



Clapper Chatter

Minnesota • North Dakota • South Dakota • Wisconsin • Manitoba

Volume 40 • Issue 1 • February 2026

Area 7

Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA



Anthornis, Festival and so much more!

Message from the Chair



by Paul McKenzie

Happy New Year HMA friends. I hope that your holiday music-making was rewarding and fun. There was such variety of presentations given — from before Thanksgiving until after New Year's — concerts that included costumes, instruments, choir, and narration. I attended a worship service that featured bells with harp, percussion, singers, and guitar and demonstrated creative use of bells in worship.

2026 will prove to be a fantastic year for handbell events. In addition to concerts, there will be events for high school/college students, technique workshops, massed ringing, and, of course, the 2026 Handbell Festival in St. Cloud in June.

This year's festival will feature very unique and informative classes, fun events, Rochester Area Handbells concert, and fantastic guest conductors. I have heard from a group in Illinois that wants to attend our event because it's "got everything ringers could want." If you're undecided about attending, let me assure you that this one is not to be missed. "It's got everything."

The registration information is on the Area 7 website now. The (unique) list of classes will be there, and registration for Bronze Plus Choir and Conference Choir. This year we are also looking for participants for the Sunday worship service with the theme of "Bring Many Voices." We'll need flute/Native American flute, singers/cantors, and foreign language speakers (including ASL). Great River Resonance will be the solo choir and YOU will be the "ringing congregation."

This Clapper Chatter edition has some very interesting articles highlighting the vitality of Area 7. We are looking for candidates for the offices of Chair Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer. We have recently made additions to the board roster. Derek Bromme is the new sub-area chair for Northern MN. Bonnie Tranby is the new Youth Events leader, Jordan Goodwater is the new historian, and Dan Ahlman is filling a new position called event assistant. The board and I are working hard to promote handbells, offer education, and to promote goodwill through the art of handbell ringing. Let's celebrate our abundance of riches as we RING in the new year. 🎵

**Deadline for the next
issue of *Clapper Chatter*
is April 10, 2026**



Carol Scheel

7209 Morgan Ave S Richfield MN 55423
612-208-1741 877-426-3235

www.heitzhandbells.com heitzhandbells@yahoo.com

Opportunities for supporting Area 7 and the 2026 Festival

The Area 7 Board of Directors is an all-volunteer entity, and the biannual Festival Conference is its primary means of financial support for running the business of the Area. The Board prioritizes keeping event costs affordable for participants. Additional financial support to assist in that effort is always welcome! Here is how you can help:

1. Attend Area 7 events and encourage others to attend.
2. Donate items for the Festival Silent Auction.
3. Consider a sponsorship in memory of, in appreciation of, or in honor of someone in your life.

Donations received by June 1, 2026 will be acknowledged in the Festival Conference booklet and in a future edition of Clapper Chatter.

Sponsorship levels:

- Supporter: \$25-99
- Contributor: \$100-249
- Patron: \$250-499
- Ringing Endorsement: \$500 and above
- Major Sponsorships (e.g. featured ensemble expense or “swag bag”) are also available.

Contact Jennifer Cadwell with questions:
pastchair.area7@handbellmusicians.org.

Follow the link below or use the QR Code to make sponsorship donations:

www.paypal.com/ncp/payment/3WDJM53CUPL3A
🎵

Sponsorship of Area 7 Festival Conference



Four scholarships available for attending Festival 2026

The Clista Wood Scholarship Fund was established to provide encouragement and assistance to eligible individuals to attend an Area 7 ringing/learning event. Thanks to generous donations to this fund over the years, we are able to award four scholarships for the 2026 Festival Conference in St. Cloud, Minnesota!

Two scholarships are for the full three-day registration fees plus a \$100 stipend toward housing (if needed).

Two additional scholarships cover the fees to attend classes for one day of the Festival Conference, either Friday or Saturday.

Applicants must be a full Handbell Musicians of America member, affiliated with a recognized member organization, or participate in a group directed by a full HMA member.

Recipients of the full event registration are expected to purchase and prepare the music and register to attend with an ensemble or as an individual ringer to be placed into an ensemble. Recipients of the one-day registration do not participate in rehearsals, just classes.

The application form for the 2026 Festival can be found at this Festival Document link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bkgWA6goMhSeLf-wu-iEG3-_xhai5lzl?usp=sharing

The application deadline is March 1, 2026. Questions can be directed to Jennifer Cadwell,
pastchair.area7@handbellmusicians.org. 🎵



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Quality supplies, including gloves, binders and table padding
Unique gifts for ringers and directors handmade in the USA

www.handbellservices.com

From the Area 7 Youth Events Planner



by Bonnie Tranby

Join the AdventuRing!

We are resurrecting AdventuRing!

