

THE SOONER TUNER

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



HAPPY VALENTINES DAY ♥♥♥

FEBRUARY 1994

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



H a p p y
Valentines Day! I hope each of
you is getting a good start on the
year. I'd like to share an
experience from the other day that
I would like to think will
characterize 1994 for me. Darin
Niebuhr and I were evaluating an
old upright we had acquired
several months ago and we were
using it to practice soundboard
repair techniques. The board had
multiple cracks and quite a bit of
rib separation. As Darin was
progressing with his part of the
job, he remarked on how the tone
of the board was improving (it no
longer sounded like the back of a
dresser when knocked). I ran my
hands over the keys and found the
sound had indeed improved except
for the bass. Upon closer
inspection I found a badly split
bass bridge—beyond repair.
Discouraged we debated aborting
the project of making the piano
usable.

I remembered the videotape
on bridge repair shown at our
November chapter meeting. I also
remembered thinking at the time,
"That's interesting, but I don't
do bridges, thank you." The
problem (or opportunity) had
appeared and after a little
discussion and a call to Ross who
I knew had done some bridgework,
we rose to the challenge. Five
(see President's pg. 4)

MEETING NOTICE

OUR NEXT MEETING
WILL BE FEBRUARY
17TH 8:00 A.M. AT
JIMMY'S ROUNDUP CAFE
AT 5000 N.W. 10TH.

TIM HAST WILL PRESENT A
SLIDE PRESENTATION ON
AGRAFFE REPAIR.

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Please send contributions
to: Norman Cantrell, The
Sooner Tuner; 2251 NW
19th; Oklahoma City, OK
73107

**Oklahoma Chapter Officers
1993-94**

President	David Bonham 721-0566
V. President	Tim Hast 359-0440
Secretary & Treasurer	Nathan Sobel 329-6971

**NORM'S
NONCENTS**

Welcome back to The Sooner Tuner. After a brief hiatus I'm back in the editorial saddle again. Last month I was able to upgrade my computer to a 386 processor. I realize that there are faster machines on the market, but it is a definite improvement from my old system, an 8086.

I have considered several topics for this month's article and have finally settled on a brief discussion of a subject from a men's seminar I attended last weekend at my church. The name of the seminar was "Dad the Family Shepherd." If you ever have an opportunity to attend one of these seminars I can highly recommend it for the helpful suggestions for parenting skills and enhancing the relationship with your wives.

What does this have to do with piano tuning? One of the sessions dealt with the differences between men and women. Most of the members of our local chapter are men and if your clientele is like mine, most of my customers are women. So understanding the differences in how women and men perceive things and events differently can indeed be beneficial to business.

At the least we can all agree that men and women have different thought patterns. As a general rule men tend to be compartmentalized in their thoughts whereas women tend to be wholistic. In other words women see the big picture and men tend to see only small parts at a time. Secondly men tend to be task oriented and women tend to be more person oriented. This is important to keep in mind when dealing with customers. While a simple regulation makes perfect sense to you and me as a logical improvement to the piano, a female client may consider how we make her feel about the job as being much more important than the nuts and bolts of key dip etc.

It may be that we get or lose that next job not because of our technical skills but rather how genuinely interested we are perceived to be. Our listening skills become increasingly important in light of this.

Perhaps one of the best suggestions is to ask your spouse or close friend of the opposite sex how she would respond to your approach to handling such things as incoming calls, a description of the need for a pitch raise, or some other routine repair. Ask her to be painfully honest and listen to her suggestions. Remember a woman's intuition is one of the things she trusts in decision making and so do your clients.

Norman Cantrell, ED

PIANO PROVERBS

*Music is like an icy
sidewalk...
If you don't "G sharp"
you'll "B flat."*

**DO NOT MOVE THAT UPRIGHT PIANO
IF YOU WANT TO BE SURE IT STAYS IN TUNE!**
BY TRAVIS GORDY, RPT

I can tell you for sure that is good advice, I once heard an instructor at a seminar say that it does not get an upright out of tune to move it. The most recent implication of that misinformation was in the December Journal which has prompted me to report what I am sure many of you know and others have yet to experience.

