



Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA

Area 11

www.area11.handbellmusicians.org

Newsletter

NATIONAL OFFICE

www.handbellmusicians.org

Volume - 5
Issue - 5

May 2012

Mountain Sub-Area Chair - Mary Moffett
Mary_Moffett@comcast.net

Desert Sub-Area Chair - Libbie Randels
libbie70@aol.com

From the Chair.....

51 Days and Counting.....

2012 Area 11 Festival/Conference

June 21 - 24 in Salt Lake City, Utah

Beeeeeeeeeeee.....ADVENTUROUS!!!

Beeeeeeeeeeee.....CREATIVE !!!

Deadline for June Newsletter

May 25, 2012

Advertising deadline 5/20/12

In this issue....

BEEeee Adventurous and Creative
Festival Registration Balance Due May 15
Loaner Chime Deadline - June 1
Evolution of a Website
Ring of Fame 2012 Inductees
Bells in the Holy Land
Bells and Ear Problems
Last Minute Festival Info

I believe Handbell Musicians are naturally an adventurous and creative group! By definition, someone who is disposed to seek *adventure* or to cope with the new and unknown is ADVENTUROUS. We have all been adventurous at some point in our lives. Those first steps we dared to take as a baby; that first day of school out in the world all by ourselves; learning to drive as teenagers – all adventures. In fact, we can all agree that just learning the mechanics of playing the handbell or handchime is truly an adventure. Each piece we embark upon can be a new adventure. An important component of the adventure is “creativity”. Creativity refers to the phenomenon whereby a person creates something new that has some kind of value.



This month I want to spotlight someone very special to Area 11 who embodies what it means to be *adventurous* and *creative*! **Marcy Hontz** is not only our e-newsletter editor, but also our Area 11 webmaster. Like many of us, Marcy did not grow up in the age of technology, but that didn't stop her. Her adventurous spirit and creativity have taken her on a journey that required her to learn new things that didn't always come easily and took many hours of study.

On April 9th, Area 11 officially launched our new website with a layout that Marcy worked on for months. **CONGRATULATIONS MARCY ON A JOB WELL-DONE!!**

Check out the new Area11 website - go to www.area11.handbellmusicians.org and see our “new” look and take some time to explore the different tabs at the top of the home page. Let us know what you think and give us feedback!

I want to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge the outstanding work that Marcy does for Area 11. She is a valuable member of the Area board and has never backed away from a challenge, even when it

(Cont. on page 2)

meant she would have to learn something new and somewhat foreign! That is exactly what happened last fall when we decided to explore the options for a new website. For this month's e-newsletter, I asked Marcy to write an article on the history of our website and how she got started. After you read it, I'm sure you will appreciate the time and effort that Marcy gives to help us all stay informed about Area 11 and Handbell Musicians of America. Please join me in thanking Marcy by sending her your own note of thanks. Just e-mail her at mrhontz@cox.net.

Our Area 11 Festival is almost here - only 51 more days!! If you haven't registered yet, you still have until May 15th. This is a festival you won't want to miss – you need to BEEeeeeee There!! The 2012 Festival is a new concept for Area 11. Educational and ringing opportunities are offered for entire choirs as well as individuals – all with the intention that all registrants will return home a better ringer and musician. For our Area 11 Event Planners, putting this festival together has been a real *adventure* – and yes, an exercise in *creativity*!! I am happy to announce that over 1/3 of our registrants to date are “first-timers” to our festival and another 60+ registrants are youth!! That is GREAT NEWS!!

Until next month.....

Adventure awaits in Salt Lake City – hope to see you there!!

Claudette



FESTIVAL UPDATE!!!

Remember, if you made a partial payment for your registration fee, the balance is due no later than May 15, 2012. If you have misplaced the confirmation email that listed the balance due, contact Claudette (Claudette.rothwell@gmail.com).

Loaner Chime Application Deadline Is June 1!

