

# PIANO TECHNICIANS JOURNAL

February, 1979





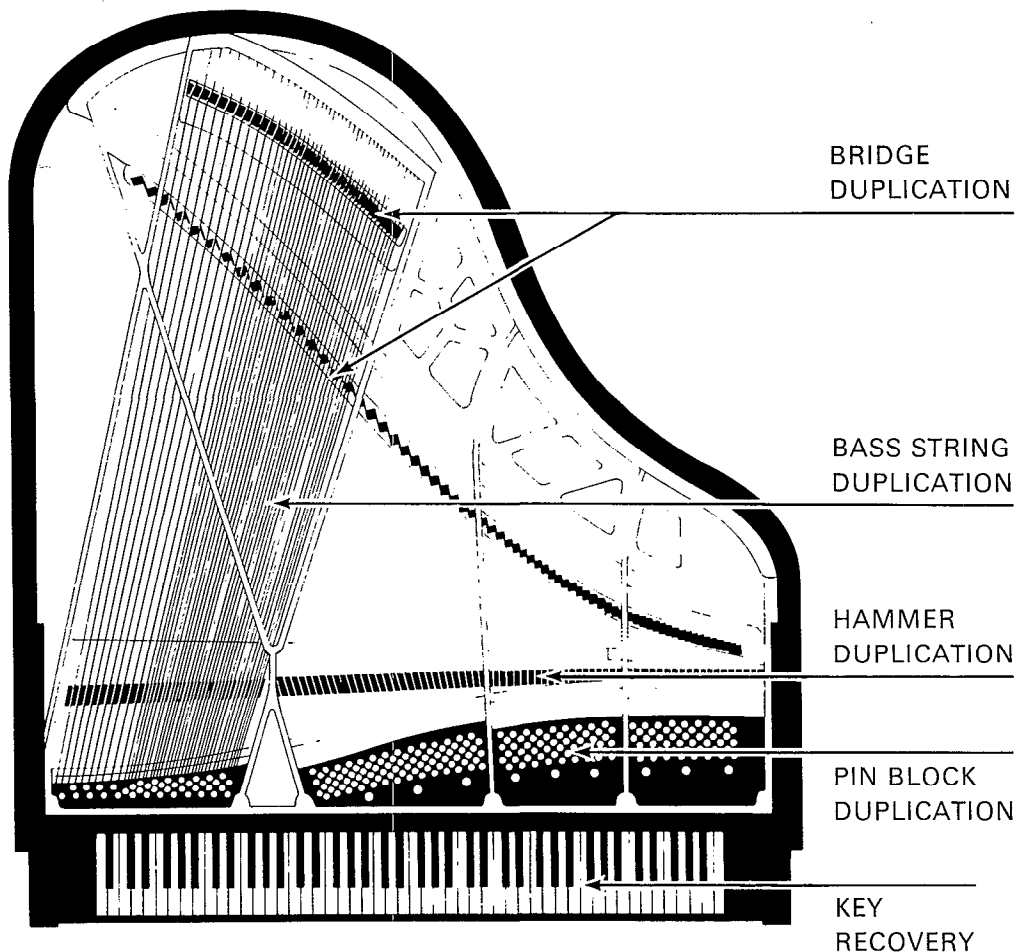


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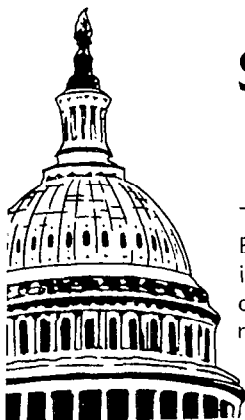
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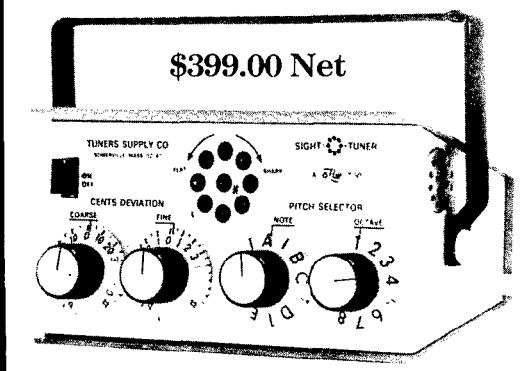
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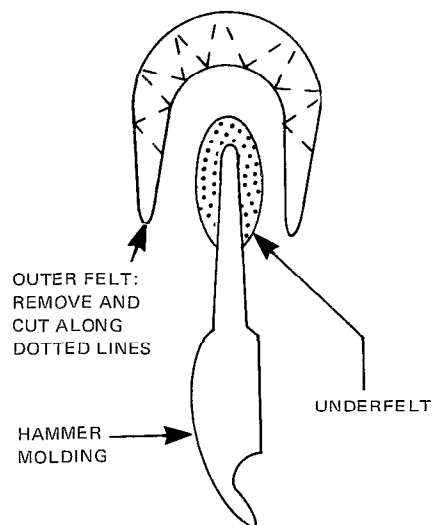
# PIANO TECHNICIANS JOURNAL

Official Publication of the Piano Technicians Guild/February 1979

Volume 22 Number 2

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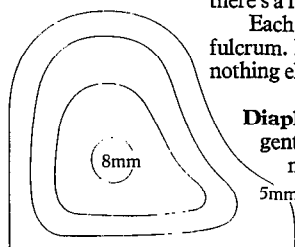
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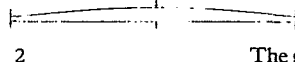
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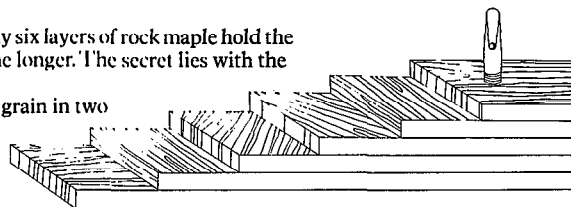
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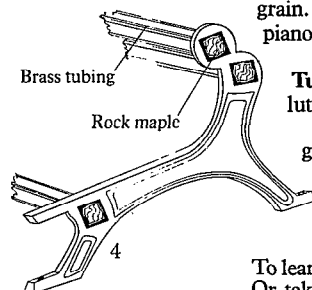
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# EDITORIAL

**You're a piano what?** A piano tuner-technician — what's that? Ever get this response from people? I do when I introduce myself to those outside the industry as your executive director. Why are they so puzzled? Most people have pianos, have had pianos, and listen to and enjoy piano music. Pianos need kind and loving care, like everything else worthwhile; whether or not they get proper care is another matter. We in the Guild believe in, and are committed to, the concept that the registered tuner-technician (fully qualified through training and experience) should be the proper person to provide this professional care. Why then is it that the craft seems so invisible to the general public, and why has it apparently failed to get the broad recognition it so richly deserves?

With a working membership of over 3000 strong and various publications being mailed out to almost 4000 people monthly, along with 158 chapters located throughout the length and breadth of the land, this fine old craft certainly should be able to stand up and be counted with the rest of the highly skilled professionals. The piano tuner-technician should be as evident in the piano industry as the pharmacist is in the drug store or the chemist in the laboratory.

PTG is making progress in this direction. More and more chapters are getting together on regional and state levels and are holding high-level institutes and conventions. This is all activity that goes into the "mix," making people aware that we are alive and functioning. An increasing number of members from our chapters are appearing as exhibitors at conventions, trade shows, and other outside Guild gatherings; working at exhibits; handing out materials; and informing the general public. Chapter members are getting together with

schools, clubs, and other community groups — supplying them with programs on the history, nature, and proper care and treatment of the piano. We have launched a national advertising campaign by trading advertising space with other trade-related publications in the industry — bringing attention to you and the Guild, its goals and purposes, and marketing subscriptions for our *Journal*.

The Guild is reviewing our fine film, "The Music of Sound," with the idea of making the Guild more visible in its format; and is considering the production of another film, more closely akin to the craft itself, for general public consumption. We believe wholeheartedly that the Piano Technicians Guild, and the craft it represents, is slowly but surely gaining ground in worldwide recognition. International study groups to Japan and Germany are doing much in this regard. We are at a time in history when members of the Guild can stand with pride in their role as an absolutely vital necessity to the industry they represent.

Why seek recognition for the piano technician? There are many reasons of course, but to start with, as people are made more aware that a registered tuner-technician is available to them in their community, they will seek their help more readily and more frequently. Many people do not have their pianos properly cared for simply because they do not know who is available to do the job or how often it should be done.

As the public becomes more aware of the complexity of the instrument and the degree of expertise required for its proper care, they will be more willing to pay a fair and equitable price for this service. As our accreditation program becomes more widespread and better recognized, people

will seek out only those technicians who are fully qualified to do the job. It is also a matter of establishing personal pride in one's profession. The prestige that accompanies documented accreditation generates private and public support whenever and wherever it is needed.

Why recognition? — for the sake of the craft and industry, and for those who make it up. A candle burning brightly under a bushel basket is as useful as a dead light bulb in the trash can. We must bring the Guild out into the open and let people everywhere know that we are making a major contribution in the world of music.

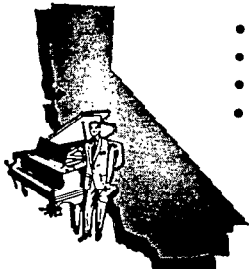
Finally, to further illustrate my point, I know two world-famous mountain climbers. One, my next-door neighbor, is a quiet and humble man who goes about achieving greatness in a dangerous and strenuous occupation — meeting impossible goals without fanfare. He received a moment of fame some years back when, with his tremendous strength, he effected an ice ax rescue of five members of his party on Mt. Everest. This is practically the only national publicity ever thrust upon him in his many years of accomplishment. Another mountain climber from this part of the country, just as skilled and expert, never goes anywhere without his press corp and a personal public relations consultant. He gains publicity on every accomplishment and his name is a household word.

The one man, a humble and quiet climber, always has a great deal of difficulty financing his expeditions; the second climber, with the press coverage, has no trouble at all in this direction — the money just comes pouring in. In short, while it may be blessed to be humble, it is not nearly as profitable. — DLS ■

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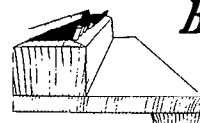


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DON MORTON

# PRESIDENTS REPORT

At exactly 10:13 a.m. the starter's gun sounded and four runners jumped off on the 24-hour endurance run that established two world records. You could feel the excitement and the competitive urge that surges around all athletic events as the news media (including television cameras) recorded the action. What was unique about this run? Two of the starting runners were over 70 years old! It all happened on the high school track at Glendale, California, on December 20 and 21, 1978, culminating six months of planning and training.

The day before the event all contestants over 50 were carefully examined for any physical problems. Each was given an electrocardiograph examination, then placed on a treadmill for a stress test. At 6 a.m. the next morning blood samples were taken, followed by a light nutritional breakfast. All contestants were at least 90 percent vegetarians or lacko-vegetarians and had kept a detailed record of all foods and liquids ingested during the previous week.

My wife, Fern, and I said encouraging words to each other as we prepared to take our turn carrying the baton for 1 mile before passing it off to another teammate. Four events were taking place simultaneously: (1) a 10-man team made up of men over 60 running to establish a 24-hour endurance record, (2) a 10-woman team of women over 50 running for the same purpose, (3) a 10-man high school team running to break their old record of 228 miles in 24 hours, and (4) a 3-man team, all marathon champions, running to break the world record of 198 miles in 24 hours.

Things went well during the daylight hours; thanks to a rain a few days before, the track was excellent. Our

backup crews from Loma Linda University Medical Center kept a close eye on each contestant. Besides the nutritional group who supplied us with proper liquids, fruits, and other items high in carbohydrates, physical therapists were on hand to massage tired aching legs.

