



Clapper Chatter

Minnesota - North Dakota - South Dakota - Wisconsin - Manitoba

Area 7 Report

(Traditionally an Area 7 Report takes place at the Leadership Meeting during the bi-annual Festival Conference. Since the Festival has been postponed until 2022, a brief report is presented here).

The Area 7 Board is comprised of an all-volunteer group of voting and non-voting members (the names and positions are listed elsewhere in this newsletter). Elections take place every two (even numbered) years for Chair-Elect, Secretary and Treasurer. Since there was a special election last fall to fill the vacant Chair-Elect position, this spring's ballot is for Secretary and Treasurer only. The election results are typically announced at the Festival Conference but with the postponement of that event, watch for a special announcement after the voting period has closed.

Membership in Area 7 hovers around the 300 mark. With the national change from membership renewals every month to a once-a-year renewal date of March 31, a significant number of our membership missed that deadline this year. Sub Area Chairs or other members of the board will be sending out renewal reminders so no one misses out on their membership benefits. Don't forget that ringers in a member's choir can get a sub-membership for only \$10 a year! The HMA website lists membership categories and benefits.

Area 7 Sponsored Events scheduled during the past two years have included the Festival Conference, Director's Seminar, Anthornis, Kids Ring, AdventuRing, Copper Ring and Young Ringers' Camp. Unfortunately, inclement weather has forced cancellation of several of those events so Anthornis and Kids' Ring moved to the month of November in 2019.

It was a difficult decision to postpone the 2020 Festival Conference, originally scheduled for June (25)26-28, but the Executive Team and Events Coordinator felt it was in the best interest of the participants. Most, if not eventually all, of the planning will be implemented in June, 2022. The Special Event payments and registration deposit refunds requested have been returned to the purchaser. Contact the Chair, Anita Fraudorf, if you have questions.

There are also Area 7 Endorsed Events that members or member organizations may offer to handbell ringers. More information and the application can be found on the Handbell Musicians of America (HMA) website. These events should also align with the HMA mission of being "dedicated to advancing the musical art of handbell/handchime ringing through education, community and communication" and the vision of "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". Endorsed Event organizers can apply for an Area 7 grant to assist with expenses. Information on the grant application is on the Area 7 website. A recent example of an Endorsed Event is the Appleton, WI workshop on March 14, 2020, organized by members of the Encore! ensemble of northeastern Wisconsin. Anyone interested in exploring an Endorsed Event option, contact the Area 7 Chair who is willing to help you with planning and implementation.

Past Chair, Karen Van Wert, has been working with the national office's Publications Director, JR Smith, to update the Area 7 website. Watch for information about a "roll out." Our gratitude and thanks to long-time Web Administrator, Paul McKlveen, for all he has done for Area 7 over the years.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Dr. Ona Pinsonneault for sharing her Music Theory expertise in Clapper Chatter and at Festivals over the years. The archived articles will remain a valuable resource for ringers and directors alike.

Please feel free to contact Area 7 Board members with suggestions or questions. Thank you for your support for Area 7!

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MUSIC THEORY.aargh©

Why Cb? (Session 39)

By Dr. Ona Pinsonneault



In the short amount of time that I have been ringing bells I have purchased a few scores, usually for Festivals and Anthornis. I have rung in the battery, close to the ringer on the B4 C5 bells. One rehearsal the ringer turned to me and asked, "Why do I have a Cb?" It was difficult in a short amount of time to convince the ringer that "Cb" was a real note, "Why can't they just use 'B natural?' ", the ringer asked.

I looked through the scores that I own and have discovered that the amount of time that "Cb" is needed is about 1 per cent of the time. There are multiple uses for "C" and "C#", but not "Cb."

Reasons for using any bell would be to fulfill one of two things, a melodic or a harmonic purpose. The bell used is either part of the melody or part of the harmony.

Melodically here is a "Cb". Sandra Winter opens her composition called "Genesis" (Beckenhorst Press, Inc, 2009) with this sequence. (Some notes have been omitted for clarity.) The composer wants measures 5-8 to sound like 1-4 but transposed up a third. The exactness of this transposition creates a "Cb" on the third downbeat of measure 5-7. (Does the ringer appreciate having a "Bb" and a "Cb" to play, clearly one with each hand?)

