



QUAVERS

AREA VIII: ILLINOIS, IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA
MAY, 2007

COMMUNITY GROUPS

According to the AGEHR website, we have at least ten different community handbell ensembles in Area VIII. A community handbell ensemble is usually made up of different people from the communities or area where the ensemble is formed. Most of them are auditioned groups.

A community group is unique. There is more freedom of ringing with a community group. They ring sacred music but they also ring secular music and original pieces. A lot of this music isn't usually performed by church choirs, which make up the majority of the handbell world. Community ensembles ring a higher level of music because of the variety of skills of their members. The ringers are usually among the best in their areas.

Some of the ringers in community groups come from a couple of hours away to practice and perform. These are extremely dedicated people who love handbell ringing so much that they make big sacrifices to play in these groups. Their commitment is what helps the community ensembles reach beyond what the average church choir can achieve.

Community groups usually perform in concert or fine arts series. Some of them will travel to other areas to play. Some of them run or help to run handbell workshops to promote the art of handbell ringing and to teach ringers the skills they need to become better ringers. A lot of the ringers are directors themselves in their own churches or schools. Some of the groups have traveled internationally to promote handbell ringing. A lot of the groups have produced CDs of their work and have websites.

AGEHR is currently trying to find more ways to support the community ensembles. They are looking at different classes they can add to National Seminars that are geared for community groups or possibly hosting seminars for just these groups. Things are still in the early stages but it is good to see that they are cognizant of the needs of this niche within the organization.

Community handbell ensembles are very important to us in Area VIII. The concerts they give in their home areas or wherever they may travel help to promote the art of handbell ringing and to promote our area. We thoroughly enjoy hearing them and groups from other areas. These ringers show us what we can aspire to. Support these groups in anyway you can within your state or area.

Yours in Ringing!

Debbie Llewellyn ~ Area VIII Chair

Young Ringers Camp

WINDMILL INN & CONVENTION CENTER

JUNE 14-17, 2007

BRANSON, MO

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ILLINOIS COMMUNITY GROUPS

Illinois is proud to be home to several renowned community handbell choirs, three of which are in the greater Chicago area. After participating in a massed ringing festival in 1990, five women who had been in Shirley Hipwell's handbell class at Harper Community College decided to put together a new handbell choir. They chose the name **Random Ringers** because they came from so many different areas in Chicago's northern and northwestern suburbs. Their current director is our state committee secretary, Beth McFarland. They have no auditions but will be looking for a new member in the fall who can play 4-in-hand. They rehearse on Monday evenings at the United Methodist Church in Palatine and have two concerts coming up (in addition to participating in our Illinois Spring Ring on April 14). For more information contact Barbara Scharringhausen at 847-825-4630 or email her at splus14@aol.com.

Even though Shirley Hipwell's bell class at Harper was eventually canceled, it spawned a second community choir in 1999. When several alumni ringers and directors wanted to ring challenging music and hone their skills, they started **Chicago Bronze**. The group, consisting of members from primarily the western and northwestern suburbs, rehearses on Mondays at the Lutheran Church of the Cross in Arlington Heights. Their performance venues span concerts and holiday celebrations, conferences and festivals, church services and banquets, even TV appearances. Current director, Phil Roberts, handbell editor for GIA Publications, is excited about the group's first CD, *Chicago Bronze—Christmas in the City*, available this spring. Auditions will be held on June 4. Check their website for further information as it becomes available, www.chicagobronze.com.

Many of you may have just read about **The Agape Ringers** in the March/April issue of *Overtones*. Founding director David L. Weck, handbell editor for Hope Publishing Company, in addition to wanting an "in house" group for promotional recordings, had always wanted to direct an advanced bell choir who would perform regularly rather than just once or twice a year. About once a month, The Agape Ringers present concerts or conduct workshops (they have been the clinicians for many of our Illinois state committee ringer workshops). Members from as far away as Bloomington and Wisconsin rehearse each Monday at Grace Lutheran Church in LaGrange. (What is it about Chicago-area community groups and Monday rehearsals?). They have performed and taught at AGEHR events, have been on TV, and are especially proud of their collaborations with various nationally known musicians and musical groups. They tour frequently—all over the United States, England, Puerto Rico—and are planning (and hoping) to go to Japan in the summer of 2009. They will be performing and teaching many of the classes at the Area VIII director's seminar in Kansas City this June, and are scheduled for another Illinois ringer workshop in Peoria in November. Auditions run on a three-year cycle and were just held in January, but anyone interested in subbing can contact David Weck at 630-665-3200 X120 or david@hopepublishing.com, or find out more, including information about their available CDs, on their website, www.agaperingers.org.

