

# THE SOONER TUNER

Newsletter of The Oklahoma Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.  
SEPTEMBER 2003

## COMING EVENTS:

The next meeting of the Oklahoma PTG will be held Thursday, September 18, 2003 at Edmond Music at 8:30 AM. Edmond Music is located at 3330 S. Broadway in Edmond. Norman Cantrell will be giving the technical on shaping and tapering hammer tails. For your information, topics of upcoming meetings are listed below:

OCTOBER: Keith McGavern Caster repair, Dolly Installation and Related Repairs

NOVEMBER: Barbara & David Bonham Cleaning Grand Soundboards and Plates, Polishing Strings, Cleaning Tuning Pin Area

DECEMBER: Christmas Party?!?!? To have or not to have?

David & Barbara Bonham have volunteered to host a Christmas dinner again this year. If anyone else is interested in hosting a party or has any ideas to contribute, please speak up. Plans and dates for this event will be discussed at the next meeting.

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TSA CONVENTION 2004

WHO REMEMBERS WHEN AND WHERE THE TSA REGIONAL CONVENTION IS GOING TO BE HELD IN 2004? It is in Oklahoma City. WE will be hosting the TSA Regional Convention. It will be held March 11-14, 2004. This is a very important event and we need 100% participation from the members of our Chapter to make it a success. The Seminar Director is Bob Scheer. The Convention will be held at the Holiday Inn Airport located at 2102 South Meridian. A special convention rate of \$69 per night will be offered. The phone number for the Holiday Inn is 405-685-4000. Registration for Friday through Sunday is \$155. There will be a \$55 additional charge for the all day Steinway classes to be offered on Thursday. This will include lunch. The goal is to have around 95-100 technicians registered at this convention. Plan to be a part of this event. Each of you will be contacted sometime soon to find out how you can help to make this convention a success. Start thinking about how you can best help. MARK THESE DATES ON YOUR CALENDAR!

## ~~~~~ TECH TIP:

When replacing a broken string, I now use one of these rubber grommets shaped like a donut to mute the stretching strings when space permits. It's really ideal! The groove in the rubber grommet where the sticker fork normally goes receives the plain music wire quite nicely and it stays put until the next visit.

Keith McGavern, Shawnee

## ~~~~~ WORDS OF WISDOM:

If the water is high, roll up your britches!

Ben Davis, Luther (For further explanation, please contact Ben.)

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HOW DID YOU BECOME A PIANO TECHNICIAN?

How often have we each been asked that question? Barbara and I were thinking how interesting it might be to share each person's answer through the newsletter. Please send us yours to publish. I'll start us off...

My dad heard about a piano technology school in Chicago in 1969 while I was a junior in high school in Evanston, Illinois. I enjoyed working with tools and I had taken piano lessons for two years and trumpet for six years. The idea first struck me as absurd, but it grew on me over the summer. My dad and I were pretty good at repairing things, but we had too much respect for our pianos (a 1916 Knabe grand and a Fischer console on which my mother taught lessons) to tinker with them. The pianos had a mystique about them that only a professional should be allowed to explore and alter. Could I become such a professional that musicians would come to trust me and seek me out to care for their treasured instruments? That's the seed that grew over that summer and led me to commit to driving about twenty miles to the school every Saturday of my senior year. I worked in a Lyon Healy retail store during the week as part of a vo-tech program that earned school credits with my technician training, and I practiced the tuning and repairs to complete what was mainly an independent study type course. By spring I was getting paid for doing the work and had paid for the tools and course work.

I enjoyed the work for the most part, but still had no intention of making a career of it. It paid considerably better per hour than my college friends were earning and I was enjoying the growing respect. I completed my degree in Psychology at Oberlin, moved to Oklahoma and got a Masters in Social Work, and worked in that field several years. But since 1985, I've been a full-time piano technician and hope to continue down this path.

David Bonham, Oklahoma City

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RISK

Students were worried as they looked at their papers with one single question. "Define a 'risk'." How would you do that? The students all started scribbling pages of answers except for one. He wrote one word. "This." He got an A. Life is about taking risks. It is very difficult to get anywhere without taking a few chances. This is something that student knew and in his case, the risk paid off. Although you may take risks in life to get anywhere, all risks have percentages of probable success. Some are wise, some are foolish. Choose wisely.

Author unknown

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FUTURE MEETING TOPICS

Would any of you be interested in a presentation by a violinmaker as a technical at one of our monthly meetings? It might be interesting to see the different process that goes into building a violin, versus a piano. If this sounds like an interesting topic, please let me know and I'll see if it can be arranged for a meeting next spring.

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HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL ON SEPTEMBER 18 AT EDMOND MUSIC.

- President – Bob Scheer
- Vice President – Ben Davis
- Secretary – Keith McGavern
- Treasurer – Gary Bruce
- Newsletter Editor – Barbara Bonham

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