Harmonically a Cb Major chord was used by Betty Radford in "A Spirit of Joy" (From the Top- Music, 2017). This example contains measures 19-22. Again, the Cb Major chord sounds the same when written B, D# F#, but imagine how that would look for ringers. Also, this composition is in the key of Eb Major, a key with three flats. Flats are related to this key.

measure 19

D# add6 Cb A#m Bb

Db F Ab Bb Cb Eb Gb Ab Cb Eb Bb D F

I have decided that this column will be my last submission on a regular basis. I am always open to discussing theory questions that you may have. You can continue to reach me at pinsonoj@gmail.com and I will get back to you either directly or through Clapper Chatter. (Sometimes we all have the same perplexity!) I love being with you and will continue to ring!

DULUTH FESTIVAL POSTPONED

The difficult decision was made to POSTPONE the Duluth Handbell Festival Conference until 2022.

As so many other things are right now, it is disappointing, but since Duluth is such a favorite, fun location, we just had to make it work for 2022.

The only dates available in 2022 at the DECC were June (9) 10-12, 2022. Yes, we know it's not an ideal time, especially for those involved in graduations; but with this much advance notice, the Area Board is hopeful that many will make this date work for them.

The clinicians have agreed to save our dates, including most of the faculty. Using the 2020 Festival repertoire in 2022 will save on your music budget. The same great "extra" events are excited for our new date: "Bells & Brew" and the "Dinner Train".

Keep watching the Area 7 website and Facebook page for updates.



Duluth 2022



STRIKEPOINT



UPCOMING AREA 7 HANDBELL EVENTS 2020/2021

We are proceeding with planning Fall 2020 and 2021 handbell events. It is difficult to firm up any plans with so many offices closed right now. But the following events are being worked on.

1. **KIDSRING** - November 7, 2020-
Sandy Mullany, clinician
2. **ANTHORNIS** - November 13-14,
2020 in St. Louis Park, Minnesota,
Kathy Ebling Shaw, clinician.
3. **AdventuRing** - Winter/Spring
2020 for junior/senior high ringers at a
college.
4. **YOUNG RINGERS CAMP** -
June 2021

More definite information will be posted
online when available.

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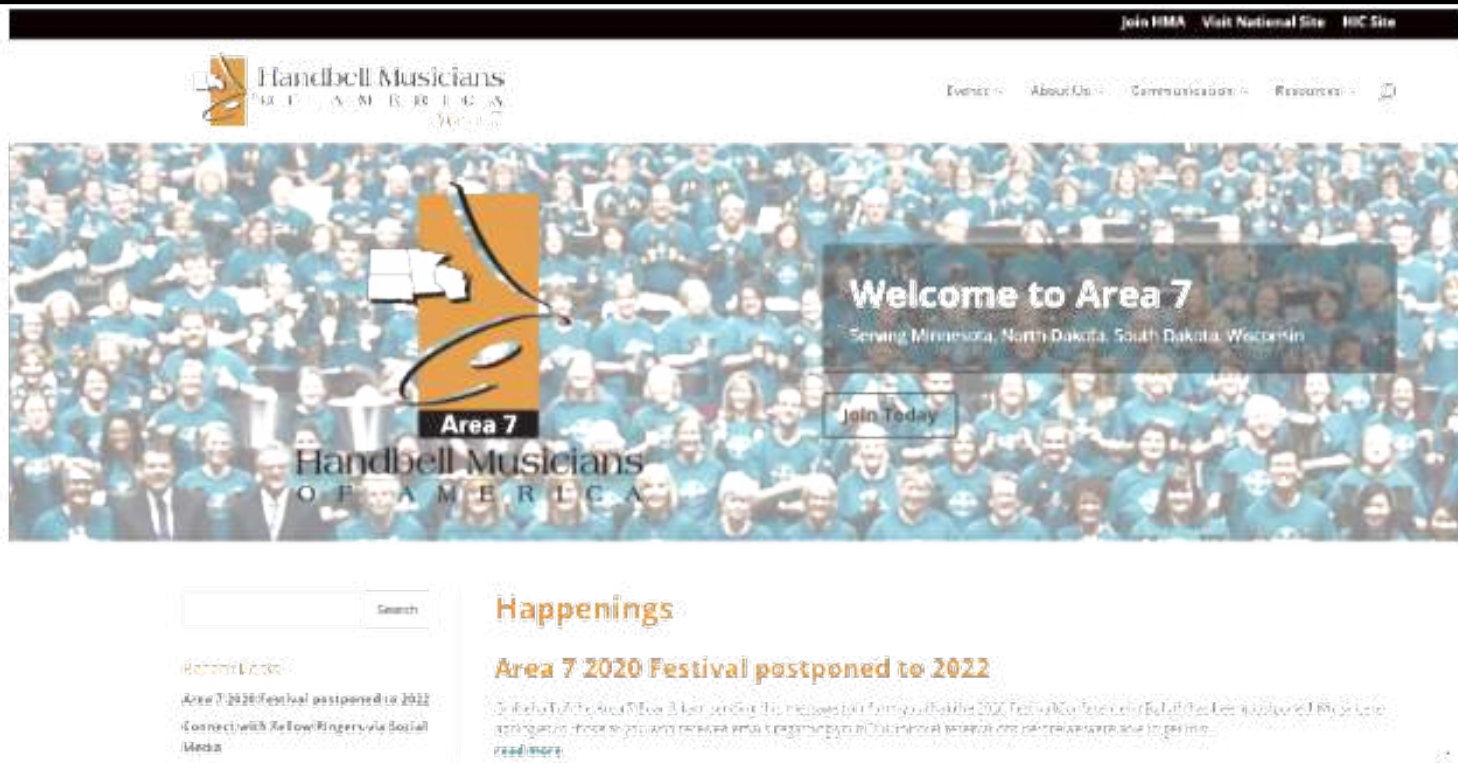
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Asked and Answered



