



The Twelfth Tone

The American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, Inc. - Area XII
California ♦ Guam ♦ Hawaii ♦ Nevada

Claremont, CA

Volume XVI Number 3

June-July, 2004

A NOTE FROM THE ARM OF THE CHAIR

Lee Waggener

Fifty for Fifty

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What age are your bellringers? I'm thinking of the children in your handbell program, and if you don't work with children, I'd like to encourage you to give it a try.

Most public schools have no formal classroom music programs. But music is a very important part of children's lives, and the fortunate ones have opportunities outside school. However, in our busy world, sports and other activities encroach on time for music as you undoubtedly know if you have tried to schedule rehearsals for a children's group.



This year, three young siblings of elementary-age ringers in our program wanted to "play bells", so along with two others, we formed a chime choir. These children are 4 - 6 years old, so our rehearsals

consist of rhythm games, movement, listening, and a little chime ringing. This picture of them is typical of what it's like to try to get the attention of all of them at once, yet they learned the difference between lines and spaces and learned to play color-coded chords. After they could read lines and spaces using just one line and could recognize and play quarter, half, and whole notes, I tried VERY simple pieces written on a large chart with each line of the staff a different color so they could find their notes. Our first appearance in church was "Jacob's Ladder", with the older children playing a more complex arrangement and the younger ones playing the chords.

This was the culmination of eight months of rehearsals. It is a very small step musically, but more importantly, we have four committed families who are interested in their children's musical education. Three of the children are now enrolled in a program at our local community music school. And all five are eager for the day when they can play "real bells".

Area XII is committed to providing assistance to music teachers at all levels. A loan program allows a school to borrow bells or chimes for a semester. Many of our members use bells in schools and can serve as mentors for those teachers who are just starting with bells. These children are the future music lovers who will support musical performances and participate themselves in a variety of music groups.

Watch for events specifically geared for younger ringers in Area XII. If you would like to start an event for children and/or youth, contact your Regional Coordinator or other member of the Board, and let us help you plan a special day of ringing. - Lee Waggener

NEW MEMBERS

New Members in March

Robert Kuzminski
Green Valley Presbyterian Ch
Henderson, NV

Steve Vincent
First Congregational Church
Buena Park, CA

Music Director
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church
Granada Hills, CA

Handbell Director
Los Gatos UMC
Los Gatos, CA

Steve Angelucci
St Eugene Cathedral
Santa Rosa, CA

Tom Fox
Cypress Avenue Baptist Church
Carmichael, CA

Cindie Whitefoot
Rocklin, CA

Jan Sullivan
Sacramento, CA

Christina Estabrook
St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
Yuba City, CA

Wendy Williams
Antelope, CA

Sandra Keller
Rocklin, CA

New Members in April

Sheila Saxelby
Fresno, CA

Lee Stallings
Campus Baptist Church
Fresno, CA

Priscilla Thompson
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Simi Valley, CA

Sue Goodenow
St. John's Presbyterian Church
Reno, NV

Anne Weger
Santa Barbara, CA

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The Twelfth Tone **April-May, 2004**

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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).

OVERTONES REVISITED



In this series celebrating the 50th Anniversary of AGEHR, we are reprinting articles of historical interest from the early days of the organization's existence. The following article by Frederick L. Fay appeared in the October, 1964 issue of OVERTONES. It is retyped verbatim as it appeared in that issue so the

style of writing and social references are unchanged..

THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH HANDBELL RINGING IN THE U. S. A.

FREDERICK L. FAY served as Director of Religious Education for over 25 years in various churches in New England and New York State. Mr. Fay graduated from Hartford School of Religious Education and is now on the staff of Whittemore Associates, Inc. in Boston and in charge of the bells and chimes department. Mr. Fay was a director of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers for the first five years of its existence, and for the last five years has been chairman of Area 1. It was Mr. Fay who suggested the name OVERTONES for our national magazine.

The first quarter of the twentieth century saw probably only one group of handbell ringers in this country. Margaret Nichols Shurcliff in Boston possessed a set of bells brought from England and she gathered in some of her friends, and later her own children, to enjoy the music they could make with her bells. It was during this period that her group began the unique celebration of "Christmas Eve on Beacon Hill."

The second quarter of this century saw possibly a hundred ringing groups throughout the country. In 1937 Mrs. Shurcliff rounded the first affiliation of ringing groups here, which was the New England Guild of Handbell Ringers.

