

# The Buckeye Backcheck

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

Volume 41 Issue 7 October 2016



## Full steam ahead!!



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## Chapter Meeting Minutes September 20, 2016

The meeting was held at Hughes Hall, OSU Main Campus.

### Attendance:

Mitch Staples, Ron Kenreich, Chris Burget, Kim Hoessly, David Chadwick, David Stang.

### Treasurer's Report:

\$1494.81

### Old Business:

Suggestions for upcoming technicals were discussed, and Kim Hoessly said the Smart Piano Mover device was looking more and more like a possibility.

The Chapter Auction took place on Saturday, June 18, 2016 at Church Of The Master in Westerville. The total sales for the auction amounted to \$801.00, with the Chapter keeping \$81.00, and \$720.00 going to Don Carle's family.

Chapter Elections were held, and the slate of Officers nominated and elected were:

Mitch Staples - President

Chris Altenburg - Vice-President

Ron Kenreich - Treasurer

Chris Burget - Secretary

Kim Hoessly - Immediate Past President

The Newsletter page on the Chapter website is still disengaged and options for the archive are being explored. It may remain on the site but the link will only be available to members and subscribers.

### New Business:

David Chadwick, Chapter Delegate at Council during the National Convention, gave his report of Council activities. These included motions on: multiple-chapter membership being extended to Associates; background checks on new members; dues reductions for members over 65 years of age; and changes to the Tuning Exam in regard to examinees only retaking certain parts of the test that were failed. He said that Council this year went quickly and smoothly with all matters being handled in a very timely and efficient manner.

Old Bag Of Nails in Westerville was suggested as a location for the January Post-Holiday Dinner because there is a larger party room upstairs. The matter was brought up so early because the room is often booked very far in advance.

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## Butts & Flanges

David Stang recently serviced a newer Asian-made Baldwin grand that had a loose lyre that led to problems with the bushings in the una corda shift mechanism. David made the necessary repairs to the lyre and the trapwork, possibly even improving them from the original condition. Everything shifted properly and smoothly and the hammer spacing was adequate, yet the customer claimed it wasn't sounding right. Many suggestions were offered in regard to voicing the hammers between the grooves, adjusting the amount of shift, and hammer spacing, etc.... One trick is to place carbon paper in between the hammers and the strings so as to mark the hammers where they strike after shifting with the pedal. These markings on the hammers make it easier to make decisions regarding spacing, voicing, and shift travel. Another suggestion, in regard to wholesale mating of hammers to strings, involves placing something like a 6" metal ruler in the bass end where the action slides in, so as to shift the whole action slightly. The hammers are then aligned so that the left edges of the hammers are all lined up to the left edges of the left strings. The ruler is removed upon completion and the spacing is consistent throughout, and the una corda shift screw can be adjusted as desired. This also spurred the general discussion of how to deal with customers that are just impossible to please, or are unreasonable at best. Sometimes people actually get used to the malfunctioning parts, or have unrealistic expectations from their pianos, or complain as a tactic to lower prices. These situations can be tricky, especially when they insist you did something you didn't do, or vice versa. Some people must always have the last word, or have the "it's not right until I say it's right" syndrome, whether it really is right or not. Sometimes second opinions should be suggested. You can only do the best you can, and you can only do so much within reason. Kim Hoessly then quoted Tom Harr by saying, "God did not make your piano!"



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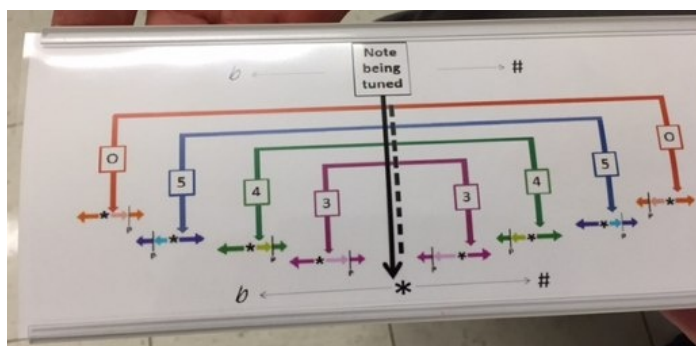
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## PTG International Convention and Midwest Regional Conference

Thanks to David Chadwick, Mitch Staples and Kim Hoessly for sharing some of their experiences at the PTG Convention in Norfolk, and the MRCO in Indianapolis. Following are just a few of the highlights offered by each, as well as some pictures.

