



## *It's Good to Belong!*

by Chris Peck

Membership Chair and Area 8 Chair-Elect

*Sharon Schmidt, Area 8 Chair, will return to the Quavers front page in May.*

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Your membership in Handbell Musicians of America is more important than you might realize. So in case you missed it, please check the status of your membership. There are many memberships which expire on March 31, including mine. Our membership numbers show that, by state, the following memberships will expire: IL-100, IA-60, KS-43, MO-53, NE-41. We don't want you to lose all the benefits that come with your Handbell Musicians of America membership.

Since many of our groups are not meeting, or meeting differently, those reminders may not be at the forefront of our minds or they may be at the church under piles of music catalogs, masks, gloves, or other items.

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*You probably have received or will be receiving renewal reminders from the national office.*

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Please take the time and renew today so we can all stay connected better. Handbell Musicians of America and Area 8 do NOT want to lose you, and we don't want YOU to lose access to all the wonderful national and local members-only benefits. Here's a reminder of your personal benefits, and the ways that HMA has improved the handbell world.

### National and Area Events

Learn about, and attend, events with like-minded handbell ringers, conductors, and composers. Participate in massed ringing and attend classes to learn about ways to improve your techniques and handbell musicianship. Meet composers and clinicians. Our instrument is unique in that most composers are living, and actively involved in the handbell world. They enjoy hanging out with ringers and conductors!

## Overtones National Magazine

Our national magazine includes how-to articles and insightful columns. I especially gravitate toward the practical content included in the “Tips & Tools” in the middle of each issue. For instance, I plan to find a time to use the reproducible pieces by Sandra Eithun, “Lockdown Blues” and “It is Well With My Soul” that were in the Spring 2020 issue. They each require only 12 bells, which is perfect for my church choir right now. Past issues are available on line, in case you can’t find your paper copy.

## Quavers Area 8 Newsletter

Our Area 8 newsletter *Quavers* includes many practical ideas, pandemic-time suggestions, and positive inspiration from local leaders as well as information about events that won’t require as long of a drive (outside of pandemic time). The September issue included bios of the newly elected board members, and I was able to get to know the leadership with whom I will work these next several years.

## National Websites and Email Blasts

The national website members-area only includes, among many resources, the member database to find other ringers and bell choirs in your area. This was described very completely by Illinois co-chair Kendall Ladd, at our first Fourth Friday Focus in January (yet another great resource!). All Area 8 members are eligible to receive national and area eblasts, informing us of upcoming events, new published music, and more!

## Area 8 and State Facebook Pages and Area 8 Website

Did you know that the Area and each state has its own Facebook page and website page? I found this very helpful this past December, when handbell choirs posted their virtual concerts and I was able to attend many, many concerts virtually.

So, take a little time, find your renewal notice, and renew your membership to Handbell Musicians of America. Area 8 wouldn’t be the same without you!

*If your church, school, or other organization is not in a position to renew its membership at this time, consider an individual membership. The cost averages out to about \$8 per month. Membership information can be found **HERE**.*



**STAY UP TO DATE WITH US!**

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### KANSAS CO-CHAIRS

Julie Assel, Janelle Flory Schrock

### MISSOURI CHAIR

Cheri Leigh

### NEBRASKA CHAIR

Nancy Youngman

Click here to visit the Area 8 website  
for contact information and bios.



## Schedule

March 26	Sampler Night
April 23	In-Depth Seminar (see below)
May 28	Sampler Night
June 25	In-Depth Seminar
July 23	Sampler Night
August 27	In-Depth Seminar

# Fourth Friday Focus!

Gather with handbell musicians to chat, learn, and ring at 7 p.m. on the fourth Friday night of the month in a virtual format alternating between Sampler Nights and In-Depth Seminars. Check the website for up-to-date information.

## March Sampler Night, March 26

Based on speed dating, these 90-minute sessions will offer short introductions to handbell topics such as techniques, history, top 10 lists, games, trivia quizzes, and more. Sampler Nights are free.