AdventuRing is an event for high school and college handbell ringers. This year's event will be held on the campus of St. Scholastica in Duluth, MN.

Dr. Derek Bromme will be our clinician. The date of the event is March 28th.

Tables will be provided, and groups are expected to bring their own foam, handbells, mallets, etc. The cost is \$15 per registrant. You may bring a full choir, or a small group of ringers.

All information is available on the Area 7 website. Gift cards are available to purchase to send a ringer to the event. Grants are also available to help purchase music. This event is designed to show high school students an example of handbell ringing in college and to give college students a chance to ring with other groups close to their own age.

The registration deadline is March 1, 2026. Follow this link for more details and the registration form:
area.handbellmusicians.org/adventuring-2026

Please register as soon as possible, so we can adequately prepare for the event. See you in March in Duluth! 🎵



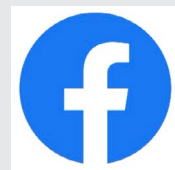
COMING SOON: AREA 7 BOARD ELECTIONS

This spring, we will hold elections for Area 7 secretary, treasurer and chair elect. The slate of candidates for each position will be announced next month.

In May, Area 7 will hold the election. Members will receive an email from the national HMA office that includes a link to the ballot so you can vote. Official results will be announced at the Festival held in St. Cloud this June.

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers who serve on the Area 7 board.

Keep in touch with
Area 7 on Facebook



The Raleigh Ringers

STAY UP TO DATE WITH US!



www.rr.org



[/RaleighRingers](https://www.facebook.com/RaleighRingers)



[@RaleighRingers](https://twitter.com/RaleighRingers)



[@RaleighRingers](https://www.instagram.com/RaleighRingers)



A look back on Anthornis 2025



Don't miss this year's BellFest

It's not too late to register for Bells of the Lakes BellFest, March 7th in Arden Hills, MN.

We are happy to announce that registration will stay \$35/ringer, with a student rate of \$20/ringer. There's also an added option of \$15/person lunch.

We are excited to have Matthew Compton join the directors' podium this year.

If you have any questions, please email BellFest Chair, Krista at bellfest@bells of the lakes.org. Otherwise, head over to the Bells of the Lakes website to register:

www.bells of the lakes.org/events/bellfest. 🎵



Saturday, March 7
North Heights Lutheran Church
1700 Highway 96 W
Arden Hills, MN 55112

bells of the lakes.org/index.php/concerts/bellfest/



Matthew Compton,
BellFest Conductor

**Regular registration:
\$35/person**

**STUDENT registration:
(High School/College-aged)
\$20/RINGER**

**(\$15 lunch-optional
all registrants)**

BellFest Repertoire

Hashivenu	Austin	Agape 3028	L2
Children of the Heavenly Father	Compton	Agape 2972	L2+
Ascend	Eithun	CGB1411	L3
Adoro Te Devote	Krug	GMH350031	L3
Capriccio No. 2	Helman	CGB706	L3

**Individuals, small or full ensembles,
are welcome to register!**

The St. Olaf Handbell Winter Tour (Winter Wonder)

The program will feature pieces with flute, voice, piano, bell tree and will explore the wonder of winter and the magic of bells.

Friday, February 27, 7:30 pm
St. Andrew Lutheran Church
13600 Technology Drive
Eden Prairie, MN

Saturday, February 28, 7:30 pm
Plymouth United Church of Christ
4126 Ingersoll Ave.
Des Moines, IA

Sunday, March 1, 2:00 pm
Grinnell United Methodist Church
916 5th Ave
Grinnell, IA

Monday, March 2, 8:15 pm
St. Olaf College
Christiansen Hall of Music, Urness Recital Hall
Northfield, MN

30 Years of Excellence: Bells of the Lakes

by Cynthia Clanton

Bells of the Lakes is celebrating its 30th year of making and sharing handbell music. Based in Minneapolis, MN, the ensemble was formed in 1996 by its first and only musical director, Bill Mathis, and an intrepid group of ringers. While the roster of ringers has changed over time, Bells of the Lakes continues as a leading ensemble in the arts community, inspiring ringers and audiences with its dedication, innovative collaboration, and passion for excellence.

Bells of the Lakes was born out of a desire for a challenging and rewarding ringing experience for local musicians. Charter member Paul McKenzie recalls, “I had relocated to the Twin Cities for a new

job and I knew Bill had just moved to the area from Oklahoma. I paid him a courtesy visit and suggested that he start a handbell group so I could play in it! We laugh about it now, but I knew I would gain from experience playing at a high level and could take those skills to my work as a church musician and handbell director.”

