

Quavers

July 2019



Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA
Area 8



Area 8 Chair:
Beth Ann Edwards

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From the Chair

By Beth Ann Edwards

Ah, summer! A time of rest and rejuvenation! Reading books, taking non-bell-related vacations, long lunches with friends ... But wait! What does the summer of 2019 bring? ... Lazy? No! ... Hazy? Ask me in September! ... Crazy? Yes! Area 8 is thrilled to host the Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar in St. Louis, Missouri, July 16-20. National Seminars are perfect for handbell directors and ringers. My favorite reason for attending is that I am not in charge of anything – I can go, ring bells, attend concerts and classes, meet up with friends, refresh my love for all things handbell related, and then go home. This summer, however, the tables were turned on the Area 8 Board, the designated Local Liaisons. It's our turn to work behind the scenes and make sure all in attendance are well taken care of.

Kristin Kalitowski-Kowal and I have been locating equipment and volunteers from throughout our five-state area, and we thank you most sincerely for saying "yes." Some people deserve special recognition: Kipp Willnauer and Patrick Gagnon will be driving trucks to pick up and return equipment from Missouri and Kansas. Debi Robey and Patrick have volunteered to work Every.Single.Shift during the Seminar, moving bells and equipment from one classroom to another. Linda Ashley and Tracy Peterson issued countless phone calls and emails asking for equipment. Thank you, thank you, to all who said yes to loaning equipment. To those of you attending the Seminar, every time you pick up a bell or chime, know that it belongs to us, Area 8, and all the generous people who are willing to share with the larger handbell community.

Speaking of attending, if you come to National Seminar, make sure to say hello to the Area 8 board members and friends who are schlepping bells between class sessions and handing out packets for reading sessions. Look for all of your Area 8 friends and stay tuned for a time and place for an all-Area 8 photo at the Seminar. I'm looking forward to seeing old and new friends when we gather in St. Louis, so please don't be shy!

Spotlight what's going on around you

Handbell Musicians of America would like our YouTube videos of handbell/handchime performances. Help us spotlight Area 8 by submitting a YouTube link to handbell videos with a short description (who, what, when, where) of the performance. If you know of a choir that has a good video, please ask them to send it to HMA. Send YouTube link submissions to membership@handbellmusicians.org with a subject line of "Video of the Month Submission" Thank you for your help in sharing our art!

Festival First-Timer? Help is on the Way!

By Beth Ann Edwards

As I write this article, the Area 8 2020 Festival is exactly one year from today: June 18-19-20, 2020! I love handbell festivals, and I love massed ringing. What could be better than ringing gorgeous music conducted by amazing clinicians, with 250 of your favorite handbell musicians! Many who will attend in 2020 are Faithful Festival Friends, any many will be attending for the very first time (Future Faithful Festival Friends). We all take time away from family, work, and friends to attend a Festival, and we budget time and money to spend a few nights away. We want to have the best experience possible, and we're willing to prepare as best we can. So here are the BAE top 10 suggestions for a successful Festival prep:

1. **Review the options** listed on the Area 8 website that best fit you and your choir. Massed ringing and classes take place on Friday and Saturday, June 19 and 20. A directors Seminar and Worship Seminar are offered on Thursday, June 18, and an extra Brush-up and Double-Check rehearsal is offered for Thursday evening. The BronzeFest ensemble is designed for advanced ringers who want a concentrated time to ring more challenging music and present a concert on Saturday afternoon. YouthFest is designed for ringers in middle school and high school and it's an excellent vehicle for creating lifetime ringers.
2. **Choose your ringing division.** The Blue Division will ring music that's primarily Level 2. The Gold Division music is primarily Level 3. Both divisions will ring the massed pieces. The clinicians, John Behnke and Alex Guebert, will work with both divisions.
3. **Register early** to get the best discounts. All groups are welcome: full choirs, partial choirs, and individuals. The Festival Committee will assist with matching individuals with choirs that have space for an extra ringer or two.
4. **Order your music** and start your score study. Mark all conductors notes that are distributed before the event. If you are a director, some of the music might be a good choice for your choir to ring this next year, and then they'll be one piece closer to Festival ready! Set a schedule for practicing the Festival music.
5. **Make hotel reservations.** Staying at the Conference hotel is convenient, easy, and fun, and a continental breakfast is included with your stay. Ringers are everywhere, and they are very friendly. Hotel stays are a great way to meet new friends, and a great way for you and your choir to bond. When attendees stay at the Overland Park Sheraton, the 2020 Festival Hotel, overall Festival expenses are reduced. You can make your reservations now. [Use this link to Book your group rate for Area 8 – Handbell Musicians of America](http://area8.handbellmusicians.org/)



