



Newsletter



Volume 11
Issue 1
January 2018

From the Chair:



Happy New Year!!

We have made it through the holidays (whew!) and now it is time to get registered for all of the events that Area 11 has planned!

Up first is Super Bell Saturday on February 3rd. We have 12 locations throughout the area so there is sure to be one near you! This event is so fun as we are all ringing together at the same time. The deadline for registration is January 20, 2018. You must be registered by that time to

make sure that we have enough music for you. We look forward to seeing you!!

After that, there are Spring Rings in Utah and Colorado on March 10th and one in Wyoming April 13-14. With clinicians like Deborah Carr(Utah), Sondra Tucker(Colorado) and Monica McGowan(Wyoming), these events are not to be missed!!

June 21 - 24, 2018 is our Area 11 Festival/Conference in Albuquerque, NM. There is a ton of information in this newsletter about Festival with articles from our Clinician Alex Guebert and our featured performing group, Area 11's very own Forte Handbell Quartet. The registration deadline is coming up soon on March 15th. The Festival Planning Committee has been working hard and has wonderful things planned for you.

I would also like to announce our new CHIME chair, Paige Erickson, from Utah. Paige will be working hard to fill the shoes of Cathie Olds and getting all 7 sets of Area 11 chimes placed for the next school year. Paige is a former recipient of the Chime Loan program and will do a great job! The deadline to apply for the use of a set of chimes is coming up in May. Please check out the program on our website, area11.handbellmusicians.org.

We are actively working on getting nominations for Chair Elect and Secretary/Treasurer. Please checkout the job descriptions and nomination form on the website. If you are interested in running for either of those positions or know someone you think would be great, please email me at chair.area11@handbellmusicians.org. It is a wonderful way to meet people from all over the area and to help plan the future activities for our membership.

I wish you all a very musical 2018! Have a wonderful New Year and I look forward to seeing you at the events coming up this Spring!

Happy New Year!

Shannon Casey, Chair
Area 11
Handbell Musicians of America.

Area 11 Website
area11.handbellmusicians.org
National Office Website
Handbellmusicians.org

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Area 11 Super Bell Saturday VI

6th Annual Area-wide Read and Ring

Join us for a fun morning of reading and ringing music at one of our 12 locations around Area 11!

You'll be able to purchase any of the music you like at a discount and save more money by not having to pay for shipping!

Registration deadline is January 20, 2018

Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon (set up at 8:30)

Registration fee: \$8.00 for members/
\$10.00 for non-members

Find the registration form by clicking [here](#)

Arizona: Flagstaff, Phoenix, Scottsdale, Tucson

Colorado: Colorado Springs, Denver, Thornton, Windsor

New Mexico: Albuquerque

Utah: Ogden

Wyoming: Sundance



SUPER BELL
VI

RING OF FAME NOMINATIONS NOW BEING ACCEPTED!

In 2002, the Area 11 Board of Directors established the RING OF FAME to recognize and honor those who have made outstanding contributions to the art of handbell/handchime ringing. We would love to have your nominations for this award. Please consider nominating people you have worked with or know have made contributions. *This can be at a local or state level as well as national level. Sometimes it is the people behind the scenes who have made handbells what it is today, and they would be great nominees!* The deadline for nominations is March 1, 2018. We will be recognizing some of these exceptional members from Area 11 during the 2018 Festival in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The full information for who is eligible for this award, as well as more information on the Ring of Fame or to nominate someone to receive the award, visit the following page on our website. <http://area11.handbellmusicians.org/about-us/ring-of-fameselection-process/>
If you have questions, please contact Lorrie Hart, chairelect.area11@handbellmusicians.org

Area 11 2018 Festival/Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico

2018 Area 11 Festival/Conference

June 21-24, 2018

Embassy Suites Hotel and Spa in Albuquerque, New Mexico



Registration is OPEN for our 2018 Albuquerque Festival!

Lead Clinician: **Alex Guebert**

Featured Showcase Group and Teachers for our classes and workshops: **Forté Handbell Quartet**

Find all the registration information and forms on our Area 11 website at:

<http://area11.handbellmusicians.org/area-festival-2018/area-festival-2018/>

We have two options for registration.

Option 1: Mail-in registration form and pay a deposit by check, with the balance due later

Option 2: Register online and pay with a credit card.

Registration fee (deadline is March 15, 2018) – \$350.00

If registering online with credit card, processing fees will apply.