During the Leadership Meeting at Festival 2018 there were many comments about the Area 7 website. We were planning a big reveal at Festival 2020 but instead it will be released by May 1. Here are some of the features you will find in the updated website:

- Important messages will be front and center on the home page with quick links to more details.
- Details of Area 7 and Local Events are readily available in the Events menu.
- Area 7 Board contact information and bios provide an opportunity for you to virtually meet your board members.
- FAQ contains answers to some of the most frequently asked questions we receive.
- A touch of Area 7 history will be a walk down memory lane for many of us.
- Dr. Ona Pinsonneault has blessed Area 7 with 10 years of Music Theory lessons. A refresher course awaits you.
- The current Clapper Chatter and a library of past issues are ready to be explored.
- Scholarships, grants and sponsorship programs are waiting to be discovered and put to use.
- Area 7 Facebook page is another way to stay in touch so, of course, there is a link included.
- Don't forget images from all Area 7 events are accessible on our Flickr.com page. There is a quick link for that too.

The new website will launch May 1. Explore, enjoy and if you have any ideas for content you would like to see on the site, please email a board member. <http://area7.handbellmusicians.org>

A Message from the Chair

As I write this message in early April, I realize that it wasn't that long ago when I was able to attend a handbell workshop in Appleton, WI (March 14) but it feels like a lifetime ago. I barely remember our last rehearsal when we were practicing Festival 2020 music and looking forward to the June event in Duluth. Our world has changed. Dramatically changed. I sit here trying to imagine what our lives will be like when people read this message in May. Right now, everything looks bleak and scary. We grieve our loss of in-person connection to family and friends; we fear for the people working in essential and supportive jobs; we are anxious about how this crisis will affect us; we worry about how to support our families. Is Hope on the horizon?

My faith tells me to hold on. Holy Week began with a celebration which quickly changed into fear, danger, and loss but Easter brought Hope and new life. Until I know what May (and beyond) will bring, I need to look for ways to give thanks, to feel grateful for the "now" moments, to find ways to reach out to others, and to even find some joy. It is my fervent prayer that by the time you read this, we are breathing a bit easier, feeling a bit safer, adjusting to the "new normal", and, above all, feeling Hopeful.

On the journey with you.
Anita Fraundorf, Area 7 Chair

2020 Election Notification

The Treasurer and Secretary members of the Area 7 board are voted upon by the membership and the results are typically announced at the Area 7 festival. The nominating committee has presented an excellent slate of nominees for these positions. You will find the report of the nominating committee including pictures and bios of each candidate here, on the website, and in the online voting site.

The Area 7 election will once again be conducted online as permitted in our by-laws. Those members eligible to vote include: Handbell Musicians, Retired Handbell Musicians and HIC (Business) Memberships designated as a member of Area 7. Note that Fulltime Student and Sub-Memberships do not include voting privileges. You will need your Handbell Musicians of America account number to vote. If you do not know your account number, log into the national site (<http://handbellmusicians.org>) and your account number will be displayed on the welcome page behind your name. You will enter your account number as your username to cast your vote. The password is 2020Area7. Each eligible member is limited to one vote and their vote cannot be changed once it is submitted.

