



The American Guild of English Handbell Ringers, Inc.
Area IX—Texas & Oklahoma
Ringing News
Spring 2007

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From the chair...

There is a famous advertising phrase that says: "Membership has its rewards!" This is also true of membership in AGEHR. Whenever you receive a copy of **Overtones**, think about the many helpful articles you've read over the years. Has this made you a better ringer or director? The last time you went to a reading session or workshop, did you come home with more knowledge than when you went? How about those absolutely fabulous Summer Festival/Conferences you've attended? The camaraderie with your choirs, the new friendships and connections you've made with other ringers and directors, the knowledge you gained from the educational sessions can all be priceless. Just going to the concerts and soaking in all those wonderful sounds is a grand benefit of belonging.

Many AGEHR membership benefits are available nationally as well as in Area IX. But unless you attend, you will not benefit! The first is the **Central Texas Spring Ring** at Westlake United Methodist Church in Austin, TX. It's on Saturday, February 24 and directed by Arnold Sherman. You'll find more detailed information and a registration form in this newsletter.

It's not too early to plan for or attend **Basic Training for Rookie Ringers** sessions in late August or early September. Response to this opportunity the past two years was been overwhelming. We are expanding the locations and number of sessions offered:

San Antonio	Oklahoma City
Bryan/College Station area	Dallas area
Tyler/East Texas area	The Woodlands

If there is strong demand for additional locations, we will try to make that available (email me if you are interested in hosting an event in your area). Check the Area IX website (www.areaix.org) for dates and details.

These events are short, one-day events. But there is also a longer event to consider – the **National Seminar**. It will be in Addison (Dallas area) July 18-21, 2007. If you missed the National Seminar in Dallas in 2005 – DON'T MISS THIS ONE!!! You can find information at www.agehr.org. If it's your first National Seminar, consider applying for the Kristopher Jon Anthony Memorial Scholarship (requirements and registration information also in this newsletter).

I hope you will make plans to join us at one or more of these events. The Area IX Board exists to help *educate, to promote the exchange of ideas relating to handbell and handchime ringing, and to sponsor educational activities that are not exclusively competitive among its members.* We hope you will take advantage of these opportunities. If there is something else you would like us to offer to help achieve this objective, do not hesitate to let us know!!

Happy Ringing!

Ben Harris
Area IX Chair

North Texas Rep

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Denton, TX 76201
(940)565-2860

South Texas Rep

Michelle Tejada
1105 Iris Crescent Drive
Floresville, TX 78114
(830) 393-7436

www.areaix.org



Schedule of Upcoming Handbell Festivals and Events



IX-S =Area IX Sponsored Event IX-E=Area IX Endorsed Event N=National AGEHR

Date	Event	Site	Clinician	Contact
February 3, 2007	GDHA's Youth Handbell Festival	Preston Hollow Presbyterian 9800 Preston Rd. Dallas, TX	Hart Morris	www.dallashandbells.org
February 9, 2007	Ensemble Extravaganza	First United Methodist Church Round Rock, TX	Kevin McChesney & David Jordan	www.handbellseminars.com seminars@jhsbell.com
February 10, 2007	Ensemble Extravaganza	University Baptist Church Ft. Worth, TX	Kevin McChesney & David Jordan	www.handbellseminars.com seminars@jhsbell.com
February 12, 2007	Ensemble Extravaganza	Greater Houston Handbell Association Location: TBA	Kevin McChesney & David Jordan	www.handbellseminars.com seminars@jhsbell.com
February 13, 2007	Ensemble Extravaganza	St. Andrews UMC San Antonio, TX	Kevin McChesney & David Jordan	www.handbellseminars.com seminars@jhsbell.com
February 14, 2007	Using Handbells & Handchimes Successfully in Schools	St. Andrews UMC San Antonio, TX	Kevin McChesney & David Jordan	www.handbellseminars.com seminars@jhsbell.com
February 23 & 24, 2007	FebFest	First Baptist Church 7401 Katy Freeway Houston, TX	Hart Morris	Ruth Seiwel, 979-236-4736 ruthseiwel@sbcglobal.net
February 24, 2007	Central Texas Spring Ring (IX-S)	Westlake UMC 1460 Red Bud Trail Austin, TX	Arnold Sherman	Susan Finnigan 512-329-9446 secretary@areaix.org
February 24, 2007	TulsaFest (IX-E)	Tulsa Convention Center 100 Civic Center Tulsa, OK	Mary Kay Parrish	Sheryl Tomlinson (918)392-1199 x 473 education@areaix.org
March 3, 2007	Ponca City Area Handbell Festival (IX-E)	Northern Oklahoma College East Gymnasium Tonkawa, OK	Arnold Sherman	Marta Sullivan (580)762-9102
April 21, 2007	GDHA's 2007 Brookhaven Festival (Intermediate)	Brookhaven Community College Dallas, TX	Tim Waugh	www.dallashandbells.org
April 28, 2007	GDHA's 2007 Brookhaven Festival (Advanced)	Brookhaven Community College Dallas, TX	Tim Waugh	www.dallashandbells.org
July 18-21, 2007	AGEHR National Seminar	Intercontinental Hotel Addison, TX	Various	www.agehr.org

