

QUAVERS

AREA VIII: ILLINOIS, IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA MARCH, 2008

PEORIA RINGS MY BELLS

Greetings All!

The new year is in full swing and, hopefully, so are your plans for attending the 2008 Conference, PEORIA RINGS MY BELLS! The board is meeting soon to finalize all our plans. This issue of the *Quavers* is about preparing yourself and/or your choir for attending the conference. Preparation for attending a conference like this is very important. It is three days of very intense work. We will keep you busy!

First, and foremost, in the list of preparation is knowing your music. I can't stress that enough. I have attended conferences and festivals knowing and not knowing the music and I know you will have a much better experience if you have practiced the music. It is really hard to play music you don't know when you are standing further from the director; you can't count on using your peripheral vision to see the director's bouncing baton. You need to have worked out your bell changes already. No matter what level you ring at, you need to be prepared. The first conference I attended, I hadn't rehearsed the music. I was going as an orphan and it is hard to prepare by yourself. Also, you don't always know what bells you will be playing. I considered myself a fairly good ringer but it was hard! The group I played with was also standing right under the director, so you know she heard every wrong note!

Read the clinicians comments on the music. This way you will know ahead of time what is expected of you and the clinicians will have more time to concentrate on the music with you instead of having to go over things that you could have notated in your music already. Make sure you have everything you need to play each piece. Do you need mallets? Do you need chimes? If you own them and a piece calls for them, you can pretty much count on them being used. Clinician comments will include anything different they may want. I played at a conference once with Tim Waugh where he told us to bring things to make our own rhythm instruments that were used in a piece. Those who didn't bring anything missed out on a lot of fun!

Prepare yourself physically. There is a lot of standing and walking at a conference. You stand for an hour at a time for massed and level rehearsals each. Then you walk (and we have tried to keep everything as close together as possible) to classes, to the ringing floor, to the hotel. It can be a long day times three! You also need to prepare your body for a whole lot of swinging and ringing! It's hard on the joints! Get some stretching exercises to do for your shoulders, arms, wrists and hands. Make sure you do them before rehearsals just in case your clinicians don't give you a physical warm-up before ringing. It will help keep you from injuring yourself or aggravating any existing conditions. Take it from a tendonitis sufferer. It does help. Wear comfortable shoes and clothes. Carpet squares help alleviate some of the standing on hard concrete.

Most of all, prepare to have fun! I believe we have a great conference planned. We have a terrific group coming for our special concert, Strikepoint of Duluth, MN. There will be lots of learning and teaching, reunions with old friends and new friends to make and we'll throw in a little dancing on top of that. I hope to see you all there!

Debbie Llewellyn ~ Area VIII Chair

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A RINGER'S PERSPECTIVE

How to prepare for a festival from the ringer's perspective? Finally, a subject I know something about! I've been going to handbell festivals almost every year since 1987, from Portland, Maine to Portland, Oregon. I call it *bell camp* because, as an adult, it's a multi-day getaway where you room with friends and immerse yourself in something you love all day long.

You can go with your whole group, as a partial group, or all by yourself. The social bonding of going as a group is priceless (not to mention it's a great place to gather ideas for Secret Santa next Christmas!). Partial groups can link up with other partial groups affording you the opportunity to meet new people, one of the most fun aspects of *camp*. The years I've gone by myself, all of us orphans managed to find each other somehow at meals and share our love of this unique art form. Once when I went alone, I decided to forego the massed ringing entirely and just take classes and I got to *attend* the final concert! What an experience to hear over 500 ringers make beautiful music together after just a few short days!

The opportunities for learning are boundless. To ring under the direction of nationally and internationally known conductors — I've "painted fences" with Cynthia Dobrinski, played hand-body coordination mind games with Tim Waugh, done healthy stretching with Susan Berry. To take classes from similarly famous (or infamous) clinicians — rhythm, movement, techniques, conducting, performance, history, networking, maintenance. The opportunities for fun are there too. I've played on African percussion instruments with Greg Ashurst, made a stained glass bell with Vic Kostenko, done killer drills with Campanile, and learned folk dancing from Michael Joy. And for you ring-a-holics, there's always several new music reading sessions per festival. And the vendors area is huge, with tons of music available, the time to browse through it, and lots of bell doodads to buy for your group, your director or yourself.