Community handbell groups in Illinois are not exclusive to Chicagoland. Director Mike Lamb founded **Bells in Motion**, an auditioned group based in Springfield, as a way for ringers (who come primarily from central Illinois to St. Louis) to play more advanced and different types of music from what is normally heard in church. In addition to concerts and workshops (including one sponsored by our Illinois state committee), BIM has toured through approximately 20 states and five countries. A memorable event was at a jazz festival in Italy where they talked the drummer from one of the bands into joining them and the guitarist also jumped up and joined in on *In the Mood*. Their unique rehearsal schedule (one Saturday per month, 9am-4pm, with breaks/sectionals and lunch) is workable for ringers to come from long distances—one member, from Green Bay, WI, combines rehearsal weekends with visits to family in central Illinois. It also allows for bringing in members from other community groups when schedules don't conflict—Illinois' music librarian KC Congdon, who rings with Agape but lives in Lexington, is also ringing with BIM this spring. Another unique aspect of the organization is the existence of a "feeder group," the Prairie Bells, a non-auditioned, intermediate level group that serves as a bridge between members' church choirs and the more rigorous concertizing of BIM. Part of every bi-weekly Sunday rehearsal, which alternates between Decatur and Springfield, is spent working on ringing skills while also learning repertoire to be played in local BIM concerts. More information, including CDs, is available on their website, www.bellsinmotion.org.

Debi Robey ~ Illinois State Chair



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IOWA COMMUNITY GROUPS

There are many well known groups in the handbell world such as The Agape Ringers, Raleigh Ringers and many more that have been seen at AGEHR events in concert and even possibly as clinicians. I found two handbell groups in Iowa that consider themselves community handbell ensembles.

The King Ringers are directed by Cathy Moglebust and are located in Fort Dodge, Iowa.

De Klokkenluiders are directed by Kris Harms and located in Pella, Iowa.

I'm sure that there are more groups out there and some may just be getting started. These groups work very hard at sharing the sounds of handbell music with the public and do a great job while doing that.

If you are part of a community group that did not appear in my article—please make yourself known to both myself and the editor of the newsletter so that we may help you promote your concerts through our website and the newsletter

I encourage everyone to attend a handbell concert whether it is a church or a community based group. It's always great to hear handbells.

Kathryn Jaeger ~ Iowa Chair

Check out our website:
www.agehr-ia.org
for upcoming workshops & events.





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KANSAS COMMUNITY GROUPS

The state of Kansas has so much to offer! We moved to Kansas in 1988, and we had some friends back East who said, "Kansas? Why do you want to go to Kansas? There is nothing to do in Kansas!" Well, they were so wrong! There is so much to do: nature watching, cultural events, family events, sports—you name it, we've got it. HOWEVER, if you want to hear a variety of Community Handbell ensembles, well...we ain't got 'em! As far as I know, we have one: the aptly named **Heartland Ringers**. Let me introduce you to them.

Our own Area VIII Chair-Elect, Marilyn Lake, founded the Heartland Ringers in 2004. They are a not-for-profit organization. They totally support themselves with annual dues and playing opportunities. They have two groups under the same umbrella: a large group that plays five octaves, and a smaller ensemble. A total of twenty-four ringers ensure that there are always personnel to cover the ringing opportunities. (So much better than "ringing obligations", don't you think?) Their small ensemble rehearses during the day, the large ensemble at night, each getting one rehearsal per week.

