

The Buckeye Backcheck

Volume 30, Issue 1 January 2005

Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

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President's Message

I hope everyone had a safe and prosperous December and a good New Year and survived the ice storm. I'm quite sure we will be finding some very out of tune pianos after the bad weather and loss of power for many Ohio residents.

The New Year also brings with it a newly revised state requirement for sales tax collection by county rates and assessments. You may find more information on the web at Ohio.gov. The state has also provided a site, [The Finder](#), to assist you in finding the correct tax rate for each customer's home location. If you have questions or need assistance while using The Finder, please call 1-800-304-3211 or email: thefinderhelp@tax.state.oh.us. Thanks to Tom Ruff for guiding me to this information source. I have looked at the site but I'm not sure how user friendly it is going to be. This may be a topic for an upcoming Chapter meeting.

Meeting Minutes

There are no meeting minutes since we didn't meet in the month of December. The Chapter committee on the Long Range Planning Task Force did however meet in December to conclude putting together the survey that was sent to all Columbus Chapter members. Thanks to everyone who participated in our effort to see what the general consensus of this Chapter might be. We are not sure if we asked all the right questions, we are piano techs not statisticians, but I think some of the answers were quite revealing. Some of the respondents obviously gave some serious thought to their answers.

The following page will try to summarize the survey questions, and answers the members gave. We hope to have time to forward this to Richard Bittner, our Regional Vice President, before the national board meeting. I have invited Richard to attend a Chapter meeting at his convenience in 2005.

The Survey Questions

1. Do you believe there is a need to change the current PTG classification system? YES
NO

explain your answer:(use back if necessary)

2. How should/could the status between Associate and Registered level of technical certification be conveyed to the public so that they understand the difference?

3. What represents the main hurdle to taking the PTG exams? Circle all that apply

A. Cost

B. Not prepared - require more preparation time.

C. Do not believe there is a need to upgrade classification.

D. Lack of a convenient testing facility.

E. List any others

4. Should there be a time limit set for Associates to take the exams? YES NO

If so, what should that time limit be? _____

5. Should associate members be assigned to another membership category after a time limit has expired and they have not completed the exams? YES NO

6. What was or is your motivation to take the RPT exam?

7. What PTG services do you consider important? List all that apply, on a scale of 1-10 #1 being most important.

___ A. Piano Technicians Journal

___ B. National and regional seminars

___ C. Business building / publications from Home office

___ D. Chapter meetings

___ E. Membership in a professional organization

___ F. Camaraderie / sharing viewpoints or problems

___ G. National or local Web pages

___ H. Chapter newsletter

___ I.

Other _____

8. Have you ever been contacted for piano services via the Internet through a PTG (national or local) website? YES NO

9. Should associate members have use of the PTG logo for advertising? YES NO

10. Do you promote the PTG to your own customers, or prospective clients? YES NO

10.b) Are they aware of your membership in the PTG? YES NO

11. Would you support the plan to divide the Piano Technicians Guild into two separate organizations: one for Associates only and one for Registered Technicians only.

YES NO

There were 24 surveys and 15 responded. This is a compilation of the responses.

Question #	Y / N	Some of the written response and suggestions
1.	5 / 8	Quit changing, this topic keeps coming up, waste of time Need categories that better define member qualifications Should only be one classification using the PTG symbols
2.	.	Most common response was it would be difficult & public doesn't care. The term apprentice is more clearly understood by everyone. Advertising by manufactures, stores, the PTG and its members. Only RPT's should have use of logo and a reason to upgrade.
3.	.	For those that answered here : B) 3 C)2 D)1 other) had bad experience with test procedure.
4.	5 / 8	on time limit: 2 say 2yrs / 1 says 1 yr/ 1 says 3 years / 1 says must take the exams to join
5.	2 / 11	(what happens if person does not upgrade?)
6.	.	By far the most common response was to improve and was the next logical step
7.	.	Like in golf, here the lowest number represents most important service to members. A) 37 B) 42 C) 84 D)31 E)66 F)32 G)94 H)65 Camaraderie and Chapter meetings were #1 -- (we should see better attendance) The journal and seminars were very close. The result was somewhat askew by one 10 on the seminar all others were value 1-6 , the Journal values 1-8. The web and business building had the lowest ranking.
8.	5 / 8	(We forgot to qualify this answer with having Internet access)
9.	4 / 9	This was brought up in several other responses- toward negative
10. a	12 / 1	This should be the best advertising for the PTG
10. b	12 / 1	It appears everyone is proud of their membership in the PTG
11.	2 / 11	It appears the Chapter would not support proposed changes.

It is difficult to sum up all the information here but the general impression I take is what the PTG does best is provide educational opportunity. One respondent stated that the reason for joining the PTG was the willingness of other members to share knowledge and information. Associates play an important role in Chapter and Guild activities and separating the two categories would be a divisive action. There may be some misunderstanding or misuse of the term Associate, and that category may be too broad to truly reflect persons wanting to pursue an upgraded status. Most appear satisfied with the current system.

My personal sentiments are that Ron Berry (and our own link through David's effort) have done an excellent job on the PTG Web page, and interested piano owners will seek out members. This is one way to inform the public. The quality of service that members provide should be in direct relation to the effort of continuing education. The PTG exam should be a goal for all interested members, but should not exclude persons. Professional service provided by a qualified technician will be the best advertising you ever get. The RPT will never have the name recognition of McDonalds or Coke and it's not that important. The PTG needs to focus on services that improve members technical abilities and less on name status. I strongly oppose the term "Certified" technician.

Mark Ritchie, Editor

Tech Tip

Bryan Hartzler

Don't forget the drywall screws! The all purpose screw has a prominent place in my spare screw container. 3/4", 1", and 1 3/8 " are all there. They are generally self tapping, and have a ferocious bite that is loathe to strip. I use these on loose or broken case parts, pedal brackets, loose trapwork, etc. In case of stripped screws, choose a slightly longer drywall screw and it will tap into the bottom of the stripped hole. They work well when screwing the soundboard to separated ribs as well.

Chapter News & Notes

Next Meeting: February 15, 2005 at 7 :30 PM @ Graves Piano & Organ 5798 Karl Rd. Columbus OH: "Bringing Together Pianist and Instrument" with Bryan Hartzler

From the WebMaster

David Stang

If you get a minute, browse to the new place on our web page called Technical Photos <http://www.ptgcolumbus.org>.

The idea is for us to have a place where we can share pictures of special pianos, or anything we may run across that's particularly beautiful or unique. Send them my way and I'll post 'em. (I can even take the pictures for you with the new camera I got for my birthday.) Similarly, if you ever have a contribution to the Newsletter that deserves to have pictures with it (better than a

Xerox reproduction), send them and I'll link them with the on-line newsletter version.

On the Web

Doug Brandt

Here's a link to a 9 part series from the New York Times on the building of a Steinway:

www.nytimes.com/ref/nyregion/PIANO_INDEX.html

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