

Faculty Biographies

Janet Anderson received her B.M. in performance from University of Massachusetts Lowell. She has been ringing and directing bells at the Congregational Church of Littleton (MA) for the past 18 years where she has worked with both children and adults. She played in the Rainbow Ringers quartet for a number of years and until recently as a duet partner with Debra LeBrun. Janet also is a past member of New England Ringers.

Ruth Bowers is a graduate of Furman University in Greenville, SC, Union Theological Seminary in New York City, and Northeastern University in Boston. She has directed handbells for over 25 years and was a member of the Bells of Harvey Park Handbell Quartet. Ruth has served the Area I Board in many capacities and she is currently the Director of Music at the First Baptist Church of Rockport, MA.

Phil Brown has been involved in various aspects of church music his entire life. He currently serves as music director at South Congregational Church in St. Johnsbury, VT, where he has been directing the choral, handbell and instrumental ministry for 24 years. He is an adjunct instructor in Fine and Performing Arts at Lyndon State College and also serves as manager and music director for St. J. Jazz, an arts organization dedicated to supporting the live performance of traditional and classic jazz in northern New England. Phil performs across many genres including classical tenor soloist with North Country Chorus and Lyndon Community Chorus; jazz bassist and vocalist with Maple Leaf Seven, Swing North Big Band and his own jazz trio, and folk guitarist and vocalist. He has been a frequent clinician and instructor at local, state, regional and national handbell workshops and festivals. Phil earned his Bachelor of Music degree from Boston University.

Diane Burke comes from a musical background of piano and voice, and was inspired to take up handbells by her mom, a fellow ringer. She lives in Marlboro, MA and has been ringing for over 20 years in the MetroWest MA area. In 2001 she became one of the founding members of the Merrimack Valley Ringers, and continues to ring with them today, in addition to participating in a spinoff quartet from that group. For the past three years she has also rung with the United Ringers in Littleton MA, and at present directs the Joyful Ringers in Marlboro as well as the Lincoln Bellringers in Lincoln, MA. Diane also sings gospel music and has performed with several choirs in and around Boston. She is a passionate fan of NFL football, and currently works in the holistic health field.

Asako Burr of Winchester, MA, spent her early childhood in Tokyo. She has been ringing for more than 15 years and currently rings with the Carilloneers of First Congregational Church in Winchester, MA, the Carillon of Hancock Church in Lexington, MA, and New England Ringers. Asako and her husband Chas have attended International Handbell Symposia in England, Korea, Australia, the United States and Japan and have participated in a handbell cruise to the Caribbean. They have two grown daughters, both living on the West Coast. Asako works as a librarian at the Cary Library in Lexington, MA.

Sue Chamberlin started ringing handbells in 1981 and started directing handbell choirs not long after that. She was ringer/director of the quartet Bells-n-Four from 1983 until the group

disbanded in 1998. Currently, Sue directs handbell choirs at her church, and rings with the Merrimack Valley Ringers and the quartet "4/16ths MVR." Sue became the Schulmerich representative for New England in 2006, and has travelled throughout New England, teaching workshops and repairing handbells.

Peter Coulombe, a graduate of Cornell Law School, is an attorney for the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Peter also directs the Old South Ringers at Old South Church in Boston. He began ringing bells while an undergraduate at Yale University and has continued to ring, direct, or found new handbell ensembles ever since. He was a founding member of Back Bay Ringers. When not tintinnabulating, Peter also enjoys gardening and quilting.

Krishna Ersson began ringing handbells during college when two friends brought him along to a local church choir rehearsal. He went in not knowing anything about the instrument, but his diverse interests in music, dance, math, and engineering fueled an eventual passion to tackle this uniquely challenging art. In particular, Krishna prefers ringing in the battery or inner section of a handbell choir where he enjoys picking apart the often competing musical lines and rhythmic elements. Originally from Oregon, Krishna studied computer engineering in Indiana and now resides in the Boston area. He rings with the Back Bay Ringers, is a percussionist in the Metropolitan Wind Symphony, and is a founding member of the Back Bay Quartet, a handbell ensemble known for their performances of music not usually arranged for handbells. Krishna currently works as a software engineer at MIT Lincoln Laboratory and is enrolled in a part-time master's degree program at Carnegie Mellon University.

