



HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA

ILLINOIS, IOWA, KANSAS, MISSOURI, NEBRASKA

QUAVERS NEWSLETTER

MAY, 2014

Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA

RING DAVENPORT!

You may be ending a year of ringing with your school, church, or community ensembles, but do not let that stop you and some of your ringers from attending the Ring Davenport Festival!

The Executive Committee of the Area 8 Board has met for the final time before the Ring Davenport Festival. Detailed plans have been corrected, reviewed, and implemented for all aspects of Ring Davenport! Registrations are still coming in and if you have procrastinated there is still time to register as a full participant or to choose which day or days to attend as a daily participant. Either registration provides you with many learning opportunities and ringing experiences that will help you grow as a handbell musician.

Do you know how many composers and arrangers are located in Area 8? I am astounded with the number of published Area 8 composers! If you would like to know who they are and the music that they have composed, plan to attend the Area 8 Composers reading session during the Ring Davenport Festival. You will be surprised and say as I have, "I did not know that they lived in Area 8!"

Dolan Bayless ~ Area 8 Chair

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VOTE

VOTE

VOTE

All members of the Area 8 Board are serving you, our constituents, and trying to provide excellent educational opportunities throughout our five state area. We want to have your input, ideas, and evaluations as to how we can help you excel as ringers and directors in your schools, churches, and communities.

One significant way that you can give us guidance at the area level is to vote for the elected officers of the board. Voting will take place after the Ring Davenport Festival. Now is the time to get acquainted with the slate of nominees for Chair Elect, Secretary and Treasurer. Biographical sketches are posted on the website. You may get acquainted with these individuals in person at the Ring Davenport Festival, share your ideas with them, and hear about their ideas for the future of Area 8. When the balloting begins, please vote.


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	Everyone	Ringing Skills	Rhythm Skills	Leadership
Class Name				
Adapting...Few Ringers				x
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Adv. Treble		x		
Art of Precision	x			
Assessing Skills				x
Assign/Levels	x			x
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Beg. Bass		x		
Beg. Bells		x		
Beg. Solo/Ensemble		x		
Beg. Treble		x		
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Bells on a Budget				x
Bouncing Beat			x	
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Concert Programming				x
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Critical Listening	x	x	x	x
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	Everyone	Ringing Skills	Rhythm Skills	Leadership
Class Name				
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Maori II			x	
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Orff Schulwerk			x	x
Past Parenthesis		x		x
Planning Bell Event				x
Practical Body Mapping	x	x	x	
PREPARE to Sightread!		x		
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Touring w/Youth				x
Unpublished Music Session	x			
Weaving		x		
Without Words	x			
Working w/Young Ringers				x
World Drumming			x	



ELECTED	ELECTED	APPOINTED
CHAIR: Dolan Bayless c/o Kirkwood UMC 201 W Adams, Kirkwood, MO 63122 314.966.8167	CHAIR-ELECT: Patrick Gagnon 211 S Victor (P.O. Box 314), Hubbard, IA 50122 641.373.2972	COMMUNICATIONS: Pat Latshaw EDUCATION: Lauran Delancy
TREASURER: Kristin Kalitowski-Kowal 295 Town Center Blvd, Gilberts, IL 60136 630.699.3802	SECRETARY: Kathy Leonard 1st UMC 612 Poyntz Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502 785.532.4926	FINANCIAL ADVISOR: Cheryl Abney MEMBERSHIP: Stephen Swanson QUAVERS: KC Congdon
PAST CHAIR: Marilyn Lake 5748 W. 87th Terrace, Overland Park, KS 66207 913.302.1010	 Like us on Facebook	RESOURCE LIBRARIAN: Kathy Harrison WEBMASTER: Wendi Calkins