- Hope/Agape Virtual Repertoire Reading
- Acapella App
- Professor Bell and Clapper explore Ring-Touch and Thumb Damp
- Area 8 Chime Loan Program
- Beginning Bell Tree Solutions

## April In-Depth Seminar, April 23

### Solo and Ensemble Skills for These Times

*A nominal fee will be charged*

- Four-in-hand solutions for multiple bells
- Weaving
- Working with Fewer Ringers

*Visit the Area 8 web page to  
register now for both sessions!*

What topics would you like to see included in either format?  
Email your suggestions to [events.area8@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:events.area8@handbellmusicians.org).



Lori Fenton

Lori started ringing handbells over 35 years ago at her church. She currently rings with the Des Moines Concert Handbells as well as her church bell choir. She has participated in several national ringing events over the past 15+ years including the Bay View Week of Handbells, Distinctly Bronze East and West, and Virtuoso, an advanced ringing event sponsored by the Raleigh Ringers. She toured Italy with Desert Bells and attended the International Symposium in Vancouver in 2016.

Lori is a vocalist and sings with groups in Des Moines including the Des Moines Vocal Arts Ensemble, Des Moines Community Orchestra and her church choirs.

Lori serves as the Vice President for the Des Moines Concert Handbells and previously served as Treasurer and President for the Des Moines Vocal Arts Ensemble.

Her day job is as a Finance AVP with Global Atlantic Life & Annuity in Des Moines. In addition to handbells, she is addicted to all things Disney, wine, and cats.

# *For the Love of History!*

by Lori Fenton, Area 8 Treasurer

Did you know that Handbell Musicians of America has officially been in existence for close to 70 years? That's a lot of history!

If you watched our First Friday Focus offering, I spoke about those individuals in our Area who have received the Honorary Life Membership award. In pulling together that segment it hit me that there is a lot of handbell history in our Area, and maybe even on a National level, that has potentially been lost or soon could be. In an effort to begin to preserve what we can, the Board has two asks of our members:

1. Are you someone who has something you would like to share?

It could be stories, photographs, concert programs or other memorabilia. We are happy to help you document your stories in writing or via audio/video recording. And we're also happy to take any items off your hands that you think help tell the story of Area 8.

If there's someone you think we should directly reach out to who has something to share, let us know.

2. We are looking for someone to serve on the board as our Historian who can help steer this project. This would include helping to arrange the gathering of stories as well as serve as a

collection point for any physical items that are donated, along with items we already have. We are looking to digitize as much as we can so you would need to be able to handle that as well. We know this is potentially a big job so we would be happy to have more than one person step up. Of course, if you are good at delegating you can ask others to help you along the way.

Please reach out to Sharon Schmidt ([chair.area8@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:chair.area8@handbellmusicians.org)) or Lori Fenton ([treasurer.area8@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:treasurer.area8@handbellmusicians.org)) for more information about the Area 8 Historian position.

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*Did you know that Handbell Musicians of America has officially been in existence for close to 70 years? That's a lot of history!*

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# Why Yes, I HAVE Seen That Episode of New Girl

By Kendall Ladd, Central/Southern Illinois State Chair

It's happened to all of us. You are talking to a friend, family member, coworker, significant other, a random person on the street and you inevitably end up bringing up handbells (because what else would you want to talk about!?). And in a single moment of excitement, knowing that they have seen handbells other than at one of your amazing concerts, want to bring up the movie, television show, commercial, viral video, etc. to make sure you've seen it too. Now, chances are, you've probably already seen what they are referencing.

If you haven't yet, how exciting! I don't know about you, but I love seeing new handbell videos or seeing handbells referenced in non-handbell related media circles! Maybe you can share a few more with them that they haven't seen yet (including a few shameless plugs of you and/or your choir ringing).

If you have, and this feels like the millionth time someone has asked if you've seen a specific video, you may find yourself struggling how to politely share that you've seen it already. So, I'm here to provide you with a few polite responses when you find that you've run out of clever responses:

- I love that episode/video/commercial/etc.! I'm glad you discovered it too!
- I have seen that one, it's a classic!
- Oh my gosh, that's one of my favorites!
- It wouldn't be the holiday season without it (if applicable).
- Ugh, I know, but it's so sad that they messed with a classic (you know which one!).
- Oh no, I've never seen that one before (because sometimes it's fun to pretend like you are seeing something for the first time)!
- Yeah, that's a great one! Let me show you some other handbell videos that I love too.
- It's basically a requirement of being a handbell ringer to see that video (this is my personal go-to).