Pictures from Past Festivals



[Find Past Festival Pictures on the Area 8 website.](#)

6. **Talk it up.** Create some “Festival buzz” in your handbell community and choir. Invite someone who has attended a Festival to talk to your choir. Encourage others in your community to attend with you and invite ringers from other choirs to fill available assignments in your choir.
7. **Watch videos** of massed ringing on YouTube. (I searched for “massed ringing.”) Watching these videos, however, is like watching someone else drive a car. You’ll get an idea of what is happening on the ringing floor, but it’s nothing like experiencing it for yourself as a ringer.
8. **Familiarize yourself** with the conductors and the music and know a bit about them before you arrive. Watch videos and listen to music they have composed or conducted. Find information on the music you will ring. Is it original? Based on a hymn tune? An arrangement of a more contemporary song? Listen to recordings of the Festival arrangements and other arrangements of the same melody.
9. **Start a packing list:** music, gloves, water bottles, band-aids and tape for your hands (if you’re not accustomed to ringing several hours in one day), pencils, clear tape, page turners, hole punchers, risers, comfortable shoes, cushiony floor mats. Bring your own equipment for massed ringing: bells, chimes, mallets, singing bell sticks, and more! Tables are available for a modest rental fee, and then you won’t have to transport your own.
10. **Plan to shop** with the Festival vendors. Make a shopping list for music, accessories, and equipment, then carve out some time for shopping and attending reading sessions while you are at the Festival. The vendors have lots of items you never knew you needed!

And finally, ask questions! Feel free to contact me or any A8 Board Member if you are curious or need clarification. All of us have been first timers, too, and we look forward to seeing you on the ringing floor.



2020 Festival

More Than Meets the Eye

Repertoire Chosen for 2020 Festival

Massed – Blue and Gold Divisions

Directed by Alex Guebert and John Behnke

Jubilant Spirit	Lauran Delancy	AGEHR AG35376, Level 3
Les Cloches	John Behnke	AGEHR AG36025, Level 3+
Gratitude	Alex Guebert	(Available after Jan. 1), Level 2
Reflections on Kelvingrove	arr. Jason Krug	Red River MRRBL5079, Level 2+
Over the Rainbow	arr. Chris Peck	Hope MHP2686P, Level 3

Blue Division

Directed by Alex Guebert and John Behnke

A Merry Heart	Cynthia Dobrinski	GB471, Level 1+
Behold, A Host Arrayed in White	arr. John Behnke	Concordia 97-7634, Level 2+
Exultation	Matthew Compton	AGEHR AG35371, Level 2+
Clarion Call	Michael Joy	Choristers Guild CGB864, Level 2+

Gold Division

Directed by Alex Guebert and John Behnke

All Creatures of Our God and King	arr. John Behnke	AGEHR AG36041, Level 3
Fantasy on Restoration	Brian Childers	GIA MGIG8492, Level 3+
Good Christian Men Rejoice	Kimberly Strepka	From the Top 20327HB, Level 4
Africa by Toto	arr. Alex Guebert	(Available January 1), Level 3+

BronzeFest, directed by Lauran Delancy

Campanae Celebrare	Cathy Moglebust	Hope 2626, Level 4
Elegy	William Payn	Hope 1277, Level 4
Be Still My Soul	Alex Guebert	Jeffers JHS9570, Level 5
Angels We Have Heard on High	Kyler Brengle	AGEHR AG36056, Level 4
Spy Ring	arr. Tammy Waldrop	Red River RRBL5088, Level 3+
Finale from Symphony No. 2 in D minor for Organ	arr. Fred Gramann	AGEHR AG46016J, Level 5

YouthFest, directed by Nick Hanson

Under construction! Stay tuned.

Order your Festival music from www.heitzhandbells.com Enter #Area8 in the title area of Music Selector. All the music will be listed and includes a 15% discount.

