



QUAVERS

AREA VIII: ILLINOIS, IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA
MAY, 2006

YOUNG RINGERS—PART I

The theme of this issue is *Recruiting and Keeping Young Ringers*. I asked two experts their opinions and the following are their thoughts.

Jason Wells (former director of Ring of Fire at Tualatin Valley Junior Academy):

1. Give meaning to the program by focusing on sharing music with others, inspiring others, and helping others.
2. Create a strong sense of family. Play fun and exciting music together and “play” outside of bells as well.
3. Set extremely high expectations for attendance, concert participation and performance ability.
4. Do not perform until the group is ready. Performance is never a right, it is an honor.
5. Believe in each ringer — set the bar higher than you ever imagined.

Kipp Willnauer (music educator and church musician for 30+ years):

Kipp likes to talk to kids about themselves and what they have accomplished musically already. He reminds them about how great a feeling they had and what friendships they created with their music. He says to encourage them to be on your team. They will create good music, have fun, make friends and relax during their time together.

Marilyn Droke ~ Area Chair



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CAN I JOIN THE BELL CHOIR?

Interviews with: Debbie Titus (DT), 5th–8th grades at Santa Maria del Popolo, Mundelein; Nancy Brunner (NB), 3rd–6th grades at Gary Memorial UMC, Wheaton; Joyce Kelstrom (JK), 9th–12th at Joliet Catholic Academy, Joliet; Diane Oster (DO), 3rd–10th grades at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Wadsworth.

What are your recruiting techniques?

DT: In May, I have the entire 4th grade try out the bells and chimes during their music class after their Spring concert. I teach them basic ringing of half notes, whole notes, quarter notes and end with *Jolly Old St. Nicholas* that is marked with right and left. Sometimes I have a few of the 8th grade ringers help me. I send home a letter explaining our handbell program, when we start in the Fall and what is expected of them – rehearsals, concerts, fees, etc. In the Fall, I send home another letter, reminding them of how much fun they had in the Spring, and that they are all welcome to join. I also ask the upper grades if they would like to start bells.

NB: In May, I visit the 2nd grade Sunday school class with a case of chimes and bells. We do a few chord songs on chimes, and then try it on the bells. I usually bring a C7 and C4 to show them the range they would play in the choir. I also have used the rainbow bells at vacation bible school and this year have been asked to run the music portion of the week and do more with handbells, so that will be a BIG recruiting opportunity. Also, once a year, I make a bulletin board showcasing the choir and try to make it look like it would be a fun thing to do. I post a serious group picture and a silly one where the kids are acting crazy and holding the bells in silly ways. This silly picture has been a big hit with the congregation. I know the kids have started recruiting on their own, too. I also talk to parents of 2nd graders I know and start them thinking about their child in the bell choir.

JK: My recruiting technique is basically person-to-person. If I want a student in my program, I send them a personal note, talk to them face-to-face, etc. I send notes to all students who took beginning handbells that I think would qualify to be in intermediate and advanced handbells.

DO: To recruit the public school kids, I write a Sunday bulletin article, which includes an invitation to an "open house" to come explore ringing. For the kids who attend our parish school, I now have an open house in the late Spring for 2nd graders to come discover chimes. Their general music does not include the use of chimes as a learning/performance instrument. I am convinced that if you only let them try it, they'll like it! I like to recruit in the Springtime so that over the Summer when the pressure is less to prepare specific pieces of music, we can work on basic and advanced ringing techniques, improving our knowledge of the rudiments of music, spend more time on the drums and hand-held African and Latin percussion instruments, and, for the two older groups, we have "dinner bells" (a rehearsal at suppertime begun by a potluck meal).

What do you think makes them want to be in your program?

DT: I think they are impressed when they hear the older kids ring in church and being with their friends who are a part of the bell program.

NB: There are not many opportunities for 3rd graders to be in a musical ensemble other than vocal choirs. Within just a couple weeks, the kids are playing real songs and making music and they think that is pretty cool. We have no prerequisites to join the bell choir and that helps as well.

JK: They enjoy ringing and have fun doing it. That is the hook that draws them back.

