



# Happy Holidays to All from The Buckeye Backcheck

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*Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the  
Piano Technicians Guild*



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## ***President's Message***

I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. We know it is one of the busiest times of the year for piano technicians. There are many concerts and pianos in use in many different venues, even in the shopping malls. We should all feel gratified that we play an important role in helping to provide some of the beautiful music that will be heard during the season. I hope we all have an opportunity to sit back and enjoy some of the fruits of our labor.

Seasons Greetings from,  
*Mark & Marilyn Ritchie*

We had a very good turnout for the November meeting at Graves Pianos & Organs. Just some of the members pictured from the left: Ben Wiant, David Gorsuch, Kim Hoessly, guest Mark Potter, Mitch Staples, guest Marilyn Ritchie, Bryan Hartzler, guest Andy Launer and far right our host Paul Graves.



## ***Meeting Minutes*** (excerpts)

Old Business:

Members are reminded to contact Chris Altenburg with any suggestions or other input regarding the Long Range Planning Committee and member classification.

New Business:

Thanks to Paul Graves & Co. for providing our meeting space, speaker and snacks following the meeting.

### **Chapter News & Notes:**

No regular Chapter meeting in December.

Ben Wiant and Jon Chandler will again host our annual Christmas dinner party Sat. Jan. 8, 5:30 PM Bring a dish to share and PLEASE RSVP 850-9757

February meeting will feature Bryan Hartzler RPT “Bringing together pianist and instrument”

Randy Potter School of Piano Tuning is offering a training seminar in St. Paul MN. You may go to [www.pianotuning.com](http://www.pianotuning.com) for a brochure or registration.

### **Tech Tip**

Phil Walters

I suggest the use of the lubricant Protek on pianos that have strings that are not moving freely over terminations. This may include points on the capo bar or agraffes, applied in moderation, a single drop, with a syringe. On grands, a more liberal application behind the agraffe on the understringing felt seems to provide the best results. Sometimes a second application may be necessary. I have found this useful on hard to tune Steinway studios. Apply lubricant on the under felt above the pressure bar. Avoid using too much and letting it run down the string. I always lube bass strings at the pressure bar pin before doing a pitch raise.

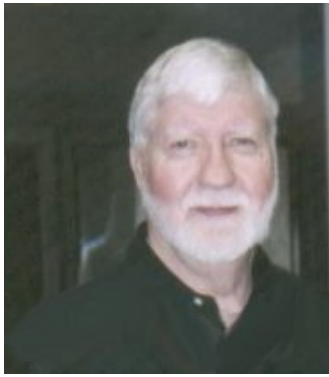
***Technical presented by Don Mannino & Kawai***



Don Mannino RPT, and Director of Kawai Piano Technical Education, presented a very interesting program to the chapter. The focus was on the research and development in pianos from the early history of piano construction to current production instruments. Early piano makers of course experimented with every piano built, and as new technology developed so did the piano. Improvements in wire making, metal casting and tooling all added to the improvement of the piano. Many changes were made using subjective evaluation and demands by pianists and composers. By early 1900 the large changes pretty much stopped and new developments were minor refinements. Little was changed after 1920 until some new material use post-war 1950, namely the infamous PVC plastic (as in spinet elbows) and the Teflon bushings used by Steinway in the 60's. A side note that the Teflon used was researched right here in Columbus at Battelle. The only other major research was being conducted by Baldwin under the direction of Harold Conklin with the innovations of the accu-just hitchpin and plate design, and his work on bass strings. In 1980 Kawai established the Kawai Research & Development Laboratory at Ryuyo, Japan. For this reason Kawai continues to be on the forefront of the use of new materials, including ABS ( Acrylonitrile Butadene Styrene) and now carbon infused ABS styran used in the “Millennium” actions.

Don concluded his program with several films taken at high speed resulting in super slow motion glimpse of the piano action and strings in motion. These films are very enlightening to see what is taking place during a single keystroke.

Many thanks to Don for his insightful presentation and our host Paul Graves from Graves Piano & Organ for the meeting space and refreshments.



Our host for the evening was Paul Graves.



Dan responds to questions from members & guests.

*A Nice Story* (no idea if it's true - ed.)

Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took her boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted an old friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE!"

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that the child was missing. Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "Don't quit." "Keep playing." Then, leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child, and he added a running obbligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed what could have been a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was so mesmerized that they couldn't recall what else the great master played. Only the classic, "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

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The Buckeye Backcheck

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