

THE SOONER TUNER

NEWSLETTER OF THE OKLAHOMA CHAPTER
OF THE PIANO TECHNICIANS GUILD, INC.



HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY ☼

May 6, 1993

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I believe that one of the most important roles we as piano technicians play is guiding people in the purchase of pianos. I would like to pursue this subject in an upcoming meeting. I believe we could all benefit from the sharing of our collective experience in this area.

How much should a piano cost? How good a piano does a child need as a beginning practice instrument? Why buy a new piano instead of a used one? How do the brands compare? How much will the piano be worth in a few years? Is bigger always better? What about the imports? These are a few of the common questions.

There are three primary suggestions I make when I consult with prospective piano purchasers. I will share one of them here: Stretch your imagination and your

budget to get the most quality instrument you reasonable can. If the piano is not responsive to the touch, pleasing to the ear, and (for many people) attractive to the eye, the experience of playing it will fall short of what they intended and they are more likely to lose interest. If it is purchased for a child and he or she is frustrated by the loose, uneven or stiff action, practicing will be unpleasant and probably cut short. Poor tone will have

similar results. In both cases the child is not likely to know what is wrong or to ask for help. If he or she doesn't stay with the piano program, it could stem from the quality and condition of the practice instrument. The investment in the piano is really an investment in the person's future. One of our tasks is to educate people about this.

Think about this subject and let's plan a forum or some other means to help us further develop our skills and resources. We may want to enlist the help of a local piano dealer or two, and a piano teacher might be helpful as well. What do you think?*

See you at the chapter meeting!

David Bonham,
President

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Willem Brees, RPT*

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PERSONAL*

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*NOMINATING COMMITTEE
REPORT*

BIRTHDAY INVITATION

**Oklahoma Chapter Officers
1992-93**

President	David Bonham 721-0566
V. President	Tim Hast 359-0440
Secretary & Treasurer	Nathan Sobel 329-6971

NORM'S NONCENTS

Recently I was tuning a piano for a customer who didn't have a very high quality piano and whose playing skills were limited as well. She expressed how much joy learning to play the piano had been in her life over the last couple of years. She asked me some questions about how to practice, how to approach learning to play, and expressed some frustration over the time it seems to take to learn to play well. She commented that like many other adults she had taken lessons for a short time as a child but had given them up. She expressed the usual regrets over this decision and went on to discuss the many benefits learning to play the piano has for each of us.

I know that most of us in the local chapter have at least some musical talent and that this talent has been developed over many years. I would like to make some comparisons between developing musical skills and running a business.

When you are learning to play the piano several tasks and systems are honed as skills. The most obvious is that you are learning the essential skills of piano playing and making music. Without these basics progress would not occur. In addition to the basics of making music one is also learning to rehearse effectively. During the rehearsal time the student learns to break the music into manageable parts in order to become proficient. One is also learning to practice more than one piece at once. The student is setting both long and short term goals; always in preparation for the upcoming performance.

Many entrepreneurs tend to be task oriented and see the process of business in the light of doing, going, selling and activity that is productive. If you are like me down time seems like a waste of energy that could be spent making money or finishing another project. Try looking at your business in light of the rehearsal/performance approach. Learn to use planning time to set goals, mentally manage your projects, exercise the discipline necessary to making your business grow and prosper. This planning time is your rehearsal time, with the performance happening with the customer.

My customer was also bemoaning the fact that she didn't have time to take lessons. It became apparent that because her only teacher was herself, she had missed some of the basics along the way and even some pointers on how to master those seemingly difficult musical passages. The next time you are tempted not to come to a chapter meeting or attend a seminar. You may be trying to perform without a teacher to guide you.

Norman Cantrell, ED

INDUSTRY NEWS

MAPES UNCOILS NEW WIRE!

Mapes Piano String Co. has just announced the release of their new piano wire called "International Gold Series", the wire was developed and patented to be the best piano wire in the world. The test results I have show that in Breaking weight, Elongation, and PSI Strength it is superior to both Rosalau Blue Label and Suzuki wire, and the finish is beautiful! The final accuracy of the wire is assured by drawing it through the final die twice. Personally, it makes me happy to know that we can still do it right in America.