Recommendations for when you attend a festival:

Practice, practice! Although you get LOTS of rehearsal time at the festival, it helps *so* much to know the music well before you go so you can *watch the director* and learn all he/she has to offer. Even if you may think the music is relatively easy, sight-reading it still keeps your head buried in the folder; you *have* to be able to look up without getting lost in a massed ringing situation.

Bring carpet squares or something to stand on. It's worth the extra lugging to have something under foot for several hours a day of rehearsing besides a hard floor. Your legs will thank you.

Wear comfortable shoes and clothes. Some festivals I've attended have been held at colleges and the massed ringing is in an arena or gym where it can get warm in the early summer. But it's worth it to forego the skimpy sandals for a solid pair of sneakers, or the tank top for a loose-fitting shirt that offers your bells a place to damp besides on sweaty skin. Area VIII does their festivals in convention centers, which can actually get a little chilly with the air conditioning. It's not that big a deal to carry along a sweater.

So I encourage all of you, especially all from Illinois, to go to Peoria this summer; it won't be this close again for another 10 years!



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READY, SET...

IT IS FESTIVAL TIME!!!

It does not matter how many times you have been to a festival, there are many things that you should do to prepare yourself for this awesome experience.

Practice, practice, practice. You should know the festival music inside out. Make sure that you have played all of the pieces and marked any special directions given by the festival director. The rehearsals at the festival are more for polishing the music and learning to play as a group than it is to learn the music for the first time. This will help you to enjoy the rehearsals when you are not stressed about learning new music.

Also remember that coming prepared also includes bringing any special handbell accessories that are needed for the music like mallets.

Mark everything. Yes, everything! Bells, chimes, mallets, music stands and binders, foam, table coverings and tables (if you bring your own) all need to be marked so you know what belongs to you. Most of us in the handbell world all shop at the same place so everything looks the same. Address labels are sometimes an easy way to mark most of your items. Electrical tape, yarn and fingernail polish are also some other ways to mark items that belong to your church or organization.

Extras. Pencils (to mark music), carpet (to stand on), clips (for turning pages), polishing cloths are also some items that you might want to have around at your table. Pencils I find are one of the easiest things to forget but one of the most important things that you need. It is always nice to give your bells a quick polish before the final concert so that they shine.

Buy a shirt. At all of the Area VIII Festivals there is a festival shirt created and many people wear these during the final concert. I encourage everyone to purchase a shirt and wear it proudly. I get to spread the word even after the festival as I am asked about my festival shirt when I am around town and get to answer many questions about handbells.

Attend all practices and classes. There is plenty of time to work hard and also to have fun. Try to get to all the classes that interest you and also make sure to stop by the vendor area to check out all the awesome handbell items. I know I spend way too much time in this area both in time and money.

When attending a festival you will have a great time, learn a lot and also make beautiful music. I hope to see all you in Peoria!!

Kathryn Jaeger ~ Iowa Chair

CALLING ALL CHOIRS

Area VIII is again going to feature Break Out Concerts during our conference in Peoria in June. These concerts are 30-45 minutes in length and are featured at the same time as the class sessions. Participants at the conference will have a choice of going to a class session or attending a Break Out Concert. If your choir is interested in ringing in one of these Break Out Concerts please contact **Marilyn Droke** 417-334-3462 or ddroke@suddenlink.net.



KANSAS STATE COMMITTEE

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THE THREE P'S

Ringers, the first thing to do when getting ready to head to a Festival – get those dates scheduled off from work, on your family calendar, etc.!

Prepare your family. If you are leaving a spouse/children behind, and you are so inclined, prepare a couple of casseroles and put them (with cooking instructions attached) in the freezer. If not, leave coupons and \$\$ for fast food or your favorite pizza establishment, make arrangements for grandma to cook, teach your spouse/kids how to cook, etc. Or, perhaps talk fast and convince bell choir members *not* going to the festival (shame on them!) to fix a meal for all the attendee's families one evening.