DO: Here are the answers the kids gave me: "It's something fun to do besides homework", "I get to be with my friends", "I saw my big sister do it last year", "It has a nice director", "I get to enhance my music skills", "I like the sound of the instrument", "I get to use different techniques", "We play both chimes and bells", "Mom made me sign up", "I get to try something new I've never done before", "End of the year pins", "The open house was fun", "Become friends with the other musicians that we work with", "I'd rather ring than sit in the pew and sing".

Stay tuned for the next issue of Quavers when these brave souls share with us *Tips for Working with YR*.

KC Congdon ~ Illinois State Chair



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KEEPING THEM GOING

I think the most helpful thing in keeping the kids going is to take them to festivals or take a week-end trip to ring someplace and then go to a theme park while on the trip. We have also taken tours in the past, ringing from Maryland to New Jersey, the Dakotas and Canada and another time to Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska. The festivals have taken us to many different states, too. We start kids ringing as early as the 4th grade. **(Marilyn Strachan—Western Iowa Rep; Humboldt, Iowa)**

Keeping it fun is one of the best ways to keep young ringers playing. I also think it is very important to get them hooked at a very young age. I start playing bells with the children at Sunday School (preschool - 4th grade) and everyone is in charge of just one rainbow bell. The older students (2nd - 4th) usually get to have real bells so that they feel they are getting special attention. We work on playing I, IV, V chords, dynamics, and playing together. I try to find easy songs that we can play and sing at the same time and the children enjoy showing off how well they can do. We even play bells at our vacation bible school. For the past two years we had all the students singing *Jesus Loves Me* and playing chords along with the song and they did great. This is just one way to educate and start the interest of music in the students while having fun. My youth bell choir is made up of 5th grade through the young at heart (as I have a very new program and don't have many adults). Students and parents are very busy and it is important to try and find a good practice time. We practice on Wednesday nights 45 minutes before confirmation class. Another key to keeping them playing bells is to not burn them out. I try to give my ringers a practice night off after we play in church. They seem to enjoy this break (I'm sure the parents do also). We also have "fun" practices when we practice a little bit and end with snacks. I've been known to practice all our songs on Boomwhackers or have a cup game challenge. I also let my ringers take turns switching places with me so that they can get the perspective of the director's side of the table. They really enjoy being the director. Offering to take your young ringers either to a youth handbell camp or workshop makes them feel important. This also gives them a chance to meet other bell ringers their own age and learn some new techniques or skills. Music is another important tool that can make or break your group. It is important to keep a good balance between music that is too easy and too challenging. I try to find music that they might recognize or a piece of music that uses some new techniques or a favorite technique of the group. My group loves to play the entire song on mallets. Each choir is different and it is important to figure out what works for them. Your youth ringers are your best recruitment tool and they will be the ones that will keep everyone coming back week after week. When you find a way to have fun and ring bells, the music you make will keep your youth ringers active in your handbell program. **(Kathryn Jaeger—Secretary; Clinton, Iowa)**

I recruit my ringers by putting a notice in the church bulletin. Then I hope someone shows up! We are very fortunate in our church that we have many musical families. I asked my Joy Ringers (grades 3-8) why they liked coming to practice, and some of their answers were: "It is something fun to do", "I like music", "Playing bells is something different than piano", "We play songs we know", "We get to go places in the community to play the bells and chimes". I like to start the young ringers with **Ready to Ring III** by Thompson and Callahan. It starts with whole notes and works up to harder music by using songs they know. They love to do the *Westminster Chimes* on page 11. It is a great way to start a service. We are currently learning to play *Oh, How I Love Jesus*, as arranged by Susan E. Geschke. It has a good melody, and is easy to play (level 1). I try to do seasonal songs, and we practice only 30 minutes at a time. I think that is long enough to keep the attention of young people. **(Anabeth Voigts—Treasurer; Jesup, Iowa)**

Chris Peck ~ Iowa State Chair



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re•cruit

Pronunciation Key (rĭ-kroot)
v. re•cruit-ed, re•cruit-ing, re•cruits

v. tr.