*The wire is available right now, and you can specify it when you order strings from Mapes. Contact Wayne Hicks at Mapes, (615) 543-3195. **

*From Indy-440 Newsletter, Indianapolis chapter; May 1993 edition.

SHOULD ASSOCIATES BE OUR EQUAL?

Willem Blee, RPT, St. Louis

Once again the issue of membership classification is going to be debated at the annual convention. Instead of hashing over the same thing again and again, perhaps we should rethink what we are about, who we want to serve, and how much it means to be a member of our organization.

One of my clients is the executive director of the MSCPA (Missouri Society of Certified Public Accountants). According to him, the Society is compromised primarily of CPA's, but like the PTG, they also have 2 secondary classifications: "auxiliary" and "student". Auxiliary members are very much like our Associates, in that they can have very little experience, or they can just have missed passing the CPA exam by a few points.

Auxiliary members can attend CPA conventions and seminars and can even serve on committees of the MSCPA, but do not have a voice in running the organization. Student members have absolutely no rights and get no benefits other than a membership directory, the the right to attend seminars at member rates.

The difference between PTG and the MSCPA however, is that Auxiliary and Student members do not pay full dues. Dues for CPA's are \$210 per year. Auxiliary members pay only \$35 per year. For that they get all MSCPA magazines and literature, and can advertise membership in the MSCPA as "auxiliary" members. (Promotional material does not seem to be an issue with Auxiliary members, since that is usually developed by CPA's or their firms, and most Auxiliary members work for a CPA or a CPA firm) Student members pay only \$15 per year and have to be enrolled in school full time.

What we can learn from the MSCPA is

that the PTG needs to distinguish more clearly the difference between RPT's and Associates. There seems to be two main differences between the rights and benefits of RPT's and Associates: the use of promotional materials and political rights. RPT's want to limit those things only for themselves. Associates feel that if they have to pay the same dues, then they should receive the same rights and benefits.

Number 5 of our Code of Ethics states: "I WILL NOT ENGAGE IN UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES". This presumably means we will perform competent service for an honest fee, and be fair with our customers. In my opinion, the PTG is going against its own Code of Ethic, in that it is being unfair to the Associates by asking them to pay full dues, but not giving them the same rights and benefits.

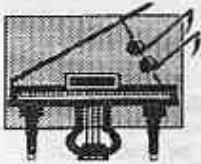
There is a conflict with the current system. Since we charge Associates the same dues, then we should give them the same rights and benefits. We should allow them to have a voice in running the organization, and we should allow them to use the promotional materials.

But most RPT's do not want Associates to have the same rights and benefits. RPT's do not want Associates to vote on PTG issues, and do not want them to use promotional materials designed for RPT's.

Because PTG already limits the rights and benefits of Associates, in order for the PTG to abide by its own Code of Ethics, the only alternative would be to reduce their dues accordingly. If that was done, however, to insure PTG's financial strength, RPT's would have to pay more for their membership.

(See Associates Pg. 5)

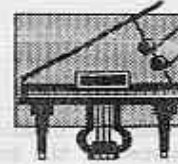




TUNER TALK

WITH

Bob Barnhoff



Hello this is Bob Barnhoff and this is Tuner Talk. I realize that many of you wonder just what is Tuner Talk? Tuner Talk is your forum, it is your chance to seek answers to questions that can come from nowhere else. It is your chance to ask questions that you might have been previously afraid to ask. There is no such thing as a dumb question, only dumb people. With that in mind, let's check the mail bag.



Dear Bob:

I was tuning a Hobart M. Cable upright the other day. I was wondering just exactly what the M. in Hobart M. Cable stands for?

Musing in Minco

Dear Musing:

As you know I am somewhat an expert on piano history trivia. It took some research but the answer to your question is simple but it does have some futuristic implications. First the Hobart M. Cable piano company lists several usages for the initial "M". The earliest literature quotes the "M" as standing for "musical". This sales ploy must not have had the desired effect as later brochures list the "M" as standing

for "Magnificent". I was able to find the family history and it seems that Hobart's middle name was really Milhous. This is quite interesting in light of the fact that the Cable family lived next to a family named Nixon during the years of 1876 through 1900. Hobart must have made quite an impression on the Nixon family as the now former president of the United States also received the same middle name.

Dear Bob:

I have been having trouble with my computer. I have been trying to use it to record my customer files. It seems every I try to install a customer into my computer they disappear. What is happening?