Or maybe you've crafted your own signature response that is better than all of those above combined. Either way, I always find myself elated that someone else has paid enough attention to my favorite musical art to take notice and pass the message along. Regardless of whether or not it's something I've already seen or heard of. I also like to take the opportunity to introduce them to other handbell related videos, facts, and choirs.



*Kendall Ladd*

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*Patrick Gagnon*

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# Gathering Again in Iowa

## By Patrick Gagnon, Iowa Chair

I look forward to the time when we can ring together; the time when we can occupy the same space as a full handbell ensemble; the time when we can gather with other FULL handbell ensembles and make great music under a great conductor here in Iowa. We are hopeful that we will be able to do this on Saturday, October 9, 2021 in Windsor Heights, Iowa, under the direction of Brenda Austin, director of the Detroit Handbell Ensemble, and handbell music editor with Hope/Agape Publications. On the next page, you can read her greeting and rehearsal notes for the repertoire we will ring at the 2021 Mid-Iowa Handbell Festival.

- HMA members - \$35 per ringer, HMA non-members \$40 per ringer
- Light breakfast and full lunch included!
- More information can be found here: <http://area8.handbellmusicians.org/iowa/iowa-events/>
- Register now! <https://forms.gle/3rrKccBRePn5aoHn8>

### Schedule

8:00 am	8:40	Arrival and set-up (& shopping)
8:40	9:00	Welcome and warm-up
9:00	10:15	Rehearsal with Brenda Austin
10:15	10:40	Morning break (& shopping)
10:40	12:00	Rehearsal with Brenda Austin
12:00 pm	1:00	Lunch (& shopping)
1:00	2:30	Rehearsal with Brenda Austin
2:30	3:00	Concert prep & Audience seating
3:00		Concert – Open to public Invite your family & friends!
4:00		Tear down and “good-byes”

# Conductor Notes, Mid-Iowa Handbell Festival



I am excited and thrilled to be joining you soon. It is truly special to come together with other handbell musicians and make beautiful music. Together, we will create something greater than ourselves. It is made all the more special as we have been without for so long. We will be overjoyed to come together and hear the bells play! I've put together some notes to aid you in your preparation. For comments that apply to a specific beat: m 37.3 stands for 'measure 37, beat 3'. mm 72-86.2 stands for 'measures 72 through beat 2 of measure 86'. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at [BrendaEAustin@gmail.com](mailto:BrendaEAustin@gmail.com).

## Ah Holy Jesus

Brenda Austin L3 Beckenhorst HB 580

- MM1-16 re-assign bells and chimes so that all notes are covered. (For example, the D5 and C5 chimes could be played by Position 2).
- M. 8 add LV to bass clef chimes
- M.15 add poco rit.
- M. 44.1 add R to stem-up treble and stem-down bass
- M. 50 add an R to Stem-up Treble. Stem-up treble should ring and damp mm.51-56.
- M. 59 add a fermata to beat 3.
- M. 61 add a fermata to beat 3.

## Carol of the Bells

Alex Guebert L3 Hope2929

Hang on to your horses, this song is going to be a fun ride!

- When you have a dotted quarter note, be sure they are square. Count 3 eighth notes.  
Example Bass clef M. 2
- Dynamics are HUGE in this piece. A couple of places to take note. M. 27 is p then we crescendo to F by M. 29. Similarly, M. 26 we are P, then crescendo to FF in M. 69
- M. 77 note that 3 octave choirs will play the top staff.
- M. 81 Holy Major, batman!!! Be ready with E Naturals!
- M. 81-87 double all up stemmed notes if you have a 4, 5, 6 or 7 octave choir. With the exception of M. 86 and 87, the C7 and the B-flat 6 are not doubled. M. 93 only 3 octave choirs play the stop staff.
- M. 109 FF on beat one, then instantly back down to a MF with a giant crescendo to the FFF final finish!

