 2+

#### Intermediate

**Come, Christians, Join to Sing** arr. Compton  
Level 3+ (3-6 oct bells; opt 3-6 oct chimes)  
Evergreen Music - EGM116

**Deep River** arr. Hart Morris  
Level 3 (3-5 oct bells with opt oboe, flute and/or cello)  
Ring Out Press - RO3249

#### Advanced

**Spiritus Sanctus** by Matthew Compton  
Level 3+ (3-7 oct bells; opt 3 oct chimes)  
Choristers Guild - CGB1167

**My Strength Is from Heaven** Christian Humcke  
Level 4 (5-7 oct bells)  
Choristers Guild - CGB1227

## AREA 10

### SPRING RINGING IN AREA 10

February 9-10, 2024 - **Snake River Handbell Conference** - Nampa, Idaho  
... Level 2-3 music of various styles, techniques, and seasons  
Clinician: **Michael Joy**

April 5-7, 2024 - **Coppers Classic** - Clackamas, Oregon  
... An opportunity for advanced copper musicians to push themselves  
Founder/Director: **Ellie Hodder**

April 26-27, 2024 - **Big Sky Handbell Festival** - Helena, Montana  
... Choirs from Idaho, Montana and beyond, learn and perform ... the 41st year  
Clinician: **Sandra Eithun**

May 3-4, 2024 - **Siskiyou Summit Handbell Conference** - Ashland, Oregon  
... Vintage and Vogue - selections from the earliest handbell music and the most recent  
Clinician: **Barb Walsh**

<https://area10.handbellmusicians.org/area-10-events/>



## AREA 11



Saturday, February 10, 2024  
9am-12pm (local time)

9 Locations in Area 11  
available on our website

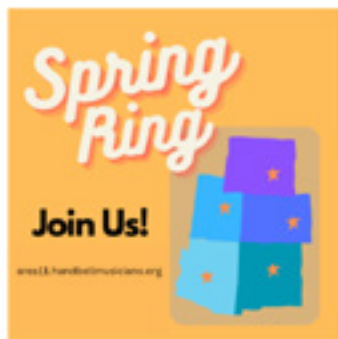
Join us for our annual Read and Ring – a fun morning of sight reading music with the opportunity to buy the music.

### Utah Spring Ring

Date: Saturday, March 9, 2024  
Location: Lehi, UT  
Clinician: Stephanie Rhodes

### Arizona Spring Ring

Date: May 4, 2024  
Location: Paradise Valley LMC  
Clinician: Ashley Strawser



### Wyoming Spring Ring

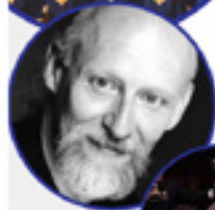
Date: May 10-11, 2024  
Location: Casper, WY  
Clinician: Brenda Austin

### Colorado Spring Ring

Date: Saturday, March 9, 2024  
Location: Loveland, CO  
Clinician: Brian Childers

### New Mexico Spring Ring

Date: March 16, 2024  
Location: Central LMC, Albuquerque  
Clinician: Anne Kline



June 13-16, 2024  
Hilton Salt Lake City Center

### FEATURING

Tim Waugh | Bells at Temple Square  
Wesley Bell Ringers | Mass Ringing  
Ringing Up! Tracks | Classes  
King of Fame Banquet

### REGISTRATION INCLUDES:

- Mass Ringing and Ringing Up! Track w/ director Tim Waugh
- B+ Classes for All Levels  
*Continuing Education Credit Available*
- Admission to All Concerts  
*Including Bells at Temple Square performing at the Tabernacle*
- 5 Meals  
*Including the King of Fame Banquet*

### WEBSITE:

[area11.handbellmusicians.org/festival](http://area11.handbellmusicians.org/festival)