Hacking in Hinton

Dear Hacking:

I am not sure just what to tell you since you have not told me what type of computer you have or what program you are running. I will however, try to assist you in your search. First make sure that the computer is on. I know this is basic but it sure helps me a lot. Next, clean the peanut butter and crackers off of your fingers before you touch the keyboard. If you will type all the information and follow the manual you will probably succeed. Keep in mind how important it is to make backup copies. Good Luck.





THE MINUTES

The April meeting was held on the 17th at Norman Cantrell's piano shop with 7 in attendance. A brief discussion over the policies for using "prepared" pianos for concert uses. Following this discussion David Bonham officially called the meeting to order.

The invocation was led by Norman Cantrell. The minutes were read and approved.

The treasurer's report was presented. The chapter received a check in the amount of \$340.00 for chapter dues from the Home Office.

David reported on the issues discussed at the Regional Seminar in March. These included a proposal to make the \$12.00 temporary assessment for marketing on PTO dues permanent.

There was also discussion over the Membership structure proposals. The two proposals that came from the regional seminar were as follows: The membership structure will reflect the following divisions--1)RPT and Sustaining; with Sustaining replacing Associate. 2)RPT, Apprentice, and Supporting; Apprentice would replace Associate and Supporting would be reserved for those who are affiliated with the piano industry but are not necessarily tuners and technicians.(An example of this would be an owner or manager of a piano store)

After much discussion Keith McGavern proposed the following three titles be used--RPT, Associate and Affiliate. This was presented in the form of a motion to be brought to the council meeting at the National Convention in Milwaukee. The motion passed.

A nominating committee was selected to present nominations for chapter officers at

the next meeting. The committee consisted of Keith McGavern, Gary Bruce, and Ross Trawick.

The other item of business approved was the assistance with chapter dues of one of the members. The motion passed.

The technical presentation was on String Tension and Tone by Norman Cantrell.

Associates from pg 3

Two questions need to be asked. Should the PTO give All its members, RPT's and Associates, equal rights and benefits for equal dues? Or are RPT's ready and willing to pay more dues to have exclusive rights and benefits?

My answer is coming in the June issue of the UPDATE SECTION of the Journal. What is yours?

MAY MEETING

Saturday May 15, 2:00 p.m.
Hast Piano Shop

The May meeting will be on computers and the piano tuning business. I am using my computer word-processor program to write this article. I use the computer for correspondence, billing and invoices, financial records, tax records and employee payroll. My computer is not a super-duper state-of-the-art 486 nuclear turbo-charged plasma memory machine. It is an 8 year old IBM clone XT with only 20 megabytes of hard disk storage. In layman's terms this means that I own an outdated antique. It does run most of the current programs on the market, it just doesn't do Windows®, well neither do I! It isn't very fast, it might take a few seconds to compute the acceleration required to catapult a softball around the world, but it is plenty fast for doing my taxes. It cuts the tax time from about 8 hours to 10 minutes, and for that my fellow Americans, it is fast enough for me!

If you are using a computer in your business, please come prepared to add your two megabytes. If you think you wouldn't be interested in this topic, come for the fellowship.

Tiw Hast, RPT

Piano Proverbs

*Poor people pay interest...
Rich people earn interest!*

*from the nominating
committee...*

The following slate of officers will be presented at the next chapter meeting. All of them have consented to serve. Other nominations will be accepted from the floor.

David Bonham--
President,
Tim Hast --Vice
President,
Nathan Sobel--
Secretary &
Treasurer,
Norman Cantrell--
Newsletter Editor.

OKLAHOMA PTG PERSONAL

During the May meeting, we will take some time to celebrate Bob Qualls 90th birthday. This is a surprise so don't leave your braille copies of the newsletter around. Bob has been active in our chapter for many years and we want to all show up and wish him a belated happy birthday: April 11. Plan to come to the meeting, and have ice cream and cake. If you wish to bring a small gift or card, or just come and wish him a happy birthday. I know it will mean a lot to him.



Congratulations to Norman and Vickie Cantrell on the birth of their new daughter Gaelen Niclolle, born April 25th. Vital statistics include weight 6lbs. 7oz, and length of 19 1/2 inches. The editor understands that she is one of the most beautiful babies born this century.

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