

Vol. 10, No. 3  
July, 2023



Houston Bronze Ensemble  
**EXPECT EXCELLENCE**

*Dedicated to HandBell Excellence*  
*Ensuring the future of handbells for ringers and listeners*

## HOUSTON BRONZE ENSEMBLE

### Upcoming Concerts and Performances

2023

**Friday, December 1, 2023 7:30 pm**  
**"Jingle All the Way"**

Guest Artist: Pride Chorus Houston  
MATCH  
Ticketed Concert

**Saturday, December 2, 2023 7:00 pm**  
**"Jingle All the Way"**

Tomball United Methodist Church

**Saturday, December 9 Time: 8:00**  
**"Making Spirits Bright"**

Unity of Houston

Houston Bronze will perform as guest artist at  
the Pride Chorus Houston concert

Houston Bronze Ensemble is currently scheduling  
events for Fall, 2023 and beyond.

To schedule a concert, contact us at:

**Email:**

info@houstonbronze.com  
eventcoordinator@houstonbronze.com

www.houstonbronze.com  
P.O. Box 541741  
Houston, TX 77254  
Phone: 1-866-908-RING (7464)



**NEW WEBSITE:**  
[www.houstonbronze.org](http://www.houstonbronze.org)

Check out our new website:  
[www.houstonbronze.org](http://www.houstonbronze.org)



The Houston Bronze Ensemble performed at Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar in Irving, Texas on July 13, 2023. We were honored to be selected to perform at this prestigious event. If you were unable to attend, the YouTube video is still available. We invite you to watch it. It will be available for the next couple of weeks.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/UBtE-wa-CoI?feature=share>

"Imagine how the world could be so very fine, so happy together!" –Garry Bonner and Alan Gordon

This newsletter now looks to our future and what it will bring but also remembers our past year! Enjoy the newsletter.

Check out our [YouTube](#) Channel.





## Introducing David York

Artistic Director of  
The Houston Bronze Ensemble

As we begin our 2023-24 season, we do so under new leadership. Welcome our Artistic Director, Dr. David York. With a background primarily in choral conducting, David came to handbells mid-career by way of composing an original work for Bells of the Cascades and his semi-professional vocal choir, David York Ensemble. "The Bells" - text by Edgar Allan Poe - was a success and the handbell bug bit hard. A few years later, he was hired to conduct Bells of the Cascades, a post he held for three seasons. In addition to his award-winning chamber choir, numerous community choirs of various sizes, skill-level, and repertoire, and church work for his entire adult life, Dr. York directed Portland Boychoir for fifteen years, the last ten years of which included a handbell program he built from scratch. David relocated to Houston in 2019. He's now the Director of Music at First Congregational Church of Houston, the Artistic Director for Pride Chorus Houston, and the Music Director for the Houston Christmas Revels. David brings big energy and excitement to Houston Bronze Ensemble, and a self-declared commitment for having FUN through all phases of the music-making process. We're so glad to have him become a member of the Houston Bronze Ensemble family.



## A Note from our President

*Kathy Beard*

I used to think of myself as just someone who rang handbells. But after 35+ years, I now proudly think of myself as a handbell nerd. I love everything handbell, including my t-shirts that say "I like bass bells and I can not lie" and "Bass Bell Diva"! I am still riding a high from National Seminar. Houston Bronze Ensemble played the absolute best concert of the eight years I have been a member of the group. And if you're going to peak, Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar is the place you want to do that. Nothing like ringing to an audience made up of all bell people and that included most of the composers and arrangers of the pieces we played.

At a very nice supper following our concert at the seminar we said goodbye to 5 ringers and to the incomparable Sondra Tucker, who gave us just one year as Artistic Director. But what a year it was! From fun filled Christmas concerts to the entertaining (and at times quite difficult) spring concerts she brought out the best in HBE. Sondra, Roger, Rachel, Aaron, Jackson, and Dylen will be greatly missed. As they all move away to graduate school, new jobs, or retirement we wish them all the best.

In just a couple of weeks we will start back under the direction of Dr. David York. He has exciting and new things in store for us. Please make your plans to attend one of our concerts. You won't be disappointed!

# Coming Soon!

# Jingle All The Way!

**Friday , December 1, 2023 7:30 pm**

**"Jingle All the Way"**

Guest Artist: Pride Chorus Houston

MATCH

Ticketed Concert

**Saturday, December 9 Time: 8:00**

**"Making Spirits Bright"**

Unity of Houston

Ticketed concert

Houston Bronze will perform as guest artist at the Pride Chorus Houston concert.

**Saturday, December 2, 2023 7:00 pm**

**"Jingle All the Way"**

Tomball United Methodist Church

Free concert



# Meet Your Houston Bronze Ensemble Fall, 2023




## THANK YOU!!

Thank you to Trinity Downtown Lutheran Church for providing us with rehearsal space and storage space for all of our equipment. We are forever grateful to you.



