

THE SOONER TUNER

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

OCTOBER 17,
1990



COMING EVENTS:

October 27 Saturday 9:00 Chapter Meeting at CU Piano Shop in Norman (Holmberg Hall rm 110). We will be taking a look at several pianos at the Music School which have received new hammers recently. Come compare Steinway, A. Isaac, and Renner hammers on three Steinway grands. Norman Cantrell will tell about a recent hammer replacement job on a Steinway using Steinway hammers produced on their new hammer press. Could they have solved their problem with too-soft hammers that you have heard me gripe about? We will exchange ideas on evaluating hammers, ordering replacements, and methods of installation. Come with someone who hasn't been at one of our meetings recently.

November 16-18 at Gilliam Music in Edmond: A Special Steinway Selection event. They will be getting in a number of new pianos to try out, and refreshments will be served. Danny Saliba, the Steinway factory representative, will be present, and others may be there as well.

November 17 Saturday 2:00 Chapter Meeting at the Piano Clinic, Norman Cantrell's shop on N. Douglas St in OKC. We will be watching a videotape from Esendorfer. Get this on your calendar.

December: Annual Christmas Dinner! At our last meeting an interest was expressed in having the Christmas event again be a potluck at the Bonhams' house in OKC. This will be fine with us if we can shift the date from Saturday, December 8 to Friday or Sunday or the previous weekend. Please bring your calendars to the October meeting so we can confirm a plan that can include the greatest possible number of our group. Haven't been to a recent meeting? This is the best time of the year to show up. Fall brings new life, changes of various sorts, and we have the Christmas Party to look forward to!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

I hope by now all of you have recovered from summer and are into your busy fall tuning season. It seems to me that three-fourths of the world wants their pianos tuned between September and December. Are you driving all over town to work everybody in and feeling like you are not working as efficiently as you could? Sometimes we are harried and bothered in our frantic attempt at "getting it all done" when we could get more done if we would take one day or maybe even half a day to sit down, be still, and plan out a strategy for the next week, the next month, the next quarter. How about scheduling regionally, then looking in our file and calling some good prospects and telling them we are going to be in their neighborhood. To save a little of the world's dwindling gas supply, wouldn't they like for us to go ahead and tune their piano on that day? Consider saving up some shopwork for those weeks at the end of the month when the phone is not ringing as much. You see, too often we react to our situation, instead of aggressively planning our course of action. Reaction results in a frantic approach that never gets us anywhere. So stop, take some time, plan, get some fresh air, get a course of action, and then get going!

Tim Hast, RTT, President

TECHNICAL TIPS:

Norman Cantrell, Assoc, called me today with a couple tips. On the rare occasion when we encounter a bare string which has broken at the hitch pin loop, why not tie it as we might had the break occurred near the tuning pin? Save that string if possible by joining a newly looped piece of appropriate length to the end, being careful to make the winding line up with surrounding strings. Why knot?

Norman also purchased a product recently

he wanted to review. It is called a Squangle, and he purchased it at Walmart for about \$1.00. It is somewhat like a T-square but with an adjustable crossbar that pivots to allow the measurement of angles between 45 and 90 degrees. It is made of aluminum, about 14 inches in length, and has inch measurements, a built-in bubble level, a fish scale and a corkscrew. (just kidding about the last two). He finds it particularly useful in measuring hammer angles in preparation for ordering or boring replacements, but also uses it for various woodworking projects in his shop. Thanks!

And from Tim Hast...

I recently did a job where I had to replace the hammers and shanks on a grand action. The damper mechanism was so badly corroded that I removed the dampers and the damper tray completely with all the levers and flanges. After installing the hammers and shanks and doing the repair to the damper action, I returned to the home to install the action and regulate the piano. I did the preliminary aligning of the hammers and shanks before I installed the damper mechanism. It made the job so much easier that I did most of the regulation of the action before I finally installed the damper action and the dampers themselves. This has caused me to consider completely removing the entire damper assembly when I regulate a piano. It makes visual inspection of the regulation procedure in the piano much easier. An added bonus is having the damper action out of the piano in order to tighten all screws and inspect the centers for correct tightness. I would like to hear from you regarding this.

Keith McGavern, RTT, shared a tip at the last meeting that might save you some trouble sometime. Do you find it awkward to tune the vertical pianos that have the lid hinged on the left end instead of the back? He uses a 48" curtain rod with rubber tips on the ends to protect the finish. This holds the lid high enough to be out of his way. Try it!

DAMPP-CHASER SYSTEMS:

I would like to have a section next month in the Sooner Tuner devoted to a discussion of climate control systems. If you have installed any of these or have any particular thoughts

about them, plan to give me something for that issue so that your viewpoint can be shared. Do you recommend these systems to your clients? Are you convinced of their effectiveness? What problems if any have you had with them? How long do the humidifier pads last before they get too coated with minerals to work efficiently? Have you installed one of the dehumidifier rods in the action compartment of a grand and if so how well has it worked? How do you keep people disciplined about keeping them plugged in and supplied with water (especially in an institutional setting)? If you do believe it to be a good idea for a particular client, how do you present it confidently without appearing pushy? Would a local group effort to provide information about these systems be a good thing? How do you decide what number of components will be adequate for a given piano situation and how do you estimate the cost?

Let's have a forum on this subject through the newsletter, and if it is helpful we could have such a subject each month. When you are trying to explain something to a client it might be helpful to have a published discussion on the topic by local technicians. Don't think your contribution must be long or eloquent. A few words shared thoughtfully would be much appreciated.

SPEAKING OF CONTRIBUTIONS...

Thank you, Ross Trawick, RTT, for hosting our last meeting and presenting the technical report. Thanks also to this month's contributors to the newsletter. The contributions came in within the last 48 hours. We need to get back to producing this at the beginning of each month, so I am asking you to turn in what you want to have printed by the first of each month. The Chapter Meeting or the week following is the logical time for most of us to do this. If the first week of a month comes and goes with no contributions to the newsletter to edit, I need to make a judgement whether it is worth the many hours to produce one, or would it make more sense to just arrange a calling chain to remind people of the next meeting. What do you think?

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