Greg Fisher, the Music Minister at Trinity Lutheran Church in Vernon, CT, began his handbell directing at Trinity Lutheran in 1977 and has continuously directed church and community bell groups ever since. Greg directs the Hockanum Valley Ringers, an auditioned community handbell ensemble based in Vernon, and he is currently the Connecticut State Chair for AGEHR, Area I. Greg has hiked the entire 2,175 mile length of the Appalachian Trail, the 272 miles of the Long Trail, and all 65 4,000-foot mountains in New England. He enjoys golf and Sudoku, and loves the Red Sox and Acadia National Park.

Joan Fossum has been actively involved with handbells for more than 30 years. She is co-founder and musical director for the Granite State Ringers. She has served as director of music at South Congregational Church, Concord, NH and Northwood, NH Congregational Church. Joan has studied handbells with Don Allured. She has served Area I AGEHR as member-at-large, is a clinician and massed ringing director and is currently serving as the NH State Chair. Joan works as an educational consultant for the NH Department of Education and enjoys singing with the Concord Chorale, reading, and spending time with her granddaughter.

Jackie Frisk directs the Jubilation Ringers of Hampden Highlands United Methodist Church in Hampden, ME; the Jubilation Ringers have collaborated with the Bangor Area Children's Choir and performed in the Spirit of Bangor Concert, a holiday concert sponsored by the Bangor Symphony Orchestra. Jackie has a degree in Music Education from the University of Maine and a M.Ed. from Lesley University in Cambridge, MA. She is a music educator and a department coordinator in the Bangor schools, and serves as an Arts in Education member for the Maine Arts Commission. Jackie served on the AGEHR Area I board as the Maine State Chair for seven years, and has conducted at local and state rings and served as a clinician at local, state, and area conferences.

Griff Gall had his first experience as a handbell ringer while attaining his B.M. in Music Education from Westminster Choir College as a member of the Westminster Concert Bell Choir. An elementary music specialist in the town of Danvers, MA, Griff frequently presents seminars at local and national handbell and music education conferences and is a contributing author to *Overtones*, the journal for AGEHR. He currently serves AGEHR as Area I Chair and has been asked to write the Music Education component of the new Handbell Musicians of America certification program. As founding artistic director of the Back Bay Ringers, he has directed two CD projects and collaborated with many of Boston's finest arts organizations.

Martha Goodman has directed handbell ensembles in Wellesley, Newton, and Concord, MA, and from 2008 through 2010 she taught handbells to high school students at Lincoln School in Providence, RI. She has been Handbell Director at First Congregational Church, UCC in Reading, MA, since 1998, and in October 2010 she became the Handbell Director at Peace Dale (RI) Congregational Church. Martha was a founding member of New England Ringers, retiring in 2010 after her tenth season. She also has rung with Back Bay Ringers and the Bay State Bells quartet. Martha holds the AGEHR Director Certification, Level 1. She has served on the AGEHR Area I Board and has been a member of the organizing committee and clinician for a number of regional ringing events. A graduate of Boston University with a degree in business administration, Martha is self-employed as a human resources communications consultant.

Gail Granum has enjoyed ringing handbells for approximately 20 years and currently rings with several ensembles including New England Ringers, where she serves as Vice President and booking manager. She was born and raised in Wisconsin and Illinois where she studied a variety of musical instruments in the public schools. Violin became her instrument of choice, with private lessons and two full orchestras filling her musical schedule. Gail also has been a barbershop singer with two Sweet Adelines choruses. She graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a Master's degree. Gail lives in Worcester, MA.

Sarah Hayes, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist by day and handbell ringer by night who works as a research assistant professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts Boston. Her research and clinical work focuses on psychotherapy approaches to treating anxiety disorders, with a particular focus on social and performance anxiety. When not at work, she enjoys ringing handbells with the Back Bay Ringers and the Old South Ringers in Boston.