By the middle of the 20th century it was discovered there were more ringing groups than anyone had been aware of. At the time there were no books of instruction on handbell ringing, and no printed handbell music. Mrs. Shurcliff and some of the members of the New England Guild were deluged with inquiries about where to obtain bells, how to learn to ring, how to organize a group, where to find music, etc., etc. in 1954 Mrs. Shurcliff called a Board Meeting of the New England Guild and representatives of ringing groups not on the Board, to consider the forming of a national organization to serve as a clearing house for the many bell-ringing groups throughout the land, and to provide a

medium of exchange of ideas about music arrangements, ringing techniques, conducting bell choirs, etc. This resulted in the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers. It was also felt that it would be helpful to meet face to face other bell ringers and chat about what they were doing and how they did it, and to hear and observe other ringing groups. So an invitation was sent to 99 owners of handbells in this country to join in a Handbell Festival at Castle Hill in Ipswich, Mass. the last weekend in August of that same year, 1954. They came - from New York, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Washington, D. C. until actually there were 26 1/2 persons in attendance - the one-half being the small daughter of Prof. and Mrs. Wendell Westcott.

The next year, 1955, saw the first issue of OVERTONES, the official organ of AGEHR members, which carried messages of interest and exchange of ideas and methods among its members. Reports showed that bell-ringing groups were snowballing in numbers almost beyond belief. The first report came in of the use of handbells in Music Therapy, and it is interesting to note that bells have been increasingly valued and used in this field of the mentally sick, even up to today.

By 1956 the Gospel of Handbell Ringing was being proclaimed to the public all over the country by various means, and the public loved it! Handbell concerts were being given everywhere. Some groups appeared on radio and television. Other groups participated in the annual Christmas Tree lighting at Radio City, and at the lighting of the National Christmas Tree in the nation's capital. In this same year was held the first Church Handbell Festival in Easton, Pa.

In 1957 the string of "firsts" continued. Handbell records began to be produced by our choirs. The first book published in America about handbells appeared, "The Story of Handbells" by Scott Parry. To supply the demand for handbell music, several directors made lists and offered their arrangements for sale. The AGEHR initiated an attempt to make a classification of bell sets. An official office was set up in Washington, D. C. The idea of a designating pin for the AGEHR was conceived, and the present pin resulted the following year. At the Ipswich Festival, "Boogie Woogie" music on handbells was first introduced into New England by courtesy of Captain Nissly of the WAFs.

In 1958 the Margaret Homer Shurcliff Library of

OVERTONES REVISITED, continued

Handbell Music was established and is now housed in the Riverside Church in New York. Also, much baseless discussion was ended regarding the use of copyrighted music in making arrangements for handbells, when an authoritative "Friendly Notice" on the subject, provided by the Music Publishers Association of the U. S. was reproduced in the October issue of OVERTONES. It stated that merely to write down copyrighted music, or to ringing it in public even when no money is involved, is an infringement of copyright laws. Music written before 1905 is in public domain, and therefore free to be used by anyone.

In 1959 a salaried Corresponding Secretary was employed on a part time basis at the Washington office of the AGEHR, due to the increase of handbell activities over the country. Mr. Robert Hieber became President of the national organization, to succeed Mrs. Norman H. Erb, who retired after several years of intensive work for the guild through the important and formative years. At the Sixth Annual Handbell Festival at Ipswich it was plainly evident that we had outgrown the Castle Hill accommodations. Therefore, it was voted to hold the national Guild Festivals in June in some larger place, in the odd-numbered years, and to encourage the areas to hold festivals of their own, locally, in the even-numbered years. In 1961 the National Festival was held in St. Louis, Missouri, with over 600 registrants and about 40

teams ringing.

In 1963 the National Convention was held in Detroit, Michigan, with an attendance of nearly 900, and 40 ringing groups. Special guest was Frederick Sharpe of England. The closing event was a concert, given by a large number of ringing groups, which closed with an ensemble comprising the largest assemblage of handbell ringers ever to ring on this continent - about 600, wielding upwards of 1,500 bells on the same music at the same time - and everyone ended on the same note at the same time. Marvin Reecher of Tulsa, Oklahoma, was elected President of the AGEHR for the next two-year term of office.

We are advised in 1964 that for the first time every area in the AGEHR held its own area Festival.