DEADLINE FOR SUMMER 2007 ISSUE OF RINGING NEWS—April 1, 2007

Ringling News is published in February, May, August, and November. Deadline is the first of the month prior to publication. Ringling News is designed to inform AGEHR Area IX members of handbell events and Area IX business. Members are encouraged to submit articles for publication. Advertising space is available at rates of \$12.50 for a business card ad \$25 for a quarter page \$50 for a half page.

Copy must be submitted as camera ready. Questions/ comments should be addressed to:
Tara Lewis, Publications Editor
580 CR 4517, Hondo, TX 78861
830-741-2103 publications@areaix.org

Are you planning a handbell event in your neck of the woods?

Let us know and we will be happy to add it to this page and post it on the Area IX website.

For an even better deal, consider having your event endorsed by AGEHR.

Endorsed events will receive additional coverage in this newsletter. Also, ASCAP licensing fee coverage and liability insurance coverage is available for endorsed events.

For more information, call the AGEHR office at (800) 878-5459

Youth Handbell Choirs
Part I - Starting a Youth Handbell Choir
By Karen Thompson

I was asked to write about starting a youth bell choir. The “starting” part is easy. It is the “maintaining” part that is difficult. So, I’ll address both in this two-part article series on Youth Handbell Choirs. Now this article is slanted towards church situations, since that is my experience. “Youth” is defined as middle school and high school. Children’s bell programs (elementary age) are an entirely different animal and would be an entirely different article.

ARE YOU CRAZY?

But first of all, why would you even want to start a youth handbell choir? Do you know how difficult it is? Youth are late to rehearsal, they talk during rehearsal, they forget about rehearsal, and they even forget on a Sunday morning when they are supposed to be ringing in church! Basically, they don’t how to make and honor commitments, which every handbell director knows is vital to a successful handbell program. It takes way more work outside of rehearsal to start and maintain a youth bell choir, way more work than your adult bell choir, and even more work than your children’s bell choir. So why even bother?

You may think I was over generalizing in the preceding paragraph. And true, not all youth are commitment-challenged. However, it is my experience that an overwhelming majority of them will have commitment issues at some point during the year and that will cause frustration to the director and the rest of the group.

So is it worth the hassle? I definitely think so.

REASONS WHY

Youth make incredibly great ringers! They learn fast and love challenges. Some of the best groups I have ever heard and conducted were youth. If you love conducting advanced groups, start a youth bell choir!

But is that enough of a reason? Have I convinced you, yet? No? OK, here are several more. The team effort that is unique to handbells can be a very powerful ministry; by being part of a team, they know they have an important role to fill. You will find a few youth whose only link to church is participation in bell choir. Youth often tell me that they join bell choir to be with their friends, so don’t kid yourself into thinking that it is all about the music. But they also tell me that they love being part of a music ministry and love leading worship. Belonging to and being an integral part of a team, coming to church, leading worship can be important and powerful experiences in their spiritual and individual development. And yes, they do enjoy making music!

OK, one last reason and perhaps the most important: *youth need to learn how to make and keep commitments*. What better place than in a bell choir where commitment is so crucial?

STARTING A YOUTH BELL CHOIR FROM SCRATCH

OK, let’s address the “how-to-start” part. Start with yourself. My advice: come from the standpoint of “youth worker” first and “handbell conductor” second. Know that the young ringers will let you down at times. Just love ‘em and forgive ‘em.

