



## *The Buckeye Backcheck*

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



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### ***From the Editor...***



First of all I would like to congratulate Chris Altenburg on being the first recipient of the Cliff Maurer RPT Exam Prize. I would also like to thank Chris, David Stang and Mark Ritchie for conducting the technical on the SAT III, the Reybum Cybertuner and the Verituner. Finally, I would like to wish to all of you... Happy Holidays!

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

**Committee Reports.** There was a discussion about having either an Associates Day to prepare for the tech exam, or having one-on-one mentoring.

**Old Business.** The Testing Committee for the Cliff Maurer RPT Exam Prize, comprised of Mitch Staples, Bryan Hartzler and Mark Ritchie, announced their nomination for the Prize as Chris Altenburg. Their write-up is as follows:

The nominating committee for the Maurer Exam Prize feel that Chris Altenburg has exemplified the qualities we feel this honor should dictate. Chris has taken a course of study to enhance his

knowledge of piano technology. He has attended National and Regional seminars in the past two years to further his studies, as well as attending local Chapter meetings. He has been serving in the Columbus Chapter as treasurer, and he has been an active member. Chris has donated his time as an apprentice with a Registered Piano Technician in the shop and the work environment. Chris Altenburg has met the requirements as set forth in the Columbus Chapter Bylaws and as such: The Nominating Committee hereby nominates Chris Altenburg for the Cliff Maurer RPT Exam Prize.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mitch Staples, Chairman  
Bryan Hartzler  
Mark Ritchie

Following the nomination, all RPTs voted to choose the recipient of the prize, and Chris Altenburg was chosen. Congratulations to our first winner!

Further discussion regarding the prize revealed that if in the future there is a tie after all the present RPTs vote by secret ballot, then the prize will be split. Kim Hoessly also pointed out that this Prize will be described in the Standing Rules and not the Bylaws of the Chapter; this being done for ease of adjustment of the design.

Ben Wiant plans to give a technical in the Spring on "Hanging Hammers".

**New Business.** Kim Hoessly mentioned the changes in the State Sales Tax Laws. A question was posed to her, and her response follows. Q. Can you summarize the changes in the State Sales Tax Law as you understand it?

A. Two things. First, effective July 1, 2003, the state tax rate went up 1%, so we should be collecting 6.75% with our tuning and service fees (as far as I know, you are not required to charge for estimates and appraisals since you are not changing anything on the instrument). Second, effective January 1, 2005, you will be required to collect the sales tax applicable for whatever county you are working in. The State Tax offices should be sending you the proper forms.

**Announcements.** Phil Walters has a low-cost upright jig for perusal.

### *From Other Newsletters...*

TECH TIP  
David Flanders  
Flanders Piano Works

Key Leveling has never been one of my favorite jobs in the shop. Not willing to settle for anything less than perfect, I always find that it takes longer than I would like, and it is more frustrating than I would like (first, the key is a bit low, now too high...) The point where the most frustrating time is spent is when I've gotten to where a handful of materials are just enough

below my straightedge that the thinnest white punching will then make the key too high.

I then get into the substitution phase of the job, where I look at the punchings already on the pin, and substitute a smaller denomination for a larger one, or a combination of ones, all based on experience. I still don't always get it right at first, and I end up with a key or two (or more) that are too high. Back to the straightedge.

Last week, I was at that crossroads point, where I had to begin substituting punchings. For some reason, I decided to accurately determine the thickness values for each of the punchings, in order to see exactly how to proceed from there. Starting with the thin white paper one, my numbers were: .003", .005", .008", .010", .014" and .021". I decided that, where the key was just a tad below my straightedge, I would make my punching pile thicker by just .001" From there, I just proceed mathematically.

For example, if my current pile consisted of a green .005", pink .008", and a cardboard .014, my total thickness would be .0275". Now to move up by the smallest increment, I substituted two blue .010", and a pink .008". Or, I could have used two cardboard .014" punchings. Either combination would increase my pile by a mere .0005". If I had wanted to increase my pile by a full .001", I would have substituted two blue .010", a green .0055", and a white .003", for .0285". The result of my leveling by numerical values was that I never had a key be too high after its previously being too low. At most, I would have to add another .001", but I had eliminated that time-consuming seesaw effect of using the .003" punching as the smallest increment I could work with. And, I took the estimation out of substituting some punchings for others.

Prior to writing this, I consulted a couple of colleagues who each have a thinner punching than what I've been using, which would save even the time spent on calculation. However, I again scanned the available supply house catalogues, and I still couldn't find anything thinner than .003". So, befriending simple arithmetic can make life a little easier, and that perfect key leveling more easily attainable.