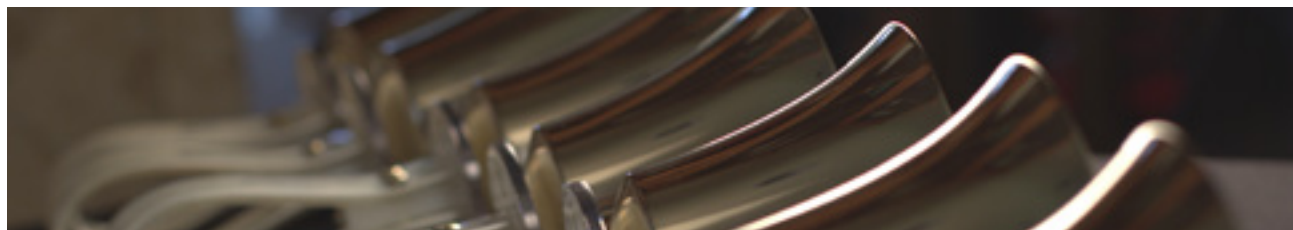
### CONTACT INFO:

[events.area11@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:events.area11@handbellmusicians.org)



Handbell Musicians of America | Area 11

## AREA 12



## COMPOSITION CONTEST

Area 12 invites all composers to participate in the Area 12 Composition Contest for our 2024 Youth Festival.

**Prize:** \$1500

**Deadline:** January 31, 2024

Additional details can be found at:  
<https://area12.handbellmusicians.org/composition-contest/>  
or by contacting Tessique Houston at  
[pastchair.area12@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:pastchair.area12@handbellmusicians.org)

The winning submission will be appealing to a youth choir (primarily in the 6-12 grade range), able to be learned in a weekend conference, and may include percussion and/or vocal parts.



Area 12  
Handbell Musicians  
OF AMERICA

# leadership **DIRECTORY**

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## AREA 1 (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT)

Chair: Jennifer Stack, chair.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair-Elect: Greg Urban, chairelect.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Lisa Arnold, pastchair.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Harriet Forman, secretary.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Lauren Larson, treasurer.area1@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Suzanne Neafus (CT) ct.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Dana Humphreys (ME) me.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Audrey Pierce (Western MA) ma.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Abby Schoppe (Greater Boston/NH) nh.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Suzanne Neafus (RI) ri.area1@handbellmusicians.org  
Patricia Pranger (VT) vt.area1@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 2 (NJ, NY, PA)

Chair: Sarah Hazel, chair.area2@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Elizabeth Nowik, pastchair.area2@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 3 (DE, DC, MD, NC, VA)

Chair: Kerry Johnston, chair.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair-Elect: Debbie Henning, chairelect.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Marcia Payne-Wooten, secretary.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Karen Strausser, treasurer.area3@handbellmusicians.org

### BOARD MEMBERS

Teri Gregory, boardmember1.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Patricia Lane, boardmember2.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Dottie Tweedie, boardmember3.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Alan Payne, boardmember4.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Neesa Hart, boardmember5.area3@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Jerry Hill (Metro DC) dc.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Reggie Fox (VA) va.area3@handbellmusicians.org  
Blaine Russell (NC) nc.area3@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 4 (FL, GA, SC)

Chair: William J. Murphy, chair.area4@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair-Elect: Carlos E. Rivera-Aponte, chairelect.area4@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Jenny Freeman, pastchair.area4@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Suzanne Holton, secretary.area4@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Michael Lamb, treasurer.area4@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 5 (IN, KY, MI, OH, WV)

Chair: Jarod Ogier, chair.area5@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair-Elect: Shannon Hardiek, chairelect.area5@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Jane Snow, secretary.area5@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Sherri Stoffer, treasurer.area5@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Cheryl Onesky (OH) oh.area5@handbellmusicians.org  
Jeffrey Scott Doeblor (IN) in.area5@handbellmusicians.org  
Hannah Wheaton (MI) mi.area5@handbellmusicians.org  
Abby Wentzel (KY) ky.area5@handbellmusicians.org  
Bryon Yetter (WV) wv.area5@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 6 (AR, AL, MS, LA, TN)

