

Notes from MAINE



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Thanks to all the folks who completed the demographic survey last month. If you did not receive the survey, please let me know.

We actually heard from 22 Maine bell choirs of which 4 were youth choirs.

It was decided at the last Area 1 Board of Directors meeting that each state should focus on support for youth bell choirs who will be the future of bell ringing in Maine. So I will be contacting those directors and asking questions such as: "what kind of support from Area 1 would be helpful to your group," or "what events might we offer to give your ringers a good experience," or "are there workshops your youth would enjoy," etc.

The youth choirs we heard from include: Church of Universal Fellowship, Orono, Middle School Choir and Childrens' Choir; Deering High School, Portland; Lincoln Middle School, Portland; and also from Freeport, the Pinetree Academy has an excellent

youth choir, and on the horizon is the Colby College handbell choir which has newly reactivated under the direction of Gail Kelly (Over the River Bells).

As I mentioned in the previous *Fundamental Tone*, each of the New England state chairs will be bringing a basket representing their state to the Festival Conference at the end of June to be included in a raffle. The baskets will be displayed near the exhibitors area and conference attendees will be able to purchase as many raffle tickets as they wish. They may then drop their tickets in the boxes on each state table for a drawing later in the Conference. Maine has a beautiful basket, which has been filled with lots of wonderful gifts and I thank all those folks who contributed to the Maine State Basket.

I will be attending the Conference along with other Maine bell ringers and directors and am looking forward to the sounds of 500 ringers playing together at the University of Hartford. The opening concert will be "Forte" a small bell ensemble with rapid-fire ability and choreography that is sure to amaze the audience. I am looking forward to the many workshops I have signed up for and, as an aside, nothing to do with bell ringing, I will be taking a class on Barber Shop Singing. What fun!!!!

Also, your Maine Spring Ring committee is very close to announcing the Conductor and the date for MSR2020. We are in communication with our final candidate and once announced, the repertoire will be our next priority. We recognize how important it is to determine the pieces to be played and let choirs know so that budget issues can be addressed. Our goal is to have this information out by early summer.

And finally, Penobscot Bay Ringers presented a spring concert, *Bells by the Bay*, on Saturday, May 11th, in Camden, Maine. The concert was a fundraiser for the Camden-based organization, Storm Warriors International, and the free-will offering collected \$1,461 for the non-profit.



Shown in the photo, L to R, are Amy Rollins, Artistic Director for Penobscot Bay Ringers; Jon Nappa, Founder and CEO of Storm Warriors International; and Leigh Smith, Co-Founder and ringer for Penobscot Bay Ringers.

See you at Festival Conference,
Sue