1. To engage (persons) for military service
2. To strengthen or raise (an armed force) by enlistment
3. To supply with new members or employees
4. To enroll or seek to enroll
5. To replenish
6. To renew or restore the health, vitality, or intensity of

I REALLY like the 6th definition listed above—it seems to speak to the real reason for organizing handbell choirs. Each ringer you add, whether a child, a youth or an adult, adds not only their talent, but also their personality to the choir. I am a firm believer in the FELLOWSHIP of choirs; music is just a by-product.

As for the actual recruiting of young bell members, try these simple ideas:

- Host a parent's night at bells and have the kids show Mom and Dad how to ring
- Introduce bells at VBS or music camp to younger kids
- Bring chimes or bells into the Sunday School class
- Use chimes or bells in a Children's Sermon
- Take your chimes or bells to an elementary school in your church neighborhood for an assembly and be sure to have a portion of your program designed for kids to come up and ring!
- Host an intergenerational bell choir for the summer comprised of your adult ringers and their kids

These ideas aren't earth shattering or terribly creative, but with a little bit of your time, you can grow your own bell program!

Happy gardening!

Marilyn Lake ~ Kansas State Chair





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RECRUIT ALL YEAR ROUND

SUMMER BREAK TIME IS COMING UP!

Ask if any of your ringers would like to get together for ensemble, duet or solo ringing this summer. Give them rehearsal options, a date to ring and choices of music. Work with them to put it together or step back and let them take responsibility for preparing the music and ringing in church. Their ringing will inspire others.

VISIT SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES

Decide on the age group(s) you would like to recruit and arrange (ahead of time) with Sunday School teachers to visit those classes to demonstrate ringing. Pack up your chimes (preferably) and visit the classes for no more than 15 minutes. To begin, have the new ringers stand in a roomy circle and teach them the ringing stroke in the air without chimes. Next, give each ringer one chime showing them the proper grip. In their roomy circle, have them ring randomly. Help those who need assistance with the stroke before calling out the specific chimes letter names for nice chordal sounds as they ring together. Be ready with the ringing program information to give to those who are interested in participating.

RINGERS' FALL ROUNDUP

Invite all past, present, and future ringers to kick off your new year with a casual fall get together. Advertise with flyers and use the church bulletin to extend the invitation to all. Invite a handbell soloist, ensemble, or community choir to provide the ringing entertainment for the event. Have your regular ringers furnish desserts or snacks, served before the program in a stand-up, grazing style to encourage guests to mix and mingle. Include the entertainers in this pre-program event making it a very informal evening.

*Sherry Boland, Manchester UMC for
Kathy Harrison ~ Missouri State Chair*

OPEN AUDITIONS

For Chicago Bronze

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RECRUITMENT!

Now that's an ongoing challenge for all choirs because handbell programs are always in need of new ringers. Here are a few ideas of ways to recruit that have worked for me.

Our church has a "Talent Survey" that is given to newcomers. The music staff is given the information on any person who has expressed an interest in their particular group. Also, the choir directors pay a visit to the new members' classes to pass on the information about their groups.

It is a good thing to be able to hand a brochure to the newcomers or new members. This brochure can list all of the musical groups in the church, when and where they meet, the name of the director and a contact phone number.

There is no better recruitment tool than personal contact. A phone call is a must! Then, follow up with a note or postcard.

If you are lucky enough to have a graded handbell program in your church then you have potential new ringers coming up from elementary through high school and then into the adult choir(s). People who have never rung before feel they could never be good enough to ring in a more experienced choir so a choir that plays easier music could transition the ringer into the more advanced group.

Be creative in your recruitment! Don't be afraid to try new things!

Natalie Radcliffe ~ Nebraska State Chair

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2006	EVENT	CLINICIAN	LOCATION
Jun 22—25	Area VII Festival Conference	Lee Afdahl Jason Wells	St Cloud Civic Center St Cloud, MN Jessica Westgard 701-281-4588 Fcregistration@yahoo.com
Jun 23—25	National Festival Conference	Hart Morris William Payn	Dayton Convention Ctr Dayton, OH Vicki Iverson 800-878-5459 Www.agehr.org/learning/ festival.asp
Jun 29—Jul 1	<i>Ringin' Up Another Storm</i> Area VIII Conference	David Davidson Jason Wells	Mid-America Center Council Bluffs, IA Cheryl Abney 417-886-6892 Cabney8762@ worldnet.att.net
Jul 9—14	16th Intergenerational Handbell Camp	Kipp Willnauer	Heartland Presby Ctr Parkville, MO Kipp Willnauer Willnauk@hotmail.com
Jul 12—15	AGEHR National Seminar Milwaukee Masters: Where Education & Inspiration Meet	Various	Hilton Milwaukee City Ctr Milwaukee, WI Www.agehr.org 937-438-0085 x 114

Want to know what I, Waldo, am doing?