By midnight two men in the over-60 team had dropped out, victims of exhaustion. Then at 2 a.m. the third runner of this group gave up because of leg cramps and the temperature drop to 36 degrees (this meant extra caution in keeping leg muscles flexible, especially during rest periods). Seven of us continued at our established pace, but now the rest periods were shorter by at least 30 minutes due to fewer runners. Every second mile each runner was weighed; if there was a loss of more than 8 ounces in weight, we were advised to visit the nutrition crew and take on more fuel. Every ounce of fluids or food you consumed was entered in your record.

Once or twice during the long night hours Fern and I happened to be on the track at the same time. There was a track rule that the faster runner was always given the inside lane when passing. As you approached the slower runner you yelled "track," which signaled the slow runner to move to his or her right while you passed. Naturally, it gave my masculinity a boost to yell "track" to my wife. Don't discount the feminine sex all you runners out there, or for that matter the kids, when it comes to endurance. All night long the ladies' team stayed within 5 miles of the men — they literally ran the socks off us!

I can't remember when I was so glad to see the sun come up — it was sort of like emerging from a bad

dream. By 8 a.m. camera crews again began assembling, setting up for the finish. And what a finish it was! The high school boys set a new record of 229 miles, beating their old record by 1 mile; the women came in with 127 miles; and the men finished with 133 miles. The only team of the four that suffered defeat was the three-man marathon champs. At the end of 12 hours they were 13 miles ahead of the world record with each man having run 37 miles, a total of 111 miles. However, one man was beginning to tire due to the fact that he had run a 26-mile marathon the week before and then gone skiing. Those in charge felt it best to stop the run at 12 hours as it would be impossible for the other two runners to make up the difference. For those of you who run, if you calculate this team's average you will see each runner was averaging better than 6 minutes 30 seconds per mile with a 13-minute rest period between runs.

Fern ran 13 miles at an average of 11 minutes 50 seconds per mile, and I contributed 17 miles with an average of 8 minutes 50 seconds per mile. And by the way, the teams' average age was 68.5 years.

Just thought you might like to know what the old folks are doing. ■



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# STICKING KEYS IN VERTICALS

The most common repair a piano tuner-technician is called upon to make is **sticking keys**. What the customer calls a sticking key could be any malfunction in the key or the action. Sometimes the customer does not know or remember which keys have been bothering his or her budding genius, and expects the tuner to be able to find out. This is done simply by depressing the damper while striking a suspecting key, lifting it slowly, and then striking it quickly. If the hammer does not strike the string, then the jack did not return under the hammer butt. If this test is used automatically during the tuning process, it may save a return trip.

The problem of the jack not getting under the butt is found on some new spinets and consoles. Before lowering the capstan for the "whisper" of lost motion between the top of the jack and the butt, check the striking distance (hammer travel) — usually it is too great. One or two pieces of self-adhesive nameboard felt between the action brackets and hammer rail felts will raise the butts enough to allow the jack to return every time. The striking distance is not the same on all pianos. If you do not have the manufacturer's specifications, this is an easy-to-remember formula: up-rights, 1-7/8 inches; consoles, 1-6/8 inches; spinets, 1-5/8 inches (or 1/8-inch difference on the three sizes).

The first rule in repairing a malfunction in the key or action is **find the cause of the problem before attempting a remedy**. In other words, don't grab the key-easing pliers and start squeezing the keys unless that is the problem; don't squirt center pin lubricant on the hammer butt flange pins unless that is the cause of the problem.

Also, before taking a piano apart, look for an obvious cause such as (1) a foreign article in the action (a pencil, piece of felt or paper, rubber mute left by the previous tuner, etc.), or (2) a malfunctioning part in the action (a hammer or jack spring out, broken hammer, loose jack or center pin, etc.) Foreign articles interfering with the movement of the keys might be an ivory, penny, mouse track, etc. If depressing one key causes an adjacent key to move, slip a knife blade between the keys and dislodge, or at least find, the object causing the problem.

The next step is to determine if the problem is in the keys or in the action. Test each part (key and action) separately and independently of each other. This will save time and needless effort. In determining the cause of sticking keys, the order given here is starting with the front of the key to back, and then from the bottom of the action to top.

1. Key slip warped so front of key sticks when depressed. Shim with a business card or paper near the problem area or between the key slip and key block; or remove the key slip screw, bend it slightly in the middle, and replace. (This moves the key slip in and out as the screw is turned.)

2. Key front bushing swelled or bunched.

3. Front guide pin turned, rusted, or set too close to end of key opening (especially on antiques). Use a file on the key and elongate hold.

4. Key strip (nameboard strip, key stop rail) felt may be loose, bolt may be bent, or lower nut worked down on the key.

5. Balance key button loose, pin rusty, hole shrunk, or bushing swelled or worn too much on one side.

6. Key broken, cracked, warped, rubbing against its neighbor or action bracket, or insufficiently weighted (especially 1 and 88); or lead weight expanded.

7. Capstan too high, too low, or roughened.

8. Capstan rocker loose or dowel out of alignment.

9. Spinet pickup finger disconnected or out of hole, or rubber grommet not in fork correctly.

10. Whippen felt worn. May need replacing, brushing, or treating with Renuzit.

11. Sticker pin loose or worked out.

12. Sticker broken.

13. Elbow pin loose and worked out or too tight on wooden elbow, or elbow broken.

14. Whippen flange pin tight.

15. Back-check wire broken.

16. Back-check checking too far back or too far forward.

17. Back-check felt worn excessively.

18. Bridle wire broken, too far forward, too far back, or contacting adjacent back-check wire.

19. Bridle strap disconnected, or hooking on regulating screw or top of jack. Bridle strap cork pushed in too far (and catching on jack rail). Bridle strap on Baldwin "gooseneck" wire worked down.

20. Letoff button too high or too low.

21. Letoff rail loose.

22. Jack spring missing, broken, weak, or out of jack hole.

23. Jack center pin too tight, too loose, or worked out.

24. Jack flange loose.

25. Jack stop rail not in proper position.

26. Spoon out of regulation, roughened or rusty, or catching on damper lift rod.

27. Spoon felt (lower damper felt) worn. Replace, brush, or treat with Renuzit.

28. Hammer butt catcher loose.

29. Hammer butt flange pin tight or loose.

30. Hammer butt spring broken, missing, rusty, or out of groove. A replacement spring may also be too strong, pushing the butt back too quickly.

31. Hammer butt plate broken.

32. Hammer shank broken, cracked.

33. Hammer rubbing adjacent hammer, catching on top of damper (especially if damper pedal is down) or on celeste (practice bar) strip, or stuck between bass strings (due to missing strings).

34. Hammer striking distance too great.

35. Hammer rail hook too far out or rail shifted. ■

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# TUNER-TECHNICIANS FORUM

How would you define the word *craftsmanship*? Is it an absolute, as implied by the saying, "Now **there's** craftsmanship!," or is it a variable, implicit in the statement, "This piece shows better craftsmanship than that one"? I prefer the variable use of the term, for the same reasons the word *quality* should be a variable. Whenever I see a neon sign advertising "Quality Used Cars," for example, I am amused that the dealer didn't specify high quality necessarily, although he undoubtedly wished to convey that impression.

To my mind, craftsmanship is a variable that must be qualified by some adjective (excellent, good, poor, etc.) because in this sense it is the yardstick by which the care and skill of the workman are measured. The true craftsman is a very special person in that he constantly strives for perfection, knowing full well that is impossible.

The level of craftsmanship of any job, then, would be the point at which the workman declares the work finished. In effect, he says to himself, "That's good enough." He has satisfied himself, in the greater part at least, that he need not be ashamed of his workmanship. He may not feel such assurance when viewing the same piece of work a few years later, but then growth is to be expected. His level of craftsmanship is not necessarily the level he is capable of achieving, but the level at which he actually performs.

How good is good enough? As you may remember, Yat-Lam Hong wrote an excellent article some months ago entitled *How In-Tune is Really In-Tune?*, which related this concept to tuning. It can apply to repair and

rebuilding work as well. For instance, is it really important that all becket points toward the treble? Would we routinely replace a soundboard just because it had only seven rings per inch at some point? If so, would we still replace it if the seven-ring area were in the dead corner? Would the presence of a cutoff bar make a difference in our decision, or not? Suppose the seven-ring area were on the live edge of the cutoff bar, what then? Where do we draw the line?

Doctors tell us that anyone who can tie knots and has reasonable manual dexterity is physically qualified to be a surgeon. The difference between the skilled surgeon and the hack, assuming both have the basic knowledge and physical dexterity to do the job, is one of *judgment*. The skilled practitioner develops good judgment based on education, experience, and independent research. Some obvious parallels can, I think, be drawn.

There are some shortcuts in our work which can be used successfully by highly experienced craftsmen, but not by the relatively inexperienced. Until one has been seasoned by experience, he tends to use such shortcuts in instances where they should not be used. He isn't yet able to exercise good judgment in many situations, because he thinks he knows more than he really knows. If a particular trick works for an experienced technician in certain isolated cases, the less-experienced technician may think it will work for him in any situation, and he gets himself into trouble. For that reason, shortcuts which require a high degree of skill and judgment will rarely be endorsed in these pages.

## REPLACING STRINGS

**Question:** *What is the best way to make a neat coil on the bottom tuning pin in the tenor section of a vertical piano?* — Charles Markins, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Answer:** The pinblock is inherently weak in this area because there are so many holes crowded close together. If the technician backs a tuning pin out 3 or 3-1/2 turns, he can insert the new string into the becket hole with a needlenose plier and guide the string to a perfect coil with a string hook while turning the tuning pin back into position. But when the job is done, that pin will be noticeably looser than its neighbors. If he removes the pin to make his coil, it will be much looser when replaced in the block. For this reason, I prefer the "dummy pin" method.

This is how it's done: Back the pin out about one full turn, or maybe a little less than that. Remove the remains of the old string, and put the new one in position around the hitchpin with both ends under the pressure bar. Pull each end taut and cut to length. Now remove the bottom end from the hitchpin and pull the top ends upward a few inches for working clearance. Using a spare tuning pin from his toolcase, the technician then winds a neat coil on each end of the wire. When the 3-turn coil is made, the becket is pulled out gently with a plier and the dummy pin is removed. Both coils are then installed on their respective tuning pins, and the becket is pinched into place with a small plier. The bottom end is reinstalled around the hitchpin and through the bridge pins, and the string is brought to pitch.

**Question:** *When stringing a piano, is there any advantage in starting at one end in particular?*

**Answer:** The only invariable rule is that the bass is strung last, for obvious reasons. There are some discretionary rules that apply to the tenor and treble, though.

(1) If the soundboard is new, the crown will be higher. Some of the bridge pins may actually be touching the plate braces, so tension will have to be applied elsewhere to lower the board for working clearance. This could mean skipping around somewhat.

(2) If the soundboard is not uniformly crowned, I recommend stringing the sections with the most down-bearing first. This is arguable, but I like the theory. The board may be less likely to distort itself further if the strongest parts are stressed first.

(3) Steinway recommends that its grands be strung in the following manner: Start at the top of the center section and work upward through both treble sections all the way to note 88. Then start at the bottom of the tenor, working upward to complete the treble; and then start at note 1, working upward to the top of the bass.

(4) Possibly because I'm right-handed, I find it convenient to work from left to right. Assuming I'm working with an old soundboard that is uniformly crowned, I string grands from the lowest tenor to note 88, and then go from note 1 to the top of the bass. This same left-to-right technique, applied to a vertical piano, means starting with note 88 and working straight down to note 1.

(5) Some technicians string the entire piano loosely, with no tension applied anywhere until all strings are installed. Others, like myself, apply enough tension to maintain a coil. Still others chip as they string. Personal preference and the shape of the soundboard will dictate the best method to use in a given circumstance.

