

# THE SOONER TUNER



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

May 5, 1992

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At the last chapter meeting we discussed how we priced our services and how we respond to people wanting discounts, looking for parts to do repairs themselves, and other such requests. Responding in a professional way, valuing our knowledge, skills and time so that others respect us accordingly is important to us all. Our time can be wasted responding to off beat requests if we are not careful, leaving us less productive and with less job satisfaction.

Sometimes, however, the exceptions help define the rule. I received a phone request some weeks ago from someone wanting to install his own keytops. I sold him a set and spent some time instructing him on how to install them. Two weeks later he needed instruction on rebushing keys (he got some wet when removing ivories). I ended up spending well over an hour in total helping him, making less than \$10 in marking up the price of parts. I've now done two pre-tunings and some adjustments on his piano as well. And what have I gotten in return?

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## PIANO PROVERBS

Have you ever noticed that the words "By the way..." fall from your customers lips only after you put the last knick knack back on top of the piano?

## MEETING IN REVIEW

Our last meeting was April 16 in Norman at the OU piano shop with six in attendance. We had a final committee report from Gary Bruce concerning the Mid-America Tool Show and Workshop. We did make a profit and the event was considered an overall success.

A nominating committee was selected at the meeting to work on a slate of officers for next year. The nominating committee consists of Gary Bruce, Gene Black, and Nathan Sobel. Anyone interested in serving may contact the committee. Nominations will also be considered from the floor at the next meeting. Come and make your feelings known.

Instead of a technical this meeting, we had a discussion on price structure and customer relations. This was a very informative meeting for me.

Nathan Sobel, Secretary/Treas.

## The Sooner Tuner

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1991-92

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NORM'S NONCENTS

I hope you enjoyed reading last month's issue as much as I enjoyed writing it. The newsletter has been fun to produce and edit this past year. Your positive support and feedback has been greatly appreciated. As many of you know The Sooner Tuner is sent to several people outside our chapter.

A copy is sent to our Regional Vice President, Leon Speir. Copies are also sent to committee personnel including Leonard Childs, Director of the Regional Chapter Management Committee. Another committee which receives our newsletter is the Newsletter Committee chaired by Willem Brees.

Willem Brees publishes a newsletter sent to editors of chapter newsletters. This bimonthly publication is newly titled informed. I received the May issue just before The Sooner Tuner went to print. There are two items of interest I would like to pass along.

The first was an article issuing commendations to The Sooner Tuner and two other newsletters, The INDY 440, Indianapolis chapter and ACTION CENTRAL, Central Florida chapter for their respective April Fool's editions. I will bring the May issue of informed to this month's meeting if anyone is interested in the article.

PRESIDENT'S (cont.)

I had an accident with my van several weeks ago that put me in need of some paint and body work. This person I had helped happened to have such a business, and he was really pleased to have a chance to return a favor. I know a couple of you turned down his request for help before he called me. You probably made the right decision for your situation, and I'm glad things turned out as they did for me. This has saved me several hundred dollars and I have a new friend.

David Bonham, President

NORM'S NONCENTS (cont.)

The second item concerns an upcoming newsletter contest. This contest includes all chapter newsletters with the winner to be announced at the National Convention in Sacramento. I can enter either the May or June issue in this contest. With your help I will enter the June issue. If you have been holding out on writing that great article, sending in that hilarious joke, or submitting the rough draft of your latest technical journal (or tip) the time has come to rise up and write! It would be a wonderful accomplishment for our chapter to host a regional seminar and win a national contest in the same year.

Norman Cantrell, ED

TECHNICAL TIP

Last month we talked about clean up as it relates to shop safety. This month we will look at another common problem in the shop--fatigue. Fatigue can come from long hours, poor lighting, or from poor posture. How many times have you gotten a crick in neck or pulled a muscle and did not realize it till the next day? It could be that your workplace suffers from poor ergonomics!

I realize that vocabulary review can be condescending but ergonomics is a business buzzword that some of you may have missed. The simplest definition of ergonomics is biotechnology. Biotechnology refers to the relationship of man and machine or more specifically how our bodies respond to working with machines, tools, etc.

From a practical standpoint your shop or workplace needs to fit your stature as well as fitting the jobs you perform in order to minimize fatigue. Your workbench may need to be a few inches taller or shorter than mine in order for you to be comfortable performing the same job. In the ideal shop there should be several workbenches of different heights to facilitate repairs on the variety of piano components upon which we are called to work. For example the ideal height for working on a grand action is different than that needed to replace a set of upright dampers with the action in an action cradle.

If you have a small shop or are not independently wealthy the solution may be to make your workbench adjustable in height. There are several approaches to accomplish this. David Bonham has constructed a workbench with a top that can be placed in

TECHNICAL TIP (cont.)

two height positions. His workbench top is made from a solid core door which sits in a rigid frame. The benchtop sits on cleats at each of the four legs. My problem with this design is that on the lower setting the legs protude up several inches at each corner. Perhaps a simpler approach would be to make a set of blocks for each of the legs to sit on. One could even make several sets of blocks of different thicknesses for added versatility. The blocks could be secured by simply drilling a hole up into the bottom of the legs of your workbench and inserting a short dowell into each of the shimming blocks. Sometimes one or two inches makes a lot of difference. If your workbench is unmoveable you can always change your height by making a box or boxes on which to stand.

Take a look also at things like sawhorses, chairs, and other tool heights. This is especially important for jobs which require a lot of repetitions, like key bushings, filing keytops, shaping hammers, etc. Sometimes the easiest way to locate problem areas is to ask a friend how comfortable they would be performing a particular task using the method you use. If nothing else ask yourself if there is another way to accomplish the same end by a different means. Sometimes the enemy we face most is ourselves and our old habits.

Norman Cantrell, ED.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Our next meeting will be Saturday May 16th at 1:00 p.m. at Hast Piano Shop in Edmond. Please note the change in time from our usual time to 1:00 p.m. Tim will be presenting a technical on replacing Baldwin hammer butt buckskin and catcher buckskin. If you have not tried your hand at this or would like another perspective come and learn.

In June we are fortunate to be Guinea pigs. Gary Bruce has been asked to do a mini-technical at the Texas State Association convention this fall. Gary will try out his subject matter of overtone harmonics on us.

Stay tuned for details for July. I hear rumors of a party, picnic, or some other such event.

AVAILABLE AND WANTED

1959 Geo. Steck baby grand  
\$2250.00  
1985 Yamaha GH-1 ebony grand  
\$5200.00  
Ivers & Pond upright, quarter  
sawn oak; new hammers, keytops,  
regulation \$695.00  
Above pianos for sale by David  
Bonham. Price includes tuning  
and delivery.

Wanted: Zither salesman,  
must not lisp!

52" Chickering upright 1910  
light color finish and slightly  
decorative cabinet. \$400.00  
call Ross Trawick 427-6663

Mason & Hamlin grand mod. AA 6'4"  
1930 ebony finish \$8500.00  
contact Norman Cantrell 272-9687

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