## Schedule a Workshop

 **HOUSTON BRONZE ENSEMBLE**  
*EXPECT EXCELLENCE*

### Build a Bell Workshop

[www.houstonbronze.org/education/build-a-bell-workshop/](http://www.houstonbronze.org/education/build-a-bell-workshop/)

Houston Bronze Ensemble is available to you for workshops throughout the year. You may pick the topics from a list of classes. If you don't see what you need, please ask. The best part is there is no need to pack your bells and travel. We come to you! This is offered without a fee. For more information and to request a workshop:

[www.houstonbronze.org/education/build-a-bell-workshop/](http://www.houstonbronze.org/education/build-a-bell-workshop/)





## Houston Bronze is Happy Together!!

This past season has brought Houston Bronze many memories that we will not forget. We presented a program about a city that we call home and most of the time, at least, love. Sondra crafted a beautiful program of music and stories to tell the audience about the joy we share with each other and hopefully with the people who attend our concerts. A major highlight of the season was taking the concert to Handbell Musicians of America National Seminar in Irving, Tx. It was such an honor and privilege to be invited to play along side some of the best ensembles in the state of Texas. What a pleasure to play in front of such a wonderful audience! The end of the season also brought several sad farewells. As this fun time concluded, we had to say goodbye to 5 wonderful ensemble members and our artistic director. It is never easy to say goodbye to our friends and fellow ensemble members. They are and will remain a part of our Houston Bronze family. We wish each of them the very best they begin a new adventure.

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Sondra and Roger →



Summer, 2023



“Friendship isn’t a Big Thing!  
It’s a million little things!



↑ Jackson and Rachel

Thank you for sharing a million little things with us. We wish you the very best.

Aaron and Dylon ↑





# HAPPY TOGETHER

## Behind the Scenes Of A Concert

Do you know what happens before the downbeat happens?



May, 2023



July 13, 2023 National Seminar

Hours spent selecting music, composing music (Thank you, Sondra, for the special pieces composed for us!!) preparing slide presentation, writing program notes, preparing programs, and on and on!!



# 40+ Hours

In rehearsal as an ensemble plus hours each week spent by each member preparing for rehearsal.

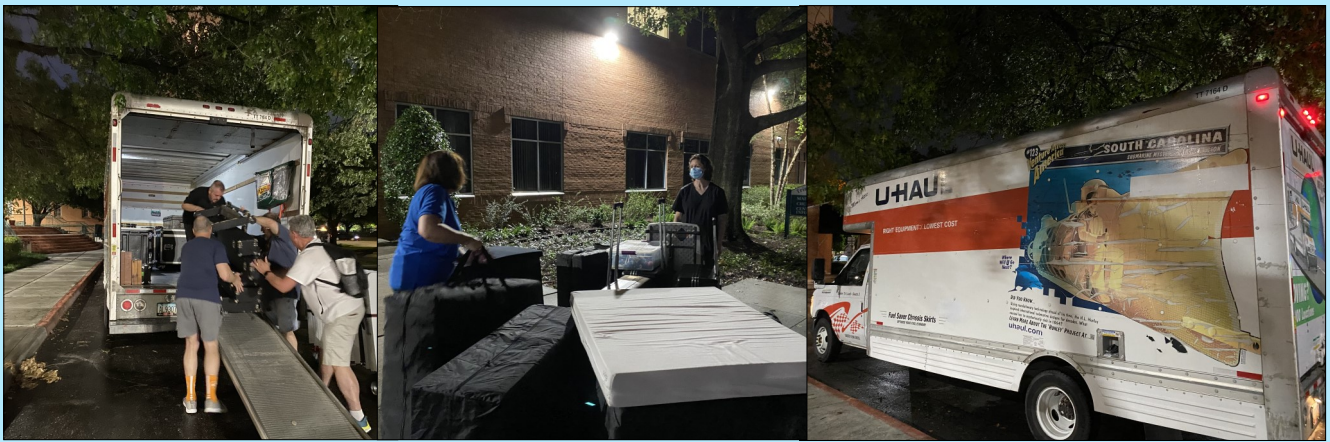


**Polishing!**  
Give it a little elbow grease!  
Make them shine like the top of the Chrysler Building.



**NOT DONE YET!!!! Next Page**





Load 'em up!! Move 'em out!

