

THE SOONER TUNER

AUGUST 2003

8-5-3

COMING EVENTS:

The next meeting of the OK PTG will be held Thursday, August 21 at 8:30 AM in Bob Scheer's Piano Shop located at 4305 Sycamore Lane in Edmond. Bob will be doing a demonstration of vertical hammer pre-filing and voicing. Hope to see you all there!

TSA CONVENTION 2004

This is going to be a continual reminder to all of you so that next March no one can say "We didn't know about this!" We will be **hosting** the TSA Regional Convention next year. It will be held March 11-14, 2004. This is a very important event and we need 100% participation from the members of our Chapter to make it a success. So, **MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW** so that you won't forget!

I want this newsletter to be interesting to all of you. Last month I posed a question to all of you hoping to get some input from various technicians. My question was: What is your favorite brand and model of piano and why? The one response I received came from Keith McGavern. Keith said that he had the opportunity to visit and play some of the pianos in the exhibit hall at the convention in Dallas. His comment was *"I must say my experience with a Shigeru Kawai (about 7') was an immaculate one. The dynamic range and touch response was to die for. No other piano I visited came close."*

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

I once heard it said that "The only thing we really have in our control is our attitude." My surgery in February made me realize that this is true. Since then, my circle of appreciation has grown much larger, and my circle of worry much smaller. I think we probably all need a little jolt once in a while in order to rethink our priorities and goals. Our chapter members have a lot in common. I think it's fair to say that we're all just trying to feed our families, keep the bills paid, do the best work we can do and have a little fun while we're at it. It's very easy, however, to reach a plateau in our level of expertise and become complacent. The beauty of conventions, seminars and chapter meetings is that it gives us an opportunity to grow and expand our knowledge. There is always something more to learn, no matter how long we've been doing our work. Bob Scheer

TREATING OR "DOPING" THE PINBLOCK

Last month, David and I had a customer who has an antique Schomacker Goldstring upright piano. This piano is a family heirloom. It was built specifically for her grandfather's funeral parlor. It is a beautiful piece of furniture with ornate carvings and has been well maintained - that is, for furniture, but not musically. It has great sentimental value to her and she wanted it fixed up so that her sons can play it, rather than the modern console which she also owns. There were two immediate problems. The first problem was that she had a limited budget and the second and most important was that each note had multiple pitches and sounded like a runaway freight train. We told our customer that it was not necessary to rebuild the piano, which would be an expensive project. We recommended trying to treat the pinblock so that the tuning pins would hold. We explained that this treatment involved injecting cyanoacrylate glue into the wood around the tuning pins to fill the gaps that have occurred from decades of wear and wood shrinkage. Most technicians refer this to as the C.A. Glue treatment, or "doping" the pinblock. For simplicity and my own understanding, I personally call it the "super glue" treatment. Our customer agreed to try the pinblock treatment before taking any other action on

repair, David and I went to the customer's home together to perform this procedure. To begin, a vertical piano must be laid down on its back so that the pinblock is horizontal as it is on a grand piano; otherwise, glue will run everywhere and a real "sticky" mess could be the result. (Turning the piano on to its back is in itself a task when dealing with a very large upright that weighs around 700 pounds.) We were able to tilt the piano over using a special dolly designed for this purpose and treat the pinblock without too much "bonding" occurring between the two of us. For those of you who may have never done this, once the piano is tilted, there is a special applicator bottle that is used to insert the glue into the wood around the base of the tuning pin. A very small nozzle is used on the glue bottle so that the glue doesn't squirt or run over the entire area. On some pianos, you can see as the glue is absorbed into the area around the base of the pin; this is quite helpful and helps to gauge the amount of glue needed on each pin. Our experience was a positive one and David returned to tune the piano several days later. Numerous strings broke and at this point, the entire section of wrapped strings needs to be replaced. I had to wonder during this whole process, is this really called "doping" the pin block, and if so, why - or was I the "dope" who was being duped?!?!?

CONVENTION COMMENTS - FROM YOUR FELLOW MEMBERS

Steinway is celebrating their 150th anniversary this year. As part of this recognition Steinway held classes for two days on a variety of subjects. It was a special privilege to hear technicals given by the leading concert technicians from both NY and Hamburg. In a completely different area but equally impressive was the technical given by Ray Vale on hanging hammers on a vertical piano. Ray demonstrated his patented jigs for getting the correct angles, etc. I was proud to be a part of an organization whose members are really advancing piano technology and are willing to share their efforts with others in the guild. This was my fifth national convention. I'm still of the opinion that the level of instruction is so good that I cannot afford to pass it up. I would encourage everyone to seriously consider attending the TSA convention in OKC and the national convention next summer in Nashville, TN. Greg Lynch - Tulsa, OK

This year's convention in Dallas was a tremendous learning experience for all of us who attended. It's exciting to get back home and try the new stuff. What better way to boost our own attitude and improve our skills than to attend a national PTG Convention. Bob Scheer - Edmond, OK

I came, I saw, I tuned. No, that is no good. Let's see? Four score and two octaves ago - no, that won't work either. How about - ask not what your country can tune for you, but what tuna tastes best with? I give up! The only thing that would have made the convention better is if our entire chapter was there. Ben Davis - Oklahoma City, OK

How many bass players does it take to change a light bulb? None, the piano player can do that with his left hand!

If you have any thoughts on what you would like to read about in the newsletter, please contact me at 721-0566 or by email: barbbonham@cox.net. Any and all ideas will be appreciated.

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him! The moral of this story: When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut!?!?!?

HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL ON AUGUST 21 AT BOB SCHEER'S SHOP.

President - Bob Scheer
Vice President - Ben Davis
Secretary - Keith McGavern
Treasurer - Gary Bruce
Newsletter Editor - Barbara Bonham