

The Sooner Tuner
Official Newsletter of the Oklahoma Chapter
of the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.
October 2006 Edition

President's Message

Since the beginning of piano manufacturing, ideas and terminology have been developed to entice piano buyers.

Here are a few examples:

1. UPRIGHT PIANO, CABINET GRAND, UPRIGHT GRAND
{One is a large upright, the other two are large uprights.}
2. STORYTONE MAHOGANY SOUNDBOARD GUARANTEED 50 YEARS.
{Also will vary one half step in pitch in the mid range, depending on the season.}
3. THERMONEAL STABILIZER.
{ Does this give a warmer more stable sound? Sounds like it could be a replacement part for a Mr. Coffee.}
4. PERMAFREE ACTION.
{ Teflon bushings, like a Timex watch, take a lckin' and keep on clickin'}
5. ACCELERATED ACTION
{Is this DSL for pianos? Who would want an UNACCELERATED ACTION? Unfortunately, there is little or no difference from the conventional balance rail punchings.}

Fortunately, there have been, more often than not, innovative ideas that HAVE worked successfully, and at least some thought has gone in to improving the piano. I think we can all agree though, that many more improvements can and should be made. I am concerned, however, that with the decline in piano manufacturing combined with the cost of research and development, that we may not see any significant changes in the near future.

See you at the meeting. Bob

Chapter Officers

President Bob Scheer
Vice President David Bonham
Secretary Nathan Sobel
Treasurer Gary Bruce
Newsletter Editors Norman Cantrell & Blaine Morris

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Norm's Noncents

I just returned from Dallas and the TSA convention and seminar. I had the opportunity to meet some new people even one new PTG member from Tulsa and also to visit with some old friends. It is interesting how

PTG offers the opportunity to meet people from all over the world and certainly all over the country. Over the years you begin to develop some real friendships. Many of these people you would never have the opportunity to meet if it were not for our shared interest in piano technology.

I attended several excellent classes and learned a few new tricks. We have a great opportunity in piano technology today that did not exist 23 years ago when I first entered this field. Many of today's suppliers are not simply warehouses that ship out parts that may or may not meet our needs. There seems to be a growing market of suppliers who began and in large part are still active piano technicians who see the need to improve the tools and supplies we have to offer our customers. I attended a class by James Arledge from Nashville who is producing and providing bass strings for us to use. It is obvious that he has done a lot of research and investment in making strings that simply are more consistent because of the tooling being used to manufacture them. In his class he had recordings and graphic illustrations of the harmonic overtones that were being produced in strings wound using different methods. It was interesting to listen and see graphically what your ears are perceiving.

Other suppliers there included Joe Goss and Wally Brooks. Both of these guys are RPT's who address specific needs in our industry. Joe sells tools and Wally sells hammers and action parts that he has personally helped develop over the years. Ron Nossaman taught a class on re-designing the soundboard and scale of a Steinway concert grand. This class was followed by a field trip to SMU to hear his piano which happened to be sitting along side another Steinway D of original design and manufacture. There was an immediate and noticeable difference in the two pianos. You could not chalk it up to different hammers as they both had fairly new Ronsen hammers with Wurzen felt. These are good days to be a piano technician.

Norman Cantrell, RPT

Technical Tip

When you are trying to set the key dip on a piano one of the most important aspects is consistency. If you are using a key dip block it is sometimes hard to be consistent with the amount of downward pressure you use. It is easy to compact the front rail felts a little more or less from key to key. To avoid this simply place your set of supply house key weights on the key dip block. You still have room to feel the edges of the adjacent keys for comparison. This will result in the same downward force from key to key and thus a more consistent key dip setting.

Upcoming Events

October Chapter Meeting will be held on Thursday October 19th at Edmond Music at 8:30 a.m. Bob Scheer will give an overview of TSA and the classes he took. David Bonham will present a technical on A-440 or Not? A discussion on whether it is better to tune the piano at A-440 or to leave it somewhere else knowing that the piano may sound better in a month depending on what you decide.

Nov 16th Chapter Meeting tentatively at Larsen Music. The technical presentation will be on Vertical Damper Regulation and replacement by Norman Cantrell, RPT. Bring your wire benders and your spoon benders and see if we can squelch this problem area of piano regulation.

Christmas Dinner. We need to decide quickly what we will be doing for Christmas this year. If anyone would like to volunteer their home now is the time to step forward and let your voice be heard. If a restaurant is the place to meet we need to get our reservations in early to make sure we can all sit together. Plan to discuss this at the October meeting and make a decision. If you don't speak up your goose is cooked.

Chapter Business!!!

At last month's chapter meeting Norman Cantrell brought a new item to the table for consideration. The Texas State Association did not have a chapter to host the seminar for 2007. A motion was made from the floor by Gary Bruce for the Oklahoma Chapter to bid on the 2007 seminar. Gary was elected to serve as Seminar Director. During the TSA business meeting there were no other chapters jumping up and down to host the seminar so the Oklahoma Chapter was successful in securing the bid to host the TSA Seminar in October of 2007. We will all need to help Gary and be prepared to put on a great convention next year. We will have approximately 12 months to make this happen. The TSA Board of Directors is ready, willing and insisting on helping us with this endeavor. We will keep you posted as things unfold.

Oakie Doakie Piano Supply

A Public Service Announcement.

We want to remind you to be good citizens and be sure to vote in the upcoming elections. There does not appear to be any candidate who is supporting piano tuning or who has broached the subject in any debate but we are not a one issue outfit.

There is some concern regarding the Gubernatorial race. We are not sure which Guber to support for this office. It is amazing how much money is spent to get elected just so you can be called the head Guber anyway.

Please do take time to be as informed as possible. It is not very comforting to think we send people into outer space flying rockets built by the lowest bidder and we often send politicians into office to run our country based on a coin flip.