

Quavers

Fall 2026

Handbell Musicians
OF AMERICA
Area 8

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Meet your new Area 8 Chair

by Nancy Blackwell



Hello, Area 8!

It is an honor to introduce myself as your new Area Chair. I look forward to serving this talented and welcoming community and helping Area 8 continue to grow.

For those who don't know me, let me share a few fun facts:



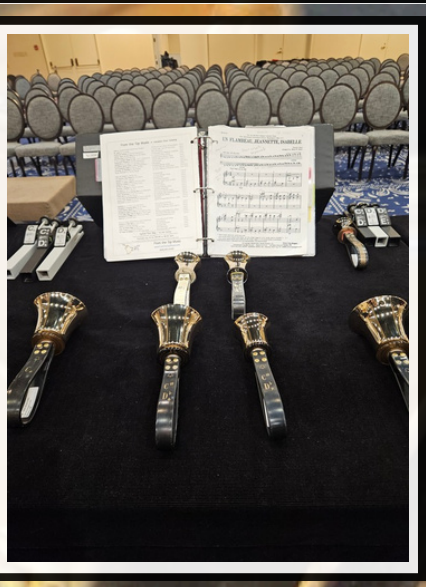
- I was born and raised on a farm near Grand Island, Nebraska.
- I am married to a retired Air Force member, and our family has lived in several states. We raised two children, and I am now enjoying the very special role of being a grandmother to one grandson.
- And then there are bells! I have been ringing handbells for nearly 30 years and currently ring with River City Ringers of Omaha and Thanksgiving Church in Bellevue, Nebraska. Handbells have brought wonderful people, experiences, and friendships into my life.



A Change in Plans for the 2028 Festival

by Nancy Blackwell





I also want to provide an update regarding an announcement made at the La Vista festival about our next Area 8 Handbell Festival.

At the 2026 festival, we announced Cedar Falls as the location for the 2028 festival. Although we had identified a prospective venue, the contract had not yet been signed. During final planning, we determined that the available space would not adequately accommodate the festival, so the board chose to pursue a venue better suited to our needs.

I take responsibility for this misstep. We should have finalized the venue and contract before making the announcement, and I apologize for the confusion caused by the change. I appreciate everyone's patience as I continue learning the festival-planning process.

And Now, Some Good News!
I am delighted to announce that the venue and dates for the 2028 Area 8 Handbell Festival are now confirmed!

2028 Area 8 Handbell Festival
DoubleTree by Hilton Cedar Rapids Convention Complex
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
June 28–July 1, 2028

The Cedar Rapids venue provides the rehearsal, performance, gathering, classroom, and lodging space needed to support a successful festival experience. Cedar Rapids is approximately one hour south of Cedar Falls and offers convenient regional access.

Although the location and dates have changed, our goal remains the same: to bring Area 8 ringers together for great music, learning, fellowship, and a memorable festival experience.

And a Final Thank You ...

by Nancy Blackwell

In November, incoming and outgoing board members will meet to review the 2026 festival, discuss upcoming events, and ensure continuity as the new leadership team begins its work.

Thank You to Our Area 8 Board
As I close, I want to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to our outgoing board members. Each has made a meaningful contribution to handbell ringing locally and throughout Area 8. Their time, energy, and commitment have helped shape the welcoming handbell community we enjoy today.

I also warmly welcome our new board members and thank those who have agreed to continue serving in new positions. I am looking forward to all that we will accomplish together! As we begin this next chapter, I hope we will continue strengthening connections across Area 8. I look forward to seeing many of you ringing soon!









Meet Your Chair Elect

by John Klopp



Greetings!
I am excited to serve as the incoming Chair-Elect for Area 8. We have a very active group, and I hope we can continue building on that momentum in the coming years.

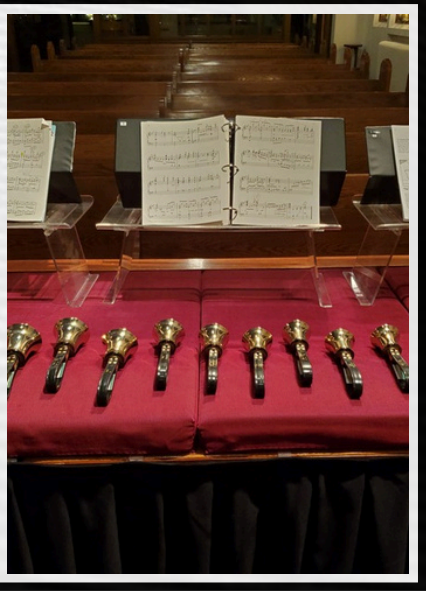
One of the main duties of the Chair-Elect is to organize and plan the biannual Area 8 Handbell Festival. I hope to begin preliminary work on the 2030 festival soon, so please feel free to email me with any thoughts, suggestions, or ideas.

