

Biennial Report from Vermont

1. Area 1, Handbell Musicians of America June 2015

Vermont Spring Rings are held at rotating sites in the state so that all areas have it easier to attend with our average attendance being approximately 250. Our Saturday ring is preceded by a Friday evening Directors Workshop and dinner. We rely heavily on volunteer labor and community donations to help keep the cost to attend low and are proud to state that each event either breaks even or yields a small profit. The 2014 event was held at AD Lawton school in Essex Junction with the clinician Michael Glasgow. Our 2015 Ring was at Bellow Falls High School and our clinician was Beth Judd, former AGHER president. Since few, if any, Vermont choirs are able to attend Festival Conference, we feel it vital to expose our choirs to nationally recognized directors.

In addition to Spring Ring, the yearly calendar in Vermont is full of Fall Skill Building Workshops (usually held in 2 locations) and January repertoire preparation workshops. Again, these are held in rotating parts of the state since it is not always easy to “get to thar from har”.

All events in the state of Vermont are put on by the Vermont Handbell Association. The VHA was formed in 2011 to manage all events and to promote the art of Handbell ringing in the state. It receives an endorsement from The Guild for the Spring Rings.

In the summer of 2014, the VHA was reorganized when the original president and Spring Ring organizer stepped down. I have been elected as the President of VHA. Besides the Secretary and Treasurer, there are Spring Ring Chairs and Chair elect and another Small Events Coordinator. We feel this structure will help facilitate the continuing work of furthering Handbell ringing in our small state while avoiding burnout on the part of the volunteers.

We continue to search out new directors in need of mentorship and those elusive closet bells. This past fall, one of these sets saw the light of day again when they were used as accompaniment for a local ladies choral groups Holiday concerts. People were entranced and some more converts were made to the magic of handbells.

Respectfully submitted:

Patricia Pranger

Vermont State Chair

Handbell Musicians of America, Area 1