

"THE SOONER TUNER"



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

NEXT MEETING

"CHRISTMAS GATHERING"

DATE: Tuesday, December 9th

TIME: 6:30PM

LOCATION: Kodiak Bar & Grill (Loft area)
2801 West Memorial
Oklahoma City, OK
405-748-5900

(Log cabin type place just east of May & Memorial)


"Come One, Come All"

Norman Cantrell, President.....	405-525-7762
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LAST MEETING

Great meeting at David Bonham's place. Good turn out. Lots of laughter, fellowship, and downright excellent technical stuff to boot, including such stuff as grand action support devices and computer hard drive via Keith McGavern, Renner Action Replacement Parts Kit and soundboard replacement video presented by David Bonham, the sostenuto system thanks to Ben Davis, and discussion of the Fazoli, Steinway, and Kawai EX concert grands initiated by Peter Krauss and Ross Trawick. Each of these piano makers make truly remarkable concert instruments! And a new definition for the sostenuto system from Peter Krauss...a selective sustain pedal. Voila!

1998 SCHEDULED MEETINGS

January 22nd		All meeting times 8:30AM except July & December
February 19th		
March 12th		
April 16th		
May 21st		
June 18th		
July (no meeting)		
August 20th		
September 17th		
October 22nd		
November 19th		
December (undecided)		

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Seasons Greeting to All! I hope none of you got run over by the shopping stampede the day after Thanksgiving. I do hope all of you took time to reflect on the things for which you are thankful. During the next few weeks when our collective schedules get crazier by the minute, it is always good to remember the true meaning behind both Thanksgiving and Christmas. In other words try not to let the hustle and bustle make an Ebenezer out of you.

Last month I began to explain the testing procedures for becoming an RPT (Registered Piano Technician). We discussed the written test. This month I will endeavor to explain the technical exam. This test is divided into three parts. One section deals with grand regulation. You are given a grand action model which is disassembled. You are given one hour to reassemble and regulate the model to the best of your ability. The vertical regulation section is similar except the action model is a three note model complete with pedals. You are given an hour to assemble and regulate it as well.

The repair section involves performing repairs to action components which can be accomplished in the field. You are required to rebush a key at both the front and balance rail. You are required to rebush and repin a grand hammer flange. You are required to shape two hammers, one bass and one from the middle of the piano. You are required to replace on vertical hammer shank. The last section involves replacing strings. One string is replace around a common hitch pin. A second string is tied with a tail to a single hitch pin. After these are in place one of your strings is cut and you are asked to tie a knot in the wire.

The total time required to take the exam is between four and five hours. It is demanding, but has been designed to be fair. In fact if you are unsuccessful in one of the areas, you are able to retake only that section and pay the test fee for only that section.

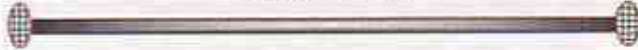
I look forward to seeing all of you at the Kodiak Restaurant on the ninth. I hear they have grizzly bear when it is in season. That could be interesting.

Norman Cantrell, RPT

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PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF
"Tunings Not Required"

Date: Wed, 8 Oct 1997

Here is something I read verbatim from Ragtime Automated Music catalog in Cores, CA for a pneumatic player retrofit. It goes as follows:

"Tuning is not required for the pianos sake, but for yours. Most player pianos will sound fine for 5 or even 10 years. Do not have the piano tuned unless it sounds bad to you. All pianos have a limited number of times that they can be tuned before the pin block wears out since it is just wood and the pins are steel. When this happens the piano tuner will advise you to replace the strings and install over sized pins."

So...I guess we better stop encouraging our customers to wear their pianos out. :)

Debbie Legg, Associate
DLLegg@aol.com

PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF
"Follow-Up to Tunings Not Required"

Date: Wed, 8 Oct 1997

HEY, I KNOW THE GUY WHO WROTE THAT! A couple of months ago he posted to the piano group, rec.music.makers.piano, warning owners against ever letting a piano technician reshape the hammers in their piano by filing them. Their only reason for doing so, he said, was to remove enough felt so that they could eventually suck you into having to buy a new set of hammers. He went on to say that he maintained a FREE tech hot line for piano owners who had more questions about piano-technician ripoffs. The number he gave was 1-800-C-L-U-N-K-E-R. He said to ask for him by name, Richard Head. I believe, however, that most people who know him well use the shortened version of his first name.

Les Smith
lessmith@buffnet.net

PIANOTECH (Internet) STUFF

"A Cold Weather Barn Story"

Date: Wed, 8 Oct 1997

While tuning a good old Howard upright, grandma came in and told me this tale about this Howard. Seems in the "olden days" they often hauled this piano to some barn where they had barn dances. Once in the winter they hauled this piano on a sled with a team of horses. While hauling the piano back, the sled slid off the trail, the piano fell off, and then the piano skidded down a gully.

It was determined it was too difficult to retrieve the piano in cold weather so they just covered the piano with canvas and left it there until spring. Well that was decades ago and here I am tuning this piano which I thought was a good piano. Apparently the piano survived this event with little if any damage.

Sy Zabrocki
only4zab@lmt.net
Billings, Montana

CAUT (Internet) STUFF

(CAUT - College and University Technicians)

"A Bass String Barn Story"

Date: Mon, 24 Nov 1997

I received a call today from a woman who is moving from her country home to a small condo in Calgary. They asked me to take a look at the piano (Yamaha G2J, #3893095). Her husband, thinking he would make things look nice and shiny for me and any prospective buyer, cleaned the bass strings with "BRASSO"! She, of course, noticed a radical difference in the sound and called me to ask what could be done to alter the situation.

I gave her the rather sad news and asked her if I could speak with her husband, to which she replied, "He's in the barn, and as far as I'm concerned, he can stay there!!". Could you let me know if you have a replacement set, the cost, etc? Thanks.

Robert Moffatt
moffattr@cadvision.com
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

≤ Internet newsgroup ≥
rec.music.maker.piano

*"Why We Have 88 Keys (usually)
On The Piano"*
(original source unknown)

In the beginning it was believed that 11 octaves was the range of human hearing with C256 in the center of this range. Since an octave has eight notes that gives you 88 keys. But then it was realized that you really need 13 keys to cover the accidentals in an octave. In turn this would require 141 keys in all.

It was decided that this was too many keys, and to boot, the average shorter player couldn't reach out far enough to play both ends of the keyboard at the same time. This factor was not taken into consideration when the eleven octaves had been selected originally.

In any case it was finally decided to hold the total number of keys to 88 to save the feelings of the original designers. No amount of research has been able to turn up why they truncated the high end and low end of the range at the particular notes we now have.

(Editor's note: Sounds good to me. Is there anyone out there that can confirm or deny this story?)

Recommended Reading

"Essentials of Advertising"

by Gary A. Nole, RPT
Chairman, Economic Affairs Committee
(Piano Technicians Journal, September, 1997, page 36)

Everything you wanted to know about advertising!

The "Kick" Zone

(closely related to after touch)

from
Keith McGavern, RPT

"Nothing warms the season like a new friendship."
(from Woody Bear's Campfire book, Matrix Essentials)

"The best way to go broke is to wait around sitting for a break."
(submitted by Ross Trawick, from a computer spelling program)

"You can do wonderful things if you don't care who gets the credit."
(from "Touched By An Angel" TV program)

"Blessed are the hard of hearing for they miss much small talk."
(Living Word Church marquee, Shawnee, OK)

"Thanksgiving is a daily privilege."
(Temple Baptist Church marquee, Shawnee, OK)