And now, to paraphrase scripture: There are also many other things in the development of handbell ringing, which, if they were written every one, I am sure would overflow all OVERTONES and fill many volumes besides.

The above article appears in *OVERTONES 1955-1986*, an anthology of the first 32 years of its publication which was created and printed in 1987. Copies are still available from the National Office in Dayton.

REGIONAL REPORTS



San Francisco Bay Area Report **TammyRaetz** bay_area@areaxii.org

Since January, several events have been keeping ringers busy in the Bay Area, beginning with the Reading Ring-Through at the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos on January 31, followed by the 10th Annual Bay Area Handbell Festival at First Covenant Church in Oakland on February 28, with Christine Anderson as guest conductor. This popular clinician also conducted Spring Ring on March 20 at Valley Church in Cupertino. Combined, these two events drew over 300 ringers to the spring festivals. Spring Ring was followed by Christine Anderson in concert at Valley Church on March 21; Christine is one of the country's most renowned handbell soloists. Other area performances this spring included the community ensemble Canto Bello on April 18, and the choir of Lafayette-Orinda Presbyterian Church on April 25.

Bay Area youth were active in two annual events: the Elementary School Festival at All Saints in Hayward was conducted by Dave Ruder on March

30, followed by the Kids Fest with P.L. Grove at the Presbyterian Church in Los Gatos on April 24. A highly popular workshop with Jason Wells (director of the phenomenal Oregon youth choir, Ring of Fire) for people of all ages was hosted by Walnut Creek United Methodist Church on May 1, and inspired the more than 100 attendees to memorize their music!

On the community and professional front, Bay Bells held a successful fundraiser concert in Los Altos on May 2 entitled "Mashed-Potato-Martinis and Music." Their upcoming performances include a joint concert with the Valley Ringers in Cupertino on May 16 and a season closing concert at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Palo Alto on June 12. Handbell soloist Michèle Sharik and her fellow Sonosian Jukka-Pekka Vainio will give a performance of "Relentless," a handbell and percussion piece with cello on May 8 at the Percussive Art Society's Day of Percussion, followed by a Q&A with composer Jim Meredith. On May 17, Sonos will kick off their summer tour at the Meyer Concert Series at Congregation Emanu-El in San Francisco. This tour will culminate with the closing concert of AGEHR's 50th Anniversary Celebration in Norfolk, Virginia.

REGIONAL REPORTS, continued

Los Angeles Metro Report

Shirley Heckman la_metro@areaxii.org



The LA Metro Region held its first Spring Ring on March 27 at the La Verne Church of the Brethren. With Bill Waggener as clinician, 84 ringers representing nine different choirs rehearsed five massed-ring numbers which were rung at the 4 pm concert. This concert also included numbers by four individual choirs and a handbell solo by Susan Hitch.

The joy of ringing with other choirs is spreading! Two of the participating choirs are now planning to host a 2005 Spring Ring in their churches: Grace First Presbyterian Church in Long Beach on April 23 and All Saints Episcopal Church in Riverside on April 30. Hmm, what will happen in 2006?

The LA Metro Region is looking forward to welcoming many of you to the Ontario Ringers' Conference on June 25. If ringing with 84 other ringers was fun, ringing with 350 will indeed be thrilling! See you in Ontario!

Nevada Report

Barb Walsh

nevada@areaxii.org



Howdy! The 2nd Annual Sierra Spring Ring was a great success! It was held in Bishop, CA this year, and all the Bishop groups were there along with a brand new group (on borrowed bells) from Mammoth Lakes. Bel Canto from Reno along with a member of Great Basin Bells was there to represent Reno (we would love to have more groups from Reno next year!) and my Opus I group from school was there to represent Sparks. Tess, as usual, was fun to work with (who couldn't have fun with someone with blue hair?) and we worked to make the pieces more musical since all the groups were so well prepared. The audience was HUGE and very appreciative. Thanks to all who worked so hard to make it a success!

If you missed the Sierra Spring Ring this year, maybe we'll see you at the Ontario or Hawai'i Area XII Ringers' Conference, or maybe at Zephyr Point July 25-29. If none of those, then please plan to attend the Ringers' Workshop Oct. 2nd at Sparks United Methodist Church in Sparks, NV. Rudy Rodriquez is our clinician, so it'll be a fun time! It would be great

to visit with some of you that I haven't seen in awhile at ringing events, so please try to make it to something so we can catch up on things and have fun ringing at the same time!