Late Registration (between March 16, 2018-May 1, 2018) – \$450.00

If registering online with credit card, processing fees will apply.

Lodging is *NOT* included in this registration fee.

You will need to contact the hotel to make reservations.

Embassy Suites Hotel is offering a special rate to those attending our Festival.

Registrants who live outside a 60 mile radius from the hotel and choose *not* to stay at the Embassy Suites Hotel must pay an Off-site lodging surcharge of \$100.00.

This helps insure we meet our contracted room blocks, keeping all costs as low as possible.

If you are unable to attend the full festival, but would like to attend on Saturday, we do have a Saturday Only Option for registration on our website.





The Importance of Learning Classical Music on Handbells

Brad Bird, the director of Pixar's *The Incredibles*, recalls a story in which a friend asked him if animation was his favorite genre. Angrily, he retorted: "Animation is not a genre. Animation is an art form. It can do any genre."

I think this translates elegantly to our instrument. Handbells is not really a genre—it can do any genre. Handbell ringing is an art form. With our art, we can explore the genres of classical music, contemporary music, film score, jazz, pop music, and really any musical style we want.

And now, my main point: Why should you play classical music on handbells? It is usually more fun to play music that was truly written for bells, by modern

composers, because all the positions on the table usually get to play active and interesting parts. And after all, Mozart never wrote any pieces for handbells—nor did any of the classical greats. Allow me to give a short history of the reason for such an oversight....

The modern handbell choir (ensemble, group, team, or whatever you choose to call it!) is a relatively new instrument. Of course, small bells have existed for millenia, and handbells tuned to the western 12-tone scale have been around for centuries—but the modern handbell (that is, the American variant of the English-style handbell, manufactured by the two American companies, Schulmerich and Malmark) is, by comparison, a brand-new instrument.

These American handbells have a purity of tone that could not be produced by bells made in the older companies' foundries. Thus, we can perform harmonically complex music. That is the reason we have so much variety in our handbell repertoire. On a typical concert program, one might see original works and hymn arrangements by contemporary handbell composers, arrangements of film score, classical, jazz, and even pop music – all of which work well on such a flexible instrument.

The great classical composers never wrote for handbells because they were, at the time, either completely unknown, or not suitable for the harmonic complexity of the music of the age. We know that a carillon bell tower can sound a beautiful peal, but imagine hearing the Moonlight Sonata of Beethoven played on a carillon – too many overtones, no subtlety, any actual chord would sound completely muddy. Any small bells at the time had the same problems.

In the 1960's and 70's, handbell composers began to emerge – people who recognized the potential of the instrument. These people first wrote very bell-idiomatic music: music that sounded like carillon peals, change ring patterns, etc. Then, simple hymn arrangements became popular. Over the past decades, the handbell scene has happily embraced many more genres – in fact, any genre will work well, if the right pieces and arranging techniques are used.

So, now, we can play classical music on handbells. The art form of bells, in fact, is perfectly suited for the genre of classical music. (Here, by classical music, I mean all the eras: Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, etc... even modern "concert music".)

Teaching a handbell group a piece of classical music has many benefits:

It provides a music history learning opportunity. This is great for children, but is certainly also great for adults. It gives us, as handbell musicians, a context for our art form and how it fits into the timeline of musicians throughout the ages.

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Area 11 2018 Festival/Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico

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It can be used to encourage the growth of individuals' musicality, no matter the level. Classical music tends to have great opportunities for musical expression. Directors: play a recording of the piece (in its original classical instrumentation). Encourage the ringers to listen to the subtle changes in dynamics and tempo. This can help them listen for the ends of musical phrases, which are typical spots for *ritardandos*. The end goal is for the ringers to be able to “feel the music”, and listening to it first is crucial.

It allows for nice variety in a concert program, and also usually works well in church. Unless your church has a blanket ban on all not-specifically-sacred works, most classical music is appropriate as a church service prelude or as music during the offering, communion, etc.

It helps in the effort to bring handbells into the classical mainstream. It helps us, as a community, be more highly regarded in the world of contemporary classical music. It connects the great contemporary composers of the handbell world (Betty Garee, Cynthia Dobrinski, Fred Gramann, Cathy Moklebust, William Payn, Kevin McChesney, etc.) with the great classical composers of ages past.

Now, where can you go to find a classical piece for handbells? The obvious route is to use the handy Music Selection Assistant on handbellworld.com, and select “Classical Composers” and/or “Classical Music”. There is a wide selection there, at various AGEHR levels.

