

# THE SOONER TUNER

Newsletter of The Oklahoma Chapter 731 of the Piano Technicians Guild, Inc.  
April 2009

## COMING EVENTS

**MAY 21st** – The May meeting will be held at Albert Evans piano store on Thursday May 21st at 8:30 AM. The store is located on MacArthur just north of 39th. Albert will be doing the technical on piano rebuilding. Our meetings and demonstrations have been really good lately and this one should be great on a subject we need a little more understanding on. See you then!

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Any girl can be glamorous. All you have to do is stand still and look stupid.  
--Hedy Lamarr

Anyone who says he can see through women is missing a lot.  
--Groucho Marx

Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please.  
--Mark Twain

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## President's Message:

Someone once said that "If you have a true passion for your job, or occupation, then you'll never really feel like you are working." I believe this statement to be true. We need to feel contentment in our chosen work. Of course if it were always fun, it wouldn't be called work. But, we can be tired and contented at the same time.

I also believe that, if one dreads working at their job, or is only doing the work for monetary reasons, then it's best to look for a different occupation. If your heart isn't in the work you're doing, you probably won't put forth your best effort, nor feel the need to improve your skills. If, however, you have come to realize that you are, indeed doing your intended job, then the need for knowledge and improvement can become an insatiable quest.

This is why it is so important for to take advantage of the opportunities available through PTG. There is much to gain by reading the Journal and attending Chapter meetings, Seminars, and Conventions.

There is always more to learn about this beautiful, imperfect musical instrument we call the piano. Bob

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All men who have achieved great things have been great dreamers.  
--Orson Swett Marden

I paint objects as I think them, not as I see them.  
--Pablo Picasso

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From the Pianotech List, April 11, 2009:

**Pianos From The Past**

by Chuck Behm

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My dad died of Alzheimer's at the age of 95. The last several years of his life were spent in a nursing home in Mason City, Iowa. He spent most of his time in a silent world of contemplative reverie. Few things could penetrate the fog that enveloped him.

I found two things that worked. One was to start reading from the Journal aloud to him. He had 20 years worth in binders on his shelves. I would pick an issue at random, open it up and begin reading.

Slowly, dad's eyes would seem to focus a bit. He would begin to nod slowly, as if to himself. I would finish the article and wait. "Krefting," he would say softly. "Jack Krefting."

I would flip to another issue and read something else. "Susan Graham," he would say, smiling slightly.

Another article. "Lyon's Roar," he would say.

He was right more often than not. For some reason, these articles were there in his mind where he could grasp them. It was as if for the moment the fog would lift a bit, and for a short time he was on a firmer ground.

The other trick concerned pianos from his past. Dad was born in '06, and when he graduated high school went to Chicago to live for several years. There he worked in a paint store matching paint samples by day, and played piano in various dance halls at night. He remembered, to his dying day, a number of the pianos that he played on.

After warming up with the Journal, I would stop and ask him, "Remember that Haddorff, dad?"

He would be silent for a moment, and then would smile. "Yeah, yeah. At the Paradise. Big sound!" he would say. "Filled the hall. Great piano!"

Again a long lapse of silence as he thought back. "How about that J. Bauer, dad, do you remember that one?"

"Sure," he'd say, without hesitation. "Don't remember the place that was at. Built right in Chicago, though. Had a sostenuto pedal. Great instrument. Wish I had that piano here now."

So did I. The home had a Wurlitzer console in the activity room. Dad never played it.

That was usually as far as I could take dad towards a lucid conversation. When I would try to steer things in any other direction he would again become quiet, lost in a place that was beyond finding.

Perhaps this explains somewhat my prejudice towards pianos from that bygone era. I realize that many of

them have problems that sometimes are beyond fixing. They've weathered many decades of wear and tear, and have not gone unscathed. But I have a deep appreciation for the integrity of their construction.

Pianos built during my youth (born in 1950) somehow just aren't the same. Imagine in a few short years, when I'm sitting in a nursing home, one of my grown children saying to me something like, "Remember that Story and Clark, dad?"

My eyes would clear for a moment, and I would say, "Yeah, yeah. The one with the fable Storytone soundboard! That was a piano!"

Or, more likely perhaps, "That was a piano?"

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*Cheers!*

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