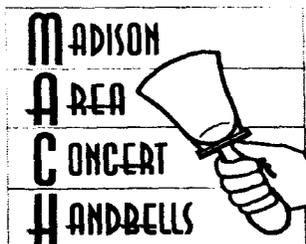


Madison Area Concert Handbells *Messenger*

Spring 2006



www.madisonhandbells.org



*Sharing the delights
of a Picnic in the Park*

Please put up the
enclosed poster.
Thank you!

Picnic in the Park

Enjoy a day's adventure in the park as expressed by MACH's scintillating handbells and chimes! As you enter the park, the first piece, a syncopated *Walk in the Park*, will add spring to your steps and inspire anticipation of a wonderful day. You'll then be greeted by *Song of the Flowers*, a medley of Taiwanese folk melodies that describes the beauty of nature. One of America's favorite garden flowers, *Gladiolus*, is featured next in a ragtime style. As you marvel at the lush environment of the park, our guest singer and harpist will join the bells and chimes in a favorite song of the 1940s to 1960's--*The Green Cathedral*.

Next, imagine watching a single leaf as it floats down a nearby rocky stream, twirling through the sunlight and the shadows. *Impression of a Leaf* is a flowing whole tone composition that propels the leaf through turbulent rapids before it can safely drift into still waters. Scott Joplin's familiar *Maple Leaf Rag* follows, enhanced by some rhythmic magic by our guest percussionist. Then, high in the trees, we focus on a firebird, allowing Stravinsky's *Firebird Finale* to refresh us all with its flamboyant melodies and colorful harmonies.

After enjoying some light picnic fare during intermission, everyone will want to climb aboard the merry-go-round for Richard Rodgers' appealing *Carousel Waltz*. Afterwards, strident chords foreshadow a gathering storm. An irregular meter of 5/8 contrasting with 6/8 and 4/4 meters reflects random flashes of lightning and billowing clouds as the storm brews, gathers momentum, and finally erupts in all its fury. *The Tempest* leaves the ground sodden with rain, prompting our ringers to present the "get-down" swinging piece, *Mississippi Mud*. To help celebrate the end of the storm, we hear *The Rainbow Connection*, complete with Kermit the Frog! As this contemplative song concludes, *America's Hometown Band*, an energetic tribute to rousing band music, is heard from the park's band stand.

Twilight approaches, accompanied by a hauntingly beautiful *Nocturne*, setting the stage for the evening's finale: *The Royal Fireworks* as expressed musically by George Frederick Handel, with MACH's bells and chimes reinforced by guest artists on organ and timpani. What a show, what a day, what a treat to experience so many moods and colors in just an hour and a half! Come, join us for Picnic in the Park---you'll be glad you did!

Picnic in the Park will be presented in Madison at **7:30 p.m.** on: **Friday, May 12th**, at Christ Presbyterian Church, 944 East Gorham Street and **Saturday, May 13th**, at Asbury United Methodist Church, 6101 University Avenue.

Advance tickets are \$12 adults, \$9 seniors (age 60+) and youth (thru age 16) and are available at Orange Tree Imports and Borders Book Shops East and West; by sending a check by May 8th to MACH at P. O. Box 44056, Madison, WI 53744-4056; or by calling 845-2476.

Tickets at the door: \$15 adults, \$10 seniors (age 60+) and youth (thru age 16)

Experience the UNIQUELY BEAUTIFUL MUSIC of one of the nation's finest bell choirs!

MANY THANKS TO OUR CONCERT UNDERWRITERS!

Our Spring concert, *A Picnic in the Park*, is being underwritten by the Norman Bassett Foundation and by the Wahlin Foundation on behalf of Stoughton Trailers. We are most appreciative of the generosity of these two foundations and wish to especially thank Tom Johnson who serves on the Bassett Foundation Board and Don Wahlin who is instrumental in the Wahlin Foundation. Both gentlemen are also members of MACH's Board of Directors and helped us receive this fine level of support.

MACH PRESENTS CLASSES AND CONCERT FOR SCHOOLS

During the month of April, Kristi Menninga and Susan Udell are visiting 4th and 5th grade music classes in Madison, Middleton and Waunakee. They are teaching the children proper techniques for playing handchimes, dividing each class into teams to ring chords, and then demonstrating handbell techniques. On May 3rd, all MACH ringers will present a concert for these students at the Middleton-Cross Plains Performing Arts Center. Entitled "Nature's Magic," the concert will stimulate students to see how music can be expressive of nature. A booklet about the music is being provided for the teachers as a guide to maximize the students' learning experiences.

Handchimes are becoming increasingly popular as educators realize the many benefits they provide. From a musical standpoint, chimes allow students to play melodies and also harmonies for accompanying songs. Rhythm, accidentals, dynamics, and all aspects of musicality can be explored while playing chimes.

From a sociological standpoint, the almost instant success in playing helps create self-esteem. Students realize that they're a valuable part of an ensemble and learn to focus and be committed to achieving the finest result. The discipline of attendance and attentiveness teaches them that teamwork makes dreams work!

