Piano Technicians Journal

October 1983

Piano Technicians Guild
26th Annual Meeting
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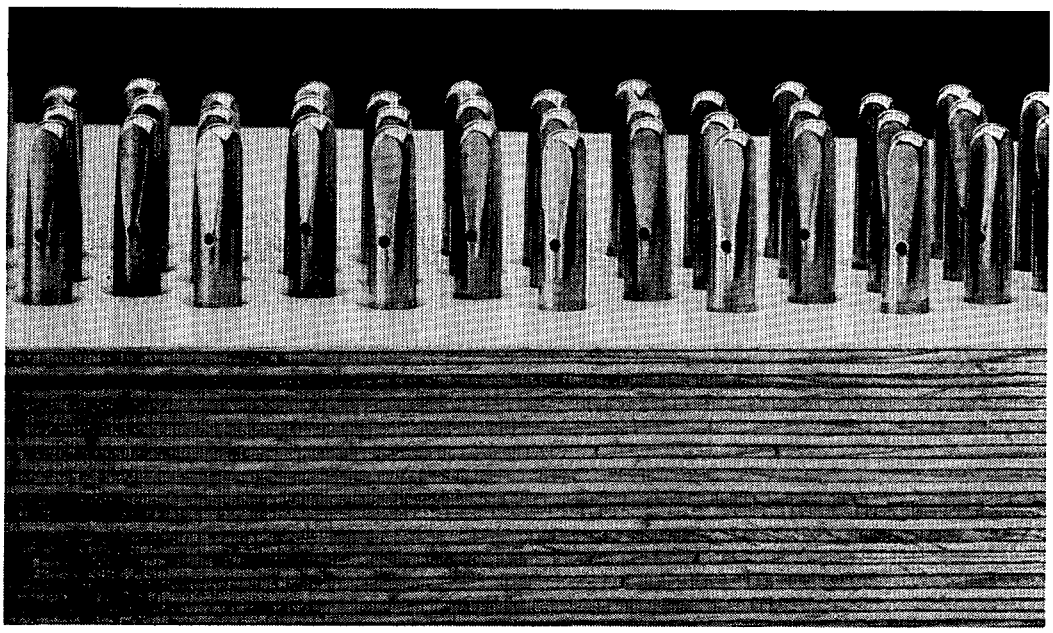

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Editorial

Don L. Santy
Executive Editor

Suppose the Government announced one day that it would have to tax its citizens an extra sixty billion dollars to meet some unexpected expenses. It had decided to do away with 'private donations' to charitable, educational, recreational, social welfare and health organizations. From now on they would be supported by various government agencies.

Would that get your attention? We would, of course, instantly become a 'cradle to grave' welfare government.

That sixty billion dollars is what we contribute to charity each year. We give to foundations, memorials, trusts, endowments, health and welfare agencies, youth groups, art commissions and every conceivable cause and order. Now, I realize that sixty billion dollars may not be a whole lot when it comes to such items as defending the country, but like Senator Dirksen (R-Ill.) once said, "take a billion here and a billion there and pretty soon you're talking big money."

Hardly a day goes by when a person is *not* solicited for some kind of donation. Everything from a college, hospital or gymnasium down to the kid who knocks on your door and wants you to pay him/her to bike, run or swim in some kind of marathon. Business people get hit up more frequently and with greater pressure than anyone else. Business people get solicited by business people who then get revenge and solicit them back. The cycle goes on and sometimes works into big stakes.

The truth of the matter is that people don't give to caues. They give to people. This is why every major fund raising effort starts out with the recruitment and involvement of community leaders. These leaders are best able to motivate others and solicit substantial gifts from them. They are in the best position to make friends and associates an 'offer they can't afford to refuse.' Would you be inclined to flatly refuse someone with whom you may be dealing in the market place — especially if you're on the receiving end?

Bear in mind, charitable contributions are wonderfully good. But let's face it. They are not always voluntary. There are well over 300,000 health and welfare agencies in the U.S. alone. The great majority of these agencies are extremely important to those who receive goods and services from them and can often be life sustaining in scope.

Their services can make the difference between just existing in misery and hardship or living a decent and satisfying life. They are a great "leveling off" influence in our society.

Unfortunately, there are many thousands of causes espousing good work which are outright phony. They bilk the public out of hundreds of thousands of dollars which should rightfully go to legitimate agencies.

People give to these causes because to be kind, sympathetic and compassionate is natural to their instincts. Phrases such as "helpless children," "unwed mothers," "hungry masses," "desperately diseased," "severely handicapped." "impoverished," or "culturally deprived" appeal to our charitable natures. Most people want to help if they can, and these words and phrases trigger response. Fund raisers know this. Unfortunately, people don't investigate the causes to which they contribute. They believe what they read and are told to believe. Their trusting nature helps the con artists and phony fund raisers meet their goals.

BEFORE YOU GIVE, give some thought to these suggestions. They come to you from a person who has been on all sides: the professional social agency executive who receives funds, the fund raiser who arranges for them, and the business man who has been solicited for every conceivable cause and from every possible angle.

1. Ask who runs the agency. Find out who is involved. Ask about the professional qualifications of the staff. Ask who else contributes. Get endorsements, references and recommendations.
2. Ask for literature, and a financial statement. Get a description of services with specifics. Be sure to get the telephone number, address of both the agency and the solicitor, and any other pertinent information.
3. Be wary of an organization which is being run by its founder, who receives compensation *in any form.* Check the board to see if it consists of the founder's friends and relatives.
4. Ask if they are a United Fund Agency. If they are, chances are they are legitimate. They may not be a deserving one in your opinion but at least they will be regulated and controlled.

Continued on page 15


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President's Message

Ernie Preuitt
President

None of us really likes to have someone tell us how wrong we are. There is usually a feeling of resentment toward our critic. This is natural.

But should there not be a feeling of gratitude as well? After all, criticism often calls to our attention mistakes we are making and thereby affords us the opportunity to take corrective measures, or at least guard against repeating the same error.

There are two major areas of criticism — (1) corrective, and (2) destructive — and we should be able to recognize the difference.

The purpose of constructive criticism is to help an individual or situation. When a person is willing to take the time not only to criticize, but to explain the motivation for doing so, we should take the time to listen with an open mind, without being offended.

Even if we don't totally agree, we should implement any suggestion from our critic that will enable us to perform our task better or easier, while attaining the same or improved results. Granted, our critic may not be fully versed or understand the entire situation, but we should still listen with an open mind and guard against being offended. Politely thank the critic for his/her interest, but don't argue or antagonize the constructive critic for those very thoughts may offer valuable assistance in the future.

Now "destructive criticism" is another story. Its purpose is to demoralize or ridicule.

A person who criticizes in this manner will usually do so frequently. Specific people or organizations, such as the Piano Technicians Guild, may be singled out again and again. Such individuals are usually frustrated in their own endeavors and follow the old adage, "misery loves company." They enjoy rubbing it in when a mistake is made, and usually have a negative attitude toward those things they are not personally involved in. The quickest way to thwart such a person's fun is to ignore the barb as much as possible. Don't argue with him. It's like throwing gasoline on an open flame.

So don't waste time listening to destructive critics. Rather, think positively and thank the constructive critic. Remember, all you'll ever get from strangers is surface pleasantry or indifference, but only those who really know and respect you will criticize you constructively.

These are thoughts I have gleaned from one of the several organizations I belong to, and are just as applicable not only to the Piano Technicians Guild, but to life itself. It certainly helps in administering the affairs of this body. Try it, it may help you too!

