



Making Music and Memories

by Sharon Schmidt, Area 8 Chair

After over a year of planning and nail-biting, the 2022 Area 8 Festival happened! Based on the feedback we received, handbell musicians were thrilled to make music and be in community. Kudos to the 2020 planning team led by then-Chair Beth Ann Edwards that outlined the new format and selected the clinicians – you’ll see praise for their efforts in the comments below.

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- Both of these clinicians are fantastic. Pleasant, encouraging, clear in expressing what they were looking for.
- Alex and John are both wonderful!
- I like the level of activity. I like the current length. Longer would be hard if it was as full as this one
- This was my first time. I thought it was a great event. Wouldn’t eliminate anything.
- Two days seems right for my first time. Lots of walking and standing.
- Like the mix of concerts, classes, rehearsals. Like the two day time frame. Like the provided lunch.
- Directors rock
- Wonderful clinicians! So positive
- Both directors were amazing, engaging, easy to follow and knowledgeable
- Ran smoothly
- Loved the personalized agenda/schedule in my booklet
- The whole event was great fun. Thanks!
- Really liked timing of sessions. Did not seem rushed.
- Spacing of sessions in schedule was one if not the best for any conference I have ever attended. Bravo!
- Really like both conductors! Especially like Alex – great encouraging demeanor.

- Loved the personalized printed schedule! Was wonderful!
- Loved silent auction and wine toss
- These were great clinicians. Two days is enough. I enjoyed the weekend, but found it tiring. And I'm an active person, not ancient.
- Both clinicians were great and had very positive and helpful rehearsal techniques. We made big improvements with the music in 2 days
- This conference was great. I had a great learning time. Everything was wonderful.
- Thank you, thank you!
- 2 days and set up day was ample time.
- I liked the shorter 2+ day schedule this year

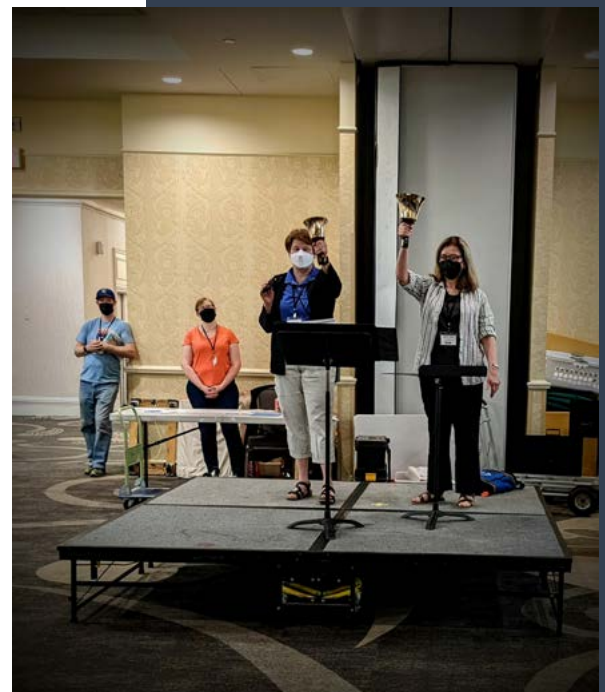
(Yes, I confess that I was selective. One thing you learn in event planning is that you can't please everyone, and some things are out of your control. We will carefully review all the comments and make them available to future event planners.)

I can't thank the Area 8 board enough – they worked steadily and cheerfully from Wednesday night through Sunday accomplishing a myriad of tasks. There was always someone willing to step up when a need arose. In particular, our local folks – Trey Bures, Julie Assel, & Sara Washington - accomplished the enormous task of finding and transporting the bells, tables, foam, chimes, music stands, and keyboards for the classrooms and massed ringing. In multiple trips, they moved:

- 9 3-octave sets of bells
- 8 5-octave sets of bells
- 7 3-octave sets of chimes
- 5 5-octave sets of chimes
- 40 music stands and 2 carts
- 40 tables (6' & 8')
- Bell tree stands
- Director's platform

Yes, a festival is a lot of work! But the smiles and comments from the handbell musicians made it all worth it!