Northern California Report

Louanne Marshall no_calif@areaxii.org



Encouragement has been given to organize new events for our Northern California Area, so events are in the workings. Right now there is a Workshop being planned for October in Lakeport. We are calling it a "Fall Frenzy." Barb Walsh from Reno will be the clinician. Information regarding this event can be found in this issue, and more information will be coming out soon.

We had a great time at our annual Director's Workshop. It was held in Woodland again this year, and Mel Tully was the clinician. Plans are already underway for next year's Director's Workshop. It will be held in February again, but with a new location. We are investigating possibilities for this workshop and will announce details as soon as they are finalized.

Santa Rosa has been requesting to hold a Spring Ring in their community. The date is set. Mark your 2005 calendar for May 14th. Jason Wells of Oregon, director of "Ring of Fire," is scheduled as clinician for this event. It will be held at the St. Luke Evangelical Lutheran Church in Santa Rosa. Watch for upcoming information for this exciting event.

If you would like to host an event at your church, please contact me, and we will look into what would best fit your location and the needs of your bell group.

The Raleigh Ringers

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(919) 847-RLRG (7574) phone/fax
email: rringer@rr.org
www.rr.org



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RINGERS' CONFERENCES UPDATE

If you are NOT registered for one of Area XII's Ringers' Conferences by the time you receive this, you might not be able to attend. What a shame! At this point, there are 360 fellow ringers, directors, and chaperones registered for Ontario, and 219 for Hawaii - a total of 579 in all.

Our Conference conductor, David Davidson, is among the most highly rated clinicians in the country, and those of you who will be ringing under his direction should be in for a great learning experience. To get the most out of your participation, the recommendation of your Conference Committee

RINGERS' CONFERENCES UPDATE, continued

is to prepare the music as thoroughly as possible so that your ringers are focused on the development of their musicianship under David's guidance rather than focused on what note comes next.

Rudy Rodriguez has arranged for a 50th Anniversary Conference shirt, which is a long-sleeved, light blue denim shirt with both the national Anniversary logo and our Conferences' locations embroidered on their front. Only preordered shirts will be manufactured, so get your order in immediately if you wish to have one. Although the announced deadline for shirt orders was June 1, we *might* be able to take orders up through June 10. Email the Conferences Registrar [twelfthtone@areaxii.org] if you would like more information.

We will have a vendor display area at both events. Furthermore, at least one vendor will sponsor music reading sessions at each site, so be sure to schedule time to participate in at least one of these that suits your choir's ability and needs - or perhaps look for repertoire that might stretch your choir's current level of accomplishment. Consult the vendors after registering to find out what will be presented at their reading sessions.

We are delighted to announce that both events will feature showcase choirs. In Ontario, we will hear the *Rosary High School Handbell Choir*, under the direction of Karen Curry, from Rosary High School in Fullerton, CA, on Friday night, and *Bay Bells*, under the direction of William Kyle, from the San Francisco Bay Area will present its program on Saturday. In Honolulu, *Twin Cities Bronze*, under the direction of Monica McGowan, will present a showcase concert Friday night. These three should reflect the best in both the school and community ensembles.

In addition to these special concerts, we have received enough applications to be able to schedule at least one solo concert for each site at which individual choirs present a piece of their choice for

the rest of the participants. The level of expertise of each choir is irrelevant: the important issue is that these choirs have chosen to present their best effort to the rest of the participants.

David Ruder, as part of his responsibilities as Chair-Elect of Area XII, has organized a cadre of excellent faculty who will share their handbell knowledge and expertise in a wide variety of seminars and hands-on classes. Participants will be able to sign up for those sections with limited enrollment (primarily those which offer participation at the tables) at the time of check-in and formal registration. If you would like your first choice(s) of these sections, be sure to arrive on time - if not a bit early!

Further updates will be emailed to all registrants periodically. If you have any specific questions, email Lee Waggener, Area Chair [chair@areaxii.org].

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AREA XII HANDBELL AND CHIME LOAN PROGRAM

How would you like the free use of a three-octave set of handbells or handchimes next year for one semester? The American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, Area XII, has a set of each available exclusive for public or private school use.