The Heartland Ringers is an advanced choir. They play for many events in the Kansas City area, notably for the Holiday Luminary Walk at the Overland Park Arboretum, at the Loose Mansion, weddings, community events, and this summer will be the featured choir at the Intergenerational Handbell Camp. They play for monetary donations, but many times will play just for the enjoyment of playing, or for the enjoyment of the audience. A ringer in the group said that they love the challenge of ringing Level five music, but the group is really about the fun, fellowship, and developing a bond of friendship within the group. One ringer spoke of their "mission". The small ensemble recently packed up the bells and took them over to the house of a cancer patient, set up and played a concert! That, my bell ringing friends, is what it is all about.

Judy Scharmann ~ Kansas State Chair



**Rezound
Kansas City
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MISSOURI COMMUNITY GROUPS

I am a former member of a community handbell ensemble, and it was an incredible experience that I still treasure. Ringing with a community group provided musical and traveling opportunities that I would never have had with my own church choir. Rehearsing and performing with this group, as well as learning from the experiences of other members, helped me become a better director.

Community handbell choirs have, at the core of their existence, a mission to share this wonderful musical art with others. Using educational programs, special events, and concerts, you can find these groups inspiring young ringers, training new directors and encouraging experienced ringers to strive for the next level of performance.

Three well-known community handbell choirs call Missouri home. Drawing ringers from the major metropolitan areas, these choirs present a variety of musical opportunities for their communities. Plan a special treat for your choir(s) and take them to a concert. Invite them to do a concert and/or workshop in your area.

Columbia Handbell Ensemble, Columbia
<http://chebells.homestead.com/chehome.html>

Gateway Ringers, St. Louis
<http://gatewayringers.homestead.com/>

Rezound, Kansas City
<http://www.rezound.org/>

Kathy Harrison ~ Missouri State Chair



Gateway Ringers

**St Louis
Missouri**

Columbia Handbell Ensemble

**Columbia
Missouri**





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NEBRASKA COMMUNITY GROUPS

The **River City Ringers**, **Ambassador Adult Choir** and **Ambassador Youth Ringers** share the community choir ringing within the state of Nebraska. Having three choirs allows us to offer a wide variety of musical venues throughout the entire year.

River City Ringers began in 1998 as the Fremont Community Handbell Ensemble. Five octaves of bells were obtained by a grant from the Paul and Oscar Geiger Foundation. While based in Fremont, the choir rang each July for the John C. Fremont Days as well as private holiday parties and weddings. They also performed for several of the retirement homes in and around Fremont. Outgrowing their rehearsal space and having ringers coming from areas other than Fremont, the choir moved to Elkhorn and changed their name to the River City Ringers. They also added the sixth octave of bass bells and a complete sixth octave set of choir chimes to the expanding choir.

The Ambassador Choirs have ringers that are in the Omaha area. The bells for these choirs came as a gift to the director and ringers.

Some of the ringers love ringing so much that they are in both community choirs. Having two adult choirs allows both choirs access to lots of subs when needed. It also allows for both choirs to share in all of the ringing events during the year. They have done several weddings, special events, many, many holiday parties, concerts at the Durham Western Heritage Museum, and the Omaha Botanical Gardens to name just a few. Weddings have become their favorite ringing event.

During the 2006 Area VIII Conference, both adult choirs presented concerts as well as being a part of the Bronze and Mass choirs. Several of the ringers have participated in the Distinctly Bronze (DB) choir under the direction of David Davidson. Two of them will be enjoying the Distinctly Bronze International Tour this coming June to Scotland, England and France.

Beginning on a small scale in 1998 the choirs have grown over the years, both in numbers and musicality. All the members love ringing and being able to share that enjoyment with others. Auditions are held once a year and the groups have had six new ringers request to audition. To find out more information, please view the website at: www.omahametrohandbells.org

It is my privilege to be the director of all of the community choirs. Juggling the schedules becomes a little scary at times but I have such wonderful support from all of the members and the parents of my youth choir that it makes it worthwhile.

Our upcoming goals include the making of a CD and doing a little travel outside of the Omaha area.