Voting will be open May 1, 2020 at midnight through May 31, 2020 at midnight. The website is: <https://vote.electionrunner.com/election/Yc2Ce>
Note: Chair-Elect is not included in the ballot due to the special election held last fall. Jennifer Cadwell was elected as Chair-Elect. Given the festival has been postponed until 2022, the election results will be posted on the website and included in the next newsletter.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the voting process, please contact Past-Chair Karen Van Wert, pastchair.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Nominees for Treasurer

Michelle Finlon began ringing handbells at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church in Eagan, MN in middle school, and returned there to ring again starting in 2010 after a hiatus for college and graduate school. Since the fall of 2018, she has also been ringing as a member of Twin Cities Bronze. She previously served on the Area 7 Board as the Youth Events Planner from 2014-2017 and enjoyed reliving her early ringing experiences with the next generation of ringers.

Michelle spends her days improving processes, solving problems, and digging into the details as a Business Analyst/Systems Analyst for a company in Oakdale, MN. She loves data, spreadsheets, color coordination, and making sure everything is correct!



Sally Sterk began her handbell career by responding to a poster looking for people interested in learning handbells during her junior year at Concordia College. After moving to Fargo in 2016, she got back in touch with her college director Jessica Westgard Larson, and joined the bell choir at St. John Lutheran. She has enjoyed the opportunity to push her handbell skills and meet new people by attending past Anthornis and Area 7 Festival events.

Sally is a CPA currently employed at Eide Bailly LLP within the governmental auditing group and serves on her church finance committee. Previously, she served as treasurer for the Calumet Players, a community theater group in Pipestone, Minnesota. Outside of work and handbells, Sally enjoys knitting, running, playing flute and saxophone, and spending time with her husband Dave and cat Tuffy.



Nominees for Secretary

Denean Smith is the incumbent seeking re-election. Denean has been ringing handbells for over 20 years, initially 'drafted' to ring in her church handbell choir in Decatur, IL. She currently rings with, and is treasurer for, Encore! Handbell Ensemble (Oshkosh, WI) and rings with Grace Lutheran Church handbell choir (Green Bay, WI). Her prior handbell experience includes ringing 12 years with Bells In Motion (Springfield, IL). She has participated in numerous events including Bay View (Michigan) Week of Handbells, Distinctly Bronze East, Distinctly Bronze West, National Seminar and regional events sponsored by Areas 7 & 8. She is a retired accounting manager and lives with her husband, Mark, in De Pere, WI.



Diane LaFontaine is a member of Bells of Praise at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Mn. She has been ringing for about 25 years. At one time St. Luke's had two bell choirs and she rang with both. She also rings as a regular sub with Westwood Lutheran in St. Louis Park. Diane's day job is working Billing and Registration for the before and after school childcare program of the Bloomington School District. She is blessed to have children, grandchildren, and a great-grandson all in the Twin Cities area, so she can spend a lot of time with family.

She has been known to say, "Many weeks, bell rehearsals are the best hours of the week!"



KidsRing 2019

by Jessica Haeder,
Area 7 Youth Events Planner

KidsRing 2019 was a wonderful success!

It was held November 2nd under the direction of Sandy Mullaney at Church of the Epiphany in Plymouth, MN. Over 40 youth ringers from 7 different choirs attended the event that included ringing, playing games, a service project and food. The day started with getting to know you games (and candy 😊) and moved onto rehearsal. Each choir came having all practiced one song, “Come Christians Join to Sing”; they received a new song to learn, “Away In a Manger”; and finally they all learned a new method of how to ring handbells using a Lead Sheet of chords & lyrics. In between practicing all this music, the young ringers had time to make 300 sandwiches in support of the Minneapolis Recreation Development, also known as 363 days – founded by Allan Law. The day was capped off with a concert that included the songs worked on during the day, a bell tree solo by Krista Riedel, a solo piece provided by Hennepin Ave UMC and a surprise piano solo written and performed by one of the youth. It was a great event and I can’t wait to do it again!



KidsRing was such a success last fall that we are bringing it back in 2020!! We look forward to seeing all your youth bell choirs November 7th, 2020 at Church of the Epiphany in Plymouth. Sandy Mullaney has agreed to be our guest conductor again. The event will have the same format: each choir will prepare on piece for the event and one piece they will sight read at KidsRing. The sight reading piece will be Advent/Christmas appropriate. And more guitar chord chart songs, games and food! Keep checking the website for more information!