And what if you decide you want to transcribe a classical piece for handbells? Well, if it is a piece for solo piano, it is easier than you may think. Here are the steps you can take:

Search for the score on imslp.org, which is a vast database of classical music scores. You can print these for free. The only things not offered there are pieces which haven't yet entered the public domain (typically, pieces which were published after the mid-1920's).

Determine if the range is good for your group. If you have 5 octaves, you can probably handle most simpler piano pieces. Notes that fall below the range can sometimes be played at the higher octave (you may need to use your own musical discretion here).

Decide if you're going to start from scratch (re-inputting the notes) or just use the existing piano score (this may work if it's not going to be too messy-looking when you're finished marking it up).

Use “LV” markings when the sustain pedal marking is used in the piano score. Listen to a recording: does the pianist use the sustain pedal more than what is marked? Use the LV marking liberally in your score. Remember to cancel it with an R marking where appropriate.

Decide if some melodies or sections should be “spiced up” with techniques or other instruments. Staccato section? Use stopped techniques (marts, mallets, plucks, etc.). Lovely bass melody underneath some soft treble chords? Use chimes on the bass melody.

Place measure numbers above every measure.

Find the notes on leger lines in the middle of the grand staff – these need to be moved to their proper staff. You must always follow the rule that middle C and below goes on the bass staff, and the D above goes on the treble staff.

Finally, create a “Handbells Used” chart.

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Below is an excerpt from Rachmaninoff's "Elégie"; the piano score:



And here is the handbell transcription. Note: there are no more leger lines between the treble staff and bass staff; the "left hand" arpeggios are played on chimes for a nice contrast; the LV markings follow the standard of what most pianists would do with the sustain pedal here (based on listening to recordings and/or noting when the harmony changes), measure numbers have been added, etc.

A handbell transcription of the piano score excerpt. It shows measures 90, 91, and 92. The notation is adapted for handbells, with no leger lines between the treble and bass staves. The 'ppp' dynamic is marked in measure 90, and 'LV' (left hand) markings are present in measures 90 and 92. The arpeggiated figures in the bass staff are indicated by diamond-shaped notes, suggesting they are played on chimes. Measure numbers 90, 91, and 92 are clearly marked above the staves.

So: handbell music is an art form, and an exciting one at that—one that allows us to play many different genres. The genre of classical music holds many opportunities for us in the handbell community. I have implemented the use of classical pieces (specifically, transcriptions of piano works, like the Rachmaninoff example above) in my handbell groups, to great effect. I encourage you to begin working on more classical music in the coming season!

Alex Guebert (Lead Clinician for our Area 11 Albuquerque 2018 Festival)

Festival Classes and Workshops

Would you be interested in teaching a class at our Albuquerque Festival?

The 2018 Festival Planning Committee would like to have input on classes you would like to see offered.

If you would like to teach a class, let us know what your topic would be and a general course description.

We are offering a \$50 stipend for every course selected. Class sessions will be no longer than one hour.

Each course could possibly be offered more than once during the Festival. You must be registered to attend the Festival in order to qualify. Please send ideas and submissions for courses to

events.area11@handbellmusicians.org.

Area 11 2018 Festival/Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico

Article by Forté Handbell Quartet

As might be obvious, we all love handbells. At least that's what I assume, since you're here, unless you're lost and looking for Trombones Daily Digest or whatever you might be into. Throughout all of our handbell careers, we become familiar with answering many questions about our instrument. "Why do you keep switching parts?" "How heavy is that bell?" "Why do you wear gloves?" "What caused you to make such an interesting face during that song?"



However, whether you're the diehard bass player, the solo or ensemble ringer who is looking for a new way to hold more bells, or one of the greatly beloved choir members who is happy to play any part in front of them, there is one question which presents itself above all others: **"Why, oh why, out of all the instruments, do you play handbells?"**

After having answered that question, presented in its various forms by family and friends, I found myself at rehearsal one day, looking at the metal objects in my hands and wondering to myself how I'd gotten there. After plenty of intermittent thought, I've come up with my reasons for why I love what we do. My answers undoubtedly differ from those of you unsuspecting readers, but that just leads into my first point:

We ring because of those who ring, and how they change us.

Playing handbells, unlike many instruments, is by its nature a wonderfully social experience. Every rehearsal, we find ourselves flanked by the good, the bad, and the crazy. Perhaps you know and like them. Perhaps you pray that your director doesn't place you next to them. Perhaps you only ever know who these people are from the name in their folder (guilty as charged). When we lift our bells alongside someone, we can find ourselves in an unusual environment where, regardless of any differences in politics, opinions, or social etiquette, you are suddenly required to *trust* the people beside you, all while knowing that they're trusting you. It's just not *comfortable*.