	ILLINOIS	IOWA	KANSAS	MISSOURI	NEBRASKA
Chair	Sharon Schmidt 28 Oriole Ct Naperville, IL 60540 630.369.9879	Patrick Gagnon (acting chair until filled)	Cherryl Cox 14684 W 152nd St Olathe, KS 66062 316.305.7055	Suanne Comfort 6108 Blueridge Blvd Raytown, MO 64133 816.353.1708	Mike Allen 1414 20th St P.O. Box 347 Aurora, NE 68818 402.694.3580 (H)
Treasurer	Debbie Perisho	Mary Lee Parks	Karla Denton	Cathy Leiboult	Janet Chiocchi
Secretary	Beth McFarland		Staci Cunningham	Open	Nancy Youngman
Web	Gary Dietschweiler	Wendi Calkins-Levitt	Wendi Calkins-Levitt	Wendi Calkins-Levitt	Janet Chiocchi
Other	Membership Open Registrar Kristin Kalitowski-Kowal Chime Mentor Diane Oster Chime Coordinator Aimee Legatzke Shelley May Hutchison Food Coordinator Anna Piro Handbell Services Debi Robey Student Liaison Ben Hafner	Historian Tina Gehrke Chimes Aaron Hansen Eastern Rep Cat Walker Western Rep Yvonne Johnson Des Moines Area Rep John Cook	Past Chair Kathy Leonard Chimes Shirley Myers	St Louis Area Sherry Boland KC Area Kathy Ford At Large Marilyn Droke Kathy Harrison Chime Chair Anne Miller	Chimes Janet Chiocchi Byron Jensen Vicky Vandervort Joyce Miller Angela Wright Linda Ashley Natalie Radcliffe Charles Cohen Deann Nicolaus Jessica Kite

The Raleigh Ringers

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A community handbell choir

QUAVERS OFFICERS



Farewell to Cheryl Abney— Area 8 Financial Advisor

Pink...that's the color I think of when I think of Cheryl Abney. Cotton Candy pink – sweet, compassionate, warm, generous with her time and talent. Cheryl was the type of friend we all want to have AND be. I first met Cheryl when we were both directing choirs at a youth festival at Camp Windemere, in the Ozarks, in 2005. She impressed me not only with her warmth towards others, but with her deep and abiding faith in her church and in her God. For Cheryl ringing bells wasn't just about making music, it was about learning to read music, and learning to be a part of the worship service, and making fellowship with one another. She was always supporting youth bell ringing activities and pushing us as an area to promote kids and youth and bells.

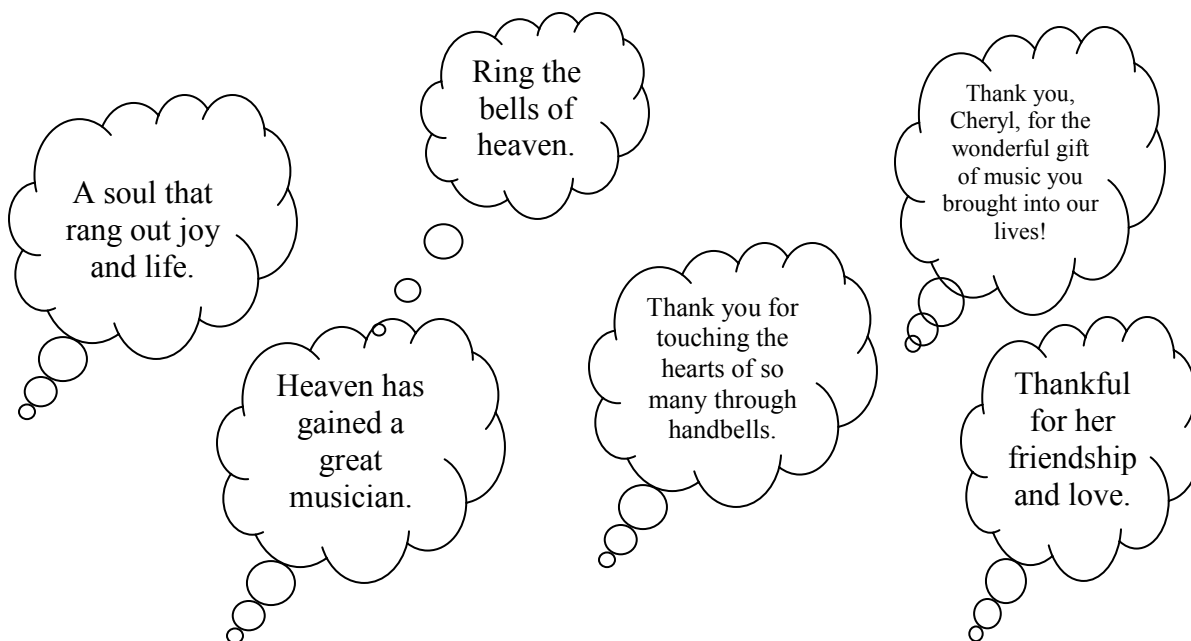
Cheryl passed away from breast cancer on Saturday, March 22, 2014, in Springfield, MO. She had served Area 8 as Secretary (2004-2006), Treasurer (2006-2010) and Financial Advisor (2010-2014) in recent years, and had been active in the state of Missouri as well, conducting at two different churches in Springfield and directing workshops all over the state. She leaves her parents and many cousins, nieces, nephews...and bell ringers from all over the Midwest to mourn her passing.

