



Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA

www.area11.handbellmusicians.org

Area 11

Newsletter

NATIONAL OFFICE

www.handbellmusicians.org

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Mountain Sub-Area Chair - Mary Moffett

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From the Chair.....

I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for the honor and privilege of serving Area 11 as your Chair. The two years have gone by quickly!! It has been such a pleasure meeting so many of you – one of the highlights of my term. Area 11 has some of the very best people!! At the top of that list are the great people that served on my board. My gratitude goes out to Sue Hahn, Sharon Sparlin, Libbie Randels, Mary Moffett, Linda Maloney, Cathie Olds, Marcy Hontz, Jessie Sume, Michael Kastner, and Tom Waldron for all of their help and wisdom. I am confident that the incoming board will do a great job. Sue Hahn, incoming Chair; Jeannine Holt, incoming Chair-Elect; Rick Meurer, incoming Secretary/ Treasurer; and Libbie Randels and Mary Moffett as Sub-Area Chairs are all gifted leaders and Area 11 is in good hands!! I will continue to work alongside them as the Area 11 Board Advisor and as one of the Area 11 Event Planners.

I wanted to share with you some of my personal reflections from the last four years. When I was elected Chair-Elect, the Area was in the first year of re-structure. One of my goals was to help Area 11 to become more unified and not just “five states doing their own thing”. I wanted us to be more connected not only as an Area, but also to the organization of which we belong, which at that time was still American Guild of English Handbell Ringers. I feel we are making progress with this goal. We are all beginning to think of ourselves as “Area 11” and that our events are “Area 11 events” open to anyone regardless of where you live. It doesn’t matter if you are a director, a ringer or just an enthusiastic friend and supporter of what we do. I was so pleased to see so many “first-timers” at our recent Area 11 Festival – almost half of our total registration!! So many of you came up to me or our Sub-Area Chairs and expressed your own desire to host an event or help with anything that we needed. That is exciting!! Over the past few years I have walked the journey with several of you as you have hosted your first event or worked on a planning committee. This is one of the results of re-structure that the Area 11 Board had hoped for. We know YOU CAN DO IT!! Let us know if you are interested in Area leadership, planning an event or assisting the board in any way. WE NEED YOU!!

Deadline for September Newsletter
August 25, 2012
Advertising deadline 8/20/12

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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.



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(Cont. on page 2)

Attending and assisting with Young Ringers' Camps have been a fabulous experience for me!! Our Area 11 youth are amazing and they should be our top priority!! We need to nurture and mentor them and encourage them to be future leaders in Area 11. We now have an Area 11 Youth Representative who plays an active role in helping the board to know what it is that the youth want. Jessie Sume is helping to plan next summer's Young Ringers Camp to be held at Ft. Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. If there are youth bell choirs in your communities, please let them know about our Young Ringer Camps that happen in the summer of odd-numbered years.

Over the past four years I have had the opportunity to represent Area 11 at National meetings and events. I was able to be part of the discussions and decisions that led to our re-branding and becoming Handbell Musicians of America. That was exciting and it is not over yet!! In October you will see a third phase that begins to take shape. You can read more about this development in your *Overtones*. I love our new name – Handbell Musicians of America. I like that it is so inclusive of everyone and identifies us as “musicians”. We can take pride in who we are and the instrument that we play!! I would like to challenge each of you to find at least one person to become a new member of the Guild in this next year. As I traveled around the Area during my term I was amazed and perplexed at the same time that so many had no knowledge of the Guild, or even Area 11. How could that be??? Perhaps we as directors and ringers are not sharing information about who we are. We are not sharing our knowledge of other National and Area events that are open to all. We are not sharing the benefits of being a member of *Handbell Musicians of America*. When was the last time you shared your copy of *Overtones* with someone else? So, the challenge is on!! I hope to see our Area 11 membership increase considerably in this next year!!

