

The Buckeye Backcheck

Volume 30, Issue 7 August 2005

Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

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Report from the National Convention

This year's National Convention was more lightly attended than were the previous four I have attended. Nonetheless, the event hotel was excellent and the level of instruction and entertainment was high. As our chapter's delegate, I attended the Annual Council Meeting on June 13th and 14th this year at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center Hotel, Kansas City, Missouri. The Council Agenda book is available to all chapter members. For the sake of brevity, I will touch only on the highlights of this year's meeting.

1. The new slate of officers of the PTG include:

President: Kent Swafford

Vice-President: Dale Probst

Treasurer: Allen Gilbreath

2. The ratification of Regional Vice-Presidents (RVP) elections took place on Monday morning. Our RVP for Region Four is Richard Bittner. I was unable to attend our regional caucus, but I will report on its activities as soon as I am able.

3. The proposed 2006 budget was approved, as was a 3.75 % increase for PTG annual dues, to \$ 178.45. This higher amount will take effect with the 2006 dues billing period. The vote for the dues increase was almost unanimously in favor of it. The board's argument for the dues increase, as we revise the 2005 budget preparatory to submission to Council, we find it advisable to request that Council approve a 3.75% increase in annual dues for 2006. We are expanding services offered and engaging in promotional projects that we hope will benefit the entire membership. As costs increase and revenue from advertising and merchandise sales decrease, this dues review is necessary to keep PTG finances as stable as they have been in the past. Our 2005 revised budget shows an expected increase in total income of \$ 21,564 over FY2004. In 2006, total income is expected to increase to \$ 1,192,986.00, an increase of only \$ 3,898.00 over 2005, or +0.33%. PTG expenses are expected to rise almost \$ 6,000.00. So, even after factoring in the 3.75% dues increase, the guild's profit is expected to be just \$ 4,000.00.

4. The longest and most contentious discussion this year took place over Bylaws Proposal 5: Membership Application Procedures. The gist of the proposed changes in how an interested party joins the PTG is to place all real authority in the hands of the PTG Home Office, as opposed to the individual chapter. The Board felt this centralization of authority was needed to comply with the Antitrust laws of the United States, offering legal protection to the organization from application and approval methods that are inconsistent from region to region and chapter to chapter. Discussion by Council lasted a long time and resulted in several amendments and substitutions being offered from the floor. In the end, the original proposal was voted on and defeated, with 917 in favor of making no change to application procedures, and 560 voting for the proposal. Council adjourned Tuesday, June 14th, at 2:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, Chris Altenburg, RPT Delegate, Chapter 431, Central Ohio

Chapter News & Notes

THE ANNUAL CHAPTER PICNIC

Date: Saturday August 27, 2005

Time: 4:00 PM

Place: Mark & Marilyn Ritchie

6262 State Rte. 605

Westerville, OH

Phone: 614.855.7704 or 614.855.1243

As customary the Chapter will provide the meat dishes, service items (plates, utensils etc.) and beverages. ***Please call*** to confirm your attendance at one of the numbers listed above. Let us know of a dish you plan to bring to share and bring a lawn chair I'll start the grills at about 5:00.

The PTG Associate Seminar scheduled in Kansas City for October 7 & 8 has been moved up one week to September 30 and October 1. This is a great opportunity for Associate members to practice RPT exam skills and receive personal feedback on their readiness to take the exams. Visit the Coming Events section at www.ptg.org to download a registration form or call (913) 432-9975 for more information.

Our October 18th Meeting will be @ Graves Piano & Organ. Guest RVP Richard Bittner

Tech Tips

from Kim Hoessly:

I was helping my husband make some stuff for my church over at Cabbage Cases, where he works (see www.cabbagecases.com) and came across a great little tool. One of the jigs we were using was tightened by wing nuts, and to snug these up he used a scrap piece of dust proof

molding. (see photo) This is a strip of aluminum that has a tongue and groove configuration and they use it on the cases they make. Now tightening wing nuts on benches has always been a problem for me since I can never get them tight enough with my fingers, and you can break off a wing if you try to use a wrench since you can only hook onto one wing at a time (don't ask me how I know this). But with a 2 or 3 inch piece of DPM, you can contact both wings of the nut and snug up those bench legs very nicely. I no longer dread wobbly benches. This also works on the occasional lyre that has wing nuts and the wing nuts on the felt practice rails, like some Kawais have to detach the rail. I'm not sure where you can purchase this molding, but my husband Bud says there is often scrap around and you only need a small piece. It does need to have the edges dressed up a bit with a file as the raw pieces are quite sharp.



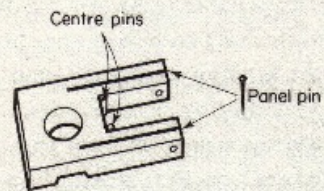
from Tom Harr:

If you care to replace some cords on flanges here is a simple jig, maybe to have a few extra in your kit.