We sincerely appreciate those grantors who have helped make this year's project possible: Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission with additional funds from the Evjue Foundation, the Overture Foundation and the American Girl Fund for Children, Alliant Energy Foundation, First Business Bank, and individual donors. Contributions to help support this project may be sent to MACH at P. O. Box 44056, Madison, WI 53744-4056. Please note "School Project" on your check. Thank you!

OUTGROWTH OF OUR SCHOOL PROJECT

While conducting MACH's handchime/bell project in the schools last year, we had told the teachers about a handchime loan program that was available through our four-state district of the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers. Mary Rasmussen, music teacher at Van Hise Elementary, followed up on the information, applied to the district, and was one of three choirs chosen to have chimes for her classes during the current school year! There was almost no cost involved and her students are enjoying playing them.

Mary has used the chimes with 3rd, 4th and 5th grades, and reports that her normally wiggly, talkative classes become very focused when playing the chimes. She circled words to play on for the youngest classes and color coded notes for the older ones. These are techniques used universally with beginning ringers. Besides making children aware of melody notes, the chimes have provided good exposure to vertical harmonies as well. The chimers will all take part in a concert on April 7th at Van Hise. Bravo to Mary for taking the initiative to bring further musical enrichment to her classes!

WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?

Have you ever wondered what the money you pay for concert tickets helps support? The immediate answer might be "It supports music purchase, space rental, staff salaries, and equipment transportation to the concert site." However, there's a lot more to it than that. In the case of MACH, your ticket purchase yields a high degree of support for COMMUNITY SERVICE.

Each year, MACH performs at the UW Children's Hospital and for those who are confined by the infirmities of age, illness, disability or income. Residents at eight care centers will have heard and participated in concerts by MACH during 2005-06, finding entertainment and stimulation by observing and interacting with our musicians.

MACH's school project teaches elementary students to play the handchimes and then those students are bussed to a free concert that lets them see polished musical results and to be enriched by experiencing varied styles of music--from folk songs to art songs or opera themes, from a Broadway waltz to a ragtime piece, from a Sousa march to ballet music by Stravinsky.

In addition, MACH presents an annual workshop for ringers and directors to enhance their technical and music reading skills and provide access to handbell materials and music. In March 2007, MACH will host a handbell festival with concert opportunities for area choirs.

Although grant support is sometimes applied for in order to fund these outreach activities, that support most often has to be matched by other funds--cash funds that come from your ticket money and contributions solicited by our letter-writing campaign. The latter is held just once a year.

So, please give attendance at MACH concerts high priority and keep those generous contributions coming. It's not for us, it's for the COMMUNITY that will benefit from the entertainment and educational SERVICES that are provided by our very dedicated and talented ringers!

GATHERING IN SONG

On February 12, MACH took part in the Ecumenical Hymn Festival of the Association of Church Musicians (ACM) at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Madison. "We Gather in Song" was the festival theme. We played handbell accompaniments for several numbers by the Adult Festival Chorus and Children's Festival Choir, and also played the prelude ("Wake, Awake" by P. Nicolai, arr. J. Honoré) and the offertory ("Bach Pastorale," by J.S. Bach, arr. B. Kinyon). The event was a fine opportunity to join other area musicians and share some of our repertoire in a new context. They took a picture of us in front of Good Shepherd's organ pipes!



Back Row: David Crowcroft, Kristi Menninga, Sally Meredith, Doug Grovergrys

Middle Row: Susan Udell, Karen Baumann, Joanne Juhnke, Jackie Hansen, Rachel Bain

Front Row: Karen Paschke, Catherine Faley, Melodie Aas, Tricia Thorngate, Jane Sulzer

Future Concert Dates:

MACH's *The Best of Bells of Christmas* Concerts for 2006 are scheduled for:

Friday, December 8, 7:30 p.m., Asbury Methodist Church

Saturday, December 9, 7:30 p.m., Asbury Methodist Church

Sunday, December 10, 3:00 p.m. First Congregational Church

HOW TO CONTACT US

✉ P.O. Box 44056
Madison, WI 53744-4056.

☎ Call our Director, Dr. Susan Udell, at 271-3514
or Executive Director, Kristi Menninga, at 845-2476

We're on the Web!
www.madisonhandbells.org

NEW FOR OUR SPRING CONCERT!

At intermission, the audience will be able to indulge in light picnic fare and lemonade in keeping with our *Picnic in the Park* theme.

Also, there will be name cards to fill out, and a drawing for CDs will be held at the end of the concert. You have to be there!

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CALLING ALL EXPERIENCED RINGERS

If you'd like to ring challenging and enjoyable music with a focused, fun-loving group, please call our Music Director (271-3514) and schedule an audition.



RINGERS AND DIRECTORS

Please save Saturday, **October 7**, for a workshop with MACH. Technique sessions, a mini-concert, a reading session of new music, and lots of handbell camaraderie will help your music program go 'round with style next season!