

"THE SOONER TUNER"



Official Newsletter, Oklahoma Chapter 731
The Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.
May '98

NEXT MEETING

DATE: May 21st

TIME: 8:30AM

LOCATION & DIRECTIONS:

Norman Cantrell's place: From I-40 & I-44 go north to 23rd, exit east 1.3 mile to Villa, then south to 19th, then east to 2251 NW 19th, 405-525-7762

*** TECHNICAL ***

"From Bench Warmer to Player"

How To Get Past First Base and Score a Home Run with In-
Player Piano Service
by Norman Cantrell, RPT

This is one of the classes Norman will be doing in Providence.


Norman Cantrell, President.....	405-525-7762
Ross Trawick, Vice President.....	405-427-6663
David Wallace, Secretary.....	405-755-4221
Gary Bruce, Treasurer.....	405-348-3213
(E-mail address: garybrucegang@juno.com)	
Keith McGavern, Newsletter.....	405-275-8600
(PO Box 1585, Shawnee, OK 74802-1585)	
(E-mail address: kam544@ionet.net)	

LAST MEETING

A small group met and had a terrific meeting at Gary Bruce's home. Mark E. Jones, CPA from Oklahoma City, visited with us. He and Gary presented the advantages and disadvantages on becoming incorporated. I must say that those in attendance were impressed by the seeming advantages. Very interesting presentation!

Ross showed us a project that Chris, his son, did for school about being a Piano Tech. A touching piece of work!!

1998 SCHEDULED MEETINGS

June 18th, Thursday		All meeting times 8:30AM except July & December
July (no meeting)		
August 20th, Thursday		
September 17th, Thursday		
October 22nd, Thursday		
November 19th, Thursday		
December (undecided)		

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the end of school draws near and the pace of life once again quickens, I hope all of you are as busy as you hope to be and are planning a little time for relaxation this summer. It really is true that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.

Have you ever bid on a job and when it was all said and done, you found you had mysteriously miscalculated and ended up on the short end of the stick? If you are like me, this has happened at least once in your career. You can usually just chalk this up to education, wisdom, and experience. The question becomes just how much education, wisdom, and experience can you afford?

If you have ever taken your car in for repairs, the mechanic uses a tool which is called, "Chilton time." If you are unfamiliar with Chilton time, it is simply an industry recognized labor guide for use in estimating and billing car repairs. For instance, if your car needs brakes, the mechanic can either bill you for the exact hours or use Chilton time to fill in the bill. If the mechanic really hustles and does a repair listed for 3 hours in 2 1/4 hours, it is customary practice to bill you for all 3 hours. Is this fair? Is it right? I don't know, but it is the practice in the industry.

Having known about Chilton time for several years, I have often wished for a similar labor guide for piano technicians. I have finally found such a guide. It is the "G" Piano Works Repair Labor Guide by Joseph A. Garrett, RPT. This is available from Pianotek Supply Company. The guide covers a wide range of repairs and rebuilding tasks giving the time for repair based on the average time for repair by an apprentice and a craftsman. In other words you may be faster on a given repair, or slower, depending on your level of expertise. If you use this guide as a tool to guide you in your estimates and actual repairs, I think you will find it beneficial. This is by no means an attempt on my part to fix pricing, but it is an effort to help each of us to examine just how we can most profitably run our businesses. If nothing else, it can serve to help you bid on a job that is presently unfamiliar to you.

I hope to see all of you at my place on the 21st. Be sure to bring all your player piano questions.

Norman Cantrell, RPT

PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF

"Pianos tuned below pitch story"

by Richard Moody

Date: Wed, 28 Jan 1998

When I was a kid my parents finally got an old piano and I started taking lessons. In high school I asked the chorus director why I could hit an F at night easier than in the day time. She looked at me like I was daft.

I started copying songs off the record player. I played "Like Young" and "Like Blue" and noticed they were all in the black keys. I played "In Crowd" in the black keys, but Ray Charles "What'd I Say" was in the key of F. So I learned to play blues in F and everything else, I played in C by ear. Then some kids with guitars came around a couple of times and remarked that they had to tune their guitars down to meet the E on my piano. For a while there was a Wurlitzer Electric piano we baby sat, but I never noticed the notes didn't match. I never played them both at the same time.

The music teacher lived right around the corner and I crammed for lessons, and in ten minutes would be playing a Chopin prelude on her piano. I never noticed any difference. Our piano didn't sound horrible, or that different from the teacher's, or the ones at school, so my dad never called a tuner, except the time we moved it. My aunt would come and play, and she didn't complain. Besides I quit taking lessons when I was 16.