Then, as you dive into measure one, you realize: everyone behind the table, no matter who they are, is resolute with you in your pursuit of the joy of music. The trust which is shared between you and the other ringers, and between you and your director, is slow to be forged, but unwavering once hardened. This bond results in a respect for the entire group, or hopefully, in the case of those few people we simply cannot bring ourselves to like, the simple ability to see beneath an unpolished exterior. It is primarily through these people that...

We develop more important skills than just bells.

The music we play is just where the magic starts! With every new ringer we play beside, with every rehearsal, we are improved as people. These changes are subtle – the ability to accept a stressful situation just a little more calmly, or maybe the humility with which to take criticism (no matter with how little tact it can be presented!). We learn more about ourselves when our frustration, achievement, epiphany in a difficult song, and even the strain of a long day are unavoidably shared with such a tight-knit group.

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Speaking personally, my life has been greatly influenced by the lessons I've learned in full bell choirs, and even more greatly by the intensity of rehearsals as I've rung with Forté. From week to week, devotion, responsibility, patience, and yes, forgiveness are all parts of a standard bell rehearsal.

Never take for granted the unspoken, subtle, yet incredibly valuable nature of what we accomplish as ringers. We never cease to make the world more wondrous through music, but we also improve ourselves and those around us through our years of dedication.

Thanks for reading,
Ring well, and don't mart chimes!

Tory Marting (yes, that really *is* my last name)

Forté Handbell Quartet



Accepting Submissions for Special Feature Articles

If you and/or your choir would like to share an event you have participated in or organized, we would love to feature you in our Area 11 Newsletters. If you would like to submit an article, send your submissions, including any pictures you have, to Mary Moffett at Communications.area11@handbellmusicians.org. We're looking forward to hearing about the wonderful things happening with the handbell ringers in Area 11! You may also write an article on a topic of interest to the members of our area.

Special Feature Articles may be sent at any time and will be included in any future issue of our Area 11 Newsletter. You will receive an email telling you in which issue your article will be featured.



New Year's Surprise!

Save \$50 off Registration Fees!

Be one of the first 10 people to email Mary Moffett saying you saw this ad and want to save \$50 off your Area 11 2018 Albuquerque Festival registration fees!

Include your name, city, and state in your response!

*You can reply to the email you received this newsletter through or send an email to:

Communications.area11@handbellmusicians.org

If you are one of the first 10 to respond, you will receive an email with further instructions.

We'll see you in June 2018!



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Area 11 Spring Ring Clinicians

Utah Spring Ring, Saturday, March 10, 2018



Dr. Deborah Carr, past director and co-founder of the Columbia Handbell Ensemble (CHE), received a B.S. degree in Vocal Music Education in 1977, a M.Ed. in School Psychology in 1992, and a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology in 1996, all from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She began ringing in Monroe, Louisiana in 1982. Since 1984, she has resided in Columbia, Missouri where she initiated a five-octave bell program at Missouri United Methodist church and directed youth and bell choirs at Community United Methodist Church. During her tenure as director, the CHE performed for the AGEHR Area VIII Conference, the AGEHR National Director's Conference, the AGEHR National Ringers Conference, and the International Handbell Explosion. She taught public school music in both Missouri and Illinois for several years and recently retired from the University of Missouri, College

of Education, serving in a variety of administrative positions. A highly respected conductor/clinician, Deborah has directed mass choirs for the National HMA Conferences and has served as a conductor/clinician for international, national, regional and state conferences in Canada, Iowa, Minnesota, Kentucky, North Carolina, Arkansas, New Hampshire, Oregon, Massachusetts and Virginia and has served on the faculty at the Montreat Presbyterian Conference. Recognized nationally for her musical seminars designed to advance performance skills of handbell ensembles, her classes in the developmental approach to ringing at more advanced levels have been well received by directors and ringers. A member of First Baptist Church in Columbia, Missouri, she is married to Ed Rollins, Associate Pastor and current conductor of the Columbia Handbell Ensemble and has two grown children, one son and one daughter who reside in St. Louis, Missouri and Destin, Florida, respectively. Enjoying retirement to the fullest – she currently serves as organist for Broadway Christian Church in Columbia, Missouri.