Cheryl was a good friend and I was honored and blessed to know her. At her service a combined bell choir rang one of her favorite pieces, a piece chosen by her to ring at the Topeka Festival in 2010, "Grazioso" by Arnold Sherman. What a lovely opportunity for those ringers to pour out their love for Cheryl and for her family.

The parting hymn sung at Cheryl's service kept coming back to this refrain, "the anchor holds in spite of a storm." She never lost her faith throughout all of her cancer treatments and surgeries. She was the most upbeat and positive person I have ever known. My heart breaks with the loss of her precious life, but rejoices knowing that she is directing a Heavenly Bell choir now...and I'll bet she won't have to set up, take down, move tables, fix clappers, tape music together, step in to ring for a missing choir member, haul bells, etc.

The Area 8 board is researching honoring Cheryl's life and commitment to Area 8 in some fashion and we will notify the membership once a decision has been made. Keep watching the website and Facebook for further information.

Compiled by Marilyn Lake, Marilyn Droke, Sandy Denton, Burnell Hackman, Kathy Harrison



Ring Davenport Pre-Conference Director's Track

I often hear from handbell directors who are challenged by the unique issues associated with leading a group of ringers. If that sounds familiar, you or your director should consider attending the Area 8 Pre-Conference Director's Track at the June 2014 **Ring Davenport** in Davenport, IA.

We'll cover the following three areas on Wednesday night:

Repertoire Leading to the Next Level (KC Congdon): An introduction to specific repertoire that has passages that introduce your ringers to changes, techniques or rhythms in the next level of difficulty.

Using Martha Lynn Thompson's "Tunes that Teach" with All Levels of Ringers (Sharon Schmidt): This resource is an excellent introduction for new ringers, and can, with slight additions, be used to build the skills of intermediate ringers.

Round Table: what works for you? What's your most pressing problem?

On Thursday morning, Carolynne Mathis will lead a session on **Conducting for Handbells—What's Different?** The basics of conducting and practices specific to handbells will be covered. Up to 10 participants will have a brief (5-6 minute) individual coaching session as they conduct the rest of the class.

These specific topics were selected to focus on key areas that will allow ringers and directors to have positive, musical and successful experiences. Participants will learn from the experienced directors leading the sessions, as well as each other. Of course, there are various other topics that could be covered, and many of those will be covered in the main conference class offerings.

This track should address the needs of directors of varied experience levels, including those who are just thinking about becoming a director, directors new to handbells, or ringers who advise their directors on bell techniques and music selection.

Schedule & Cost: The track will run from 7-9 pm on Wednesday, June 25 and continue on Thursday morning, June 26 from 7:45-9:45 am, and costs \$75 in addition to your Festival registration fee. You'll be finished in time for the opening bell.

The registration form can be found at this link: <http://areaviii.org/WP/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Form.Pre-Conf-Director-Track.pdf>

Sharon Schmidt ~ [Illinois State](#) Chair

DID YOU KNOW?

**HANDBELL MUSICIANS OF AMERICA ILLINOIS HAS TWO SETS OF
3-OCTAVE HANDCHIMES AVAILABLE TO LOAN TO SCHOOLS!**

We provide a 3 octave set of handchimes for one semester (approx. 4 months) with teaching materials, a support network and/or mentor, and a one-year membership to Handbell Musicians of America. For the forms to apply go to <http://tinyurl.com/Area8Chime> or scan the QR code.

Not a teacher?
Bet you know one –
let them know!



How to Recruit New Ringers

Tried and True:

- Open rehearsal at the beginning of your season
- Handbell “petting zoo” following a worship service in which the bell choir was featured
- Recruit substitute ringers who will then become addicted to handbells and to the awesome people with whom they get to make great music
- Borrow a duplicate set of bells and invite prospective ringers to “double” your ringers at the table during a rehearsal – literally getting dragged along!
- Make an announcement for new ringers in the other musical ensembles at your church or school
- Make an announcement for new ringers at your church's or school's youth assembly program
- Put regular pleas on your social media outlets, especially if your church or school has a Facebook page. This could be a post to the page, or an event for your open rehearsal. Share it like **crazy** and see how many people can like it and share it as well.
- And, finally, treat your ringers well, make great music, have fun, and **they** will do the recruiting for you.

