

The Twelfth Tone

The American Guild of English Handbell Ringers,
California ☿ Guam ☿ Hawaii ☿ Nevada

Claremont, CA

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June-July, 2003

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What is unique about handbells? A beautiful sound, a mesmerizing sight, perfect intonation, a musical activity that can be enjoyed by all ages and at all levels of musicianship. We are drawn to handbells for any number of reasons, including some of the distinct challenges of this instrument.

Without doubt, the level of musicianship of ringers has improved immensely over the past decade as more and more advanced groups demonstrated that, as Don Allured says, "Ringing the right bell at the right time is only the beginning." For directors with a choir of musicians who read music, the first step may be to make music out of all those notes which are rung quite easily. But the majority of our members are directors in churches and schools where teaching the basics of music and the techniques of ringing is the highest priority in planning rehearsals, and a truly musical performance is an ideal which may take years to reach.

Who are the ringers in your choir? You have musicians who are proficient on another instrument and bring musical backgrounds to their ringing experiences. You have competent music readers who have spent years acquiring the skills needed to learn music. You have talented performers who know how to learn music quickly and are comfortable in front of audiences. And you have eager volunteers for your choir who do not read music or play another instrument but can promise you a commitment to your rehearsal schedule and a willingness to learn anything that you can teach about handbells.

I'd like to tell you about some of those volunteers who were not musicians when they came to our choir. Heather has been with us for about 18 years. Her three children joined our choirs, and when a trip opportunity to a conference in Oregon materialized and all the children needed to have a parent along, Heather became a ringer. She had not had the opportunity to participate in musical activities as a child, but she eagerly attended every rehearsal, asked questions, helped earn money, and went on a concert tour to an Area X conference with her children. She has since been to many more conferences and an International Symposium and has become an excellent ringer. Lisa has a similar story and is becoming a skilled bass ringer. Doug, who has played in our choirs for over 30 years, learned his music reading on C4-D4.

What does this mean for you as the director? You are constantly challenged to balance the needs of the musicians in your choir with

(Continued on Page 8.)

NEW MEMBERS

New Members in March

Marianne Kripps
Escondido, CA 92029

Tami Brose
Irvine, CA 92612

Vesta Walden
Mountain View, CA 94040

Handbell Director
Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Cynthia Davis
First Unitarian Church
Oakland, CA 94612

Jennifer Espineda
Wilton, CA 95693

New Members in April

Nancy Stouwie
Handbell Mart
Hawaiian Gardens, CA 90716

Larry Moore
Modesto, CA 95356

John Young
Sacramento, CA 95841

The Twelfth Tone

June - July, 2003

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ADVERTISING RATES

	Single <u>Run</u>	Annual <u>(6 issues)</u>
Full Page Ad <small>(Up to but not larger than 7.25"W x 9.75"H)</small>	\$50	\$270
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Quarter Page Ad <small>(Up to but not larger than 7.25"W x 2.25"H or 3.5"W x 4.75"H)</small>	\$15	\$78

Camera-ready advertising copy is due on the tenth of each odd-numbered month for publication in the following even-numbered month (e. g., the deadline for the February issue is January 10).

Special Notice:

Look for the two Supplements in this issue. Supplement A includes an application for the Area XII Handbell and Handchime Loan Program and the registration form for the recently announced Area XII Directors' Workshop with Tim Waugh. Supplement B provides information and an application form for **High Challenge**, which has been opened to accomplished ringers of all ages and for which the registration fee has been lowered to \$90.00.

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VOICES FROM THE PAST

(The final in a series of six.)

Patty Marquart Ginny Fleming Dick Coulter Diane Levorson Gary Delk **Donald E. Allured**

In addition to the five Chairs who have contributed their service to Area XII, my choice for the last "interview" is Don Allured, who, by his frequent visits over the years, has also made a significant contribution to handbell ringing in this Area. His record includes serving as an early President of the Guild as well as a career-long commitment to excellence and musicianship in handbells. As we approach the 50th anniversary of AGEHR in 2004, I hope that this series has offered us a brief perspective of our past as we look forward to the next 50 years of "...uniting people through a musical art..." - wlv

1. **WHEN, WHERE, and HOW** did you get started in handbells?

The WHEN was 1963, the WHERE was Lansing, Michigan, and the HOW was the offer by someone in the congregation of the Central Methodist Church to give \$150 for "something" for the youth program of the church. I still will never forget sitting in staff meeting on a Tuesday morning in probably April or May of that year, when the Associate Minister brought up this offer. There was dead silence for a moment, then this M. of Music who had never held or rung a bell in his life said, "How about handbells?" I was given the OK to explore it. I started by calling my grad school classmate at Union Seminary, Bob Hieber, then AGEHR President, at a large church over in Grand Rapids, asking him what to do. The 1963 National was in Detroit that summer so he recommended my attending it, which I did and got hooked. Came back to my church, discovered Schulmerich bells in the Cokesbury catalog. Called the store in Chicago - they had a set sitting on the floor there which they promptly sent me - two octaves for \$595.00. A year or so later when the 3rd octave became available, I ordered it, and that C4 seemed so huge to me.

I got several choirs going that fall, and two years later when I moved to First Methodist in Lake Charles, LA, and formed the Wesleyan Bell Choir was when things started to progress.

2. **WHAT FORMAL MUSICAL TRAINING** did you have prior to working with handbells?

Formal training started with organ lessons (at age 14) at First Presbyterian in Cass City, MI, where my dad was Pastor. Entered Alma College, Alma, MI in 1939 for college where I did organ and conducting studies. Uncle Sam delayed my graduation until 1945, upon which I entered the School of Sacred Music at Union Theological Seminary in New York. Two very inspired years there got me a Master's Degree in Sacred

Music. Courses were all in church music but no handbells. Doris Watson had formed bell choirs at Brick Presbyterian Church in the city, but I didn't know anything about it at the time.

3. **WHAT** is your favorite handbell composition, and **WHY** is this work meaningful to you?

Favorite handbell composition has to be *The Creation*, with *Sharon's Song* and *In Thee, O Lord, Do I Put My Trust* (the anthem in memory of my son, Lee) very close to it. *The Creation* is meaningful because it was written to an inspiring text by James Weldon Johnson. It is a 13-minute work and was composed essentially in two sessions a few weeks apart, having been completed at the cottage in Bay View in 1985 and performed later that summer. The Westminster Concert Bell Choir played it on tour my last year at the school in 1988 - with much feeling and color.