## Spirit Dance

Brenda Austin L2 Hope2901

- When rehearsing M. 1-12, clap/tap the rhythm off bells before ringing the rhythm. Notice, and point out, where the pattern changes at M. 13 M. 37 observe the accent marks
- M. 49 Notice dynamics. The chime part should be the loudest M. 50 & 53 the A4 Chime may be played by the B4-C5 ringer M. 77 Stems up treble do not LV
- M. 78 only the A6/A7 shake

## I've Got Peace Like a River

Sandra Eithun L2+ Hope2892

- She weaves the traditional canon "Dona Nobis Pacem" throughout. Find those places, and point them out to your ringers. (M. 23, M. 48)
- M. 44-45 add a big watch box to that ritardando
- M. 45 as ringers to turn their page early so we don't have a big "page turn" noise on the cesura (grand pause)
- M. 45.3 ALL EYES ON THE CONDUCTOR

## Inception

Jason Krug L2 Lorenz20/2020L

- M. 1-3 add a crescendo
- M. 4 add a decrescendo
- Repeat for M. 5-8, 9-12, 13-16, 17-20 and 42-45, 46-49, 50-53, 54-57
- M. 21-24 & M. 58-60 write in the crescendo marking
- M. 70 be sure to bring out the melody in the battery
- M. 112 observe the subito p in every part except G6/7
- M 123-125 Add a big watch box
- M. 45.3 ALL EYES ON THE CONDUCTOR



*Janelle Flory Schrock*



*Julie Assel*

**Kansas State Co-Chairs**

Julie Assel &  
Janelle Flory Schrock

**Treasurer**

Karla Denton

**Secretary**

OPEN - Contact  
Julie or Janelle

**Chimes**

Shirley Myers

# Welcome, Kansas Co-Chairs!

by Janelle Flory Schrock and Julie Assel, KS Co-Chairs

Greetings, Kansas ringers, from your new Kansas state co-chairs! We look forward to reaching out to you in the coming months - if you reside in Johnson, Wyandotte, or Douglas County, you will be hearing from Julie, and if you reside elsewhere in Kansas, you will be hearing from Janelle. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!

**Janelle Flory Schrock** began ringing handbells in 1989 at her home congregation, the McPherson Church of the Brethren. In 1994, she began ringing under the direction of past area chair and Kansas Malmark representative, Eunice Tarum, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in McPherson. Between 1996 and 2002, she travelled with the Spirit Ringers to four Area 8 festivals, one national festival and as an individual ringer to two Pinnacle events.

Since then, she has performed with handbell ensembles in Indianapolis, Indiana; Claremont/LaVerne, California; and Hannover, Germany. After returning to Kansas in 2012, she has taken every opportunity to network with other Central Kansas handbell musicians, and to attend and recruit others to attend the Area 8 festival and the Kansas City-based Resonate Advanced Ringing Workshop. She currently is a member of Angelus Ringers of the McPherson Church of the Brethren, and the brand new Prairie Bronze Handbell Ensemble of Newton, Kansas. She and her sister, Kendra Flory, have performed handbell duets across the United States, as well as in Germany and on the 2004 Christmas Eve CBS television broadcast.

Janelle holds a B.A. from McPherson College in Modern Languages: German, with minors in English and Music. She is office manager at the Dyck Arboretum of the Plains in Hesston, Kansas, a 30-acre native plant public garden.

**Julie Assel**, Kansas Co-Chair, was introduced to handbells when she was in elementary school. She attended her first handbell festival in Cape Girardeau when she was in high school and saw solo ringing for the first time. She incorporated solo ringing into her high school senior recital. Julie went on to earn her bachelor's degree in instrumental and choral music education from Luther College (Decorah, IA).

Julie joined the Adult Bell Choir at Atonement in 1999 and became its director in February, 2001. She currently directs three handbell choirs: Joy (adult small ensemble), Adoration Ringers (adults), and Youth Bells (grades 2-12). She holds level one certification from the Handbell Musicians of America.

In her "other" job, she is the President and CEO of Assel Grant Services, a professional grant services firm providing comprehensive grant support to nonprofits, universities, school districts, health systems, and behavioral health care center. Julie is married to her husband, Tom, who plays in Atonement's Adoration Ringers and has two active little boys whom she has already introduced to handbells and chimes. Julie lives in the Kansas City metropolitan area.





Cheri Leigh

**Missouri State Chair**

Cheri Leigh

**Past Chair**

Suanne Comfort

**Treasurer**

Suanne Comfort

**Membership**

Sherry Boland

**Chime Chair**

Christie White

# “I Can’t Read Music”

By Cheri Leigh, Missouri State Chair

How many times have you heard that as a director when you are looking for new ringers? What does that mean and how important is it in order to ring?