David Chadwick and Mitch Staples both attended the International Convention in Norfolk, VA. David had many highlights from the week. As mentioned in the Minutes, he served as our delegate to Council and said that ran very smoothly. He also described some of the classes he liked, such as the one taught by Thomas Strange covering rebuilding/servicing square grands. Thomas also brought examples of other early grands like a Broadwood and a Steinway, similar to forte-pianos. David loved their tonality. "Not as much sustain, but a quality of tone that is remarkable," is how he described them. David also helped with some tuning exams and is working toward becoming a CTE, so he found the aural tuning classes taught by Rick Butler and Bill Bremmer to be very insightful and thought provoking. He also enjoyed classes taught by Melanie Brooks and Alan Day in regard to action rebuilding, hammer replacement, and working with suppliers. He also enjoyed the Chesapeake Bay; toured the battleship Wisconsin; and sang John Denver tunes in the piano karaoke bar, hosted by Scott Jones of Pitchlock.

Mitch Staples also shared some of his Norfolk experiences, which included one of the rides on a wooden ship in the bay. He attended a discussion on piano appraisal and mentioned that some people are making efforts to add a piano appraiser certification. He said that, in many areas of trade, the IRS requires appraisers to be certified in some way. Some people in the discussion felt that being a piano technician is probably enough in most cases, but that the limit of the law has not really been pushed very far. Some feel that the PTG should be more pro-active in anticipating this need. He also said that the IRS requires any appraisals over \$5,000 to be made in writing. He went on to discuss some of the various types of appraisals like fair market value versus cost of replacement. This spurred discussion in our own group on how to format an appraisal with appropriate disclaimers explaining that it is the technician's "opinion" based on many factors. Mitch said that it is likely there will be more done in this area. Mitch also shared a clever gadget





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he picked up from an aural tuning class taught by Mitch Kiel. It was a temperament slide rule, of sorts, that showed how various intervals change in relation to each other. He also mentioned that his wife was able to take some business oriented classes at either reduced rates, or totally free of charge (not confirmed at press time). Member's spouses, who participate in the business, but are not members themselves, get this reduction.



Kim went to the MRCO in Indianapolis and here is a little of what she had to share. She liked a class by John Dewey which focused on tips for using and modifying tools for use in the field and in the shop. He basically had a list that he ran through of roughly a hundred items, many of which he passed around and explained their uses. One tool was a modified bottle/can opener that can unravel windings off of universal bass strings. Another tool, made from such a winding or brass wire, can then be used to form a tiny jig which attaches to an upright backcheck wire holding a jack forward to facilitate access to the hammer butt flange screw. He also had what he called "hermaphrodite velcro", or single strip velcro. There were also many files modified for specific uses. Much of this may show up in a technical in the near future. She also helped give some exams, which she says is always a learning experience. She took a class by Priscilla Rappaport called "Holes: Drill it and fill it", that focused on proper drilling techniques for a variety of purposes like bridge pins, pinblocks, keys, action stacks, and trapwork. Kim also took a class by Lucy Urlacher on servicing the Steinway sostenuto, utilizing an interesting jig with a leather pad to help set the gap between the lever and the tab. She also showed us pictures of various products in the supplier's hall and updated accessories from Damp-Chaser.



These were just some of the highlights offered by David, Mitch, and Kim. All pictures were taken by Kim Hoessly and David Chadwick.





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

**Treat?**



**...or Trick?**



## Columbus Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

- Officers -

<b>President</b>	Mitch Staples, RPT
<b>Vice-President</b>	Chris Altenburg, RPT
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ron Kenreich
<b>Secretary</b>	Chris Burget
<b>Imm. Past Pres.</b>	Kim Hoessly, RPT

## Chapter Meeting

**Tuesday, October 4**

**7:00pm**

**Not 3rd Tuesday of the month!!**

### Solich Piano

6370 Proprietors Rd  
Worthington, OH 43085  
(614) 8883441

[solichpianocolumbus.com](http://solichpianocolumbus.com)

**Topic:** Yamaha Disklavier  
Enspire

### Map Link:

[goo.gl/maps/5ddSHcLCh4F2](http://goo.gl/maps/5ddSHcLCh4F2)

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