4. **WHAT ADVICE** would you give to someone who is just starting to work with handbells?

Do everything you can - via workshops, texts, and attending concerts by the better choirs - to learn the "fundamentals" of GOOD bell technique and above all, the Musicianship prerequisite to conducting a truly musical performance.

5. **HOW LONG** have you been a member, and **WHAT** has *The AGEHR* meant to you?

I joined the AGEHR in 1963 and membership has provided a background of workshops and concerts sponsored by the Guild, with many teaching and conducting responsibilities related thereto, all of which have given me opportunities to emphasize how important the Musicianship which applies to all fields of music must also apply to our work in handbells. The Guild is still struggling with this to some extent, but they are hoping to get more and more recognition and acceptability in the world of music at large.

6. **WHAT POSITION(S)** have you held in *The AGEHR*, and **WHEN** did you serve in each position?

I was an Area Chairman of the "old" Area VII (LA, AR, TX, NM, and OK) and was instrumental in the realignment to the 12 Area we have now. (We had nine Areas then.) Became President-Elect in 1971, President 1973 - 1975, Past-President 1975 - 1977.

VOICES FROM THE PAST, continued

Served during the time a national office site (Dayton) was selected and an Executive Officer (Andy Flanagan) hired.

7. **WHAT FUTURE** do you see for handbells? *More to the point, WHAT do you think MUST HAPPEN in order to elevate handball ringing to the level of public support and recognition enjoyed by community orchestras, choral ensembles, and the like?*

Handbells are here to stay and will do so well into the future. But acceptability as a legitimate ensemble is still severely limited by lack of attention to the three basics of handbell performance: eliminating mistakes, eliminating colorless playing with little or

no dynamic change, and ignoring note values with regard to stopping the sound at the right time according to the printed score, in other words, damping at the right time on shoulder or table.

Also, Directors and their Choirs need to be more conscious of the visual aspect of their performing, being aware that this is Choreography to good handbell playing. Few musical ensembles really lend themselves to this but handbells do and choirs need to make much more of it than they normally do. This is where good taste is so important, because movement and its gracefulness purposes to enhance performance, not distract from it. The term "musical art" is part of our motto and in those works is a built-in standard to be observed by us all. - *Don Allured*

REGIONAL REPORTS



San Francisco Bay Area Report
Tammy Raetz tammrae@earthlink.net

In February, the Bay Area had the Oakland Handball Festival, in March, we finished up the month with the Spring Ring, and now concert season is upon us. In fact, we got a taste of it with Velocity's "Spectacular" April 12 appearance with the Golden Gate Boys Choir Ringmasters and Ring of Fire's two exciting Easter concerts on April 16 and 17.

The March 13 School Festival at All Saints School in Hayward was conducted by P.L. Grove and Dave Ruder and was attended by about 150 ringers.

The Spring Ring was another well-attended success at Valley Church on March 29. Ruben Mendoza received a spontaneous standing ovation for his solo performance of "Symphonia on Hyfrydol," a truly amazing demonstration of dexterity, speed, musicality and good old-fashioned showmanship.

It's concert season again! The Bay Area blazed with the energy of Ring of Fire's tour last month and the ball is still rolling. All kinds of handball ensembles are preparing their spring concerts, from church choirs like Verdant Vibrations (St. Thomas Episcopal, Sunnyvale) to community groups like Bay Bells, to our professional Bay Area ensemble, Sonos. And though Velocity is gearing up to take their "Inspirations" show east of the Rockies on a Midwest tour, there's one more chance to see them here at home before they leave.

You can advance the art we love and support the handbell ensembles in your area by introducing new people to this lovely instrument. Invite friends and

family to attend a concert with you. Too often I think we assume that others won't feel the same fascination we feel ourselves, but that's not the case! I've talked with many, many first time concert attendees, and heard of many more, who invariably walk out true handbell converts. And we all know what joy bells have brought to each of us. So share the joy!

Kedith Wickware and family left St. Thomas Episcopal Church (Sunnyvale) and went off to Canada a few years ago, where she missed bells so much that she formed a community ensemble there. St. Thomas was thrilled to receive her back on the family's return last year, and Kedith threw her creative talents into Verdant Vibrations. This ensemble performed its annual end of the year concert on Mother's Day, May 11, at 4:00 pm.

Westminster Presbyterian Church in San Jose is sponsoring a concert series to raise interest and funds to purchase handbells. For their May 18 Handbell Showcase, they put together two incredible handbell "acts" - the concert opened with soloist (and Sonos member) Michèle Sharik, performing with the exquisite grace for which she is known. The program concluded with Velocity's amazing virtuosity on 6 octaves (one for each of them!), a rare opportunity to hear and see.

The Clayton Community Handbell Ensemble, Canto Bello, will be departing July 1 for Sarajevo, Bosnia on an Instrument of Peace mission. They will be joined by a vocal choir under the direction of Carol Morris. They will be giving two concerts as part of the Sarajevo summer music festival and two concerts at the Sarajevo Youth Center. During the two weeks there, they will be teaching the children how to ring handbells and chimes. They are looking forward to presenting the youth home a two-octave set of

REGIONAL REPORTS, continued

chimes. These two choirs will be presenting their concert at three different locations in the East Bay before departing for Sarajevo, including June 7 at the Walnut Creek UMC, June 8 at the Clayton Valley Presbyterian Church, and June 20 at the Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian Church.

Velocity announced a six concert June tour that includes venues in Minnesota, Kansas, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Urge friends and family in those states to drop everything and run to see this historic show on tour. It's a Bay Area treasure and a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! Visit <http://www.velocitybells.org> for details.

Sonos acquired an Executive Director (yours truly), announced auditions for the upcoming 2003-2004 season, and is shortly to release its first video sometime in June. Summer concerts include a collaboration with the San Francisco Girls' Chorus, the annual Old First Concert Series in San Francisco, and a concert at AGEHR past president Dick Coulter's church, St. Luke's Episcopal in Los Gatos.

There are too many notable concerts in May to mention them all, but some mention should be made of Michèle Sharik's solo recitals, which featured the world premieres of two commissioned works for solo bells and other instruments.

For complete Bay Area event listings, visit the Area XII website, <http://www.areaxii.org>. Happy ringing!