One of the hardest things in starting a bell choir is determining a rehearsal time and keeping that time sacred. The best times are just before or just after they are already at church doing something else. You must work with your youth pastor AND other church staff AND youth committee. If you are to be successful, it is essential that everyone be in your corner. If you don’t have the support of the other youth workers, you are doomed! Honor the other youth programs and ask that they honor yours.

RECRUITING

Next comes the recruiting. Go to where the youth are: Sunday School, youth group, wherever they gather. Make phone calls. They don’t read the church newsletter and only a miniscule percentage will read a target mailing! You must get in their face. I’ve started youth programs in three different churches and I always start with a come-check-it-out period, usually about 3 or 4 rehearsals. I’ve called it “test-drive” and “rookie training camp”. Try to reach the musicians and non-musicians. Play up the fact they don’t need to know how to read music. But for those who are musicians, emphasize the fact they will love learning a new instrument. I tell the jocks that athletes make great bell ringers. Of course, I also tell the band members that they make great bell ringers. Remember, the youth will join bell choir to be with their friends. Try to get a few of the influential kids to agree to come for the “test-drive” period and have them help recruit. The youth are much better recruiters than us. If you get a few key teens excited about it, they will bring their friends.

FIRST REHEARSALS

Know that the first rehearsals will set the tone for the program. I always start with a brief and quick rundown of the rules for the room (no gum, no leaning on tables, no horseplay, etc.) I don't address the "commitment" issue in the first few rehearsals. That comes later. First you have to hook them and that will take some FUN rehearsals.

For those first few rehearsals, I do start at the very beginning ("this is how you hold a bell") but I talk VERY fast and I progress through all the basic stuff as fast as I can. They will pick up WAY faster than children and adults, so RUN! If you want a copy of my lesson plan for my first rehearsals, email me. I have a systematic and developmental approach that goes from point "alpha" to point "omega". I won't omit anything even there are good many of them who have already rung. I acknowledge those who have rung before and tell them it will be a "review" for them AND I also call upon those with experience to help the rookies.

As fast as possible, get into a real piece of music and yes, and I always start with level one IF there are more than half who have never rung. I might do a level 1+ or 2- if over half have some ringing experience. Music selection is important (I'll talk more about that topic later in the Part II article). But in the beginning when you are playing easy music, you don't want anyone to be bored. Even if they are all novice ringers, you might have some great musicians who pick it up so fast that could plop down into your level 3 adult group. They might not be bored the first rehearsal or so, but they will by the third or fourth. So, here a few tips on how to keep the more adept ringers challenged. In level 1 music, you can combine position 1 (CD4) and position 2 (EF4) into one position. Give your all-state trombone (or whatever) player a quick lesson in weaving. That'll keep him out of trouble! Next, you've got the youth who have taken piano for 8 years and/or who have some ringing experience. I give them a crash course in shelley and 4-in-hand ringing. Even if you are only playing a 3 octave piece but have five octaves of bells, ask them to double some of the notes 8va. It is better in the beginning to first double with octaves rather than create a position that is say: G6, A6, B6, C7. If you only have 3 octaves at your disposal, then double G5 with G6 and C6 with C7. In these first rehearsals, don't worry if you don't have enough ringers to cover all the positions. Pick music with stacked chords and they won't mind a missing part or two (but mention it so that you can enlist them to fill the "empty spot"). But do pick music with techniques (swing, shake, mart). Techniques are fun! Teach them something simple that can be rung in church ASAP. A handbell peal as in introit is perfect!

As the "test-drive" period concludes, sit down with them and discuss the bell program. This is the point in which to ask for a commitment. It is best to include the parents at this point, especially if your group is middle school. Please know that is the only the first of many discussions you will have regarding "commitment". But include other things on the agenda: name for the group, what to wear, worship leading, etc.

In the next issue, I will address the care and feeding of an established youth handbell choir. It will be chock full of tips and ideas that have worked for me!

About the author:

Karen Thompson has a Bachelor of Liberal Arts degree with a Music Major from Austin College of Sherman, Texas and is currently serving at First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth where her duties include conducting three handbell ensembles. She is the present and founding President of Concert Bells of Ft. Worth, and served as Co-conductor of the ensemble for two years. And active conductor and clinician, Karen is frequently called upon to conduct and teach at regional and national events. Additionally, Karen has served on the Area IX Board of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers and chaired the AGEHR National Seminar in Dallas in 2005.