When an upright piano sitting on four casters is moved over an uneven surface, the casters in the new location must be in the same plane as when the piano was tuned, otherwise the bass will be out of tune with the treble. Even when in the same plane there will have been some effect on the tuning but perhaps only noticeable to the critical ear. As all four casters attempt to stay in contact with the uneven floor there is some torsion on the case to which the sound board is glued, this stress causes the bass and treble bridges to change position relative to each other. A grand piano does not present this problem because of three point support.

I had been tuning many years and was a registered Guild member before I realized how severe his problem can be. I was tuning two upright pianos in a church basement choir room, a spinet and a console. The pianos were placed at either end of the choir seats. The console was tuned first without moving it; the spinet the moved near the console to more easily tune them together. The spinet was then moved back to its original position. As is my custom, the last thing I did was to play a few arpeggios in different keys (I do love to hear a well tuned piano), and was shocked at how terrible it sounded. The bass had changed greatly but not the treble. re-tuning the bass set things back in order. The floor checked out to be very uneven.

Well, thought I it must be a problem with this particular American made spinet. Wrong! I have since found the same thing happens with any upright.

Another example concerns a popular Japan made console in a church fellowship hall. By the time I tuned this one my experience with school and church pianos had provided more information. I knew this piano was moved to various locations. The choir director was in the building when I finished tuning so I called her to observe a demonstration. I played several octaves spanning the bass treble cross over and she agreed they sounded well tuned. I then rolled one end of the piano out from the wall to a position 90 degrees from the original. The right rear caster stayed approximately where it had been. You will often find that floors are not flat all the way to the wall. I played the same octaves as before. They were obviously out of tune; some worse than others.

Now pay attention! I carefully moved the piano back to its original position and played the same octaves. They were in tune; maybe not as perfectly but no problem. She was impressed and subsequently had me install a three wheeled truck of my design and made in a local machine shop. The Gordy Truck is under four pianos in churches and a country club. They cost too much for public schools, so I have used twin dollies from piano supply houses. These seem to help where pianos are stored with keys next to a wall, moved out into the room for use then returned to the wall. While tuning such pianos I have them approximately where they will be used. The so called school casters do not help the tuning problem.

When home tuning I nearly always have the piano sitting where it will stay after I finish even if it means taking pictures or (see MOVING pg. 4)

President's

(from pg 1)

hours later we had a new maple bridge glued in place and were ready to tune the piano. We tightened the bass string coils as we installed them. It sounds very good, and we really felt a great sense of accomplishment.

Have you ever skipped a chapter meeting because you didn't think you needed to learn about the subject to be covered in the technical presentation? Even if I never do another bridge, I'm a better technician for having done this one.

I can evaluate and estimate bridge problems and repairs more knowledgeably. And this is only one example of hundreds of such tasks in our piano field. Let's all keep growing in 1994!

Our next chance together for such learning is Thursday February 17th at 8:00 A.M. at Jimmy's Round-Up Cafe at 5000 NW 10th. I hope to see you there.

David Bonham, President

UPCOMING EVENTS!

February Meeting--Feb 17th at 8:00 A.M. at Jimmy's Round Up Cafe, 5000 NW 10th. Please note that this is a change in location from the announcement at the January chapter meeting. Tim Hast will present a slide show on Agraffe Repair.

March 12th--One Day Tool Show and Seminar with Bob Marinelli. This will be held at the Church of The Servant, MacArthur just north of Memorial. This will be from 9:30 to 4:00 with lunch being served. The cost is \$25.00. Plan now to attend!

April 21--Chapter meeting at David Bonham's piano loft, 10717 Eastlake Cir. David will present a technical on regluing ribs to the soundboard. You will not want to miss this innovative technique.

Moving

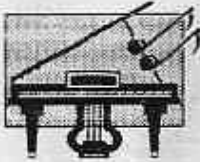
what not off the wall so the top can be raised. I have even tuned in a small closet with clothes hanging overhead because a kid wanted to practice in private.

