

The Sooner Tuner

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

President's Message

Our dear friend and fellow technician, Bob Qualls, has officially retired at 104 years of age. He said he would like to keep working, but it was getting to be too difficult to stand for long periods of time. Don't you wish you could buy into his gene pool?

In spite of an unfortunate accident which claimed his eyesight at the age of ten, Bob managed to earn 2 college degrees, while working his way through college, by tuning pianos. He raised his family, and built a successful piano tuning and repair business for 86 years! He attended the first PTG board meeting, that joined the ASPT and the NAPT to form the PTG. He has been an instructor at numerous PTG Seminars and Conventions, and received the "Man of Note" Award in 1975. He says he will attend the Convention in Kansas City this summer if he can. What a life! What an incredible inspiration!

I have been fortunate enough to acquire Bobs tools and shop supplies. After countless hours of sorting through his "stuff", I have come to realize that I am looking into a large part of his life. I have found many treasures, including a signed, first edition copy of "A guide to Restranging" by John Travis, many great old tools, and multiple jigs and tools, probably acquired from the numerous Seminars and Conventions that he attended. I will bring a few of these "gems" to the next meeting.

See you then! Bob

Chapter Officers

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

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Norm's Noncents

It's been a pretty quiet week here in Lake Wobegon, my home town. A little blatant plagiarism never hurt anyone. Besides imitation is the greatest form of flattery. Anyway, other than a little flooding and storms it has been slow lately as often happens as the school semester winds down. People are pinching pennies to send to the IRS and Easter has passed. It is a time when it is handy to schedule updates to school pianos and the like.

I have been fortunate to finally talk the powers that be at Cameron to update the Steinway B in the Band room and replace the Teflon action parts. I ordered the hammers, shanks & flanges, wippens and underlevers from New York. What I didn't realize was that Steinway has redesigned the back action and specifically the damper lift tray and the new style underlevers are longer than the Teflon style underlevers by about one half an inch. I had not calculated the price for the new rail into the job and I was also not too thrilled with the idea of waiting around watching the water rise in the back yard for a whole week while the new, \$73.00 plus shipping not in the budget, part arrived. Fortunately there is a Steinway D in the recital hall that was originally Teflon and has had the parts replaced. I took a look at the profile of the new style damper tray and made some measurements. The old style flanges are similar to those on traditional uprights with a raised tongue that the flange rest on to keep it from rotating. The new style is similar to a main rail on Asian and German vertical pianos that utilizes a flat flange with a small groove that fits over a wire that is clamped to the rail by the flanges. The tray itself is in the shape of an "L". The back section is hard maple and the extending lip is made of poplar.

I decided that I would modify the existing rail to fit the new style flanges. The worst case would be that I would waste a few hours and still have to order the new part. If I was careful and diligent I would have a useable rail in a few hours and after some glue had dried. The good news is that it is possible to modify an existing rail. The purpose of this article is to make you aware of the change that Steinway made in their design so you can budget the extra cost of a replacement rail or you can plan on some fun in the wood shop to make it work. Either way you can benefit from my ignorance. As my pal Red Green says, "We're all in this together!" Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Go ahead and register now to attend the Annual Institute and Convention in Kansas City. If you make it to Kansas City, I'll tell you where there is a fantastic Italian restaurant.

Stretched out and hung out to dry.

Norman Cantrell, RPT

Upcoming Events

The next chapter meeting of the Oklahoma Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc. will be May 17th at the new Music store in Norman, OK. This is the new store operated by Mike Gilliam of Edmond Music and is in the space formerly occupied by the Brook Mays Store. The address is 2280 West Main; Norman, OK. That is in the shopping center at the corner of Main and NW 24th. It sits on the south east quadrant of that intersection. From I-35 take the Main street exit eastbound and come about .7 miles.

Business Meeting to include the election of officers.

From the Nominating Committee the following have been nominated to serve:

President - Bob Scheer

Vice President - David Bonham

Treasurer - Gary Bruce

Secretary - Jordan Bruce

Newsletter Editor - Blane Morris

additional nominations will be taken from the floor.

TSA Update with Gary Bruce will be made available at the meeting.

Norman Cantrell the chapter delegate to Council will be present to field any questions and receive input regarding his votes at Council. Read your Journal Supplement and be prepared to offer suggestions.

Technical presentation to follow the Business Meeting.

Official Notice

Sunday May 13th is Mother's Day. Send her a card today and call her. You have been notified so you don't have an excuse. If you mom is no longer with us take time to remember all she has done for you.

Technical Tip

The wire handle for your rubber mute can be used for a variety of things. It makes a great capstan wrench for dowel type capstans or any other capstan with a hole through it. It also makes a good awl for starting screws in new wood. It can be heated with a flame and used to iron the felt bushings in a grand damper guide rail. I even used a part of one to replace a missing bridge pin on a Hamilton studio that had a missing bass string. Don't leave home without this valuable versatile tool.