

THE SOONER TUNER

Newsletter of The Oklahoma Chapter 731 of the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.
November 2008

COMING EVENTS

OCTOBER – Norman Cantrell on Vertical Regulation. That will be the technical at our next PTG meeting on November 20th. This will be especially valuable to those of us that are considering the Technical Exam. This is one reason we pay our dues folks! 8:30 AM at the Gilliam Piano store in Norman at 2280 West Main. One block east of I-35 in the shopping center on the right.

Happy Early Holiday Greetings Friends,

It seems every year I see a Christmas decoration or a commercial earlier and earlier. Well, this year is no different. Our lives seem to just speed up, not slow down! So it is time again for the annual Oklahoma Chapter Christmas party. Sadly last year the event was iced out with all that nasty weather we had. Hopefully this year things will be less travel hazardous! Again, I am going to offer up my home for the location for the Christmas party. It is still a work in progress, but is very ready to accept guests and share holiday memories.

The address is:
9713 Hillcrest Dr.
Edmond, OK 73025

When you come to the intersection of Waterloo and Kelley take Kelley two miles North to Charter Oak. Take it right and your first left will be Hillcrest Drive. Turn onto Hillcrest. I am the third house on the left with a green mailbox and the long winding driveway. It says Bruce on the mailbox. Should you get turned around, please feel free to call my cell at (405) 314-2407 or Gary's cell at (405) 413-8863. Reception can be iffy out here so if we should miss your call please leave a message. If you put the address into google maps it comes up with great directions.

To rsvp please send me an e-mail to [HYPERLINK "mailto:brucepiano@att.net"](mailto:brucepiano@att.net) brucepiano@att.net When you e-mail I will let you know if we need side dishes or desserts ect. I will be handling the main course.

The party is on Friday, December the 12th. Feel free to start showing up about 6:00P.M. and we will plan to start eating about 6:30. Dirty Santa seemed to be a lot of fun so everybody bring an inexpensive gift that they would not mind having themselves. It makes it more fun to steal presents if it is something you want!

I hope to see everyone out, but for those you cannot make it, I would like wish you a great, safe, warm, and happy holiday season. May God Bless You and Yours.

Merry Christmas,
Jordan Bruce
Second Gen. Technician

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Regardless of whether you're candidate won the election or not, or, if you're wondering if your Sep IRA or 401K will ever come back in your lifetime or not, we have a lot to be proud of. We are Oklahoma Piano Technicians. We come from a hardy stock of self reliant entrepreneurs that can survive practically anything!

I remember my mentor, Charlie Gilliam talking about the Great Depression. He said he had to trade piano tuning for chickens and eggs a few times, but he got through it. My parents grew up in Western Oklahoma during the dust bowl and the depression, and they didn't cry and wait for someone to bail them out or take care of them, they sucked it up and kept on going! They also never felt that the rich should be forced to give up what they had rightfully earned and give it to them! Believe it or not, my parents never owned a credit card, nor would they have used it if they had one! I heard them say many times, "If you don't have the money to pay for it, you don't need it! I also heard them say many times, "A man is only as good as his word"!

These words are more important today than ever before. In an age where, in many parts of the country, commitment doesn't mean anything anymore, and many don't feel that they should be held accountable for their actions, most Oklahomans don't feel that way. I've heard it said by some members of the news media, and one politician, that we "cling to our guns and our religion". They are so right! Don't even think about taking either one away from us!

In short, we are strong, tough, self reliant, self motivated, independent contractors. Our Constitution entitles us to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That's all we want and need. Give us free enterprise and a small government and stay out of our way! Enough said?

Bob the Tuner
Bob Scheer, RPT
Edmond, OK

When government expands, liberty contracts.
--Ronald Reagan

Be true to your work, your word and your friend.
--Henry David Thoreau

Greetings Oklahoma PTG Members!

This is Valerie Crawford, a former member of your group, reporting from New York City where I have just been on a tour of the Steinway factory and seen the world's premier Steinway showroom. All this was so exciting that I wanted to share some highlights with you.

The several-story factory on Long Island is kept at a constant humidity with steam piped into every area. Steinway uses only flawless wood for production, and one room not much bigger than some of your workshops in Oklahoma stores several million dollars' worth of exotic wood veneer. As the production process moves along, some tasks, such as pinblock drilling, are done with computerized equipment. Others are done by human strength, such as a rim for a Steinway D, the largest piano produced, that I saw glued and clamped into shape by a team of about seven men. Notching the bridge and setting bridge pins are done by craftsmen who do the work by sight, not using any guides. As I saw the many steps involved and the high

quality of materials, my thought was, "There is a reason these pianos cost what they do."

The Steinway showroom in Manhattan is across the street from Carnegie Hall and looks like a mansion inside with murals and carvings. Over 100 pianos are separated into several rooms. I played a Steinway M and noticed its need for further regulation. As Peter Krauss told the Oklahoma PTG members after he completed the Steinway apprentice program at the New York factory, every new Steinway needs two or three days of regulation work to bring out its full potential.

So you, the piano technicians in the field, provide the essential finishing touches to the world's most expensive pianos. Please consider taking part in the Steinway apprentice program where you will spend time with the technicians at the New York factory, honing your regulation and repair skills. For housing, I recommend the Greenpoint, Brooklyn YMCA that rents rooms for \$40.00 a night. Subway makes an easy commute from the YMCA to the factory. Or, Craigslist.org is the best website for locating other short-term housing in New York City. Call Steinway at (718) 721-2600 for more information about the apprentice program.

Thanks Valerie for sharing this article with us!

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Hide not your talents. They were made for use. What's a sundial in the shade.
I did not fail the test. I just found 100 ways to do it wrong.
--Ben Franklin

Helpinstill Upright: I've been working on one of these, the first I have ever seen. I think it's an early 70's. It's at Victory church at 42'nd and MacArthur. These kids that lead the worship there are into music we used to listen to when we were young, especially the Beatles. When I went to evaluate the piano at first they were playing an old Beatles record on a turn table! Their drum kits have 60's style snares, etc. I get a kick out of them. This piano is a piece of work to be sure, but it's vintage you know, set up like a spinet but the keyboard itself folds down into the harp section and looks like an oversized suitcase. If you don't get it in exactly the right place the keys bind and stick. The strings are short and it gets out of tune easily. It has some kind of pickup in it too. But hey it's vintage you know and they want to put in on their new CD. It's a little abrasive sounding but not too bad really. I do enjoy working with these visionary kids and am inspired by their enthusiasm and sense of doing something that makes an eternal difference. I sort of felt like Obi-wan Kenobi among all the young Skywalkers. I must admit, regulation of this piano is a challenge with mixed results. The Force wasn't with me the whole time but we got it going. Another interesting experience in an interesting occupation.

Closing thoughts;

Pondering the events of the last few months reminded me of comedian Jonathan Winters upon being released from the mental hospital for having an overly fertile imagination then went on the Dick Cavett show. During the discussion about pushing the broom and wearing the white coat he said, "Sometimes you have to..... pull the chain on the side of your head and.....flush your mind."

I'll look for one of those and demonstrate it at the next meeting. Cheers!

Dancing with the stars?

Found this in the New York City PTG Newsletter. Says it all doesn't it

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