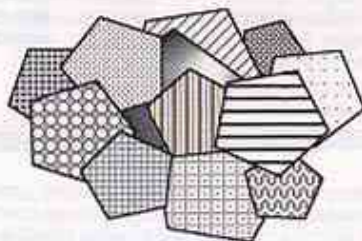


# "THE SOONER TUNER"



Official Newsletter, Oklahoma Chapter 731  
The Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.  
February '97

## NEXT MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, February 12th

•••• TIME: 8:30AM ••••

(changed from 9AM)

LOCATION: Tim Hast's place

DIRECTIONS: From I-35 and Danforth exit go west to Bryant, north to  
Tim's place 3631 North Bryant, 405-359-0440

### ••• MINI TECHNICALS •••

*"Customer Relations"*

*"Leg Repair Job"*

by

Tim Hast, RPT and Ross Trawick, RPT

Norman Cantrell, President.....	405-525-7762
Ross Trawick, Vice President.....	405-427-6663
David Wallace, Secretary.....	405-755-4221
Gary Bruce, Treasurer.....	405-348-3213
Keith McGavern, Newsletter.....	405-275-8600

(PO Box 1585, Shawnee, OK 74802-1585)  
(E-mail address: kam544@ionet.net)

### LAST MEETING

Terrific meeting in January at Norman Cantrell's place. After the business and social part of the gathering, Norman presented the technical, PIANO CLEANING AND SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS CONCERNING THE HANTA VIRUS. It was an excellent presentation. Norman kept the group in rapt attention with the in-depth research he did for this subject. Thank you Norman for taking the time!

### TECH TIP

Saw a terrific way to prevent the fallboard from potentially falling on playing hands. Someone had installed a strip of velcro on a Yamaha Grand between the fallboard and its counterpart in the up position. Works very nicely. *Editor*

### MISCELLANEOUS

#### *IN MEMORY OF*

Rex Lawrence, former Associate Member of the Oklahoma Chapter, passed away Monday January 13, 1977 in Rochester, Minnesota. He is survived by his wife, Penny, two daughters, and one step-daughter.

**PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF**  
*"Lest We Forget"*  
(Part I)

I once heard a technician say that he kept what he found in pianos that he tuned. Something about being the reward for taking the time to open the thing up and do a quick check, etc... I don't agree with this, and the following story is why. It is a Christmas story, and it happened to me some years ago.

The call was for a tuning on the "family Steinway" for Christmas. The elderly lady was having her two sons and their families for the holidays. The piano had not been tuned in the 30 years since her husband died. (1947)

I tuned it, no more than a 30 cent raise, but enough to wake up the bass strings a little, and it sounded good. I then pulled the blocks and took off the fallboard. There was a pencil, (of course!), and some small bits of paper, but it looked ok. Then I noticed something laying on the action stop. Upon retrieval, I saw that it was a St. Christopher medal ("The Protective Saint") and there was a date on the back. I put it on the music rack, and buttoned the piano back up.

After giving her the bill, I said, "I found this in the piano", and I handed her the medal. She stopped still, then seemed to dissolve, as she began a controlled fall into the nearest chair, sobbing.

Obviously this was something I was not prepared for. I just said I was sorry that she had been so saddened, and cried along with her as I waited. This is the story she told me.

In December of 1943, she and her husband celebrated Christmas eve with their three sons, all of whom were going into their service duty on New Years Day. Three good looking officers, one in the Air Force, one Army, one Navy. They gave each of their sons a St. Christopher medal that night, and as they had done all their life, sang as a family quartet, with Pop playing the piano in the living room.

(over)

The next morning there was a medal missing. It was the one given to the youngest son, who was the Navy officer. He had always been the wild son, the "live for today" kind of guy. They searched the entire house for his medal, but never found it. Three weeks later, his ship was torpedoed and sunk with all aboard.

The mystery of his missing medal had always been associated with his loss at sea, and after the black bordered telegram arrived that January, Pops never played the piano again. His health began to fail, and he passed away in grief that summer.

Aside from the occasional plink by a grandchild, the piano sat unused until that cold night in 1977, when the two boys were going to be back. Why had she decided to tune the piano this Christmas? I don't have the answer to that.

As we go into peoples homes and deal with their instruments, we often see the pianos as combinations of downbearing and, key height, hammer density and pinning friction. Often this is not how the owner sees their instrument, but rather as a very personal part of their life, a record of their family history. They associate things with their pianos that we cannot possibly hope to ever fully grasp.

I hope we all can remember, that what is a technical artifact to us can be something entirely different to the owner. There are spirits of loved ones, and memories of childhoods in these instruments. And that is the real value of the music and the things used to make it...