On another note, it's hard to believe that my two-year term as Area 8 chair will end in October. I look forward to serving as past chair, working with Chris and the 2022-2024 board on future events, the expansion of our chime program, the Festival Scholarship, and reaching out to you, our members.



Greetings From Your New Historian

Or, I Need Your Help!

By Laurie Austin

There are some times in life where your worlds collide in the most delightful way. This is one of them. When my friend and Rezound! colleague, Sara Washington, asked whether I would be interested in the historian role for Area 8, it didn't take very long for me to respond with a resounding yes. I am a certified history geek—I have my master's in it, for goodness sake—and just try to keep me away from playing handbells. Combining the two is pretty much a no-brainer for me.

In daily life, I am the audiovisual archivist at the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library and Museum in Independence, MO. I work with historic photographs, sound recordings, and moving images, helping to preserve them and make them available to anyone who wants them. I've been doing this kind of work for 18 years.

I have been ringing handbells even longer, though. Starting in 1996, I had the audacity that only comes with complete ignorance to audition for a group when I hadn't ever played bells before, and I've been ringing ever since. I've spent time in a college group, a church choir, and three community groups along the way. I love sharing our art form with people who have never heard it before!

So you can see why I jumped at the chance to be your historian. But I need your help, because there is one qualification for which I'm lacking: I haven't lived in Area 8 very long, and I don't know very many of you or what goes on in your corners of the country. I moved here in 2018 from Area 1, where I rang with the Back Bay Ringers in Boston. I'm pretty familiar with Boston's contributions to handbell history, but now I need to know what we're all about here in the heart of the country.

So I'm asking (begging?) for your help! Please introduce yourself to me, virtually or in-person if you're ever at a Rezound! event. Over the coming months and years, feel free to send me a history of your group's involvement in the handbell world. Do you have photos of people who were instrumental in starting your program? Do you have a special piece of music you've commissioned as part of your history? Do you have a pretty cool story to tell about a remarkable performance you've given? Have you launched the handbell careers of others? I am interested in both the depth and the breadth of our activities.

And finally, I would like to ask you—what do you want your historian to focus on? What projects do you think are important to document Area 8's past, and the history we are creating every day? Please reach out with your suggestions—I'd love to start a conversation with you about where we go from here.

*More immediately,
I would love
to collect your
photographs from
the Area 8 Festival
you just attended
in Kansas City.
Unfortunately I
was unable to make
it to the festival
to photograph it
myself, so I would
be grateful if you
shared some of
yours with me.
Please email me at
historian.area8@
handbellmusicians.
org with your
photos and
descriptions of
the people and/or
events they portray.*

Congratulations to Newly Elected Executive Committee Members

Lori Fenton, Chair Elect



Lori Fenton has been ringing handbells for almost 40 years and currently rings with the Des Moines Concert Handbells. She has participated in several national ringing events including the Bay View

Week of Handbells, Distinctly Bronze East and West and Virtuoso. She toured Italy with Desert Bells in 2008 and attended the International Symposium in Vancouver in 2016.

Lori is also a vocalist and sings with the Des Moines Vocal Arts Ensemble and serves as an Alto section leader with her church choir.

Lori is completing her second term as the Area 8 Treasurer. She also serves as the Vice President for the Des Moines Concert Handbells and Treasurer of the Des Moines Vocal Arts Ensemble. Lori is actively engaged with United Way of Central Iowa's Women United, currently serving as the Campaign Chair.

Her day job is as a Finance AVP with Global Atlantic Financial Group in Des Moines. In addition to handbells, her interests include traveling, reading and listening to podcasts.

Sara Washington, Secretary



Sara Washington has been involved with handbells for 47 years and has acquired many bell friends from all over the country while ringing and directing numerous choirs in Kansas, Indiana, Oklahoma, Texas, Colorado, Iowa, Georgia and Missouri.

Sara is a past AGEHR Area VIII Board Member having served as Secretary from 2000-2004 and 2020 to present. She currently is ringing with Rezound! Handbell Ensemble and directing at Platte Woods Church in Kansas City. Besides ringing, Sara enjoys spending time with her extended family and doting on her new grandbaby.