Our previous Chair-Elect, now Chair, Nancy, worked hard during her term to plan the upcoming 2028 festival. It promises to be an amazing opportunity for members to ring, learn, and grow together.



In addition to planning for future festivals, I hope to focus on increasing Area 8 membership and participation. There are many bell choirs that are not currently members. Those of us who participate in HMA and Area 8 events know how valuable these experiences can be, both in helping us grow as musicians and in strengthening our groups through fellowship and musical development.

If you know of individuals or groups in your area who are not part of HMA, I encourage you to reach out and share the benefits of membership. Please be sure to let your leadership team know as well so that we can connect with them and extend an invitation.



Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve Area 8. I look forward to reconnecting with those I have already had the privilege of meeting and to getting to know many others across our area.

John Klopp
chairelect.area8@handbellmusicians.org

Meet the New Nebraska Chair

by Christopher Boilesen



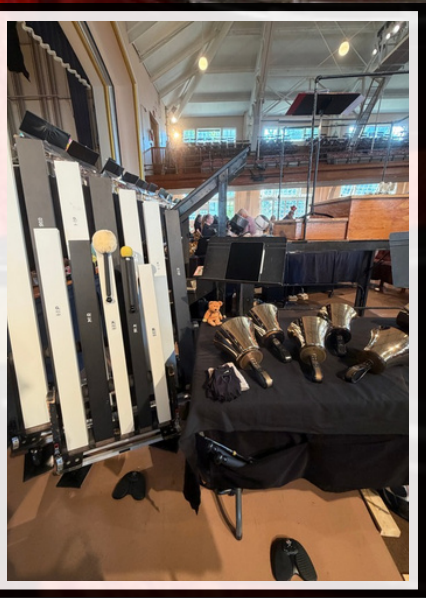
Greetings! I am Christopher Boilesen, and I am honored to be the new Chair of the Nebraska State Committee. My journey into handbells began over 41 years ago.

I picked up my first handbell in 1985, when I was in 5th grade. I was hooked from the start. By the 8th grade I was ringing with the "adults" in the Plymouth Ringers, the advanced ensemble at our church. I have now had the privilege of directing the Plymouth Ringers and the other ensembles at First-Plymouth in Lincoln, NE, for the last 10 years. Over the past few years we have worked to build our children's music ministry which now includes opportunities for all children K-12 to ring handbells or chimes.



Handbells have truly been a family affair for me. A year after I began ringing, both of my parents started ringing. Currently the Plymouth Ringers include my wife, Deanne, my parents, Jane and Gene, my son Aaron and my daughter Kathryn. Another of my daughters, Kieran, rings for the Smithtonians in Denver, CO.

This summer I attended the Bay View Week of Handbells for the 22nd time, an event that is near and dear to my heart, and has become our yearly family vacation.



When not ringing or directing handbells, I work as a Network Engineer for Lincoln Public Schools and enjoy going for walks and runs with our two year old German Shepherd, Loki. (Who does NOT ring handbells)

Meet the New Nebraska Chair

by Christopher Boilesen

I look forward to working with the experienced Nebraska State Committee to elevate the art of handbell ringing across the state and to serve the ringers and directors of Nebraska. We look forward to hosting the Nebraska Spring Ring in April of 2027, welcoming Brenda Austin as our clinician.