Chair: Gary Bynum, chair.area6@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair-Elect: Les Beaver, chairelect.area6@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Mary Caldwell, pastchair.area6@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Beth Wilson, secretary.area6@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Becky Price, treasurer.area6@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Carole Millard (TN) tn.area6@handbellmusicians.org  
Lisa Hester (AR) ar.area6@handbellmusicians.org  
Heather Batchelor (AL) al.area6@handbellmusicians.org  
Barbara Williams (LA) la.area6@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 7 (MN, ND, SD, WI)

Chair: Jennifer Cadwell, chair.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair Elect: Paul McKenzie, chairelect.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Anita Fraundorf, pastchair.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Diane LaFontaine, secretary.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Sally Sterk, treasurer.area7@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Karisa Templeton (ND) ndakota.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Cathy Moklebust (SD) sdakota.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Jordan Goodwater (MN-N) minnesotanorth.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Chad Winterfeldt (MN-S) minnesotasouth.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Akudo Omeoga (MN-TwC) twincities.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Lisa Bourget (WI-S) wisconsinsouth.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Denean Smith (WI-N) wisconsinnorth.area7@handbellmusicians.org  
Ron Vert (Manitoba) manitoba.area7@handbellmusicians.org

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### ADDITIONAL AREA ASSIGNMENTS

Canadian Provinces: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, PEI and Quebec, Area 1; Ontario, Area 2; Manitoba, Area 7; Alberta, British Columbia & Saskatchewan, Area 10;  
Puerto Rico, Bahamas, Virgin Islands, Area 4

## AREA 8 (IL, IA, KS, MO, NE)

Chair: Chris Peck, chair.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair Elect: Lori Fenton, chairelect.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Sharon Schmidt, pastchair.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Sara Washington, secretary.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Tami Kofran, treasurer.area8@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Beth McFarland (IL-North) ilno2.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Dick Crusinberry (IA) ia.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Janelle Flory Schrock (KS Co-chair) ks.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Julie Assel (KS Co-chair) ks2.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Byron Jensen (NE) ne.area8@handbellmusicians.org  
Trey Bures (MO) mo.area8@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 9 (OK, TX)

Chair: Mark Arnold, chair.area9@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair Elect: Stephanie Rhoades, chairelect.area9@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Dellinda Ebeling, pastchair.area9@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Sandy Milner, secretary.area9@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Diana Montgomery, treasurer.area9@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Cyndi Erp-Long (S TX) txrep1.area9@handbellmusicians.org  
Brittney Axton (N TX) txrep2.area9@handbellmusicians.org  
William Wade (OK) okrep.area9@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 10 (AK, ID, MT, OR, WA)

Chair: Shelley Giaier, chair.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair-Elect: Tomi Kent, chairelect.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Barb Silvey, pastchair.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Shosh Meyer, secretary.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Ellie Hodder, treasurer.area10@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Corbin Rasmussen (ID) id.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Heather Dixon (OR) or.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Julie Hunziker (WA) wa.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Linda Hightower (MT) mt.area10@handbellmusicians.org  
Caroline Valentine (AK) ak.area10@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 11 (AZ, CO, NM, UT, WY)

Chair: LeAnna Willmore, chair.area11@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair Elect: Anne Kelley, chairelect.area11@handbellmusicians.org  
Past Chair: Anne Kleve, pastchair.area11@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary/Treasurer: Jill Persichetti, treasurer.area11@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Glen Hicks (Mountain) mountain.area11@handbellmusicians.org  
Nancy Roberts-Small (Desert) desert.area11@handbellmusicians.org

## AREA 12 (CA, HI, NV)

Chair: Marci Nuoffer, chair.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Chair-Elect: Michèle Sharik, chairelect.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Past-Chair: Tessique Houston, pastchair.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Secretary: Carol Pickford, secretary.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Treasurer: Kathy Arnold, treasurer.area12@handbellmusicians.org

