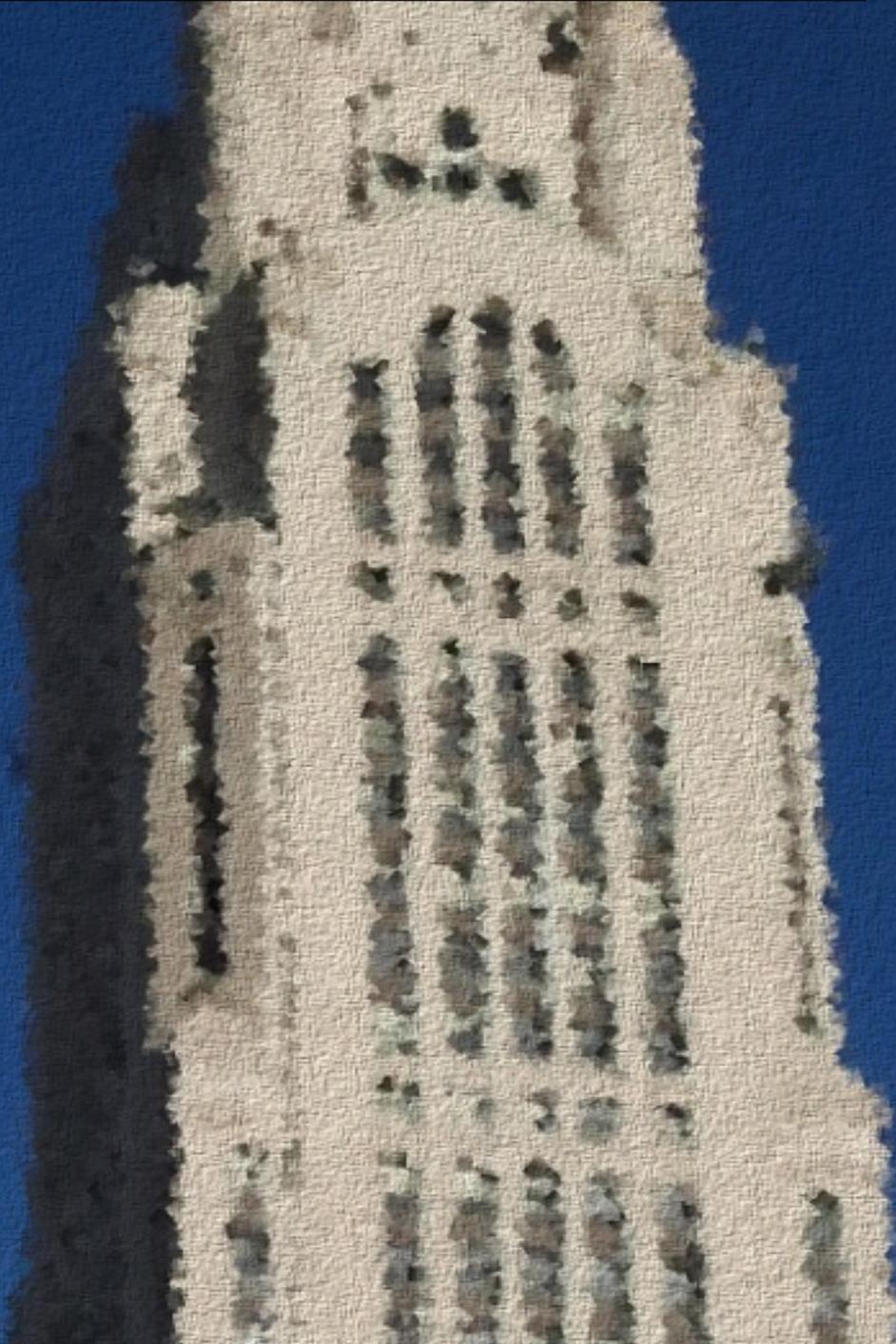


# The Buckeye Backcheck

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

**Volume 44    Issue 2    April 2019**



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## Chapter Meeting Minutes March 19, 2019

The meeting was held at Graves Piano & Organ Co.

