

## Utah Valley Handbell Ringers to present Christmas concert at Museum

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The Utah Valley Handbell Ringers will present a Christmas concert at the Springville Museum of Art on Sunday, Dec. 16, at 5 p.m. The one-hour event, sponsored by the Springville Arts Commission, is free to the public.

The Utah Valley Handbell Ringers are a volunteer performing handbell choir whose members share one thing in common: the love of handbells and the music they make. The group practices together weekly with the goal of producing the highest quality handbell music possible and sharing their incredible sound with people everywhere.

As a community group, the Ringers can appear at an unlimited variety of venues including churches, corporate parties, firesides, festivals and talent competitions. In 1999 they were honored to perform during the worship service at the world-famous Crystal Cathedral in Anaheim, California.

The Ringer's director, Karen Eskew-Wyllie, began playing the bells years ago in Florida. She and her husband, Neil, moved to Springville in 1991 where she became director of a small church handbell group which eventually became the Utah Valley Handbell Ringers. Over the years the group have grown in both size and expertise to consistently produce outstanding music at each concert.

Eskew-Wyllie has made it her personal mission to share the unique sounds of the handbell with concert goers throughout Utah and beyond.

Cast of bronze (copper and tin) the bells are each tuned to a single tone. When rung together or in succession they produce melodies full of rich tones. Bells are still created the same way that has proven successful for hundreds of years.

The molten bronze is poured into a sand mold and after cooling the sand is removed to expose something that looks faintly like a bell. Placed on the lathering table the true magic begins as the bell starts to take shape. Layer after layer of metal is carefully removed from the inside and outside the bell and then tuning begins.

The ringers must wear gloves to protect the delicate metal surface, because once damaged, a bell must be melted down and recast. The black and white handles are comparable to the black and white keys on a piano and denote the sharps and flats of a note.

At this year's Springville concert the group will perform a variety of Christmas favorites. The choir has produced two CDs of handbell music: one with Christmas music and one with hymns. They are available for sale during concerts.

The handbell choir can be reached through their website: [www.utahbells.com](http://www.utahbells.com).