Happy Halloween

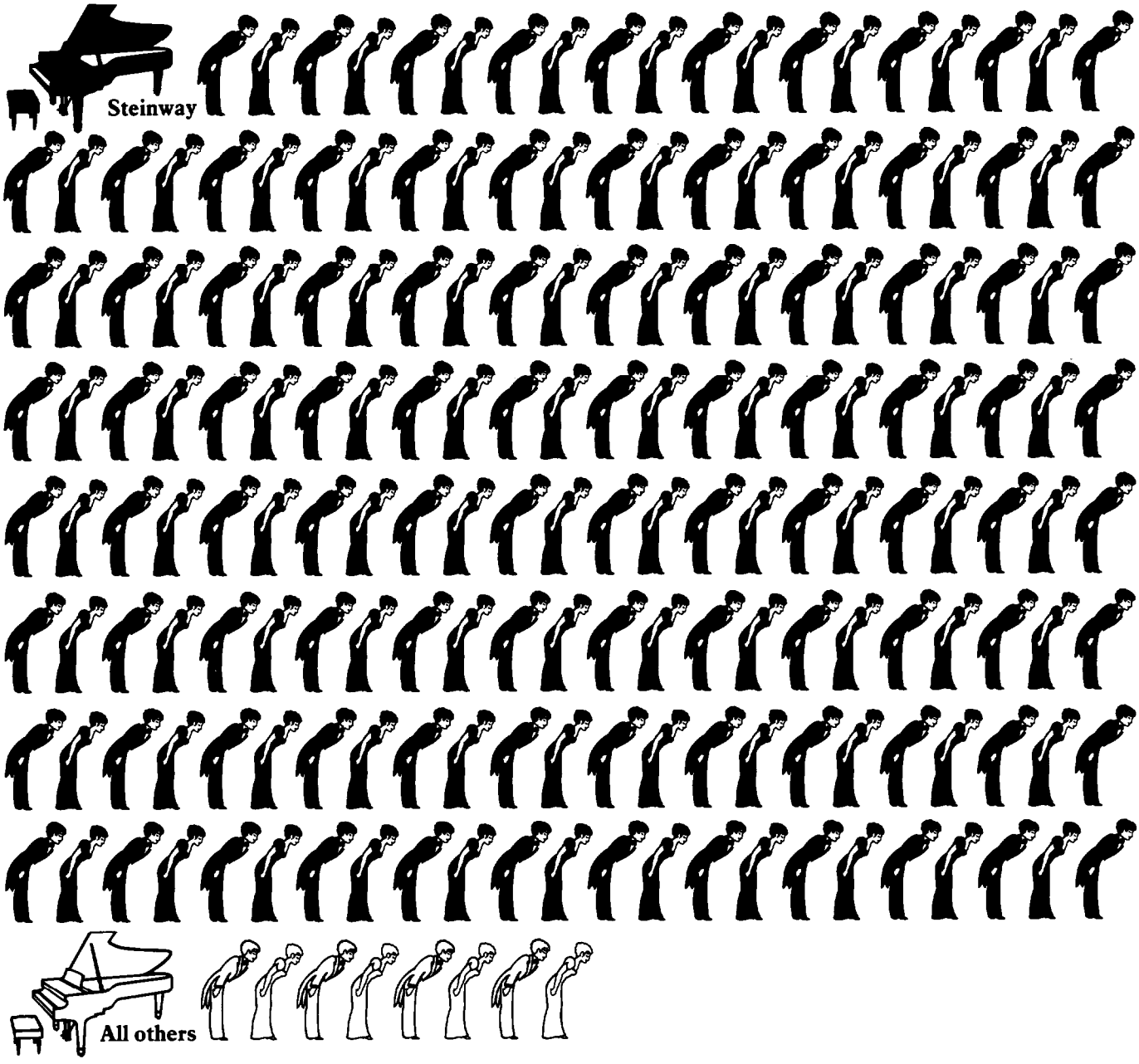
The International Scene

Fred Odenheimer, Chairman
International Relations Committee

The trip to the Orient and IAPBT meeting in Japan is still a daily object of discussion here at home. And it feels as if the excellent convention in New Orleans was just yesterday. We had a fine hotel with large lecture and exhibition rooms which could have accommodated many more people. Now we are setting our sights on 1984.

Your I.R. Committee has been charged with the arrangement of trips abroad, and the planning has started. After consulting with Dan Evans and corresponding with Ralph Long of England, we are ready to propose a trip to Great Britain in conjunction with the convention of the Piano Tuners Association somewhere near Liverpool. The place and the hotel have not been cinfirmed as yet, but the time very likely will be May 16 to 20, 1984. At this time it is our intention to leave the U.S. on May 15; we should then be ready for classes starting on May 17. After the convention we intend to visit some factories, including: the very modern crown foundry; Naish felts close by; perhaps Herrberger Brooks, the action factory; the Bentley piano factory, situated in a beautiful valley and worth the trip just for the landscape; and, time allowing, perhaps another piano factory.

A tour through England, Scotland and perhaps Wales is to follow the educational part. Of Ralph Long's rather long list of places to visit, I just want to mention a few: Bath, Oxford, Stratford-on-Avon, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Lake District and the Isles of Scotland. Total length of the tour will be approximately 18 days, if necessary a day or two more; and we will try to hold the total cost down to $2,200.00. It is almost certain that a limit will have to be set on the number of participants; the group probably should not exceed 35 members. By the time you are reading this article some of the details will have been worked out. If you would like more information, contact Dan Evans, 4100 Beck Ave. No. Hollywood, CA 91604 or Fred Odenheimer, 15358 Wyandotte St., Van Nuys, CA 91406. We had a very nice letter from Sam Kajimura, Director and General Manager of International Sales Division of Yamaha; I would like to share part of his letter with you. "It was a great pleasure and also an honor for us to have the Piano Technicians Guild members in Hamamatsu, just after the Tokyo Convention of the International Association of Piano Builders and Technicians. I am very glad to know that everybody who was with us enjoyed the tour of our various facilities and also our welcome party at Tsumagoi."



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Houston Symphony Orchestra • 9 out of 9
Long Island Philharmonic • 2 out of 2
Los Angeles Philharmonic • 9 out of 9
Louisville Orchestra • 2 out of 2
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National Symphony Orchestra • 12 out of 12
New Jersey Symphony Orchestra • 2 out of 3
New York Philharmonic • 11 out of 11
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THE TECHNICAL FORUM

Jack Krefting,
Technical Editor

The multi-purpose tool ideas are starting to come in, some of which obviously have been submitted with tongue firmly planted in cheek, but there are also some that will be very useful to many of us. Anyway, they will all be mentioned as promised, beginning with my next article. Readers are encouraged to participate.

Many things look good on paper, but when it comes down to actual use there are drawbacks which had not been anticipated. For this reason, it would be helpful if we were told just how long a particular tool or procedure has been in use, together with a list of advantages and disadvantages, so far as these can be determined. While one technician's personal experience may not parallel that of another, it still would seem beneficial to share that kind of information.

