

Clapper Chatter

Minnesota – North Dakota – South Dakota – Wisconsin – Manitoba

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Area 7

Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA

From the Chair

by Anita Fraundorf

The year 2020 was not at all what we expected it would be. It's hard to remember the "normal" months of January and February. There was a seismic shift from busy lives to staying home and away from people and places. Events and celebrations: postponed or canceled. Work, school, worship: online. Travel: restricted or unavailable. Relationships outside our "bubble:" calls, texts, emails, cards, letters, Zoom, FaceTime. This year has taken an immense toll on health care and essential workers, parents and children, students and teachers, businesses and employees, our mental and physical health, and on families who could not be with loved ones during their final hours. We have all been affected.

What have we learned in the past year? We learned to value the people who serve our community. We learned that almost anything can be done online, but that access has gaps which must be addressed. We learned that we do not need to schedule every minute of every day. We learned we need to cherish time spent with family and friends.

The beginning of 2021 looks different. We are less likely to make a laundry list of resolutions or fill our calendars with meeting dates. Let us look forward in hope.

As my friend Pastor Jeanine says: "On the journey with you."

~Anita

Board Notes

by Anita Fraundorf

Welcome to our new Clapper Chatter Editor: Bill Alexander! Many of you know Bill as the “Player/Coach” of Duluth’s Strikepoint ensemble and a popular festival clinician. He’s worn many hats for our Area 7 organization throughout the years, and we’re glad to have him back on the Board.

Last November Area 7 presented its first virtual events: November 7 was the Director’s Seminar, and November 14 focused on bell trees. Many thanks to former Board Chair, Karen Van Wert, and her tech crew for planning and implementing our foray into online events. Discussions are in progress to offer more opportunities for our membership. If you have suggestions on what you would like to see offered, contact one of the Board members; their information is listed elsewhere in this newsletter. Continue to check out the [Area 7 website](#) for more information.

It has been one of my goals to contact each member of Area 7 via email. Hopefully you have seen at least one of those messages during the past year. The next step for me is to schedule an online “meet and greet” in each sub-area. Watch for an email with a date, time, and how to access the meeting. Let me know if you have specific topics you would like to discuss during our virtual time together.

Opportunities to serve on the Area 7 Board are available! We are looking for someone to serve as the North Dakota Sub-Area Chair, and we also need a Northern Wisconsin Sub-Area Chair. Check out the [Area 7 website](#) for the details, or email me (chair.area7@handbellmusicians.org)

You may be wondering these days exactly **what the Handbell Musicians of America organization is doing for you.** In some ways there has been even greater access to events and information than ever before. One case in point: July’s virtual National Seminar. For \$175.00 we were able to experience all the classes, concerts, conversations, and even socially-distant game nights that would have been offered in-person in Orlando—all from the comfort of our homes. I expect that even when seminars are back to the in-person format, there will still be some type of online option.

Our Area 7 Board, as well as the National Board, continue to seek membership benefits. In return we ask that you maintain your membership, invite others to join, and consider adding your ringers for only \$10/year per person, so that we can keep the handbell organization strong and vital both now and in the future. We thank you for your dedicated support!



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If you would like to know more or have questions, please contact Bill Alexander at editor.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Finding Hope in Our Craft

by Ruth Molloy, Minnesota North Sub-Area Chair

There have been so many things to be upset about during the past year. Even when I try to look at the positives, which helps tremendously, I have to admit that life during the pandemic has been missing some essential elements.

Singing in church is a big one that I am missing right now. This essential part of our worship is not allowed at this time in many churches. I was reminded of this today, when I read a verse from scripture and remembered a song that we used to sing that includes words from the bible to share its message.

According to the website, www.knowing-jesus.com, the words “Be not afraid” appear in the Bible 60 times. It’s part of life to be concerned when things happen to test us, but we share the ability to worship with our hands and voices, especially during trying times. I want to share these lyrics from a favorite hymn of mine, in hopes that these words will bring you hope when you need it in 2021.

Be Not Afraid

by Robert J. Dufford, S.J., 1975

“You shall cross the barren desert,
But you shall not die of thirst.
You shall wander far in safety,
Though you do not know the way.
You shall speak your words to foreign men,
And they will understand.
You shall see the face of God and live.

Be not afraid.
I go before you always.
Come, follow me, and I will give you rest.

If you pass through raging waters in the sea,
You shall not drown.
If you walk amid the burning flames,
You shall not be harmed.
If you stand before the power of hell
And death is at your side,
Know that I am with you through it all.

Be not afraid.
I go before you always.
Come, follow me, and I will give you rest.”

We're always
looking for new
members



There are many ways to
keep up with what Area
7 is doing. The more you
explore, the more you will
know.