As I write this article I have just returned from National Seminar in Cincinnati, Ohio. We had 15 attending from Area 11!! I had hoped to get us all together for a picture and a time to get to know one another, but the schedule of activities prevented us from doing so. Area 11 attendees included:

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--------------------|
| Gwen Blumenschein | Kevin McChesney | Libbie Randels |
| Michele Case | Karen Miller | Joyce Rosenquist |
| Jay Hill | Kim Montross | Claudette Rothwell |
| Jerri Hill | Susan Quintanar | Diane Rubio |
| Marilyn Hylton | Linda Maloney (whose heart resides in Area 11) | Joan Wagner |

If you know any of these people, be sure to talk to them about their experience at National Seminar. The 2013 National Seminar will be a bit closer – Portland, Oregon on July 24-27. I hope to see YOU there!!

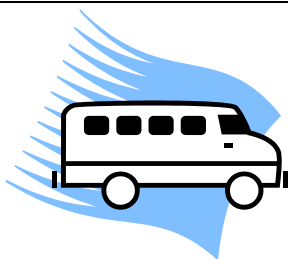
Please stay informed by visiting the Area 11 website, www.area11.handbellmusicians.org and by reading your monthly e-newsletter. Area 11 has many fun and exciting events in the planning stages and you won't want to miss them!!

Area 11 is now 41 years old!! We have been enriched by those that served and shaped our past and we look forward to the promising future that lies ahead. Thank you again for allowing me to be one of your leaders!! It is a time in my life that I will treasure forever!!

Best wishes to all,
Claudette

Another Festival Fact

Our Bell Wranglers drove a total of 1,922 miles picking up and returning the bells from 24 locations.



Special thanks go out to **Glen Peleti, Barb Hartman, Ryan Kunz and Mary Moffett** for their many, many hours of driving and schlepping the equipment.

HANDBELL DIRECTOR POSITIONS OPEN - COLORADO AND ARIZONA

Mountain View United Methodist Church (Boulder, CO) is now accepting applications for the position of Handbell Choir Director. This position follows the school calendar from September-June and nominally requires 4-5 hours/week. \$4,000-\$4,675 DOQ. Send cover email with attached resume to Keith Brown, a_keith_brown@earthlink.net. Full position description may be found at www.mtview.org.

Position will remain open until filled or until September 15, 2012

Littleton United Methodist Church (Littleton, CO) seeks an experienced handbell director to conduct established adult choir. Five octave Schulmerich handbells, four octave Malmark Chimes. Wednesday evenings 7 - 8:30 p.m. Please submit letter of interest and resume by **August 15** to David Kates, Director of Music and Worship Ministries at davidkates@littletonumc.org.

St. Paul Presbyterian Church (Aurora, CO) is seeking a Director for their Adult Handbell Choir. This is a part-time non-exempt position paying for an average work load of 5 hours per week Labor Day through Memorial Day. No hours are planned for Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Responsibilities include selecting music, assigning handbell parts, leading the choir for weekly rehearsals (currently on Mondays), and preparing to play in worship one Sunday per month. The Handbell choir traditionally participates at Christmas Eve services.

STPPC owns 4 1/2 octave set of Schulmerich Handbells along with 2 octaves of Malmark chimes. The full job description is available on the church website at: www.stppc.org

If you are interested in this position please send your cover letter, resume, and references to: office@stppc.org or handbells@stppc.org. If you have any questions please contact the church office Monday through Thursday, 9am-4pm, at 303-693-3434.

North Scottsdale (AZ) United Methodist Church is seeking a Director for their Adult Handbell Choir. This is a salaried position. Responsibilities include: Leading the choir for weekly rehearsals September - May and on the 4th Sunday of the month during Sunday morning worship services.

The Handbell choir also participates at special services during Advent and Lent. NSUMC owns 5 octaves Malmark Bells and 3 octaves Malmark hand chimes.

For more information please contact Darin Read, Director of Music: darinread1@cox.net or by calling 602-315-7347. Church website: www.nsumc.com

Festival Logo Shirts for Sale

We have three extra logo shirts leftover from the Area 11 Festival because of a sizing error. We are offering them for sale. Area 11 will pay for shipping. Here are the details:

Men's Black Polo Shirt, Size XL - \$25

Men's Black Polo Shirt, Size 2XL - \$25

Women's Long Sleeve Black Blouse, Size XL - \$25

Call Claudette at 801-698-2728 **after August 12th** if you are interested.

Other Festival Attire

We hope to have information in the September newsletter regarding ordering your own Festival Logo Attire on an individual basis.