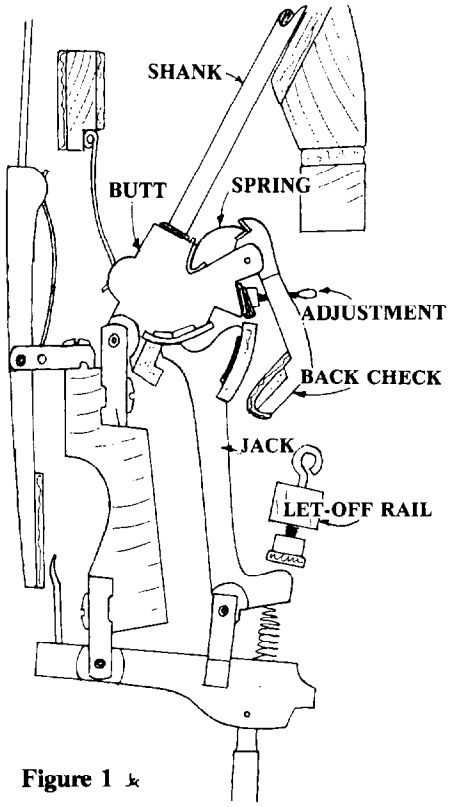


Figure 1

Vertical Rebuilding

If we are rebuilding the action of a modern piano, and suitable replacement parts are readily available, we have a good choice of procedures; but if the action is obsolete we must either recondition the existing parts, manufacture replacements, or substitute parts of a different design. Let's briefly examine our options in the case of an obsolete action such as the Staib-Abendschein shown in **Figure 1.** Bill Pealer, RTT, of the Northern Virginia Chapter, sent us an action drawing of this design some time ago, and more recently some sample parts were submitted by Bob Moreland, RTT, Western Maryland Chapter. Bob's samples were taken from an old Bjur Brothers upright. This would be an instance where new identical parts are just not available.

We will discuss a complete action conversion, such as installing a modern action in a birdcage piano, in our April 1984 issue, and the following month we plan to discuss the small-scale manufacture of replacement action parts. The

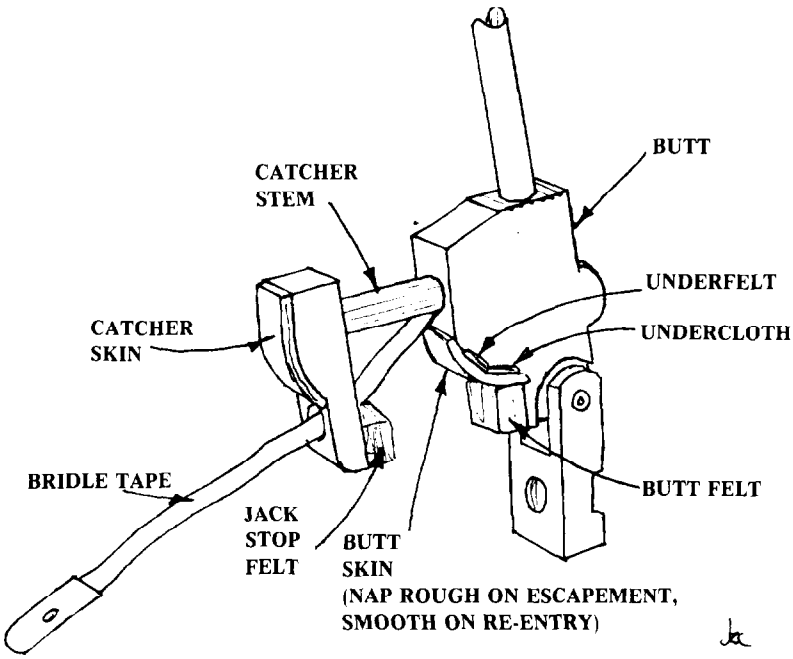


Figure 2

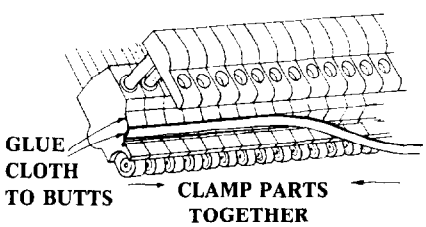


Figure 3

other option, reconditioning existing parts, will be considered now.

A conventional butt, shown in **Figure 2,** has about ten pieces of cloth, felt or buckskin which may need replacement; sometimes it is difficult to decide where to stop in reconditioning because all of the material will be showing some wear or compression, but some parts are worn out when others are still in relatively good shape. In the final analysis, it could be presumed that the stopping point would be determined by the amount of the repair bid.

If a complete reconditioning is planned, the flanges should be removed and the butts clamped together as shown in **Figure 3.** This allows a uniform application of recovering material, because it can then be applied in strips rather than in small pieces. Remove the old buckskin, felt and cloth, scrape the old glue off the wood, and clean the parts as required. If sanding or sandblasting techniques are employed, be sure that the critical surfaces retain their original contour; this is especially important where the jack pushes on the butt.

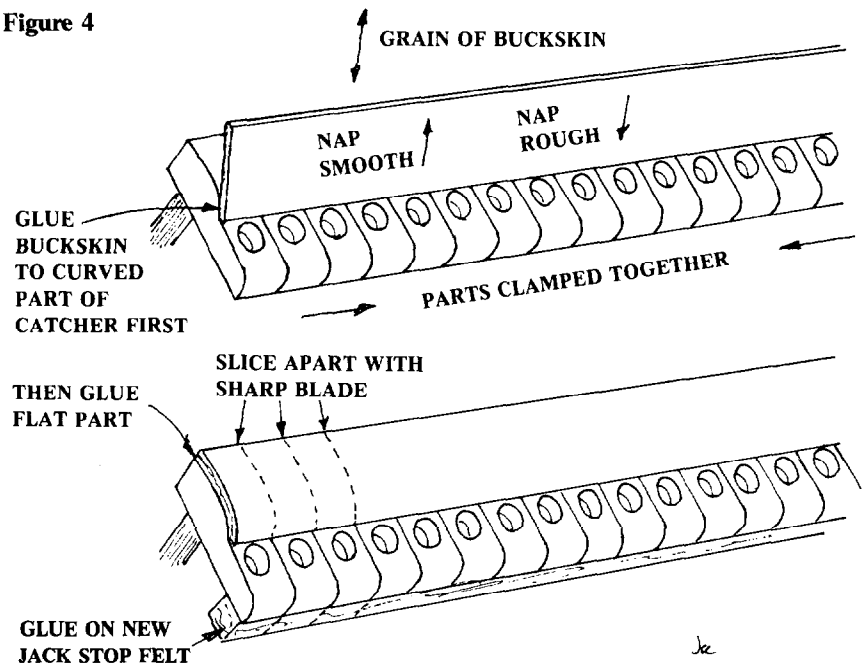
The undercloth should be good quality bushing cloth of the same thickness as the original. Felt is not suitable here, as it compresses too much under the force of playing. That would lead to an eventual hollowing of the buckskin surface, making it impossible to regulate the piano so that it would repeat reliably without having excessive lost motion. That is what Don Galt used to call "cavitation of the butt," an intolerable situation which can happen even when bushing cloth is used as the undercloth if the piano is played heavily with lost motion beteen jack and butt. The jack seems to get a running start before contacting the butt, and when it does, it hits it rather than pushing it. If this line of reasoning holds water, incidentally, it would be a convincing argument in favor of keeping a piano in proper regulation because the parts would last longer in addition to the obvious benefits.

The underfelt may be replaced with either felt or cloth, as preferred by the technician. Its purpose is to keep the jack from making noise when it returns to the butt before its whippen has dropped all the way down. This material must be thick enough to do its job, but no thicker; otherwise the shape of the critical surface is altered, and repetition will suffer.