Tamara Kofran, Treasurer



I am a life-long resident of Cedar Falls, Iowa, except for a brief few years when I lived in North Carolina. I graduated from the University of Northern Iowa in 1984 with a BA in Administrative Management. I am

the Business Manager for Modern Builders, Inc. in Janesville, Iowa, and have been employed there for over thirty years.

I started ringing handbells around 1990 with my home church and have been hooked ever since. I've been solo ringing since about 1995 and have had the privilege of duet ringing with Carolyn Jensen (also from Cedar Falls) since about 2008. In addition to the solo and duet ringing, I'm a member of the handbell choir at St. John Lutheran Church here in Cedar Falls. I currently direct the handbell choir at my home church, First Christian Disciples of Christ.

In addition to attending various local bell events and our Area 8 handbell festivals, I've participated in several national events such as HMA National Seminar, Distinctly Bronze East and West, and SEE (Solo and Ensemble Extravaganza).

2022 Festival Education Report By the Numbers

Patrick Gagnon, Education Chair, Area 8

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.

Our 2022 Festival/Conference in Kansas City featured all of the following:

- 13 teachers
- 46 class sessions
- 6 classrooms
- 7 repertoire reading sessions which featured
- 81 pieces of handbell music

Festival registrants will receive a link to class handouts from each session as well a link to each piece of music that was featured in a reading session

I owe a huge debt to Carol Scheel from Heitz Handbell Services for providing all of the music for our repertoire reading sessions. The numbers above are actually short because there was one additional music packet that did not arrive.

Thank you to Sara Washington for contributing materials for the Advent/Christmas Level 3-6 reading session.

My favorite class is pictured below. This is the Friday night Unpublished Music Reading Session and this year we featured four original pieces by our incoming Area 8 Chair, Chris Peck who conducted the session.

Thank you for meeting me in Kansas City!



Festival Concerts

Area 8 Festival 2022

Kansas City, Missouri



Tami Kofran: Awesome soloist! Wonderful



Columbia Handbell Ensemble: Fun, entertaining, excellent



BronzeFest: The best of the best! Delightful



Lawrence Community Handbell Choir: Wow! Just wow!

Massed Ringing and More! Area 8 Festival 2022, Kansas City, Missouri



Festival Attendance Highlights

Chicago Area (Illinois) Chair

It was fantastic to return to an in-person handbell festival once more this summer! This was my first festival as a fully behind-the-scenes individual and I had a blast. If you get the chance to get involved in organizing a workshop or festival in the future, I highly recommend it.

Being on the festival committee gave me a greater appreciation of all of the hard work that goes into a successful event. While committee members each had an event “specialty” (equipment, registration, vendors, etc.) we worked as a team to make sure everyone was able to accomplish their goals. I also got to know people from across the Area and make some new friends!

I took some notes of things I want to remember for the next festival. Perhaps you’ll find some of my notes helpful:

- Pack for all climates (i.e. layers, gloves, poncho, umbrella, rain boots). It always seems that one room is imitating the Sahara while the next is doing its best Arctic impression. And don’t forget rain! Loading equipment in the rain is always a possibility, and you never know when the air conditioning is going to cause a light sprinkle or the room above yours is going to spring a leak.
- Wear sturdy shoes when loading equipment – I had far too many “going up a ramp pushing a heavy cart in flip-flops” situations for my toes’ nerves. One toe in particular is holding a grudge for the table I dropped on it.
- Bring a trash bag for the car! A group of eight of us drove from the Chicago-area of Illinois to the festival in Kansas City and we forgot to bring a trash bag. Luckily, we were picking up one of our passengers on the way and she was able to help us out.
- Carts. We always need more carts. And equipment that comes with its own wheels!
- Somehow there is never enough toilet paper when and where it is needed, maybe someone can sponsor a roll of toilet paper in the festival bag? Perhaps paired with hand sanitizer or wet-wipes...hmmm...
- One can never have enough office supplies. Pens, pencils, note pads, tape, paperclips, highlighters, ring reinforcements, erasers, and don’t forget a pencil sharpener!

My list is making me excited for the next festival so I can have more memorable experiences with some of the best people around, bell people!



Kirsten Hendrickson

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](#).