The ensemble has performed at many regional, national and international festivals, including the International Symposium of English Handbell Ringers in Birmingham, England, and as a featured concert ensemble at Pinnacle in Orlando, Florida. Bells of the Lakes has collaborated with choral groups including



The current Bells of the Lakes ensemble at a 2025 Christmas performance.

the Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus and Chorus Polaris, with multiple guest musicians and with many other handbell ensembles, including Strikepoint, Twin Cities Bronze, Bells of the Bluffs, Rochester Area Handbells, and the St. Olaf College Handbell Choir.

Culture of Dedication and Musicality

"What's different about Bells of the Lakes is the musicality," says Mathis. "Some of that is an outcome of recording music for publishers and the demand for precision that process requires. But it's also a result of thinking about music differently — because I started my career as a choir director, not a handbell director, we put emphasis on phrasing, shaping the music to suit the desired emotion."

Bells of the Lakes alum Kris Koch-Wahl adds, "It's definitely labor-intensive music-making that requires an unusual amount of dedication. Several times I've joked that I played in a heavy metal band, especially when schlepping bells and equipment is involved, but it's special to be part of a group of musicians where every single person is essential."

Gail Onan, another long-time Bells of the Lakes ringer and current alum, agrees. "When you are part of a musical group and it gels, when everything is flowing, it's magical. Musical talent has to be there, but it needs to be surrounded by a feeling of ensemble."

In a testament to the group's lasting legacy, Koch-Wahl's daughter, Laura Wahl, is a current Bells of the Lakes ringer, as is Mathis' daughter, Martha Mathis.

A number of spouses have been part of the group over the years. One charter member, Scott Ward, still rings with the ensemble.

Inspiring Others

The influence of Bells of the Lakes extends beyond performances. The group organizes annual educational events and has inspired new ensembles. Charter member Marilee Anderson, who played with Bells of the Lakes for 15 years, paid it forward. "I made many good friends in the group. Being able to play with them was an honor and I learned a lot. Those memories prompted me to start my own community ensemble, Bells of the Bluffs, now in its 13th year."

The ensemble's philosophy remains unchanged. "At the outset, we were trying to bring out the musicality, to get to the next level," says Ward. "The group has gotten younger over the years, but the caliber of ringers and their dedication have always been there — people with passion for making music together and dedication to work at it week after week."

A focus on providing an outstanding audience experience involves not just learning the music, but also bringing new approaches and new music to the handbell community. The group has commissioned pieces from a range of composers and provided new arrangements of favorite melodies, often created by Mathis.

"Now, as part of the audience, I just love to watch the bells play," Onan says. "It's so interesting to see the techniques and the new arrangements are fascinating."



Early Bells of the Lakes rosters from 1998 (left) and 2001 (right).

Looking Forward

As Bells of the Lakes commemorates this milestone, the group's president Laurie Pyle looks to the future. "I am excited to celebrate our 30th year of ringing with the arts community! We've had many wonderful experiences this year, from small group ensembles at weddings and nursing homes, to concerts around the Twin Cities and collaborations with other music groups. I know I can speak for all of us when I say we are looking forward to many more in the future!"

Bells of the Lakes will host Bellfest 2026 with clinician Matthew Compton on March 7, 2026, and "Legacy in Bronze: The Sound of Celebration," a special concert marking its 30th season, on April 26, 2026, at 3 p.m. The April concert will feature an alumni choir, silent auction, raffles, and a reception. Learn more at bellsofthelakes.org. 🎵



The ensemble in 2019.



Bells of the Lakes
Legacy in Bronze:
The Sound of Celebration
2026 Celebrating our 30th season
Celebration Concert
special guests: Alumni of Bells of the Lakes

Sunday, April 26 @ 3 PM
Hennepin Ave United Methodist Church
511 Groveland Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55403

- Silent Auction
- Raffles
- Reception
- Celebration!

bellsofthelakes.org



Bells of the Lakes Memories

Will that C2 fit in my carry-on?

A trip to England in 2000 for the International Handbell Symposium had its share of equipment woes. “Most of our bells, equipment, and luggage didn’t arrive with us,” remembers Kris Koch-Wahl. “We played the first concert on a hodgepodge of different kinds of bells the host church owned. It didn’t sound that great to us, but the crowd loved it.”

Frozen in place

More than one trip to Fargo involved unexpected hiccups. Gail Onan recalls a trip in weather bottoming out at 30 below zero that included very frosty bells and an inoperable liftgate on the rental truck, and a summer trip when a bell was left behind in shrubbery after an outdoor photo session.

Never mind that scraping sound

As the group’s resident engineer and equipment manager, Scott Ward says he has learned a thing or two — some the hard way — about checking for overhead clearance and managing rental truck emergencies.

The pressure is on

Performing a commissioned piece with the composer in the audience is both exciting and daunting. Two examples were premiering Cathy Moglebust’s “Vision Quest” in 2005 and debuting “Come Thou Fount” for new composer C.J. Caminiti at the 2019 National Seminar in St. Louis.

