



The Buckeye Backcheck

Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

Volume 33 Issue 5 June 2008

CHAPTER MEETING Minutes May 20, 2008

The meeting was held at Henderson Music. Thank you very much to their management for hosting us.

Attendance: Chris Altenburg, Bob Grubb, Mark Ritchie, Kim Hoessly, Victor Wolfe, David Stang.

Treasurer's Report

Our present total balance is 2691.20: 2000 face value in CDs, 691.20 in checking.

- submitted by Ron Kenreich through email.

Old Business

The National Convention will be in Anaheim, June 18-22. To the best of our knowledge, no one from our chapter will be going except possibly Mitch Staples if OSU pays for his trip.

There was some discussion of the national By-Laws proposals, but only informally since there was not a delegate present to advise. There was general disfavor about the proposal to raise the cost of the tuning and technical examination fee to \$180 and for 1/2 of the fee to go to the national office.

Three people have not renewed their membership this year: Mike Varrone, Dana Reidel, Matt Scavo. Mike Varrone is still in the business tuning pianos though.

Kim Hoessly and Chris Altenburg led the technical examination to two members of the Cincinnati chapter last month. Mark Ritchie also assisted.

New Business

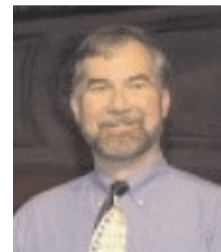
Chapter elections were held and our new officers are:

President – Kim Hoessly, RPT
Vice-President – Chris Altenburg, RPT
Treasurer – Ron Kenreich
Secretary – David Stang

Congratulations, and thank you to past officers for their service!



Kim Hoessly, Pres.



Chris Altenburg, V.P.
& Immediate past Pres.



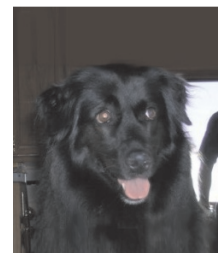
Ron Kenreich, Treas.



David Stang, Secr.



Bob Grubb,
Immediate past V.P.



Ebony Ritchie,
Mascot

There will be no chapter meeting until August when we will plan to have a picnic.

Kim suggested we buy a grand action model for the chapter to use for the technical examination. (The one we presently use belongs to an individual.) Kim will pursue the purchase and will report back if the cost seems out of line, that is, more than the \$300 range.

There was a consensus that we would like to have at least one speaker come in to give a technical talk to the chapter next year, and it would be reasonable to offer the payment of travel expenses for someone to come in from out of town.

The National Chapter has purchased Sponsored Links to appear on Google and other search sites in order to direct business to RPTs.

The Buckeye Backcheck

Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

Butts & Flanges

Mark Ritchie brought in two interesting old tools. The Brown multi-purpose pliers, and the Bass String “Re-toner”. He was inspired to bring them in because the Journal has featured both recently as historical curiosities.

We discussed the Wegman piano, which is unique in that it has no wooden pinblock: the tuning pins are driven into the metal plate. They are shorter than conventional pins and feel very different when being turned. There are also a few other old piano brands out there with this rare feature, such as some old Wurlitzers.



Mark's Multi-pliers (as seen in the March Journal) still serve as a handy tool after many years of use. They function as shank bending pliers, easing pliers, a pin turner, and a small clamp.

From Kim Hoessly...

Many of you have already heard about Sandy West's passing following a long illness. I've run this by a few of the members and we are agreed that it would be appropriate to make a donation to the PTG Foundation in her memory. I think \$100 would not be out of line. I will work with Ron K. to make these arrangements unless someone has a better suggestion. I will also send a note to her husband, Pat, on the chapter's behalf.

For those of you who didn't know Sandy, she was a member of the Columbus Chapter a number of years ago and was very active with PTG and fine technician as well as a being a great person to know. She will be sorely missed by many, many people.

Please keep her family in your thoughts and prayers,

Regards,

Kim

From Greg Kottman (through Mark Ritchie)...

It is with sadness that I report that Sandy West, RPT passed away today in Atlanta, GA after a lengthy illness. I have no details on arrangements and do not expect any local notification. If I get any more information, I will forward.

I know that many of you knew Sandy during her time here in Cincinnati and certainly her technical expertise was respected by all. If someone who should be is not on the list, please forward to them to make them aware.

Please remember her husband, Pat, and their daughter Robin in your prayers.

Yours,

Greg Kottmann

The Buckeye Backcheck

Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

FROM OTHER NEWSLETTERS

Charley was National VP when I entered the Guild and was an interesting guy.