Los Angeles Metro Report

Shirley Heckman la_metro@areaxii.org



May was a busy month for many handbell enthusiasts in the LA Metro region. "Ring of Fire," the outstanding school choir from Oregon ushered in the month with a series of concerts in Azusa, Temecula, and Calimesa and also performed at the Crystal Cathedral on May 4. The Young Ringers' Conferences were held on May 16 and 17 in Garden Grove and San Diego with Gary Delk as clinician. The First Annual High School Handbell Festival, with massed ringing directed by Karen Curry, was hosted by St. Matthias High School in Downey on May 20. And, on May 31, Campanile held an Open House at Central Lutheran Church in Van Nuys.

This is the time of year when many individual choirs are giving programs/concerts. Directors are invited to send information regarding their choirs' future and past events to la_metro@areaxii.org for publication in the LA Metro Handbell eNewsletter which is sent out by email on or about the 15th of each month. All LA Metro directors and ringers are invited to subscribe by sending a request via email.

Nevada Report

Barbara Walsh barbagehr@worldnet.att.net



Howdy! Well, our first annual Sierra Spring in Reno went very well. We had a group from Bishop CA, Good Shepherd Lutheran, South Reno United Methodist, the Village Ringers from Incline, Opus I from Alice Maxwell School, and Bel Canto all in attendance. The mood was informal and everyone enjoyed working with our conductor, Tess Koenig. We're thinking about having the event in scenic Bishop, CA next year. What do you think? What dates are good for you? This is a low stress event that is perfect for groups that would like to experience massed ringing but are scared to do so. The more experienced groups are there to provide support and subs for groups needing them. If you didn't join us this year, please think about coming next year and let me know what dates are good for you and if you have any favorite songs you'd like to see on the massed numbers list. *****Mark your calendars now for the Ringers' Workshop on October 4th at South Reno United Methodist Church. Mary Balkow is our clinician and I'm sure we'll all learn a lot and have fun doing it! I'll be sending out more info later. Also, don't forget about the Zephyr Point Handbell Conference on beautiful Lake Tahoe at the end of July. Call or e-mail me if you would like more information.

Southern California Report

Micki Mennet-Martin mennet@aol.com



Under the baton of Art Baker, The Dyson Bell Choir of Meadowlark Community Church in San Marcos played J.S. Bach's "Sheep May Safely Graze" arranged by Doug Wagner on Sunday, May 27. The bells were a gift given to the church given by Mrs. Dyson to celebrate the life of Mr. Dyson. The choir will end its 2002-2003 season in June playing "Jubilance" by Kevin McChesney. The Meadowlark Community Church also has a chime choir made up of young people ages 11 and 12 also directed by Art Baker.

Lois Tiller directs the First Lutheran Church of Vista Handbells. They play 3 to 4 octaves. The youngest members of this choir are in their 50s and the olders in the 80s. On May 4, the choir played "An Easter Welcoming" arranged by Sharon Rogers. Later in the spring, the choir is scheduled to play Celtic Aarwell and *Intermezzo* from the opera "Cavalleria Rusticana" by Mascagni, arranged by Arnold Sherman.

The Lutheran Church of the Incarnation Handbells under the leadership of Irene Patton recently played "Dialogue", composed by Zabel. This piece is arranged for two bell choirs. The church's handbell choir played one part and Jared Schmitthener, Poway High School performed the second bell choir's part on the marimba. Mrs. Patton began directing

REGIONAL REPORTS, continued

Central California Report

Paulette McFarlin cen_calif@areaxii.org



This spring was great! Spring Rings were blooming everywhere. In Atascadero, they had a great turnout with over 80 participants with Mel Tully directing. Their final concert was at 7 PM after a dinner together. Shirley Werner and a couple of directors in that area did a great job for their first event. They have already begun planning next year's event.

The Spring Ring in Fresno was also an exciting day. Many enthusiastic beginning ringers said it was a great way to increase their limited experience. There were over 40 ringers at this event with Cheryl Baker as clinician. A special treat was the Fresno Pacific College handbell choir who participated and rang a special number at the final run through. Look for a Spring Ring near you next year, as there hopefully will be one in every region. It's sometimes makes a better learning process to learn from an accomplished clinician the things you don't always glean from your own director.

OPUS, the Modesto area handbell choir, hosted an Invitational Festival in April with Richard Colla as clinician and six massed pieces to ring and solo choirs performing.

Plan to participate next year in one of these spring events, and keep these ringing opportunities happening!

this choir September 2, 2002 - just 7 months ago.

Karlene Neal of the First United Methodist Church, El Cajon has five handbell choirs. "Joyful Noise" is young people in grades 3 - 5. "Praise Sounds" is the 6th grade and older choir. Another group is the "Monday Night Bell Ringers". "Praise Ringers" rehearse Friday morning. A chime choir of kindergarten to 2nd graders is also a part of this church's music program. Bells play approximately once monthly. Karlene describes the church as a small church with a big emphasis on music.

On Friday, May 16, in Garden Grove and on Saturday, May 17, in San Carlos, the YOUNG RINGERS' CONFERENCES 2003 took place. The Clinician was Gary Delk. The program has been a big success in Garden Grove for about 6 years. This is the first year this program for young ringers has been offered in San Diego. Contact: Rudy Rodriguez, therudybell@aol.com or Karlene Neal, karleneneal@abac.com.

Check out <http://www.areaxii.org> and explore the Guild's web site. More information on all AGEHR activities and conferences, including the YOUNG RINGERS' CONFERENCES 2003, can be found there.

Anytime you hear of a handbell choir ringing ~ introduce yourself. Let them know when and where you ring. Our friends in the handbell world are a treasure to each other.

RUDY'S ROOST

The Care and Feeding of Ringers Part 4: *What is the Goal of your choir? 1st and 10? 5 under par?*

Have you ever noticed that many times we get so wrapped up in the details of what we are doing that we lose sight of the original goal?

As many of you know, I **do** have a "Day Job" which pays the bills. As much as I love handbells, I just cannot make a living from handbells. Any of you have the same problem? By trade, I am a Consulting Engineer. I work with architects and contractors in designing buildings of all types. Which brings me to my illustration:

There once was a young Civil Engineer who was given an assignment by his Boss. "Young man, I want you to go to that new property that I just bought and I want you to drain the swamp so I can build a shopping center on it," said the Boss. So off goes our eager Young Engineer to drain the swamp.

Some weeks later the Boss visits the construction site to check on the progress of the work. He found the Young Engineer standing waist-deep in the muck of the swamp which seemed unchanged to the Boss. The Boss asked the engineer, "Why isn't this swamp drained?"