RE-FITTING LOOPS TO FLANGES

In many cases odd loops break and you need the special loop cord for replacing these. Remove the old loop and use a small saw to open the grooves to enable you to put the new loop in place. One method to put the replacement loop in accurately is as follows:

First place your flange on your bench and knock two centre pins into the bench, flush with the top of the flange, in the inside of the

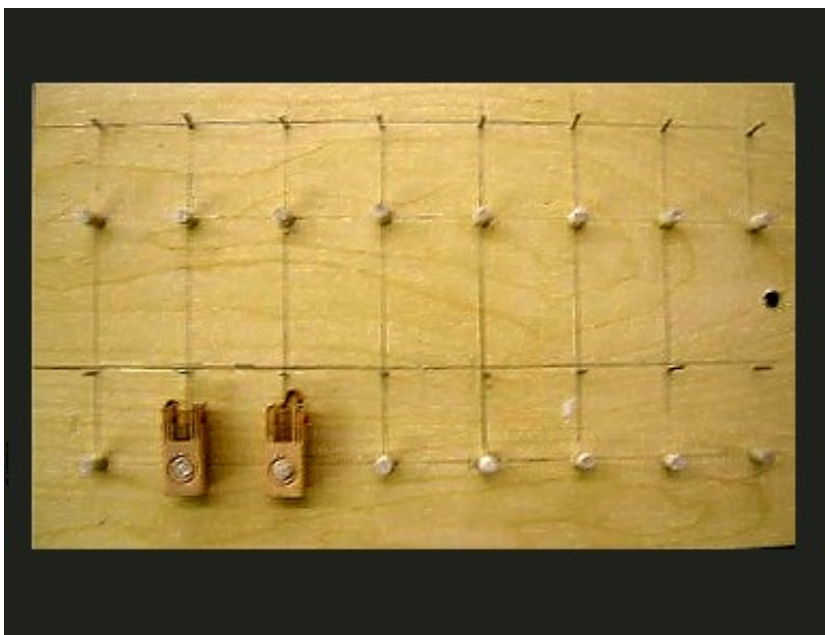


FITTING LOOP TO FLANGE

A follow up to your Yamaha flange tip: Braided (or plaited) nylon fishing line (not monofilament) makes a more durable replacement for silk or linen action cords. This is a simple jig for installing replacements to exact uniform size. Works for Kimball's Herrberger-Brooks and similar actions as well.

response from Kim Hoessly:

The only difference in my jig is that I drilled some spaced holes on a piece of scrap wood, cut up some 3/16ths inch wood dowel and glued them in the holes to hold the flanges instead of using center pins to secure them while gluing.



Acrosonic Observations - 3rd in a series of articles from Thomas Harr

Binding Up Wounds

There are only about two repairs peculiar to any of the Acrosonic actions that come to mind. The simplest is due to the unique-to-Baldwin “gooseneck” bridle wire. This has, presumably for simplicity in manufacture since it has no other discernable virtue, a simple bend in the wire instead of a hook to capture the tip of the bridle tape. In the fullness of time the hole in the tip wears and allows the tip to either fly off the wire or slide down it hanging up the wippen and preventing the jack from returning to rest under the butt. A simple cure for this is a dot of PVC-E glue on the hole to secure it to the wire. Titebond dries hard and then has no grip on the wire. Superglue might work, but then suppose you have to take it off some day.

Rubber has an unsatisfactory history as applied to piano action parts. Grommets are no exception. Age makes them hard and brittle. Then they will either rattle or crumble away. To quiet rattles and slow further deterioration a small bead of PVC-E glue is a quick field repair. Replacing a set of grommets (no point in doing a few, if some are bad they all will go bad) is quickly done using a small reversible cordless screwdriver. Except that the 1/4" socket doesn't have enough headspace to accommodate the domed top of the locknut and the protruding wire, so, in advance, drill it out inside enough for clearance. The 3/16" hole only needs to be about 3/8" deep but the black-oxide finish nut runners are usually casehardened and may require a cobalt steel or titanium carbide coated drill bit to break through the “skin”. Nut runners with magnetic inserts provide plenty of space if the magnet is extracted. Note the swedge on the wire to provide a grip for pliers to hold it while turning the lock nut on or off. Final adjustment of lost-motion can be made with an Excellite stubby nut driver or the brass one made to tune Conn organ inductors without throwing the pitch completely off as a steel tool would do. (Want to make one? Watch this space.) Note on PVC-E glue: ruined by freezing and unlike Titebond will not recover upon thawing, so don't leave it in your car.

Making them regular.

To round off the peculiarities of Acrosonic regulation the W&B SIS action presents a challenge in adjusting the capstans since they are way back under the auxiliary wippens and the square sections are well above the keys also. Just to make it more interesting they are 1/8". I have a dogleg capstan wrench that would appear to be well suited to just fit the notch in the key and reach the capstan, but alas it is the usual 3/16" size. The quick and easy way is to lift the key out, front end first, and make the adjustment. Now suppose you have filed the hammers or for some other reason reset the hammer-rail. Adjusting the entire set of capstans piecemeal would be exceedingly tedious. Fortunately it can be done wholesale due to a peculiarity of the action geometry. On the back of the portion of each action bracket which supports the auxiliary wippen-rail there is a fluted pin which fixes the rail in place (these barely show in Fig. 1). Draw each pin, back off the large machine screws on the front side, remove the rail and plug the holes

left by the pins. Reinstall the rail, barely snug the screws, and tap the rail down until the hammers just start to wink, then raise the rail just a touch to provide lost-motion and tighten the screws securely. Insert the pins in the back of the brackets and squeeze them into the rail with pliers once you are sure the rail is exactly where you intend. Individual adjustments can then be made as necessary.

Setting things square.

The distinctive Acrosonic action problem that led to these observations lies in the relationship between the pick-up finger and the capstan, which lifts it (see Fig.6). If these do not line up the cushion will eventually wear unevenly and, on a hard blow the finger will slip off the capstan and become wedged. Individual fingers can be centered by slightly bending the guide pin; an entire row will require shifting the guide-rail in the appropriate direction.

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