First there is a lot of music terminology: staves, clefs, meter, note value, dynamics, articulation, and the notes themselves. If you have grown up with music, you have learned it all gradually. A new ringer can’t learn it all in the first week, but it can all be learned. It is not a skill, it is just information.

Second, a new ringer isn’t going to play every note, but will start out with only two notes that are located in the same place on the staff every time. The ringer has to identify them and be willing to wait for their turn to be play. This can also be learned.

Which brings us to rhythm and timing and counting. I think this is harder to teach. This is why we have classes using Maori sticks, because rhythm is not natural for everyone. Those of

us who have sung in choirs or played an instrument can tap our toes and see the notes fall into place. A new musician may have to work on this. A singer or a keyboard musician may also have to work on this because they are used to singing or playing every note. There is

a lot of waiting and counting with handbells, which is more similar to an instrumentalist in a band or orchestra.

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*... the ability to read music ... helps, but it can all be learned gradually ...*

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Last is the kinesthetic action of striking the bell at the exact right time. Beyond reading music, it’s the whole integration of looking ahead to find one’s note, playing it at the right time, and finally moving the arm early enough to strike the bell on the beat. You know what I’m talking about. If it’s not there, it will take a lot of individual practice to learn to play on time and a lot of patience from the director.

So, does the ability to read music matter with handbells? It helps, but it can all be learned gradually. What really helps a new ringer join an existing choir is the ability to wait one’s turn and move with the rhythm of the piece. When that happens it’s beautiful.

# Handbells at Hastings College

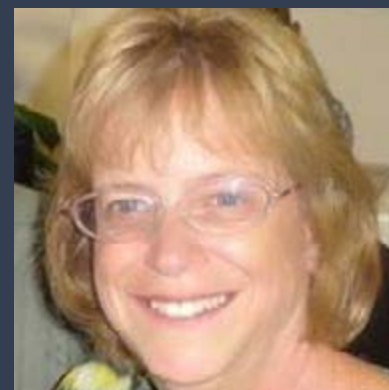
By Byron W. Jensen,

Director of Handbells at Hastings College

Handbells were introduced at Hastings College in August 2003 when Dr. Byron Jensen was appointed professor of music. Prior to that, Dr. Jensen was at Ottawa University (KS) where one of his responsibilities included the University Ringers. He writes, "When I came to Hastings College, I expected my handbell life to be with First Presbyterian Church (FPC) only. My department chair, Dr. Robin Koozer, asked if I would start handbells at the college, and the rest is history."

That first year, the Hastings College Handbell Choir (HCHC) played on Petit-Fritzen bells owned by FPC. These bells were certainly different compared to the Schulmerichs Dr. Jensen had at OU, but the ten players persevered—with only one bell casualty. Turns out you cannot martellato on P-F Bells. Before the end of that year, Dr. Jensen was asked to put a quote together for purchasing handbells; a list was drawn up, and in August 2004, HCHC received five octaves of Schulmerich handbells and chimes, along with other equipment. Since then, bells and chimes have been added to fill out the lower sixth octave.

HCHC has ventured on nearly a dozen tours, appeared in numerous churches, high schools, and retirement homes in three states, and commissioned original compositions from Kevin McChesney, Jason Krug, Brian Childers, and Brenda Austin. Dr. Jensen and one of his former students have also penned some original music. HCHC was invited to perform in 2009 and 2014 at the Nebraska Music Educators Conference



*Nancy Youngman*

## Nebraska State Chair

Nancy Youngman

## Registrar

Linda Ashley

## Scholarship Committee

Janet Chiocchi

## Secretary

Byron Jensen

## Members

Michael Allen

Jessica Kite

Deann Nicolaus

Brian Lew

Angela Wright

Jonathan Rippe



Hastings College Handbell Choir (2018)

(the latter included a presentation on handbells in education). Because Dr. Jensen also conducts the Hastings Symphony Orchestra, the HCHC has been a frequent guest for the December Holiday Concerts. For a non-auditioned group with few student having previous ringing experience, HCHC has been a worthy ambassador for handbells and Hastings College.