Is this thing broken?

Even the most dedicated ensembles have their moments. Onan recalls one concert that included “In the Hall of the Mountain King” by Grieg. “I noticed Bill looking over his glasses at us — never a good sign. Then his left hand was pointing at himself (“Watch me”) and then his hand was stabbing at himself (“Really, really watch me!”). We were running those trolls up and down the mountain at a furious clip — taking our tempo, not his. He forgave us eventually,” she adds with a laugh.

Emotional connections

“My favorite memory with Bells of the Lakes was a Christmas concert with the Twin Cities Gay Men’s Chorus,” says Paul McKenzie. “The chorus joined us toward the end of a piece singing, “Dona nobis pacem.” There were men in the chorus who would soon be shipped off to Afghanistan, others who had recently lost loved ones, and people in our group facing serious medical issues. Although it was not joyful, it was powerful and so memorable.”

From the Area 7 Events Coordinator



by Alanna Teragawa

As of February 1st, registration is OPEN for the 2026 Festival Conference! Read on for important details to know to make the most of your time there.

AREA 7 2026 FESTIVAL CONFERENCE

June (25) 26-28, 2026

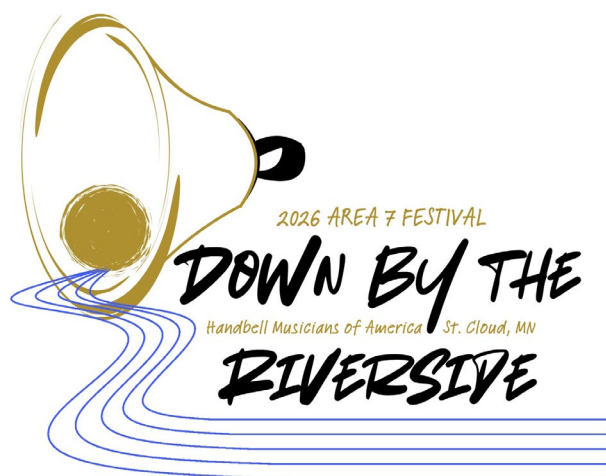
River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, Minnesota

Follow the updates on the Area website:

area7.handbellmusicians.org/festival-2026/

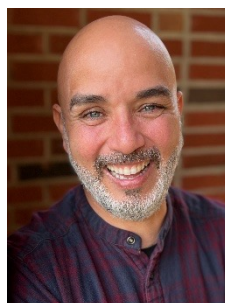
Every effort has been made to provide a variety of options to choose from to create a fun and meaningful Festival event. Be one of over 300 other ringers to experience 3 great clinicians, 31 classes, 11 topics, 16 faculty.

The complete Festival schedule is featured toward the back of this issue. If you can't fit all three days into your schedule, consider attending for one day — either Friday or Saturday.



Spread the word — Invite other ringers/directors. **GUARANTEED:** You will learn at least one new handbell “thing” and meet hundreds of new handbell friends.

CLINICIANS:



Carlos
Rivera-Aponte



Jill
Mahr



Jennifer
Cadwell

FESTIVAL 2026 LINKS & FAQs

Registration link will open February 1st:

area7handbellmusiciansofameric.regfox.com/down-by-the-riverside

NOTE ON FESTIVAL PRICING

At a recent site visit to the St. Cloud venue to finalize all the Festival plans, we were informed by the caterer of increased meal costs. We continue to strive to offer nutritional options using premium food items. Therefore, we are forced to increase the Festival registration fee to \$280, an increase of \$30.

CHECKLIST FOR THE 2026 ST. CLOUD FESTIVAL CONFERENCE

- ☐ Feb 01 – Registration opens (no money is due until March 1st).
- ☐ Feb 01 – Register for classes (until May 1, but as soon as possible is preferred).
- ☐ Feb 01 – Hotel reservations can be made online only at this link:
www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.24113.html?groupId=9R9KH2D3
The discounted rate for all room types is \$142 plus approx. 15% tax per night.
- ☐ Mar 01 – Scholarship application is due.
- ☐ Mar 01 - \$140 full-Festival deposit is due. Or \$65 one-day Festival deposit is due.
- ☐ Mar 15 – Application for one of the Specialty Choirs is due, if desired.
- ☐ Apr 15 – Ringers for the two Specialty Choirs will be selected by an Area Board member.
- ☐ Apr 30 – Fees are due for ringers accepted into Specialty Choirs, for music, shirt and clinician. \$45 for Conference Choir ringers; \$65 for Bronze PLUS ringers.
- ☐ Apr 30 – Specialty Choir ringing assignments will be determined and scores will be sent via USPS.
- ☐ May 1 - \$140 full-Festival balance is due; or \$65 one-day-Festival balance is due.
- ☐ May 1 – Optional fees due: \$35 Handbell Happy Hour event.
- ☐ May 1 – Registration closes. Last day to register for classes by period.
- ☐ May 19 – Last day to make hotel reservations at the discounted rate.
- ☐ June 1 – Sponsorship donations are due.