Ed Foote  
A440A@aol.com

(over)

## **PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF**

### *"Lest We Forget"*

(Part II)

...In the mid sixties I was called to a older lady's home to tune her piano, so it would sound better and she could sell it for more money. The story she told me was one that is thankfully less likely to be heard today. Her husband had been a 'real man' and took care of all the financial dealings with the wife knowing absolutely nothing about their financial condition. The husband died and left the lady with nothing but the house and a small amount of money in the bank. She was selling off bits and pieces of her household furnishings to make ends meet. She was selling the piano to pay that years real estate taxes.

As I was tuning the piano (an old upright) I decided to adjust the pedals. When I opened the bottom up I saw three paper sacks, two large and one small. In the small sack was several life insurance policies, five if I remember correctly. One of the large sacks contained cash in large denominations 100's and 1,000's (they were in circulation back then). The third sack contained stock certificates and bonds.

I closed the bottom back up found the lady and asked her to come into the room where the piano was, showed her what I had found and supported her to a chair. "I just knew he would not leave me with nothing" she said over and over.

No, it was not at Christmas time but the rewards over the years from that incident have been great indeed. I don't know how much was involved in those sacks but I do know that the lady never had to worry about selling her piano...

Jim Bryant (FL), RPT  
JIMRPT@aol.com

**PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF**  
*"Pinblock repair"*

I have repaired dozens of split pinblocks in the last 15 years. I finally got tired of trying to find bolts of exactly the right length, and of the right hardness. Fastener Supply houses have 3/8" heat treated threaded rod available. I have them cut it to 6" length, and then cut it myself to exact length with a bimetal hacksaw. A cap nut goes on the outside of the piano and looks nice. I guess I liked carriage bolts enough, but some pinblocks are just too thick.

For glue, I use titebond...

Dave Stocker, RPT  
FirTree@aol.com

**PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF**  
*"Rattles & Squeaks"*

.. Regarding the "buzz" in the lock mechanism of the Kawal, the proper fix is to disassemble the mechanism and thread a piece of very thick yarn between reach coil of the spring. If you take apart a new lock mechanism, you'll find that this little trick caught on at the factory!

Brian De Tar, RPT  
bdetar@aol.com



## 1997 SCHEDULED MEETINGS

March	13th, 9am	Thursday	(location undetermined)
April	22th, 9am	Tuesday	(location undetermined)
May	14th, 9am	Wednesday	(location undetermined)
June	12th, 9am	Thursday	(location undetermined)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I am writing this article, my seven, soon to be eight, year old daughter is practicing her piano lessons. She began in January so she is not yet playing a Chopin etude. I had thought a lot about something Lloyd Meyer's said at Dearborn this past summer. He said that if parents realized all the benefits from learning to play the piano, they would insist on piano lessons. The benefits include discipline, problem solving skills, project management, and the list goes on. I have tried to pass these sentiments to my customers in the past few months.

The Oklahoma Chapter has several exciting events on the horizon. We are firming up plans for a joint meeting with the Tulsa Chapter on April 22nd. We will probably meet in Stroud halfway down the turnpike. If it is at all possible, Jack Wyatt will join us for this meeting. We also need to focus our plans for the upcoming OMTA State Convention in May. This year's event will be held in Edmond at the University of Arts and Science.

At the last meeting I asked for your input on ideas for a mission statement for our chapter. I hope some of you have given this some thought and can be prepared to share your ideas with the group. Defining who we are and being able to communicate it will help us when we try to help others get involved. I'm looking forward to seeing you all at the next meeting.

Norman Cantrell, RPT

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

This just in from Jack Wyatt, South Central Regional Vice President. The Piano Technicians Guild has hired a new Executive Director. His name is David Hanzlick who hails from Topeka, Kansas. Larry Goldsmith will still do some contract work. More details will be published later in Jack's forthcoming regional newsletter and the Piano Technicians Journal.

## Recommended Reading

### Reyburn CyberTuner™

*Innovations in Visual Tuning*  
by Kent Swafford, RPT  
(PT Journal, January 1997, pages 28-29)

### The "Kick" Zone

(closely related to after touch)  
from  
Keith McGavern, RPT

"Attitude is the mind's paintbrush. It can color any situation."  
"What is popular is not always right. What is right is not always popular."  
"No one can do everything, but everyone can do something."  
"People can alter their lives by altering their attitudes."  
"The quest for excellence is a lifelong process."

from several different posters in the  
Tecumseh Mid-School Music Room  
authors unknown

Just a thought...  
Don't get mad at somebody who knows more than you do,  
it isn't their fault.  
(from a Marie Cooksey post on Suzuki-L.)

"If there is something you've got to do and a way to enjoy it,  
you'd be a fool to do it any other way." --Thomas M. Disch

"Before you criticize a man, walk a mile in his shoes; that way,  
if he gets mad, you're a mile away and he's barefoot."  
(from a Michael Lovingood post on Suzuki-L.)