You'll have to come to the Area VIII Conference to find out!

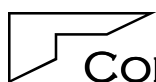
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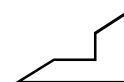


UPCOMING CONCERTS

2006	CONCERT	LOCATION	CONTACT
May 7 3:00p	Bells in Motion Spring Concert \$\$	Hoogland Center for the Arts 420 S 6th St Springfield, IL	Hoogland Center 217.523.2787 Www.bellsinmotion.org
May 7 3:00p	Wesley Chimers Manchester Bell Choir Vesper Bell Choir	Manchester UMC 129 Woods Mill Rd Manchester, MO	Sherry Boland 636.394.7506 x 3133 Bolandse@aol.com
May 7 4:00p	The Agape Ringers	St John's Lutheran 2650 Plainfield Joliet, IL	Shirley Harbeck 815.439.2320 Www.agaperingers.org
May 20 7:00p	Gateway Ringers	Holy Trinity Lutheran 2030 Union Rd St Louis, MO	Jeff White Reedstop@prodigy.net Www.gatewayringers.org
May 21 3:00p	Gateway Ringers	Holy Cross Lutheran 2650 Miami St St Louis, MO	Diane Stout Stout_Diane@yahoo.com Www.gatewayringers.org
May 21 4:00p	Chicago Bronze Spring Concert	St Mark's Lutheran 27 S Edgelawn Dr Aurora, IL	Church office 630.897.6891 Www.chicagobronze.com
May 21 7:00p	Spring Ring XIV "A Walk in the Park" Guest artists—Madrigal Singers (Downers Grove South HS)	1st UMC 1032 Maple Ave Downers Grove	Pattie Barnes 630.953.0146 Bellhog@juno.com
June 4 4:00p	Chicago Bronze Spring Concert	Grace UMC 300 E Gartner Naperville, IL	Church office 630.355.1748 Www.chicagobronze.com
June 11 4:00p	Allegro Handbell Ensemble Desert Tour Send Off	Union Church S Garfield Hinsdale, IL	Michael Surratt 630.323.4303 Www.allegrobells.org
June 26 7:00p	Handbell Performance Workshop with guest artist The Agape Ringers	Christ the King Catholic Church 5306 Main St McFarland, WI	Bob Morrison 608.838.6273



CONCERTS LISTED FOR FREE IN THE AREA VIII
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RINGING UP ANOTHER STORM

We just completed our last site visit to Council Bluffs. Plans are finalized and looking great. The numbers for the Super Early Bird registration are really terrific. Our thanks go to all of you who registered early for the 2006 Conference. We are now in the Early Bird registration period and additional entries are steadily coming in. Registration numbers are close to 500. I am very excited and looking forward to a very exhilarating and successful conference.

As you know, the theme for this conference is "Ringing Up Another Storm." Maybe it was fitting that during the first day of the site visit we were hurried off to a safe shelter to protect us from a storm and tornado!

During our stay we visited nearby hotels, restaurants, shopping areas and other great possibilities for our conference registrants to enjoy. The Comfort Inn and Suites still has a few rooms available and there are several other hotels located nearby with reasonable prices. Remember, the conference center has free parking so it will be convenient to drive back and forth from area hotels to the conference site. Great eating-places abound, but you really won't have that many opportunities to dine away from the conference center during the day. Friday evening you will have a block of time to eat dinner wherever you choose. Lunches can be purchased at the conference center at very reasonable prices. In our final mailing we will include a map and menu for the concession area. Most lunches will be available for around \$5. On Friday and Saturday you will be encouraged to purchase your lunch and take it with you for eating while listening to the noontime concerts. Check the Area VIII website at www.areaviii.org for further updates to the schedule, classes, menus, hotels, and helpful hints.