Link to the Festival documents:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bkgWA6goM-hSeLfwu-iEG3-xhai5lzl?usp=sharing>

General Festival information link:

area7.handbellmusicians.org/festival-2026/

SHOWCASE CONCERT

The Showcase concert at this year's Festival Conference will feature Rochester Area Handbell Ensemble, featuring Paul Kingsbury, artistic director. The group is composed of ringers from communities throughout the Rochester Area.

Formed in 2017, Rochester Area Handbells has quickly become respected for their exciting musicality and engaging programming. Their 2026 program, "Why We Ring", features favorite ringer selections

both new and old, as well as commentary from some of the ringers on their connections to the art of ringing. Look for sneak peeks at www.facebook.com/RochesterAreaHandbells.



Rochester Area Handbells taking aim for an exciting Showcase concert in St. Cloud.

The 7:30pm Friday concert at the River's Edge Convention Center is free to Festival registrants. Tickets for \$20 can be purchased at the door for non-Festival registrants.

OPTIONAL ITEMS FOR THE FESTIVAL

Handbell Happy Hour (Optional)

\$35 per person

Thursday June 25, 2026

Iron Street Distillery, 539 E. Germain Street, St. Cloud

5:30-7:30pm Food trucks onsite

7:00-9:00pm Happy Hour with the Beer Choir

Space is limited – register early through the Festival registration process.

Includes the first TWO beverages (for a cocktail, a mocktail or other beverage), a handchime to play, an official Beer Choir hymnal adapted for handbells, sing-along, and a whole bunch of fun.

Additional discounted drink tokens can be purchased onsite for \$10 if more than two beverages are desired.

Highlights:

- A special cocktail (or mocktail) created for Area 7 will be prepared.
- Cathy Moklebust will be conducting her new HANDBELL HAPPY HOUR composition.
- All other frivolities will be led by the Twin Cities Beer Choir folks.

Festival Meal Tickets for Non-registrants (Optional)

\$35 each

Want a non-ringer friend or family member to join you for a Festival meal? They can — with a pre-purchased meal ticket.

Meals available for purchase: Friday lunch, Friday dinner or Saturday lunch or Sunday lunch. All meals are catered by the Center.

Friday Lunch (Optional)

NEW this year

\$25 each

You can now purchase a catered Friday box lunch, which must be pre-paid during the registration process. Or you may choose to eat at a local restaurant for Friday lunch. There is 1.25 hours allotted for lunch.

Festival T-shirts for non-registrants (Optional)

\$12 per shirt

All registrants will receive a BLACK T-shirt as part of their registration, to be worn during the closing concert. Perhaps there are some people who could not attend the Festival, but they want a Festival shirt anyway.

Extra shirts can be purchased during the registration process and will be available for pickup on Festival check-in day. No additional extras will be available at the Festival.

All of the above optional items must be purchased during the Festival registration process.

SPECIALTY CHOIRS

Want more ringing? Consider applying for placement in one of the Specialty Choirs.

Both choirs perform in a concert on Saturday, June 27th at 4:30pm.

The CONFERENCE CHOIR provides an opportunity for more experienced ringers to play more challenging music. Jennifer Cadwell is the Conference Choir conductor in 2026.

The Conference Choir is comprised of up to three 5-octave choirs with a minimum requirement of two choirs.

All participants in this ensemble are required to be experienced at ringing level 3+ music proficiently and be committed to arriving with the music already learned. Attendance at all rehearsals is mandatory, which may require you to miss Divisional rehearsal(s) in the Arena and classes. However, the Conference Choir rehearsals are scheduled to avoid Coppers Division rehearsals.

The repertoire includes the newly commissioned piece in honor of Jennifer Cadwell's service to Area 7 as Chair and to those who served with her during her 6-year term.

You must commit to this rehearsal schedule:

- Fri June 26: 9:00AM-12:00PM
- Sat June 27: 9:40-10:40AM and 3:20-4:20PM

The Bronze Plus Ensemble provides advanced ringers the opportunity to work with an outstanding director. Carlos Rivera-Aponte is this year's Bronze Plus conductor.