Buckskin may be applied next, and it should be skived to uniform thickness and cut with the grain running across the strip, not along it. Glue the strip into the groove first, with the nap pointing toward the groove; that is, the buckskin should feel smooth in the direction of the butt felt, and rough in the direction of the catcher stem. This keeps the jack from slipping out prematurely, which would cause a loss of power, but allows it to slip easily back into firing position with the barest minimum of lost motion.

When the glue in the groove has set up, stretch the buckskin over the underfelt and undercloth, making sure that no glue touches either, and glue the buckskin to the wood near the catcher stem. Make some sort of holding fixture to clamp the skin in place, and clamp until dry. The catchers should be recovered in similar

Figure 4



fashion, except that there is usually no undercloth and the buckskin is glued all the way. Orient the grain so the nap is as shown in **Figure 4,** and glue to the lower, curved edge first. This makes it much easier than if the flat part were glued first, or if the entire surface were glued at once, because holding the edge of any piece of cloth or leather onto a curved surface requires a precise caul, whereas almost any type of clamping arrangement will work with a flat surface.

When the glue at the curved edge is dry, glue the remainder. Then apply a new strip of jack stop felt, if the catcher is so equipped, and the butts may be sliced apart. Use a sharp hobby knife for this, with paraffin on the blade to help it slide more easily between parts.

If the bridle tapes are to be replaced in the original manner, it will be necessary to replace the catcher stems; this decision, obviously, must be made before we go to a lot of trouble to recover catchers, because of the likelihood that new catchers would be available even though the butt assemblies are not. It is usually easier and cheaper to replace parts than to recondition them, so if new parts of equivalent quality are available, I would by all means use them.

Inspect the birdseyes for roundness of hole and general integrity of wood, and check the fit with centerpins of various sizes. The size to use is generally considered to be the smallest size that cannot be pushed into the birdseye by hand. If it can be pushed in, it will certainly walk out, so make sure it has to be forced in with a centerpin tool. Then, having selected the centerpin size, push it into the flange bushing from either side. Some resistance should be felt, the same on both sides, so that when the center is assembled the torque will be correct. An upright butt assembly, hammer attached, should swing about four times if the swing test is used. Another measure of torque is to see whether the flange will drop under the weight of its flange screw, or a penny, whichever is preferred. The torque of this center should, in all cases, be more firm than that of any other center; this is because firmness is needed to withstand the punishment of the jack, especially because its point of application of force is so close to the centerpin, and at the same time firmness can be

tolerated because the momentum of the relatively massive hammer will keep the center in motion. The other action parts neither need nor are able to tolerate that degree of firmness.

There is a limit to how big a centerpin should be used, and in my opinion that limit is reached in a practical sense at about the size 21½. Beyond that diameter, which is 0.053", there seems to be too much pin surface area in contact with the bushing, so it is better to replace or rebush the flanges. If these happen to be Billings butts, naturally they will require rebushing.

Clean the old cloth and glue from the holes to be rebushed, using a hand-held drill bit, and tear the flange bushing cloth into strips of the correct width. The cloth must completely encircle the centerpin without leaving a visible seam, but at the same time the cloth must not overlap itself. Be sure to tear the cloth rather than cutting it, as cut edges will not knit together like torn ones will, and anyway it is much easier to get uniformity by tearing as the cloth will tear along a particular thread. As shown in **Figure 5,** cut the cloth to a point and pull it through the center of both flange arms. Flanges may be bushed one at a time, or twenty or thirty of them can be strung together on a single strip, factory-style. Apply a very small amount of glue to the cloth just to the side of the flange arm, and then to the other flange arm, and pull the cloth further into the flange. It is a good idea to insert a centerpin while the glue is drying. Use a pin one half size larger than the one selected for that birdseye.

When the glue is dry, pull the pin out and trim the cloth neatly with a razor blade. Start the cut at the seam in the cloth, and cut toward the closed side, as this eliminates hanging threads. Insert the centerpin once more and dip the flange arms in a solution of 85% methanol and 15% water. Pull the flange out of the solution immediately and allow it to evaporate with the pin in place. This presses the wool fibers so they fit the pin without excessive reaming.

Next month in this space we will continue with action reconditioning.

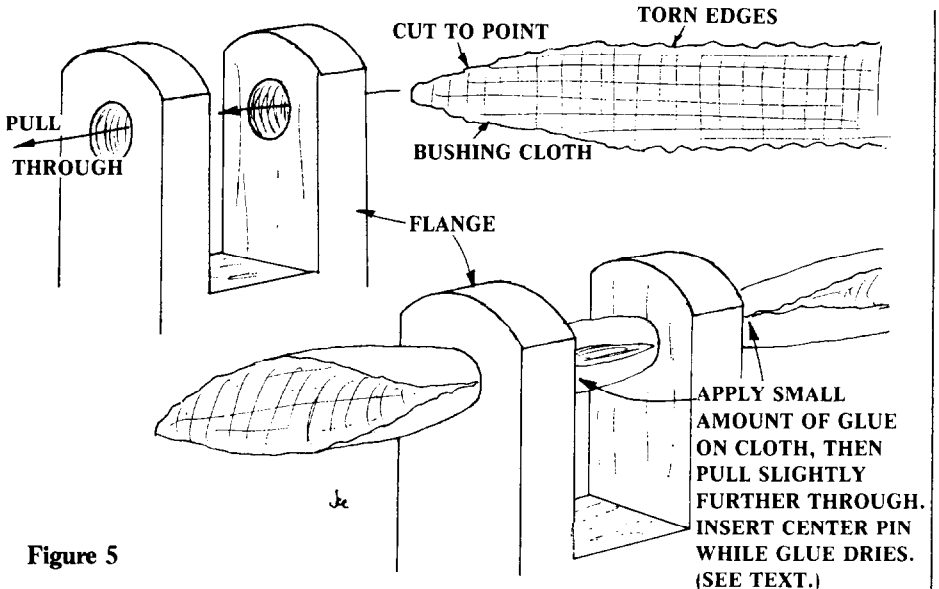


Figure 5

Kimball Action Brackets

Question: *I recently replaced a string in a Kimball console manufactured in 1980. The action brackets curve to the plate and are secured by screws through the plate. After replacing the action, I found a lot of lost motion that had not been there before. After some experimentation — and noticing that the bracket screws were slightly bent — I found that tightening the screws raised the action off its supports. After consultation with a technician, I called the factory and was told it is necessary in that model to reseat the action each time it is replaced by banging on the brackets with a hammer until the action seats. I was told this is the way the actions are seated in the factory. (This explained the bent screws.) I expressed the hope that they had discontinued building this model and received a reply in the affirmative. Within a month I found another piano with the same type of brackets, a Lindemann spinet, at least 30 years old. This appears to me to be an unusual design/manufacturing practice. Would you please comment?*
John R. Shafer
Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming

Answer: Since this involves a specific make and model, I referred it to Roger Weisensteiner of Kimball, who replied:

Up until 1981 Kimball manufactured its spinets and consoles and some studios with the goose-neck action bracket design. This design, when properly installed and serviced, was a very manageable design. However, the tolerances were critical, not only from an action installation point at manufacturing, but also because any problems like the ones you described with bent or angled screws further complicated the process.

