

The Sooner Tuner

Official Newsletter of the Oklahoma Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc. April 2007 Edition

President's Message

Spring is here, or so they say! So why am I still wearing a coat every day? Sometimes, things don't work out exactly like they should, but we adapt to the situation and go on, right? Sometimes pianos don't play exactly like they should, even when we regulate them to the exact manufacturers specifications. For instance, even when the key dip is exactly where it should be, we may need to raise the hammer line to achieve sufficient aftertouch.

Piano work like life, is filled with adjustments and compromises. Like life, the more we learn, and the more experienced we become, the easier it all seems. This is why we owe it to ourselves, and our customers, to learn all we can about this complex creature called the PIANO!

Did you know that there are only 70 days until the PTG Convention in Kansas City? Do you realize that if you send in your registration money before May 15, you can save money?? Hummm

Bob

Oklahoma Chapter President

Chapter Officers

President - Bob Scheer
Vice President - David Bonham
Secretary - Nathan Sobel
Treasurer - Gary Bruce
Newsletter Editors - Norman Cantrell & Blane Morris

“All expression of opinion and all statements of supposed fact are published on the authority of the author as listed and are not to be regarded as expressing the view of this chapter or the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc. unless such statements or opinions have been adopted by the chapter or the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.”

By leaving the important stuff at the top of the page it allows the words to stay dry during times of spring flooding as they are written on higher ground.

Norm's Noncents

Last month we left our intrepid Wurlitzer grand with only a proposed scale and some hopes and dreams. Since then a couple of things have transpired. First there was some discussion in this month's Journal about the very issue I have been addressing regarding the scale of the piano during re-stringing and attempts to improve the tone with a new scale design. I mentioned that I had been concerned with the existing scale of the piano as I was tearing it down for re-stringing. The piano had been re-strung previously with oversized tuning pins and someone had transferred the scale to the plate via pressure sensitive transfer numbers. There seemed to be some discrepancies between the actual number of unisons and the proposed number stenciled on the plate. The lack of half sizes also raised some concerns. Given that the piano was a whopping 4' 7" in length I figured that I could do no harm and it would give me some experience with piano scaling. I measured every other note since most pianos have shared pairs of unisons and the string breaks happen in

groups divisible by two unless you have tied strings such as at the end of a section.

I took the measurements and plugged in the formulas from Dave Robert's series of articles in the Journal and looked at the existing string scale. I found it to be a fairly low tension scale and there were indeed several places where the tension had some pretty large jumps from one note to the next. Using the spreadsheet allowed me to play "what if?" by simply plugging in alternate wire sizes and come up with what I perceived to be a much smoother scale. The bass bridge was loose from the soundboard and was also suffering from a developing crack along the bridge pins. This bridge had the pins in a straight line as is often found on vertical pianos and the 2 string unisons were not notched. I made a new bass bridge cap that included notched unisons. (I had calculated that there was at least 1.5 lbs of tensions difference on some notes because of the different lengths without notches) I sent the proposed scale and the adjusted measurements to Arledge Bass Strings who came up with a bass string scale to fit. Once the piano was strung to pitch and tuned a few times I could evaluate my work. I also replaced the hammers with Abel Lite hammers. With the new string scale and the new hammers I was truly amazed at the smooth transition up and down the scale I had to do very little voicing of individual hammers once the strings were leveled and hammers fit to the strings. I tuned a Yamaha GH-1 just before Easter at a small church and was happy that my Wurlitzer was smoother right out of the box than the Yamaha. (This was the early model Yamaha without the wrapped strings in the tenor transition) I plan to put this knowledge to use in the future when stringing pianos. You really can teach an old dog a few new tricks.

Keep your tuning lever moving

Norman Cantrell, RPT

Upcoming Events

Chapter Meeting

The next Chapter Meeting of the Oklahoma Chapter of The Piano Technicians Guild will be held at the Crowne Plaza, 2945 Northwest Expressway, Oklahoma City, OK on Thursday April 19th at 8:30 a.m. We will be discussing the plans for the upcoming TSA seminar. The TSA board will have met for their mid year meeting and we will be entering the countdown of activities before the convention in October.

* * * * *

PTG Annual Institute and Convention

Celebrating PTG's 50th birthday will be June 20 through 24th in Kansas City. Plan now to attend. Remember local chapter members can share in the \$1200.00 chapter incentive fund.

* * * * *

TSA

The Oklahoma Chapter will once again host the Texas State Association regional Seminar this October 11-14 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Stay tuned for more details as they become available or visit the TSA website at ptg.org/tsa



Our sympathies go to David and Barbara Bonham for the passing of Barbara's sister who lived in Pittsburg, PA. Her death followed a recent illness. Our prayers and thoughts go out to the Bonhams.

Technical Tip Oakie Doakie Piano Supply

If you have ever encountered a pedal lyre that was coming unglued at the tenons at the top of the pedal box itself, the correct procedure is to remove the lyre and clamp it with wood clamps after inserting glue into the joint. What if you (a) are miles from home and the clamps are in the shop or (b) don't own wood clamps to begin with? You can always use the piano as a clamp by placing books such as hymnals in a church or even magazines in a customer's home under the pedal lyre and use the weight of the piano to clamp the joint while the glue dries.

We at Oakie Doakie Supply are continually striving to stay on the cutting edge of technical developments. You may have noticed the proliferation of the multi-tool concept in the hardware stores and home centers lately. Heck you may have even received one or two during the annual Dirty Santa game at Christmas. Having two or three lying around after Christmas got us to thinking how we could incorporate this concept to piano technology. After months of research and development we are proud to announce and unveil the Multi Tool 1000 PT®. (That stands for Multi Tool Piano Technician)

This amazing device will soon allow you to carry the Multi Tool 1000 PT® and only a couple of mutes and a tuning fork. We are even working on how to integrate those into future models. Included are all the basic regulation tools that you currently have in your case all in one simple to use hand tool. I know you are thinking I already have a combination handle which is probably true but you still have to add all the tools to it and they take up precious space and add weight in your case. The Multi Tool 1000 PT® allows a technician to simply add the tip to the end of the extension wand. We have wire benders, damper regulation tools, let off button adjusters, a drop screw adjuster, capstan wrench attachment, balance rail pinhole easer, a precision jeweler's screwdriver, butterfly spring adjuster, just to name a few.

We have carefully designed this package to fit inside the hollow handle of the Fujan carbon fiber tuning lever for even more ease of transport and economy of space.

Sign up today and be the first to receive the Multi Tool 1000 PT® for only 89.95 and start saving space and time today!