### STATE CHAIRS

Nancy Schmitt (Far CA-N) farnorcal.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Cindy Ksiazek (CA-N) norcal.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Michèle Sharik (CA-S) social.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Marquise Usher (SF Bay) bayarea.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Barbara Walsh (NV-N) nv.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Karen Carlisle (HI) hi.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Erik Der (LA-Metro) lametro.area12@handbellmusicians.org  
Alison Pruettt (NV-S) vegas.area12@handbellmusicians.org

## Regional Membership Coordinators

Mya Dundzila - East (Areas 1–6)  
mdundzila@handbellmusicians.org  
937-438-0085 ext. 800

Kim Braswell - West (Areas 7–12)  
kbraswell@handbellmusicians.org  
937-438-0085 ext. 808

## National Board

Greig Ashurst, President  
gashurst@handbellmusicians.org

Kathryn Jurado, President-Elect  
kjurado@handbellmusicians.org

Lynn Atkins, At-Large Director  
latkins@handbellmusicians.org

Tracey Bowers, At-Large Director  
tbowers@handbellmusicians.org

Gillian Erlenborn, At-Large Director  
gerlenborn@handbellmusicians.org

David Harris, At-Large Director  
dharris@handbellmusicians.org

Kathleen Wissinger, At-Large Director  
kwissinger@handbellmusicians.org

HANDBELL MUSICIANS  
OF AMERICA

# master series

July 6-9, 2024



Prior to National Seminar, we offer a series of masterclasses, featuring intensive learning opportunities with top instructors.

## CONDUCTING

The Conducting Masterclass is limited to thirteen conductors who will be assigned one piece to learn and conduct under Dr. William Payn's tutelage. There will be a handbell choir of ringer/observers to perform all pieces, and the event concludes with a final showcase concert where each conducting student will conduct their piece for an audience. An application is required to be considered, along with a video from within the last 12 months of the candidate conducting two pieces of contrasting styles. Dr. Payn will be retiring as a Handbell Musicians of America teacher after this event, and we anticipate the interest to be high for this session. We encourage applicants to thoughtfully complete their applications and provide video that effectively showcases their work (recorded from above and behind the choir performing, facing the conductor). Conducting applications that include video links are due by February 26, 2024.

There is an opportunity for 13 handbell musicians to participate in the Conducting Masterclass as Ringer/Observers who will ring the compositions for the student

# OVERTONES

Handbell Musicians of America  
201 E. Fifth Street, Suite 1900-1025  
Cincinnati, OH 45202

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
MADISON, WI  
PERMIT NO. 2223

Spring 2024 • Volume 70, Number 1 • \$10.00 USA  
If you are moving, please e-mail us your new address at  
[info@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:info@handbellmusicians.org)

conductors, and have the opportunity to watch and learn from Dr. Payn as he mentors the conductors. No application is required, and interested participants should simply proceed to registration. Participation is processed in the order of registration and a waiting list will be available. Ringer-observer registration closes April 1, 2024.

## COMPOSITION

Eight composers will have the opportunity to work with Sondra Tucker to hone their skills in composing and arranging. Participants must have at least one composition or arrangement in process on arrival, which they will focus on for the event. Keyboards will be available and ample time will be provided to work on compositions/arrangements. The composers will be part of group discussions and collaborations. Participation is processed in the order of registration and a waiting list will be available. Composition registration closes April 1, 2024.

## SOLO RINGING

Eight solo ringers will have the opportunity to work individually with Linda Krantz to hone their skills in solo ringing. Group discussion and collaboration among participants will also occur. The session concludes with a private showcase where the solo ringers will perform their pieces with piano accompaniment for each other. An application is required to be considered, along with a video link of the applicant solo ringing. Videos should be from the last 12 months, and recorded from in front of the applicant to allow for a clear view of their ringing and bells on the table. Solo Ringing applications that include video links are due by February 26, 2024.

Details at [handbellmusicians.org/event/master-series](https://handbellmusicians.org/event/master-series)