



Clapper Chatter

Minnesota – North Dakota – South Dakota – Wisconsin – Manitoba



Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA

Letter From The Chair by Anita Fraundorf

I asked and you answered. Thank you to the people who responded to the email question I posed in September regarding what was happening with ringing around the Area. As you can expect, it ranged from “nothing is happening” to some full ensemble rehearsals. Many programs are unable to access the building or equipment and ringers are reluctant to or unable to gather in a group. Some ringers not able to ring with a group are experimenting with solo ringing or bell trees. Ensembles that are rehearsing have individual tables spaced apart with no sharing of bells. The ringers wear masks and disinfect the bells at the end of rehearsal. (More information on ringing safely can be found at www.handbellindustrycouncil.org)

Overwhelmingly the most common response from people able to ring are gathering in smaller groups; most ringing 12 bell music. Some are together to ring for enjoyment while others are ringing in order to video a piece to include with their online service or to play during in-person worship. With 12 bell music, each ringer is able to have his/her own music stand and binder without sharing bells. (A Covid Ringing Comprehensive Ensemble Music List was posted on the Area 7 FB page in early September).

If you aren't able to ring with a group or borrow bells in order to practice solos, do you have access to your music binder? At home, take spoons and utensils (or even pans), find a recording of the song you want to practice and listen to the music while you “ring” your utensils. If you can't access your music binder, Handbell World or other Music Publishers have recordings of songs and many have the music available for preview so you can play along. Maybe there is a song with a tricky rhythm that you can practice by tapping the table or clapping the rhythm. Just think how much farther ahead you will be when your group is able to be together again!

Area 7's Board is discussing ways to offer virtual bell topics. See page 2 for more information on virtual Area 7 events. By the time you read this, Bells of the Lakes will have presented their virtual seminar. Other Areas around the country are having virtual ringing or workshops. And there are always YouTube videos of performances that can help ease the pain of separation from bells and ringing friends.

Board news: At our Board meeting in September, we welcomed Michelle Finlon as our C.H.I.M.E. Representative (overseeing our bell and chime loan program) and Lee Afdahl as our Past Chair. We are excited to have them back with us! Sadly, we bid farewell to our North Dakota Sub Area Chair, Sheila Leier and our Northern Wisconsin Sub Area Chair, Sue Retzlaff. And this edition of Clapper Chatter is Editor Karla Hulne's last. For me, parting is not “sweet;” it only feels like “sorrow” but I say “farewell until we meet again.”

Help Wanted: With the departure of 3 Board members, this means there are opportunities for you or one of your ringers to step in! We need a representative from North Dakota and one from Northern Wisconsin. More information can be found on our website: www.area7.handbellmusicians.org

An Editor needs knowledge of and skill in a computer publishing program to create the newsletter 4 times/year, ability to elicit content and design the layout, send the newsletter to the National office for distribution, and post it on the Area 7 website. She/he also reports to, and attends, Area 7 Board meetings (virtually) and assists with Area 7 events.

Contact me if you would like more information on either the Sub Area Chair or Editor position: chair.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Until next time, I'm on the journey with you.

Clapper Chatter

Volume 34/Issue 4/November 2020 Page 2



Area 7 is proud to host two virtual events this Fall, topics pertinent to our current environment. Both events will be presented by Karen Van Wert, and offered FREE to all members of Handbell Musicians of America. Ringers affiliated with a member Organization are considered members and are welcome to register and participate.

Director's Seminar

Saturday, November 7, 2020

9:00am – 12:20pm

Director Focused, Ringer Friendly

This is a virtual event hosted on Zoom



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.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

9:00- Round Table Discussion – Challenges? What is working? Why?

9:45- Re-entry to Ringing Music

As some ringers may not be comfortable returning to the table or social distancing may not allow room for a full choir. This session will introduce music and ideas for 2-9 ringers without sharing bells.

10:15- Break

10:30- From Zero to Ring/Record in 60

Need to get from zero to ring/record quickly? Teach your ringers to sight read more effectively by modeling good score study habits. Use the acronym “MAP the STARS” to breakdown the score and teach your ringers score study. Sight reading and rehearsals will be more efficient when ringers utilize score study skills.

11:20- Let's All Ring Together

As social distancing takes us further apart and potentially simpler music leaves musicality a bit exposed, ringing chords together has become more difficult and more important. Ringing together is dependent on anticipation, awareness, and execution. Even beginning ringers can quickly be taught skills to help them anticipate and execute a perfect chord every time.

12:20- Close/Opportunity for open discussion.

Registration

This event is open to all Handbell Musician of America members.

Please have your membership number available to register.

A link will be sent to you in the registration confirmation.

Register Now

Registrar & Questions:

events.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Event Coordinator, Area 7

SERVICE PROJECT

Area 7 sponsors a Service Project at each event to “give back”.

Please make a donation to VEAP (Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People) in the name of Area 7, Handbell Musicians of America

<https://veap.org/donate/give-today/>

VEAP Mission

Together we create pathways to stronger, more hopeful communities through access to healthy food, housing stability, and supportive services.

FYI: \$30 will provide an individual three meals a day for 30 days.

Bell Tree Solutions

Saturday, November 14, 2020

9:00am – 12:20pm

This is a virtual event hosted on Zoom

As handbells get reintroduced to worship services either in person or virtual, bell tree is a great way to extend the capability of ringers. Join us for a journey from “new to bell trees” through “bell tree creativity” to “exploring bell tree and choir music”.