Book your hotel room for the Area 8 Festival 2020

Sheraton Overland Park
6100 College Boulevard
Overland Park, KS 66211

Room rates:

\$139-\$149/night (includes continental breakfast)

[Use this link to Book your group rate for Area 8 – Handbell Musicians of America](#)

*When attendees stay at the conference hotel, Area 8 receives credits for expenses incurred at the venue, which keeps overall costs lower.

If registrants who live more than 50 miles from the hotel choose to stay at another location, they will be charged a small fee to cover venue costs.

Members Corner

Virtuoso

By Lori Fenton, Area 8 Treasurer

New Members As of May 31, 2019

Steve Gokool
Northminster
Presbyterian Church
Peoria, Illinois

David R. Smetak
Westmont, Illinois

Emily Forssberg
Waterloo First United
Methodist Church
Waterloo, Iowa

Janet Bucher
Overland Park, Kansas

Randy W. Frye
Lawrence, Kansas

Karen Bolinger
Gethsemane
Lutheran Church
St Louis, Missouri

Marilyn Droke
Shepherd of the Hills
Lutheran Church
Kimberling City, Missouri

David Kowalczyk
St Joseph Academy
St Louis, Missouri

Kay E. Wunder
Ballwin, Missouri

I'm an Accountant by day and while I serve as Treasurer for Area 8, I am very passionate (i.e. obsessed) about ringing. I recently had the privilege, once again, to be part of Virtuoso, an "extraordinary performance experience", sponsored by The Raleigh Ringers (RR). This event has been held bi-annually since 2013 and is directed by Dr. William Payn.

Virtuoso is an auditioned event, the process for which began last fall. Prospective ringers submitted an application, performance video and recommendations. 30 ringers (2 6+ octave choirs) were chosen to participate and contacted at the end of January. Repertoire and ringing assignments followed shortly thereafter. Ringers are expected to learn their music to the point of performance ready by the time they arrive in Raleigh for the first combined rehearsal. This is no small task for some of the pieces! All bells must be covered by both choirs and "creative assignments" are worked out ahead of time.

We spent two days pulling together the eight pieces, one of which was the encore piece "Bohemian Rhapsody" and would be played with the RR, rock attire and all. Outside of rehearsal there was lots of time for socializing with each other as well as members of the RR, who are amazing hosts. They provide all transportation as needed, arrange all lunches and dinners and provide us with some great swag, including official RR tie dyed gloves.

Virtuoso members also "get" to serve as roadies for the weekend. After the final run through we help pack up three+ choirs worth of bells, tables, foam etc. along with all the other RR concert accessories - and there are a lot!

The weekend culminates with Virtuoso performing on the RR spring concert at Meymandi Hall in downtown Raleigh.

While this is admittedly a very challenging event it also brings me a great amount of joy - from ringing to seeing old friends and meeting new ones. I hope that ringing brings you the same kind of joy.



Illinois

My First Festival

By Kendall Ladd, Central/Southern IL Chair

Picture it: Louisville, 2012. I was attending the Area 5 Festival with my high school handbell choir, and it was my very first handbell event. I had no idea what to expect going into the Festival, and upon arrival the tiny handbell bubble I had been living in completely burst. My first reaction was in response to the number of other ringers who were in attendance. I had no idea that there were so many other people out there who played this instrument! Of course, as I would eventually come to learn, the number of ringers at this one event was just the tip of the iceberg. As we began to set up our tables and bells, we instantly began making connections with the choirs who were setting up around us. I recall everyone's enthusiasm and interest in meeting other ringers and making new connections (one fellow ringer I met actually ended up being one of my future directors!). After setting up the equipment, everyone began perusing the vendor tables as we waited for the first massed ringing rehearsal to begin. At the time, I was less impressed with the music and equipment that was available to look at (I assure you, that has changed) and more interested in the other handbell themed items – magnets, shirts, stickers, and jewelry. Now these were the things I could use to really show off my handbell obsession!