It seems to me the bass bridge is under considerable stress when an upright is moved; more so than the tenor section of the treble bridge (or bridges). I have made no attempt to prove it. All of us occasionally find a bass bridge coming unglued. In a school once I tuned a big old upright that I assume did not have a loose bass bridge while tuning because I do not recall having a problem tuning the bass. After tuning, it was necessary for me to move the piano. The bass went wildly out of tune. I immediately looked at the bass bridge and found it out of position.

Now for one last example. In my early

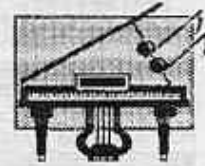
days of tuning my own piano, long before I decided to tune anyone else's. I came home one day, sat down at my console and after playing one chord yelled to my wife, "Who moved my piano?" I had tuned it the day before and knew just how it sounded, and now it was different. Not much different and if I had had someone else tune it and played the same chord right after he finished I probably would have thought it was OK. Turned out she had had someone help her clean house and they had "carefully moved it away from the wall to clean behind it, then carefully put it back where it had been."

Moving a four footed piano does make a difference in its being in tune; maybe insignificantly but maybe dramatically. It just depends.



TUNER TALK

WITH
Bob Barnhoff



Bob Barnhoff is on vacation this month and in his place we are proud to welcome from Vancouver, British Columbia:



Ms. Piano Gal

Dear Ms. Piano Gal:

I just got home at 10 pm after another typical 14 hour work day. I was called to tune a piano that required a buffing as well. I arrived at 6:30 pm totally exhausted only to find that the piano was 50 cents down in pitch. The pedal dowels were not working, a couple of notes were sticking and the piano was covered with kitchen grease. When I opened up the lid, I could not see the plate (it was covered in dust). All of these problems

were present even though the piano was not too old.

I told the owner that I was very tired and it would take a lot of elbow grease to remove the kitchen grease. I further explained that I did not think that I could finish the job that evening. At that moment his wife arrived home and went to change her clothes. As I was buffing the piano, his wife came into the room and asked me a question. As I turned around, my tongue flew out of my mouth and my eyes popped out of their sockets. She was clad only in a skimpy bathing suit that could only have been painted on. On a scale of 1 to 10, she was a 12 with looks that would make Bo Derek jealous. Needless to say I had a difficult time discussing the piano with her husband. It certainly gave me enough energy to finish the job and I made sure the piano had a "mirror" finish.

Was this situation an incentive for me to finish the job or was it just a tip? What do you think?

I.M. Buffled
Britannia Beach, B.C.

Dear Buffled:

You can find out the answer for yourself! Simply call her back and offer to touch up the job you did on her piano.

*From the Oct 1993 issue of The Vancouver Beat

Keep On Trying

I love the story about the old farmer whose mule fell into the well. After many unsuccessful attempts to haul the mule out of the hole, the farmer decided it was hopeless. So, with sadness he instructed his boys to fill up several truck loads of dirt and just bury the old mule there in the well. Well, the boys backed up the truck filled with dirt, shoveled in the dirt and began to fill the well to bury the mule. The mule didn't take it kindly, though. The first shovel of dirt hit him squarely on the head, got in his eyes and mouth, and made him sneeze. Every shovelful after that hit him somewhere causing the old mule to stomp around in the bottom of the well. Several trucks of dirt later the mule was still stomping and packing dirt firmly under his feet. Little by little that mule was lifting himself out of that hole. Sure enough, about mid-afternoon that mule simply stepped out of the well and snorted at the whole business.

Have you noticed that is the way that some people deal with their problems? Some complain; some do not handle setbacks well; some are defeated with the slightest difficulty. There are others who, like the mule, when problems hit them squarely on the head, they stomp around enough until finally they use the problem to rise above it.

(Author Unknown)



The Sooner Tuner
2251 NW 19th
Oklahoma City, Ok 73107