Ringers for the ensemble, comprised of one 6-octave group, will be chosen through an application process and references. All participants are required to be experienced at ringing Level 5 music proficiently and be committed to arriving with the music already learned. Attendance at all rehearsals is mandatory. The Bronze Plus rehearsals are scheduled to avoid the Bronze Division rehearsals:

You must commit to this rehearsal schedule:

- Fri June 26: 9:00AM-12:00PM and 2:10-3:10PM
- Sat June 27: 1:00-2:00PM

Contact Monica McGowan if you have any questions about either ensemble:

chairElect.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Application forms can be found at this link and are due March 15, if not sooner:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bkgWA6goM-hSeLfwu-iEG3-_xhai5lzl?usp=sharing

CALLING ALL HANDBELL VENDORS & AREA 7 COMMUNITY GROUPS

Make yourself known to the Festival registrants by hosting a table (or several) at the 2026 St. Cloud Festival.

Vendor hours:

Friday June 26

Setup 7:30am to 9:30AM

Open: 9:30-11:45AM and 12:30-3:30PM

Saturday June 27

Open: 8:30-10:40AM and 12:30-3:10PM

Tear Down: 3:15-5:15PM

Costs:

- Uncovered TABLES: \$20 each (bring your own covering)
- Upholstered CHAIRS: \$10 each

You can also bring your own table (maximum 8') and covering.

If you would like to reserve a spot, more information will be sent to you after contacting Alanna Teragawa events.area7@handbellmusicians.org. Do so by March 1, 2026.

Pictured below was the busy vendor area in 2024. Imagine what we can offer in 2026!



SILENT AUCTION

Are you a "crafty" person? Do you have something you think a fellow ringer would like?

Bring and/or buy an item from the Festival Silent Auction. Almost anything can be offered up for auction. Some suggestions you may consider: Items (wine, cheese, snacks, etc.) that represent where you live, a handbell trinket, a painting, gently used music that you no longer need in your library, and many more.

You are limited only by your imagination. Your purchase helps offset the cost of hosting Festivals and the start of the Bill & Cindy Alexander Grant Fund. Thank you!

To help us prepare for the donations, please follow the link below to submit the information about the item(s) you are donating.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfcMBB-znLfLiEMGd-aBnoqQd7vrPJxLzVds0uckVpGg0wkAZw/viewform?usp=preview>

Questions can be directed to Lisa Bourget at WisconsinNorth.area7@handbellmusicians.org

CAN'T ATTEND THE FESTIVAL? LOAN US YOUR HANDBELLS / HANDCHIMES / FOAM

Here is what equipment is needed for our numerous Festival classes, as well as for specialty choir rehearsals and performances:

- 01 6-octave set of handbells and handchimes
- 25 sets of 5-octave handbells
- 22 sets of 4-octave handbells
- 22 sets of 3-octave handbells



- 44 sets of 4- to 5-octave handchimes
- 22 sets of 3-octave handchimes
- 1,752 feet of table foam

Your loaned equipment will be picked up and delivered back to you and is fully insured while away from your building. In our decades of hosting Festivals, every handbell and handchime has been returned safe and sound.

Please contact Michelle Finlon ASAP if you are able to loan your equipment:
chime.area7@handbellmusicians.org 🎵

Come one, come all!

Let's fill the St. Cloud Convention Center with over 500 ringers – just like we did in 2006.



If you are interested in advertising in *Clapper Chatter*, we have a variety of plans that could fit your needs.

There is a 15% discount to advertisers who pay in advance for an entire year (four editions).

\$30 for business-card size per edition
\$55 for 1/4 page per edition
\$65 for 1/2 page per edition
\$80 for full page per edition

If you would like to know more, contact Jen Welch at editor.area7@handbellmusicians.org



2026 FESTIVAL CONFERENCE SCHEDULE
as of January 3, 2026

THU JUN 25

7:00-9:00

OPTIONAL

HANDBELL HAPPY HOUR Twin Cities Beer Choir and Food Truck Event at Iron Street Distillery
Pre-registration required. *Food Trucks open at 6:00pm.*

FRI JUN 26

8:00-3:30

REGISTRATION

9:00-10:00

PERIOD 1

REHEARSAL – Bronze Plus Specialty Choir – Carlos Rivera

REHEARSAL – Conference Choir Specialty Choir – Jennifer Cadwell

Classes: both **Coppers** and **Bronze** Divisions

Bell Lore – Sandy Mullaney

Bell Trees Beginning – Karen Van Wert

Small & Mighty Reading Session – Christina Herold

Maintenance-Malmark – Monica McGowan

Plink Plank Plunk – Cathy Moglebust

Reading Session: Crowd Pleasers – Derek Bromme

Reading Session: Jingle All the Way – Jordan Goodwater

9:30-11:45

Vendors & Silent Auction are open to shop and mingle

11:45-12:30

Vendor Area is closed

12:30-3:30

Vendors & Silent Auction are open to shop and mingle

10:30-11:30

PERIOD 2

REHEARSAL – Bronze Plus Specialty Choir - Carlos

REHEARSAL – Conference Choir Specialty Choir - Jennifer

Classes: both **Coppers** and **Bronze** Divisions

I've Got Rhythm – Jill Mahr

Bell Tree Beginnings – Karen Van Wert

Hitting the Road on Tour – Nancy Eaton & Derek Bromme

Maintenance-Schulmerich – Monica McGowan

Conducting – Paul McKenzie

Reading Session: Jingle All the Way – Jordan Goodwater

11:30-12:45

Lunch, on your own or pre-purchase a Box Lunch ticket during registration.