How to **keep** new ringers. Here is where I struggle. It's hard to share both my excitement for my handbell program and the challenges we face with scheduling and commitment. True confession time? I began this year with *six* new ringers for my 3-octave group that already had six returning. I was making plans for borrowing bells, adding tables, juggling schedules for my newbies, when all but one decided that they could not make the commitment. So, E pluribus...unum (from many, one.) Keeping them in is far more difficult than getting them to the table.

For me and for you, there are many new resources available on the national Guild website: <http://handbellmusicians.org/handbell-musician-resources/> Especially appropriate for this subject is Karen Eastburn's "Recruitment and Assimilation."

Patrick Gagnon ~ Acting [Iowa State](#) Chair

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[Iowa](#)

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can
become
the new
Iowa
Chair!

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How To Recruit Bell Ringers *OR* Won't You Come and Play With Me?

/ri-KROOT/ Verb 1. To enlist in the armed forces

Sometimes we feel like we are ringing in the "trenches," depending on where you get to set up bells for worship, and we *do* use our *arms*, but really we have a golden opportunity at our hands (bad pun) to encourage participation in small groups in your church or community. Handbell ringing is such a unique art form, but it can also be one of the strongest small groups in your church.

"Grace Groups" are what some churches call their small group Bible studies and I find that title aptly describes bell ringers to a tee. What a perfect opportunity to provide some much needed **grace**! Bell choirs can easily handle ringers from very advanced to just beginning, all in the same piece of music. There is plenty of *grace* to go around when a bell is missed or rung late. Several positions are much easier to read and ring: EF4, AB5, B6C7.

Consider these options for encouraging folks to join your bell choirs for some *grace*:

- Open or close with prayer every rehearsal. This gives folks a chance to share about their families and co-workers; the opportunity to come together in prayer is a powerful force.
- Ask *anyone* who comes up to you to compliment the bell choir on a particular anthem if they would like to ring. *Anyone*.
- Take the bells or chimes into the Church School classrooms or to VBS to encourage the start of a children's bell choir. By building a graded bell program you will have built-in ringers coming up the ranks. (UGH...another armed forces joke!)
- Invite parents to come to a rehearsal with their kids and ring alongside them.
- Set aside a short rehearsal time for one month, and rehearse a piece for a worship service or congregational dinner (not too stressful). The only commitment will be that one month, but encourage folks to just "give it a try."
- Invite spouses to come to a rehearsal.
- Have a fellowship time after rehearsal for birthdays; or just for fun.
- Sign your choir up to host coffee hour a few times each year at your church.
- Participate in intergenerational events where a sing-a-long might be included. The "ring-when-your-word- is-circled" music is great for instant success, or even flash chord cards (CEG, FAC, GBD, etc.)
- As the director, be enthusiastic and *welcoming* about handbells. It is *your* passion for the art of handbell ringing that wins them over!

Marilyn Lake ~ Area 8 Past-Chair
[Kansas State](#)

Click on the state flower to find out more about the

**Kansas
Chime
Loan
Program**



Recruiting Handbell Ringers

The best recruiting is done by a well-established, successful handbell program that is visible in church services often and is performing and serving in the community. People want to be part of a successful group and participate with people who are obviously enjoying their art. The reputation of your program in the community is a powerful recruiting tool, but getting there can take a lot of time and work!

Family members of current ringers can be a fruitful field. Often spouses of current members are willing to step in and try to ring with some patient coaching, and ringing becomes something that couples can enjoy together. Younger siblings of youth choir members are almost always eager to ring when they reach the appropriate age for your training choirs. You can use your current ringers to recruit neighbors, Sunday school class friends, and likely candidates for ringing.

Exposure and making ringing accessible is necessary. Use some handbells with the junior choir or youth anthems. Do some of the great combined choir anthems with multiple choirs and handbell accompaniment. Use Ardis Freeman's *Ring Along Series* of books from Cantabile Press for Sunday School class parties, youth Christmas caroling, and even vocal choir social events to get chimes into people's hands in a fun and nonthreatening way. The Christmas books are always an instant success, but all year you can use the *Ring Along Old Favorites* (folk songs), *Ring Along Songs of America*, and *Ring Along Hymns I and II*.

