

Notes from MAINE



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Hello and greetings to Bell Ringers from across Maine.

As you are aware, we are all experiencing the impact of Coronavirus in our lives, on so many events and celebrations, on activities involving wonderful traditions and on the health and welfare of our families and friends. Things have changed and we have to look at disappointments and how to pull together. When we notified you that the Maine Spring Ring would not go forward on March 28th due to the Coronavirus, we also indicated that we would continue to have conversations about the possibility of rescheduling to the Fall. We asked that you be patient for a short wait as we explored alternatives and we thank you for honoring that request. We addressed the issues associated with this potential change as promised and were happy to let you know that **October 24th** was available to us at the same location as our spring plans, The Auburn Middle School. In addition, all conductors and clinicians have recommitted to this event.

So just to remind you of the salient points as stated in that communication I have listed them as follows:

- Maine Spring Ring 2020 is rescheduled for October 24, 2020
- All registrations including boxed lunch fees are transferred to the rescheduled event
- If you are unable to attend on this new date a refund may be secured by contacting Susan Schultz: registrar.area1@handbellmusicians.org
- All requests for refunds must be made by the person who originally registered.

Let's hope that we can ring together in the Fall but be prepared for the potential hard decision to cancel.

On another note, we have also heard from Amy Rollins, Artistic Director, Penobscot Bay Ringers who sends greetings from Midcoast Maine, where a partial re-opening of our local economy is emerging. She hopes we all practice caution and patience to see clear to the other side of this pandemic.

Penobscot Bay Ringers last met in person on March 12th and they continue to keep in touch through email and Facebook. As in "normal" times, Amy reports that her ringers continue to find ways to be cheerful, caring, and creative. She misses seeing them, and especially in these weeks leading up to what would have been their spring concerts.

Amy has been using her time at home to dream up future handbell offerings. With some handbells at home, she has logged one bell tree solo for Easter:

(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSRdV3CHbgmbaD-qVkBfZ7g>). Hopefully there will be more music to come, very soon.

And from Kim Visbaras of the Auburn Methodist Ringers an idea worth considering: Kim suggests this is a great time to perform full maintenance of bell sets before returning to ringing. He plans on starting with their five octave set this month. If choirs have folks who can provide this maintenance or who want to learn, they may do so by accessing the Malmark and Schumerich websites. This is also an opportune time to do chime set adjustments for consistent sound.

And finally, the Ocean Park summer bell choir is currently exploring possible live streaming or video taping music for summer services. Because the Temple floor will not be set up for congregational seating this summer, the bell tables can be arranged in a variety of available configurations, designed to maintain a 6 ft. distance between each ringer. If folks are comfortable with a face mask requirement and a different set up we may be able to confidently perform a number of our beautiful handbell pieces.

Stay safe and well.

Susan I. Evans, Maine State Chair