HANDBELL EXHIBIT OPENS AT MUSICAL INSTRUMENT MUSEUM (the MIM)

When this beautiful Musical Instrument Museum (the MIM) opened in North Phoenix a few years ago, handbell musicians in the area were disappointed that their instrument was not included. People talked about what should be done - write to people in charge, talk to national officers, etc. etc. Whether anyone ever acted on their ideas is unknown but somehow the key people found each other and then things happened quickly. Tim Schuback, President of Malmark heard only recently about the MIM (one of the largest museums of its kind in the world) and just hours before he was going to call MIM he received a call from them! Malmark sent 15 bells, all the G's and C's from G1 Aluminum (largest one they produce) to C9 Bronze (the smallest). Dr. Cullen Strawn, Curator of Musical Instruments at MIM, a handbell ringer in his youth, designed the stunning display of the bells.

At the MIM you receive headphones and as you stroll through the museum and stop at a display your headphones immediately synchronize with what's on the video screen. You can hear and see the instrument in the display being played. Included are such instruments as an Indonesian gamelan, accordions, bag pipes, African Drums and many, many others. The videos at the handbell exhibit highlight various playing styles. Included are the BAYLOR BRONZE, a top college ensemble which was filmed at Baylor University, Waco, TX ringing "Rondo Passacaglia" by Dobrinski (2009). RING OF FIRE'S performance of "Capriccio" by McChesney from their Finale DVD (2008) features the tireless-teen style - all memorized

of course. The professional level of a SONOS performance is shown with "To A Humming Bird" arr. James Meredith from their Ringing Up: Music of Three Worlds DVD (2009).

The handbell exhibit was officially opened with a program on July 28, 2012 with over 125 people, mostly ringers, attending - a good attendance considering this

was the first day of the Olympics and a very hot day in Phoenix. In the tradition of Handbell Musicians, the program began with Doug Benton, representing Mal-

mark, Inc. ringing the "opening bell". This was followed by Dr. Christopher J. Bell (yes, really, Bell!), Vice President of External Relations at MIM, who welcomed everyone and gave some comments as to how the exhibit came about.

During the program which followed, Dr. Strawn, Curator of Musical Instruments, gave a very interesting history of handbells and of Jacob Malta, who is responsible for the American Handbell in the modern era. Dr. Strawn discussed Jake's history as Head Engineer for Schulmerich Carillons until 1972, then forming Malmark in December of 1973, and Jake's successful development of Choirchimes® in 1982 and then the aluminum bass bells.

A group of four from the Paradise Ringers of Paradise Valley United Methodist church led by Monica Stern introduced the audience to various handbell techniques including ringing, shaking, the swing, martellato, martellato lift, echo, pluck and thumb damp. They also demonstrated the use of mallets, both on suspended bells and bells on the table and the singing bell technique. Ms. Stern also explained why some handles are black and others are white and the correct way to hold the bell, since the clapper only rings on one plane and will sound best if the clapper hits the casting at the proper strikepoint. She also compared the appearance of musical scores of other instruments with a bell music score. Then the group played "Ode to Joy" to demonstrate ringing through a full piece which included bell changes.



Dr. Cullen Strawn



Paradise Ringers



Playing for the first time. It's fun!

Then it was time for the volunteers from the audience to try their hand at ringing. Only folks who had never rung a bell before were allowed to participate in ringing "Take Me Out To The Ball Game." What fun it is to see the smiles on the faces of those who ring for the first time! Especially when they finally realize what they are supposed to do and it sounds better the second time.

Several people who have been honored for their work in the handbell world and especially for their service to Handbell Musicians of America Area 11 attended the event. All are members of our Ring of Fame. Doug Benton and Roy and Jennie Blomquist were inducted into the Ring of Fame at Area 11's 2012 Festival in June and John Faris was in the first group of inductees to the Ring of Fame in 2006! Their interest and support of this event is another evidence of why they deserved the Ring of Fame award.