The young engineer replied, "When you're up to your henny in alligators, it's hard to remember that you came here to drain the swamp."

How often do we as directors get so distracted with "alligators" in the music that we forget what our original goal was? But what **is** the goal?

I know of a handbell choir in The South (of the U.S.A.) who meets every Tuesday morning for a couple hours of rehearsal and coffee and donuts, but who **never** rings before an audience. Yet they are perfectly content. Their goal is not to perform in concert, but to enjoy fellowship with one another and ring some bells at the same time.

There is nothing inherently wrong with this goal. This is what they want and it makes them happy.

RUDY'S ROOST

The director understands this and adjusts his music selection accordingly.

So Master Director, I ask you: What is the Goal of your choir?

Some of you have specific responsibilities that the choir is to meet. As an example, my 5-octave choir is expected to ring in at least one worship service per month, every month year round. That is a responsibility, an assignment, a task, but is it our Goal? No. Our primary Goal is to lead in the worship experience. Our secondary Goal is to involve people in worship who are not already involved. As you can see our Goals are quite different from our assignment.

Have you, in your mind or in discussion with your ringers or your bosses, separated your tasks from your Goals? Much like our Young Engineer, there has to be an overriding Goal, a mantra if you will, that gives overall direction to our decisions and actions. If the Goal is to teach music to non-music reading people, that would require a completely different approach and music selection that the choir whose Goal is concert touring in the Summer. Both are valid Goals. My point is that you, Master Director, should only expect from your choir that

which is within the Goal of your choir.

That may seem like an over simplistic idea, but how many times have we seen directors "push" their choirs to a level of performance perfection that is beyond the goals of the choir and more importantly beyond the ability of the ringers just because of a goal that resides only within the mind of the director? Oftentimes neither director nor ringers are happy dampers neither are they pleased with the outcome.

So, let me challenge you: Discuss the Goals **of** your choir **with** your choir. Then write them down. Not the tasks nor assignments, but the banner that will fly overhead as your march into the swamp to drain it!

Next time I will reveal the best-kept secret: The best thing you can do as a conductor for your ringers. This secret will vastly affect your approach to **"The Care and Feeding of Ringers."**

Rudy Rodriquez

Pithy saying for the day: *"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."*

Mahatma Ghandi

IMHO: SHOULD WE PERFORM WITH THAT "UGLY" BACKGROUND NOISE ... A LOOK AT HANDBELL MUSAK?

Several years ago my school handbell team was honored by an invitation to perform at the California Music Educators Conference which was being held in southern California. We were to lead a workshop on the use of handbells and handchimes in schools. Our workshop room was delightfully quiet and filled with attentive, interested attendees.

Since we were making a considerable effort to attend this event, I was looking for additional performance opportunities. The conference committee responded favorably and extended us an invitation to perform at both a leadership reception as well as in the exhibit hall. Both of these additional venues placed the handbell ensemble in the position of providing "back burner" music while other activities held the "front burner" positions.

The reception scenario involved the usual greetings and conversation over the sound of clinking glasses and eating noises. Against one of the walls, a rather large waterfall cascaded onto huge rocks providing the additional white noise of rushing water. It was not exactly an ideal performance situation. We were able to have the waterfall shut down while we played. We had a number of curious music educators asking questions following the performance.

The exhibit hall was filled with people and activities as conferees strolled the aisles looking at the various exhibits, asking questions, and trying out some of the musical equipment. We chose a space large enough to set up our bell tables and other equipment and began our concert during the lunch hour. We had a lot of fun and many students and teachers tried out the bells.

Bell musicians know that handbell sounds are more delicate than those produced by most other instruments. The lower range is even more difficult to project than the piercing upper range. A quiet room is best for enjoying the full nuances of a handbell concert. We certainly did not have silent rooms in either of the two situations described above.

Should we have accepted these performance opportunities? Should we have spent the time preparing for concert situations that were less than ideal? Does background noise prove distracting and discouraging to ringers? Does the handbell ensemble make a favorable impression on anyone listening?

IMHO, bell ensembles, whether school, church, or community, should continue to accept these less than ideal performance opportunities from time to

IMHO: SHOULD WE PERFORM WITH THAT “UGLY” BACKGROUND NOISE ... A LOOK AT HANDBELL MUSAK?, continued

time. Here are some of my reasons with a few caveats thrown in for your evaluation.

No one likes to be ignored when they are talking or performing. We have a sense that what we are saying or doing is the most important thing at the moment. Ringers love those audiences that sit with full attention and rapture to our beautiful music, and respond with enthusiasm. But, alas, those moments are precious and perhaps fewer than we would like to admit.

There are hundreds, thousands and yes, even millions of people who would never hear a bell ensemble, much less consider participating in one, without an exposure to bells. That first exposure might come in a school assembly with squeaky chairs and rustling feet, a shopping mall with passing shoppers near an active fountain or busy escalator, a theme park playing before the curious revelers, a holiday parade or a luncheon with scraping forks and spoons. These are wonderful, though not perfect, opportunities to play for many more people than we could possibly reach through our “sanctuary” performances.

These “public” performances provide a wonderful opportunity to try out our new repertoire, gather new performance opportunities (perhaps for pay) and display publicity about our group as well as invite people to the next, more quiet, concert where they can hear the bells resounding in all their glory!

The director must, as well as possible, describe in

advance these performance situations and the expectations to his/her ringers. In spite of the performance site being less than ideal, the ensemble should give the best performance it can. The background noise will force the group to keep the director in sharp focus, as it is often difficult to hear the sounds of the bells from one end of the table to the other. The director may have to over-direct a bit with larger and sharply defined beat patterns.

Since such performances are the first contact many people have with bell groups, ringers and directors should be extra friendly and accommodating. The ensemble may not have the usual formation (something to practice in advance), lighting, sound, or silence they would prefer. Complaints, grumbling and demanding that certain things be done to accommodate the group will only lead to a poor reputation for the group and any other bell groups that might follow. It certainly is okay to share your basic needs in advance such as accommodation for tables, a microphone and parking and loading space.