Often people are afraid of a long-term commitment of time. Offer a six week "Introduction to Handbell Ringing." Children often don't know what they will like. When a child doesn't know if they want to ring or think they won't like it, I make them a deal—"Try it for four weeks; then if you don't like it, I won't bother you anymore!" After four weeks, they are always hooked. Often there are vocal choir members with nice voices who never learned to read music, or congregation members who would love to learn that skill. Offer a six-eight week class on "Learning to Read Music." After the class see where it goes from there.

I have never found that a general invitation in a church newsletter or bulletin was very successful in recruiting new members of any choir, vocal or handbell. The personal touch, the invitation from the director or choir member, has always worked better in my experience. I hope some of these strategies will help make your program visible and appealing to new ringers for your choirs.

SuAnne Comfort ~ [Missouri State Chair](#)

HANDCHIME LOAN PROGRAM

The MO chapter of the Handbell Musicians of America has a free 3-octave set of Malmark handchimes with reproducible secular/sacred music that will be available for the 2014-15 school year, at no cost except insurance coverage for that semester or year. The deadline for application is June 1 for placement by July 1. Please contact [Anne Miller](#) or 636.349.1817 for more information and an application packet.

Pass the word to your friends, too!

If You Start One, They Will Come, But...How Do I Find New Ringers Later On?

I started our choir, Proclamation, 20 years ago, using money given in memory of my mom, who had recently passed away. I initially began with a 2-octave set of Malmarks and I had more volunteers wanting to ring than the eight I needed. What a problem to have...I was blessed with subs and we always were able to play with a full choir.

Boy, have times changed. We have since grown to a 4-octave choir with ten to eleven ringers and twelve if I am lucky. The problem is I have had ringers come and go, some moved away, some graduated from high school and went on to college, some retired for medical and health reasons and some just felt they were too old to continue.

I often joke, as a dentist, that I ask individuals while they are sitting in my dental chair, if they would like to learn to ring bells. Talk about putting the pressure on. It does work, but I don't believe it is because of the threat of what I might do to them; they know me better than that, but rather it is **personally asking each individual**.

I feel that *that* is the most effective method for recruiting new members. One must **develop a list of prospects** and **approach each individual on a one-on-one** basis to consider joining a choir. Making a blanket plea to an entire congregation for one or two people who might want to learn to play handbells seldom ever works. Ironically, often I find out later that they have had this internal desire to learn to play handbells; they were just waiting for someone to **ask them!**

In my church, I have exhausted campaigning within for new members, so I have gone so far as to **talk with members of other churches**; with the understanding that they didn't have to join our church, but only commit to ringing with us once a month. In the past, I have even recruited a minister and his wife from another church, and currently, I have one ringer from another church.

A couple of summers ago, knowing I was going to be losing another ringer to college as well as our interim minister/ringer who was moving on, I put an **ad in our local newspaper**. I did pick up one new ringer using that method. Don't be shy, **ask people**, especially if they are musically inclined.

I have also found it helpful to **finagle being asked to play at other churches, at women's or service clubs**. This allows you to not only play so they see how a handbell choir performs, it also gives you the opening to explain how handbell choirs function, **and to make a plea to solicit new ringers**.

Keep asking, as some may turn you down because this is not a good time in their life to take on the commitment, but that doesn't mean that if you ask them in a year or two, they might not jump at the chance. **Do not prejudge individuals**. You will not know what they are going to say until you **ASK!**

Good Luck and Good Hunting!

J. Michael Allen ~ [Nebraska State](#) Chair

The Nebraska committee has one set of tone chimes and one set of Kid's play bells that are available on loan.

If you are interested in borrowing them for your group, contact:
Nancy Youngman, Chimes Chair.

2014	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
Jun 25-28	Area 8 Festival <i>Ring Davenport</i>	Davenport, IA	Area 8
Jun 26-27	Area 8 Youth Festival Carolynne Mathis	Davenport, IA	Area 8
Jul 6-10	Intergenerational Handbell Camp Various	Heartland Center Parkville, MO	Camp
Jul 15-18	National Seminar Various	Sheraton Atlanta, GA	National
Jul 16-18	National Seminar <i>Distinctly Teen</i> —Kimberley Strepka	Sheraton Atlanta, GA	National
Sep 12-13	Flint Hills Handbell Fest Various	YMCA Camp Wood Elmdale, KS	Kipp Willnauer

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