Welcome
to our newest members!

Patty Dorn- Grand Rapids, MN
Carolyn Hahn- Edgar, WI
Judy Kereakos- Rochester, MN
Mary Ryrholm- Sioux Falls, SD

The above list is obtained from the Guild office and reflects new members as well as late membership renewals.

Wisconsin Handbell Workshop

Thirty-six beginning and intermediate ringers gathered in Appleton, WI on March 14 for a handbell workshop prior to the announcement of strict COVID19 in-person proximity guidelines. We were pleased, and a bit overwhelmed, to have 48 registrants! However, due mainly to health concerns, 12 chose to stay home.

We were thrilled to welcome Anita Fraundorf, Chair, Area 7 HMA Board, and her husband, Bill, who journeyed from Duluth to attend the event. Displays were set up to advertise membership in HMA and Encore!. Happily, several people expressed an interest in joining HMA! The event was sponsored by Prince of Peace Lutheran Church of Appleton, Encore! Handbell Ensemble of Oshkosh, and endorsed by Area 7 HMA.

Dr. Leigh-Ann Lethco, Lecturer in Music at UW-Oshkosh and Director of the UW Oshkosh Handbell Choir was the clinician. She began by reviewing bell basics, then teaching numerous techniques along the way as we worked with Michael Keller's "Developing Coordination Skills" along with some simpler reproducible music. We ended with a reading session which included two of the ringing selections for Area 7 Festival.

Attendees included a group that uses only hand chimes, another group that currently rings on melody bells, and several ringers with a great deal more experience. For some of those beginning ringers, this was the first time they had handbells in their hands! How exciting to witness their passion to learn to ring handbells. Those of us who ring frequently take for granted the wonderful instrument and all the related-equipment we are so fortunate to use.

We look forward to future events to further the art of handbell ringing. We now know, especially from the feedback we received, that there is a willingness and hunger to learn more!



Membership News

by Deb Madel,
Area 7 Membership Chair

Happy Spring! Well, according to the calendar, it is spring. Today it is cloudy, cold and rainy. Hopefully we start seeing some sunshine and warmer temperatures soon.

I am your newest Membership Chairperson, having taken the reins from Sondra Joten in November 2019. A huge thank you to Sondra for covering the month of October for me as I traveled and for patiently training me as I took over this position. I am excited to be back on the board working alongside the wonderful and talented people who lead Area 7. They are amazing! Make sure you thank them when you see them at a rehearsal or an event.

The latest Area 7 membership report for March indicates that we are 308 members strong, including individuals and organizations alike. Wouldn't it be great if we could grow that number to include even more people! So, don't be shy...encourage new members by asking personally. Share with them the benefits and joy that being part of this nationwide team can be. Group memberships ... Individual memberships ... full-time student memberships ... sub-memberships ... HIC (Handbell Industry Council) memberships ... retirees ... etc. There's something for everyone!

Beginning in our fiscal year 2020 (October 1, 2019–September 30, 2020), the HMA organization changed the schedule for membership renewal. Rather than renewing memberships every month of the year, they moved everyone to a March 31 renewal date. This provides several benefits for the organization by reducing mailing and invoice costs, adding overall efficiency, and making fiscal planning easier for the office/national membership personnel. If you have questions about your membership, please contact Kim Braswell the West Region Membership Coordinator at kbraswell@handbellmusicians.org, your Area 7 SAC (see website for emails), or myself. Also please remember to update your contact information if you have made changes!

I am guessing that most of you are not currently ringing due to social distancing and isolation restraints. It is HARD to be apart from handbell friends and not making music! Keep in touch and support each other. You can also check out the HMA's Events page for information to participate in Handbell Happy Hour, and Member Chats. Hopefully we will be ringing together again soon!