Do you know an elementary teacher or a church musician who is looking for a way to put some excitement into a school or church music program? Some children just don't have a good singing voice. Other children would do better with a more active way to learn music. Could their teachers benefit from the loan of a set of chimes for use in the 2012-2013 school year? Area 11 will place three octave sets of chimes at seven locations where a music program would be enhanced by such a loan. Music is provided and a mentor could be made available. Information about the program and the application forms can be found at our web site: area11.handbellmusicians.org . Click on “Chime Loan Program” under the Education Tab.

Don't delay. Opportunity is knocking. The deadline for applying for a Loan of one of the Chime sets is JUNE 1.

NORM HEITZ & CAROL SCHEEL
PRESENT:

Heitz Handbells
and Music

A full service handbell store with music and accessories: gloves, gifts, maintenance items, binders, mallets, bell tree items, Malmark products

Visit us at
www.heizthandbells.com

612-208-1741
1 (877 or 866) 426-3235
heizthandbells@yahoo.com

6603 Queen Ave S, Suite S
Richfield, MN 55423

The Evolution of the Area 11 Website - by Marcy Hontz

In 1999 I retired from my job as a church secretary and became interested in creating websites. By reading a three inch thick book on HTML 4 and doing the exercises in it, I learned enough to create a family website and one for the church bell choir I had been directing for several years. Just by reading that book, I kept discovering different things which could be done and it was fun learning something new. Every time I was able to accomplish something I wanted, it was like winning at a computer game and for me it was fun! I was also developing a useful skill.



Then Jennie Blomquist invited me to an Arizona AGEHR State Board meeting to help choose music for the upcoming State Festival. I went to the meeting, helped choose the music and conversation turned to an Area XI website. Roy Blomquist who had served as an Area chair said there was a need for a website for Area XI which would provide a place for people to get various forms needed for event registrations or things like vouchers to do the business of the organization. That sounded like a small job and something I could handle with my limited knowledge so I volunteered to give it a try. Thus the Area XI website was conceived. I thought all the states in the area already had their own websites and it would just be a matter of providing links to them. I would only have to be responsible for Area doings. Things seemed a bit overwhelming when I discovered that NONE of the states had websites! Then I realized that all the state pages could have similar layouts with the Area page being the opening page. And that's how the original five state website was born. Over the years we just kept adding things and the web site grew into what it was through March 2012.

However, change was in the air. We are a part of an international organization and at its Pinnacle 2010 event in Nashville, Tennessee the AGEHR board of directors introduced us to a new name. In October 2011 AGEHR officially began doing business as HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA, a name which identifies the organization's members as musicians to be respected and taken seriously in the mainstream music world. We could foresee a lot of changes having to be made in the website just with name and logo changes. In the fall of 2011 we also learned we would have to look for a new server and that service was being offered free from the national office of HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA. The time seemed right for a new beginning and we began acquainting ourselves with WordPress.

WordPress was said to be very intuitive and easy for anyone to learn. Several people could be named as administrators and work on the website, each in their own area - the Chime Chair could be responsible for that page, each Sub-Area Chair would work on the page(s) for their area, etc. "Looked good on paper," as the saying goes, but as things turned out, WordPress was not all that intuitive after all. It just meant learning a different way of doing things. But there is no book, only help files! And if different people were to be working on the website in their various areas, it meant that all of them would need to learn WordPress. Realistically, it's hard enough to get one person willing to be responsible for a website, let alone 3 or 4. After a few months of a learning curve while playing with a test site set up for us, three Go-To-Meeting phone calls with J.R. Smith in the national office and many questions and answers through e-mail, some of the pages we were actually going to use were developed and the new site launched on April 9, 2012.