Byron W. Jensen



Dr. Byron Jensen, Distinguished Professor in Music at Hastings College, teaches courses in music education, theory, history, directs the strings studio, and conducts the Hastings College Handbell Choir—a group he founded in 2003. Dr. Jensen was appointed conductor/artistic director of the Hastings Symphony Orchestra in May 2004 where he oversees extensive operations of that organization that is now into their ninety-fifth season. He plays bass with the HC Faculty Jazz Quartet, and he conducts two handbell choirs at the First Presbyterian Church.

With degrees from the University of Northern Colorado and Kansas State University, Dr. Jensen has conducted and programmed all manner of music from kindergarten age to professional ensembles. His teaching career began at Banner County Schools in Harrisburg, Nebraska, followed by thirteen years at Ottawa University (Kansas) before coming to Hastings College. He has conducted or performed in hundreds of concerts over a forty-one year span, including nearly one hundred concerts with the HSO.

Among several additional memberships and awards, Dr. Jensen is a member of the Handbell Musicians of America (Nebraska board member) and an honorary member of Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity (Xi Alpha Chapter), and a “Friend of the Arts” through Sigma Alpha Iota Fraternity (Eta Nu Chapter)—both at Hastings College.

*Are you or someone you know looking for a college that has handbells? Click here for a list of college handbell programs found on the national Handbell Musicians website.*

Registration is now open for National Seminar!  
July 13-17, 2021, Glendale-Phoenix, Arizona



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Visit the  
National  
Website  
for more  
information.



# Upcoming Area 8 Events

Please check websites for updated information. Due to social distancing and COVID-19 requirements, events may be cancelled after this newsletter is distributed.

## Area 8 Fourth Friday Events

To register, visit [area8.handbellmusicians.org](http://area8.handbellmusicians.org)

Friday, March 26, 2021

Area 8 Fourth Friday Sampler

Friday, April 23, 2021

Area 8 Fourth Friday Seminar: Solo and Ensemble Skills for These Times

Friday, May 28, 2021

Area 8 Fourth Friday Sampler

Friday, June 25, 2021

Area 8 Fourth Friday Seminar: Topic TBD

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## May 2021

Sunday, May 2, 2021

4:00 pm Pop! Bells in Motion Virtual Concert. Visit [bellsinmotion.org](http://bellsinmotion.org) for more info

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## July 2021

Thursday, July 10, 2021 - Monday, July 17, 2021

Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar: Glendale, Arizona

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## October 2021

Friday, October 8, 2021

6:00 pm Beer, Wine, and Bells: Des Moines, IA

Saturday, October 9, 2021

8:00 am 2021 Mid-Iowa Handbell Festival: Windsor Heights, IA

**Does your choir or ensemble have an upcoming concert or handbell event?** Area 8 can help you publicize your event. When the forms found on the Area 8 website event page (found here) are filled out, the event is posted on the Area 8 website, Quavers, monthly e-blasts, and Facebook posts.

## Handbell Happy Hour

Sponsored by Handbell Musicians of America

Looking for a fun way to help ease self-quarantine and social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic? Join us for a casual, virtual chat with your handbell friends.

**Join the Chat!** Each chat will be hosted by a member of the national staff or board of directors. Use this time to check in with each other, share ideas for staying musically connected, and discuss your love for all things handbell. No need to pre-register, just follow this link (<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1482015406>).

So grab your favorite snack and beverage and join us for an hour online!

Check the HMA website [HERE](#) for dates and topics.

## Publishing in Quavers

6 publications per year, published in odd months.

## Articles

Articles are due on the 10th day of even months.

## Advertising

Click here for more details about advertising in *Quavers*. 6 ads for the price of 5! Run 5 identical ads in 5 successive *Quavers* and get the 6th ad free.

## Events & Concerts

must be submitted by the 25th of even months to be included in *Quavers*. To submit a concert or event for inclusion, click here or go to the A8 Website, Events page.

## Questions?

Please send all questions and comments about this and future *Quavers* publications to Beth Ann Edwards, Editor: [newslettereditor.area8@handbellmusicians.org](mailto:newslettereditor.area8@handbellmusicians.org)

*Find the most up-to-date calendar and details about events on the A8 website.*