## GRAND DAMPER WIRES

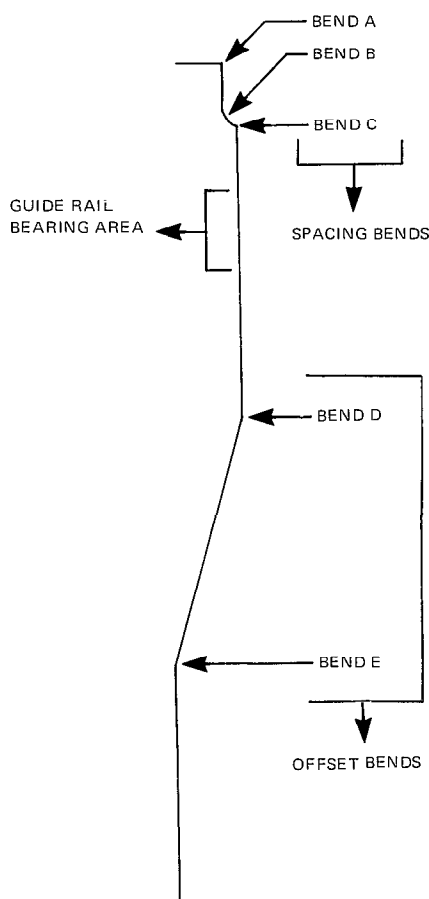
After my appointment was announced last July, a couple of people

asked if I would find room to discuss grand dampers in some detail. Since the letters have been slow coming in, we have room to at least begin in this issue. I have elected to start with the wires.

In Figure 1, we see that the wire has five bends. The only exception would be when there is no offset (guide rail hole directly above underlever), in which case the wire would only be bent at points A, B, and C.

The top bend (A) is made when the wire is installed and should not be altered during subsequent regulation. Segment 1 (see Figure 2) is imbedded in the hole in the damper head, and segment 2 should always remain in its mortise. All side-to-side spacing and tipping of the damper head should be done by altering the angle of bends B and C. The angle of segment 3 will depend on the amount of spacing required to center the damper head over the unison.

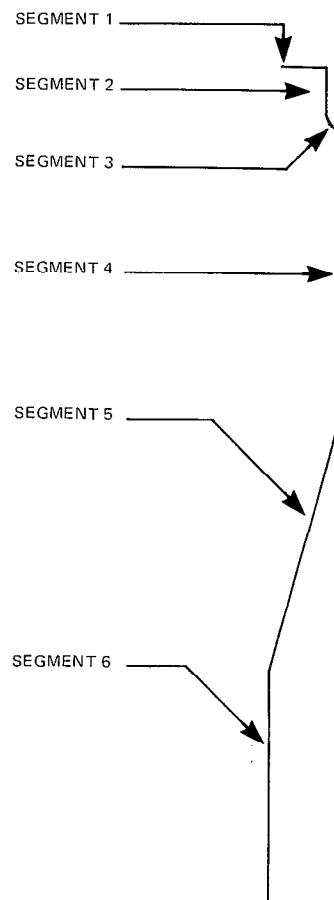
FIGURE 1



Similarly, the angle of segment 5 is determined by the amount of offset. The angle of bends D and E **must be identical**, and wire segments 4 and 6 **must be parallel**. If they are not, either the damper head will travel to one side or the wire will exert side pressure on the underlever top flange, causing sluggishness. This is the most common error made in damper regulation, but it is also the easiest problem to correct once the technician realizes what he must do.

To fully understand the principle, let's examine the purpose of these two all-important bends. The sole function of bend E is to make segment 6 parallel with the hole in the underlever top flange. To test this, place the damper in position with the screw loose. Now depress the damper pedal and watch the damper head. It should not move; rather, the underlever top flange should move up and down freely on the wire with

FIGURE 2



the movement of the pedal. The technician then can be certain that no side pressure is being exerted on the flange.

Sometimes the wire fits too tightly, so that even if bend E is correct, the flange still will not slip over the wire. If this is the case, check the bottom of the wire for a burr caused by a wire cutter. File it smooth and try again. There might also be a distortion of the wire at the point where the screw contacted the wire. Straighten the wire at that point and remove any burrs. If it still won't fit easily, the wire diameter must be reduced slightly. I use a piece of fine emery cloth for this purpose, and find that it doesn't take much reducing to get a nice, free fit in the flange.

The sole function of bend D is to make the damper move straight upward. If the head travels to either side, bend D is the culprit. If the head moves up without traveling but the wire bears against one side of the guide rail bushing, then bend D is at the right angle but in the wrong place. In the middle or treble, for instance, if the wire bears to the right, then bend D is too high on the wire. Another way of correcting this would be to slightly lessen the angle of both bends, but if bend E is altered at all it must be rechecked for freedom of movement in the flange. When the wire is bent so that the head moves straight up and down without bearing on one side of the guide rail bushing, with a free (unstressed) underlever top flange, bends D and E are correct.

To space the head from side to side, I suggest the following procedure which I learned a long time ago from Cliff Geers. Assuming a treble damper must be moved toward the bass, grasp the head with a smooth-jawed damper plier and bend the head over to the right to about a 45-degree angle, bending the wire at point B. The plier should be covering wire segment 2 during this bending operation to ensure that the wire *cannot bend at point A*. Next, from under the pinblock, bend the wire at point C to the left until the head is square with its neighbors and parallel to the strings in the unison.

The result of all this will be that the head has moved to the left because the angle of bends B and C has been increased, and wire segment 3 is now leaning further toward the bass. Unfortunately, this also has the effect of shortening the length of the wire, which means the screw must be loosened and the underlever reengaged at a slightly lower point on segment 6. If the head had been moved to the right, the wire would have become slightly **longer**, and the underlever would then have to be raised slightly. Naturally, all this must be reversed in the bass because the wires are mounted on the opposite side of the damper heads.

If the head is tipped in a fore-and-aft direction so that both ends of the damper do not contact the strings simultaneously, the wire must be bent in the proper direction at point B. Please note that point B is the only point on the entire wire that could require a compound bend (bends in two different planes). We will get into this area further in another issue when we discuss the type and thickness of felt to be used.

If the damper head is twisted, the natural reaction of the inexperienced technician would be to loosen the screw, align the head, and retighten the screw. This is nearly impossible to do, especially if the screw is determined to align itself with its former niche in the wire. The head twists out of alignment again when the screw is tightened. So, instead of going to all that trouble, we should twist the wire itself, leaving the screw tight. Grasp the wire in an ordinary serrated-jaw plier just above the flange and twist until the head is in alignment with the strings. Naturally, this procedure is only used when there is a minor twist, not when the head is 30 degrees out of line. The wire is soft and malleable to a point, but when that point is exceeded it will break.

If it does, don't panic. Ask the housewife for a new damper wire, while pointing to the coat closet. Four or five different gauges of soft wire are used in making coat hangers, and with a little luck you can find

one of the proper diameter. Cut and bend a piece of it to dimensions and you're back in business. I know it sounds like a Mickey Mouse repair, but wire is wire; so long as it's unpainted and of the right gauge, it'll work just fine in an emergency.

Next month in this space we'll discuss underlevers and their related parts.

## TRANSPOSING PIANOS

Willis J. Bradley of the Nashville Chapter, an independent technician with 53 years' experience in the piano service field, writes:

*My father had told me that he once serviced a piano with a transposing keyboard that was, I believe, made by Norris & Hyde. I never had the opportunity to see this piano, but on Monday of this week I serviced a piano with a transposing device which, however, did not involve the keyboard directly. This piano was made by Dierdorf Piano Mfg. Co. of Indianapolis, and is of high quality, still rather well preserved for its age, which I estimate at about 77 years. I have made a rough sketch which illustrates the principle upon which the transposing device operates. The view shown is of the keyboard from directly above, with the numbered circles indicating the capstan screws which are mounted on the stickers rather than on the keys. (See next page for Figure 3.)*

Our thanks to Mr. Bradley for showing us this interesting device. The only transposing piano in my clientele is somewhat different in that the keyboard, rather than the stickers, moves back and forth. The keyblocks are hollow and contain extra keys that appear and disappear with the turn of a crank. This particular old upright is in bad shape, and I discovered what I thought was an almost indecently bright idea: Since the instrument was a full half-step flat and the pins rather loose, I tuned it to itself and cranked the keyboard one notch to the right. Now there is an A<sup>b</sup> peeking out from the bass keyblock, and C88 has disappeared

**FIGURE 3**

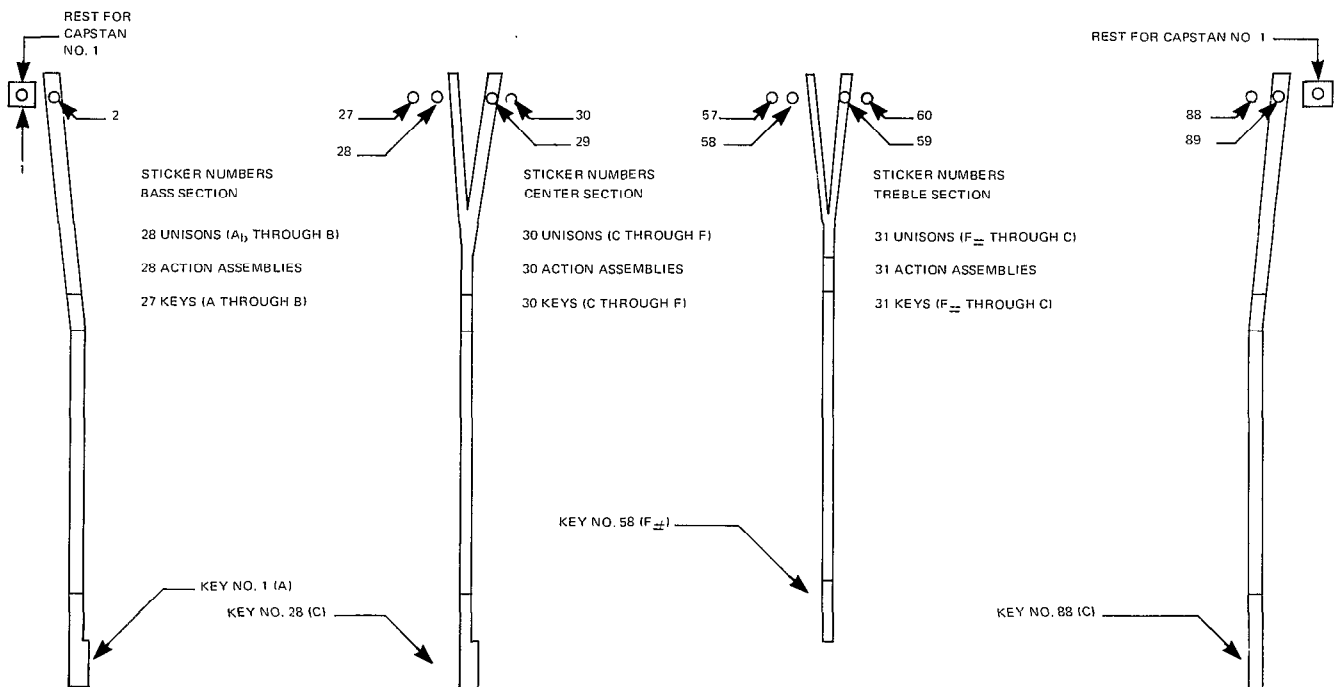
*Transposing Piano made by Dierdorf Piano Mfg. Co., Indianapolis, Indiana, probably about 1900. Scale No. 3 patented on July 25, 1899. Serial number of this piano is 12. Action is Wessell, Nickel and Gross, with continuous brass flange rail and compensating sticker and whippen mechanism. Bass and treble sections use*

*Wegman pinblock, but center section uses exposed wood pinblock.*

*There are 89 string unisons and 89 sticker and upper action assemblies, but only 88 keys. A lever under the keybed shifts the stickers (only) one space to the right and the two forked keys, with their arrangement under the stickers at the action*

*breaks, take care of breaks in the line of stickers. The shifting lever moves the action rail on which the swing flanges are mounted.*

*In the normal playing position the compass of the piano is 88 notes (A through C). In the shifted position the compass of the piano is 88 notes (A<sub>B</sub> through B).*



into the woodwork on the right side; but the owner is happy, and that's what counts.

