

artextra



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Donna Kagan, left, of the Village of Pinellas, rehearses with the Village Ringers on April 4, 2024 at New Covenant United Methodist Church. The group led by Bonnie Fisher will present its spring concert "Colors!" on March 29 at the church.

Village Ringers Readying for a Colorful Concert

The resident handbell choir will perform "Colors!" on March 29 at New Covenant United Methodist Church.

By **MICHAEL FORTUNA**
Daily Sun Staff Writer

The Village Ringers upcoming concert "Colors!" will cover the entire spectrum.

When the resident handbell choir led by Bonnie Fisher appears on stage at 7 p.m. March 29 at New Covenant United Methodist Church, the audience will hear songs with a color in the title.

Expect such familiar tunes as "Mr. Blue Sky," "The Pink Panther," "Yellow Submarine," "Shades of Forest Green" and "Over the Rainbow." A couple of Christmas songs sneak their way into the set list, including "Silver Bells."

Throughout the show, images will be projected onto a screen to enhance the mentioned hues. The group will throw in a few new sound effects such as aqua bending, which involves dipping the bells in water to bend the notes.

Dan Southworth will play the saxophone during "The Pink Panther," while Cathy Bullock will perform a clarinet solo during "Over the Rainbow."

"The music is fun and swinging," Fisher said. "You'll want to tap your toes and sing along."

The Village Ringers, Too, a newly formed offshoot of the handbell choir, will make its debut at the concert, assisting the main group with a couple of songs.

About a year ago, several members of the Ringers gathered to come up with themes for the upcoming season's concerts.

"We started looking around, and there's a lot out there," said Fisher, of the Village of Piedmont. "It was hard to find some bell arrangements. For some of the songs, we had to make new arrangements."

In the group, Carolyn Roan usually plays the tiny bells that make the notes B and C, while Marie Johnson plays medium-sized bells that make the notes F and G.

"You have to listen to the music around you so you can play as an ensemble," said Johnson, of the Village of St. Catherine.

Johnson joined the Ringers a year ago. She spotted the group's listing in the weekly Recreation and Parks publication and contacted Fisher.

As luck would have it, Fisher was hosting auditions the following Monday, so Johnson signed up.

She enjoys forming new friendships with people in the Ringers and the group's song selections.

"We play fun stuff," Johnson said.

Johnson, who played the piano during her school years, discovered handbells when her local church bought a set for a new choir they were

forming.

"With the piano, you play all the notes," Johnson said. "With the bells, you play two bells."

Roan has been with the Village Ringers for three years. Prior to this, she played the handbells for more than 30 years in Dalton, Georgia. She spent about four years away from playing before joining the Ringers.

"I picked up where I left off," said Roan, of the Village of Osceola Hills at Soaring Eagle. "Once you're a ringer, you're always a ringer."

Tickets for the show are \$20 and are available at ncumcfl.com/tickets or at the door.

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