Prepare the music. This is a must! It saves everyone's time and keeps from irritating the guest conductors when you come prepared. This also lets you get the most out of the rehearsals. If you do not have a full choir attending, see if your director can help you find recordings of the selections, and practice your bells with the recordings. That won't be exactly how our guest conductors will do things, but it gives you a good idea of how the whole piece should sound.

Prepare yourself. Keep an eye on the Festival website (http://www.areaviii.org/pastconf/2008.htm) for new information. Make your hotel reservations. Make sure your director has submitted the registration forms for your group. Start packing. Browse the web for fun things to see/do on the way to and from the festival. Look for things that you might want to do while you are in Peoria. Contact bell buddies you've met at other events to see if they are planning to attend (and harass them if they aren't). If you haven't been before, plan on meeting a lot of great folks that will enhance your bell experience. Bring your comfortable shoes – you'll want them for those mass rehearsals when you will be on your feet for extended periods of time.

Turn off your cell phones. Please don't forget to do this, or at the least, turn it to vibrate.

Once you get to Peoria, settle in for a great time! There will be long rehearsals, but the resulting music is glorious! There will be a plethora of classes – so attend as many as you can. You will learn new techniques, and fun activities to share with your group at home. This is also one of the best ways to meet other ringers. There will be solo concerts and full ensemble concerts. Attend these to see what some of the best in "our business" are doing. Go to music reading sessions and step up to the table. These are great sight-reading experiences, and you will come away with suggestions of great pieces for your director to purchase for your choir. Don't always stick with just the people you know when it comes to meals and classes. Take the chance to meet new people. Ask questions of the guest conductors and class facilitators. Let the moment absorb you!

Festival really is more about the ringers than the directors. I'm excited about attending this summer. I've attended several festivals over the years, but this will be my first festival as a director, and also as a member of the Area VIII Board. I've attended as a ringer in the past, and this time I'll get to experience some things from the "other side of the table."

See you in Peoria! Come up and introduce yourself – I love meeting new people!



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PREPARE TO BE PREPARED

Whether you will be attending your first handbell festival as a novice ringer or you are attending your 25th handbell festival as an experienced ringer, you may have some anxieties and expectations! So, the more your director helps you *prepare to be prepared* the more enjoyment and musical satisfaction you will have during and following the festival!

What anxieties do ringers have as they approach a festival? As an experienced director who has planned festivals and shepherded many ensembles to festivals, I have heard from ringers that they are anxious as to whether they will embarrass themselves in the massed ensembles. Let me try to allay that anxiety! From the least experienced individual I have taken to a festival (less than one year of ringing), every ringer has always been able to find someone of the same experience level with whom they could relate in classes and massed ringing. Handbell directors and ringers are kind, sharing individuals who do not play "one upmanship" with each other. If they did, this director would have been totally left out at the beginning of my career thirty years ago because of the all the questions I asked!

A second anxiety relates to what classes should I take as a ringer. The frequent comment is heard that the classes are for directors, so as a ringer I will just go shopping! Classes at festivals are developed so that anyone who comes to the class will be encouraged to learn something new, to develop a new technique, to progress towards mastering a technique or to learn new music. In a mutually supportive environment like a festival, no ringer should fear going into a class that is labeled as for directors. Why? Most directors of handbells were first handbell ringers! And, it has been heard in more than one venue, "every handbell ringer is a potential director." So with your director's help, try to pre-plan which classes you might want to take at the festival.