Joyce Miller ~ Nebraska State Chair

Ambassador Choir Omaha Nebraska





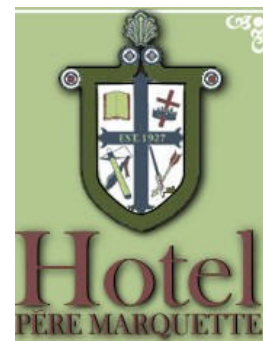
AGEHR SPONSORED EVENTS

2007	EVENT	CLINICIAN	LOCATION
Jun 14-17	Young Ringers Camp Area VIII Festival www.areaviii.org	various	Branson, MO Debbie Llewellyn Dal60525@sbcglobal.net
Jun 29-30	Director's Seminar www.areaviii.org	various	Platte Woods UMC Kansas City, MO Debbie Llewellyn Dal60525@sbcglobal.net
Jul 18-21	National Seminar 2007 Beyond the Printed Page: Pursuing Musical Artistry with Handbells & Handchimes	various	Dallas, TX http://www.agehr.org/learning/seminar.asp

Directors Seminar

**June 29—30,
2007**

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





UPCOMING CONCERTS

2007	CONCERT	LOCATION	CONTACT
May 6 3:00p	17th Annual Spring Ring Manchester UMC Choirs	Manchester UMC 129 Woods Mill Rd, Manchester, MO	Sherry Boland 636-394-7506 x 3133
May 12 8:00p	The Rhapsody Ringers	Manhattan Arts Center 1520 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan, KS	Judy Scharmann 785-341-2300
May 15 7:30p	Alleluia Ringers Concordia College	1st English Lutheran Church 1311 E 18th St, Spencer, IA	712-262-5598
May 16 7:30p	Alleluia Ringers Concordia College	Zion Lutheran Church 14205 Ida St, Omaha, NE	402-493-1744
May 18 7:30p	Alleluia Ringers Concordia College	Lutheran High School 12411 Wornall Rd, Kansas City, MO	816-241-5478
May 19 2:00p	Chicago Bronze	Cutting Hall 150 E Wood St, Palatine, IL	847-705-5123 x 411
May 19 7:30p	Alleluia Ringers Concordia College	Trinity Lutheran Church 803 Swifts Highway, Jefferson City, MO	573-636-6750
May 19 7:30p	Chicago Bronze	St Mark's Lutheran Church 27 S Edgelawn Dr, Aurora, IL	630-897-6891
May 20 3:00p	Chicago Bronze Cathedral Concert Series	Cathedral of St Raymond 604 N Raynor Ave, Joliet, IL	815-722-6653
May 20 7:00p	Spring Ring XV Choirs of 1st UMC	1st UMC 1032 Maple Ave, Downers Grove, IL	Pattie Barnes 630-953-0146
May 21 7:30p	Alleluia Ringers Concordia College	Living Lord Lutheran Church 500 Cedar Circle Ave, Lake Stt Louis, MO	Jill Kirk 636-327-7729
May 22 7:30p	Alleluia Ringers Concordia College	Immanuel Lutheran Church 2750 E Sangamon Ave, Springfield, IL	217-528-5232
Jun 3 4:00p	Allegro Handbell Ensemble Send-off Concert to the UK	Union Church United Church of Christ 137 S Garfield, Hinsdale	Michael Surratt Wwww.allegrobells.com 630-323-4303 x 15

You too can have your handbell choir concerts
posted on this page. Just send your information
as listed above, to:

KC Congdon, *Quavers* Editor
Kc@stmatthew-ucc.org

Deadlines are the FIRST of the even number months.



RESOURCE LIBRARY

The following materials are available to all Area VIII members and their choirs to be checked out. There is no rental fee; we just ask that you pay postage both ways and a small packaging charge. Materials should be returned within two weeks unless other arrangements are made or instructions sent. We hope that these materials will be another area of assistance for you and your Handbell Choir.