The method that the factory gave you for checking to make sure that the action is completely seated on the action support bolt is correct. I normally install the action and start with action bracket #2, counting from the left or bass end of the piano. Holding the hammer rail down and in turn holding the action down at this #2 bracket point, I tap on the top of the goose-neck bracket with a hammer. When I hear the sound transfer or change from a hollow type to a solid sound I know that that particular bracket is seated. Still holding the hammer rail and action down with my left hand, I take the screw and secure it with my right hand. If the head of the screw or shank is bent, a new screw will be required. Once bracket #2 is installed I then move to action bracket #3, repeating the process of securing and holding the action down, tapping with the hammer and listening for the solid sound, continuing in sequence, bracket #4 and #1 and then verifying at the bottom of the

bracket to make sure that the foot or toe of the bracket does not move when I apply pressure both inwards and outwards . . .

Roger H. Weisensteiner
Manager, Technical Services
Kimball Piano & Organ Co.

Plate Breakage

"Dear Jack,

"In production of piano plates, especially cast iron, we can be sure (as in all manufactured products) that all plates produced are not perfect. In the process of molding, foreign substances such as sand, dirt, etc., can inadvertently be trapped in the molten metal. Another hazard could be air bubbles, called blow holes, trapped in the melting process. Who can tell me how many pianos at the factory suffer broken plates when the pianos, finally assembled, are pulled up to pitch?

"A bridge over the Ohio River in my area on Interstate 79 was erected about three or four years ago. Would you believe that one of the main girders developed a huge crack that rendered the bridge useless until major repairs were made? And we are talking about *steel,* not cast iron; X-ray inspected and quality controlled.

"That all points to a crucial question: how many pianos leave the factory with faulty plates that fail to break at the factory, serve faithfully for 10, 20, 30 or 40 years and finally fail? How many piano plates will fail if tension is removed completely from the plate and restored again when a new pinblock is installed? If the plate is inherently weak due to a bad melt at the factory a great risk is at stake!

"What does a piano technician tell his client when six months, one year or five years after installation of a pinblock he gets a call to say that the plate broke? Or perhaps just a short time after doing a tuning job he gets the same ugly call? Somebody told me recently that one out of 5,000 pianos will experience a plate break in the piano's lifetime. In my own experience (38 years and approximately 16,000 tunings) I have had plates break on 4 pianos. Of course I do take a risk in pulling the piano to 440 pitch, but we can't be tuning pianos *down* just to be safe!

"Yesterday I tuned one and had to raise the pitch a full tone in the bass and tenor and a tone and a half in the treble. The bass strings at such tension produced no more tone than a wet rope. Fortunately for me three of the plates that broke in my 'bad experiences' gave me no problem with my clients because I forewarned them that such an episode could occur in raising pitch. However, the fourth piano was still under warranty when the plate broke. But, sad to say, the warranty was worthless because the manufacturer went out of business! And, believe it or not, the pitch was raised only 20 cents.

"If a client should take a technician to court for a settlement in the case of a plate break, I am sure that the judge would rule in favor of the technician — but how much does it cost for such legal service? My answer to anyone is that he should discipline himself to set aside a fixed percentage of his weekly

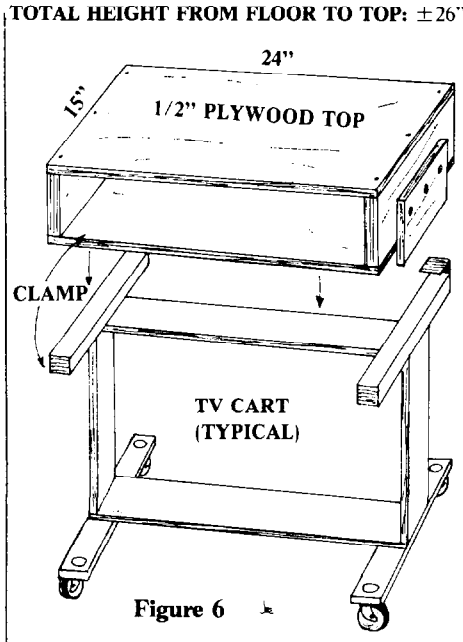


Figure 6

income. This money should be in a separate account and should remain untouched until its balance reaches at least $1,500. This is called insuring yourself without paying premiums. I suggest that the technician doing complete overhauls strive for a fund of $5,000 - $6,000. The feeling of security and relief of pressure can go a long way for the benefit of the technician."
Ernie Vagias
Baden, Pennsylvania

Since receiving Ernie's letter, we noted an item in the Indy 440, newsletter of the Indianapolis Chapter, which had in turn been reprinted from the Western Michigan Newsletter regarding Terry Zimmerman's experience in this regard. It seems that Terry was sued over a broken plate, and that his liability insurance did not cover his loss. According to the report, Terry and the client settled the matter out of court, and he has now obtained a special insurance policy to cover such an eventuality.

This should have been unnecessary, since it is obviously not the fault of the technician who merely tuned the instrument, but of course in a court of law anything can happen. We will be researching this issue, and would like to hear from other technicians who have had experiences with plate breakage and subsequent legal trouble.

Action Dolly

"Lifting pianos and throwing grand actions around over the years eventually catches up with some of us. Too late I arrived at a solution, which I have sketched on the attached sheet. If you want to pass it around, fine; if not — file it, you know where. (See **figure 6** . . . ed.)

"I have shown the measurements of my contraption. All TV carts are not the same size; however, the main height to consider is from the floor to the keybed of the grand piano. The actino is easily slid out onto the cart and wheeled out of the way in the case of regulating dampers, or adjusting backchecks, or anything else you want to fool around with in there.

"The two sections are light and come apart — I use two ivory clamps to hold the top to the cart . . ."
Walter Thatcher, RTT
Creve Coeur, Missouri

Gadget of the Month

Herman Koford, who has contributed so many times in the past, once more shares his thoughts with us. This time the problem is the sheer weight and bulk of the grand action and keyboard, especially bothersome when it has to be carried for a relatively long distance, such as when the action is to be removed from a school. Herman has made a gadget, illustrated in **figure 7,** which makes the keyframe act as the frame of the action carrier. The upper unit is a handle and the lower unit is the wheel-and-axle assembly, and both are attached to the frame by turning wing nuts which clamp these assemblies to the keyframe.

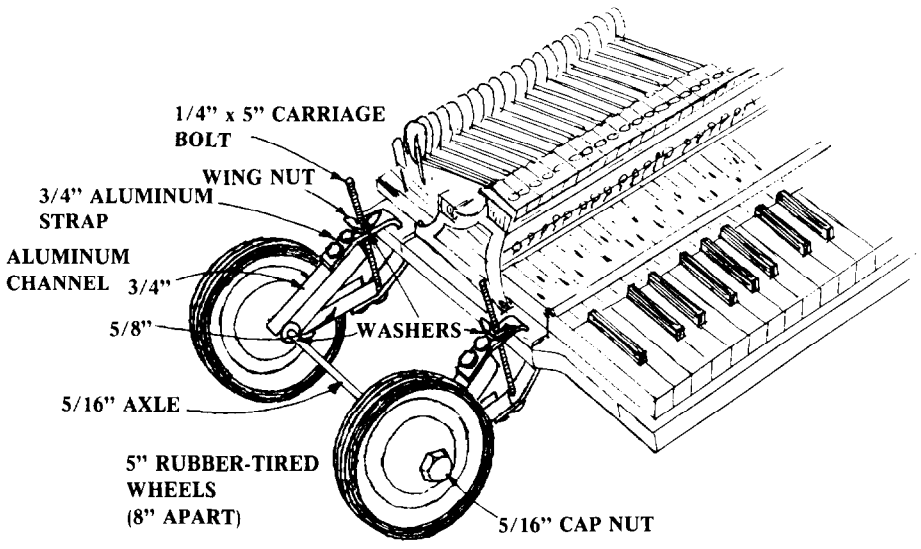
The idea is a sort of variation on the idea of using a two-wheeled luggage carrier to carry a grand action, which was brought to our attention some years ago by Bob Erlandson, RTT, of Omaha, Nebraska.