Speaking of unusual pianos, Bob Mollard of Cincinnati services an old Story & Clark that folds up into a cabinet. It is the approximate size of a console, with drawers above and below the keyboard. When the pianist is through practicing, he folds the keybed (keys and all) into the case, and the pedals disappear at the same time. When closed, it looks like a chest of drawers. Surprisingly enough, Mollard reports that there are no problems with the regulation. The pivoting mechanism brings the keybed to the same position every time it is opened, and Bob says there is no lost motion in the action beyond what would be expected in a vertical piano.

## BRIDLE STRAPS

**Question:** *How do you measure the correct amount of slack for bridle*

*straps, and what is the best amount for good repetition?*

**Answer:** We do not adjust bridle straps for repetition, because that is not their function. If the action will not repeat quickly, check for tight centers, weak springs, or excessive friction. Correct the problem and the action will repeat properly even if the bridle strap is missing or broken. The function of the bridle strap is simply to keep the jack from slipping under the butt felt when the technician removes the action or keys. This is similar to the function of the key stop rail in a grand, which serves no purpose at all except when the piano is being moved, at which time it becomes very important.

This is not a precision adjustment, nor does it require periodic attention. Once set, the adjustment will hold until the straps break. The proper adjustment is somewhere between these extremes: If there is too much slack, the jacks will slip under the butts when the action is removed; if

there is too little slack, the keys will dip when the soft pedal is depressed. Bend the wire until a happy medium between these extremes is reached, and the adjustment is made.

This might be as good an opportunity as I will get to discuss repetition in vertical pianos; so, with the forbearance of all the experienced technicians in our readership, we'll discuss it for the benefit of the newer technicians.

## REPETITION IN VERTICAL PIANOS

When Jacques Erard invented the repetition lever for grand pianos in 1823, he made his mark in the piano world. All modern grands use refinements of his invention in one variation or another because, properly regulated, it is capable of more repetitions per second than the human hand can produce. It is generally conceded that the vertical action is not as



good because it lacks a repetition lever, but sometimes technicians use this fact to excuse their failure to achieve decent repetition in verticals. In point of fact, if a vertical action is properly designed and regulated, its performance will satisfy all but the most finicky of concert pianists. Noted concert artist Emmanuel Ax, for example, says that his vertical piano is perfectly adequate for practice sessions. He registered no complaints about its capability of repeating to his satisfaction.

As the old saw goes, first you find out what's wrong and then you fix it. It sounds simplistic, but it applies to this problem as readily as to any other. Proper diagnosis is vital to the solution. We have all seen pianos with sluggish actions and keys that have been eased so much that they will touch each other. This is a prime example of faulty diagnosis. The client complained about sticking keys, so the technician mindlessly continued to ease the keys until they were hopelessly sloppy, without solving the problem. To the client, the keys are the only visible components that are malfunctioning, so it is entirely understandable that he would register his complaint in such terms. It is up to the technician to determine the real cause of the problem, which may or may not be in the key itself.

Isolate the problem by operating the action with the damper pedal depressed so the damper return springs cannot help the whippens to return. Next, with the right pedal still depressed, quickly operate the soft pedal several times. When the pedal is released, the hammers should return quickly to the rest position. Any hammers that are significantly slower to return should be chalked for further attention. The problem is likely to be that (1) the butt flange center is too tight, (2) the butt spring is too weak or improperly bent, or (3) there is excessive friction between the spring and the butt groove.

This test will determine whether the top action is the culprit. Even if it is, the bottom action, dampers, and keys should be checked to be certain that they aren't also contributing to the overall sluggishness.

For convenience in grouping, I am calling all parts from the butt flange upward the top action. Now let's consider the bottom action, consisting of the whippen and its related parts.

The next test involves the whippen support flange center, which is probably the center most often overlooked because of its relative inaccessibility. Depress the damper pedal all the way so the damper springs won't mask the problem, and depress the soft pedal to get the butts out of the way. While one hand is pressing down on the backs of a group of keys, the other hand flicks the whippens upward. They will stop when the jacks touch the butt leathers, of course, but what we are watching is how quickly the whippens fall back to the capstans. They should fall quickly and freely, with no hint of reluctance.

The third test involves the jacks. Trip each jack tender with the point of a regulating tool and watch it snap back under the butt. If it doesn't leap all the way under, try again with the soft pedal partly depressed. If it works well now, the problem was one of friction or interference at the top of the jack. If the jack is smooth and lubricated on top and the butt leather and felt in good condition, then the problem is insufficient lost motion. But before adjusting the capstan, check the blow distance to be certain that the hammer isn't settling too far when at rest. In the absence of manufacturer's specifications, the *five-six-seven* rule can be helpful: Spinets, one and *five* eighths inches; consoles, one and *six* eighths (1-3/4 inches); and studios or larger, one and *seven* eighths. Shim to specifications.

If the jack doesn't snap quickly back into position with interference removed, slip the spring out of the tender and manually compare its strength with that of a neighboring spring which is performing correctly. A weak spring can be stretched a bit, but if this doesn't strengthen it enough it will have to be replaced. If it is strong enough, then the jack center must be tight.

It is possible that a burr on a metal part could be scuffing against felt, so the capstans and spoons should be

checked, together with their mating felt surfaces. Problems here are rare, but possible. When in doubt, check everything. I once found a damper spoon that had wedged itself against the side of the damper lever. This caused a repetition problem only when the damper pedal was *not* depressed (the opposite of the usual situation), proving once again the applicability of Murphy's Law.

This brings us, finally, to the keys. Needless to say, they must not touch each other at any point. Having already mentioned the capstans, we have only three contact points to be concerned about — the key button, the balance rail hole, and the front rail bushing. We are assuming that any foreign objects have been removed from between keys, and that the keyslip is positioned for proper clearance.

The balance rail hole establishes the horizontal position of the key, both fore and aft and side to side. It must be tight enough to maintain this position without sloppiness, and yet be free enough to allow the key to dip and return easily. To test this fit, raise the front of the key a fraction of an inch above its rest position. When released, the key should fall back to the balance rail very quickly. If it does not, the hole should be eased primarily on the sides, not in front or back. A bit of side play is permissible here, but there should be absolutely no fore-and-aft play (pulliness).

The key button allows the key to dip freely while preventing it from rocking from side to side. Overeasing at this point causes a sloppy feel in the keyboard. A little side play is permissible, so long as the front of the key does not visibly rock.

The function of the front rail bushing is to prevent yaw. More clearance is permissible here than at the balance rail button, but the keyboard still must not feel sloppy. When in doubt, the clearance can be checked visually. Assuming the keys have been properly squared and spaced, the gaps between white keys will be about equal across the entire keyboard. If any two adjacent whites are firmly pinched together, the gap

should close to about half what it was when both keys were at rest. If the gap does not narrow noticeably, the front rail bushings are too tight; but if the keys can be pinched so they make contact, the bushings are loose.

There are other areas which could cause problems in verticals. We have not mentioned related parts such as abstracts, pickup fingers, or stickers because they are loosely pinned and rarely cause problems; but there's always a first time for everything. Last fall the Santa Barbara Chapter came up with no fewer than 45 possible causes for sticking keys in verticals, and Sid Stone of San Francisco, just sent me a list of 88 causes. (For more information on this subject, see Stone's article elsewhere in this issue.)

Let's suppose that all, or nearly all, action centers are too tight. They can be reamed and individually repinned, but there are easier ways of easing them. They can be shrunk or ironed without disassembly, at great savings of time and effort. Various shrinking solutions are recommended by piano manufacturers for this purpose and, because the type of wool cloth varies somewhat from one maker to another, it's a good idea to use the method recommended by the maker of that particular instrument. I have not found flange lubricants to be effective for more than a few hours or days after application, and I would caution against the use of any petroleum-based product (such as WD-40) for this purpose. Lubrication is only a temporary cure, in my experience. For long-term effectiveness, a tight center must be eased by increasing the inside diameter of the felt bushing. If the technician does not increase that diameter by shrinking the felt or reaming and repinning, the only other long-term cure is ironing.

Francis Mehaffey of California has developed an intriguing gadget that will iron the bushing without even removing the flange from the rail. It works by heating the centerpin electrically with a pair of probes which fit on each side of the flange. When both probes make contact with the

ends of the centerpin, the circuit is closed and the pin heats quickly, scorching some of the wool fibers in the bushing. The pin should not be overheated, lest it become loose in the birdseye. A second or two is usually sufficient to ease a center, and an entire rail can be eased in a matter of minutes. If Mehaffey has a name for his gadget, I don't know what it is; in Cincinnati, it's known simply as "the zapper."

Butt return springs can be individually strengthened by bending, or the entire set can be strengthened by raising the spring rail. A small change in the position of the rail will make a big difference in the spring action, because the mechanical advantage of the spring is increased as the spring is moved away from the centerpin. Broken or hopelessly bent springs can be replaced either by the factory method or by the use of repair springs from supply houses. Lubricate spring grooves with graphite.

Key bushings can be tightened with a bushing tightener (available from supply houses) or eased with easing pliers. Except in an emergency situation, front rail pins should not be turned to firm up a loose bushing. These pins are flattened on the sides to provide additional bearing surface, not for adjustment of slack. Turning the pins will only accelerate the wear in the bushing.

If the balance rail hole at the bottom of the key is tight, the immediate reaction of the technician is to open it up with the pointed end of a regulating tool. This is not recommended because it enlarges the hole all around, when we only want to relieve it a bit on the sides. Remember, there must be no play at all in a fore-and-aft direction. Yamaha markets a special tool for this purpose which eases the hole from above without causing sloppiness in the key. Lacking this, a special tool can be made from a No. 4 Nicholson round rasp. Grind the serrations completely off two opposite sides of the hole. The ground-off portions face front and back, preventing any wood from being removed there. The tool is used from underneath the key, and care should

be exercised so that the rasp does not penetrate far enough to ruin the bushing in the key button. Noted technician Ben McKlveen has neatly solved this problem by breaking his file off short so that, even in an excess of zeal or frustration, he cannot inadvertently ruin the bushing by pushing the rasp too far into the key. It is simply not long enough.

If the keys touch one another, the area of interference must be eased by removing wood with a rasp or coarse sandpaper. Sometimes a key will twist, causing a special dilemma for the technician. If he tips the key to a compromise angle by bending the balance rail pin sideways, the capstan will still line up with the whippen and the note will play, but the front of the key will be tilted. If he straightens the front so the appearance is acceptable, the capstan tilts to one side and will not line up with the whippen. In that event, the key can be straightened with steam, and we will discuss that next month.

## READER FEEDBACK

As this is being written, reactions to our November issue are starting to come in. The following letter comes from Bob Waltrip of Parker, Arizona:

*I am dangerously near agreeing with your opening paragraph in the November Tuner-Technicians Forum: "...and knows for sure that he doesn't deserve [the post of Technical Editor]."*

*For you to suggest in Replacing Upright Shanks "I would recommend replacement [of hammer butts]," leads me to immediate and vociferous disagreement. There are certain instances when replacement is called for, of course, but the vast majority of upright hammer butts are of such fine and enduring quality that recovering them is far and away the best way to give the customer his money's worth. Certainly no one would ever throw away a set of Wessell, Nickel and Gross butts, for instance. The customer gets his money's worth when he gets back a piano that is*

restored and that he cannot hope to wear out in his lifetime.

You would destroy the touch of a fine upright action if you replaced doeskin or buckskin butt leather with the horrid felt that is on all new butts. In order to have repetition and a definite aftertouch, plus fine degrees of volume, the butt leather must be there. The jack slips on felt. You must recover the old butts in order to have the action like new. Of course it doesn't look as impressive as new butts, but our goal is performance.