Finally, go with the flow. If the luncheon tables are all set up when you arrive, and you have to divide the group into two sections, go for it. If the stage is too small, put half the group on the stage and the other half below. Some directors and groups have a way of turning the disadvantages into positives with humor. Perhaps the water glasses can be used to provide the percussion beat to a lively song. Members of the audience might be brought into the act in some way. Whatever, have a good time and everyone else will too! - *Dave Ruder*

A NOTE FROM THE ARM OF THE CHAIR, continued

those who need basic instruction on how to count eighth notes. You find ways to show where the melody is for those who do not hear sounds from printed notes. You teach the vocabulary that many of us learned as children on a piano bench. And sometimes you are at wit's end trying to achieve the musical result which is in your ear but not yet in the hands of your choir.

But think of the rewards! Many of your ringers have not had the thrill of participating in a group musical experience such as an orchestra or band or choir. Watch the faces of these ringers when you do get a particularly beautiful passage of music mastered. Listen to them talk about what making music means to them, especially to adults who always wanted to be in music but did not have the opportunity. And experience the pleasures of working together with good friends who spend time each week working for a common goal.

Let AGEHR help you! Throughout the year, Area XII will be planning workshops and ringer events to support you as a director and to provide learning experiences for your ringers. **The Twelfth Tone** articles such as Rudy Rodriguez's "Care and Feeding of Ringers" will give you ideas. Directors' workshops will give you the training that you need to reach all levels of ringers. Spring Rings provide occasions for ringers to play and learn together. And next June, Area XII is providing the perfect excuse to go to Hawaii. And if not Hawaii, then attend the Conference in Ontario. Come play with a master conductor, enjoy "golden oldies" of bell music, learn from experienced clinicians, and have fun. Everyone in your choir, from beginners to most advanced, will enjoy the unique experience that bell conferences provide.

Read the information in this issue about our Conferences and plan now to join with others in Area XII at our **Golden JuBELLee** in 2004. - *Lee Waggener*

THE SPRING RING: BEGINNINGS

*On April 5, 2003, the Sacramento area annual Spring Ring celebrated its 20th anniversary, which Lee and I were privileged to attend. Approximately 10 years ago, Paul Allen wrote a series of articles that appeared in **The Twelfth Tone** of that era which he agreed to submit again. This (and the five that will follow) is presented in commemoration of the anniversary and in hope of encouraging others to establish similar, long-running events in Area XII. - wlv*

In the fall of 1983 a few directors from Sacramento conceived the idea of a handbell mini-festival for their area. They thought this festival would give their choirs a chance to rehearse and perform music scheduled for an upcoming Area XII event. Since then the Spring Ring has been successfully delivered eleven times. This could be an appropriate pattern for other regions to use. From our beginnings through our improvements and into the future, this six-part overview may help you build your own Spring Ring.

The first four Spring Rings were presented in roughly the same fashion. First, we selected someone to host the ring. This person became, for that year only, the administrator of the Spring Ring and coordinated the entire event from accepting registrations through cutting checks for expenses, setting up the public address system and printing programs to holding lost-and-found items. Each year the host was a different person.

The host selected the site for the Ring. The site had to be convenient to the host and large enough to accommodate the anticipated choirs. Each year we wanted to locate the Ring in various ends of our area because the Sacramento region encompasses ringers from Reno, Galt, Vacaville, Redding, and in-between. Choirs could look forward to the next year if this year they had to travel some distance.

The host's own handbell choir assisted the coordinator/host in most every aspect of the festival. Sometimes the host choir wore a distinguishing uniform to be seen clearly by other festival participants. The host choir helped choirs set-up, distributed festival schedules, answered questions, assisted the director and generally filled in the gaps. We then asked another of our own to direct the Spring Ring itself. We felt no need to search for a director from the outside. This person was responsible only for directing the music.

We acted as a committee-of-the-whole and perused all available handbell music. We selected the specific titles which would be performed, basing our choices on what could be used by directors outside the festival, would not overstretch our budgets, might challenge the ringers and could be used in upcoming regional or national festivals (as far as could be determined).

Finally, a Saturday date in March or April was determined, giving Easter a wide berth, at least two weeks before or after. We also tried to avoid other important church or community events, insofar as they were known.

Choirs were charged \$30 to offset the festival costs (\$30 per choir, not per ringer). In the beginning ten to twelve choirs maximum were expected. A free, afternoon public concert was presented at 3:30 pm. Individual ringers, without a choir, could ring where they found room.

Choirs were invited to arrive as early as possible to set up their bells before the first massed rehearsal at 10:00 am. Several such rehearsals were spread throughout the morning and early afternoon. Time was allowed for solo choirs to rehearse in the auditorium. A one-hour lunch allowed all ringers and directors to mingle informally, and a 30-minute break before the public performance provided ringers the opportunity to change from their practice clothes into concert attire.

The concert started at 3:30 pm. A Master-of-Ceremonies kept things moving during the concert, stimulated audience interest by telling bell stories or shared information about handbell ringing. Even at this time, ringing was an art about which many were ignorant. The event concluded at 5:30 pm.

Five or six solo choirs, solo ringers, and ensembles complemented the concert program with alternative handbell sonorities. This encouraged small choir directors to boast of their program. It also displayed competence at various levels of handbell experience. The First Spring Ring was located at Faith United Methodist Church, Sacramento where we had been meeting for several seasons to read through recent handbell releases. Leonard Schmidt hosted, directed, and served as master-of-ceremonies.

The Second Spring Ring used Charlyn Connor as host. The gymnasium at Delta High School, Clarksburg became the venue. This dwarfed the number of choirs attending, the only time this happened. Location was still the most important factor. Mary Balkow directed and Leonard Schmidt returned as master-of-ceremonies. We noticed an increase in the number of solo ensembles, a trend which indicated increased choir competence and director confidence.

The Third Spring Ring moved north to First Congregational Church in Auburn. Lois Maas and her choir at Pioneer UMC hosted. She served as M.C., but in a much reduced capacity. We also tried something new: additional instruments (in this instance, violin and brass ensemble) during several numbers. The effect was tremendously exhilarating and we made an unspoken resolution to continue

THE SPRING RING: BEGINNINGS, continued

contrasting bell sounds with other instruments.

The place was packed for the rehearsals, overflowing for the concert. Choir members had a difficult time moving around the room. The afternoon concert's audience was small (some had to stand or leave). It seemed that we had pressed the limits of the normal church setting. The audience's view from under a canopy and through the armpits of the director, Paul W. Allen, was less than desirable.

The Fourth Spring Ring moved to south Sacramento and James Rutter Middle School. Paul W. Allen and The Concert Carillons hosted. We made more adjustments. First, we admitted that audiences should be as comfortable as possible and that they should look down upon the aesthetically pleasing choirs. Audience enjoyment of the concert was more important than initially anticipated.

