

Bloomfield Hills, MI carillonneur performs next in Alfred University series

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Alfred University's summer of 2009 carillon recital series continues on Tuesday, July 14, with Dennis Curry from Kirk in the Hills Presbyterian Church, Bloomfield Hills, MI. The program begins at 7 p.m. at the Davis Memorial Carillon on campus. Admission is free and the performance will go on rain or shine. Guests may sit on the lawn adjacent to the carillon. Feel free to bring along chairs and blankets to enhance your listening pleasure. Curry will perform arrangements from Johann Sebastian Bach's repertoire; "Wingate Fantasy;" "Two Hymn Settings" "Bunessan" ("Morning Has Broken"), "Reflections and Prayer on Finlandia" ("Be Still, My Soul"); "Four Variations on the Parsifal Chime;" Folksongs from the British Isles "The Bells of Aberdovey" (Welsh), "Ye Banks and Braes O' Bonnie Doone" (Scottish), "Londonderry Air" (Irish); and "Scottish Triptych:" "Dorian Rhapsody," "Cathedral Ruins," "Toccata Pentatonica." Curry is carillonneur and associate organist at Kirk in the Hills. His carillon studies began with Dr. Frederick Marriott, longtime Kirk carillonneur. Curry advanced to carillonneur member of the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America (GCNA) in 1989. President of the GCNA for the last five years, he has also served on the board of directors and as juror on the Guild's Student Examination Committee. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the World Carillon Federation (WCF), serving as its vice president. In 2001, with the support of the Kirk, he hosted the 59th Congress of the GCNA, which honored the centennials of Percival Price and Frederick Marriott. He supervised the formation of the Marriott Memorial Library and the complete renovation of the Kirk carillon - the world's largest (77 bells). In 2011, he will host WCF's World Congress, celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the GCNA - which should be the largest gathering of carillonneurs in history. A carillon recitalist in the United States, Europe, and Asia, Curry has also performed in several prestigious international carillon festivals - Springfield (2002), Historic Bok Tower & Sanctuary (2003), Lgumkloster (2007), and Centralia (2002/2009). His other musical endeavors have included section leader for the Detroit Symphony Chorale & Chorus, president of the Kenneth Jewell Chorale, and appearances as organist and vocalist at area churches and synagogues. He recently retired from Ford Motor Co. after 38 years as regional manager for environmental & safety engineering in Eastern/Central Europe, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. Alfred University's Wingate Memorial Carillon Recital Series will continue each Tuesday in July at 7 p.m. The next two performances will feature Laura Ellis, University of Florida School of Music, Gainesville, July 21, and Jeremy Chesman, Missouri State, Springfield, MO, July 28. The series honors Dr. Ray Winthrop Wingate (1886-1968), who was a professor of music at Alfred University for 56 years. After the installation of the bells in 1937, he was appointed the University carillonneur and continued in the position until his death. He arranged more than 5,000 selections for the carillon and composed nine suites. The Margaret Merrill and Ray W. Wingate Memorial Carillon Foundation funds the series. The carillon at Alfred University is made of a double row of rounded oak levers, called batons (which are struck with loosely clenched fists), with a pedal board (octave and a fifth). The ground floor display by the carillon has information on its history. Guests are welcome to climb the 69 steps to the top to enjoy the view and watch the guest artists at work.