Musical preparation can be a concern for both individual ringers and for ensembles that participate in festivals. As a director, I want each individual ringer and their ensemble to be very comfortable and secure in knowing the repertoire as to the notes, the rhythms, and the articulations or techniques. In many ways, the musical preparation for festival music is like any other repertoire preparation. Even though most publishers and composers/arrangers provide tempo guidelines, there is often a wide variety of tempi that can be considered for each piece. Will the festival conductor take the music faster or slower? How do I deal with that as a ringer? To prepare groups to be prepared for other conductors at festivals, once the notes, rhythms and articulations are learned, I begin to vary the tempo each time through the piece thereby enabling the ringers to adapt and adjust to whatever tempo the festival conductor takes. Another salient skill needed along with the flexibility in tempo preparation is the ability to watch the director often from very long distances. Where should I place the music so that I am visually prepared to see the music and once every measure look at the director? Is the director on a high platform, one hundred feet away? Is our group on the front row of the gold division and the director is right on top of us? Flexibility is a major attribute needed when attending festivals! Ringers, be prepared to be flexible and directors please coach your ensembles to be adaptable! The most successful festival conductors, like the ones who will conduct in Peoria, spend the first part of the initial festival rehearsals getting every ringer on the same page with tempos and coordination to their conducting.



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PRACTICE, PRACTICE

It is now less than five months until several hundred ringers will gather in Peoria for the Area VIII Festival Conference. They will be coming to ring their bells under the direction of Hart Morris and Bill Alexander. They have spent the last several months preparing for this event in various ways.

The first and foremost preparation would be hours of practice done within their choir or alone at home at the kitchen table. The best way to come to any ringing event is to have done your practicing ahead of time. So, for those of you lagging behind in the practice time, you still have several weeks left to get that music out and ring your bells. As I am sure the other State Chairs have mentioned, **practice is the key** to making a festival worthwhile for you and those ringing around you. No one wants to be stressed during any of the rehearsals because of not being 100% prepared.

I know several directors who prepare CDs of the music to give to ringers. If you happen to be an orphan ringer, this is very helpful for you and the choir that you might join when you come to the festival. I will have three orphan ringers joining our choir in Peoria that will not have had the opportunity to rehearse with my ringers. Knowing that their director is helping them learn the music by a CD puts my mind at ease as well as my ringers.

I am going to take some rehearsal nights during the next months to rehearse only those ringers from my choirs going to Peoria. It will be a free night for my non-festival ringers but helpful for those ringers coming to the festival. It may be that other ringers from the Omaha area who plan to attend the conference will be able to come and join us on those nights.

The biggest preparation is always to practice, practice, and practice. Working with other ringers and having a CD are very helpful so I hope ringers reading all of the tips from the State Chairs regarding festival preparation put this information to good use.

See you all in Peoria – Ring Those Bells!

Joyce Miller ~ Nebraska State Chair

— The Raleigh Ringers —
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——————————————————————————————————————



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PREPARE...CON'T FROM PG 5

All who attend a festival have expectations whether expressed, verbalized, or only thought of. Some of us may be able to verbalize those expectations and others may never think in terms of their expectations. Now that I have raised the topic, what are your expectations? What do you hope to gain by attending the Area Festival? Do you want to reconnect with colleagues and friends? Do you come to learn new repertoire to suggest to your director? Do you come to improve your ringing skills? Do you come to learn from outstanding nationally known directors who conduct the massed ensembles? I hope that your answer is "Yes, I attend for all of these reasons." Expectations become realizations when acted upon by individuals! So whatever it is you expect to receive at a festival, you must act upon it for those concepts to become your reality! I invite you to think about your expectations for a festival, then to take an active approach and send in your registrations. As you attend the various rehearsals, reading sessions, classes, and exhibits, you will be fulfilled in more ways than you can describe. Your expectations will be met and exceeded.

Prepare to be prepared...I am ready to pack my bag, my bells, my music, my mallets, my conducting baton, the pads, tables, and covers...See you in Peoria!

Dolan Bayless ~ on behalf of the Missouri State Chair

FAREWELL TO IL

I'm writing this in my hotel room as I await closing on a new house next week - in Madison, Wisconsin. So I'll also say good-bye; it's been fun and a real learning experience! I pass on the duties of chair to Kristin Kalitowski, youth handbell director at Gary UMC in Wheaton, whose youthful exuberance and organizational skills will greatly benefit the Illinois State Committee as we continue to strive to offer you varied ringing and learning opportunities. learned to ring under Debbie Titus at Santa Maria del Popolo and continued at Purdue University while studying civil engineering. We also bid (a temporary?) adieu to KC Congdon, who's taking a leave from her Illinois State Committee duties to further her studies in choral directing. Beth McFarland will be taking over as the music librarian.