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[Flickr.](#)



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well, everything!

Area 7 Events

by Events Coordinator Alanna Teragawa

Past Events

Thank you to Karen Van Wert who presented two virtual workshops in November via Zoom. They were offered free to HMA members and were attended within and beyond Area 7. The topics were quite appropriate for the pandemic times we are in:

Directors Seminar,

2020 brought with it many challenges for the world including challenging the status quo of handbell programs. In response many directors and ringers have been rethinking how their handbell program works and their participation in worship. Good news—many handbell programs are recording music for online services, and some congregations are welcoming handbells into worship in lieu of vocal choirs and other forms of music.

Bell Tree Solutions

As handbells are reintroduced to worship services, whether in-person or virtual, a bell tree is a great way to extend the capability of ringers. Attendees journeyed from “new to bell trees” through “bell tree creativity” to “exploring bell tree and choir music.”

Both sessions were recorded. If you missed attending either of these workshops, a free link is available from the Events Coordinator by emailing your name, your HMA membership name and number, and the name of the session you would like to view to

events.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Future Events

As you can imagine, any Area event being scheduled right now is of a virtual nature. There is still great optimism that the two events scheduled in November of this year will happen—KidsRing and Anthornis.

In the meantime the Area 7 Board members would like to offer at least one free 30–60-minute virtual workshop per quarter to HMA members.

- **Your help is needed.**
- **Topic ideas are needed.**
- **Workshop leaders or roundtable panelists are needed.**

Please email your suggestions right away to

events.area7@handbellmusicians.org

A few topics already on the waiting list are:

- Mallet Techniques

- A roundtable session to discuss what people are doing to ring right now—the music they are performing, how they are performing, etc. Are things different for handbells in schools and colleges than for church ensembles?

- A roundtable session to discuss how auditioned groups are coping with no-live-audience concerts, etc.

As soon as topic ideas are received, a group of Area Board members will put together a workshop to address the topic(s). Watch for workshop updates on the [Area 7 website](#) or Facebook postings.

From the Southern MN Sub-Area Chair

by Karen Dressler

Hello all! I am writing to you with some information on events coming up this year. We are hoping that we can once again join together for some of our yearly events. These are looking ahead a ways, but it's never too early to start penciling these events in!

We have scheduled **KidsRing** for November 6, 2021 at Church of the Epiphany in Plymouth, MN. This event is a one-day gathering for youth ringers 4th grade and above. Ringers will receive a new or refresher course in ringing techniques to improve their ringing.

Our yearly event, **Anthornis**, is scheduled for November 12-13, 2021 at Westwood Lutheran Church in St.

—continued on next page

Louis Park, MN. This two day-event for adult ringers includes a reading session, massed rehearsals, and a free concert open to the public at the end.

AdventuRing has been tentatively scheduled for next January, so stay tuned for details in the future. This event is for 8th–12th grade ringers and held on a college campus. It not only provides students with a handbell-ringing workshop, but also gives them the opportunity to experience a college campus. It ends with a concert that is open to the public.

Last but definitely not least, the **Area 7 Festival** is scheduled for June 9-12, 2022 in Duluth, MN. There will be a lot of details to come, but put it on your calendar now! The Lift Bridge in Duluth inspired our theme for next year's festival: "LIFT" Rise to Your Potential (**L**earning **I**nspiration **F**ellowship **T**eamwork). We hope to see you there!

Stay tuned for more information and details to come on all of these upcoming events and more. We hope to see you at one or all of them!

Click the Event for More Information



Handbell Musicians of America
Area 7



From the Southern WI Sub-Area Chair

by Mary Vassalotti

Greetings from the Southern WI Area. The holidays have passed, and as we move into 2021, there is anticipation of a COVID-19 vaccine that will allow all of us to get back to what we love—ringing and the enjoyment of being around each other. The county I live in has had some of the most restrictive guidelines in place related to COVID-19, so we had to be creative with our rehearsals and recording session. For our rehearsals and recording, we wore masks and socially distanced by about ten feet between tables.



Many other handbell groups have found ways to creatively share the music of the season. Six ringers from the Ringing Badgers handbell group came together to practice and record familiar carols for Immanuel Lutheran’s Advent service. Mary Nelson, a member from Area 7 and music director for First Lutheran Church in Stoughton, recorded a beautiful concert of solo handbell pieces (link to performance can be found at [First Lutheran Church](#), given with permission). The Milwaukee Handbell Ensemble recorded a virtual Christmas concert. I know there were many other music groups that recorded and shared their music in the virtual world this Christmas season. I look forward to the day when we will be able to safely gather to practice and share our music with others.

Keep calm and ring on!

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