**ANNOUNCING:
AUDITIONS FOR SHOWCASE CONCERT
2008 FESTIVAL/CONFERENCE (Austin, TX)**

The Area IX Board would like to invite your handbell choir and/or ensemble to audition for the Showcase Concert at the 2008 Festival/Conference which will be held in Austin, TX. Interested choirs, please submit a video tape or DVD containing 3 pieces of performance quality to:

Area IX Past-Chair
Stephanie Scott
Grace Presbyterian Church
4300 W. Park Blvd.
Plano, TX 75093

DEADLINE: October 15, 2007

Note: If the video/DVD has more than 3 pieces on it, only the first 3 will be considered.

CHIME LOAN PROGRAM UPDATE!

The Area IX Board has two new recipients for the 2006-2007 school year:

Michael Jimenez
Kirkpatrick Middle School
Ft. Worth, TX

And

Melody Long
Bryker Woods Elementary School
Austin, TX

For this school year, the recipients will receive a three-octave set of chimes, a 1-year membership in AGEHR, educational materials and a mentor to support them in starting this new opportunity in the music program. We are excited for these great teachers and hope that this opportunity helps further the goal of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers to advance "the musical art of handbell/handchime ringing through education, community, and communication."

Paula & Rick Knapp



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2007 Central Texas Spring Ring
Saturday, February 24, 2007
Westlake United Methodist Church
1460 Red Bud Trail
Austin, TX



ABOUT THE CLINICIAN:

ARNOLD SHERMAN, currently living in Tyler, Texas, is a freelance composer and co-founder of Red River Music. His undergraduate work in music education was done at Montgomery College, Rockville, Maryland, and Baylor University, Waco, Texas. Arnold is the founder and Director of the East Texas Handbell Ensemble. A clinician and guest conductor, he has led choral and handbell workshops, festivals, and reading sessions throughout the United States, Canada, England, Japan and the Bahamas. Arnold teaches the Composing for Handbells class each summer at Concordia University, Mequon, Wisconsin. He has been a recipient of an ASCAP Standard Award every year since 1992. Arnold has numerous choral and handbell pieces in print and is an active member of the AGEHR where he has served as Area IX Chairman.

Music Repertoire for CTSR:

A Carol for All Seasons, Terry Price
MHP1272
3-5 Octaves/Level 3

Our Great Redeemer's Praise, Arnold Sherman
MRRHB0018
3-5 Octaves/Level 3

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross, Arnold Sherman
MHP2356
3-6 Octaves/Level 3

Shout to the Lord, Kevin McChesney
MFBBGH1003
3-5 Octaves/Level 2

Schedule:

8:00 a.m. Registration/Set-Up
9:00 a.m. Rehearsal
10:30 a.m. Break
10:45 a.m. Rehearsal
Noon Lunch
1:00 p.m. Rehearsal
2:15 p.m. Break
2:30 p.m. Concert (open to public)
3:30 p.m. Load out

If you haven't registered, please contact us immediately!!
Wilson Van Tine, treasurer@areaix.org, (918)331-2112
Susan Finnigan, secretary@areaix.org, (512)329-9446



Central Texas Spring Ring

February 24, 2007

Westlake UMC, Austin

Clinician: Arnold Sherman

This annual one-day ringing event is open to individuals and choirs and features a variety of classes as well as the opportunity to ring under the direction of Arnold Sherman. Don't miss this great event!

2007 Central Texas Spring Ring Registration Form

Director's Name _____ AGEHR Membership # _____

Organization/Church/School _____

Mailing Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone # _____ Organization Phone # _____ Email _____

Choir Name _____

FEES:

\$15 per participant (ringer or director) if NOT an AGEHR Member _____ x _____ = \$ _____

OR join the AGEHR now for \$65 and pay the member rate _____ x _____ = \$ _____

\$10 per participant (ringer or director) for AGEHR Members _____ x _____ = \$ _____

Table Rental (\$1.25 per linear foot*) _____ x _____ = \$ _____

Lunch \$5 per participant _____ x _____ = \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE (Please make check payable to AGEHR Area IX) \$ _____

- Please indicate the number of linear feet of floor space you will need, WHETHER OR NOT you are renting tables or bringing your own: _____ ft.

REGISTER & PAY ONLINE: www.areaix.org

Or send registration form & payment (checks made out to AGEHR Area IX) to:
Wilson Van Tine, Treasurer, 617 N. Spruce Ave., Bartlesville, OK 74006.