Reader Comment

Grand Fallboard

In response to Gerald Foye's article in the July issue concerning his surefire method of grand fallboard installation, there is yet another (simpler) procedure which involves virtually no risk of damage to keyblocks, fallboard, piano arms, or technician's temper. Leaving the keyblocks disconnected from the fallboard, place the fallboard so that it is "standing" on the keyboard fairly close to the edge of the keys. Lift one end of the fallboard just enough that the appropriate keyblock can be attached — perhaps 2" or so. Lower that end, lift the other end, attach the other

Figure 7



keyblock, and lower that end. Now the fallboard and keyblocks are a unit and can be properly positioned and secured. The reversal of these steps is also useful for removing fallboard and keyblocks. Even technicians with very short arms or a very high K-factor can safely and successfully utilize this method . . .
Martha Lagoy, RTT
Cincinnati Chapter

Pin Driving Fluid

Concerning the discussion we had at the Pennsylvania State Convention in Allentown about pin driving fluid . . . using APSCO driving fluid and Falconwood: (1) At first the pins are very loose (alarmingly below 100 in. lbs.). (2) Within a week or two the pins are noticeably tighter. (3) By the third M & H tuning all pins with or without fluid were about the same torque.

Advantages to using driving fluid: I had to hammer less to get the pins in and leveled; I had no broken pins; rough and early tuning was less jumpy and less frustrating; and coil tightening was easier. Disadvantage: it took a little more effort not to be messy.
Daniel M. Sponenburg
Reading-Lancaster Chapter

Piano Bench Repair

"Unfortunately, all too often these days benches seem to wear out much before their counterpart, the piano itself, and at a much faster rate than piano benches of yesterday. Tongue and groove construction ofttimes is a thing of the past. Manufacturers seem to favor the butting of bench leg to the sides of the bench by relying on the corner bracket, which is, in turn, fastened to the sides of the bench by small screws only. True, the bracket is mounted into a slot on each piece of the bench sides, but much depends on two small screws.

"All too often the owner uses the piano bench to store everything imaginable — and sometimes even music! By putting too much in the bench storage compartment, the bench user then forces the bottom from the bench itself. This is the better of two problems. The much more likely possibility is that the manufacturer securely fastened the bench bottom to the sides. If so, patron pressure will cause tremendous stress on the corner bracket screws and slots! Often times even the bracket slots split out with nothing left to secure the leg.

"How many times have you, the tuner, tightened up the bench parts without even mentioning it to the customer? It takes more time to explain to them than it does to make the repair. However, it makes good sense to do the service in proper sequence, i.e., loosen the wing nut first, then tighten the screws, finally retightening the leg wing nut proper. By tightening the wing nut and then the screws, you are adding lots of pressure to the smallish screws in their holes, thereby perhaps even compounding the problem itself. Obviously the customer must then be advised to find other places to store things and even music than the piano bench itself. New benches without any storage facilities aren't all that bad, in my book!
Clarence (Clancy) Stout
Arizona and Nebraska Chapters
Holyoke, Colorado

In Conclusion

Our intent in publishing the *Piano Technicians Journal* is to provide something for every technician in every issue; some will read it from cover to cover, but there should be at least some one or two articles of interest to each. If any readers have suggestions for improvement, by all means pass them along. Please send technical comments, together with other technical material for publication, to me at the following address:
Jack Krefting, Technical Editor, PTJ
Baldwin Tech Service
1801 Gilbert Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Editorial
Continued from page 4

5. The very best way to be satisfied is to *go see for yourself.* Visit the agency if possible. Watch them at work. Talk to people who are there working and receiving the service. Try to determine how well it is run.
6. Check their tax exempt status.
7. Be particularly chary of door-to-door solicitors, mail appeals, those which are vague or unknown and those run by wild-eyed zealots. The degree of their enthusiasm is not proportionate to the value of their service.
8. Never make a cash contribution of any size. Don't write a check unless you have all of the particulars.
9. Believe it or not, some of the most questionable charity drives are conducted right there in your home town by your own home-grown crooks. Boiler room telephone solicitation often represent themselves as acceptable entities like police or firemen, ostensibly to 'keep the kids off the streets' or 'help feed the hungry.' often the money goes to somebody's personal welfare program.
10. Gambling for charity isn't always what it seems to be. Skimming is commonplace. A large chunk can go right off the top into somebody's pocket before it ever gets entered into the books. This is one of the original 'trickle down' programs. The 'trickler' gets the bucks and the 'tricklee' gets the pennies.

Don't stop giving. Somebody's life is at stake and you'll feel a lot better if you give and give generously.

Letters

Dear Mr. Santy,

Again I am writing to thank the Guild for being so good to me. Last year a birthday party but this year the Award of the Hall of Fame! I do sincerely thank everybody who had a part in giving me this overwhelming surprise. My first ASPT convention was in Detroit in 1947. I was the only woman member so I was televised with President Gose. I wrote in my diary, "Who do they think I am!"

So humbly I still ask the same question.

My thanks and love to you all,
Hannah Grover

Dear Ernie,

Thank you again so much for honoring me with a Presidential Citation. It is hanging in a prominent place in our living room.

In accepting it I want to share it with the many people in the Piano Technicians Guild who are as deserving as myself of recognition, the many quiet and hard workers of our organization who make the Piano Technicians Guild what it is and what it will be in the future. We do not work for any awards but for the pleasure and enjoyment it gives to us to have a small share in the building and advancement of our great organization and, in a larger way, the betterment of mankind.

Thanks again and with best regards,
Fred Odenheimer

Dear Fellow Members:

Our reasons for entering a trade or profession, and especially for remaining in it for most of a lifetime, are not easy to explain even to ourselves. There must be numerous satisfactions to keep our interest for so long and I have found many of these.

We need to enjoy the work itself, to recognize the challenges, to honestly feel that we have been more than mediocre workmen in the field we have chosen. We hope to have a good relationship with the people for whom we work and with our associates. There is considerable satisfaction in eventually acquiring sufficient skill and developing a clientele that will provide an adequate income.

There are small triumphs in being able to give some younger and talented person a boost along the way. But it is a very special feeling of reward to receive the recognition of friends and co-workers expressed by the award of the Golden Hammer. It is with much humility and gratitude that I thank you all for this remembrance of our years together. It will help me to feel that I was able to do something more than tune a piano pretty well.

Sincerely,
Robert A. Burton

The Eclectic's Notebook

Christopher S. Robinson
Connecticut Chapter

This is being written just after returning from the 1983 New Orleans Piano Technicians Guild Technical Institute. One of the things which appear to be most impressive about this annual event is the steadily increasing level of sophistication in the nature of the information being exchanged. Whether we are talking about the formal classes themselves, the materials and equipment being offered in the Exhibition Hall, or the impromptu "bull sessions" occurring between technicians in the halls and in the living quarters, the ever-widening scope and comprehension of technical applications to piano service methodology was in abundant evidence.

The reader will recall that in our last article, the condition of the AMPLIFIER, or soundboard, began to be considered. As an initial method of analyzing the integrity of that component, we decided to make careful readings of the existing downbearing. These measurements, while they are certainly good indicators, cannot be accepted as irrefutable evidence of the actual condition of the soundboard. There are circumstances when the technician may not be able to measure any bearing on a certain portion of the belly-bridges; yet the soundboard may indeed have significant positive curvature. There are also times when a piano may evidence positive downbearing throughout the scale, despite the fact that the soundboard has been completely caved-in or distorted.