Plus, you didn't mention that you have no hope of getting old shanks out unless you drill them out. Acetic acid will kill only the hide glue it can get to.

Anyway, in future, please consider a bit before writing your column.

I must say that I agree with practically everything else you said in the column. However, you might have mentioned in the section about replacing the broken bass bichord unison with a replacement string that the unison will sound clean if the winding on both strings is exactly the same length. The small string will be less volume, that's all. Both must be twisted, of course.

Good luck in future endeavors.

## Technical Tips

From the Southwest Florida Chapter newsletter, edited by Duncan S. Ritchie, comes this valuable tip:

Removing an action from an older Acrosonic spinet can be really frustrating if the pickup fingers slip out of the guide rail. To prevent this, raise the pickup fingers of the first and last note in the center section of the piano. Remove the last two

damper blocks in the treble section. Slide them on the pickup finger guide pins and tighten them as close as possible to the guide rail. Then remove guide rail screws and action bracket bolts. When replacing the action, press the keys down in front of the capstans with the keyslip. Push pickup finger abstracts onto the capstans, and replace guide rail screws and damper blocks.

Thank you, Mr. Ritchie, for the excellent tip. Incidentally, the new Baldwin spinet actions with metal pickup fingers can be removed and serviced most conveniently if the pickup fingers are left hanging in the piano when the action is removed. From below the keybed, simply pull each pickup finger toward you until it slips out of its felted groove in the whippen. When the action is replaced in the piano, push each pickup finger back in its groove, and the job is done.

Mike Knoblock, technical editor of Cleveland's *Butts & Flanges Gazette*, suggests that white rings in a piano finish can be removed with toothpaste on a damp cloth. He goes on to share the following regulating tip:

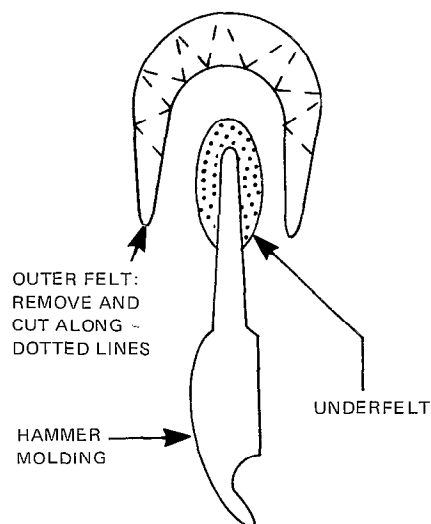
One way to set uniform letoff in a vertical is to block a strip of 1/8-inch masonite against the strings, and back off all regulating screws until the hammers block against the masonite (keys depressed). Then, one at a time, hold each key down (hammer blocked) while slowly running in each regulating screw. When the jack kicks out you will have 1/8-inch letoff. The nice feature of this method is that constant visual inspection is unnecessary. Usually a regulating adjustment that can be done by feel is more efficient than one that requires repetitive movements and constant checking.

Another useful tip comes from H. Gene Wilkison of the Orange County Chapter, Southern California.

Gene recommends drilling about 60 holes in a small piece of plywood, and using it to keep the hitchpin ends of bass strings in order while working on a bass bridge.

Our Tip of the Month for February comes from Jim Donelson of the San Francisco Chapter (reprinted from their newsletter, *In Tune*):

To remove key bushings, make felt wedges out of old piano hammers. Remove the staple and cut the hammer in the manner illustrated. Soak the wedges in water and insert them in the bushing holes. Add more water and let stand. The bushings will easily slide out with no wood removal.

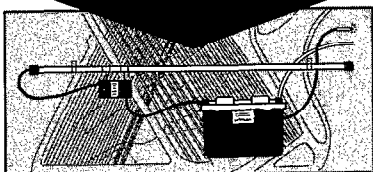


Finally, to conclude this month's Forum, we have a reader comment on our tip of the month for November. As you may remember, it involved a fast way to space and align grand hammers using strips of paper on the strings. Hugh Manhart of Omaha liked the tip, but suggests that it would be even better if masking tape were used instead of strips of paper. "The advantages are obvious," says Hugh, and we agree.

Our thanks to Hugh, Jim, Gene, Mike, and Duncan for the excellent tips this month. ■

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## COMING EVENTS

*Note: All seminar dates must be approved by the Conference and Seminar Committee. Please submit all dates to the home office on the appropriate Request for Seminar Approval form.*

**FEBRUARY 14-15, 1979**  
MIDYEAR BOARD MEETING  
Hollywood, California

**FEBRUARY 16-17, 1979**  
CALIFORNIA STATE  
CONVENTION  
Hollywood, California  
Write: Gene Rudder  
Box 4653  
Carson, CA 90745

**MARCH 3, 1979**  
BALTIMORE  
CHAPTER SEMINAR  
Baltimore, Maryland  
Write: Morris Millman  
8326 Scotts Level Road  
Baltimore, MD 21208

**MARCH 22-24, 1979**  
TENTH ANNUAL  
PACIFIC NORTHWEST  
CONFERENCE CONVENTION  
Olympia, Washington  
Write: Al Seitz  
PNW Secretary-Treasurer  
1517 Medfra  
Anchorage, AK 99501

**MARCH 23-25, 1979**  
CENTRAL WEST  
REGIONAL SEMINAR  
Lincoln, Nebraska  
Write: Richard West  
109 North 32nd  
Lincoln, NE 68503

**MARCH 30-APRIL 1, 1979**  
PENNSYLVANIA  
STATE CONVENTION  
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania  
Write: Dick Bittinger  
107 West Main Street  
Brownstown, PA 17508

**APRIL 27-29, 1979**  
MICHIGAN  
STATE CONFERENCE  
Write: Dale R. Newhouse  
3674 Wentworth Dr. SW  
Wyoming, MI 49509

**APRIL 27-28, 1979**  
NEW ENGLAND  
SEMINAR  
Hartford, Connecticut  
Write: Christopher Robinson  
190 Long Hill Road  
South Windsor, CT 06074

**APRIL 27-29, 1979**  
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Write: Charles R. Rhodes, Jr.  
402 East Elm  
Ozark, MO 65721



NEWTON J. HUNT

# ACCENT ON TUNING

One useful technique I forgot to mention in last month's article on treble tuning is plucking. If you are having difficulty hearing a unison or even an octave in the high treble, then pluck the strings and listen to the relative pitch. This approach, in combination with the key, may help clear things up a bit. (If you have not read my last article, I suggest you do so to maintain continuity with this one.)

Every note must be tested until you **know** that it is right, or as right as possible, before going on to the next string. This applies to every aspect of tuning, temperament, treble, and bass, and cannot be overstressed here. (Skywriting is too expensive.)

After completing the temperament, I start tuning the bass by tuning E<sub>3</sub> so its fifth (B<sub>3</sub>) is as pure as possible without an overly rough fourth (A<sub>3</sub>), and so the third (G<sub>3</sub>) and sixth (C<sub>4</sub>) retrogress evenly relative to their adjacent intervals. I have found the third/tenth test useful, but none of the above are as important as the sound of the octave itself.

The one thing that does come out rather rapidly is an error in the temperament. One obvious error is the slanted temperament. This is my term for the temperament where everything appears to work out well but the thirds progress too slowly or too rapidly — as shown by roller-coastering of the retrogressive thirds. If the roller-coastering is minor it can be ignored (but remembered for correction at the next tuning). If the error is excessive, then the temperament must be retuned. If the first few thirds going into the bass are too fast, the temperament slope is such that the upper part (F<sub>4</sub>) is flat and/or the lower part is sharp. If the retrogressive thirds are too slow, then the upper part of the temperament is too sharp or the lower part

is too flat. A quick analysis should reflect which factor prevails.

One must take care on small pianos with extra heavy wire or wound strings at the bottom of the middle section, and when crossing over into the bass section, because the inharmonicity can depart substantially from that in the temperament octave. A change in third and sixth beat rates occurs here more often than not in all except the more carefully scaled and fabricated instruments. By watching for it you can learn when it is the piano's fault and when it may be due to your tuning — and when it can be corrected and when it cannot.

The above aside, the rest of the bass is easy to tune as long as each octave is tested and checked thoroughly by using the pure fifth, retrogressive tenths, and the third/tenth test and listening carefully to each octave. There are several unisons that are not as easy. Occasionally two strings of a two-string unison are wound so that the upper partials do not match. The only thing that can be done is to get the least objectionable quality by first listening to the lower partials tuned in unison, then to the upper partials tuned in unison, and deciding which sounds best.

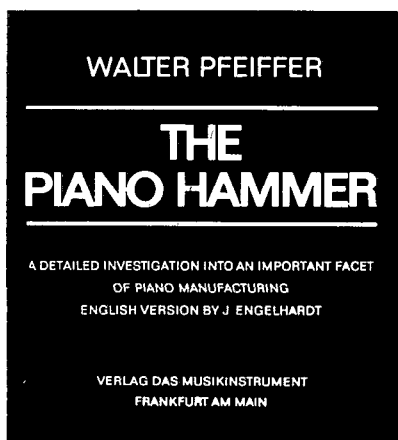
There are also some octaves that must be handled in the same manner. There is a quality of power, definition, and clarity to the properly tuned bass octave that is rather obvious once learned. The reason for clarity is obvious, but not always obtained because of carelessness or hurry, or because a vital test is ignored. Definition comes after clarity and is that element of blended partials which begins to define the power.

I mentioned power tuning last month. Tuning the bass is where I discovered this essential element of my way of relating to what I want from

the piano. I want to get the entire piano, case, keybed, plate, and structure to produce a continuous resonance (i.e., beatless) at the lower coincident partials which produce the most power. On most vertical pianos the bottom panel or the keybed can feed this information to your thigh or knee, and on grand pianos the keybed to knee and front bar (stretcher) to arm. After learning to detect the beatlessness with your body, your ear will easily pick up the increase in power. Because of the extra thickness of the core wire in the low bass, metal fatigue sets in rather quickly, which causes the strings to break at the tuning pin. Turning the tuning pins as little as possible will increase the life of these strings as well as the stability of your tuning.

One of my favorite guides (please note "guide," not test) is the minor third/sixth. Example: D<sub>2</sub>-F<sub>2</sub> minor third should be slightly slower than F<sub>2</sub>-D<sub>3</sub> sixth. Care must be taken because varying inharmonicity can play fun and games with the beat rates, but you can use it to get into the ball park and to keep from straying too far from just right. This can be used from the temperament octave all the way down on most pianos. The double octave is useful also if you have strayed far afield, but the most useful for me is the fifth. It will produce a most definite beat at the low end where the octave should come in, and it can be used without taking your hand off the hammer.

I am sure I have left out tests that you may find useful, which is just fine for you. What you find of value and are comfortable with is not to be despised but shared. Because I am lazy and find it difficult to write at times, I would be most thankful for interesting bits, pieces, or whole articles that I can use in the column. Let's write up! ■



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\*Walter Pfeiffer, *The Piano Key and Whippen* - an analysis of their relationship in direct blow actions. English version by J. Engelhardt. Pages 72, 39 figures. \$15 / £7.50 / DM 28 + postage.

## Apologies...

Home office would like to extend its apologies to Mr. John Philips and Miss Sumi Gunji. Mr. Philips reports that his address should be corrected to read: 214 South Pearl Street instead of 213 South Pearl Street. Dan Evans has brought to our attention that Miss Gunji was listed as an overseas member. Although Miss Gunji has an overseas address, she specifically asked to be a member of the Los Angeles Chapter and her request was approved.

We would also like to extend our apologies to Eli (Lee) Dobrins, who reports that her name and address were listed incorrectly. The proper spelling and address is as follows: Eli (Lee) Dobrins, 1 Candlewood Path North, Dix Hills, NY 11746.