Audiences had grown larger, so we had to provide for increased spectator interest. The Spring Ring still focused on the ringers and their experience, but we began to turn our vision on educating the audience about the art of handbell ringing.

Second, the host's job had become difficult. Each year, the wheel was reinvented. Practices which worked the year before had to be abandoned due to a new location. Maybe the previous host had different people to work with. Maybe the site was too different. Details became cumbersome. Coordination became a challenge. The host could no longer coordinate the Spring Ring with joy. The number of choirs increased, and accommodation had to be made for their needs.

For this Ring three directors divided the directing job into the categories of Tins, Coppers and Massed (we had no selections yet for Bronze Choirs). These were Nadene Donner, Vera Refnes and Charlyn Connor, respectively. We thought that it would be a valuable

experience for more directors to conduct a large gathering, and that it would be good for ringers to see different directing styles on the same day. In other words, we envisioned directors pounding at the doors to get onto the podium.

During the planning stages for the Fifth Spring Ring, crises overwhelmed us. Negotiations with the city school district for a larger concert hall broke down weeks before the Spring Ring. They required insurance coverage which could not be provided by the choirs' sponsors. Up to this time, most group insurance policies appeared sufficient for our Ring, but we found that legally they were not! Dates requested were unavailable. Easter was later that year.

Necessarily the venue returned to James Rutter Middle School for the second year in a row. Our schedule was thrown off. We had to meet in late April, much later than many felt comfortable with.

The same host was called upon to do the same job. This caused us to reflect that the host did not have to change each year, that in fact there was an advantage if it didn't! If this were true, then the location did not have to change either. This would be a radical departure from our initial intent.

In addition we discovered that finding three fresh directors every year was too taxing. The directorial pool was not bottomless! Sites, by virtue of their available space, limited the number of choirs we could welcome. Nearly 30 choirs were attending. The Spring Ring had become a major event - joyously so, but with an enormous responsibility as well.

This created a logistical dilemma. We needed to resolve issues regarding location and directing resources. Improvements had to be made. - *Paul Allen*

COMING EVENTS

4th Annual Handbell Concert

June 1, 2003 at 5:00 pm
Corona United Methodist Church
114 E. Tenth Street
Corona, CA
Admission: free-will offering
Contact: Gayla Lonsbery
Phone: (909) 737-5225
Email: CoronaUMC@aol.com

CUCCC Spring Bell Concert

June 1, 2003 at 4:00 pm
Claremont United Church of
Christ, Congregational
233 W. Harrison Street
Claremont, CA
Contact: Lee or Bill Waggener
Phone: (909) 624-0236
Email: lwaggener@aol.com or
waggwl@aol.com

Sonos performs with the San Francisco Girls Chorus

June 1, 2003 at 3:00 pm
St. John's Presbyterian Church
2727 College Avenue
Berkeley, CA
Tickets: General: \$12 - \$18
Reserved: \$12 - \$40
Contact: City Box Office
Phone: (415) 392-4400

COMING EVENTS, continued

Bells for all Seasons

June 1, 2003 at 3:00 pm
St. Luke Lutheran Church
Wright Avenue at The Dalles
Sunnyvale, CA
Contact: Joyce Vaughn
Phone: (408) 732-4539

Canto Bello Pre-Sarajevo Concerts

June 7, 2003 at 7:30 pm
Walnut Creek United Methodist
Church
1543 Sunnyvale Avenue
Walnut Creek, CA
June 8, 2003 at 2:00 pm
Clayton Valley Presbyterian
Church
1578 Kirker Pass Road
Clayton, CA
Free will offering: half will be
donated to the Sarajevo Youth
House and half will help
defray expenses of the trip
Contact: Carol Smith
Email: carolsmith2@juno.com.

Saratoga Presbyterian Church Handbell Choir and Bay Bells in Concert

June 8, 2003 at 6:00 pm
Saratoga Presbyterian Church
20455 Herriman Avenue
Saratoga, CA
Phone: (408) 867-0144

Tintabulations Concert

June 10, 2003 at 7:00pm
Kingman Chapel of Claremont
UCC
233 W. Harrison Street
Claremont, CA
Contact: Shirley Heckman
Email: la_metro@areaxii.org

An Afternoon of Solo Handbells and Chamber Instruments

June 14, 2003 at 3:30 pm
Soloist: Michèle Sharik
San Ramon Valley United
Methodist Church
902 Danville Boulevard Alamo, CA

AGEHR Master Class In Conducting

June 19 - 21, 2003
Clinician: Bill Payn
Anaheim Convention Center
Contact: AGEHR
Phone: (800) 878-5459

One-Day Area XII Directors' Workshop

June 19, 2003
Clinician: Tim Waugh
Anaheim Convention Center
Cost: \$20.00
Contact: Lee Waggener
Email: chair@areaxii.org

HIGH CHALLENGE: A National AGEHR Advanced Youth Choir Event

June 19 - 21, 2003
Anaheim Convention Center
Anaheim, CA
Clinician: Tim Waugh
Registration materials available
at <http://www.agehr.org>
Cost: \$90.00
Contact: Nancy Jessup, Event
Chair
Phone: (714) 545-3213
Email: nanjessup@aol.com

High School Handbell Directors' Planning Session

June 20, 2003 at 10:00 am
La Habra
Contact: Karen Curry
Email: KVCTinker@aol.com

Canto Bello Concert

June 20, 2003 at 7:30 pm
Lafayette Orinda Presbyterian
Church,
49 Knox Drive
Lafayette, CA
Cost: Free-Will Offering
Contact: Carol Smith
Email: carolsmith2@juno.com.

Choir of Bells Annual Spring Concert

June 22, 2003 1:00 pm

Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church
728 W. Fremont Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA
Cost: Free-Will Offering
Contact: Michèle Sharik
Email: ladysun1969@hotmail.com.