Thought you might find it interesting and was reprinted in the Rhode Island Good Vibrations June newsletter - Mark R.

The Great Piano Bonfire

By Charles Huether

Atlantic City is famous for many things in its long history as a resort and convention center, but did you ever hear of the "Great Piano Bonfire"?

In 1904 the Convention of the National Association of Piano Dealers was held at the great resort city. The turn of the century was also a crisis time for the piano industry. The modern grand and upright had reached their peak in development. Scale and action design were as such a stage of refinement that all instruments of earlier design were obsolete. And that meant principally the old "square grand."

In 1904 the manufacturers were building the modern upright and grand and they had to get rid of the old squares and the problems of taking them in trade. The piano owners were anxious to buy the new instruments but resisted the notion that the old squares were worth very little as practical musical instruments and even less as trade-ins.

To the fore stepped Harry Edward Frenund, Editor of the "Musical Age." With grand rhetoric he presented and pushed for his plan, which was to collect as many square grands as possible and make a bonfire of them. As so, one thousand pianos were collected from all of the country, piled high on the beach at Atlantic City and, as a great climax to the Piano Dealer's Convention, put to the torch.

It was a great sight and the publicity was tremendous. Reports were in papers from coast to coast, not a small achievement in those days before wire services and TV. Harry Edward Frenund, with typical flourishes of the day said, "What has occurred is, I think, typical of the American spirit – to destroy that which has become useless."

It hadn't been easy to get the bonfire organized for even as long ago as 1904 there were people who just couldn't understand the problems of business. When word went out of the planned fire, Mayor Story of Atlantic City was deluged with letters from people protesting and asking for the instruments for themselves or for some charitable institution. Further, the possibility of the fire getting out of hand and spreading to the city was a major concern for there had been an extensive fire just three years earlier. The Mayor said, "No!" Harry Edward Frenund and his supporters protested. They threatened to take their fire to another neighboring community, a number of which were eager to participate for the publicity. And that tipped the scale. The Mayor relented and with the fire department and a squad of police on hand to keep things under control, the fire was set.

At 10:10 p.m. on May 24, 1904, Harry Edward Frenund, put the torch to a pile of one thousand kerosene-soaked square grands and the flames leaped to the sky. Thousands of people came from great distances to witness the conflagration and it was reported to be seen twenty miles out at sea. The Piano Dealers joined hands and danced around the fire and sang songs.

Symbol of the squares to be destroyed was an instrument painted white and exhibited at the Convention as "The Dealers; White Elephant." It was brought to the meeting by Frank P. Anderson of Brooklyn and, in addition to being painted white had "verses" lettered on its case. A few samples: Of all the words of tongue or pen / The saddes are these, "I am a has been." Another: From Brooklyn I came / Anderson is my name / The Boss didn't give a dame / If I do go up in flame. And yet another: No longer the dealer will tear his hair / Nor gnash his teeth in wild despair / My days are done poor old square / I'll feed the flames by the salt sea air.

It is hoped that Mr. Anderson was a better Piano Dealer than a poet.

So add another claim to fame to Atlantic City's long list. And if you ever wonder where all the square grands went, why they went to Atlantic City and went up in smoke.



The Buckeye Backcheck

Newsletter of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

www.ptgcolumbus.org

Upcoming Events

No chapter meetings in June or July. Have a great summer.
Don't let your musical instruments get too humid !!

Organ Concert by Matthew W. Scavo

Sunday, June 8, 2008 4:30pm
Broad St. Presbyterian Church, 760 E. Broad St.

National Convention and Technical Institute

June 18 - 22, 2008
Anaheim, California
www.ptg.org/conv/2008

Chapter Picnic

Time and Place TBA
(Probably during the last half of August)

Voicing Master Class

Sept. 19 - 21, 2008
PTG Home Office

Central East Regional Seminar

October 10 - 12, 2008
Des Plaines, Illinois

This newsletter was created using the open-source program *Scribus* running on the Linux/Ubuntu operating system.

Disclaimer:

All expressions of opinion and all statements of supposed facts are published on the authority of the author as listed and are not to be regarded as expressing the views of the Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild unless such statements or opinions have been adopted by the chapter or the guild.
Articles and illustrations may be re-printed by other PTG newsletters with proper acknowledgment, unless otherwise indicated in the article.

Comments, articles, and advertising requests may be sent to the editor.
David B. Stang, 286 E. Kelso Rd., Columbus, OH 43202 stang_db@yahoo.com