New Chime Program!

Nancy Youngman, Nebraska Chair

For years, the Handbell Musicians of America Guild has had a Chime Loan program in place to loan a 3-octave set of Malmark chimes to schools, either private or public, for their use. Area 8 has a very active program with new sets of chimes in every state. Once a school borrows the chimes for the semester, they also receive a year's subscription to HMA, plus the option of buying the chimes at a reduced price at the end of the loan period. Each state also furnishes music and ideas for the teacher using the chimes. Please contact your state representative if you are interested in this program. NOW is the time to get in your application for the coming school year!! Go to the Handbell Musicians of America Area 8 site and click on Resources. There you will find the Chime Loan program and how to contact your state representative found on the site.

BUT---some exciting news!! Many churches, community handbell choirs, and individual members have asked to borrow the chimes. But, the contract with Malmark is that they will only be loaned to schools, because the ultimate goal of the program is to get chimes and/or handbells as a regular part of a school's curriculum. Area 8 now has 2 additional sets of chimes---a 3-octave Malmark set and a 4-octave Suzuki set-- for loan to non-school requests. We have decided that the loan period will be in 3 sections---January – April (think spring concerts or Easter!), May – August (maybe Bible School or camps!), and September – December (fall concerts, and Christmas, of course!) Any group in Area 8 may request the chimes for one of these time periods. Proof of insurance will need to be furnished, but other than that, the sky is the limit on the uses for these chimes. Soon, application forms and insurance forms will also be available on the Area website. Please watch for this exciting new opportunity, or contact me, Nancy Youngman, at chimes.area8@handbellmusicians.org



Nancy Youngman

State Chimes Representatives

Illinois

[Patti Mangis](#)

Iowa

[Patrick Gagnon](#)

Kansas

[Marci Milus](#)

Missouri

[Christie White](#)

Nebraska

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Patrick Gagnon

Registration for the Mid-Iowa Handbell Festival is now open. To register, and for more information, please visit the [Iowa page](#) on the Area 8 website.

Brenda Austin, Clinician

**Friday, October 21
Beer, Wine and Bells
reading session,
Urbandale Community
Room (\$10 per person,
or \$5 with Festival
registration)**

**October 22, 2022
Handbell Festival
Windsor Heights
Lutheran Church
(\$30 HMA members, \$40
nonmembers)**

**Visit [here](#) for a
downloadable PDF.**

The Handbell “Anns” from Sioux City, Iowa

Patrick Gagnon, Iowa Chair

Ann Cowles won the auction to ring the bell that would close the 2022 Handbell Musicians of America, Area 8 Festival/Conference.

Ann Lohry-Smith died suddenly and tragically on June 2, 2022, leaving vibrant handbell communities in Des Moines and Sioux City who loved her dearly.

One Ann filled with joy, and one Ann’s memory filled with sorrow; both sharing a name, a city, and a unique instrument that brings people together.

Both brought joy and passion to their involvement in Area 8 Handbell Festivals. Both will be remembered for years by all that knew them and all that were touched by their love for handbells.

In the end, Ann Cowles participated in the ceremony that would announce our next biennial gathering in the city of “somewhere.”

In the end, Ann Lohry-Smith’s legacy will be paid forward in a new piece of handbell music, commissioned in her honor by Des Moines Concert Handbells. The piece will embody her joyous, passionate, irreverent spirit, and will live on into 2024 and beyond.

In the end, Ann Cowles was not enough - it took TWO ringers to close the festival - she rang with our incoming Chair, Chris Peck, and TOGETHER they completed the task - closing the 2022 festival so that the 2024 event could open “Somewhere, Over the Rainbow.”

That is, after all, our mission - to UNITE people in a musical art.

I feel that the Sioux City “Ann’s” did just that.



Ann Lohry-Smith 1979-2022



Janelle Flory-Schrock

I'd like to extend an extra big thank you to those who donated items for the silent auction and bottles of wine for the wine pull. You made the success of this fundraiser possible!