The real fun began during the remainder of this day and half long Festival. I was able to attend different classes, some of which focused on different handbell techniques, such as four-in-hand ringing, and some that focused on musicality. I also had my first experiences with massed ringing under the direction of a director who I had never worked with before. In addition, I was able to participate in the Bronze ringing track which allowed me to ring with an entire choir of ringers who I had never met before and another director who I was unfamiliar with. The Festival ended with one giant concert with all handbell choirs in attendance. This was followed only by the insanity that was everyone trying to pack up their equipment and load it into their respective vehicles at the same time. All of these opportunities to ring with different people and directors helped develop my ringing abilities, preparing me for the choirs I have run with since then and other handbell events I have attended. I can only remember this Festival with fondness because it made me realize what an incredible musical community I am a part of and all of the ways I can better myself as a handbell musician. Whether you are brand new to handbell ringing or more experienced, attending your first handbell event can be nerve-racking, daunting, or even intimidating. However, attending these events is a great way to meet other ringers, expand your handbell knowledge and experiences, and have fun!



Central/Southern Illinois

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Coordinator: Patti Mangis

Handchime Loan Program

Mentor: Diane Oster

Food Coordinator:

Anna Piro



Advance with a Retreat!

By Patrick Gagnon, IA Chair



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Historian:

Christina "Tina"
Elwood Gehrke

Western Iowa Representative:

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Cat Walker

I have been fortunate to be part of several Community Handbell Ensembles both as a ringer and as a director, and have always enjoyed the before, during, and after of a season-opening retreat. From planning to packing up, each retreat has been memorable. They have helped each ensemble grow musically. They have helped each ensemble develop relationships. They have helped kick-start each season. Perhaps most importantly, I have found that retreats have helped recruit and retain ringing members.

Ringling

One crucial piece is having the upcoming season's repertoire selected, assigned, and delivered so that a substantive portion of the retreat can involve sight-reading each piece. This gives everyone a heads up about what work needs to be done by the concert, and what practice priorities might exist. This also lets the director(s) have a snapshot of each piece's potential to ultimately succeed or be re-examined.

Teaching

Des Moines Concert Handbells began the fall season with two teaching goals: score study and ringing gesture. One of our members presented a session on score study, score marking, and a standard set of symbols used to mark bell changes and choreography. One of the directors unrolled a garden hose which we all held and then "rang." Our disparate gestures quickly became more unified, and we now have the wonderfully hilarious phrase, "Beth Ann, get the HOSE!"

Eating

I had the pleasure of living with a graduate exchange student while I was a student at Boston University. We didn't have lots to say to one another, but as we made dinner, we could certainly agree that "good food makes good friends." Every bell program I have ever encountered has enjoyed stellar pot-luck meals. Some have been carefully planned. Some have been completely spontaneous. All have been important to the careful cultivation of what we can do so well: Uniting People through a Musical Art.

Keep an eye on your inboxes, the Area 8 website, and the Area 8 e-Blasts for two exciting events this October in Des Moines. Great things are coming to Iowa.



Kansas

What it means to be a director

By Kipp Willnauer, KS Chair

So you are thinking of being the leader ... the handbell director? You want to be the person who has the knowledge. The one who can pick the best music available for worship, fix an instrument with one hand, turn pages and can keep a steady beat with the other hand?

Prayerfully consider:



1. Getting along with and leading people – You will be trusted to unite folks in worship and music. Leadership is not only in front of the ringers, but also convincing others in the congregation that they should share their talents and abilities through music and fellowship. You must exhibit the confidence to lead the congregation towards a common outcome of presenting God's word through music.
2. Do you possess the knowledge needed to direct music and have a music background – You must grasp the skills to interpret the music that the composer placed upon the paper and you must own a minimal musical performance experience.
3. Know where to get handbell answers to questions – Answers come from a variety of places: Handbell Musicians of America workshops, other handbell directors and mentors, stores and websites such as: www.handbellworld.com, www.jwpepper.com, www.handbellmusicians.org, www.handbellcamp.org, www.thirdbellontheright.com Do not be afraid to ask, become a member of this organization, browse various websites in retailing and publishing as well as handbell manufacturers (Schulmerich or Malmark) and the Area 8 officers and state representatives.
4. Identify where to find and select music – Look first to see what music is in the files of your church. Make a list of the music publishers and search for those on the web. Check the websites mentioned above and other handbell store sites for music of the church season you wish to research. Select music that you can confidently recreate what the composer had in mind.
5. Partner with other worship leaders – As you prepare to select songs for future worship and seasons of the church year, you would be wise to meet with the Worship Chair or Minister of your church, to discuss how the choir can best assist in Worship leadership. Planning books are available at retail stores. Your own hymnal has a listing of the scripture readings for each Sunday throughout the church year.
6. Commit the time necessary for a great result – Being a director takes time - attend workshops and festivals, visit a mentor, search for appropriate music, reading scripture & worship planning and direct rehearsals. You may rehearse less than two hours per week, but the role of a handbell director may take 6 or more hours per week for a successful program.