Explore the wonderful options in nearby downtown St. Cloud

Vendors and Silent Auction are open (Closed 11:45-12:30)

1:00-2:00

PERIOD 3

Classes: both **Coppers** and **Bronze** Divisions

Using Media – Amy Maakestad

Reading Session: Mini Masterpieces – Cathy Moglebust

Crash Course in Recording – Matt Gender

Tips and Tricks Treble Bells – Bonnie Tranby

Fine...I'll Conduct Open Forum – Jessica Westgard Larson

Basics of Handbell Weaving – Tracey Bowers

Reading Session: Sacred Music - Jennifer Cadwell

Showcase Choir Run-through Time 1:00 to 3:10 – Paul Kingsbury



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- 2:10-3:10 **PERIOD 4** Friday cont'd
REHEARSAL – Bronze Plus Specialty Choir - Carlos
Leadership Tea – Area & National Updates: for Directors, Area Board Members, HMA Staff
Classes: both **Coppers** and **Bronze** Divisions
Jumpstart & Teach Children – Cheryl Ulmer
WYSIWYG – Cathy Moglebust
Healthy Ringing & Adaptations – Michelle Jensen
Reading Session: Crowd Pleasers – Derek Bromme
Showcase Choir Run-through Time 1:00 to 3:10 – Paul Kingsbury
Vendors and Silent Auction are open until 3:30
- 3:30 Vendors and Silent Auction are closed for the day.
- 3:30-4:40 **PERIOD 5**
MASSED REHEARSAL – all ringers
- 5:00-5:40 **PERIOD 6**
Dinner, provided
- 5:50-7:15 **PERIOD 7**
MASSED REHEARSAL – all ringers
- 7:30 **PERIOD 8**
SHOWCASE CONCERT
with **RACH Rochester Area Handbell Ensemble**, Paul Kingsbury, Artistic Director
Concert is free for Festival registrants. Tickets on sale at door for all others: \$20
- 8:45 Retreat to your hotel.
- SAT JUN 27**
- 8:30-10:45 Vendors and Silent Auction are open to shop and mingle
- 8:30-9:30 **PERIOD 9**
Rehearsal - COPPERS DIVISION – Jill Mahr
Classes: **Bronze** Division
Bell Lore – Sandy Mullaney
Joys of Non-Performing Choirs – Amy Maakestad
Hitting the Road on Tour – Nancy Eaton and Derek Bromme
Tips and Tricks Treble Bells – Bonnie Tranby
Maintenance-Malmark – Monica McGowan
Conducting – Paul McKenzie
Use of Alternate Instruments – Paul Kingsbury
Vendors and Silent Auction are open

**NOTE: The class schedule may change before the Festival depending on the number of registrants per class.
Most class sizes are restricted to 40, unless otherwise noted in the class description.**



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- 9:40-10:40 **PERIOD 10** Saturday cont'd
REHEARSAL – Conference Choir Specialty Choir - Jennifer
Rehearsal - BRONZE DIVISION - Carlos
Classes: Coppers Division
Using Media – Amy Maakestad
Reading Session: Mini Masterpieces – Cathy Moglebust
I'm New Here – Mary Yerks
Reading Session: Small & Mighty – Christina Herold
Maintenance-Schulmerich – Monica McGowan
Basics of Handbell Weaving – Tracey Bowers
Bang on a Can – Paul Kingsbury
Vendors and Silent Auction
- 10:50-12:30 Vendors and Silent Auction are closed
- 10:50-12:00 **PERIOD 11**
MASSED Rehearsal – all ringers
- 12:10-12:45 **PERIOD 12**
Lunch, provided
- 12:30 – 3:10 Vendors and Silent Auction are open
- 1:00-2:00 **PERIOD 13**
REHEARSAL – Bronze Plus Specialty Choir - Carlos
Classes: both Coppers & Bronze Divisions
Copyright in 60 Minutes – Jeff Cadwell
Jumpstart and Teach Children – Cheryl Ulmer
WYSIWYG – Cathy Moglebust
MAP for STARS – Karen Van Wert
Brain Gym – Sandy Mullaney
Healthy Ringing & Adaptations – Michelle Jensen
Introduction to SOUND Healing – Julie Struzyk - Chakra Sound Garden, Inc
Reading Session: Sacred Music – Jennifer Cadwell
Vendors and Silent Auction are open
- 2:10-3:10 **PERIOD 14**
Rehearsal – COPPERS Division – Jill Mahr
Classes: Bronze Division
Copyright in 60 Minutes – Jeff Cadwell
Joys of Non-Performing Choirs – Amy Maakestad
Crash Course on Recording – Matt Gender
Nuts and Bolts-Planning a Workshop – Bonnie Tranby
Fine...I'll Conduct Open Forum – Jessica Westgard Larson
Craft Class: Card Making – Tracey Bowers
Introduction to SOUND Healing – Julie Struzyk – Chakra Sound Garden, Inc
Bang on a Can – Paul Kingsbury
Vendors open. **Last Chance to bid on Silent Auction items.**
- 3:10 Vendors and Silent Auction Area is closed for the Festival