On the following two pages, we have enclosed the *Golds and Tins* rehearsal notes. Please read them carefully so that you come fully prepared for the event.

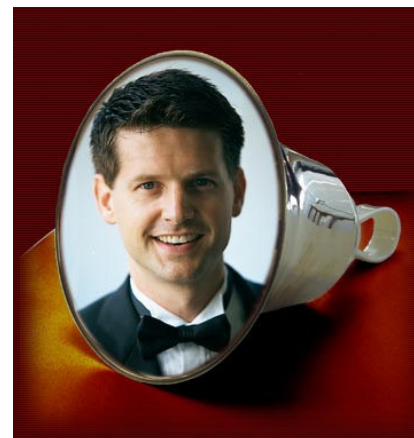
If you haven't registered for the conference, please do so as soon as possible. We are excited about you joining us this year and look forward to meeting more than 800 ringers in Council Bluffs. Make plans now to register and join us for a great time of ringing and fun.

See you in June!

Marilyn Droke ~ Area Chair



David R. Davidson
Silver & Bronze Director



Jason Wells
Tins & Gold Director



TINS REHEARSAL NOTES

The Road To Jerusalem, William Gross:

Jerusalem is a city that has been ruled by 27 different cultures over thousands of years. It seems that nearly every civilization has been on the road to Jerusalem at one time or another. Due to this rich history, today, it is a very special place for three major world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. As you explore this original composition, feel the emotions surrounding this historic city.

Ms 1-4: These are to be played as quietly as humanly possible—pppppppp.

Ms 1 on: Be sure to play the chime notes on chimes or not at all (unless we don't have enough chimes.) Be dramatic on the crescendos and decrescendos. Make a huge rise and fall to this piece.

Ms 35 on: Very light plucking.

Ms 54 & 62: Broaden these stacked chords, as it is easy to rush this section.

Ms 81: Very last note needs to be as quiet as those first note—pppppppp.

Festive Variations, Michael Helman

The phrase of the day for this piece will certainly be to BRING OUT MELODY! Let's really push to have fun on this one by making each variation very unique. We will work to pull out all the differences of each variation!

Ms 17: ppp up top on the RT's. With 500 of us doing those RT's—ppp will be plenty!

Ms 33: Great mallet technique! Pull the sound from the bells—no hammering! Let the mallet bounce off the bell, not drive into it. That will create a light, fun, almost music box quality with hundreds of us doing it!

Ms 49: Stress the legato quality of the section—beautiful running notes. It's probably OK to use sloppy damping here but not LV. We don't want to see choppy ringing through this very lyrical spot.

Ms 59-64: As you musically shape this section, please make sure that the highest note of the melody in each measure is the peak of the phrasing.

Ms 81: Light on the chords in the bass. If a ringer has 4 consecutive notes, have them artistically play them in one large circle (at 6,8,10, and 12 o'clock).

Ms 93: Same thing here with repeated chords. Add some artistic style to the performance! (One large circle instead of 4 quick ones.)

Arise, Bill Ingram

Use mallets throughout...

Ms 1-12: Lean on beat "2&" in measures 1,3,5 etc. and as that rhythmic pattern continues.

Ms 15-16: Drastic change in volume to ppp.

Ms 22: Protect the rest at beat 3 by not playing over it!

Ms 25 to end: Accent all melody notes that come in on "1&".

Ms 32: Add a dramatic *rit.*

Ms 33-38: Very slowly.

Ms 34 Add a fermata on beat 4.

Ms 36: Add a fermata on beat 3 and beat 4. I'll direct each beat.

Ms 38: Add a fermata on beat 4.

Ms 39: Back to original tempo—very perky!

Ms 43 to end: Again, accent all melody notes that come in on "1&".

Ms 57: Do not make the mistake of coming in on the "&" of 1—wait for beat 2.

Ms 60-63: Each measure builds on the last, so MP, MF, FF.

Ending: Stay strong and bold!

Brethren, We Have Met to Worship, Kevin McChesney

Very light mallets in the bass throughout. Slight accent on beat 1 and 3. Strive for each of these.