TENTATIVE AGENDA

9:00- Welcome

9:15- Bell Tree Beginnings – Where Do I Start?

Start with a single strand of bells and inexpensive equipment. String a tree, discover the \$5 BT pole, and ring. You will be given simple melodies to play that sound great on the bell tree. From solo to ensemble, we will talk about ways you can be creative with bell trees in your situation. Bell trees are handy to have in your toolbox anytime but especially during this time of virtual music.

10:00- Break

10:15- Bell Trees Beyond 1st Tree

Got a taste of BT ringing and want more? Expand from one tree to four, from one octave to two, from single pole to BT stand. Explore various equipment options including stands, separators, and mallets. Ring melodies that transition from one string to another and back again. Incorporate flats/sharps giving you full range of two octaves. Investigate published music and learn practical applications for skills learned.

11:00- Bell Tree Creativity – Hymn Embellishments Made Easy!

There are so many easy ways you can add embellishments to make a hymn shine – through ostinato phrases, rhythms, and more. A few basic skills will empower you. We'll turn your creativity loose so you will return home with ideas of how to embellish a hymn tune using a simple bell tree. Bell Tree Beginnings or BT ringing experience are required.

11:45- Bell Trees Plus Choir – Extending BT Skills

Bell trees were introduced to the handbell community in the 1980's by Louise Frier. She developed this concept to extend her choir and involve more people by combining handbells and chimes at the table with Bell Tree as a processional element. It also added an element of show to concerts and special occasions. I will take you on a journey through BT & choir music and adapting music for BT & choir.

12:20- Close/Opportunity for open discussion.

Registration

This event is open to all Handbell Musician of America members.

Please have your membership number available to register.

A link for this seminar will be sent to you in the registration confirmation.

Register Now

Registrar & Questions:

events.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Event Coordinator, Area 7

WHO SHOULD ATTEND THIS SEMINAR?

Conductors who are exploring ways to re-enter in person/virtual worship
Musicians who are looking for a new way to express themselves in worship

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Welcome

to our newest members!

Pamela Anderson-Green Bay, WI
Linda Berg-West Salem, WI
Heidi Bischmann-Hartland, WI
Karissa Dennis-Farmington, MN
Rebecca Hahn-Apple Valley, MN
Jean Lubke-South Saint Paul, MN
Carmen Rosendahl-Rapid City, SD
Kaye Schmitz-Fond Du Lac, WI
Joni Sutton-Plymouth, MN

Presented by The Raleigh Ringers

VIRTUOSO

An Extraordinary Performance Experience

Conductor: Dr. William Payn

June 3-6, 2021

Raleigh, NC

www.rr.org/events/virtuoso



C.H.I.M.E Grant

Area 7 welcomes Michelle Finlon as the C.H.I.M.E. Representative. 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. Outside of handbells, Michelle works as a Business Analyst and enjoys playing tennis and reading in her free time.



Area 7 is fortunate to have two 3-octave sets of handchimes and two 3-octave sets of handbells to provide to grant recipients at Area 7 schools, churches, senior living facilities and other community organizations. In addition to the instruments; music, technique manuals, curriculum suggestions, and support needed to start a program is provided to the grant recipients. The instruments are used to create a handchime/handbell ensemble which will teach ringers concepts of music, teamwork, mental focus, and the joy of personal achievement. We want everyone to have the opportunity to experience the fun and learning that handchimes/handbells offer. Grant recipients have the instruments from September through May to grow their music program.

This year, grant recipients are Reek Elementary School in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin and Homestead Senior Living in Rochester, Minnesota. We are excited to see the great things these groups will add to our handbell/handchime community in Area 7.

Whether you are a part of a church, school, senior living facility or community ensemble; Area 7 is here to help promote handchimes/handbells. Do you know someone that is looking to build their music program? Or a group that is ringing and could use an extra set of bells or chimes so they can ring socially distanced and not share bells? Or an organization that would like to start a bell program? We are here to help. Grant applications are available on the Area 7 website. Additional grant awardees for the 2020-2021 season are available. Contact Michelle Finlon with any questions.

Northern Wisconsin News

by Sue Retzlaff, Northern WI SAC

In this area of the state we are experiencing beautiful fall color. I typically associate this time of year with new beginnings. Many of the activities that end in the spring begin again in the fall, such as the school and church years, and handbell groups. This brings a sense of anticipation and excitement for the new things ahead. Not so much this year.

My church handbell choir has started ringing again following the guidelines developed by the Handbell Industry Council: masked ringers at individual tables that are physically distanced; no bell sharing; cleaning equipment following use. Space limitations have resulted in smaller ensemble ringing.

A month into this "new normal" I have realized why I have missed ringing. Covid-19 has taken a devastating toll on every aspect of our lives, including the creative drive that helps define our humanity. There are few things more satisfying than working with a group of people to create a musical presentation that can be shared with others. Making music feeds the spirit. It is a source of joy to do this again with my community of ringers.

Rather than pine for the bells not used, we will use this as an opportunity to work on the skills needed to play 12-bell music more beautifully: blend & balance; dynamic contrast; cleaner technique; and finding joy in the making and sharing of music.

Stay well. I hope to see you again when we can meet as a larger community of handbell musicians.

Area 7 Board



Volume 34/Issue 4/November 2020 Page 5

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