

THE SOONER TUNER



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

March 21, 1992

President's Message

Wow! What a weekend... I was surely proud of our chapter and the whole seminar event. With Gary Bruce at the lead and each of us doing our part, the Mid-America Workshop and Tool Show was a great success! Over eighty technicians attended, including people from at least nine states. It was great to welcome our national president, Nolan Zeringue; our vice president, Fern Henry; and our regional vice president, Leon Speir. The classes were great, the banquet was fun, and the atmosphere was warm and congenial. Nick Gravagne, our guest sound-board specialist from New Mexico had this to say, "I've been to plenty of these seminars. It's not uncommon for them to run pretty smoothly and business-like, but they generally feel kind of cool. This one was hot!"

I could go on and on about this, but I'll just close with my sincerest Thank You to all of you who made this event such a success. Some of us had our doubts and worries, but together we proved how well we can work together. Special thanks to Gary Bruce and Danny Boone. See you at the next meeting.

David Bonham, RTP

Meeting in Review

The February meeting took place at Norman Cantrell's shop. This meeting did not have a technical as we were busy as little beavers preparing for the Spring Seminar.

The only business that took place was discussion of the future of the Regional Seminar and a raise in price of the newsletter for non-members. The new price per year is \$10.00

At the last meeting we had 11 in attendance, including one first time guest Terry Fowler of OKC. Remember, a chapter is only as strong as the number who participate. There is a lot to be learned from the technicals that are given. I would like to encourage those of you who have not come to a meeting to come check it out. It is well worth it.

Nathan Sobel, Secretary-Treas.

The Sooner Tuner

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Norman Cantrell, Assoc. Editor
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Send contributions to:
Norman Cantrell, Editor
The Sooner Tuner
2251 N.W. 19th
Oklahoma City, OK 73107

Norm's Noncents

I really enjoyed having the opportunity to help host the Spring Seminar. For those of you who missed the business meeting on Friday night the issue of whether or not to continue the existence of the Regional Spring Seminar was resolved. After much discussion the vote came back positive. There will continue to be a Spring Seminar as well as a Texas State Association Seminar in the fall. Perhaps in another four or five years we will have an opportunity to once again serve as hosts.

I wish to personally thank Gary Bruce for a job very well done. Also a Special thanks to Jan for giving Gary and his time to us. At least from my perspective things went very well indeed. I won't say everything went perfectly but I do believe everyone had a very positive experience.

There was a lot of good technical information and fellowship but I found the session Friday night during the Tool Show very rewarding and enlightening. Don Morton of Pacific Piano Supply provided a unique and personal perspective of the piano industry since before World War I. I hope you took advantage of this session and that it also meant a lot to you.

Norman Cantrell, Editor

A Tribute to the American
Spinnet Piano

This little inexpensive instrument was built by the thousands in the 1940's through the 1970's many of them are now thirty, forty, fifty years old. Their size fit very well in the small houses that were being built then. Today tuners are often called to service one of these durable little pianos. We clean, regulate, raise the pitch and tune to remedy years of neglect and abuse and another person is on the road to learning to play the piano.

This sturdy little piano who's performance level is not high, none the less starts doing what it has done so faithfully so many times in the past, allowing someone who cannot afford more, to play the piano. It could be compared to a little car that could go no faster than sixty miles an hour but would go for a hundred thousand miles with little care and upkeep. They had many names like: Cable, Lester, Jansen, Starr, Kohler & Campbell, Winter, Jessie French, Gulbransen, and others. Their strong cast iron plates had names too, like "Badger" and "Wickman."

Their actions had names also like Thayer, Wood Brooks, Wessel Nickel & Gross, and Pratt-Read. All of which are gone now. But the little spinnets are still here and there is little doubt that when they are nearing one hundred years old a tuner will be called to clean, regulate, tune, etc... and the sturdy little piano goes on and on.

Jack Wyatt, RTT Dallas
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Technical Tip

I know we hate to hear articles on some subjects and I am probably the least qualified, at least from a practitioners standpoint, to address the subject of shop safety. If you ever took any kind of shop in school it seemed they spent most of the first semester on shop safety and then left you about a week to do your project. There is a reason for this. Simply put, the shop can be a very dangerous place and needs to be respected.

Whether you have a large shop or are simply working out of your garage or basement this first topic will apply. Safety rule #1: Clean up your work area regularly. This seems oversimplified but it is the easiest to overlook. Clutter and things can and do cause accidents. We have all laughed at a silent movie slapstick scene where the actor gets beamed by stepping on a rake or hoe. It is funny to watch but as they say, "Don't try this at home."

Three simple suggestions can help. First put your tools away at the end of each work day or period. This assumes you have found, made, or in some way assigned each tool a home. Second sweep the floor and carry out the trash. Sounds simple enough but tripping in the shop is one of the more common accidents. Thirdly give your shop a thorough cleaning periodically. I usually try to spend a good amount of time at the end of each project, say after it is delivered. This way I start with a clean shop with each new project. Another way to motivate yourself to clean up is to agree to host chapter meetings. I'm always surprised how much junk I cart out just before each meeting.

Norman Cantrell, Ed.

Available and Wanted

Wurlitzer Vertical Grand 1984, immaculate condition \$1995.00 plus Tax. contact Kieth McGavern

Culbransen Studio, good practice piano. \$495.00 plus tax contact Kieth McGavern

Yamaha Console M304 in dark walnut. 3 years old in excellent condition \$2100.00. Contact Gary Bruce 348-8213

Wanted: Good woman! Must be able to clean, cook, sew, dig worms, and clean fish. Must have boat and motor. Please send picture of boat and motor. Ralph, P.O. box 2129, Lawton 73502

5' 6" Wurlitzer Grand, brown mahogany early 1930's, \$2500.00 Contact Bob Qualls 234-6005

Vose & Sons Upright oak cabinet with bench. Keys bushed, action regulated, \$275.00. Contact Norman Cantrell 272-9687

Piano Proverbs

"There is hardly anything in the world that some man cannot make a little worse and sell a little cheaper, and the people who consider price only are this man's lawful prey."

John Ruskin

Upcoming Events

Our next meeting will be on Thursday April 16th. Hopefully the IRS will have left some part of you alive and well enough to attend. The topic of discussion will be what you are really worth as a piano technician and how to realistically figure jobs without losing your shirt. This will be an open forum so come ready to discuss. The meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. at the OU piano shop.

The May meeting will also be on the 16th, a Saturday. We will have a technical on Baldwin buckskin replacement. Tim Haast will share his methods for this procedure. Tim has graciously agreed to host this meeting at his place.

DID'JA HEAR ABOUT...

What the key button said to the easing pliers? "Don't squeeze me too hard, honey, I'm bushed."

What the girl tuning fork said to the boy tuning fork? "You can't make me vibrate, Bub, I've heard that pitch before."

What the broken hammer said to the repairman? "Shanks, I needed that."

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Oklahoma City, OK 73107