For Event questions or information, please contact
Susan Finnigan, secretary@areaix.org, (512)329-9946

Kristopher Jon Anthony Memorial Scholarship
for the AGEHR National Seminar, Dallas, TX
July 18-21, 2007

The Area IX Board is pleased to offer a \$500 scholarship to the National Seminar in 2007. This seminar will feature classes and tracks for directors and ringers of all levels and abilities, as well as concerts by some of the top handbell performers. This scholarship may be used toward registration and other expenses associated with attending this event.

Eligibility Requirements:

- (1) AGEHR member in good standing;
- (2) Director of at least one handbell choir at time of application, and also following seminar;
- (3) Area IX resident (Oklahoma or Texas);
- (4) This event must be your first National Seminar;
- (5) Recipient is to write a short summary of his/her experience at the Seminar.

Application Deadline is March 1, 2007

Name: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip _____

Telephone number: (home) _____ (work) _____

Church/School: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip _____

AGEHR Member for _____ years. AGEHR membership # _____

Choir(s) currently directing (include age/grade level) _____

Is your Seminar attendance dependent upon scholarship? _____

Is your church/school able to help you with expenses? _____

Please write a brief summary of your handbell program and describe your goals for how Seminar attendance will benefit your work. Use a separate sheet of paper and enclose with this application form.

Send this application, postmarked no later than March 1, 2007
To Bob Avant, 2619 Brisbane Road, Austin, TX 78745
Email: Chairelect@areaix.org

Questions? For Scholarship information, contact Bob Avant at (512)442-3314 or chairelect@areaix.org.
For more information about the National Seminar, check out www.agehr.org.





*Welcome back to Dallas...
And prepare for a brand new
experience!*

*AGEHR National Seminar 2007
July 18-21, 2007
The InterContinental Hotel Dallas
Addison, TX*

AGEHR is excited to present:

- Four ringing tracks featuring the directorial talents of Mike Joy, Kermit Junkert, Mary Kay Parrish, and Tim Waugh
- New classes: Visual Choreography for Bells, Ear Training, Memorization, English and American Folk Dancing, Critical Listening, Marketing and PR, Hearing Conservation for Musicians, Bell Talk with the “Ringen Brothers” and more
- New Tracks: “I’m a New Director, Now What?” and “Body and Bell Connection with Healthy Ringing™”
- Expanded classes on Finale®, Handbell Favorites with a new twist including techniques, processions, exercises, change ringing, certification classes, contracts—both performance and employer, working with youth and much more. Classes for those who work with Special Populations: Hearing Impaired, Seniors, Handicapped and Music Therapy
- Spectacular Concerts featuring: The Raleigh Ringers, East Texas Handbell Ensemble, Concordia University Alleluia Ringers, and Bronzeworks

Even More...

Following our opening concert on Wednesday night, you’ll have time to greet your friends (and make new ones) at our opening reception to be held in the Handbell Industry Council’s Handbell Galleria. Save time each day for special shopping opportunities and prize drawings.

One evening will feature a new class format design to keep you moving. Other special events include the opening keynote address, a hymn festival, and the closing banquet.

Pinnacle Experience

Pinnacle Experience is designed for advanced community or church ensembles (not individual ringers) and will be structured to provide them the opportunity to ring bronze-level music with six wonderful composer/directors: David Davidson (conducting a Betty Garee composition), Bill Mathis, Hart Morris, Mary Kay Parrish, Valerie Stephenson, and Kath Wissinger.

**For details about events, lodging, Scholarship opportunities, and airfare discounts, visit the AGEHR website:
www.agehr.org
Or call Vickie Iverson at the AGEHR office
(800)878-5459**