It was also noted that John Pullano was incorrectly listed in the Colorado Springs Chapter. Mr. Pullano should be listed in the Denver Chapter. ■

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Philadelphia Chapter

# A REPORT ON IVORY IMPORTS

The following is a letter from Pratt Read concerning ivory imports:

Thank you for your letter of December 21st requesting information concerning ivory imports.

Since Pratt Read has stopped the actual manufacture of ivory from the raw elephant tusks some years ago we have been receiving individual key strips from the Harris Group in England. They had been doing the actual importing into their own country from Africa of raw product, processing it into acceptable dimension sizes for keyboard covering, grading, and forwarding this to us and other piano key manufacturers throughout the world.

Last February we contacted Harris to see where an overdue shipment

was and it was at that time that we received word from them that ivory imports to this country would no longer be allowed by the customs officials. It seems that from an ecological standpoint the killing of elephants for ivory is not a popularly accepted situation. By the same token we had been hearing from Harris for some time that the African government in its own right was becoming much stricter on poaching of ivory and keeping a much closer eye on the general legal harvesting of this product.

Therefore, at this time, save for what ivory some of the supply houses and manufacturers might have stored away, there is in effect no legal importing of ivory for piano keys. Obviously, this means that shortly

there will no longer be new ivory available for recovering piano keys. Those people that do have ivory will probably begin to hoard the product and they will certainly be able to demand higher and higher prices. At this time we see no possibility for any relaxation in the law; and we are afraid that one more old world product has gone by the wayside.

While, I am sure this is not the happy news that you were looking for, nonetheless, it should allow people to plan accordingly in their own business practice and in dealing with their clientele. If we can be of further help please let know.

Best regards,  
Woody Comstock  
Sales Manager

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LESLIE J. HOSKINS

# STRAY THOUGHTS

Perhaps the sorriest aspect of government waste as seen in many of the supposed-to-be altruistic schemes is that we have no way of knowing what it costs us as individual taxpayers. We know the cost of Social Security because we see it as a fixed percentage levy on our income. If all the other government appropriations of a similar nature were to be grouped and seen as a big bite out of the dollar, we might really have something to gripe about.

One aspect of Social Security to be considered is that at least 50 percent of the beneficiaries have no other means of support, and without it would be dependent on some form of government assistance. Also, 90 percent or more of the money paid out as Social Security goes back into circulation immediately, thus creating needed jobs. On the contrary, the handouts, bribes, rip-offs, and the like may go to enrich officials who already "have it made." We aim our criticism at the only tangible target and we let go with both barrels, heedless of what it might cost us if we bring it down.

What one news commentator called a week of "tawdriness" saw one member of Congress convicted on 19 criminal charges, another indicted for bribery, three reprimanded by the House, and two senators under investigation.

Now that the legal profession is permitted to advertise, one long-established restriction in their code of ethics has been removed. Critics sometimes say the lawyers never had a code of ethics so severe it couldn't be bent to suit circumstances, but generally the learned professions have pretty well lived up to their obligations.

I have often said that I think the piano service profession is one of the most conscientious ones devoted to serving the public and I still believe this, despite an occasional rumor of misconduct on the part of a few members. The PTG has a code of ethics to which each member pledges faithful observance, and they do so almost without exception. Once in a great while we hear of price-cutting and other questionable tactics aimed at undermining a fellow member, but these are few and hard to substantiate.

Rules and codes are sometimes subject to individual interpretation under extraordinary conditions; however, there are areas of social and professional conduct which are commonly considered inviolate and these are carefully observed by all fair-minded people with or without a formal code.

Think hotel room prices are high? A swanky New York hotel will put you up for \$65 a day, but it costs the City of New York \$71.79 a day for each of its 6000 jail inmates, says the United States Council on Crime and Delinquency. Of course, if you were stuck in the clink, you wouldn't pay the bill, but you wouldn't get hotel-type service either. Service picks your pocket. From the bellhop to the doorman, every employee has a hand out for a piece of folding money. Coins don't seem adequate now because of inflation — in hotels, that is.

Don't let hotel rates keep you away from the PTG conventions. Those conventions are too important to pass up and they pay off in a big way if you make your living at piano service. Start saving for the next one, even if your wife has to put up with home-made hair-dos and

permanents, but don't — don't leave her home at convention time.

One great form of wasted money is also the hardest to control — the cost of illegal aliens in the United States. In Los Angeles County it is estimated that the cost of health care for illegal aliens is \$44 million annually. It is also reported that illegal aliens cost New York City \$200,000 to \$300,000 a year. CIA director Bill Colby warns that the growing population of illegals is a greater threat to the future of the United States than is the Soviet Union. There seems to be but little defense for this economic virus, although we are told that great effort is being made to curb it.

The University of Western Ontario, Canada, believes that married men have lower mortality rates from the most common causes of death than do the unmarried ones. An English scientific journal appears to agree. It states: "It looks as though marriage will not damage your health." But, so far as the United States is concerned, such findings have no effect on the marriage rate. The most recent figures show a dramatic upsurge in the U.S. divorce rate, and in 1977 there were 1,508,000 unmarried persons living together. Taken alone, the figures suggest that family life in America continues a steady breakdown and that we no longer have the sinews of solidity upon which the strength of our nation depends. Statistics may indicate it but I don't believe it. I believe we, as a people, are getting fed up with our own folly and that all we need is **someone** or **something** to remind us of our latent strength and to inspire us to once

again reach the heights of influence for good which the world once knew and respected.

— — —

The cost of food is said to be rising faster than the spiral of inflation. High price doesn't seem to cause any drop in the consumption of food. Statistics show that 44 percent of the population is overweight, despite reducing pills, beverages, physical culture salons, and other programs calculated to take off the surplus fat. Those tempting television food ads are designed to break down all resistance to bedtime snacks. It is hard to win the "battle of the bulge."

— — —

A California policeman's car was stolen from in front of a police station; the thief was caught when he tried to sell the car to another policeman. Very interesting!

— — —

The *Los Angeles Times* says that one American in every ten receives some form of public assistance known as **welfare**, averaging \$3,520 to \$4,651 a year. I'm sure you know about the California woman charged with pulling off the biggest welfare fraud in history. She received \$239,000 in welfare checks and \$50,000 in food stamps and medical aid while living in a \$175,000 home and driving a new Cadillac. Smart woman or stupid officials? ■

## RUMP RIVER NEWS

I tooned the widow Brawdseet's big Knabe last week. She always gripes about payin' me \$25 four times a year but I just let her squeel. I tooned the Sohmer console for Mrs. Ben Eaton-Fish too. I like to hear her talk. She comes from Boston where I think they larned English from the Indians. She always skips the letter "r" but I understand her, like when she says she used to play the hop.

— — —

Grandpa Highby always predicks the weather and he says the Rump River will froze over solid till spring, so folks is aimin' to do a lot of skatin' on the Rump this year.

— — —

My dizzy neese, Dum Dora, come all the way up heer last fall to see my girls softball team win the championship again. I've got a sneakin' idee my wife invited her. She thinks Dora is cute. Dora ain't no teen-ager but she is easy on the eyes with her blond curls, blue eyes, and a figger like a calendar girl. I didn't mind havin' her except that Harry Coombs, the barber, dated her for the Sattiday nite dance at the Boston Socail Club. Harry is a batchler with a hankerin' for sport cars and pretty girls. Dora never can hang on to a guy very long because she's wacky, but she might hook Harry because he's just as coo-coo as she is. I souldn't stand livin' in the same town with her.

I red where some fellers claim they can run their cars on alky. We can run 'em on Swamp Joose if we mix it with gas but nobody has figgered out the right mix. Coonie Whirp tried in his tractor but before he could stop the thing he had plowed up a quarter acre of taters.

— — —

Foss Gerkin is gettin' married agin, this time to a widow in Bosstown. They will live there 'cause that's where she works. Foss had to get married or get a job on account of the money he got from his last wife's insurance was runnin' out.

— — —

There's a lot of work waitin' for me. Will Berry has ordered some more pianos so he can have a "overstocked" sale and the school pianos has to be tooned. But I won't have to figger on that old Haddit & Howe upright that belonged to the 3rd grade teacher with loose ribs. Will Berry took it in trade, thinkin' I would fix it up. I told him no way she he will rent it for a practice pianoo.

— — —

I guess that's all. If there's any news I will let you know. Right now I'm pooped thinkin' about all them jobs.

Hopin' this finds you the same, I am Yours Truly,

Councilman

Horace P. Kornbinder

## First PTG Technical Movie Available

At a Council meeting in Cincinnati, a PTG first was shown and enthusiastically accepted; namely, a Pilot Technical Film. The film is in color and sound (magnetic) and the subject is "Regulation of Vertical Dampers and Spoons." The film can be used as a short program (20 minutes) at Chapter meetings and is available from the PTG home office as part of the Chapter Program Lending Library. To show it a Super-8 sound projector is required. If not available, PTG home office will ship a projector (with instructions). Call or write for more information. Filmed, edited, and narrated by Bob Harts.



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DENNIS KURK

# MINNEAPOLIS IS FINE IN 79!

As Institute director for this year, and on behalf of the Twin Cities Chapter, I am very happy to welcome everyone to the 22nd Annual PTG Convention, to be held at the downtown Radisson Hotel in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 23-27, 1979. As with past reunions, we intend to do our very best to make your stay in our area a most enjoyable and, we hope, memorable one.

Since many of you may not be familiar with this part of the country, I would like to begin this series of reports by telling you a little something about ourselves. As to our Twin Cities Chapter, we are now over 50 in number and rapidly growing. Both our chapter and our compatriots, the Minnesota-North Iowa Chapter, have had excellent growth records over the last few years.

Minnesota itself should be well enough known to most of you by our logo, "The Land of 10,000 Lakes." Actually we have closer to 15,300 lakes, but at any rate we do have a lot. As Minnesota is known as the "Land of Lakes," Minneapolis is known as the "City of Lakes and Parks." Minneapolis has 22 lakes and 152 parks (the word Minneapolis means "City of Waters"), which works out to 1 acre of park for every eight residents. Within the Metroland area, which includes St. Paul and much of an eight-county area, there are more than 250 lakes — 200 of which are within 40 miles of downtown Minneapolis! You can see that plenty of fishing, boating, swimming, water-skiing, jogging, biking, picnicking, or whatever are within easy reach of everyone. Although we know that convention time is perhaps a little short for some, we sincerely hope that you can find an extra day or two to take in the sights and sounds of

what we like to call our "Theater of Seasons."

According to the Urban Land Institute of Washington D.C., the Twin Cities area, which embraces 2 million people, ranks first in overall quality of life among 18 metropolitan areas. The city of Minneapolis has been in the continuous process of major remodeling and rejuvenation since 1962 when a series of all-weather skyways were built. These are walkways which connect all of the downtown business firms — air-conditioned in the summer and heated in the winter so that shoppers can move around in complete comfort, regardless of the weather. By the year 1985 64 blocks will be linked in this manner — all of which is being financed by private business. These glass-enclosed midblock bridges are used by 125,000 people each day and are always open during regular business hours.

I'm sure that you will want to make a tour through these skyways if only to view the myriad and almost endless variety of products available in the countless number of stores. (This would include such places as Daytons, which is reputed to be the fourth-largest department store in the nation.) It's been said that when fully completed this development could make downtown Minneapolis the most accessible, compact, and convenient metropolitan shopping business section in the world.

While you are here you will certainly want to explore the new \$138 million 57-story IDS Center, which is the tallest skyscraper between Chicago and San Francisco. I know you will be greatly impressed with the Crystal Court, a skylit indoor plaza which is a modern version of the ancient Greek agora, or market place. You may wish

to take the elevator to the Observatory (\$1.75 adults, \$1.25 children) to get a 35-mile panoramic view of the area.

