

The Buckeye Backcheck

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Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

In this issue:

[*President's Message*](#)

[*Meeting Minutes*](#)

[*Restoration of a Weber Upright*](#)

President's Message

The elections are now over and decided (hopefully) at this point. I hope everyone took the time to vote and let their voice and concerns be heard. The Piano Technicians Guild also has some important decisions ahead that we the members should take some time to consider and let our voices be heard.

The Long Range Planning Task Force committee has put forth a proposition that would divide the PTG into two separate divisions with the PTG Inc. acting as an umbrella corporation. One category would be the Association for Piano Technology known as the APT. This would replace the Associate category as we now know it. Open to anyone interested in piano technology with lower dues, a variety of fee options tied to benefit choices. There would be no logo but members could advertise membership in the APT. The other category would be the Certified Piano Technicians Association known as the CPTA. This would be for only PTG-certified members who would be required to meet current and minimal CPT standards through exams. The exam fees would be substantially higher than for APT members but if passed would be accepted as dues payment in full if the person becomes a member. There would be a logo and could be used in advertising.

These proposals are under current discussion and each member should take a moment to evaluate what these changes might mean to the PTG, and you as a member. The chapter has formed a committee to get input from our own members so that we might submit opinions based on the chapter views of this topic. We may include a questionnaire in an upcoming issue of the newsletter, or you may send comments to Chris Altenburg who is chairing our Chapter committee. You may also wish to go to www.ptg.org and look over the information that is presented there.

Meeting Minutes (excerpts)

Old Business:

Doug is still checking with Ben about the Holiday party in January. The November meeting is set at Graves Piano and Organ with Don Mannino of Kawai. Other Ohio Chapters have been invited.

New Business:

The Home Office reminds us that dues notices will be mailed soon. Dues this year will be \$172.00 for national dues and \$30.00 for local dues (which will again be collected together). -- Mark led a discussion about the Long Range Planning Committee authorized at Council whose primary function will be to put forth suggestions regarding membership categories. A copy of the most recent update of that committees work can be accessed by members on the PTG website by going to the members area and clicking on Long Range Planning. After the chapter talked about the implications of the committees work to-date, it was decided to form our own committee to gather and then express in writing the Columbus Chapters opinions to present to Richard Bittner, the CERVP. Chris will chair the committee and Mark, Kim and Victor will also serve. Members are encouraged to read the information on the website and let the chapters committee know what they think about all this.

Tech Tip

The Mystery of the Squeaky Pedal Kim Hoessly

Recently, I was doing a routine tuning on a Reiger-Kloss Studio piano and the customer said those often dreaded words "there's a squeak in the sustain pedal." Now this could be many things: squeaky pedal rod brackets, damper springs collectively squeezing in their slots, squeezing from the pedal itself, even the bottom board coming loose or being split. First things first. Clearly define the nature of the noise. The noise was actually more of a groan than a squeak, so I did suspect the bottom board, but that seemed very secure. The dowel from the trapwork to the pedal rod ran through a wooden, felted slot rather than connecting with a pin through a hole in the rod and that seemed suspect. I lubricated the bushing with Teflon Powder, a good all purpose, dry lubricant, but that did not eliminate my mystery noise. I went ahead and applied some ProTek to the hanger brackets as long as the action was out, and thought, maybe that was it. When I put the action back in and worked the pedal, the noise was gone, however, when I replaced the bottom panel, unbelievably, the noise was back. Hmmm. Sherlock Holmes always said something like, when you've eliminated all the other possibilities, whatever is left, no matter how improbable, must be the answer. Could the innocuous bottom panel be the culprit? If it's a high gloss polyester finish, you bet! So I again whipped out the Teflon Powdered brushed it liberally (I can only do things liberally) all around the edges of the panel,

around the edges of the aperture where the panel sits and in the holes for the dowel in the panel. Replaced the board and Voila, noise begone. So watch out for those high gloss finishes, the Teflon Powder would no doubt eliminate squeaking benches, too.

Chapter News & Notes

The November chapter meeting will be held at: Graves Piano and Organ Co. 5798 Karl Rd. Columbus, Ohio This meeting will feature Don Mannino RPT, and Director of Kawai Piano Technical Education. Don sent this brief outline of his sure to be enlightening class. I'm sure many of you have seen Don at the National Convention or other regional seminars and seen some of his terrific classes. Don't miss this great opportunity. Development of the Kawai Millennium III Carbon Composite Action 1 ½ hr.

This seminar presents the details of the development of a new piano action design, including the evaluation of performance parameters to the application of modern composite materials. There is extensive discussion of how the Kawai R&D department tested and evaluate subtle design changes to the action, and rare ultra slow-motion films from the testing process are shown. This class is a rare peek into the process of action design, with discussion of how different aspects of the piano action affects the tone of the instrument, and how the pianist and action interact during performance.

Technical: Restoration of a Weber Upright

The technical presented at the October chapter meeting was on upright piano restorations. Through the years I have done quite a number of these. I went through my archives and dusted off a slide program that I had used for classes taught at several regional seminars in past years. The initiative for this was a current project on a 1907 Weber upright. It's rare to find the client who is willing to make the investment, and commitment to the level of this type of rebuild on an upright today. Unfortunately, at this point in time, most of these time worn instruments require extensive repair to bring them back to a high level of service. This is the first upright that I have done that included a new soundboard. The Weber is a solid well built instrument, of one family ownership. It boasts a full sostenuto system and some beautiful veneer. The plate alone shows some of the pride that was taken in this era of piano production. I had hoped to have the instrument a little further along in the process before the meeting, but will welcome anyone interested in stopping by to see the progress.



The Weber name is cast into the plate as part of the freeze-out holes. Something that on an upright probably only a technician would ever see.



This photo shows the new soundboard and notice the open face pinblock. The piano was original 1/0 tuning pins and is being restrung with 2/0 pins



Full view with keybed removed and other plate details.



Notice sostenuto tabs on damper levers. Each action part was removed and individually shell blasted for cleaning and then rebuilt as necessary. Parts on right before shell blasting.

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