



THREE RIVERS
RINGERS



Fourteenth Annual Western Pennsylvania Handbell Festival

September 2013

Dear Handbell Directors and Ringers,

The Fourteenth Western Pennsylvania Handbell Festival will be held **Saturday, April 5, 2014!** Our location is the campus of **Robert Morris University in Moon Township, PA**, near the Pittsburgh International Airport. This is a wonderful venue for our rehearsals, classes, and concert, and we are ecstatic to return to RMU again this year. The WPA Festival is co-sponsored by **Three Rivers Ringers**, Pittsburgh's premier handbell ensemble, the **Robert Morris University Band Program**, and **Musik Innovations**. Members of Three Rivers Ringers will be teaching and performing at the festival, as well as planning the event. The Robert Morris Band program, under the direction of Elisabeth H. Charles, has been vital in helping us secure space at the RMU campus. They will be working with Three Rivers Ringers to handle all the behind-the-scenes work to make this year's event a success. The event is endorsed by the Handbell Musicians of America. Send your registration forms in now; this is one festival you don't want to miss!

Our clinician this year, acclaimed conductor **Ron Bellamy**, began ringing handbells in 1979, and has been a performer and clinician for Handbell Exploration, Handbell Musicians of America, and Solo/Ensemble Extravaganza. A former member of the Philadelphia Handbell Ensemble, he is also a solo handbell artist, and was a featured soloist at the 2013 Handbell Musicians of America Area 2 Festival in Oswego, NY. Ron is presently directing five handbell choirs at four Lancaster area churches. He has conducted several massed ringing events including the Nittany Valley Handbell Festival, and he has directed the Bucknell University Rooke Chapel Ringers on several occasions in Dr. William Payn's absence. Ron was the conductor for the 2011 Area 2 Young Ringers Handbell Festival in Kutztown, PA, and was co-director of the 2011 Ring-Fest, a youth handbell festival in Toledo, OH. A graduate of the University of Scranton and a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, his full-time employment is in the field of accounting and finance.

You will love the music for this year's WPA Festival! Please take advantage of the links on the music list to listen to all of the selections, and do not hesitate to ask us questions about the repertoire. The six level 1+ thru level 2+ selections will take your choir through the church year since we have chosen music that will provide repertoire for Christmas, Lent and Easter and the general church year. Our 'golden oldie', *I'm just a poor wayfaring stranger*, is a repeat from the 2011 festival. Our sponsor, **Musik Innovations**, will have this year's repertoire in stock and will be happy to provide music packets for your choir—please consider purchasing your music from them, as it helps support the festival. You can contact Gretchen Wilmouth, or another Musik Innovations staff member, at 800-667-TUNE (8863).

Also, consider showing off your choir by playing a solo at the festival concert! Solo numbers are always great additions to a concert program and can give your ringers something to shoot for as they develop their ringing skills over the course of the year.

Are you a new Director? Are you thinking about starting a new handbell ensemble? Would you like some new conducting tips? The festival will offer **two seminars for directors: a seminar for new directors** led by Nancy Lutz, Artistic Director of Three Rivers Ringers, and a seminar in conducting techniques with Elisabeth H. Charles, Director of Bands at Robert Morris University. Each seminar is being offered for a fee of \$25. Details are contained in the accompanying Director's Seminar letter.

Speaking of directors, we'd like to extend an invitation to all directors to attend a Director's Luncheon held in a special reserved area of RMU's Nicholson Center Food Court. Ron Bellamy, Elisabeth H. Charles, Nancy Lutz, Brian Blackall (Schulmerich), and Andy Seay (Three Rivers Ringers) look forward to greeting you and discussing topics of interest during the lunch break.

If you have any questions, check out our Frequently Asked Questions page in the registration packet, or contact Cynthia Donahoe, WPA Festival Registrar (wpa@threeriversringers.org, 412-571-0273). Information about the festival is also at www.handbellmusicians.org and at www.threeriversringers.org/wpa/

Please send your registration form and fees by **January 31, 2014** to take advantage of the early bird discount (\$15 off). The final registration deadline is **March 7, 2014**.

I look forward to seeing you at the festival!

Karen Hecht Brown, WPA Festival Manager
WPA/Three Rivers Ringers
wpa@threeriversringers.org

P.S. Remember, choirs that are not Handbell Musicians of America members may attend one festival before becoming a member. Returning attendees will need to provide their membership number.

Attachments: Registration Form, Music List, Beginning Handbell Director Seminar/Conducting Workshop Flyer, Festival Schedule, FAQ Sheet.