Ms 11: Clearly define the "2nd verse melody" with strong accents in the treble.

Ms 38-42: Slight crescendo on the last three 8th notes in the bass per measure—drive into the next measure.

Ms 57: High drama with bold accented notes on each beat!

Ms 60 to end: Each measure builds on the last, ending with a very strong finish with clean, quick RT's. Damp entire side of the bell into the body for complete stoppage of sound.

Celtic Farewell, Linda Lamb

Ms 1: Follow Linda's suggestion on slight LV, but not the entire measure. See the bottom of the page.

Ms 1 on: As melody rises, musically shape piece; as it falls, pull back. Dynamic musical phrases will make this piece sing.

Ms 40: Bells take over as soloist drops out. Let this part soar with renewed energy.

Ms 59: Very light echo rings on beat 2 and 3. All dotted halves echo ring.

Ms 67: Don't play the same note the same way 3 times in a row (quarter note chords should be played strong, light, lighter).

Ms 78: Complete cut off. Damp all notes. Watch for the cue for beat 3 pick up.

Ms 82: Memorize ending. I'll cue every note very slowly.

Ms 83: Most delicate note possible, very light—ppp.



GOLD REHEARSAL NOTES

Capriccio, Kevin McChesney:

Certainly in the top 5 of all time handbell compositions in my book! One needs to focus on the 1 3 5 concept to truly feel this piece. Be sure to place emphasis and count the first eight measures as follows:

- 1) **ONE** two **THREE** four **FIVE** six seven
- 2) **ONE** two **THREE** four **FIVE** six seven
- 3) **ONE** two **THREE** four **FIVE** six seven
- 4) **ONE** two three **FOUR** five six
- 5) **ONE** two **THREE** four **FIVE** six seven
- 6) **ONE** two **THREE** four **FIVE** six seven
- 7) **ONE** two **THREE** four **FIVE** six seven
- 8) **ONE** two three **ONE**

Say this over and over with your choir out loud—if they can internalize this concept, feel the 1 3 5—we will be ready to go to town and raise the roof! Be sure to use mallets in the bass. Be sure to practice the 6/8 measures on the last page over and over and over—those two measures are the hardest of the piece. All 6/8 measures **MUST** have a strong sense of ONE two three FOUR five six—with major emphasis on the 1 and 4 if we are to stay together and make beautiful massed music.

From a Distant Home, Michael Helman:

This piece is a great opportunity to let loose with some festive Puerto Rican spirit! The piece must be played with a light yet dance-like touch. HUGE drama must play out with the slow drawn out sections almost over the top changes in tempo and dynamics are key to the success of this island adventure!

Ms 1: Mallet rolls in the base—be sure to crescendo with treble in M2. Be sure to play the chime notes on chimes or not at all (unless we don't have enough chimes).

Ms 2/4/6: Be dramatic on the crescendos.

Ms 7 on: Mallet all dotted notes—no plucking or TD's. Nice peppy tempo. Push it right to the marked 112.

Ms 25: Add octaves as written.

Ms 37 on: Stems up in treble **MUST** be P P P P P, like gentle rain.

Ms 40: Pull out bass melody—FFF.

Ms 49 – 63: Practice these pages over and over and over. Make them smooth.

Ms 63: SLOW DOWN—RIT

Ms 77: Explosive

Ms 92: Stick the landing perfectly!

Fancye, Tim Waugh

Count this piece in 10. Place slight accents on ms 1,4,7,9. Practice clapping while counting out loud with louder claps on the accented notes. I suggest you do not count 123 123 12 12 – but do it 1,2,3 4,5,6 7,8 9,10. Once you have this feel down—you will be home free...

Ms 1: Start very softly, as written.

Ms 30: Significant rit.

Ms 31 – 48: Freely and far more slowly—milk it for all it is worth.

Ms 48: Fermata on beat 4.

Ms 49: Back up to a peppy tempo – like a tiger pouncing!

Ms 59: This measure should be half the volume of ms 60, so hold back.

Ms 61: Mart lift and dramatically wait 4 inches off the table for a final light mart back into the table.



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