Use them with your vocal choir, start a handchime or handbell performance group, or use them with your music appreciation classes. The equipment, complete with pads, instructions, and a consultant

(by phone!), is available for all grade levels through university. For further information and application for next year's loan, contact:

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Area XII Chair Lee Waggener presided at the LA Metro Spring Ring held at the La Verne Church of the Brethren on March 27, 2004, in which 84 ringers participated.

Area XII-Sponsored Fall Workshops

Directors/Advancing Ringers' Workshop

Cupertino, CA
September 18, 2004
Valley Church
Cupertino, CA

Cost:
\$20.00 per person

David Ruder
chairelect@areaxii.org

Fall Ringers' Workshop

Sparks, NV
October 2, 2004
Sparks UMC
Reno, NV

Rudy Rodriguez

Cost:
TBA

Barb Walsh
nevada@areaxii.org

Central CA Directors' Workshop

Fresno, CA
October 9, 2004
St. James Cathedral
Fresno, CA

William Kyle

Cost:
TBA

Paulette McFarlin
cen_calif@areaxii.org

Directors' Workshop and Reading Session

Claremont, CA
October 16, 2004
Claremont United Church of Christ
Claremont, CA

Lee and Bill Waggener

Cost:
\$30.00 per person

Shirley Heckman
la_metro@areaxii.org

Fall Frenzy

Lakeport, CA
October 23, 2004
Clear Lake Baptist Church
Lakeport, CA

Barb Walsh

Cost:
\$12.00 per person

Louanne Marshall
no_calif@areaxii.org

with clinicians:

For more information, contact:

and

See the Coming Events section of this issue.

RUDY'S ROOST

The Care and Feeding of Ringers Part 10: Did you bring the Oreo cookies to bell rehearsal?

Some of you Master Directors are very lucky. You have a "captive audience" for your bell choir. Such as school teacher/directors who have choirs in which the ringers must attend and get a passing academic grade in order to complete some other requirements, such as to graduate. But most of us, yours truly included, get the wonderful opportunity to work with volunteer ringers who give up some of their free time to come to bell rehearsal, hopefully alert enough to ring well. We conduct "The Volunteer Choir."

I have conducted my Volunteer Handbell Choirs for almost 19 years and before that I conducted Volunteer Church Vocal Choirs for 9 years. Which is really remarkable, considering I am only 29 years old! Along the way, I have learned some very valuable lessons, sometimes the hard way, on how to deal with and treat The Volunteer Musician.

One of the most important lessons I learned is that there is a special relationship between the Director and the Ringer and it is not too unlike a marriage. Both parties have to work at and in the relationship to "make it work." Both parties have to make a conscience decision, sometimes daily, to want to stay IN the relationship. Each party has to either love the other party or the relationship a lot in order to have a "healthy," long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationship.

Think about it. You, Master, Director, ask your ringer to get up off the soft sofa in front of the television with the handy remote and come down to the rehearsal room and do a chore called Bell Practice! You ask your ringer to "take out the bells" to the van so that you can go somewhere. And then, you ask your ringer to get all dressed up and go out "on the town" to perform a concert or ring a bell piece in public with the very real possibility of messing up and embarrassing themselves in front of a room of strangers. All the while, you concern yourself with your ringer's physical health. "Did she miss bell rehearsal due to illness? Will she be well enough to ring in the concert?" You worry about her readiness. "Dear Ringer, did you finally learn that difficult passage? Did you find the key . . . change?" And when the concert is finally over, and the bells are back in the closet, you and your ringer sit down and talk quietly about the concert over coffee.

Yes, Master Director, your relationship with your ringer is very much like a marriage. And the good skills that you use to strengthen your marriage also work in strengthening your relationship with your ringer. Here are some lessons that I have found to be helpful:

1. If what you have to say to your spouse (oops!) ringer doesn't edify them, then maybe it doesn't need to be said. Read that again.
2. There is no such thing as 50/50 in the relationship. Both parties must give 100% all the time to "make the relationship" work. Not mention make good music.
3. It is not "fair" to expect your ringer to be able to "read your mind." They cannot simply "know" what you want. You, Master Director, must talk to your ringer, and tell them what you want, or what is bothering you.
4. There is no such thing as "constructive criticism." If you must correct something, use the Oreo Cookie Method: Say something nice, say something corrective, say something else nice. Example: "Dear Ringer, you're really learning this piece quickly. Could you try to ring on the offbeat in Bar 14? That would really help the other ringers know when to ring."
5. If your ringer isn't the most beautiful and precious musician you have ever seen, change your eyeglasses prescription and look again.