Roy & Jennie Blomquist, Doug Benton, John Faris

This was a great opportunity to celebrate the instrument we all love and also to celebrate Jake Malta's singular passion as a true campanologist and his life's work. All who ring or have rung

Schulmerich, Malmark or Maas-Rowe handbells have been able to do so because of Jake Malta. The handbell community owes a debt of gratitude to the MIM for their farsightedness in their desire to have this exhibit to share with the world the wonders of our incredible instrument, and to Malmark, Inc. for their very generous donation of these bells for this exhibit.



Picture above by Doug Benton

All other pictures in this article by Linda Meurer

Find out more about the Musical Instrument Museum (the MIM) at theMIM.org.
4725 E. Mayo Blvd., Phoenix, AZ 85050

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Richfield, MN 55423

AREA 11 NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS - (A peek at their personal interests)



CHAIR-ELECT: Jeannine Holt
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Wow! I am so humbled to begin a period of service to all of you as your new Chair-Elect! And I'm a little nervous as I begin to look at the steep learning curve I have ahead of me. I'm looking forward to a time of getting to know many of you on a personal basis over the next couple of years. Please do not hesitate to call me with any question, idea, or comment about our Area 11 – I want to hear from you and I will forward your comments on to the appropriate person, when possible. I also pledge to contact you back personally when I first receive your message.

I first encountered handbells in a small military chapel in Newport News, Virginia, in the 80's, and I was hooked! I got to ring for the first time when we moved to Tampa, FL. As a military family, we moved again, and I found myself directing my first choir, a strictly women's group, in Columbus, GA. We have moved many times since then, and it has been my pleasure for many years to direct children and youth, along with adults, in various settings, including military chapels worldwide and civilian churches. Currently I direct the Sanctuary Bells at Village Seven Presbyterian Church in Colorado Springs and a beginner senior women's ensemble that performs in nursing homes and community venues. I am also active with the Southern Colorado Handbell Alliance.

I have two grown children, three amazing grandchildren, and a lovely foster daughter. My husband, Don, is retired from the US Army and has been a contractor at Peterson Air Force Base for nearly 15 years. I retired about three years ago from the nonprofit sector and am now active in Dalmatian Rescue. We currently have two dogs who are permanent members of the family (Scout, a Dalmatian, and Rustic, a golden retriever) and one "foster" Dalmatian, Jake. As a family, we do a lot of camping (though not the tent kind), and we sponsor cadets from the Air Force Academy. In addition to handbells, I chair the Colorado Chapter of the Baylor University Women's Network, and I sit on the Board of Advocates for the Baylor University School of Social Work (can you tell I'm a Baylor graduate?). I also work with Leadership Pikes Peak to develop leadership skills in young professionals in the Colorado Springs area.

Have an awesome summer, and give me a call sometime!

SECRETARY / TREASURER: Rick Meurer

Rick and his wife Linda live in Scottsdale, Arizona. They have one son, Chris, who studied video production at Scottsdale Community College. Last January, Chris and his wife Andrea moved to Seattle where Chris manages the video department for a large community church.

Rick and Linda are terrier people. They currently have a three year old West Highland White Terrier, plus they will be getting a new Cairn Terrier puppy in August. Rick's hobbies include travel, digital and medium format photography, handyman chores for the house and cars, and of course, handbells.

Five years ago, Rick and Linda signed up for the handbell choir at their church. They were very fortunate, because Kay Cook was the handbell director. Kay was willing to take on the job of quickly training two new ringers with past instrumental musical experience, but no knowledge of handbells. Although destined to ring bass bells, Rick's first bell assignment was F5 G5 on an arrangement of Fairest Lord Jesus where F5 is the first three notes of a very soft, exposed part. With a vast two hours of ringing experience, Rick barely knew how to ring a bell, much less ring it softly!

Later both Rick and Linda also joined the Scottsdale Handbell Ensemble, a Desert Bells International community group, which gave them many new opportunities to learn and enjoy ringing. They are currently ringing with a different church group closer to home in North Scottsdale where Rick is fulfilling his destination of ringing bass bells.

For Rick, handbells is enjoyable because of the great people you meet and the wonderful music that can be created together through the individual contributions of each member. Whether it be traveling as a group to a festival, attending a spring ring, performing a community concert, or playing at church services on Sunday, the friendships developed between handbell people are special.