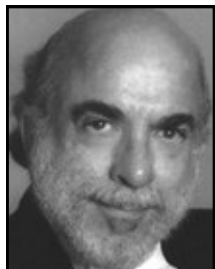
The learning curve continues just as it did with the early HTML4 website and new things will be added or changed as needed. It has not taken as long to learn WordPress as it did HTML4 but we are not doing as many things on the new site. WordPress uses real words instead of code. BUT you have to know what those real words mean and where to put them. Work is done directly on the site, not in a file which you then send to a server. You don't see what your page looks like or if the links will work until you publish and look at it. As set up now, we have no choice of kinds of fonts, their size or color changes. The Area websites are similar in design to the National web site but content and how it is arranged is up to the Area. Area 5 and Area 11 have served as "test areas" and, I believe, are currently the only two areas which have sites with a design similar to the Handbell Musicians of America website. So Bookmark the new URL: www.area11.handbellmusicians.org and check in regularly for the latest news.

ANNOUNCING THE 2012 RING OF FAME INDUCTEES!

The **RING OF FAME** award was conceived in 2006 to honor Area 11 musicians who have gone “above and beyond” in their service to AGEHR (Handbell Musicians of America) and especially to Area 11. The award is presented every two years at the time of the Area 11 Festival Conference.

The 2012 inductees are Douglas Benton and Roy and Jennie Blomquist. They will be honored at the Area 11 Festival Conference in Salt Lake City in June. Congratulations!

Doug Benton, from Gold Canyon, Arizona, has been directing handbell choirs since 1973. He is a published composer/arranger of handbell, choral, organ, brass and orchestral music. Doug has served the Guild as Arizona State Chair and set up clinics and festivals in Phoenix, Prescott, Flagstaff, Kingman, Yuma and Tucson.



As Chair of Area 11, Doug established a state organization in Colorado, was on the National Bylaws Committee and was able to change the Bylaws so states and Sub-Areas could legally establish state/sub-area organizations and their treasuries. Doug further served the Guild as its first Chair of Director Education, with committees focused on a new system of certification modeled after the American Guild of Organists and MENC, and a new event with a track for advanced ringers/groups, Handbell Spectacular.

Doug is currently the full-time Director of Music Ministries at Gold Canyon United Methodist Church in Gold Canyon, Arizona, where he directs two handbell choirs, two vocal choirs, an orchestra, produces a Performing Arts Series, plays organ at the two traditional services, and oversees music for the Praise Service and the Country Western Service. Doug says, “I am truly blessed to be here at this place at this time doing what I am doing! Life is very good, indeed!”

Roy and Jennie Blomquist of Scottsdale, Arizona, have both been involved with handbells for over 30 years. Roy has served as the Arizona State Sub-Area chair as well as the Chair of Area 11. He has worked on the National level on writing early Rules of Procedure.

Over the years he has taught handbells in various churches including one church where he directed 6 handbell groups!

His background includes over 50 years as a church musician playing organ, piano and synthesizer.

Jennie has served as Chime Chair, Secretary/Treasurer and as Chair for the Arizona State Sub-Area from 2001 to 2006.

Together, they co-founded Campanillas del Sol, a community handbell ensemble in 2000.

Despite Roy and Jennie’s individual terms of service to Area 11, they have been described as a team, supporting each other and working together over the years.