Kansas State Chair:
Kipp Willnauer

Treasurer:
Karla Denton

Secretary:
OPEN - Contact
Kipp Willnauer

Chimes:
Shirley Myers

Missouri

Hello....goodbye

By Cheri Leigh, MO Chair



Missouri State Chair:
Cheri Leigh

PastChair:
Suanne Comfort

Treasurer:
Suanne Comfort

Membership:
Sherry Boland

Chime Chairs:
Anne Miller
Kathy Harrison
Christie White

For several years our bell choir welcomed new members, watched them struggle with learning to ring, and then said goodbye as they left the choir. These were people who had taken years of piano lessons or sang in a choir. Why weren't they catching on? They definitely weren't having fun. It took a while before I realized how much we had learned as ringers and how hard it is for someone to just "step in." Singing in a choir or playing an instrument are good building blocks for handbells, but that doesn't prepare one for the motor skills to actually ring the bell or to learn to read and ring the score with just your notes.

Now we have included a 3-month training period for new ringers where they can learn the basics before stepping into the full choir. Our training starts with the basic ringing motion, which is apparently not a natural motion for most people. And because three or four people can't play much on their own, we include three or four other people from the choir in these training sessions. Now at least we can play a scale! The experienced ringers work one-on-one with new ringers to improve individual techniques. We start with the easiest whole note chords and progress from there. Of course, more experienced musicians do apply their knowledge to this new instrument and learn faster than someone learning to read music for the first time, but this extra nurturing helps ringers at all levels.

Once the new ringers are ready to join the rest of the choir, we intentionally play easier music so that the new ringers can be successful in their new positions. This can be a little boring for the experienced ringers, but we sometimes transfer some accidentals to the more experienced neighbors just to keep everyone challenged.

Adding this extra training is an investment in the new ringers and the bell program. All investments take some initial capital and that capital is time from the director and other choir members. The results have been worth it as the new ringers have felt successful and confident and have wanted to stay and learn more. They have been able to attend festivals and grow to play at a higher level of music.

Confident ringers are happy ringers. Happy ringing to your choirs!

Find us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Area8Handbells/>

Area 8 Website: <http://area8.handbellmusicians.org/>

Nebraska

Red Cloud

By Nancy Youngman, NE Chair

Red Cloud, Nebraska, a village of around 1,000 people, is nestled near the Kansas border in the rolling hills of southern Nebraska (yes, Nebraska DOES have hills!) This quaint community was the home of Willa Cather, who featured Red Cloud prominently in her prairie novels. Every year, Red Cloud is the host for the Willa Cather Spring Conference, a gathering of scholars from across the United States. A worship service is held in the beautiful Grace Episcopal Church, the very church where Cather worshipped.

Last year at the Area 8 Festival, a board member for the Willa Cather society who had heard Lincoln, Nebraska's community choir, Bell-issimo, approached me, the director of Bell-issimo, to see if we would be interested in playing for the conference. Of course!! Plus, one of Bell-issimo's goals is to bring our music to audiences that may not have been exposed much to handbell music. The board member did have a task, as none of the other board members had ever heard a handbell choir. Several conversations and videos later, we were confirmed to play for the church service—prelude, postlude, and service music, 9 pieces in all.

We needed to take a smaller group, as the church did not have much room for handbell tables. But, as I learned early on, every set of bells has 2 octaves!! We played mostly 2 – 3 octave music, with some 4 octaves, as the shelly bells don't take extra ringers. With creative bell assigning, we got by with 2 tables and stands on the sides with parts that didn't have to switch bells.

The Homily was presented by Cather Scholar Dr. Jeanne C. Collins on "The Concept of Grace in Cather's Writings" which was a wonderful literary and religious sermon. Bell-issimo followed it with "Amazing Grace" as the communion hymn. How did a group of scholars from around the nation, most of whom had never heard a handbell choir, respond? Well, they commented that they would like to make us a permanent feature of their conference!