Anne Cowley

Assel Grant Services

Austin Custom Brass

Beth Ann Edwards

Chris Peck

Harry S. Truman Library

Hillary Marotta

HMA Iowa State Committee

Janelle Flory Schrock

Kath Wissinger

Kendra Flory

Linda Ashley

Pat Latshaw

Portraits by Christopher

Rezound! Handbell Ensemble

Ron Mallory

Sharon Schmidt

Third Bell on the Right

Tom and Julie Assel

Wing & Weft Gloves

Funding the Future of Handbell Festivals

Janelle Flory Schrock, Kansas State Co-Chair

When I attended my first Area 8 handbell festival back in 1996 in Omaha, our high school handbell choir had to do some serious fundraising to get our 14 ringers plus chaperons registered, transported, housed and fed for the weekend. But it was ok, because in those days the handbell program at Trinity Lutheran Church in McPherson, Kansas, enjoyed the support of multiple annual benefit concerts dedicated to its growth and continuity. It was a challenge, and we worked hard to make it happen, but the momentum was there.

Considering all of the competing demands on our time and attention now (point of reference: 1996 was also the year I got my first email account, which I accessed via dial-up!), plus the challenges of gathering in person in a post-COVID world, we all know too well why festival attendance isn't what it once was. Which is why the Area 8 board decided it was time to start a festival scholarship fund, to help add a little bit of momentum and support to those who might need it.

Thanks to your generosity and enthusiasm while we gathered in Kansas City, we were able to blow past our original goal of \$1,000. We raised \$1,869 via the first ever Area 8 Festival Silent Auction PLUS just over \$500 from the "Ring a Bell" Wine Pull. That means we now have a solid start of \$2,374 in our scholarship fund for future festival would-be attendees. We look forward to sharing more about how to apply for scholarship funds in 2023!

If you have feedback or suggestions for future silent auctions or other fundraisers, please feel free to reach out to your state chair or any member of the Area 8 board.



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Karla Denton

Secretary

OPEN - Contact
Julie or Janelle

Chimes

Marci Milus

Does Your School Qualify?

Area 8 offers a handchime loan program to schools in its five-state jurisdiction of Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska. *Qualifying schools will receive:*

- 3-octave set of handchimes for one semester (approx. 4 months) with teaching materials
- support network and/or mentor
- one-year membership to Handbell Musicians of America.

To check availability of handchimes for loan or to submit an application, please contact Nancy Youngman, Area 8 Chimes Chair.

To learn more about the Chime Loan Program, visit the [Area 8 website](#).

A video featuring Nancy Youngman describes in detail the Area 8 chime loan program and can be found [here](#).

Upcoming Area 8 Events

September 2022

September 18, 2022

4:00 pm The Agape Ringers Concert
Oswego Presbyterian Church, Oswego, Illinois

October 2022

October 2, 2022

4:00 pm The Agape Ringers Concert
Our Savior's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Naperville, Illinois

October 16, 2022

4:00 pm Gateway Ringers Fall Concert
Concord Trinity UMC, St. Louis, Missouri

October 21, 2022

6:00 pm Beer + Wine + Bells Reading Session with Brenda Austin
Urbandale Community Room

October 22, 2022

8:00 am Mid-Iowa Handbell Festival with Brenda Austin, Clinician
Windsor Heights Lutheran Church, Windsor Heights, Iowa

October 30, 2022

3:00 pm Gateway Ringers Fall Concert
St. Paul UCC, Waterloo, Illinois

November 2022

November 6, 2022

4:00 pm Gateway Ringers Fall Concert
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Ballwin, Missouri

December 2022

December 16, 2022

7:00 pm Des Moines Concert Handbells 2022 Winter Concert
St. John's Lutheran Church, Des Moines, Iowa

December 17, 2022

7:00 pm Des Moines Concert Handbells 2022 Winter Concert
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Urbandale, Iowa

Publishing in Quavers

4 publications per year,
published once each season.

Articles

Articles are due on the
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July, and October.

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Events & Concerts

must be submitted by the
25th of January, April, July,
and October 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

*Find the most up-to-date
calendar and details
about events on the
[A8 website](#).*

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calendar and details about events
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Please check websites for
updated calendar and event
information.

Due to social distancing and
COVID-19 requirements,
events may be cancelled after
this newsletter is distributed.