

W I N T E R 2 0 2 1



# The Peal

The Official Newsletter of the Alberta Guild of English Handbell Ringers

## Handbell Musicians of Canada (HMC)

Have you checked out  
their website recently?

**Musings from the Board** –  
every month a new Board  
Director is featured. Get to  
know your HMC Board!

Need handbell resources?  
Check out their [Clinician  
Listing](#) as well as the  
**Canadian Compositions**  
[spreadsheet](#) featuring over  
360 compositions!!!

**Musician Showcase:**  
**ALGEHR's** very own **Betty  
Radford** is interviewed [here](#)  
by none other than John  
Hooper. Get to know our  
resident composer!



## GivingTuesday 2021 Virtual Concert

Less than 12 hours ago, ALGEHR hosted its inaugural **GivingTuesday Virtual Concert** via Zoom and in less than 2 hours, **ALGEHR** members and friends succeeded in raising \$2030 in donations towards **ALGEHR's** development plans for enhanced education and community outreach programming! And that's not all, TWO very generous, anonymous donors have pledged \$5,000 each – with the promise of a **SECOND** \$5,000 gift from the first donor should the first \$5,000 be matched by **ALGEHR** supporters! In other words, if we can raise another \$2,970, we could end up with an impressive \$20,000 – which represents a whopping 40% of the \$50,000 goal established by **ALGEHR**. While there is no set deadline for this matching challenge, the **ALGEHR Fundraising Committee** has set a timeline of 18 months to achieve its target. (Cont'd on page 6)

## Save the date(s)!!!

Christmas  
Performances  
December 2021

Check the last  
page for the  
details!

Classic Bronze  
July 6 – 9, 2022

Stay tuned for  
registration info!

IHS 2022 Nashville  
August 1 - 6, 2022

Register [here!](#)

## Pandemic Presidential Ponderings

Kudos to the Lethbridge Discovery 2021 Organizing Committee for staging a refreshing virtual ringing event which made us all itching to get back to ringing in person again. Such a warm welcome to the ringing season. Many thanks are due to **Fiona Miller, Bev Bellamy, Lucy Graham, Tyler Leavitt, Fran McHardy,** and **Kathy James**, and not forgetting the technology gurus - **Sharon Vogrinetz** and **Keith Miller**. Forty attendees started out on Friday evening with **Susan Galloway** getting us back into ringing and ended on Saturday evening with **Anne Hill** presenting the Joan Schaufele Memorial Workshop on Beginning Ringing. Sandwiched in between we enjoyed sessions on Conducting, Brazilian Samba and Handchimes. There were about 50 attendees at the evening concert which despite being prerecorded, demonstrated that some of us were able to ring safely through the pandemic. Features included a tribute to Joan Schaufele composed by **Fred Merrett** and music composed by the Fred Merrett Award winners from 2020 and 2021, **Catherine Bevan, Dorothy Kelker** and **Betty Radford**. Many thanks to everyone who made donations to the event.

And now we have to think about **Discovery 2022** – it will be a hard act to follow!

**Discovery 2021** certainly boosted our Membership which is wonderful news. We currently have close to 90 members. Hopefully this upward trend will continue as more choirs resume ringing, but we need to continue to engage ringers to join **ALGEHR**. There are many more than 90 ringers in Alberta!

It was lovely to have a good number of people attending the Annual General Meeting and I really appreciate you staying after the workshop. We bade farewell to **Cathy Larson** who retired from the Board after an outstanding twelve years of volunteer service. We welcome two new Directors-at-Large, **Betty Radford** and **Carol Chernishenko**, who I know will both make a great contribution to the Board. We also welcomed **Cliff Linton** as our newest Life Member of **ALGEHR**, recognized for his long years of contribution to **ALGEHR**, both on the Board and as **ALGEHR**'s go-to person for virtually everything website related. And speaking of the website, we are moving along with the introduction of a new website platform, currently being reviewed by the Board before moving into the final testing stage.

We have created a new Board position this year. **Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin** has taken on the position of Director- Fundraising and will be leading a fundraising committee comprising of both Board members and invited external members. As a charitable organization, **ALGEHR** can fundraise for charitable purposes, of which advancement of education is one. In keeping with **ALGEHR**'s mandate to support handbells in Alberta, we are planning to raise funds to develop handbell educational and community outreach programs for adults, youth, seniors, people with special needs, through the loan of bells and handchimes, and providing support in terms of music and clinicians. Our first task approved by the Board is the purchase of the Concordia University of Edmonton's handbell collection, the biggest in Canada, and you will have received information about this venture. This is an amazing and unique opportunity for **ALGEHR** to bring the joy of ringing to communities, to expand handbells beyond the elementary school and to learn an important life lesson; the value of teamwork where everyone's contribution is essential needed to make beautiful sound. **GivingTuesday** on 30<sup>th</sup> November is the first of many opportunities for members to donate.