It has been said that, “Roy and Jennie love handbells! And, they have worked hard so others can learn to love them too!”



~~~~~FUN THING TO DO IN UTAH~~~~~

Lagoon Amusement Park

Address: 375 Lagoon Drive, Farmington, UT

Website: <http://www.lagoonpark.com/>

Lagoon is a large amusement park about 15 miles north of Salt Lake City near the town of Farmington. Lagoon has been in operation since 1896. Its mix of old and new elements makes it unique. The park's carousel has been in operation since 1906, and the wooden roller coaster has been running since 1921. Park owners put up a new big ride just about every year to keep locals coming back. Lagoon is fun for all ages and includes kiddie rides and big thrill rides. The replica Pioneer Village is fun for all ages, and so are the musical performances in the pavilions and Lagoon Opera House. Lagoon includes a water park called Lagoon-A-Beach.

The Holy Land:

A Musical Journey of Faith

Sharing Israel's First International Handbell Festival

April 5 – 16, 2013



Dear Ringers and Directors,

You are cordially invited to join me for the first international handbell festival in Israel from April 5 to 16, 2013. *The Holy Land: A Musical Journey of Faith* will deliver us into the cradle of Biblical sites where we shall also share Christian and Israeli music together.

Our musical journey will convene in Tel Aviv along the Mediterranean Sea for our first concert. This will be followed by concerts in Jerusalem and the area of Nazareth/Galilee. You will get to know Inbalim Ensemble, a member of Peimon, Israel Association of Handbell Ringers. Since their organization in 2009, it has become their passion to establish choirs in Israel churches, senior citizens' homes, among special needs populations, and in low-income districts for troubled youth. Our time in the Nazareth/Galilee area is devoted to concerts that may extend into some of these areas.

Our musical repertoire will include six mass selections of cultural and Christian origins. The balance of our concert program will be inclusive of Inbalim Ensemble and individual selections of participating choir groups and/or ensembles. What a wonderful place this will be for you to showcase your talents as handbell musicians to the people of Israel!

This will be a life changing experience. I would love for you and your ringers to be a part of this tour. And yes, individuals and partial groups will also be accommodated, as well as non-ringing tour members.

I hope you will seriously consider being part of this international festival to the Holy Land. With you, this would be a wonderful partnership.

Yours in ringing,

Debbie Rice
Festival Artistic Director

A complete brochure for this trip is available at

www.area11.handbellmusicians.org.

You'll find it under the Events tab.

Spread the word. Tell your friends.

You do not have to be a member of Handbell Musicians to add your name to the mailing lists for Area 11 or National e-mails. To sign up for National E-notes or ringEr-notes follow instructions in the box to the right. ➡

To get the Area 11 newsletter send an e-mail to:
newsletter@area11.handbellmusicians.org.

Please remember to keep your e-mail address current!

E-notes - Sign up for your monthly national GUILD news or ringEr-Notes at www.handbellmusicians.org. Click the Music and Resources tab. You do not have to be a member of Handbell Musicians of America to get E-notes or RingEr-Notes. Tell your friends!

PLEASE

Be sure to keep your e-mail address up-to-date to receive the latest news.

KEEP YOUR RINGING IN YOUR HANDS AND OUT OF YOUR EARS!

- by Jane Wolfarth, MS

Lucky us! A star quarterback's days of glory may be numbered, but we handbell ringers can appreciate the companionship of fellow musicians and the joy of performing straight through our Golden Years. That is, if we can still hear. Have you ever considered the cumulative effect of handbell rehearsals on your hearing? My quick internet search turned up a few useful articles about handbells and hearing loss (see below), but not much by the way of scientific studies on the long-term effects of ringing. So I thought I'd put my grad classes in audiology to work for once and do a (not very scientific) study to convince my fellow handbell ringers to think about their hearing while they still have time to save it.

Poor hearing results from two causes—a mechanical one (like damaged bones) or an electrical one. Gradual hearing loss from repeated noise exposure is a sensorineural loss, which means the tiny hairs in your ear that pick up sound vibrations are damaged. These hairs convert vibrations to electrical signals. Your brain uses the signals to figure out what you're listening to. Once these hairs are gone, you can't grow them back. That's why you see landscape workers walking around with plugs sticking out of their ears as they blast leaves off the sidewalk—they're trying to limit the damage to the hairs of their inner ears.

So what constitutes *too loud*? The National Institute of Health warns that sounds over 85 decibels (db) begin to damage your hearing. So how do bells rate?