Meet our New Editor

by Lori Fenton (Past Chair)



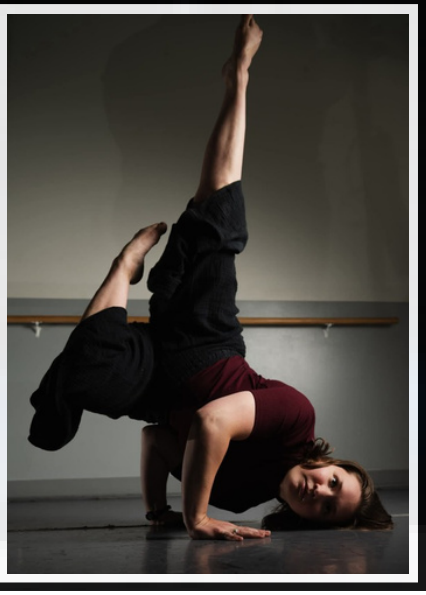
After many years of faithful service to the Area 8 Board, Beth Ann Edwards has decided to step down from her most recent role as the Quavers Editor. Prior to her time as Editor, she served as Chair Elect, Chair and Past Chair from 2016-2022. With a background in art and graphic design, Beth Ann also helped design the logo for the Area 8 Festival as well as the festival program book for many years. The current Area 8 Board would like to deeply thank Beth Ann both for her leadership and the contribution of her talents to Area 8.



With Beth Ann's departure, we are excited to welcome Amanda Myroniuk to the position, with this issue being her first as Editor. Amanda shared the following with Area leadership earlier this fall:

I grew up in Apple Valley, Minnesota. My two biggest passions have always been music and dance. I come from a family of musicians, and from a young age I was able to take piano lessons, play the trumpet through school and private lessons, and play handbells at my home church while also dancing at a private studio. I was fortunate enough to be able to continue to ring handbells in college with the St. Olaf Handbell Choir. While there, I also received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance and English.

After graduating in 2019, I moved to Omaha for a year of service with the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, and I was assigned to Nelson Mandela Elementary School. I still work at the school today as the Family and Community Engagement Specialist. Outside of work, my fiancée Emma and I enjoy exploring the outdoors and camping. I ring at Trinity Lutheran Church and with the River City Ringers of Omaha. I also take numerous dance classes and perform with the Moving Company at the University of Nebraska Omaha and other dance organizations around Omaha.



If you have any ideas for a future issue of Quavers, you can reach Amanda at newslettereditor.area8@handbellmusicians.org.

HMA Membership Benefits

HMA Group Membership (Choir, school, community ensemble, or similar organization)

$95 annually or $9 per month
Benefits:

- Members-only rates for Handbell Musicians of America National and Area events
- Reduced rates for your handbell/handchime choirs to attend HMA events
- Opportunity for the primary contact of your company to participate in HMA National's Distinctly Bronze and Master Series programs
- One vote in Area and National elections
- Subscription to Overtones (HMA quarterly journal)
- Scholarship and grant opportunities
- Online musical, educational, and administrative resources
- Chime loan programs
- Opportunity to have an event Endorsed by HMA
- Access to membership mailing lists
- Health insurance plans available through Lighthouse Insurance Group
- Post job openings on HMA website
- Opportunity to have leadership roles on State, Area, and National boards
- Option to add Sub-Members (additional fee applies)



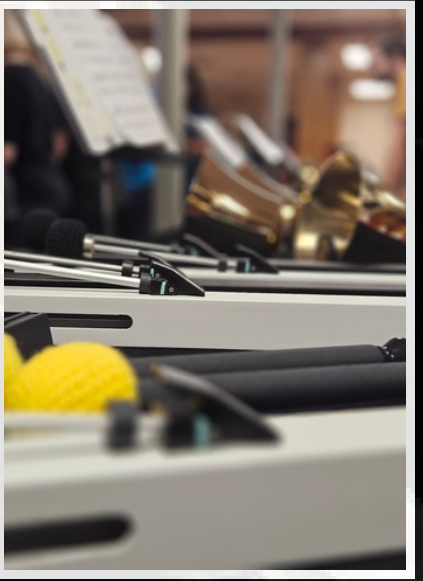


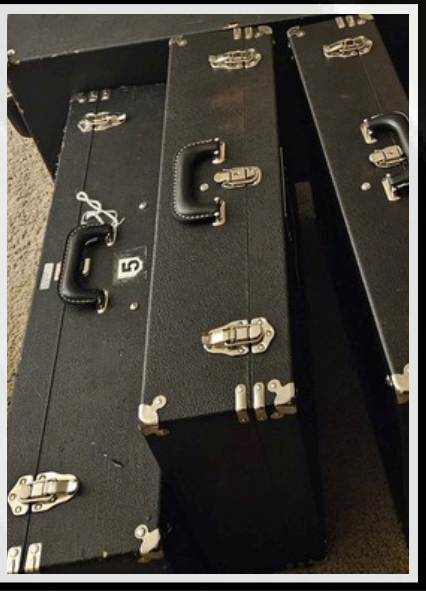


Ringing Out the Good News!