SONOS Concert

St. Luke's Sunset Series
June 28, 2003 at 8 pm
St. Luke's Presbyterian Church
20 University Avenue
Los Gatos, CA
Phone: (408) 354-4560

International Music Camp

July 6 - 12, 2003
Clinicians: Monica McGowan,
Cheryl Baker, Fred Merrett.
Location: Peace Garden
Contact: Joseph Alme,
Phone: (701) 838-8472
Email: [info@internationalmusic
camp.com](mailto:info@internationalmusiccamp.com)
Websites:
[http://www.international
musiccamp.com](http://www.internationalmusiccamp.com) or
<http://www.peacegarden.com>

Intergenerational Music Camp

July 6 - 11, 2003
Heartland Presbyterian
Conference Center
Parkville, Missouri.
For those entering 6th grade to
88+. Besides ringing with
single and massed choirs,
activities include a campfire,
talent show, swimming,
horseback riding, relaxing,
resting and/or more ringing.
Cost: \$325/ youth, \$355/adult.
Email: hpcenter@crn.org

Handbell Week

July 7-11, 2003
School of Music
Concordia University
Mequon, WI
Phone: (888) 553-9756
Email: [handbellexplo@earthlink.
net](mailto:handbellexplo@earthlink.net)
Web: [http://www.handbellexplora
tion.com](http://www.handbellexploration.com).

COMING EVENTS, continued

Elderhostel "Ringing in the Rockies"

July 12-20, 2003

Colorado State University/
Pingree Park Campus

Cost: \$642 (based on double occupancy)

Web site: <http://www.elderhostel.org>

Sonos Handbell Ensemble

July 13, 2003 at 5:00 pm

Old First Church
1751 Sacramento Street
San Francisco, CA

Tickets: General - \$12,
Students/Seniors - \$9,
Members - \$6.

Contact: City Box Office,
Phone: (415) 392-4400

Email: <http://www.sonos.org>

Directors' Seminar 2003

Session I: July 17 - 19, 2003

Session II: July 19 - 22, 2003

Hartford Hilton

Hartford, CT

Phone: (800) 878-5459

Web Site: <http://www.agehr.org>

The Loire Valley Handbell Festival

July 21 - 29, 2003

Clinicians: Fred Gramann and
Larry Smith

The Loire Valley and Paris,
France

Contact: British European
Specialty Tours

Phone: (800) 835-0402

Email: info@BESTConcertTours.com

Zephyr Point Handbell Conference

July 27 - 31, 2003

Clinicians: Mary Balkow, dean,
Jim Smith, co-director

Zephyr Cove, NV (on Lake Tahoe)

4th National Residential Ring Week

July 28 - August 2, 2003

Dunblane Cathedral, Scotland

Contact: Malcolm Wilson

Email: claganach@easynet.co.uk

"A Moose-i-cal Cruise to Alaska" Handbell Cruise

August 3 - 10, 2003

Clinician: Tim Waugh

Organizers: Bells of the Cascades
Inside Passage cruise on the
Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's
Vision of the Seas, departing
from Vancouver, B.C. Prices
start at \$1029 per person,
double occupancy

Contact: Azumano Travel

Phone: (800) 395-5578

Summer Ring

August 6 - 8, 2003

Concordia University, Irvine, CA

A handbell event for ringers,
directors, and their families
designed to develop strong
ringing techniques and
leadership qualities.

Contact: Nancy Jessup

Email: nanjessup@aol.com

Solo Ensemble

Extravaganza

August 7 - 10, 2003

Colorado College,
Colorado Springs, CO

Contact: Beth Klein

Phone: (503) 805-1269

Email: beth@handbellsunlimited.com

Web: <http://www.handbellsunlimited.com>

Las Vegas Explo

August 14 - 16, 2003

Alexis Park Resort

Las Vegas, NV

Phone: (888) 553-9756;

Email: handbellexplo@earthlink.net

Web: <http://www.handbellexplosion.com>

Directors' Workshop

September 20, 2003

Clinicians: Lee and Bill Waggener
Grace Baptist Church
Street

Santa Clarita, CA

Contact: Shirley Heckman

Email: la_metro@areaxii.org

Ringers' Workshop

October 4, 2003

Clinician: Mary Balkow

South Reno United Methodist
Church

200 Despain Lane
Reno NV

Contact: Barb Walsh

Email: nevada@areaxii.org

Distinctly Bronze

October 9 - 13, 2003

Guest conductor: Fred Gramann
Springmaid Beach, South Carolina

Website: <http://www.agehr.org>

Hershey Explo

January 8-11, 2004

Hershey, Pennsylvania

Phone: (888) 553-9756;

Email: handbellexplo@earthlink.net

Web: <http://www.handbellexplosion.com>

Pinnacle

January 15 - 19, 2004

Hotel Inter-Continental
Addison, Texas

Website: <http://www.agehr.org>

Reading Ring Through

January 31, 2004

Presbyterian Church
Los Gatos, CA

Contact: Norma Rose

Email: gmrose1234@aol.com

Area XII Ringers

Conferences

June 25 - 27, 2004

Clinician: David Davidson
Ontario Convention Center
Ontario, California

Contact: Lee Waggener

Email: chair@areaxii.org

Website: <http://areaxii.org>

July 1 - 4, 2004

Clinician: David Davidson
Renaissance Ilikai Waikiki
1777 Ala Moana Boulevard
Honolulu, Hawaii

Contact: Cheryl Baker

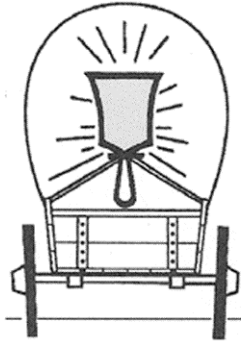
Email: pastchair@areaxii.org

Website: <http://www.areaxii.org>

(Continued on Page 14.)

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CHORAL MUS

AREA V HANDBELL COMPOSITION CONTEST

3-5 Octaves Non-sacred Original
Composition

(No Higher Than Level 3)

Prize: \$500.00

Deadline: June 15, 2003

For contest rules, send a self-
addressed, stamped envelope to:

