

Main Line Ringers
Membership Handbook
June, 2008

Group description:

The Main Line Ringers is an advanced community handbell ensemble, dedicated to the promotion of excellence and enjoyment of the art of handbell ringing.

Education:

The Main Line Ringers educates its members on healthy and musical ringing technique. We seek to educate the general public on the art of ringing.

Community:

The Main Line Ringers encourages a sense of community within the ensemble. Each member is unique and valuable. Contributions specific to each individual ringer are recognized and applauded.

Membership:

Membership in the Main Line Ringers is based on an annual audition process. Every member must re-audition yearly. Auditions will be announced to current ensemble members and the general public. Those interested in joining the Main Line Ringers are expected to have prior handbell ringing experience.

Auditions will be based on clear expectations. Prior to each audition, criteria will be available. In addition to musicality and technical proficiency, in audition decisions the director will consider teamwork, collegiality, and the overall interests of the ensemble.

The director may ask a ringer to change positions within a concert year depending on the needs of the ensemble. Ringers may also ask to serve as substitutes on one or more selections.

Enrollment is limited to fourteen members.

Membership expectations:

Members are expected to dedicate time outside of rehearsal to practicing and learning their parts. Rehearsals are intended for ensemble technique, not for learning notes and rhythm.

Music will be provided. Members are required to purchase their own three-ring binders and gloves, and to bring them to each rehearsal.

Rehearsals begin promptly at 7:00 p.m. Ringers must be in place, gloves on, for the first downbeat.

Equipment is the responsibility of every member. Plan to assist with takedown after every rehearsal, as well as in the moving of equipment before and after every performance.

Cell phones should be silent during rehearsal.

Ringers missing more than two rehearsals in a season may be asked by the director to act as a substitute ringer for the remainder of the season. Ensemble ringing requires consistent attendance from every ringer.

Ringers are expected to engage an approved substitute for any anticipated rehearsal absence. Lists of approved substitutes will be distributed and updated throughout the season. Ringers should maintain an accurate substitute file at home.

Rehearsal absences must be communicated to the director no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled absence. Note date on calendar in rehearsal room.

For unplanned absences due to illness or other emergencies, the director must be notified via e-mail or phone by 3:00 the day of rehearsal.

In the case of an unexpected late arrival for rehearsal, call the director at (610) 299-9174 as soon as you are aware of your potential tardiness.

Dues:

2008-2009: Members are asked to contribute \$200 to the general fund. Donations above and beyond the dues would be appreciated. Payment can be made via check at rehearsal, or via PayPal on the website: www.mainlineringers.com

Performance expectations:

The concert schedule will be published at the start of every season. Conflicts for concerts must be communicated with the director as soon as possible. Every effort must be made to be in attendance for every concert.

What to wear:

Ringers are expected to purchase their own attire, which includes red shirt and black skirt for women, and black tuxes, long black tie and long-sleeved white shirt for men. Less formal venues may allow MLR polo shirt as concert wear.

Committees:

Each ringer is encouraged to contribute according to his or her strengths. Options include:

Publicity

Program

Equipment

Historian

Capital Campaign

Newsletter

Special events

For local solo concerts, members will be asked to hang posters throughout local neighborhoods and near the concert venue.

Willingness to commit to a collegial part of the ensemble is expected from all members. Working together as a team goes beyond our musical efforts. It is important to trust our leadership while knowing that we will not always agree. We will strive to maintain open lines of communication between the director and the ringers. Concerns and questions about directorial choices and musical issues should be brought to the director before or after rehearsals. Ringers may e-mail concerns at any time. Please make every effort to resolve potential problems before they begin to interfere with our ultimate music goals.

Thank you to the Advisory Committee:

Carolyn Biles

Carol Edwards

Melissa Thompson

From the director:

It is with pleasure that I welcome you to the Main Line Ringers. I look forward to getting to know each of you as we unite in this musically elite ensemble. Thank you for your enthusiasm and willingness.

Joyfully,

Main Line Ringers

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