by Darryl Guzman, Activities Assistant Cedar Lake Village, Olathe, Kansas







In the Fall of 2025, the Chimes Choir of Cedar Lake Village Senior Retirement in Olathe, Kansas had the pleasure of adding several new chime ringers. But what to do about additional chimes for additional ringers? Never fear – Area 8 Handchimes to the rescue! After some frantic internet searches, I very fortunately stumbled across the Handchimes Loan Program in our area and got connected with a very sweet and helpful Nancy Youngman. We were approved for the Loan Program and within weeks (days maybe?), I had the loaner 2 octave set delivered cheerfully by Nancy Youngman and her husband. Honestly, the whole process couldn't have been easier! Nancy wants to keep people ringing!

We used the loaner chimes in two concerts; a Christmas concert and a July patriotic concert. Here are the titles we played:

Christmas Concert "Ring Out Good News!"
Processional and Bell Chime by Margaret Tucker, *Processional on Good King Wenceslas* arranged by Linda Lamb, *The Friendly Beasts* by Sandra Eithun, *Little Lord Jesus* setting by Ron Mallory, *Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine Traditional German Carol* arranged by Anna Laura Page, and *Frosty the Snowman* arranged by Tammy Waldrop

July Concert "Patriotic Prelude"
March Royale arranged by Linda Scholes, *Shenandoah American Shantey* arranged by Bill Ingram, *Largo* from "The New World" by Antonin Dvorak, arranged by Dave Howland, *Many and Great Dakota Melody* arranged by Cathy Moklebust, *Jesus Loves Me, This I Know American Hymn* arranged by Lloyd Larson, *Grandfather's Clock Traditional American Ballad* arranged by Patricia Hurlbutt, and *My Country, 'Tis of Thee (America)* arranged by Lloyd Larson

Unfortunately, our number of ringers in the chimes choir has dropped... again. But I'm hopeful that in the future they may bounce back up and if that happens, for sure I'll be in touch with Nancy Youngman once again. Thanks Nancy and Thanks Area 8 Handchimes Loan Program!

Memorializing & Honoring Members of Your Choir

by Amy Knudson
Kansas State Chair



As I mentally prepare myself for a concert tomorrow that honors a friend who passed away very unexpectedly, I wanted to offer a list of possible songs that could work in your service/concert. And this list is not, in any way, the only pieces out there. Our options for music are vast and wide and growing weekly. These are the pieces I know about and were listed on the Handbell People facebook page when someone posed the question. If you are not a member of that page, you are missing out.

If you are aware of that person's favorite hymn, you could find a version of that. Or, if you have the means, composers and arrangers do special commissions. All you have to do is reach out, maybe bring an idea to them, or even let them come up with something on their own. One composer said she had several ideas in mind already, she just needed to get them 'on paper.'

So tomorrow, we will play a version of *It is Well With My Soul* since that was sung at his funeral. And we also have a special trumpet ensemble playing since that was his instrument. It was pretty easy to put together and I know his family will appreciate it. And I know I'm not the only person on stage who will have tissues close.

Hymns:
Be Still My Soul
Borning Cry
Gaelic Blessing
Great is Thy Faithfulness
In the Garden
It Is Well With My Soul
Make Me a Channel of Your Peace
O God Beyond All Praising (Thaxted)
Shall We Gather at the River

Originals:
Calming Peace by Cathy Moklebust
Canon of Grace by Linda R. Lamb
Grazioso by Arnold Sherman
Hymn of Promise arr by Janet Linker and Jane McFadden
Meditation on Beautiful Savior by Cathy Moklebust
Morning Light arr by Stevie Berryman
Parting by Barbara Werner
Prayer for Peace by Philip M .Young
Reflections by Karen L. Buckwalter
Remembering by John A. Behnke
Song of Remembrance by Arnold Sherman

Publishing in Quavers
4 publications per year, published once each season. Articles are due on the 10th day of January, April, July, and October.

Advertising
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 January, April, July, and October to be included in Quavers. To submit a concert or event for inclusion go to the A8 Website, Events page.