Let me challenge you, Master Director to treat your ringers as the precious treasure that they really are. You won't find bell ringers growing on a tree. Approach your relationship to your bell ringer as thoughtfully and purposefully as you would a spouse or in some cases even better. You will find that your relationship with your ringer will flourish and the bell music will flow sweetly.

When I first started to write this series of columns on "The Care and Feeding of Ringers", I made a list of topics that I wanted to cover. Well, now it is almost two years later, and my list is almost complete. So now it is time to go to you, Master Director, and ask, "Are there any questions that you would like me to address?" Here's your chance to ask wizen, ol' grandpa the questions that have puzzled you. What question do you have in the depths of your heart that you would like answered? Write them down and e-mail them to me at RudyAGEHR@aol.com. If I use your question in my column, not only will you receive priceless wisdom in print, but I will also personally send to you a fabulous gift. And of course, your ringers will also benefit from your increased interest in improving your skills in "The Care and Feeding of Ringers." - *Rudy Rodriguez*

Pithy saying for the day: "*People never improve unless they look to some standard or example higher and better than themselves.*" *Tyron Edwards*

IMHO: IT IS POSSIBLE TO KEEP KIDS FOCUSED DURING A REHEARSAL

Over the years I've had many opportunities to visit various youth rehearsals. Some were a bit chaotic with the children doing all kinds of things that were not necessarily oriented to the task at hand. Other rehearsals were orderly and much was accomplished, despite the kids' naturally high enthusiasm and energy levels. Their spontaneous vigor can be a great benefit when one is building an exciting bell program. Properly channeled energy allows rehearsals to be filled with fun and excitement! Energy allowed to run amuck is a recipe for disaster and a stunted musical program.

IMHO focused, exciting, high accomplishment rehearsals are possible for even rather young children. Here are my thoughts based on observation and personal experiences.

The director needs to plan the ENTIRE REHEARSAL in advance, in considerable detail. The hard work of preparation pays enormous dividends in keeping the children on task. The director must study the score and decide what is to be done with it. An outline of the entire rehearsal might include drills, theory study, pieces to rehearse and what is to be accomplished, break time (announcements, snack, birthday celebrations, prayer, game time), and any concluding activities.

Let the kids in on the rehearsal goals for the day. Outlines of the rehearsal may be placed on the board, or printed out in advance. The advantage of printed rehearsal schedules is that you can include information you wish the parents and the students to remember such as an upcoming event or performance, special directions, or dress and conduct codes. Be sure to boil this down to "kids' language."

Feel free to tell the children what you hope to accomplish with each particular piece that day such as: this is a sight reading experience (do the best you can!); we will work on the articulation (technique) changes; let's improve these tricky rhythms; or, try to play it a bit faster. You might share that this is the next piece to be performed and that the group needs to put the final touches on it to make it sound terrific!

Director's remarks: Keep your remarks positive and encouraging. Enthusiasm is contagious. Avoid talking too much! Bell ringers want to make music. Extended time listening to directors pontificate will only lead to playfulness. Make your remarks quick and to the point.

Variety of activities: Nothing is more boring to children than doing the same thing over and over for a long time. There is always another rehearsal. Use it! Here are some ideas for variety.

- Keep all drills brief. The length depends on the age of the children.
- Rehearse several pieces in the time you would spend on one piece for an extended time.
- When the kids need a break, make it short, or you will lose them.
 - a brief physical exercise like bending knees, shaking out hands and arms;
 - a fast drill or short contest;
 - announcement; or
 - a brief theory lesson.
- After a break and a return to a problem, it is often with renewed energy and enthusiasm.
- Vary the rehearsal. Avoid doing the same thing each week.
 - Change the rehearsal room setup.
 - Ring the piece with chimes instead of bells.
 - Record or video the rehearsal.
 - Have a visitor such as parents, staff member, or another adult sit in on a portion of the rehearsal.
- Rotate assignments. Kids are flexible and enjoy ringing different bells.



Watching the Director at Kids Fest 2004

Select appropriate music: The selected repertoire should match the strengths of the kids at their development level. Children will lose interest if the music is too difficult or too easy. Here are some ideas:

- Use the level system to find music appropriate for your group.