### ***From the Arts Journal...***

THE LAND WHERE MUSIC IS BANNED "A public ban on music has gradually taken effect in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, after a radical alliance of right-wing religious parties swept to power in local elections last year. Music and film stores have closed, musicians have been harassed and vigilantes routinely tear down posters and torch tapes, decrying them as un-Islamic." BBC 12/16/03

NY SUBWAY MUSICIANS GO TO KOREA New York subway musicians are a constant presence underground. One entrepreneur thought they would be a hit in the Seoul subway, which doesn't have performers. So she rounded up some players and flew them to Korea. "They were featured on Korean talk shows and news shows, and their faces were all over the papers.

And the buzz only increased as the days passed. On the day of their second performance, the musicians arrived at Gang Nam station to find several hundred people sitting quietly on the floor, some with their own mats, waiting for the music to start. By the time the trip ended two weeks later, the five musicians were the toast of the town, featured in just about every newspaper, magazine and TV show of note." Newsday 12/16/03

### ***For Sale..***

**Ernst Kaps 5' 10" Grand #18560** c. 1896-97. Built in Dresden Germany. Original point of sale JB Cramer & Co, London, England. Walnut Case in beautiful condition with ornate carved music desk and large octagonal legs. Ivory keys with ebony sharps in very good condition. New bass strings, all else original, piano needs tuning, but is close to A440.

Contact Mrs. Helen Ford of Columbus, OH 614-274-5425.

### ***From the PTG Home Office...***

We have moved!! Not our web address but our physical address. Our office will be closed on December 11 & 12 during the moving process.

Piano Technicians Guild  
4444 Forest Avenue, Kansas City, KS 66106  
913-432-9975 (P) / 913-432-9986 (Fax)

If you need to speak to a staff person at the Home Office, you can leave a message at the old number 816-753-7747, and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

You may also e-mail the staff:

Barbara [barbara@ptg.org](mailto:barbara@ptg.org)  
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### ***From Dwain Lee...***

Dwain Lee, the architect who gave a technical to the Columbus Chapter not long ago, toured the Charles Walter facility recently. He put up a page of pictures which can be seen on the following

great web site:

<http://home.netcom.com/~arch2/Walter.html>

### *Humor...*

#### IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS?

As a result of an overwhelming lack of requests, and with research help from that renown scientific journal - I am pleased to present the annual scientific inquiry into Santa Claus.

1) No known species of reindeer can fly. BUT there are 300,000 species of living organisms yet to be classified, and while most of these are insects and germs, this does not COMPLETELY rule out flying reindeer which only Santa has ever seen.

2) There are 2 billion children (persons under 18) in the world. BUT since Santa doesn't (appear) to handle the Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Buddhist children, that reduces the workload to 15% of the total 378 million according to Population Reference Bureau. At an average (census) rate of 3.5 children per household, that's 91.8 million homes. One presumes there's at least one good child in each.

3) Santa has 31 hours of Christmas to work with, thanks to the different time zones and the rotation of the earth, assuming he travels east to west (which seems logical). This works out to 822.6 visits per second. This is to say that for each Christian household with good children, Santa has 1/1000th of a second to park, hop out of the sleigh, jump down the chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the remaining presents under the tree, eat whatever snacks have been left, get back up the chimney, get back into the sleigh and move on to the next house. Assuming that each of these 91.8 million stops are evenly distributed around the earth (which, of course, we know to be false but for the purposes of our calculations we will accept), we are now talking about .78 miles per household, a total trip of 75-1/2 million miles, not counting stops to do what most of us must do at least once every 31 hours, plus feeding and etc.

This means that Santa's sleigh is moving at 650 miles per second, 3,000 times the speed of sound. For purposes of comparison, the fastest manmade vehicle on earth, the Ulysses space probe, moves at a poky 27.4 miles per second. A conventional reindeer can run, tops, 15 miles per hour.

4) The payload on the sleigh adds another interesting element. Assuming that each child gets nothing more than a medium-sized lego set (2 pounds), the sleigh is carrying 321,300 tons, not counting Santa, who is invariably described as overweight. On land, conventional reindeer can pull no more than 300 pounds. Even granting that "flying reindeer" (see point #1) could pull TEN TIMES the normal amount, we cannot do the job with eight, or even nine. We need 214,200 reindeer. This increases the payload not even counting the weight of the sleigh to 353,430 tons. Again, for comparison this is four times the weight of the Queen Elizabeth.

5) 353,000 tons traveling at 650 miles per second creates enormous air resistance this will heat the reindeer up in the same fashion as spacecrafts re-entering the earth's atmosphere. The lead panof reindeer will absorb 14.3 QUINTILLION joules of energy. Per second. Each. In short, they will burst into flame almost instantaneously, exposing the reindeer behind them, and create deafening sonic booms in their wake. The entire reindeer team will be vaporized within 4.26 thousandths of a second. Santa, meanwhile, will be subjected to centrifugal forces 17,500.06 times greater than gravity. A 250-pound Santa (which seems ludicrously slim) would be pinned to the back of his sleigh by 4,315,015 pounds offeree.

In conclusion: If Santa ever DID deliver presents on Christmas Eve, he deserves to be a saint!

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