**MATCHBOX 4**

HOUSTON BRONZE ENSEMBLE  
**HAPPY TOGETHER**

Happiness can only grow when shared with YOU. Our concert of music and poetry, "Happy Together," will underscore the events and diversity of our lives as Houstonians from our hot summers and busy freeways to the big Texas blue sky and from beautiful sunsets and sunrises to trips into space. Join us as we share our joy of making music together in this fabulous city we call home. The concert will include three premiere performances. Houston  
Download Happy Together and more great music from Matchbox 4

MAY  
**20**

Matchbox 4  
 Houston Bronze Ensemble  
 KCBSE CHALLENGE  
 Houston Symphony



Unload every-  
thing and set up  
concert hall.  
Dress rehearsal  
at venue and  
now we are  
ready!



Finally Concert Time!!!



Time to load and go home!

Wash, Rinse, Repeat for next concert!!

Time for a party!!!!



Everybody Dance Now!



Celebrate!



Thanks for the memories!



## The Houston Bronze Ensemble

Houston Bronze Ensemble is currently scheduling events for 2023 and beyond. If you are interested in hosting the entire ensemble or perhaps just a small group for a full concert, party or wedding, please get in touch with us at:

P.O. Box 541741  
Houston, TX 77254

Phone: 1-866-908-RING (7464)  
[www.houstonbronze.org](http://www.houstonbronze.org)

Email:  
[info@houstonbronze.com](mailto:info@houstonbronze.com)  
[eventcoordinator@houstonbronze.com](mailto:eventcoordinator@houstonbronze.com)

Houston Bronze Ensemble also loves conducting workshops for handbell organizations throughout the Houston area. We would love to do one for your group. <http://houstonbronze.com/build-a-bell-workshop.html>



Houston Bronze Ensemble  
*EXPECT EXCELLENCE*



**[LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!!](#)**

## About the Houston Bronze Ensemble

The Houston Bronze Ensemble is a professional, auditioned, handbell ensemble made up of musicians from the greater Houston area. Known as Houston's premier handbell choir, the ensemble performs regular concerts in the winter and spring as well as at community events, regional and national handbell events, weddings, and private parties. In 2014 HBE had the honor of performing with the Houston Symphony. The group plays a wide variety of musical genres, always with the goal of EXCELLENCE.

Founded in 1988, Houston Bronze Ensemble was started as an avenue for Houston area handbell directors to have a place to ring. A lunchtime meeting with Jeff Weiss, Christine Anderson and Hart Morris in attendance and with only a napkin to write the names of those who might be interested is what started it all. The rest, as they say, is history. In the fall of 1988, Hart Morris became the first director of Houston Bronze. After Hart moved to Tennessee, the ensemble rang under the direction of Margaret R. Tucker. In the 1995 season, the group rang ensemble style with various ringers, including G.W. Shepherd, Andrew Bowen, and David VanderMeer, directing the ensemble. Artistic Directors since then have included David VanderMeer, Dolan Bayless, Ben Harris, Ruth Seiwel, James Roberts, Bill Nave. And Sondra Tucker. David York was appointed the artistic director in July 2023.

Houston Bronze recognizes the importance of investing in the future of handbell ringing. We offer a variety of educational opportunities designed to meet the unique needs of churches and schools who wish to build or improve their handbell program. Workshops designed to meet the specific needs of a choir, mini concerts, and petting zoos are a sample of what we provide to the Houston area handbell community. Houston Bronze also offers scholarships to students wishing to attend College Ring-In, an event sponsored by Handbell Musicians of America.

Whether it is through a concert, playing at your wedding, party, private or community event, conducting a workshop for your ensemble, or presenting an educational program for your school, we would love to share our art with you! Please look at our website, [www.houstonbronze.org](http://www.houstonbronze.org) for more information about our group and what we offer. Feel free to contact us at [info@houstonbronze.com](mailto:info@houstonbronze.com) with any questions or requests. We look forward to working with you to provide handbell excellence to meet your needs!





*Thank you!*

Houston Bronze Ensemble would like to thank our contributors for their donations during this past year. In the past you have helped us to send our director to a national handbell event, purchase new music and equipment, offer scholarships to students to attend College Ring-In, and so much more. It is because of you that we are able to continue to bring you our dedication to

**EXCELLENCE.**

*Corporate Contributors*

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*Individual Contributors*

January 2019—Present

Stephen Ashurst	Robert and Linda Ellison	Ken and Lorna Noack
Leslie Bartlett	Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church, Houston, TX	Sarah and Steven Schlacks
Penny Brehany-Wellman	Ben and Margaret Harris	Michelle Shuman
Judy Clayton	J. Marvin Havard	St. John's Lutheran Church Cypress, TX
Sam and Linda Conner	Phil and Marylyn Hodges	Barbara Szalkowski
Jerry Conry	Dean and Sherry Hunter	Margaret and Bob Tucker
Jimmy Clark	Alicia Monroe	Wilson Van Tine
Cheryl Cranford (Bells of Hope)	Diana and Mike Montgomery	Mary Voigt
Paul and Betty Dorn		
Tim and DruEllen Duncan		