Debi Robey ~ Outgoing IL State Chair

PEORIA CONFERENCE CHANGES

Bronze Level Out of Print—Festive Sanctus

Bronze Level Replacement—*Praise His Name in the Dance* by Derek Hakes, Level 4, Alfred MAP25358



AGEHR SPONSORED EVENTS

2008	EVENT	CLINICIAN	LOCATION
Mar 8	Nebraska Spring Read & Ring www.agehr-na.org	various	Southwood Lutheran Lincoln, NE OR 1st Lutheran Kearney, NE
Mar 29	Iowa Youth Workshop www.agehr-ia.org	various	Lutheran Church of the Resurrection Marion, IA Kathryn Jaeger Jkjdjaeger@juno.com
Apr 19	Hastings College Festival/Workshop	Pikes Peak Ringers	Hastings College Hastings, NE Byron Jenson Bjensen@hastings.edu
Jun 19-21	Area VIII Festival/Conference Peoria Rings My Bells www.areaviii.org	various	Peoria Civic Center Pere Marquette Hotel Peoria, IL
Aug 4-8	International Symposium www.agehr.org/learning/ intlsym.asp	various	Rosen Shingle Creek Resort Orlando, FL
Aug 8-11	National Seminar Ringing in Unity www.agehr.org/learning/ seminar.asp	various	Rosen Shingle Creek Resort Orlando, FL



2008
Area VIII Conference
June 19-21
Peoria, IL
Mark your calendars!





UPCOMING CONCERTS

2008	CONCERT	LOCATION	CONTACT
Mar 16 4:00p	The Agape Ringers Guest Artists: Jane Holstein And Joel Raney	1st Presbyterian Church 7551 Quick Ave River Forest, IL	Tickets \$10 at the door 708-366-5822 www.rfpres.org
Apr 13 5:00p	The Agape Ringers	Mt Carmel Lutheran Church 8424 W Center St Milwaukee, WI	Paul Kasten 414-771-6586
Apr 15 7:30p	Hastings College Bell Choir	1st Presbyterian Church 7th St & Burlington Ave Hastings, NE	Byron Jensen Bjensen@hastings.edu
Apr 20 3:00p	Pikes Peak Ringers & Hastings Symphony Orchestra	Hastings College 4th St & Hastings Hastings, NE	Byron Jensen Bjensen@hastings.edu
Apr 26 7:00p	Chicago Bronze	Mount Mercy College 1331 Elmhurst Dr NE Cedar Rapids, IA	Carolyn Sternowski 319-377-6588
Apr 27 4:00p	Chicago Bronze	Federated Church 403 W Main St Sandwich, IL	Judy Rice 815-786-8595
May 4 3:00p	Ambassador Ringers	St Andrews' UMC 15050 W Maple Rd Omaha, NE	Joyce Miller 402-333-0715
May 4 4:00p	The Agape Ringers	1st UMC 155 S Main St Lombard, IL	Jack Winquist 630-267-9789
May 18 3:00p	River City Ringers	Pacific Hills Lutheran Church 90th & Pacific Omaha, NE	Joyce Miller 402-333-0715
May 18 7:00p	Chicago Bronze	Cutting Hall 150 E Wood St Palatine, IL	Fred Snyder Info@chicagobronze.com
Jun 1 3:00p	The Agape Ringers Guest artists: Jane Holstein And Joel Raney	College Church 332 E Seminary Wheaton, IL	Elaine MacWatt 630-668-0878 x 129
Jun 17 7:00p	Rezound! On the Road to Peoria!	Grace UMC 6199 Waterman Blvd St Louis, MO	Pat Latshaw 913-341-5725 News@rezound.org
Jun 18 7:00p	Rezound! On the Road to Peoria!	Grace Presbyterian Church 114 W Forrest Hill Ave Peoria, IL	Pat Latshaw 913-341-5725 News@rezound.org

REGISTRATION FOR:

Area VIII – "Peoria Rings My Bells" Festival/Conference June 19-21, 2008 – Peoria, IL