VIDEOS

- **Advanced Solo Ringing and Handbell Techniques.** Demonstration by Erin Downey
- **Alive!** Featuring the Echo Handbell Ringers under the direction of Katsumi Kodama.
- **Area II Massed Ringing, 1991.** Wayne, NJ. Bill Goff and Dick Frey, organist. Howard Moser and Hart Morris conducting.
- **Area VIII Massed Ringing, 1992.** St. Joseph, MO. David Davidson conducting.
- **Area VIII Massed Ringing, 1994.** Cedar Rapids, IA. Hart and Marty Morris conducting.
- **Bell Basics.** David Weck and Susan Berry walk us through the ringing skill demonstrations. An excellent tape for the beginning ringer or director.
- **Bell Lore.** Ellen Jan Lorenz. Historical bell facts. (1986)
- **Celebration: The Story of Handbells.** (35 mm film strip with cassette)
- **Christine Anderson in Concert.** Solo ringing concert.
- **Developing Skills for Solo and Ensemble Ringing.** Jessup and Calkins.
- **Facing the Music: Seven minutes that will change the way you think about copyright laws.** Produced by the Church Music Publishers Association. This short video gives clear information about copyright laws in an entertaining format.
- **Intro to a Handbell Festival.** Produced by AGEHR, Inc. This video provides a glimpse of what a handbell festival is all about.
- **Masteringers Festival, 1988.** Allentown, PA. Filmed by PBS. Massed ringing and solo concerts plus commentary on techniques and history of handbells.
- **Music Makes the Difference: Action Kit for Music Education.** National Coalition for Music Education. Complete with booklets and two videos, this kit will assist the music educator with supportive material for the arts in education.
- **Ring of Fire.** Videotaped at the United Church of Christ in Claremont, CA. This tape will bring you to their May 2000 concert when they played 12 of their most popular songs.
- **Songs for the Solo Ringer.** Instructional with David Weck and Christine Anderson. Video with accompanying music text.
- **Songs for the Solo Ringer.** Christine Anderson in concert.
- **Sound Advice from Malmrk.** Care for your Malmrk handbells.
- **Tinkling Handbells.** A CBS/Sony, Inc. video production featuring the Echo Handbell Ringers under Katsumi Kodama's direction. Produced in Japan in 1987, this video, visually blended with pictorial settings of European culture and countryside, is a new experience in visual handbell performance.
- **Woodson Handbell Choir.** Demonstration of a program for special needs ringers.
- **Tempo Setter Videos.** Interviews of prominent handbell folks throughout handbell history.

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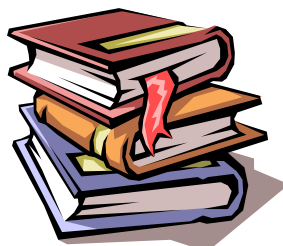


BOOKS AND PAPERS

- **Adaptive Notation for Handbells.** Letha McGrew
- **Bass Bells.** Various authors
- **Bell Lore.** Ellen Jane Lorenz
- **Conducting Technique for Beginners and Professionals.** Brock McElheran
- **Copyright: The Complete Guide for Music Educators.** Jay Althouse (1984)
- **Creative Use of Handbells in Worship.** Hal Hopson
- **Dalcroze Applications for Handbells.** Marilyn Kielnarz
- **Developing Conducting Skills.** Michael Keller
- **The Director as Teacher: Working with the Beginning Handbell Choir.** Venita McGorman
- **Director's Manual.** Janet Van Valey and Susan Berry
- **An Ear Training Course for Handbell Directors and Ringers.** Fred Merrett
- **The First Quarter Century.** Elizabeth Bradford (1979)
- **Focus on Participation: Alternative Methods for Special Groups.** Joe Pinson
- **Fundraising for Fun and Profit.** Marlene Anderson
- **A Guide to Handbell Assignments.** AGEHR
- **Handbell Assignment Book: The Eight-ten System.** Bob Ivey (1993)
- **Handbells in Education: A Guide to Learning.** Various authors (1990)
- **Handbells Making History: A Bell Tree.** Margaret O'Sullivan-Hillman
- **Handchimes in General Music: A Curriculum Guide Grades 1-3.** Janet Van Valey and Martha Avery
- **Handchimes in General Music: A Curriculum Guide Grades 4-6.** Janet Van Valey and Martha Avery
- **Mastering Musicianship in Handbells.** Don Allured (1992)
- **The Modern Conductor.** Elizabeth Green (1981)
- **Musical Elements: A Classroom Method for Handchimes.** Kenneth Liske
- **168 Non-musical Ways to Improve Your Band or Choral Program.** Jay Althouse (1986)
- **Overtones 1955-1986.** Joan Shull, editor
- **A Practical Handbook for Handbell Directors.** Valerie Stephenson
- **Quick Foundations.** Kirtsy Mitchell
- **Rehearsal Planning, Techniques and Procedures.** Michael Keller
- **Schulmerich Learning Package: A Complete Curriculum for Music Education and Performance.** Dr James Fisher
- **Score Study Techniques.** Michael Keller
- **Songs for the Solo Ringer.** Christine D. Anderson
- **Solo Ringing Musically.** Michael Kastner and Kevin McChesney
- **Teaching Young Ringers.** Carolynne Mathis
- **We Can All Ring.** Aaron Champagne