In order to ascertain the actual condition of the soundboard, it will be necessary to stretch a thread along the back of the soundboard between the two longest ribs, from liner (inner rim) to liner. The existence of any air gap at all, *provided it is in the center of the soundboard arc,* proves the presence of positive soundboard crown, and a healthy amplifier with good tonal potential. I'll refer you here to the *Piano Technicians Journal,* December 1982, Volume 25, Number 12, page 8, figure 2 for a very good illustration of the application of this test. If there is no air gap, or if any possible gap exists decidedly in front of or in back of the exact center point in the piano belly, then we are witnessing proof positive of a distorted or collapsed soundboard. The remedy? If the instrument is worthy of extensive remanufacture, then send it to one of the very fine shops equipped for and experienced in soundboard replacement work which may be found in various locations throughout the country. If the customer is unable or unwilling to finance this type of work when all they thought they were requesting was a "simple" voicing, then the wise and seasoned technician will apologize for his/her inability to regulate the tone of the piano in question, and politely excuse himself or herself. Please look closely at **figure 1.**

What the reader sees here is a very common, but infrequently discussed, soundboard condition. It is a *distorted,* or sine-waved soundboard. Do you see what has happened to the treble, or long bridge? It has rolled forward, hasn't it? What the experienced piano technician will be able to measure is the existence of *more downbearing close to the rear bridgepin than can be observed close to the front bridgepin,* when he/she is using a conventional rocker-type bearing gauge. *This observation will always indicate a rolled bridge condition, in most cases a distorted soundboard condition, and in some cases a*

Figure 1

complete collapse of the belly assembly. Do not attempt to voice a piano which evidences this condition unless the problem is to kill volume in the louder portions of the scale. You will not be able to increase the volume, DWELL, or DECAY in any instrument which is suffering from the above problem. It may be possible to heighten the ATTACK, but do not make the mistake of confusing ATTACK with volume, as a great many of your colleagues do. One may with success dampen the net volume of a piano with this condition, however.

Look again closely at **figure 1.** One of the interesting things about it is that the bass bridge is riding a little, perfectly crowned, "semi" soundboard all to itself. How many times have you encountered grand pianos which have a "fantastic bass," "bonging" tenor section, absolutely dead mid-treble, and good ringing high treble? In almost every — no, the heck with it — in *every* case, what you are hearing is the result of a sine-waved, or distorted, soundboard. There is no way any technician will ever get that mid-treble register of the scale to project under the described circumstances. Do not sell your customer a set of new hammers, and do not blame the hammer manufacturer for your own inability to properly diagnose a common cause-and-effect condition! When the car is out of gas, putting water in the radiator will not get you home for dinner.

The soundboard in the modern grand piano must be both COMPLIANT and IMPEDANT. The COMPLIANCE of the board allows it to react with and absorb the motion of the oscillator, or music wire. The greater the COMPLIANCE, the more possible volume can be elicited from the amplifier assembly (disregarding, for now, the hammers). Compliance is determined by the thickness of the board, the taper from apex to edge, feathering or gaining of the ribs, and cross-section of the ribs.

The IMPEDANCE of the soundboard assembly enables it to resist the too rapid absorption of the energy of the vibrating string(s), which would certainly yield a very short DECAY period. It also resists too quickly reacting to the maximum excursion of the struck piano wire, which might result in a narrow and very sharp DWELL figure. The impedance of the soundboard is controlled by its major thickness (at the center of the panel), number and spacing of the ribs, amount of crown imposed on the structure, and the curvature and reverse relief (back-taper) of the belly liners (inner rim).

It's The Little Things That Count!

Gerald F. Foye, RTT
San Diego Chapter

Now what does a piano tuner need with a hacksaw blade, you ask? Even if you didn't ask, I'm going to tell you!

A hacksaw blade can be used for many purposes. One is to cut a screwdriver slot in those screws that have been gouged so badly you can't turn them any more; especially on a certain brand piano where Phillips type screws are used, way down inside, to anchor the key cover hinges.

Also, a hacksaw blade can be used to drag (sideways) across wood, lead weights or other surfaces that must be roughed up for glueing. A light drag across grand hammer tails for better catching is another use. Cutting off hammer shanks or sawing away interference areas (such as a bridge binding against the plate) are other examples.

Although some technicians prefer to use a bare blade, I prefer to use a half section of blade in a plastic sheath (hand grip) for safety. A 24-tooth blade is my preference.

ON PITCH

A Series of Articles Dealing With the Integration and Equation of Aural and Electronic Tuning Techniques

No. 4

Rick L. Baldassin, RTT
Utah Valley Chapter

Last month our discussion presented aural checks and electronic setting instructions to distinguish between three types of octaves — 2:1, 4:2, and 6:3. It was noted that there were four classes of aural checks, since they employ both expanded and contracted intervals, and either the upper note or the lower note may be the reference to which we are tuning.

This month, we will discuss aural checks and setting instructions for 6:3, 8:4, 10:5, and 12:6 octaves. Since these types of octaves are only tuned in the bass of the piano and the top note is always the reference to which we are tuning, we need only concern ourselves with two classifications of aural tests at this time, Class B and Class D.

CLASS B: Upper note is the reference note. If the beat rate between the test note and the lower note is *too slow* as compared to the beat rate of the test note and the reference note, *raise the lower note.* If the beat rate with the lower note is *too fast, lower the lower note.*

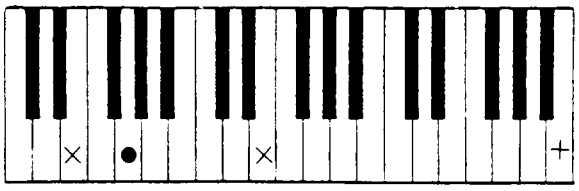
CLASS D: Upper note is the reference note. If the beat rate between the test note and the lower note is *too slow* as compared to the beat rate of the test note and the reference note, *lower the lower note.* If the beat rate with the lower note is *too fast, raise the lower note.*

The object in each case is to obtain an equal beat rate between the upper and lower notes of the octave and the test note. The "x" indicates an octave note, the "●" indicates the test note, and the "+" indicates the strike note. Each test is given a name corresponding to the intervals employed in the test. In naming the intervals, "P" denotes a so-called "Perfect" interval, "M" denotes a "Major" interval, "m" denotes a minor interval, "A" denotes an "Augmented" interval, and "d" denotes a "diminished" interval. It must be noted that some of these intervals are very hard to hear in the bass region of the piano. These checks, however, are still valid. To make use of these checks, hold down one of the octave notes and the test note without playing them. (You may have to use the sostenuto pedal in some cases.) Play the strike note with a staccato blow. Repeat this procedure with the other octave note and the test note. When the two beat rates are the same, the type of octave which has been tested for will have been tuned. The strike note in all cases is the note listed in the electronic setting instructions for that particular type of octave.

Although the 6:3 octave was discussed last month, I have included it again, as it is often necessary to use the above procedure when tuning 6:3 octaves into the lower bass of the piano.