### Attendance:

David Chadwick, Ron Kenreich, Chris Burget, Kim Hoessly, Mark Ritchie, Evan Bingham, Walter Bagnall

### Treasurer's Report:

\$1,880.01

### Old Business:

There was discussion about updating our by-laws to be in line with recent changes in the PTG to allow Associate Members to hold offices of Chapter President and Vice President, but there was no vote to actually make the changes yet. They were last revised in 2014, and can be viewed on the Chapter website at:

<https://www.ptgcolumbus.org/bylaws.html>

The possibility of a digital piano technical was discussed again, and some contact info for some possible repair outlets were given and will be included in this issue's Butts & Flanges section.

### New Business:

Suggestions for future technicals included: Yamaha hammer return spring cord repair/replacement; and Nick Gravagne's action ratios (for dummies!), or something similar.

Art Reblitz, famed piano repair author, has expressed interest in referencing our Chapter website's Beat Generator page in an upcoming revision to "Piano Servicing, Tuning, and Rebuilding: For the Professional, the Student, and the Hobbyist". He also inquired about the permanency of our website, as many do come and go, so we discussed making the sound files available to the Home Office if they wanted to add a similar feature to their web site. The Beat Generator can be found in the Media section of our site, or viewed at:

<https://www.ptgcolumbus.org/beat-rate-generators.html>

## Butts & Flanges

While discussing the possibility of some sort of digital piano servicing technical, various names of potential repair persons and facilities were given out and will be listed below. This also bled over into electric organ repair as well. First, people should try contacting the store where purchased, as they may have arrangements for that. Ron Kenreich mentioned that Columbus Piano Leasing outsources these repairs to a shop that periodically makes stops to pick up repair items from their store. Some others include:

### Abell Audio Inc.

909 King Ave #300  
Columbus, OH 43212  
(614) 299-2383  
[www.abellaudioinc.com](http://www.abellaudioinc.com)

### Sphar Organ Service

11449 Lebanon Rd  
Cincinnati, OH 45241  
(513) 769-4352  
(800) 521-4352  
[www.spharorganservice.com](http://www.spharorganservice.com)

### Chris Young

(614) 859-4350  
Yamaha Clavinova Service

Ron Kenreich brought up the topic of casters on grand trucks/dollies. Namely he was asking what others might do to keep the piano from rocking during performances, as sometimes the brakes alone are not enough, and wedges don't always work either. People suggested trying different shaped wedges, and those of differing materials to see if there is any improvement. Also, orienting the wheels so they are at opposing, or near perpendicular, directions of motion may help as well. Thick buckskin placed in between the brake pad and the wheel was also suggested.

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## CA Glue Pinblock Treatment

The March meeting was held at Graves Piano & Organ Co., and David Chadwick gave the technical presentation on treating loose tuning pins with CA glue.

For decades, technicians have been trying to use various chemicals, pin tighteners, or "dope", like Garfield's, on pinblocks and pins that have been losing their grip from drying out. As the wood shrinks, the holes enlarge and draw away from the pins. These chemicals were supposed to swell the fibers back up, thus increasing grip. Often, though, the wood becomes soft and mushy inside. CA glue, however, has a quick curing and hardening time, which is a factor in its higher success rate because, though it does also cause the wood fibers to swell, the glue itself hardens before the wood gets soft. In some cases too, some might say the glue itself is another layer of material to grip the pin. Some people have reported that Garfield's and others can work well, but it has to be used in a certain way and mixture under specific circumstances.

Before application, clean as much dirt and debris from the plate webbing around the pins. Run-off is possible and any dirt in its path is likely to become permanently stuck. The thinnest viscosity glue is desired, either thin, extra thin, or super thin, depending on the manufacturer. Various techs have their preferred brands and purchasing outlets. Those available from Schaff and Pianotek are generally well regarded, as well as what is often found in marine supply stores, and hobby shops that specialize in high-end model making. These places "usually" have fresher stocks than what is found in most hardware stores, though there may be exceptions. Some literature on the subject advises pulling the action out of grands and covering the keybed in case anything penetrates the whole block, however, everyone present with experience in this said it was never a problem for them. It may be wise to inspect the block for delaminations underneath. You also want some towels and a container nearby to hold your items.