MISCELLANEOUS

- **Mallets.** From Jeffers, Malmark and Schulmerich





THE 1970'S (AREA VIII HISTORY) PART II

1970—1972: Pennie Smith was reelected to the chairmanship. She also served as the festival chairman for a very fine festival in Bolivar, MO. I remember classes on 4-in-hand with demonstrations. This was the first festival Otis Mumaw attended. For the first time he heard solo ringing and decided he could do it too. People remember his outstanding solo ringing in the 70's and early 80's. Richard Litterst, again, was the massed ringing director.

1972—1974: I was area chairman. Betty Jo Wilcox was chair-elect and Gladys Walker was secretary/treasurer. We returned to the same site in Lincoln for the 1974 festival. Again there was some redecorating, but we were able to adjust. Andy Flanagan was massed ringing director. We had the first formal area board meeting. In 1973 this was held at Prairie Rose State Park in IA in our thirteen-foot camping trailer. The officers met inside and their husbands visited outside. The 1974 board meeting was held at our farm, and we had a chance to look over the festival site. I thought handbell workshops would aid members, so we had our first workshop in Omaha with Ed Duncan as clinician. A second workshop was held in Decatur, IL. I had not planned attending there, but was urged to go. Attendees appreciated this extra effort. Incidentally, other areas were having their first workshops at this time. The featured choir was the Wesley UMC choir from Salt Lake City. The highlight of their program was the performance of *Mini-Mass for Bells*, which was commissioned by the Bennett Bell Choir (NE) led by myself.

1974—1976: Betty Jo Wilcox was area chairman and her board assigned some additional jobs. Board meetings were held at the Wilcox home where we had delicious meals. Because this was the year of the bicentennial, Betty Jo used a little logo, which she called AGEHR. The festival was held at Wartburg College in Waverly, IA, Bill Payn was the clinician and his choir, **Ringers on the Green** from Morristown, NJ, was the featured choir. Also conducting some massed ringing numbers were Otis Mumaw, Paul Shull and Mary Kettelhut. Choirs featured patriotic numbers. An outdoor barbeque was given the last night.

1976—1978: Otis Mumaw was area Chairman. We returned to Manhattan, KS for the festival and that meant Joan Shull was hostess. The board worked well as a unit. They young people liked all the recreation at Kansas State University and the directors knew where their teenagers were. Bill Payn was massed ringing director.

1978—1980: Russell Blackmer was area chairman. The 1980 festival was held in Normal, IL at Illinois State University. The area board had a few instances to deal with involving personalities. Kids thought it was fun to fill balloons with water and drop them on cars below – until the police took over. Each performing choir was assigned a practice time preceding the concert. I remember one instance when three choirs were waiting for the doors to open when noises in the hall came from another choir, and their director was very upset and hollered, "We have to practice" – which he did, taking another choir's timeslot. Andy and Helen Flanagan were massed directors.

Mary Kettelhut ~ Area VIII Historian



The history of Area VIII Part I can be found in the November, 2006 issue of *Quavers* or can be found online at www.areaviii.org/quavers.htm



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Resource Librarian

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Have you sent in
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Time is running out.
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