3:20-4:20

PERIOD 15

Saturday cont'd

REHEARSAL – Conference Choir Specialty Choir - Jennifer

Rehearsal – BRONZE Division - Carlos

Classes: Coppers Division

I've Got Rhythm – Jill Mahr

I'm New Here, Now What – Mary Yerks

MAP for STARS – Karen Van Wert

Brain Gym – Sandy Mullaney

Introduction to SOUND Healing – Julie Struzyk, Chakra Sound Garden, Inc

Use of Alternate Instruments – Paul Kingsbury

4:30-5:15

PERIOD 16

Concert of the Specialty Choirs:

Bronze Plus and Conference Choir

Recognition of Out-going Past Chair, Jennifer Cadwell

5:30 -

Free evening

SUN JUN 28

8:00-8:45

WORSHIP SERVICE

led by **Great River Resonance** (Director: Jordan Goodwater), St. Cloud

Homily/Prayers: Pastor Ron Vert

Service prepared by Paul McKenzie

Needed:

Flute or Native American Flute player

People who can speak other languages: ASL, CELTIC, NATIVE, etc.

Singers (solo and/or group)

Before 11:00

Check out of your hotel

9:00-9:45

Coppers Division - final run-thru

9:50-10:35

Bronze Division - final run-thru

10:40-11:55

Massed – all ringers - final run-thru

12:00-1:00

Lunch, provided

1:30-2:30

CLOSING CONCERT – wear your Festival T-shirt

Free and open to the public.

Food and cash donations collected for local Food Shelf.

After 2:30

SAFE TRAVELS HOME

Area Events Calendar

February 1-May 1, 2026

Area 7 Festival 2026 Registration Open

February 1-May 19, 2026

Make Area 7 Festival Hotel Reservations

For our discounted rate, make reservations at:

https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.24113.html?groupId=9R9KH2D3

March 1, 2026

Festival Registration Deposits due – half of registration fee

March 1, 2026

Registration Deadline for AdventuRing

March 28, 2026

AdventuRing

8:20am-4:30pm

3:30pm Concert open free to the public.

College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, MN

June (25) 26-28, 2026

Area 7 Festival

Rivers Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN

June 25, 2026 (Thursday)

Handbell Happy Hour (pre-registration required)

7:00-9:00PM with food trucks at 5:30

Iron Street Distillery, St. Cloud, Minnesota

June 26, 2026 (Friday)

7:30pm Showcase Concert at the Festival

Rochester Area Handbell Ensemble

River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN

Terry Haws Center B

Free admittance to Festival registrants

\$20 Tickets sold at the door to non-registrants

June 28, 2026 (Sunday)

1:30 Festival Closing Concert

River's Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN

Terry Haws Center A

Open free to the public.

Donations to local food shelf encouraged

Area 7 Board

Chair: Paul McKenzie

chair.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Chair-Elect: Monica McGowan

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Past Chair: Jennifer Cadwell

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Secretary: Deb Madel

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Events Assistant: Dan Ahlman

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Historian and Media Library

Coordinator: Jordan Goodwater

historian.area7@handbellmusicians.org

North Dakota Sub-Area Chair *Open*

ndakota.area7@handbellmusicians.org

South Dakota Sub-Area Chair:

Cheryl Ulmer

sdakota.area7@handbellmusicians.org

Northern Minnesota Sub-Area Chair:

Derek Bromme

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Southern Minnesota Sub-Area Chair:

Paul Kingsbury

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Twin Cities Metro Sub-Area Chair:

Akudo Omeoga

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Northern Wisconsin Sub-Area Chair:

Denean Smith

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Southern Wisconsin Sub-Area Chair:

Lisa Bourget

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Manitoba Representative: Ron Vert

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Registrar: Trevor Lee

registrar.area7@handbellmusicians.org