David describes his first attempt with this procedure as a bit of a mess, mainly because of the lack of adequate applicators. He showed us a variety of tips, needle bottles and pipettes of various sizes. Some may need to be trimmed to fit the original bottle, or glue can be transferred to another applicator. The idea is to have total control of each drop, as opposed to flowing glue, which is important for such thin viscosities. In this presentation the smaller sized pipettes (1-2 ml) worked the best, in that each drop could be placed with pin point accuracy. If using bottles, you may want to practice tipping, squeezing, and re-inverting them to get used to how the air transfers within the bottle so that you don't inadvertently get a sudden out-pouring of glue; David had a mason jar handy for this. He also measured the torque on various pins with the first one starting out at 95 lbs, which isn't totally loose but would work for our purposes.

The basic idea is to place the tip at the base of the pin where it meets either the block or bushing. David placed his at the 6:00 position, side closest to the keyboard on grands, and administered



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just three drops. The reasoning here is that there is a slight gap between the pin and block due to string tension pulling in the opposite direction. It is more likely to get down into the block here and actually penetrate the wood there, as opposed to just pooling up around the bushing, if there is one. If more is needed later, you can go to other positions around the pin as desired. Some techs advocate applying glue into the area until it almost starts to pool to insure that enough glue is getting into the wood fibers to actually swell, otherwise, once a layer has dried it will prevent any more from penetrating. However, David says, as do others, that might be overkill; not to mention potentially messier for those newer to the practice.



On grands with pin bushings 1/4" to 3/4" thick, Mark Ritchie suggested using a small drill bit (1/16") in a small electric screwdriver on a low torque setting to drill a tiny hole, at the 6:00 position on grands, right at the base of the pin. Just a couple small quick triggers of the tool, or you can feel the tool as it clears the bottom of the bushing and contacts the block. This helps the glue get to where it's really most effective, at the block instead of it all soaking into the bushing.



After just ten minutes, the first pin that measured 95 lbs was now measuring 130 lbs, while another measured at 150 lbs. Sometimes, upon first contact with a tuning lever, the pins might be jumpy, creaky, or "grabby", but usually smooth out after one or two adjustments. If you're doing the whole block, start at the bass and go all the way up. By the time you've reached the top those in the bass, and most likely the temperament area as well, you are ready for tuning. It is also important to note that you should insure there is good air ventilation in the room as treating a whole block will generate a lot of fumes. If possible, open nearby windows and use a fan to divert the fumes. You also want to have debonder, acetone, or finger nail polish remover on hand to separate glued fingers. As mentioned previously, be mindful of how the glue flows when tipping and un-tipping any bottles, and be careful not to get any in your eyes!



If you're wanting to reuse the needle style tips, you may be able to soak them in a coffee can with alcohol or acetone and it "might" be enough to clear them out. Your mileage may vary!

On verticals, it's ideal to have the piano tilted onto its back, especially if doing the whole block. However, some present mentioned that they have applied glue to random pins here and there without tilting, though you want rags handy to quickly catch and clean up any run-off. Also, it's less likely that much, if any, glue will actually reach the block. It may give you just enough to get through the tuning, but you may need to check back on it at a later date, or inquire with the customer to see if the notes are holding.

People also shared their various experiences with this procedure as well as testifying to how skeptical they were before trying it for themselves, and then seeing its potential. When suggesting this sort of work to clients, do so with a disclaimer that it's not guaranteed but worth a shot on some pianos. Figure about one to two hours for a whole block in addition to tuning time.



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[www.ptgcolumbus.org](http://www.ptgcolumbus.org)

## Klavins Una Corda Piano



<https://www.klavins-pianos.com/products/una-corda/>

### Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

#### - Officers -

|                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>President</b>       | David Chadwick, RPT |
| <b>Vice-President</b>  | Chris Purdy, RPT    |
| <b>Treasurer</b>       | Ron Kenreich        |
| <b>Secretary</b>       | Chris Burget        |
| <b>Imm. Past Pres.</b> | Mitch Staples, RPT  |

**Chapter Meeting**  
**Tuesday, April 16**  
**7:00pm**

**Italian Dinner:**  
**6:30pm**

**Solich Piano Columbus**  
6370 Proprietors Rd,  
Worthington, OH 43085  
(614) 8883441  
[www.solichmusic.com](http://www.solichmusic.com)

Topic: TBA

Map Link:

<https://goo.gl/maps/oSyuD7HKTaU2>

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Comments, articles, and advertising requests may be sent to the editor:

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