(1 of 2)

So about 8 years later when I was beginning to apprentice, the tuner said, "Here is a piano that is half a step low". I was dumbfounded, as I began to realize what had happened to our piano, and a lot of curiosities I never understood all became answered in that moment. What a stunning revelation to learn that all those songs I copied off records as I was growing up, were actually performed half a step lower than I learned them. Every thing I learned in F and Bb was actually in A and E. I never did learn to play in those keys. They seem cumbersome and awkward. In fact, if I came to a song book and it was in A or E, I would play it in F or Bb by ear, since my sight reading was that terrible. (If I could only blame that on the piano being half a step low)

So I became a piano tuner instead of a piano player. Maybe I can say I was lucky the piano wasn't 44 cents low instead of an exact 100 cents low. I mean, how could I have copied anything off the records or played along with them?

If only my chorus director with her masters in music had had just one lecture on the tuning and care of pianos, she might have recognized my problem. In fact when ever I ask people with music degrees if they were ever taught any thing about how a piano is tuned, or how it works, they say no.

Richard Moody
remoodys@essnet.net

PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF

"Dampp-Chasers affect Voicing"

by Jim Coleman, Sr., RPT

Date: Sat, 07 Mar 1998

Just recently (a week ago) I installed a "wet" humidistat which centers humidity at 48% RH instead of the usual 42%. My customer who has an unusually fine Yamaha CF about 20 years old but rebuilt is always looking for more power and carrying power. To our amazement the piano went out of tune but the carrying power increased another major amount. My customer had suspected that the tone got better when we had rainy seasons. I think I'm convinced now. The customer momentarily is ecstatic.

My customer is a very alert individual who has noticed the piano sounds greater during the rainy times when the DC is slightly over-riden. At the California State Conference I met Gayle at the Dampp Chaser booth who told me they already had a 48% humidistat which they called the "wet" one. I ordered one on the spot. It was here in 3 days. My customer is still ecstatic. I just returned his piano yesterday. He is still very pleased with the enlarged sound and duration.

My customer was on the verge of changing hammers before this experiment in order to get a bigger more luscious sound. He already has a great sound, but now it is even greater. I like the original Yamaha hammers that are on there now, and even though he has ordered new hammers, he may decide to keep the ones he has. This man loves pianos like a virilient man would love a woman. He has already married and divorced several including, Steinway O (rebuilt) Yamaha C7, Grotrian-Steinweg 7'4, Steinway B, and was thinking about divorcing the Yamaha CF 6 months ago. So far I've saved him multi thousands of dollars by working closely with him in the voicing area. He flies all over the world looking for a more perfect piano. His last few trips have been in vain. I think he is about ready to marry the CF for life with the advent of the increased humidity....

Jim Coleman, Sr.
pianotoo@IMAP2.ASU.EDU
Tempe, Arizona

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Slate of Officers for the Oklahoma Chapter 1998-99

President - Norman Cantrell, RPT
Vice President - Ross Trawick, RPT
Secretary - Peter Kraus, Associate
Treasurer - Gary Bruce, RPT
Newsletter Editors - Ben Davis, RPT, Norman Cantrell, RPT

"Jazz on a Sunday"

June 28th, 2-5PM, Sooner Theatre, Norman, OK.
Our own Nathan Sobel, Associate member will be playing
in one of three jazz groups.
He can cook!!

*** additional "Jazz on a Sunday" info ***

Found out that Don Stephens, RPT will be also be playing
along with Dr. Jerry Smith, Clarinetist, and jazz pianist, Mary
Sallee, in the Mary Sallee Jazz Combo. The Sunday
afternoon program is a part of the "Jazz In June" weekend.

The "Kick" Zone

(closely related to after touch)

from

Keith McGavern, RPT

"Time will end all my troubles,
but I don't always approve of Time's methods."
(Ashleigh Brilliant)

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"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is mystery, and today is a gift.
That's why it is called the present."
(author unknown)

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A young man once asked God how long a million years was to Him. God replied, "A million years to me is just like a second in your time." Then the young man asked God what a million dollars was to Him. God replied, "A million dollars to me is just like a single penny to you." Then the young man got his courage up and asked, "God, could I have one of your pennies?" God smiled and replied, "Certainly, just a second."

(St John Lutheran Church, April 1998 newsletter, Shawnee, OK)

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"A jester unemployed is nobody's fool."
Danny Kaye, in "The Court Jester"

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"I'm not afraid of losing. I just don't want to be there when it happens."
(from the backside of a No Fear T-shirt)

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