The **ALGEHR** webinars are continuing although we have postponed the one for November until January to make **GivingTuesday** a priority. But we are planning a virtual Christmas party on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December – a combination of ringing ensembles and some Christmas festivities. Come join us!

*Fiona*

Fiona Bamforth, President

## Introducing your ALGEHR Board Secretary

**Judy AtLee** has been involved in handbells for almost 30 years, many of those years in two choirs. Starting as a beginner ringer at Sherwood Park United Church in the mid-1990s, she got hooked. Soon she had her arm twisted and began subbing with the **Belles in Harmony**. In the spring of 1998 she was offered the opportunity to go on tour with them. It seemed like a good idea and, although petrified, she went ahead. And what fun it proved to be! She was hooked again. That fall she joined them officially and is with them still. For a few years, she and her husband rang with **Resounding Joy** at First United in Fort Saskatchewan. Once again her rubber arm was twisted and she began subbing in **Jubiloso!** She retired from **Resounding Joy** in 2013 when she successfully auditioned for **Jubiloso!** where she continues to ring.

She has been able to attend several multiple **Ringing Links**, **International Symposia**, **Classic Bronze**, and international handbell tours - all great experiences, highly recommended for lots of fun and improving your ringing skills. Every event you go to you meet new ringers, learn from new directors.

Music is a universal language; all those little squiggles on the page are saying something and telling you how to say it. While you ring, you forget all your troubles; music has been proven to reduce stress-related hormones and produce the "feel good" chemicals like dopamine and serotonin. Maybe that's why she loves ringing so much. (Her cats like handbells too!)



## Handbell goings on - in the northern part of Alberta!

Many schools in the northern part of the province are ringing, as it's one of the instruments that's deemed to be a bit safer under COVID restrictions. Teachers have been really creative with using bells and chimes, rehearsing outdoors, making each child their own package of binders, gloves, and sometimes playing from their desks. **Cathy Larson**, in Fort McMurray, noted that her two grade six classes will be playing in a virtual concert.

Our newest **ALGEHR** board member, **Carol Chernishenko** reported that her choir at **Wesley United** in Regina is not ringing yet, but they are hoping to later in the year. We hope that they can start again when everyone feels safe enough to do so! Welcome Carol to the **ALGEHR** board!

**St. Andrew's United** in Edmonton, with their conductor **Hazel Burn** have just gotten their bell program started again in October, figuring out how to re-design their space when they play in church. They will be working with clinician **Tammy-Jo Mortensen** on some of their Christmas repertoire.

The community ensemble formerly known as **Jubiloso!** has rung during much of the pandemic since they were under educational exemptions. They are continuing their rehearsals, with borrowed bells and at a temporary home at **Christ Church Anglican** in Edmonton.

**Parkland Bells** had just one rehearsal in September, with all ringers vaccinated, but they suspended rehearsals when the fourth wave of COVID hit. They expect to resume rehearsing in the new year. Meanwhile, director **Juanita Pickerl** is learning a bell tree piece to share with listeners! Way to go Juanita!

**Devon United** is just starting up their rehearsals mid-November. **Sharon Vogrinetz** is so happy to be seeing the ringers again!

At **Riverbend United Church** in Edmonton they have just resumed rehearsals in mid-November, and director **Lois Lund** hopes that they can continue rehearsing regularly!

One choir that rehearsed most of last year was at **Highlands United Church** in Edmonton. Their seven ringers were masked and spread out at individual tables, and sometimes even outside. They recorded over thirty (yes – 30!) pieces for services. Bravo to **Carol Bergum** and the dedicated ringers! They have had just one rehearsal this fall pending a decision by the Board on returning after the fourth wave subsides.

Fort Saskatchewan has a choir called **Resounding Joy**, under the baton of **Camille Ream** at **First United Church** and they have been ringing since September. They are social distanced and added more chimes for Christmas music. One challenge they noted, as for many choirs, is that they can't always hear each other very well, and it's also challenging for directors as the sounds are not in their "usual places". They are also ringing on some of the hymns and other worship music.

Over at the University of Alberta, the **Faculty of Education handbell ringers** are back to rehearsing with **Bob de Frece**. One brand new ringer, **Sidney M'Sahel** told us how much he is loving playing bells! And we all love bringing new ringers into the bell family, don't we?!?!?

**United Harmony**, at Sherwood Park United Church began back just after Thanksgiving and director **Susan Galloway** got really creative and divided the choir into quartets. They are lucky enough to have 2 sets of bells and 2 sets of chimes so they will do four quartets until Christmas. After Christmas they are hoping to be back as a large group.