Edward G. Henderson, Jr. began ringing handbells in 1962 and has been directing handbell choirs since 1985, including more than 20 years as director of youth and adult handbell choirs at Tewksbury (MA) Congregational Church. For the past ten years he has been the director of New England Ringers. Ed has served on the AGEHR Area I Board in various positions, and has been an organizer, clinician and conductor at numerous local, area and national handbell events. An electrical engineer by day, he manages the customer support operation for a company that produces analyzers used to measure levels of gaseous oxygen. He is an antique car enthusiast and a huge NASCAR fan, enjoys skiing and snowmobiling, and loves to spend time with his wife Sue, family and friends at their lakeside home in New Hampshire.

Karen James of Pittsford, VT began ringing bells when her church acquired a three octave set in 1983 and she became the director a year later. Karen has rung many years with *Distinctly Bronze*, a national event for advanced Handbell ringers and was selected to ring with the *Dream Team* at *SEE, the Solo/Ensemble Extravaganza*, in the summer of 2007, an event especially

tailored for the needs of handbell soloists and ensembles. Karen has been teaching music over 30 years in the public schools and in her home studio. She rings with the New England Ringers, and is adjunct piano instructor at Castleton State College.

Bob Jenkins of Dracut, MA, a lifelong resident of Massachusetts, started in music as a drummer in elementary school and has been playing and teaching percussion ever since. For a number of years, Bob was principal percussionist for the Quincy Symphony Orchestra. He is currently principal percussionist for the Lowell Philharmonic Orchestra. He has been ringing handbells for twenty-five years and has been a workshop clinician at several AGEHR events. Bob is a former member of the New England Ringers. He is self-employed as a data processing consultant on mainframe and midrange IBM computers. Bob's wife, Kathy, and three children are all handbell enthusiasts.

Pete Larson began ringing at the wee age of 10, or 5th grade, or thereabouts. He began under the direction of Jane Nolan, and fell in love with handbells. He rang with the New England Ringers for a year in college, and now enjoys spending his Wednesday evenings at Shoreline Ringers rehearsals watching Jane wave her arms furiously. Pete works in Groton, CT as a business analyst, programming and using databases all day. He lives in Colchester, CT with his wife, Lauren.

Debra LeBrun received her B. Mus. from Syracuse University and her M.M. in Organ Performance from the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign. In October 2010 she became the full-time Director of Music for Raleigh Court United Methodist Church in Roanoke, VA after serving for 24 years as the Minister of Music for the Congregational Church of Littleton, MA. She has been a professional musician for more than 28 years, working as a church music director and organist, conductor, accompanist, director for musical theater and opera productions, teacher of piano and organ, and as a handbell clinician. She also is a past member of the New England Ringers and performed for many years as part of a handbell duet team with Janet Anderson. Debra has served on the AGEHR, Area I Board as Secretary and Chair and has been involved in organizing many Area I events, including Festival/Conferences. She has taught at Festivals and other handbell events for 13 years and has attended four International Handbell Symposiums.

Karen E. Leonard is a graduate of Boston University and UMass Lowell with degrees in church music, organ performance and conducting. As Minister of Music at West Chelmsford United Methodist Church in North Chelmsford, MA, she directs a graded choral and handbell program of seven choirs and serves as organist. A Past National President of the AGEHR, Karen has been very active in event planning and currently chairs the AGEHR National Master Classes. She was awarded Honorary Life Membership in AGEHR in August 2008.

Terri Meyer is the Director of Music at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Gales Ferry, CT, where she directs five of the seven handbell choirs and two of the four vocal choirs. She also developed and directs St. Luke's 14 member contemporary worship team, "*Celebrate!*" Under Terri's direction, the St. Luke Concert Handbell Choir has performed for church congregations from Maine to Florida and at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in 2006 and the America Pavilion in EPCOT in 2008, and in 2009 recorded a Christmas CD, "*Ring in the Season.*" Terri has been directing, ringing, singing and teaching music in workshops and classes for over 10 years. She is a Certified Handbell Director through AGEHR, a Certified Director in Sweet

Adelines, International and holds a bachelor's degree in Architectural Engineering from Penn State University. Terri and her husband, Doug, live in Ledyard, CT and have three children in college.