IMHO: IT IS POSSIBLE TO KEEP KIDS FOCUSED DURING A REHEARSAL, continued

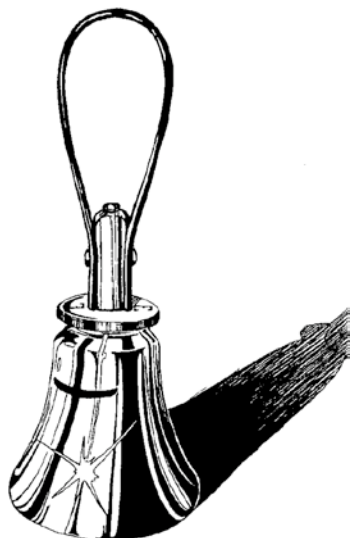
- Pieces with story lines, appealing techniques and that keep kids busy at their skill level are most effective.
- If you include a challenging piece in your developing repertoire, allow adequate preparation for a performance. Rehearse the piece in logical segments, never too long at once, allowing plenty of time to develop the skills required so frustration is minimized.
- Be sure to perform a variety of music styles in different keys, at different tempi, and with different articulations.
- Include processions, bell change patterns, and chord accompaniments to fun sing-a-long songs in addition to the regular repertoire.

Involve the kids: Let them display their skills. They love it! Most will volunteer to "strut their stuff." Ask a few to demonstrate a technique. Create a brief contest between treble and bass ringers.

Select a child to come up in front and listen to the group play a portion of a song. Ask them to point out areas that need improvement. Their musical ear will develop as they listen for misplaced notes or mumbled rhythms. They may notice the group speeding up or slowing down or some ringing too loud. A few children, when encouraged, may hear a need for musical expressivity.

- Develop student directors. Kids love to wave their arms to the various conducting patterns. A few will direct so well that they can manage to direct simple songs effectively.

In summary: Be well prepared; know what you wish to accomplish; have lots of variety; choose appropriate music; keep things moving; involve the kids; have fun! You'll have great rehearsals! - *Dave Ruder*



The hat says it all! Kids' Fest, 2004, Los Gatos, CA

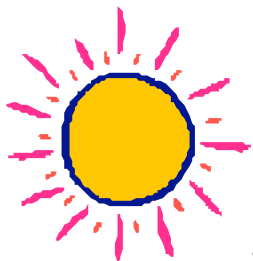


Fast hands at Kids' Fest 2004

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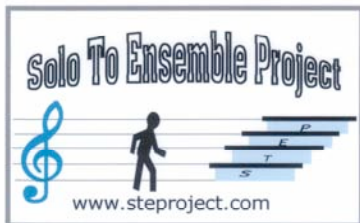
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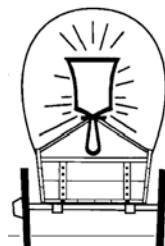
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COMING EVENTS