Up in Fort McMurray, **Cathy Larson** is really hoping to get the **Aurora Handbell** program restarted in January.

**Robertson-Wesley Ringers** and **Nova Bells (Robertson-Wesley United Church)** rang a bit through 2020-2021 under **Isabela Ramos** and played at a few services. Now both ensembles are back at it with many COVID precautions, and distancing between the players. Nova Bells played at the beginning of November, and the R-W Ringers played a service in mid-November, under their new music director, **Dr. Allan Bevan**.

As Juanita Pickerl said, "Here's hoping 2022 will bring us back to a more normal ringing year."

~ Submitted by Tammy-Jo Mortensen, VP North



## GivingTuesday 2021 (cont'd from page 1)

**GivingTuesday** is a global generosity movement, taking place each year after Black Friday. The "Opening day of the giving season," it's a time when charities, companies and individuals join together and rally for favourite causes. In the same way that retailers take part in Black Friday, the giving community comes together for **GivingTuesday**.

**ALGEHR** is expanding its horizons by increasing educational opportunities and community outreach programs and is in the process of procuring the complete handbell collection - the largest in Canada including 6.5 octaves of bells and chimes - from **Concordia University of Edmonton**. This includes not only all the instruments, but also all supporting equipment and the entire handbell music library. This transaction will be the beginning of a major handbell education program managed by **ALGEHR**. This will involve arranging for loaner sets of handbells for new ensembles wishing to "try them out" before making their own investments and the creation of youth and handbell teacher educational programs and workshops across the province. In order to make this purchase possible, **ALGEHR** is applying for several grants and organizing fundraising events such as **GivingTuesday**. Donations to **ALGEHR** can be made until midnight on December 31, 2021 by:

1. Etransfer to [treasurer@algehr.org](mailto:treasurer@algehr.org)

Please be sure to indicate the purpose of your donation and include your mailing address if you would like a tax receipt.

2. By credit card at [CanadaHelps](https://CanadaHelps.com)

3. By credit card at [www.algehr.org](http://www.algehr.org) (Please note this option is available only to ALGEHR members.)

For Monthly Giving Pledge Forms, please email your request to [treasurer@algehr.org](mailto:treasurer@algehr.org).

All donations of \$20 or greater will be provided with a tax receipt for income tax purposes. For donations under \$20, receipts will be issued upon request to [treasurer@algehr.org](mailto:treasurer@algehr.org).

## SEF Grant Impact in Three Hills

**ALGEHR** Board Director and member of JuBELLation Handbell Choir in Three Hills, **Rhoda Murray** stands proudly with fellow ringer, **Glen Flewelling**, as they show off their latest addition, an F3 bell purchased with the support of the SEF (Symposium Endowment Fund) Grant. Just imagine what kind of impact the SEF Grant could have on YOUR choir!



## Editor's Encore

It's hard to believe it's December...I saw someone in shorts at the dog park today! Ready or not, it is already that time of year once again and while life is not quite yet "normal" again, it is incredible to think how far science has advanced in such a short time to continue bringing hope that we might finally start getting the upper hand...at least until the next twist in the pandemic plot...whatever your plans for the holidays might be, I wish only the best for you and yours and that it be filled with much joy, music, good food, peace, and love – Happy Safe Holidays!

~Peal photo credits to Judy AtLee, Tammy-Jo Mortensen, Rhoda Murray, and Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin

**Not to be missed! (Send me your performances to be listed here!)**

Sun, Dec 5, 2021: Festival of Lessons and Carols, Robertson-Wesley United, Edmonton, 4 pm

Sun, Dec 12, 2021: Jubilosos! @ St Paul's Anglican, Edmonton, 4 pm

### Contact your Board!

Fiona Bamforth	President	president@algehr.org
Tammy-Jo Mortensen	VP North	vpnorth@algehr.org
Margaret Dunkerley	VP South/John Nelson	vpsouth@algehr.org
Sharon Vogrinetz	Treasurer	treasurer@algehr.org
Judy AtLee	Secretary	secretary@algehr.org
Lucy Graham	Membership	membership@algehr.org
Vacant	Education	education@algehr.org
Rhoda Murray	SEF Grant	sefgrant@algehr.org
Betty Radford	Stan Morris Award	smaward@algehr.org
Fiona Bamforth	Fred Merrett	composer@algehr.org
Carol Chernishenko	Member-at-Large	mal1@algehr.org
Cliff Linton	Website	web@algehr.org
Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin	Peal/Social	peal@algehr.org/social@algehr.org
Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin	Past-president	pastpres@algehr.org
Emmy Okazawa-Bortolin	Fundraising	

**Next Peal deadline!! Feb 15, 2022 ~ Please send me your submissions by this date!!!**