Sharing the Passion

by Cynthia Clanton

Bells of the Bluffs

Perpetual Motion Program

Wizards in Winter (O'Neill/Kinkel, arr: Morris)

Perpetuo Mobile (Bohm, arr: Sherman)

Dancing Queen (Andersson, Anderson, Ulvaeus; arr: Tervo, Mallory)

Firework (Perry, arr: Glasgow)

Believe (Silvestri, Ballard, arr: Eithun)

Rolling in the Deep (Adkins, Epworth, arr: Hanson)

Ob-la-di, Ob-la-da (Lennon, McCartney, arr: Davis)

Love Runs Out (Tedder, Kutzle, Filkins, Fisher, Brown; arr: Hanson)

Aquarius/Let the Sunshine in (arr: Tucker)

Igniting passion for handbells is the mission of Bells of the Bluffs (bellssofthebluffs.org), a community handbell ensemble based in Red Wing, Minnesota. Formed in 2013 by Musical Director Marilee Anderson, the group has focused its efforts on bringing the joy of handbell music to new audiences, from family programs at libraries to entertaining residents of correctional institutions.

The latest challenge started as something of a whim and resulted in introducing a whole new group of fans to handbell music.

"Every February, the entire city of Red Wing plays host to the Big Turn Music Festival," Anderson explains. The two-day festival is named for the city's location along the Mississippi River. "Hundreds of people come to town to experience more than 200 bands in two dozen venues. The bands range from bluegrass to indie rock. I thought, 'Why not introduce those music fans to handbells?'"

She submitted an application, expecting a polite turn-down or silence. Less than a week later, she got a call: Bells of the Bluffs was in the 2020 festival!

Element of surprise

Appealing to festival-goers meant thinking outside the box, Anderson says. There were no single-ticket sales – only two-day and single-day passes – so filling seats would require new and different promotional efforts, plus a fast-paced, high-energy program that included fresh spins on popular music. Notions of gentle hymns in quiet church settings had to be dispelled. And they had only 12 weeks to put it all together.

The process offers tips for other handbell ensembles interested in stepping out and reaching new audiences:

Plan a great program. "I started with our music library, scouting the music we already had on hand and what we had done in the past that would suit this program," says Anderson. "Then I went to my favorite music sites and started making lists. I love to explore music and listen to samples provided by publishers." Her goal was to include music people would recognize and enjoy, with a unique handbell spin.

Choose a compelling theme. Because multiple groups were using the same venue – and we all know it takes time to set up and take down a five-octave bell choir – the program (nine pieces) had to fit into a 45-minute window. That led to the theme: Perpetual Motion.

Add some twists. "We worked with a professional dancer who had a lot of great suggestions for how to apply the theme. We wanted an event with minimal commentary and steady-state motion, so we needed to work together to create transitions from piece to piece to keep the audience engaged." Ringers had transition ideas, too, and the end result was nearly constant sound and motion from before the first downbeat to the final chord.

Partner with pros. Besides the dancer, including guest musicians added interest and complexity to the music and a driving beat the audience loved. Several songs included vocalists, flute or piccolo, a drum set, other percussion instruments, bass guitar, rhythm guitar and organ. A sign language expert even added text to one song.

"The important thing is to work with musicians who know what they are doing," Anderson advises. "We chose guest artists who are experienced enough to realize how they fit with the ensemble, plus they can follow direction while offering ideas."

Go a little electric. "For this concert, we were looking for style and electric guitars seemed to fit the bill," says Anderson. "They add different sounds and interesting solo elements. Balance is always critical, since you don't want to overwhelm the other instruments."

She recommends staying acoustic with percussion, though. "Acoustic drums were a better match for what we were trying to achieve. I have learned to put the drum set in front of the ensemble vs. in the back or to the side," adds Anderson. "That helps the drummer and director work together and gives the ringers another set of visual cues."

Consider the space. Being thoughtful and creative about the setup resulted in three banks of bells with space between so the dancer could weave between the sections and guest musicians could adjust to achieve the best overall sound mix and made for more interesting visuals as action moved from space to space.

Step outside the box. An informal audience survey reveals many were from outside the area and most had never heard a handbell concert before – and certainly not one like this. Some audience members were moved to tears by the emotional impact of the concert. Many went to the Bells of the Bluffs social media streams to post comments, saying the concert was their favorite event at the festival. They said they were amazed at the energy and variety of sounds.

It's fun to try new, challenging things," says Anderson. "I think it's important to stay open to creative ideas."

Her advice for other groups: "Start small – maybe do one piece in a new way before creating a whole program. Some arrangers offer backup CDs as accompaniment. It's not the same as using live musicians, but adds a new dimension and is fun to try."

The extra effort and hours of planning and rehearsal paid off, Anderson says. Not only did the ringers enjoy the experience, but they inspired new fans and fresh thinking. "We were truly able to demonstrate and share our passion for handbells."



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