To help with this experiment, I installed two apps on my smart phone to check the decibel levels during my concert band rehearsal. I sit near the back of the band, in the French horn section. I just put my phone on my music stand and let it record the sound level. In our last rehearsal, the app I paid for recorded the db level averaging around 60, occasionally going above 90 db. My freebie app basically said we should all be deaf, spiking up to 120 during the rehearsal with alarming frequency. I don't know which was more accurate, but it's all I had to work with.

At our last bell rehearsal, I just set the phone directly on the bell pad. The average decibel level on the paid app was somewhat lower than at my band practice, peaking around 80 db. However, the tinker bells I play (G7 is the lowest) ding *right in front of my face*. I think proximity makes a difference, and more importantly, my bells *sound loud* to me, but my horn usually doesn't. I've been wearing a hearing aid since I was a teenager, and I'm probably more sensitive than most people to noise. Since everyone has a different noise tolerance level, use some intuition. If your ears hurt or you hear some continued ringing after rehearsal, the damage is

already happening. If the bells you play are the bigger bells, and you stand far from the treble bells, noise-induced hearing loss may not be an issue at all. But if you've ever found yourself thinking, "Man, that piece is making my head hurt," then it's probably time to consider some hearing protection.

Any qualified audiologist can order good plugs and fit them for you. I use Westone musician's plugs. If you're lucky enough to live near a college with an audiology clinic, you should consider using it for your consultation. For one thing, they're not trying to make a profit, but you're also educating a grad student who may never have helped a musician before. No worries--the supervising audiologist will be hovering around to make sure everything goes well. My plugs came through the University of Utah audiology clinic, and ran about \$200. First, you'll go in for an initial consultation and will need to have molds made of your ears. That's a bit icky, but the plugs are designed to fit snugly right in your ears, and your ears only. In retrospect, the colors I chose so I could tell them apart easily (red and blue) don't exactly match our concert attire, so I'd recommend getting clear plugs. My plugs work terrifically well, which unfortunately means I miss the jokes from the bass bell section.

[If you're just a poor student and want to cheap out, you could go to amazon.com and](#) search for "musicians plugs." The Etymotic Earplugs are currently going for \$13. I've never used them, but I figure any protection you use is better than no protection at all. I would like others to initiate a more rigorous study on the decibel output of an average rehearsal—let me know the results!

In short: keep your ringing in your hands and out of your ears! You'll be glad you did.

Useful resources:

<http://handbellfaq.com/faq/faqnoise.htm>

http://www.solobells.com/Handbell_soloist_Nancy_Kirkner/Handbell_Articles_%28blog%29/Entries/2011/10/19_Hearing_protection.html

A very useful article, especially if you are considering visiting an audiologist.

<http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/Pages/noise.aspx>

Jane Wolfarth, MS
Speech-Language Pathology
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

LAST MINUTE ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM YOUR AREA 11 EVENT PLANNERS

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT – BASKET DRAWINGS!!!!!!

“Basket Drawings” are fun! All registrants are invited to participate! Proceeds from the drawings will support Area 11 Special Projects – event scholarships, the Composition Fund, Young Ringer Camp, etc.



How can you participate? Bring something to donate – ANYTHING! Could be a basket full of goodies or a single item. Use your imagination! Bring your item/s to the Beehive Central area and add them to the display. Items will be on display until the Birthday Bash Friday night.



What’s next? Here’s how it works!

Purchase tickets - available for sale at Beehive Central – \$1 per ticket

Clearly PRINT your name on the back of each ticket that you purchase.

Place ticket/s in the labeled container near the basket/item you would like.

The ticket drawing will take place during the Birthday Bash.

If a ticket with your PRINTED name on the back is drawn, YOU WIN THE ITEM!

FESTIVAL REGISTRATION and HOTEL CHECK-IN (In that order!)

You must complete the Festival Registration process **BEFORE** checking in to your hotel room.

Festival Registration opens at 11am – on the first floor of The Little America Hotel.

BIG REMINDER! DON'T FORGET TO PACK.....!!!!!!

Black 'stand up' 3-ring binder

Mallets for your ringing position – ringing position assignments will be in the next eNewsletter

Bell polishing cloth - the **Sunshine Cloth** brand is recommended, or a **well-used rouge-type** cloth

Gloves

A plastic bag containing sharpened pencils with erasers

Some mini-clips - if you use them for page turns

A water bottle

Comfortable shoes



EXHIBITS!!!!

Don't worry if you forget something!

Jeffers Handbell Supply (Tom and Jill Jeffers) and Handbell Services (Dave Berry)

will have large exhibits at the Festival!

Plan to SHOP! SHOP! SHOP! and support them!