Spring Concert Listings

DATE/TIME	EVENT	SITE	TICKET PRICES	CONTACT
Friday, April 27 2007 7:30 p.m.	Strikepoint of Texas presents "An Evening with Dobrinski"	Kingwood First Baptist Church Kingwood, TX	Adults, \$10 Students, \$5	Melanie Bankston (281)358-1464 MelanieUKH@aol.com
Saturday, April 28 2007 7:30 p.m.	Strikepoint of Texas presents "An Evening with Dobrinski"	Kingwood First Baptist Church Kingwood, TX	Adults, \$10 Students, \$5	Melanie Bankston (281)358-1464 MelanieUKH@aol.com
Sunday, April 29 2007	River City Ringers at Mission San Jose Spring Fiesta	Mission San Jose 701 E. Pyron Ave. San Antonio, TX		Laura Kaarlsen, (210)256-2418 rivercityringers@yahoo.com
Sunday, May 6 2007 4:00 p.m.	River City Ringers At Community Fine Arts Network	Cibolo, TX	\$5	Laura Kaarlsen, (210)256-2418 rivercityringers@yahoo.com
Friday, May 11, 2007 7:30 p.m.	River City Ringers Spring Concert	TBA	Free	Laura Kaarlsen (210)256-2418 rivercityringers@yahoo.com
Sunday, May 13 2007 3:00 p.m.	The Dorothy Shaw Bell Choir's Annual Spring Concert	Walsh Fine Arts Center Ft. Worth Academy of Fine Arts 3901 S. Hulen St. Ft. Worth, TX	Free	www.dorothyshaw Bellchoir.org
Wednesday, July 18 2007 7:00 p.m.	The Alleluia Ringers Of Concordia University— Wisconsin	Zion Lutheran Church 6121 E. Lovers Lane Dallas, TX 75214	Freewill offering	Sam Eatherton (214)363-1639
Thursday, July 19 2007 7:00 p.m.	Raleigh Ringers	Chapelwood UMC Houston, TX	Free	www.rr.org Sondra Tucker (281)531-4245

Area IX Seed Money Grants for Start-up Projects

Seed-money grants to encourage development of local handbell events are offered by Area IX in the amount of \$200. These grants are available to any AGEHR Area IX member church, school or other organization sponsoring a first-time handbell event within the area. To qualify, the event sponsor must submit in writing:

1. Type of event (festival, conference, training workshop, etc.) and its purpose
2. Projected budget, including how the seed money will be spent (seed money is often used for publicity and other "up front" expenses, but is not limited to that use)
3. Name of clinician(s)
4. How event will be advertised, including "target area" for publicity (seed money cannot be awarded to an event that will conflict with another Area IX endorsed event).

Applications for seed-money grants should be submitted four to six months prior to event and must be approved by the

POSITION ANNOUNCEMENTS/BELL ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you have a position that you would like to announce,
need to borrow bells, or are looking to sell bells and/or chimes,
let us know and we'll post it in the next issue of Ringing News and on our website!

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INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING?

The Ringing News reaches over 600 handbell ringers and/or directors with each issue. If you would like to advertise your business or services, please contact:

*Tara Lewis, Publications Chair
publications@areaix.org, or (830)741-2103*

Rates:

*\$12.50—Business card ad, \$25—Quarter Page
\$50—Half Page*

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AGEHR Mission Statement:

The American Guild of English Handbell Ringers is dedicated to advancing the musical art of handbell/handchime ringing through education, community and communication.

The AGEHR Needs YOU!

For Membership information, contact an area representative listed on page one, call the National Office (866)878-5459, or visit their website: www.agehr.org and click on "How to Join".

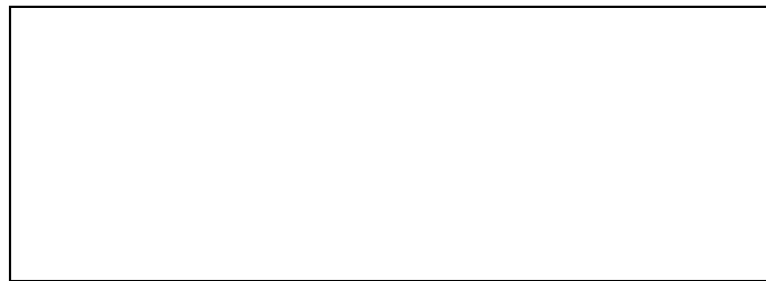
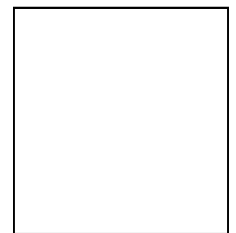
If you are an AGEHR member, please share this newsletter with new handbell directors you encounter or contact the area representatives so we can get information to them. Also, encourage your ringers to check out AGEHR. Ringer memberships are also available.

EACH ONE REACH ONE!



**Don't forget to check us out on the
web: www.areaix.org**

AGEHR Area IX Ringing News
Spring 2007
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