

THE SOONER TUNER



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

February 9, 1992

President's Message

David and I were unable to make contact with a specific message from his own hand. We did however discuss the topics he wished to stress in his article. So with your permission I will use a little poetic license to try to capture the literary style of our president.

Warmest keyboard greetings to all! I'm really feeling positive about the Spring Seminar. As the days grow closer to this great event I get more and more enthused with anticipation of the experiences we will have the privilege of sharing.

Gary Bruce share with me a quote from correspondence with Nick Gravagne, "Gary I'm so psyched up for this that I can barely contain myself." Nick certainly captured my feelings.

We do need everyone to attend our next meeting. As a group we can do so much more than any one of us as an individual. It is not too late to get your registration in but you have missed the early sign up discount. I'm looking forward to seeing you Saturday and for great success in March.

David Bonham, RTT
by Norman Cantrell ED.

Meeting in Review

Last months meeting at Tim hast's piano shop was well attended. A multi-media presentation was made of the soundboard removal from the Steinway grand. One significant item of business was discussed and passed. A column will be available in the future for the purpose of listing pianos for sale by chapter members. In the past there has been a nominal charge for this service. An amendment was passed whereby any member in attendance of a chapter meeting may obtain a free listing of pianos for sale simply by handing a written copy of such lists to the editor of the newsletter. (A personal note, should the editor be absent from the meeting I authorize the secretary to collect such lists.) This should increase useage of the Available and Wanted column as well as increase meeting attendance.

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Norm's Noncents

Last Sunday my church choir director told me that there was a strange noise in the grand piano in the sanctuary. I went to speak with the pianist who confirmed that there was a noise in the piano. The only problem was that she wasn't quite sure when the noise appeared. It was one of those come and go noises that only appears at certain times and never when the technician is present. As I spoke with the pianist we discussed a fairly common problem that exists between pianists, piano teachers, and piano technicians. The problem is communication. It appears piano technicians have a language which we understand and which pianists and piano teachers are largely ignorant of. We can all agree on what tuning is generally supposed to be. However, more technical terms are more widely misunderstood. I have had several calls from customers whose pianos either were in need of or had recently had the "pads" replaced. I'm not sure which "pads" they were referring to but it illustrates my point. We as technicians and more specifically the Oklahoma Chapter need to do a better job of educating our customers. I would also like to issue a challenge/contest to our readership. Please send your favorite part or procedure misnomer to the Sooner Tuner so we can familiarize ourselves with our customers thought processes. In the mean time try replacing the "pads" in your piano it will probably help it be a little less "plunkey".

Norman Cantrell, Editor

Upcoming Events

Our next meeting will be this Saturday, Feb. 15th at 2:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at Norman Cantrell's shop The Piano Clinic at 221 N. Douglas Ave. Our discussion will cover the Spring Seminar. As this is the last chapter meeting before the seminar it is imperative that as many of you as possible attend. If you have been assigned a particular area of responsibility for the seminar come prepared to give a progress report. If you have not received an assignment there will be lots of those assistant jobs available. As if the prospect of volunteer work was not enough to entice you to come there is a very good probability that Leon Speir our Regional Vice President will be in attendance. If you have not met our Regional V.P. this would be an excellent opportunity!

March obviously is the month of the Mid-America Piano Technicians Tool Show and Workshop. Make plans to attend. The dates of this event are March 6-8.

April will be a discussion entitled "Shop procedures; Hourly wages--What are you really worth?" This will be an open forum.

In May the technical will cover Baldwin hammer butt buckskin & catcher buckskin replacement. Tim Mast will present his techniques on this subject. Watch for dates, times, and locations to be announced later.

In Her Majesty's Secret
Service

A Sam Spinet Mini-Mystery

I found myself in England over the holidays after Chase and I had attended the European Piano Technicians Tool Show and Workshop. Chase had always wanted to visit London so we had scheduled a couple of days to tour the city. We were having lunch at one of those small British pubs. It was almost a hole in the wall but several of the locals had recommended it. As we waited for our food, among the chaos, music, and conversation I noticed a very well dressed man sitting across the room. He looked like he had stepped out of GQ or Formals Are Us and he seemed to be watching us.

About halfway through our meal the man came over to our table. He asked, "Are you Sam Spinet from the States?" This caught me off guard. I said, "Yes I am but I don't believe I caught your name." "I'm sorry," came the reply, "the name's Bond, Tite Bond."

I had heard of this guy. He was a secret agent for the British government. His code name was 006.5 and he was the kind of guy that would stick with you in a jam.

"I've been sent to find you," he continued, "and see if you can help us with a tricky situation. I need you to accompany me to the palace. The Queen's personal piano has fallen victim to international terrorists."

I paid for our meal and sent Chase shopping. While Bond and I traveled to Buckingham Palace he filled me in on the details. It seems members of R.I.P. (Rodents Infiltrating Pianos) had covertly attacked the piano for

Secret Service (cont.)

several days, usually at night and had done extensive damage. I was familiar with the types of damage having followed members of M.I.P. (Mice Infiltrating Pianos) their American counterparts.

When we arrived I was shown the piano. It was a Knight studio. (What else would you expect in Buckingham Palace?) The damage was straightforward enough. Bridle straps missing, felt rail chewed up, but the really concerning damage was the keys themselves. Several of them at the breaks had been chewed down to the point that only about one third of the wood remained. I was concerned for the structural integrity following a hard blow the next time the piano was played.

I was given full run of a very nice workshop in order to facilitate repairs. I carefully marked each key and went over to a very ancient bandsaw. I cut the key from the top at each end of the half moon of chewing. I followed this with a connecting cut along the bottom of the damaged area. Now instead of a chewed up half moon I had a smooth rectangle of empty space. I carefully fitted a new rectangular block of wood to fit the hole. Bond helped me find the glue and we clamped the repair piece in place. After the glue had dried we trimmed the excess from the repair and sanded the key to smooth it up. Two of the keys were so severely damaged I had to splice one piece on the top of the key and then cut a smaller splice in from the side of the key. The Queen's Knight had been saved and I had seen a rare taste of England.

Norman Cantrell, ED.

Technical Tip

A few months back Keith McGavern suggested using a small curtain rod to hold the lid on pianos with lids hinged on the side. The other day I was tuning one of those blessed pianos and remembered Keith's advice. Unfortunately I didn't have a curtain rod with me. That was when I noticed the soft pedal rod just waiting for me to use. It worked great and I didn't have to try to fit it into my tool box. Thanks Keith for your initial perspective.

Norman Cantrell

Piano Proverbs

A man who spends all day drilling holes in hammer heads has a very "boring" job.

Oklahoma PTG Personal

Gary and Jan Bruce announced at the Christmas Banquet that they were expecting a tax deduction and stork visit sometime in 1992. The editor forgot to pass this announcement on in last month's newsletter. Congratulations although belated are in order.

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