Barbara A. Singleton

Area V Composition Contest

105 Nancy Dr.

Richmond, KY 40475

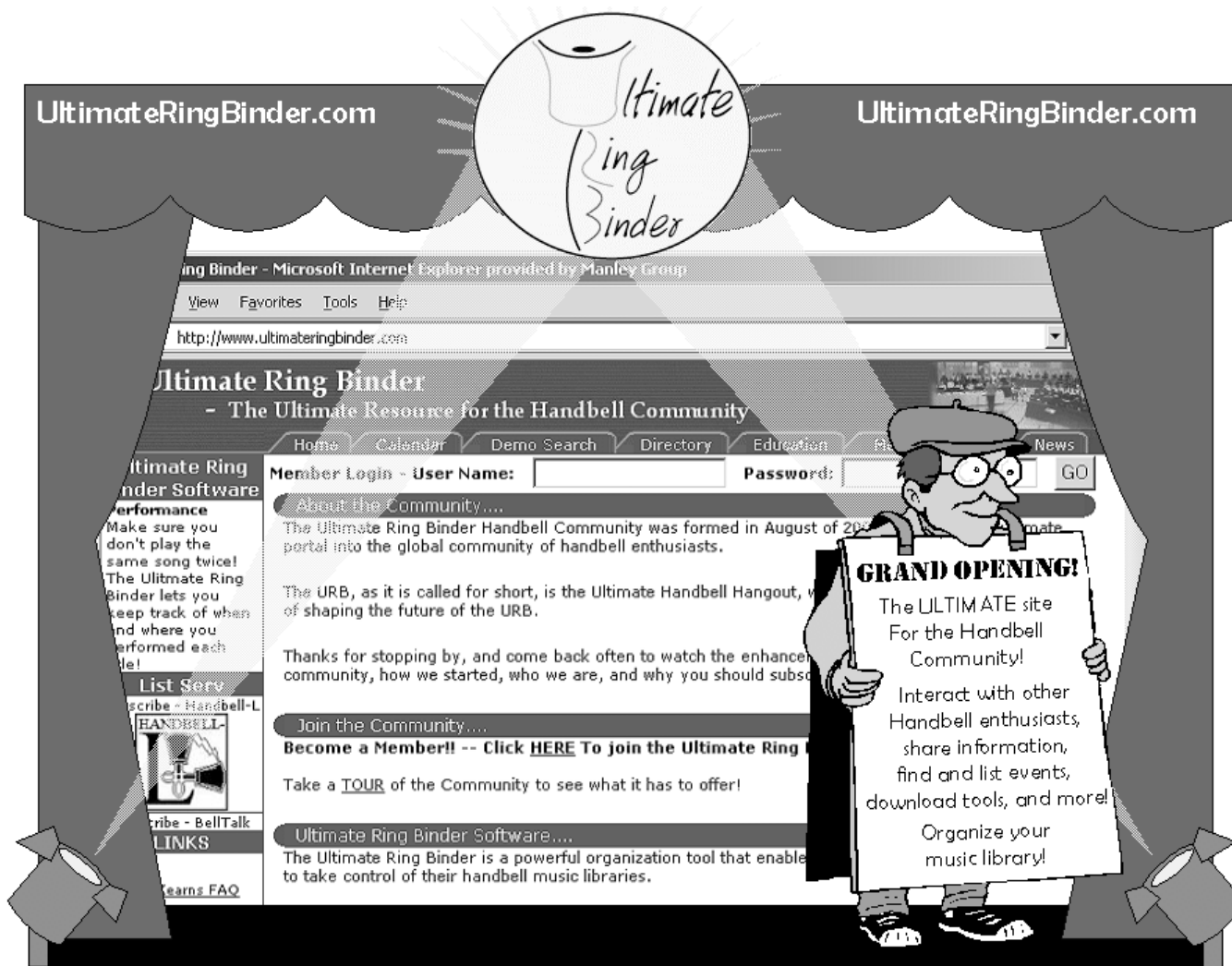
bsingleton@iclub.org

The Raleigh Ringers

Music Director: David M. Harris
8516 Sleepy Creek Drive
Raleigh, NC 27613
(919) 847-RLRG (7574) phone/fax
email: rringer@rr.org
www.rr.org



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For further information and application, contact:

Gary Delk, Bells in Education Coordinator
 1320 N. Marlei
 La Habra, CA 90631
 (562) 697-7805
 ouch@aol.com

COMING EVENTS, continued

Handbell Spectacular 2004

July 24 - 27, 2004

Marriott Waterside Hotel
 Norfolk, Virginia
 Contact: Jane Mary Tenhover
 Phone: (800) 878-5459
 Email: executive@agehr.org

11th International Handbell Symposium

August 3-7, 2004

Westin Harbour Castle Hotel and
 Convention Center
 Toronto, Canada
 Website: <http://www.agehr.org>

The Area XII Ringers Conferences 2004



Our Golden Jubilee!

Conductor: David Davidson

June 25 - 27, 2004

Ontario Convention Center
Ontario, California

July 1 - 4, 2004

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Registration Form

Enclosed With August-September Issue

Registrations accepted beginning September 1, 2003

For more information, contact:

Lee Waggener, Conference Chair
chair@areaxii.org

Cheryl Baker, Conference Chair
pastchair@areaxii.org

Bill Waggener, Registrar
twelfthtone@areaxii.org

<http://www.areaxii.org>
Repertoire List available in June, 2003

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 - Regular Membership \$55.00
 - Ringer Membership \$22.00
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 Membership number of choir: _____
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Evening Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

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A NOTE FROM THE KEYBOARD

At the Area XII Board meeting in April, a recurring theme was how to enhance communication between the Board and the membership - but not only with the members, who typically are the directors of the handbell world, but also with their ringers. There are several ways to foster our links to the ringers - all of which we would like to pursue.

Perhaps the most obvious is to encourage ringers to join the Guild as Ringer Members under the membership of their respective directors. At less than half the cost of a full membership, Ringer Memberships provide subscriptions to ***Overtones*** as well as to ***The Twelfth Tone***, so Ringer Members have access to the same published material as their directors. The multiple advantages should be clear - from having more than one set of eyes reading the articles on improving our art to encouraging group participation in external handbell events.

For the Ringers' Conferences 2004, the initial Registration Form (to be distributed with the August-September issue) requests email addresses for *all* registrants - ringers, directors, and chaperones. The intent is to disseminate developing information to each potential attendee of our conferences on a timely basis - particularly should

individual responses be necessary or appropriate. The communication efficiency Lee experienced while working on classes for the Reno Ringers' Conference in 2002 along with the immensely positive feedback we received from those Reno attendees with email accounts are the driving force behind this new approach.

As suggested on the Registration Form, we urge you to provide an email address for *each* registrant to which both casual and urgent communications about the Ontario and Honolulu events can be sent. One direct benefit to directors is that at least some of the responsibility for keeping abreast of updated information about these conferences will now fall to the individual registrants, themselves, because everyone should receive the same messages at the same time.

A broader goal is to celebrate the upcoming 50th anniversary of the Guild with as much enthusiasm and participation as we can muster. Opening and maintaining as many channels of communication as possible is a very good way to start.

William L. Waggener
Editor