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WHAT HE WOULD HAVE SAID

Doug Benton's acceptance speech on his induction to the Ring of Fame 2012

Editor's note: Someone said they had never seen Doug Benton speechless. God moves in mysterious ways. With this printing many more people will receive his message!

Thank You Area 11

I have been blest with many incredible, profound experiences in my life, most of which have been music related, and most of those have been handbell related. The first performance I was involved in was Christmas Eve, 1973. We had received our new bells in very late November and I was determined to have my choir (MOO Ringers) ring for Christmas Eve. We had no music, so I arranged Leontovich's *Carol of the Bells* for the Offertory after the sermon and Adam's *O Holy Night* for choir, organ, our 2-octave set of bells, and our great soprano soloist.

We worked very, very hard. *Carol of the Bells* was very easy and my choir got that down quickly. *O Holy Night*, though, was not going well. Our last rehearsal before we put it together with the choir and soloist, I finally told them that if we couldn't get it together, I could always just play the bell part on the organ. I told them I didn't want them to feel too much pressure and it was important to me that they felt successful at their first performance. We met with the choir and the bells rang nearly perfectly! Come to find out, they met on their own on Saturday and spent 3 hours on *O Holy Night* (the bells rang the 1/8-note arpeggios)! I have never been so proud in my life! Their doing that set the stage for an incredible personal commitment to this group that paid off for all of us throughout the years.

Christmas Eve came and *O Holy Night* was the anthem before the sermon. Everyone did very, very well. The Soprano's high Bb brought everyone to tears, including myself! Pastor got up to give the sermon, then sat down. He got up again, then sat down. He got up a third time, took a sip of water, then said, "I have nothing to say after what God through our new handbell choir has just given to us." and sat down. There was several minutes of incredible silence before we continued with the service. I know many of you have had similar experiences. I realized that night that performance for me is an act of worship.

In the 39 years since that first performance, I have met many great people. Amongst those was my greatest mentor and dear friend, Donald E. Allured, or, as we all like to call him, *The Don*. He shared many, many great insights into music, life, people, kids, etc. One of the first things he told me was, "Doug, remember that you are *in* the music, but you are *not* the music. God is the music. You are just the messenger of His creation. However, your job is to get the message expressed correctly and completely. Never settle for less than the best that you have to give, or the best that your ringers have to give. *That is your job!*" I have never forgotten that, and I pray I never will.

I was profoundly moved by my dear friend and colleague, Dr.

William Wood's words at my induction into the *Area 11 Ring of Fame*. Bill, your words literally brought me to tears, and it is your fault I wasn't able to talk (as most of you know, I am rarely without words of some kind)! If you hadn't been so gracious to remember some of the good things (and not mentioning some of the perhaps less than good things!), I would have (hopefully) said some of the following:

First, have fun! If you don't enjoy what you do, it simply is not worth doing!

Giving less than your best is not an option! You owe it to yourself, your choir/ensemble, your audience, and most importantly, the music (created by God!), to give your absolute best!

Remember, all you have to do is ring and damp the right notes at the right time, *musically!*

Don't get too full of yourself! There are *always* those who are better! Remember what Jesus said about "the log in your eye" and "asking to sit at the head table". "The bigger the ego, the greater the fall" – not sure who said that, but I haven't forgotten it!

God gave us talents, and His talent will always "find a way". But, remember it is His talent, just given to you to develop and use.

Volunteer for everything you can. This is how one learns and it helps everyone.

Volunteer before being asked. Find what needs to be done, then do it.

Be encouraging to new ringers. Remember, you were one too!

Give back more than you get. This is just a good thing to remember throughout life.

Pontificating is one of the perks of getting old! Thanks for letting me!

I will always remember my induction into the Ring of Fame. My most sincere thanks to the Board of Area 11, Handbell Musicians of America, and whomever was responsible for nominating me for this great honor. As long as God allows me to be involved with music and handbells, I will continue to do what I can to encourage new ringers, old ringers and others to be a part of this great instrument that gives such pleasure to those who hear it, those who perform with it, those who write for it and those whose lives have forever been changed because of it.

I thank God every day that I can do what I do in this place at this time.

You know what we get to do? We get to ring handbells! That makes us all very special people!

May God continue to bless us, everyone.

DOUG

Douglas J. Benton
Gold Canyon UMC, AZ