Note our "SUPER EARLY BIRD" and "EARLY BIRD" rates! Super Early Bird Rates must be postmarked by March 1, 2008 Early Bird Rates must be postmarked by April 15, 2008



REGISTRATION OPTIONS

The following registration prices are <u>per p</u>			
	Super Early Bird	Early Bird	After 4/15/08
TULL TIME REGISTRATION	\$235.00	\$250.00	\$275.00
Includes 2 banquets, Saturday night Gala Reception, classes & notes,			
"Special" concert admittance, and conference pin			
COMMUTER FEE per person – If not staying at the Pere Mar	quette		\$50.00
DAILY REGISTRATION	Thursday		\$75.00
Includes class sessions and concerts on day(s) of registration	Friday		\$90.00
	Saturday		\$90.00
NON-PARTICIPATING GUEST/CHAPERONE REGISTR	RATION		\$80.00

ADDITIONAL FEES

TABLE RENTAL (per 8 foot table) \$12.00

DIRECTOR'S LUNCH \$15.00

The Directors Lunch is Area VIII's Bi-annual meeting where all directors can come together, meet one another, meet your Board, and discuss the direction that you would like Area VIII to go.

AGEHR Membership (for non-member groups only; required to participate)

\$65.00

DEPOSIT REQUIRED!

A deposit of \$25.00 per person is required. **DEPOSITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE. Balance of fees due postmarked by May 15, 2008. After June 1st, 2008, NO FEES CAN BE REFUNDED!**

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS

Registration fee **DOES NOT** include hotel accommodations. Special group-rate accommodations are available to Conference registrants at the Pere Marquette for \$109.00 + tax per room, per day, for occupancy of 2, with **free parking and cook-to-order breakfast**. Call the hotel directly at 309-637-6500, ask for the "reservations" desk and **BE SURE** to identify yourself as a participant in the "Area VIII Handbell Conference"!

Completely fill out reverse side, **MAKE A COPY FOR REFERENCE**, and send to: Cheryl Abney, 2063 S. Glenn, Springfield, MO 65807

Registration questions? Contact Cheryl Abney, Area VIII Treasurer, 417-886-6892 or CAbney@mchsi.com

REGISTRATION INFORMATION One registration per choir

PLEASE PRINT	AGEHR Membership Number		
Director's/Leader's Name	(Can be found on your <i>Quavers</i> or <i>Overtones</i> mailing label)		
	Daytime Phone ()		
City, State, Zip	Evening Phone ()		
Fax Number ()	E-Mail Address:		
Name of Sponsoring Organization _			
Address	City State Zip		
	FEE CALCULATION		
	persons @ \$ each = \$ persons @ \$80.00 each = \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$		
1. LINEAR FEET YOUR SETUI			
3. DO YOU UTILIZE UPRIGHT	ATEGORY: (CIRCLE ONE) Tins Silver Gold Bronze by the conference.)		
*Please attach a wr	itten description if special accommodations are required for full participation.		
	For Registrar's Use Only:		
	Date Registration Received:		

WATCH THE WEBSITE FOR THE CLINICIAN'S NOTES.

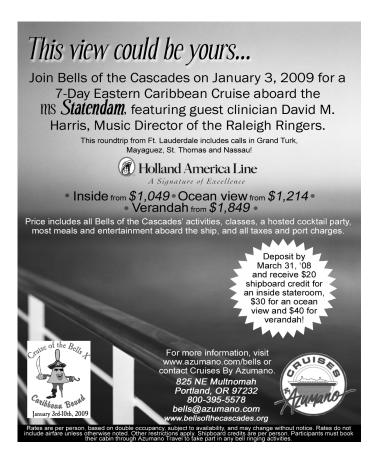
WWW.AREAVIII.ORG

Oh where will we find the bells to ring To fulfill our short fall at the Peoria fling? **Please lend your octaves** to help us swell, And prove the fact *Peoria Rings My Bell*.

Contact: Kristin Kalitowski at 630-699-3802 or chair@il-agehr.org.

AREA VIII

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