Daniel K. Moore has been a member of the Performing Arts Faculty at the Wheeler School in Providence, RI, for more than thirty years, including twenty years as department chair. During that time he developed a graded handbell program beginning in grade four and culminating in an auditioned six octave high school ensemble, The Concert Handbell Ringers of the Wheeler School. The Concert Ringers have performed opening concerts for both regional and national handbell events, recorded with the Empire Brass, produced several CDs, and tour each spring. In addition to his work at the Wheeler School, Dan also is a frequent clinician and conductor for workshops and other handbell events. His textbook/resource, *Ringin' RIGHT! From the Beginning*, is published by AGEHR, an organization he has served nationally, regionally and locally in numerous capacities. Dan's degree in music education and conducting is from the New England Conservatory of Music, Boston, MA.

Jane Nolan is the music director at St. David's Episcopal Church in Gales Ferry, CT, and the director of Shoreline Ringers, a four year old advanced level community choir in southeastern Connecticut. She has been directing handbells for 20 years and her choirs have played an opening concert for Festival/Conference in Burlington, VT, toured the northeast and midwest states, and toured twice in England. Last year Shoreline Ringers played at Carnegie Hall, on WFSB Channel 3 in Hartford for the Scott Haney Christmas Show, and with the U.S. Coast Guard Band for their Christmas concerts. Jane's degree is in music education, and she has taught at numerous conferences, seminars, and workshops throughout New England. She also teaches piano and serves as the membership chairperson for AGEHR, Area I.

Bill Noss is a freelance graphic designer, having begun his career in Nashville, Tennessee, producing various printed materials such as album covers, posters, annual reports books and brochures. He has also lived and worked in Hartford, CT, and now resides in Nashua, NH. He is editor of AGEHR Area I's newsletter, *Fundamental Tone*, and rings handbells with the Merrimack Valley Ringers. Bill's other hobbies include piano and woodworking; he sometimes moonlights as a finish carpenter. He discovered painted floor cloths a long time ago when he couldn't find the perfect living room rug.

Michael Olbash, CAGO, is the Minister of Music at the United Church of Christ in Medfield, MA, where he has directed three handbell ensembles, an accomplished parish choir, and a graded children's choral program. A graduate of Harvard University with an advanced degree in Music and Liturgy from St. Joseph's College (Indiana), he was recently re-elected for a third term as President of the Southeastern New England Chapter of the Choristers Guild. Michael directs the Gregorian chant schola at St. Mary's Church in Beverly, founded the Stepping Stone Chant Project, and served as music director of both the 2008 Magnificat Pilgrimage of Hope and the 2009 Presbyteral Convocation of the Archdiocese of Boston.

Norah Piehl was introduced to handbells in middle school, but took a long hiatus before joining the handbell choir at Trinity Church in Copley Square in 2001. She joined Back Bay Ringers in the fall of 2005 and quickly assumed a leadership role, publishing the ensemble's e-newsletter and participating in marketing campaigns. In early 2007, she was named BBR's Executive Director. Norah presented workshops on marketing and branding at the 2008 and 2009 Area I

Directors' Seminars and on treble bell techniques at the 2011 Directors' Seminar. She also led a multi-part marketing workshop and served as registrar for Area I's Festival/Conference 2009. She currently serves on the Area I Board as Secretary. Norah's professional background is in the publishing industry; she has directed the rights and permissions departments of two major university presses and attended national conferences on publishing and copyright. Currently, she is a freelance writer, editor, and permissions specialist.

Nancy Reynolds has been ringing for more than twenty years; she began ringing in a handbell class with her daughter. Because of her background as a physical therapist (with a degree from the University of Connecticut), and as a special educator (degree from University of Vermont), Nancy's mission has been to promote physically sound ringing and to increase the understanding of how this positively impacts the musicality of our art form. She also has promoted the inclusion of individuals of varying ability into handbell and handchime programs. Nancy first served AGEHR Area I as the Special Needs Liaison and subsequently served terms as Chair-Elect, Chair, and Past Chair.

Mark H. Rooney has been studying, performing and teaching taiko for 13 years in the United States, Japan and Europe. He has been a full-time taiko professional for 8 years, mainly with Odaiko New England acting as both Assistant Director and Director. Mark has also belonged to and performed with numerous other groups including Marco Lienhard's Taikoza and Shippu Uchi Daiko of Wakayama, Japan. Mark has composed several of Odaiko New England's signature pieces and has collaborated with other artists - singers, dancers, and musicians - notably master jazz trumpeter, Tiger Okoshi, and improvisational violinist, Yael Bat-Shimon. He has been the principal instructor and designer of ONE's taiko classes and workshops and has taught taiko as a popular hands-on course at Wesleyan University. Currently, Mark is learning, teaching, performing and living as a solo artist in Washington, DC.