Located in the court is a tourist booth that can provide you with any number of pamphlets and brochures that will acquaint you more fully with the many fine architectural structures in the area. However, I personally would suggest that you write beforehand to **The Minneapolis Convention and Tourism Commission, 15 South 5th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55400**, in order to be better prepared. Specifically, you could ask for the Minneapolis and Nicollet Mall brochures, plus the Minneapolis Calendar of Summer Events pamphlet.

The skyway system also overlooks our well-known Nicollet Mall. This is an 8-block-long curved roadway which is fashioned with trees, fountains and flowers, and from which auto traffic is barred. It's a great place for strolling, window shopping, or just plain people-watching.

In cultural support and opportunities, Minneapolis has been ranked second in the nation — surprisingly, over such cities as New York and Chicago (and I am happy to say that there is a good deal of evidence to support that claim). In Minneapolis, 35 companies allocate a full 5 percent of their pretax profits to civic projects, many of them in the fine arts. One of our best-known developments is the Tyrone Guthrie Repertory Theater, which opened in 1963. None of its 1437 seats is more than 52 feet from center stage and it is one of only four repertory theaters in the whole United States. (Repertory means that a theater buff could see four different plays here in one week.) It is worth it just to go there to see the costuming, which is fantastic. In addition, the Twin Cities

area has 50 to 60 community theaters.

Just recently completed is the \$10 million, 2573-seat Orchestra Hall — home of the famed Minnesota Orchestra (formerly the Minneapolis Symphony) — which is an architectural delight and an acoustical triumph. The orchestra gave 280 performances last season. Other cultural attractions are the Children's Theater, Minneapolis Institute of Arts, and Walker Art Center. The Minneapolis Public Library, located on the Nicollet Mall, has a time and space gallery, a planetarium, a wildlife museum, and a science exhibit. Any one or all of these would be very well worth your while to visit if you can.

Minneapolis is also the location of the University of Minnesota, whose large campus has an enrollment of over 43,000 students. We are also well represented in sports here with the Minnesota Vikings football team, the Minnesota Twins in baseball, the Minnesota North Stars in hockey, and the Minnesota Kicks in soccer. A new

domed stadium is now being planned which will be located in the downtown area.

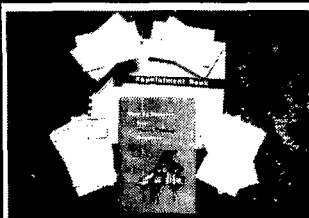
Other sites in or near the city that you may want to visit are Minnehaha Falls (made famous by the poet Longfellow), the American-Swedish Institute, historic Fort Snelling, Valleyfair (an amusement park), and the new zoo in Apple Valley.

We are most fortunate this year in having our PTG Convention dates coincide with what is called the Minneapolis Aquatennial. This a 10-day festival of parades, entertainment, ethnic traditions, social events, and sporting competition which is an awareness celebration of our watery abundance. You will hear more about this after you arrive, but if you check in by Saturday morning (July 21) you can take in the Aquatennial Day Parade, which takes place in the afternoon and marches only a block away from the hotel. There will be a plethora of events on Sunday, including the zany race on Lake Calhoun

with boats made from milk cartons. It will be a fun time, so try to come a little early.

Incidentally, if you are unfamiliar with our climate, you might like to know what to expect. Generally, Minneapolis July weather is sunny and warm, usually in the 80's. However, as with many other areas, we do occasionally get a spell of 90's with high humidity. I will, of course, put in an order for the better kind.

All in all, we think you will find visiting Minneapolis and our environment in Paul Bunyan Land an enjoyable experience. We urge everyone to join us in taking a "giant step" towards another rewarding journey in the pursuit of knowledge, renewing friendships, and all-around good comradery. If you have any questions on the convention itself, be sure to contact Mr. Don Santy, executive director, who is in charge of all convention activities. Next month we'll tell you all about the hotel and start reporting on the Technical Institute. ■



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PIANO TECHNICIANS JOURNAL — FEBRUARY

BOB RUSSELL

# Get Hooked With PTG!

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1. Please **print** your name after your signature when you endorse a person's membership application. (Many signatures are difficult to read.)

2. If the member is a restored member, please **write this fact on the application**. (Many of the Membership Services Department's "inactive files" are inadequate and only retained for a certain number of years.)

The following points are scored for signing up the various ratings: Craftsman, 6 points; Apprentice, 5 points; Allied Tradesman, 4 points; Associate, 3 points; Affiliate, 2 points; Student, 1 point. When you get a total of 24 points you become a member of the President's Club; all others are Boosters.

## BOOSTER CLUB (1 to 23 points)

Avolese, Frank — Long Island-Suffolk	11
Bach, Philip F. — Twin Cities	7
Baskerville, Henry — Richmond	1
Bell, Hamilton — Cleveland	1
Bloch, John — Denver	1
Boyd, Thomas W. — Philadelphia	1
Brandom, William S. — Kansas City	6
Brownfield, Gary — Boston	6

Carbaugh, Bob — Chicago	5
Carr, R.V. — Central Florida	6
Coleman, J.W., Sr. — Phoenix	1
Coleman, Loring — Las Vegas	1
Conner, J.S. — Hampton	6
Crabb, Larry — Atlanta	2
Cunningham, Jess — New Orleans	13

Dege, Ernest — Los Angeles	5
Desmond, Frank — Dallas	11
Donelson, James H. — San Francisco	1
Drewa, Edward — Twin Cities	1
Dye, William — Santa Barbara	6

Eaton, Wendell — Washington D.C.	1
Edwards, William E — Detroit-Windsor	1
Epman, Lawrence — Wisconsin	5
Evans, Dan — Los Angeles	5

Finger, Chris — Denver	1
Flegle, R.H., Sr. — Twin Cities	6
Freeman, Marion — N.C. Louisiana	1

Geiger, James — Dayton	6
Giller, Evan — New York City	5
Gold, Jimmy — Texoma	6
Griffith, LaVerne — Buffalo	2

Hauck, Jack — Phoenix	1
Heischober, M. — L.I.-Nassau	5
Hershberger, Ben — South Bay	1
Hipkins, David — N. Virginia	6
Hulme, Gregory — Kansas City	6

Johns, B.J. — Northeast Florida	1
Joseph, Paul — Philadelphia	6
Juhn, Ernie — Philadelphia	6

Kast, Frank — N. Virginia	5
Kelley, Allen — W. Massachusetts	6
Keller, William — Reading-Lancaster	6
Killberg, George — Twin Cities	5
Krystall, Darwin — Los Angeles	1



Lamb, D.E. — Los Angeles	5
Lawrence, P.A.U. — Blue Grass	6
Leach, W.F. — Richmond	5
Macchia, Allen — NW Indiana	5
MacConaghy, Henry — San Diego	12
Marten, Gilbert — Central Iowa	6
McDonald, Robert K. — Mississippi-Gulf Coast	5
Mehaffey, Francis — Pomona Valley	1
Mensing, Daniel — Chicago	5
Miller, D.L. — Minnesota-North Iowa	6
Monroe, Paul — Orange County	5
Moore, Donald — Fresno	6
Morton, W. Don — Los Angeles	3
Murdaugh, Rodney — SW Missouri	1
Neie, Gary — N.C. Louisiana	5
Persons, Glenn — Tucson	6
Peters, Patricia — Central Florida	1
Peterson, Jerry — Western Michigan	7
Pizza, Anita — Miracle Strip	6
Preuitt, Ernie — Kansas City	6
Ralon, Carlos K. — Washington D.C.	1
Richardson, J.W. — Idaho West	10

Rooks, Michael — Ozark	5	Tapp, Kenneth — West Memphis	18	Zehme, Uwe — South Florida	1
Russell, Bob — Cleveland	5	Thatcher, Walter — St. Louis	6	Zellman, Adelaide — Connecticut	1
		Tipple, Robert —		Zeringue, Nolan — New Orleans	1
		Member-at-Large	6		
Schoppert, Robert — S. Dakota	18				
Seller, Marion — Twin Cities	6				
Seitz, Al — Alaska	6				
Sierota, Walter — Philadelphia	1	Wheeler, Clifford — Boston	6		
Sims, Willard — Cincinnati	3	Whitby, Elmer — Paducah	6		
Stegeman, W.J. —		White, T.E. — Northwest Florida	6		
Minnesota-North Iowa	1	White, Walter — Baltimore	6		
Stern, Walter — St. Louis	6	Willis, Aubrey — Central Florida	3		
Story, Everett — E. Washington	6	Winslow, Allyn — Boston	6		

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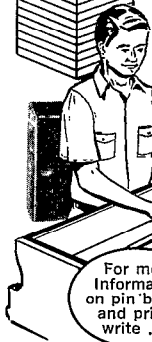
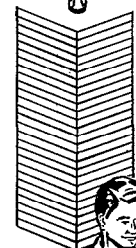
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LUELLYN PREUITT

# Wives' Lives

Greetings —

Let's give our attention once more to our theme for this year, especially to the sense in which it will be carried out during our forthcoming convention in Minneapolis. What is it? — To **dignify, enlarge, and strengthen** our organization (Bylaws — Article 2, Object).

First let us think about **dignify**. Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* gives two fairly interesting versions: (1) To "give distinction to." Now how may we give distinction to the Auxiliary? Many of us think of our role as one of nondistinction; that is, we provide refreshments after Guild chapter meetings, answer the telephone and schedule appointments, put on bridle straps, or work on the books. It might be interesting to discover just how many technicians really think of these functions in terms of nondistinction. Surely, many of them would really get tickly feet just wondering how they would get along without these helpers. (2) Webster also defines **dignify** as "changing name, appearance, or character." Most would agree with me that we do not really want to change our name from Piano Technicians Guild Auxiliary. So much for Webster on that one. How about appearance? We seem to have come over fairly well on that one in recent years. Appearance generally denotes, to a certain extent, what is on the inside. But it really depends, does it not, on the next and final part of the definition? Character is, after all, the basic reference. What sort of character do we have as an auxiliary? Do we think of ourselves as a number of persons who get together, briefly, once a year, to enjoy some social activities and a few "educational" events; or do we realize that we are in

reality a group of close-knit individuals with a common purpose which gives us an entity of our own — whose purpose is to create dignity through a changed appearance?

Next, Webster defines **enlarge** as, first, "to make larger." Usually we must understand that meaning in terms of numbers. If we are not growing in numbers, if we are always losing members, then we certainly are not enlarging. While it is true that a large membership in any organization (be it lodge, church, union, or PTGA) is not the final criterion of excellence, it must be acknowledged that if we are constantly losing members we are not offering what is important to the individual member. I want to go on to the other definition which intrigued me, comment on it, and attempt to tie the two together. This is "to set free (as a captive)." Historically, the way to being set free lies in being a member of a group. True, there is individual freedom, and it is valued and precious; but historical freedom has its roots in being freed as a group. This freedom leads to enlargement. We may therefore be challenged by saying that enlargement leads to freedom. Are these opposites really true? I wonder; perhaps they are. Let us **enlarge** ourselves as a group by becoming historically and individually free, by working together in organizational patterns which lead to individual friendships. Then we will **enlarge** because those outside of this pattern and friendship will wish to be included in our sharing. Let us welcome them!

The only thing Mr. Webster says about **strengthen** is "to make stronger, to become stronger." Seems obvious, doesn't it? If we continue to **dignify** along the lines described, and to **enlarge**, then we will surely become

stronger. There is a logic here that cannot be overlooked.

I would like to make a final comment on Webster's definition of the word **strength**: "from strength to strength : vigorously forward : from one high point to the next." We have many high points as an auxiliary from which to go forward. We can **dignify, enlarge, and strengthen** according to our group and individual patterns. Let's not wait until the next convention to wear our Auxiliary pin, or to tell some stranger about the merits of the Piano Technicians Guild. Technicians are artists in their own right. Let's support them!