Event	Date	Clinician	Location	Cost	Contact Information
North San Diego County Ring: Rock-A-My-Soul	June 5, 2004	Nancy Jessup	Christ Presbyterian Church 7807 Centella Street, Carlsbad		Ruth O'Niel ruthrings@hotmail.com
Area XII Ringers Conference	June 25 - 27, 2004	David Davidson	Ontario Convention Center Ontario, California	\$180.00	Lee Waggener chair@areaxii.org www.areaxii.org
Area XII Ringers Conference	July 1 - 4, 2004	David Davidson	Renaissance Ilikai Waikiki 1777 Ala Moana Boulevard Honolulu, Hawaii	\$225.00	Lee Waggener chair@areaxii.org www.areaxii.org
Handbell Spectacular 2004	July 24 - 27, 2004		Marriott Waterside Hotel Norfolk, Virginia		Jane Mary Tenhover (800) 878-5459 executive@agehr.org
Zephyr Point Handbell Conference	July 25-29, 2004	Bill Alexander and Mary Balkow	Zephyr Point Presbyterian Conference Center Zephyr Cove, NV		Zephyr@ZephyrPoint.org
11th International Handbell Symposium	August 3-7, 2004		Westin Harbour Castle Hotel and Convention Center Toronto, Canada		http://www.agehr.org
Summer Ring Workshop	August 4 - 6, 2004	Carolynne Mathis	Concordia University, Irvine, CA		Nancy Jessup (959) 854-8002 ext. 1522
Directors/ Advancing Ringers Workshop	September 18, 2004		Valley Church 10885 N. Stelling Road Cupertino, CA 95014	\$20.00 per person	David Ruder 408) 732-0760 chairelect@area.xii.org
Fall Ringers' Workshop	October 2, 2004	Rudy Rodriquez	Sparks United Methodist Church Sparks, NV		Barb Walsh nevada@areaxii.org
Central California Directors' Workshop	October 9, 2004	William Kyle	St. James Cathedral Fresno	\$25.00 per person	Paulette McFarlin cen_calif@areaxii.org
LA Metro Directors' Workshop and Reading Session	October 16, 2004	Lee and Bill Waggener	Claremont United Church of Christ, Congregational 233 W. Harrison Claremont, CA	\$30.00 per person (includes music packet)	Shirley Heckman la_metro@areaxii.org
Fall Frenzy 2004	October 23, 2004	Barb Walsh	Clear Lake Baptist Church Lakeport, CA	\$12.00 per person	Louanne Marshall no_calif@areaxii.org
A Handbell Directors' Weekend Workshop and Retreat	March 5-6, 2005	Wendy, Lee and Bill Waggener	Pilgrim Pines Camp and Conference Center Oak Glen, CA	Fee TBA - will include music packet, lodging, and 4 meals	Lee Waggener lwaggener@aol.com or Bill Waggener waggwl@aol.com
Bakersfield Spring Ring	March 12, 2005	Lee and Bill Waggener	St. John's Lutheran Church 4500 Buena Vista Bakersfield, CA		Lori Barnett bellsofpraise@yahoo.com
Southern California Spring Ring	April 16, 2005	Lee and Bill Waggener	St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church 1945 Illion Street San Diego		Micki Mennet-Martin so_cal@areaxii.org
Santa Rosa Spring Ring	May 14, 2005	Jason Wells	Santa Rosa, CA		Louanne Marshall no_cal@areaxii.org
Long Beach Spring Ring	April 23, 2005	Lee and Bill Waggener	Grace First Presbyterian Church, Long Beach, CA		Shirley Heckman la_metro@areaxii.org
Riverside Spring Ring	April 30, 2005	Lee and Bill Waggener	All Saints Episcopal Church, Riverside, CA		Shirley Heckman la_metro@areaxii.org
Area XII Ringers' and Young Ringers' Conferences 2006	June 22-25, 2006	Fred Gramann Shosh Meyer	Notre Dame de Namur University Belmont, CA	TBA	David Ruder chairelect@areaxii.org

To submit your events, please email all relevant information to twelfthtone@areaxii.org.

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A NOTE FROM THE KEYBOARD

By sheer coincidence, both Lee Waggener, Chair, and David Ruder, Chair-Elect and author of the IMHO column, have chosen to reflect on the importance of teaching children how to ring in their respective columns for this issue. While that may seem obvious if only because the future of handbell ringing is contingent on developing the next generation of ringers, it also can be an effective component in the development of a lifelong appreciation of the fine arts.

The all-too-frequent absence of systematic exposure to and training in music in the current public school sector leaves a void in our young people's education that *can* be offset by a good handbell experience. Numerous studies have clearly shown that those who have been able to participate in serious musical studies in their youth generally do better in other aspects of intellectual endeavor. This involves not only working closely with others but also learning the self-discipline that is so necessary for meaningful accomplishment in both musical and most other human endeavors.

Our daughters were able to participate in a local Suzuki program as they were growing up - first in violin and later in piano as well. It is interesting to read about how and why Shinichi Suzuki founded

that program many years ago for the children of a devastated Japan. Although a lot of those children have gone on to pursue professional careers in music, churning out a bunch of prodigies is not the actual goal of that program. Rather, his hope was to instill an appreciation for music in children that would lead to an audience in later years that would eagerly support the arts in his country.

We would do well to emulate that here, and although handbell ringing may not be in the same league with orchestral ensembles, it seems to me that handbell musicianship can yield some of the same benefits. Although one might think that it takes a special person to work with youth, given time, just about anyone can learn to do so. If your current program *doesn't* include a children's group, you really might want to start one. Beyond merely giving the young people a unique musical experience, you just might be helping to perpetuate handbell ringing - or even helping to develop the prolific young mind of the next Jonas Salk or Orville Wright.

William L. Waggener
Editor



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