Questions? Please send all questions and comments about this and future Quavers publications to Amanda Myroniuk, Editor: newslettereditor.area8@handbellmusicians.org

Please check websites for the most up-to-date calendar and event information.





Area 8 Events









Area 8 Events







Area 8 Events

Nov 18 12:00 PM	Karen Van Wert: Solo Performance 600 6th Ave, Des Moines, IA 50309
Nov 21 3:30 PM	Lawrence Community Handbell Choir: Joint Christmas Concert 1322 W Broadway Blvd, Sedalia MO, 65301
Nov 22 4:00 PM	Noah Hartsfield - Of Hymns, Psalms, & Spirituals; A Solo Handbell Recital 1112 E. Broadway, Columbia, MO 65201
Dec 4 7:00 PM	River City Ringers: The Heartbeat of Christmas 331 S. 85th Avenue, Omaha NE 68114
Dec 4 7:00 PM	Lawrence Community Handbell Choir: Bells will be Ringing 7416 Roe Ave, Prairie Village, KS 66208
Dec 5 2:00 PM	Lawrence Community Handbell Choir: Bells will be Ringing 730 SW Fairlawn Rd, Topeka, KS 66606
Dec 5 2:00 PM	River City Ringers: The Heartbeat of Christmas 2725 N 60th St, Omaha NE 68104

Area 8 Events

Dec 5 3:00 PM	Chicago Bronze Holiday Concert 308 N. Evergreen, Arlington Heights, IL 60004
Dec 5 7:00 PM	Bells in Motion Presents: A Ringing Christmas 3601 N. Sheridan Rd, Peoria IL, 61604
Dec 5 7:00 PM	Rezound! Handbell Ensemble: Rezound! Holiday Concert 519 Court St, Clay Center KS, 67432
Dec 5 7:30 PM	River City Ringers: The Heartbeat of Christmas 10710 Corby Circle, Omaha NE 68164
Dec 6 1:30 PM	Chicago Bronze Holiday Concert 275 Mohawk Tr, Lake Zurich, IL 60047
Dec 6 4:00 PM	Bells in Motion Presents: A Ringing Christmas 619 Kitchell St, Pana IL, 62557
Dec 6 4:00 PM	River City Ringers: The Heartbeat of Christmas 6340 N 30th St, Omaha NE 68111

Area 8 Events

Dec 7 7:00 PM	RiverBendBronze: Christmas Concert 109 E. 14th St, Davenport IA, 52803
Dec 11 7:00 PM	Rezound! Handbell Ensemble: Rezound! Holiday Concert 9300 Nall Ave, Overland Park KS, 66207
Dec 12 2:00 PM	RiverBendBronze: Christmas Concert 109 E. 14th St, Davenport IA, 52803
Dec 12 4:00 PM	The Agape Ringers: Sounds of the Season 149 W Brush Hill Rd, Elmhurst, IL 60126
Dec 12 4:00 PM	Chicago Bronze Holiday Concert 900 Eighth St, West Dundee, IL 60118
Dec 12 7:00 PM	Lawrence Community Handbell Choir: Bells will be Ringing 946 Vermont St, Lawrence, KS 66044
Dec 12 7:00 PM	Rezound! Handbell Ensemble: Rezound! Holiday Concert 306 W Main St, Richmond MO, 64085

Area 8 Events

Dec 13 3:00 PM	Rezound! Handbell Ensemble: Rezound! Holiday Concert 125 S. Pleasant St, Independence MO 64050
Dec 13 4:00 PM	Chicago Bronze Holiday Concert 98 Algonquin Rd, Barrington, IL 60010
Dec 18 7:00 PM	Des Moines Concert Handbells: Chistmas Concert: Joy! 3510 72nd St, Urbandale, IA 50322
Feb 27 9 AM - 12 PM	Rezound! Handbell Ensemble - Ring with Rezound! Sight Reading Session 125 S. Pleasant St, Independent MO, 64050
Apr 9 6:30-8 PM	Iowa City Handbell Festival: Reading Session 140 Gathering Place Lane, Iowa CIty IA 52246
Apr 10 8 AM - 4PM	Iowa City Handbell Festival: Clinician Brian Childers 140 Gathering Place Lane, Iowa CIty IA 52246

Visit the Area 8 website for more event details.

Area 8 Events