Here is a word about the upcoming convention in July 1979, hosted by the Twin Cities Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild in Minneapolis. Although no word has been received from the Auxiliary of the Twin Cities Chapter this month, I am sure they offer you a warm welcome to their city — and many interesting and different types of entertainment. Also, from what I hear, the program is following our theme of **Dignify, Enlarge, and Strengthen**. Don't wait. As soon as you receive your announcement of this tremendous event, rush to the bank, withdraw the money, and enroll. You'll be surprised how quickly it will all flow back together because you will have contributed toward not only your own advancement, but that of the group. The corporate vacuum cannot help but attract eager and willing funds to fill its place.

Well enough of my ravings. Here I am going to substitute the words of Auxiliary first vice president Jewell Sprinkle. You will remember that Jewell sent an inspiring letter to all chapters last September, and I am going to quote her at some length (I



will have to beg her pardon because I have neither asked her permission nor told her I was going to do this. However, she didn't give me any specific instructions not to quote!) Jewell says:

The Auxiliary is a valuable accessory to the Piano Technicians Guild (even if unnoticed at times). It is the frosting on the cake! There are various reasons why our husbands/wives, sons/daughters, and friends have chosen this most rewarding and challenging profession. Whatever their reason, we as the Auxiliary can be of great assistance through our everyday contacts. We are the Public Relations Department! Presenting ourselves in daily conversations with acquaintances, in answering the telephone, or in passing acknowledgements with strangers, by the tone of our voice and the expression of our face, is the true test of our professionalism.

As in all professions, there is a need for continuing growth and education. In cities and more populated areas, this can be accomplished through belonging to a chapter and attending chapter meetings. Here we learn to converse intelligently about work our piano technicians do. It is

much more pleasing when we show an interest in others' activities.

In rural areas, where it is more difficult to attend chapter meetings, the Auxiliary is really most important. This is where your backing and knowledge really shine forth! It is here where the attendance to a national convention or an area seminar can be very beneficial. At the conventions some classes are open to interested persons other than technicians, with top knowledgeable people as instructors. No, you won't be trying to take over your technician's business, only adding your special touch to it.

Conventions, seminars and chapter meetings are not teaching and learning institutes only, but are very important as a social outlet. At each convention the Auxiliary has several scheduled interesting activities. It is through these associations that we really learn. Next year, 1979, will be my tenth convention and each year I come home much richer than before. Riches that can only come from invaluable experience.

Conventions and seminars also serve many other ways. Travel opportunities, child instruction — you say you can't leave the children? Bring them!

What better gift than the association of friends and learning about the work of their parents? There will also be several grandpas/grandmas, aunts/uncles, and cousins around. They may just find a child to adopt (that is, if you wish to take home a thoroughly spoiled child!). These little ones could be future PTGers.

I hope to reach all of you. If you are a member of long standing, we congratulate you and we love you. If you are a new member, we welcome you and want to know you better! If you are a chapter, we need your counsel and guidance. If you are a member-at-large, we cherish you and need your input as well. If you are a nonmember, let us be of help to you. . . .

Here I am ending the quote of Jewell's letter. Some words were left out, and I probably have been most unprofessional in my deletions; however, I have tried to let Jewell's light shine through. Those of you who know her will agree that Jewell's light is translucent, and those of you have yet to meet her ought to look forward eagerly to that event. ■

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# CHAPTER NOTES

## BOSTON

The Boston Chapter started its chapter project in December. Their work force is divided into five groups. One group works with new action parts and hammers, one with restringing, and a third with installation of new keytops. The other two groups are working on refinishing and on rebuilding the player mechanism.

The Examinations Committee held its first monthly meeting. Their agenda includes (1) finding a piano in a school, church, or town hall that will be accessible for long-range use of the chapter; (2) developing a set of questions to use within their own chapter and for submittal to national PTG headquarters; (3) implementing a "dry-run" procedure for the next few months; (4) determining how committee members can best apply themselves to testing prospective members of the chapter; and (5) setting a time for the next meeting of the committee. — G. Brownfield

## CHICAGO

Chicago Chapter's Examinations Committee chairman, Dan Mesning, announces that examinations for membership will be conducted in February. Dan suggests that chapter members holding Apprentice rating for the last year participate and try for reclassification. (Reexamination is a yearly membership requirement for Apprentice members.) Members are asked to check their eligibility with Dale Mensching.

## CINCINNATI

Cincinnati's Project Committee has authorized the purchase of a 20-

30-year-old vertical for their use as a training instrument for their new people. When reconditioned, they hope to sell it at a profit to beef up their depleted treasury. The piano will be stored in Jack Krefting's shop unless someone else volunteers some space.

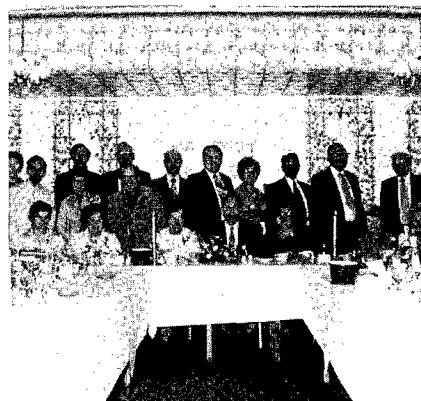
## DENVER

Denver Chapter is urging members to submit Hall of Fame nominees. Members should contact John Block for his help in preparing and submitting suggestions. Similarly, anyone having an urge to see the chapter go after a Chapter Achievement Award should contact the president or other officer.

The chapter's first 1979 all-day seminar will be held on February 25. They will also host another seminar in April, to be presented by Jim Coleman, Sr.

## ERIE

The Erie Chapter celebrated its sixth year with a banquet at the David Mead Inn. Special guests were vice president Bob Russell, regional vice president Dick Bittinger, and past regional vice president Shorty Wagner. Dick and Shorty were instrumental in getting the Erie Chapter formed way back in 1972. All but two of the original charter members were present and various accomplishments of the chapter were reviewed by president Norm Plumb. — Jim Reigelman



## LONG ISLAND-SUFFOLK

On November 21, 1978, the Long Island-Suffolk Chapter voted to give a four-year scholarship (valued at \$2000) to Howard Schreiber. This is the first time the chapter has done anything like this, and a better recipient couldn't have been selected! Howard is a fine pianist and has chosen music as his career. Chairman Frank Avolesse and his scholarship committee members (Lee Dobrins, Jim Maguire, and Joe Sciortino) presented a letter of intent to Howard on December 5, formally notifying him of the scholarship.

The Long Island-Suffolk Chapter has started their latest grand rebuilding project with a tremendous turnout of chapter members (12). The ritual of measurement-taking and stripping-down has begun! — Joel Engelsberg

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Northern Virginia Chapter's Board has concluded that the best use of their Special Services Directory would be as part directory and part membership roster. A two-line advertisement

will appear after the member's name, address, and phone number. The ad can state the member's service area, whether or not he works Saturdays or evenings, and if he can be called on short notice. Other categories are optional. Members can compose their own two-liner of 20 to 25 words, or have an advertisement put together by Carl Root (who retains the right of editorship) from the information they supply to him. Members who feel cramped by having only two lines available can purchase additional space at a small cost. — Carl Root

### **LONG ISLAND, CRISTOFORI BROTHERHOOD**

This chapter, in an effort to better relations within the piano industry, conducts meetings in which piano technicians and manufacturers of pianos can exchange problems and solutions. One such guest speaker was Otis Oxford, service manager from Kohler & Campbell. Richard Dante, president of the Cristofori Brotherhood Chapter, requests that we print the following letter received from Mr. Oxford.

Please accept a belated thank you for inviting me to your PTG Chapter Banquet recently. I knew beforehand that you had a treat in store, but I never expected to be engulfed in the warmth and companionship you and the other members exhibited on a one-to-one basis. . . .

Thanks again for a great time and I look forward to seeing you all again at your chapter seminar. . . .

### **LOS ANGELES**

The LA Chapter has voted to back up the nominations being made by the National Nominating Committee, and the name of Willard Davis was nominated by the National Nominating Committee to the Hall of Fame.

Members again contributed offerings in November and December to be given to the Salvation Army; their total was \$86. Chapter members do this in lieu of sending Christmas cards to each other.

### **NORTHERN VIRGINIA/ WASHINGTON D.C.**

On November 19, the Northern Virginia and Washington D.C. chapters put on a joint technical session which attracted 60 technicians from the Washington metropolitan area and included several members from the Baltimore Chapter. Ned Dodson, assisted by Kerry Pealer, put on a grand hammer-hanging class much like the one in Cincinnati this past summer. The Baldwin Technical Services Department came through in style by supplying each of us with right-angle guides. (You might try to contact Willard Sims to see if he still has some available.)

Larry Bowen headed up a tuning class and was assisted by Carl Root. Several subjects were discussed including muting techniques, prestressing the plate, and various useful approaches to tuning the temperament. Orville Braymer and Joyce Meekins chaired the "Open Forum." Topics of discussion ranged from soundboard and rip repair, bridge pins and wild strings, to lubricating under-string felt. Classes were given twice, enabling each participant to attend all the classes.

After dinner, Orville Braymer led an excellent discussion/demonstration on voicing. We all had the opportunity to hear differences in carrying power and color as he completed each step of the procedure. Other things noted were (1) the sound a hammer makes when it is not properly filed, (2) the procedure used to remove a broken voicing needle from a hammer, and (3) how to correct the indentation in the top of the hammer caused by slicing off individual hammers during the manufacturing process.

The attendance and participation for this technical session would seem to be a mandate for future cooperative ventures. Both chapters have already established a classified section that appears in their chapter newsletters. Several members from both chapters have crossed the Potomac to give technical sessions for neighboring chapters.

These activities have coincided with an interest in dual membership. Members of Northern Virginia Chapter who recently became dual members are Carl Root and Orville Braymer, Northern Virginia Chapter president. Ned Dodson, Gene Elfes, and Rose Stoutsengerger are the Washington D.C. Chapter members who became dual members in Northern Virginia. The interest in dual membership has also spread to Baltimore with John Farrell joining the D.C. Chapter and Doug Wurz coming up from Richmond to join the Northern Virginia Chapter.

Both chapters are looking forward to reaping the benefits of mutual cooperation on chapter and regional levels. — Carl Root

### **PITTSBURGH**

In their November meeting, the Pittsburgh Chapter was privileged to have a special technical seminar by Cliff Geers on hammer hanging, pinblock drilling and replacement, and soundboard installation.

Dick Bittinger, national regional vice president, also attended the meeting and promoted PTG membership to prospective applicants in attendance. — M.J. Duggan and M.R. Mangus

### **READING-LANCASTER**

The Reading-Lancaster Chapter recently visited the Ronsen piano hammer factory in Boiceville, New York. Bob Johansen and Ray Negron of Ronsen gave an interesting tour and explained how piano hammers were made.

Incidentally, Bob and Ray will be giving a class on hammers at the Pennsylvania State Convention in March. Dick Chenoweth will have a class on the reed organ, and Don McKecknie and Bill Lain will give a class on the harpsichord.

The chapter is making progress on their grand rebuilding project and reports that the last session was on installing dampers. — Bill Lain

# CLASSIFIEDS

**Classified Advertising Rates:** Classified ads are 15¢ a word, with a \$3 minimum. **Copy due** the first of the month preceding publication. **Address:** Managing Editor-Art Director/Charlona Rhodes, PTG, 113 Dexter Avenue N., Seattle, Washington 98109. Telephone: (206) 283-7440.

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## POSITION DESIRED

**POSITION WANTED** — Registered craftsman piano technician seeks permanent employment with established piano store. Experience in tuning, rebuilding, and sales. For details phone (319) 385-4841 or (515) 936-7197.

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**FOR SALE** — Anderson, Chicago Grand, 59-inch, serial 6572, about 1929, Former Reproducer; suitable for conversion to Piano-Corder; \$1150 or best offer over. Write: C. Long, 3118 Monticello, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118.

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