Nebraska State Chair:
Nancy Youngman

Registrar:
Linda Ashley

Scholarship Committee:
Joyce Miller

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Area VIII of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers Inc

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A View from the Board

What I've Learned from Handbells

By Pat Latshaw, Area 8 Secretary

Always be open to new experiences. Handbells! Who knew that an instrument I had never heard of growing up could turn into a musical passion? I started piano lessons in the 2nd grade and I thought I had found the instrument to define my musical pursuits with the flute in 5th grade. But when I heard handbells for the first time, I was drawn to their unique sound.

Never say "I can't." I first heard a handbell choir at my (then) fiancé's church. I enjoyed listening to them and admired their musicality but thought for sure they wouldn't want to try to teach me their skills. I was pleasantly surprised when they welcomed me onto their team and am grateful for their welcoming introduction into this rewarding and fun world of handbells.

Learning does not have a defined time frame. Once I mastered the basics of ringing, I discovered there can be so much more involved in this lovely art. From solo and small ensemble ringing, to attending festivals and workshops with my choir and becoming part of the Rezound! community ensemble, and even directing my church's choir. I find myself continuing to learn from others every step along the way.

Don't be shy – introduce yourself. Being involved in the guild has introduced me to so many people across the nation: other handbell musicians, composers, and conductors - and it's been a joy and privilege to find out that there are real people behind all those professional faces.

Be generous in giving back. The experiences that handbells have afforded me have helped me grow both musically and as a person. It's been a distinct pleasure to pay it forward by serving as a conference clinician, workshop teacher, church choir director, and on the Area 8 Board, first as Communications Chair and currently as Secretary. The benefits received – new friendships and shared acquaintances in other ensembles – are priceless.

Area 8 Festival
Handbell Musicians of America
Sheraton Hotel • Overland Park, Kansas
June 19-20, 2020
Pre-Festival Workshops June 18
YouthFest • Mass Ringing • Classes • Concerts • Shopping

Featured Concert Choir
Columbia Handbell Ensemble
Ed Rollins, Director

more than meets the eye!
2020 June 18-20 Overland Park, KS
Area 8 Handbell Festival & Conference

Registration begins January 1, 2020

For list of repertoire and more Festival information, please visit our website area8.handbellmusicians.org/2020-festival/

Clinician Alex Guebert
Clinician John Behnke
BronzeFest Director Lauran Delancy
YouthFest Director Nick Hanson
Worship Seminar Leader: Deb Carr

Upcoming Events

July 2019

Saturday, July 6

7:00pm Forté Handbell Quartet: St. Louis, MO

Sunday, July 7

4:00pm Forté Handbell Quartet: Prairie Village, KS

Sunday, July 7 – Thursday, July 11

3:00pm Intergenerational Handbell Camp: Parkville, MO

Tuesday, July 9

7:30pm Twin Cities Bronze Concert: Red Oak, IA

Wednesday, July 10

7:30pm Twin Cities Bronze Concert: Prairie Village, KS

Thursday, July 11

7:00pm Intergenerational Handbell Camp Concert: Parkville, MO

Thursday, July 11

7:30pm Twin Cities Bronze Concert: Wichita, KS

Monday, July 15

7:00pm Timbré Concert: Lawrence, KS

Monday, July 15

7:30pm Twin Cities Bronze Concert: Sikeston, MO

Tuesday, July 16 – Saturday, July 20

National Seminar: St. Louis, Missouri July 16-20

Distinctly Teen at National Seminar: St. Louis, MO July 16-20

Sunday, July 21

6:30pm Timbré Concert: Rolla, MO

August 2019

Saturday, August 17

8:30am Reading Session with Handbell Assoc. of Greater St. Louis: St. Louis, MO

October 2019

Friday, October 11

6:00pm Beer, Wine, and Bells with David Harris: Clive, IA

Saturday, October 12

8:30am Mid-Iowa Handbell Festival with David Harris: Windsor Heights, IA

January 2020

Wednesday, January 1, 2020

Registration Opens for Area 8 Festival: *More Than Meets the Eye*

June 2020

Thursday – Saturday, June 18-19-20, 2020

Area 8 Festival – *More than Meets the Eye*: Overland Park, KS

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