Kristen Russo has been playing handbells since the age of 17. She went to her first AGEHR Festival/Conference at Niagara Falls in 1994 and has missed only one festival since then. Kristen has rung with the St. Joseph Handbell Choir at St. Joseph Church in Bristol, CT, as well as with Bells of Joy in Rutland, VT, and New England Ringers, and currently is a member of the Shoreline Ringers. She directs the Asbury Methodist Church Handbell Choir in Bristol. She is also a vocalist and sings with semi-professional choirs around Connecticut as well as with the St Joseph Adult Choir in Bristol. Kristen has a degree in music education and is a music teacher for the Bristol Schools. She lives in Terryville, CT.

Michael Steele has been playing handbells since Day Two of the handbell era at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Gales Ferry, CT, under the teaching of Jane Nolan. While at St. Luke he played in the Concert Handbell Choir, and had the opportunity to accompany the U.S. Coast Guard on handbells. He also has been involved in the recording of three CDs. Mike currently lives in Norwich, CT, but has lived in several other parts of the state. He works at Bob's Discount Furniture as the trainer for the delivery drivers.

Kimberlee F. Strepka has been teaching music for more than twenty years. She received a Bachelor of Music from the Hartt School of Music, West Hartford, CT and a Master of Music from UMass, Amherst, where her Laban-integrated approach to ringing was the subject of her Master's thesis. She has done additional graduate work at the Choral Institute in St. Moritz, Switzerland, and at the Laban/Barteneiff Institute of Movement Studies in Manhattan. Kim

founded a teen handbell ensemble, the Bronze Ambassadors, that toured throughout the U.S., performed on four television networks, and appeared at regional and national AGEHR events from 1997 through 2010. She currently directs the handbell program at the Pioneer Valley Christian School in Springfield, MA, and serves on the AGEHR Area I Board as the Education Liaison. Kim is an Associate Member of New England Ringers and is a published handbell arranger. She invites you to visit her website at www.motionlanguage.com.

Kim Visbaras is a practicing real estate and corporate attorney in Auburn, Maine, and has been ringing since the mid 1990's. He currently holds down the bass position for the Auburn, Maine United Methodist Church Ringers and is one of the founding members of 4 Park Avenue, a handbell quartet which has performed from Cape Cod to Aroostook County in Maine. Kim has offered various courses for the Maine Spring Ring over the years, and has had the privilege of accompanying the Parish Ringers of Brunswick, Maine in several performances at Merrill Auditorium in Portland with members of the Portland Symphony Orchestra. He also has a passion for African drumming, having received instruction from, among others, Annegret Baier in Portland, and master African drummers Famoudou Konate and Namory Keita.

Andy Wallace of North Stonington, CT, is the Music Director at the Dunn's Corners Community Church, Presbyterian, in Westerly, RI where he directs the choral and handbell programs. Andy has been ringing handbells in choirs and ensembles since 1991 and is a member of the Shoreline Ringers. He received his B.A. in Secondary Education/History and is a middle school history teacher in West Greenwich, RI, receiving several outstanding teaching awards including the prestigious Milken National Educator Award, the "Oscars" of education.

Rick Wood, Technology Teacher and Coordinator for Woodbridge Public Schools in Connecticut, has directed the handbell choirs at First Church of Bethlehem (CT) since 1995. This all volunteer program is open to anyone who wishes to ring and includes ringers from many denominations and many towns around Bethlehem. Rick and his wife Sandy were members of the first handbell choir at Williams College where he majored in music.

David Wurth studied handbell restoration with Monica S. McGowan at Ringing Restorations in Lakeville, MN. He is the equipment manager for the Back Bay Ringers organization and the director of the Handbell Choir at First Lutheran Church of Lynn, MA. David also rings with the Back Bay Carillon in Boston, MA. David has been trusted by many New England area ringers to service their handbells. He owns and operates New England Handbell Repair and Restoration, a company that services all major brands of handbells, and is also a sales representative for Malmark handbells.