Northern Colorado Handbell Festival, Saturday, March 10, 2018

Sondra K. Tucker is a well-known composer for handbells, for choir, for organ, and for flute ensemble. Since 2013 Sondra has served as Handbell Editor for Alfred Handbell. She is in demand as a conductor and clinician, and has led denominational seminars for PCUSA, The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the United Methodist Church, ELCA, and the Southern Baptist Church, and has served on the faculty of numerous Handbell Musicians of America local, area, and national events. Her compositions are published by most major church music publishing houses. She is active in music circles of her hometown, Memphis, Tennessee. Her music degrees are from the University of Arkansas and the University of Memphis.

Additionally, Sondra self-publishes flute ensemble music under her own QuickSilver Publications imprint and handbell titles under her Casa Publications. Away from music, Sondra is an avid knitter and motorcycle rider. She is married, with two children and two granddaughters.



Area 11 Spring Ring Clinicians

Wyoming Spring Ring, Friday-Saturday, April 13-14, 2018

Monica S. McGowan took her music education background – Bachelor of Science, Music Education, Chadron State College, Chadron, Nebraska – and found her life’s passion in handbells. More than three decades later, Monica has become the consummate handbell musician: accomplished ringer, seasoned director, internationally recognized clinician and conductor and Master Technician. She is in demand as a conductor and clinician for festivals and workshops across the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada. Monica served as Director of Handbells in various denominational churches from Minnesota to Louisiana. She has held various leadership roles and educator capacities for the Handbells Musicians of America on both the Area and National levels. During her tenure as the founding Artistic and Music Director of Twin Cities Bronze, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, she led the ensemble to recognition as an internationally acclaimed handbell ensemble known for its professional musical artistry. In August 2017, Monica was hired as Music Director for Bells of the Hills, Rapid City, South Dakota. Monica currently serves as the Handbell Coordinator for the International Music Camp, succeeding the program’s founder, Fred Merrett. “Handbell Week” and “Adult Handbell Camp” are held each summer as part of the IMC’s Summer School of Fine Arts at the International Peace Gardens on the border of North Dakota and Manitoba. She opened her business, Ringing Restorations, in January 2004 and through her work in the repair, maintenance and refurbishment of handbells and handchimes, has achieved the title of distinction: Master Technician. Monica brings her extensive training, passion, love, enthusiasm and knowledge for handbells and handchimes to every forum and venue, providing a challenging, successful and fun experience for its participants.



CHIME Loan Applications

Handbell Musicians of America Area 11 owns several 3 Octave sets of handchimes which are available for loan for a full school year to use in school or church music programs in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah or Wyoming. Sets are loaned with accompanying curricula and Handbell Musicians of America Area 11 will supply a mentor upon request.

Teachers around our area have had some wonderful experiences during the time they had use of our loaner handchimes! You could be next and have your own wonderful experience introducing handchimes to children! OR one of your friends who is a teacher or church musician could be a recipient next school year.

Please pass the information along to your friends and neighbors! They do not need to know how to play or teach handchimes to be chosen as a recipient! Area 11 will provide a mentor to help them get started and keep going all throughout the year!

You can find the application form by clicking [here](#).



Area 11 Upcoming Events

For additional information about each event on this page, visit our Area 11 website at <http://area11.handbellmusicians.org/events-4/events/>



Area 11 Festival 2018
Albuquerque, New Mexico
June 21-24, 2018
Embassy Suites Hotel
in
Albuquerque
Registration is OPEN!

<http://area11.handbellmusicians.org/area-festival-2018/area-festival-2018/>



Super Bell Saturday VI, Area-wide Read and Ring

Date: Saturday, February 3, 2018

Location: Several locations around the Area!

Registration form can be found on our website!

Registration Deadline: Jan. 20, 2018



Find us on:
facebook®

2018 Spring Ring Events Around Area 11

Northern Colorado Handbell Festival

Date: Saturday, March 10, 2018

Clinician: Sondra Tucker

Location: Loveland, Colorado

Registration form and repertoire are available on the Area 11 website.

Utah Spring Ring

Date: Saturday, March 10, 2018

Clinician: Deborah Carr

Location: Riverton HS, Utah

Registration form and repertoire are available on the Area 11 website.

Wyoming Spring Ring

Date: Friday-Saturday, April 13-14, 2018

Clinician: Monica McGowan

Location: Ramkota Hotel, Casper, Wyoming

Registration form and repertoire are available on the Area 11 website.

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