6:3 OCTAVE (Bass)

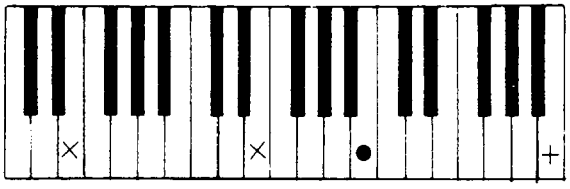
m3 — M6



(Class B)

Test the octave by holding down the m3 between the lower octave note and the test note, and playing the strike note a twelfth above the upper octave note. Then hold down the M6 between the upper note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the E2-G2 m3 and strike B4. Next hold down the G2-E3 M6 and strike B4. When equal beating is obtained, a 6:3 octave has been tuned.

P12 — P5



(Class B)

Test the octave by holding down the P12 between the lower octave note and the test note, then playing the strike note a twelfth above the upper octave note. Then hold down the P5 between the upper octave note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the E2-B3 P12 and strike B4. Next hold down the E3-B3 P5 and strike B4. When equal beating is obtained, a 6:3 octave has been tuned.

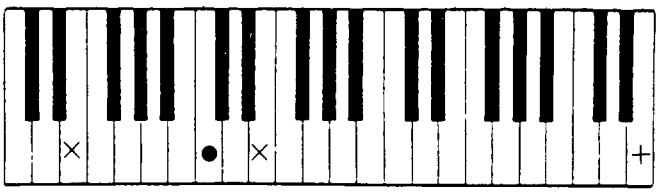
6:3 OCTAVE Electronic Setting Instructions

Twelfth (octave and a fifth) above the upper note

To tune the above example electronically, set the tuner on B4, play E3, stop the pattern, and tune E2.

8:4 OCTAVE (Low Bass)

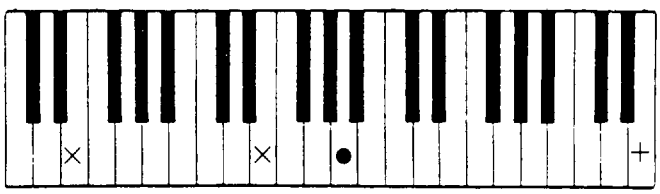
m6 — M3



(Class B)

Test the octave by holding down the m6 between the lower octave note and the test note, and playing the strike note two octaves above the upper octave note. Then hold down the M3 between the upper octave note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the E1-C2 m6 and strike E4. Next hold down the C2-E2 M3 and strike E4. When equal beating is obtained, an 8:4 octave has been tuned.

P11 — P4



(Class D)

Test the octave by holding down the P11 between the lower octave note and the test note, and playing the strike note two octaves above the upper octave note. Then hold down the P4 between the upper octave note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the E1-A2 P11 and strike E4. Next hold down the E2-A2 P4 and strike E4. When equal beating is obtained, an 8:4 octave has been tuned.

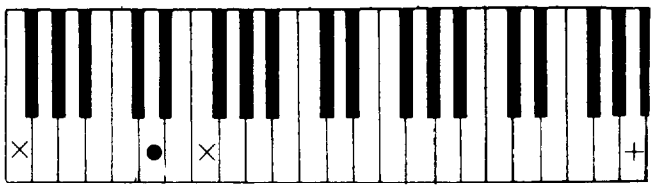
8:4 OCTAVE Electronic Setting Instructions:

Two octaves above the upper note

To tune the above example electronically, set the tuner on E4, play E2, stop the pattern, and tune E1. You may have to pluck E1 to get a reading.

10:5 OCTAVE (Lower Bass)

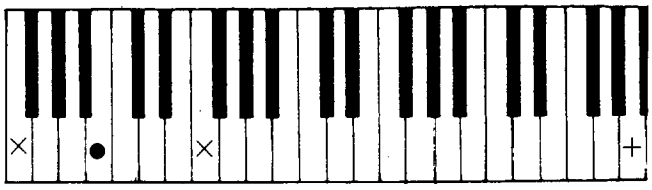
M6 — m3



(Class D)

Test the octave by holding down the M6 between the lower octave note and the test note, and playing the strike note a seventeenth above the upper octave note. Then hold down the m3 between the upper octave note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the F1-D2 M6 and strike A4. Next hold down the D2-F2 m3 and strike A4. When equal beating is obtained, a 10:5 octave has been tuned.

A4 — d5



(Class B)

Test the octave by holding down the A4 between the lower octave note and the test note, and playing the strike note a seventeenth above the upper octave note. Then hold down the d5 between the upper octave note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the F1-B1 A4 and strike A4. Next hold down the B1-F2 d5 and strike A4. When equal beating is obtained, a 10:5 octave has been tuned.

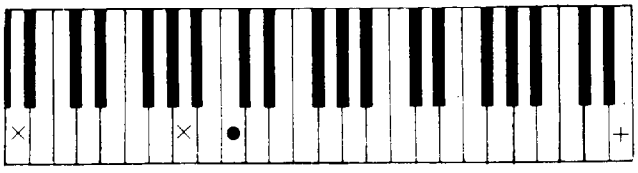
10:5 OCTAVE Electronic Setting Instructions:

Seventeenth (two octaves and a Major third) above the upper note

To tune the above example electronically, set the tuner on A4, play F2, stop the pattern, and tune F1.

12:6 OCTAVE (Lowest Bass)

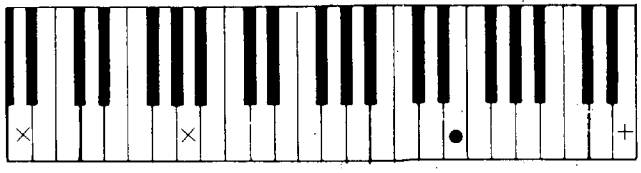
m10 — m3



(Class B)

Test the octave by holding down the m10 between the lower octave note and the test note, and playing the strike note a nineteenth above the upper octave note. Then hold down the m3 between the upper octave note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the A0-C2 m10 and strike E4. Next hold down the A1-C2 m3 and strike E4. When equal beating is obtained, a 12:6 octave has been tuned.

P19 — P12



(Class B)

Test the octave by holding down the P19 between the lower octave note and the test note, and playing the strike note a nineteenth above the upper octave note. Then hold down the P12 between the upper octave note and the test note and play the strike note. To test the above example, hold down the A0-E3 P19 and strike E4. Next hold down the A1-E3 P12 and strike E4. When equal beating is obtained, a 12:6 octave has been tuned.

12:6 OCTAVE Electronic Setting Instructions:

Nineteenth (two octaves and a fifth) above the upper note

To tune the above example electronically, set the tuner on E4, play A1, stop the pattern, and tune A0.

Prove these aural tests and setting instructions by cross-checking. In the case of the 6:3 octave, tune the octave such that the m3 and M6 are equal beating. Now testing with the other aural test for a 6:3 octave, the P12 and P5 should also be equal beating (though very slow). Finally check electronically by setting the tuner a twelfth (octave and a fifth) above the upper note. Play the upper note, and stop the pattern. When the lower note is played, the pattern should be stopped as well. The order of these three tests is unimportant. The octave could have been set electronically and tested aurally. Be sure, however, to use the aural tests and electronic setting instructions for the same type of octave.

Next month our discussion will include aural tests and electronic setting instructions for double octaves and executing compromises between the various types of octaves and double octaves.

Sound Background

Jack Greenfield, RTT
Chicago Chapter

Early Clavier Music, Tuning and Instruments

Clavier Music Originates

Although Praetorius' *Syntagma musicum,* published in Germany around 1619, was one of the earliest books giving extensive details on keyboard stringed instruments, interest in such music developed later in Germany than in other European countries. The Germans adopted the French term for keyboard, *clavier,* and used it during the seventeenth century to denote any keyboard stringed instrument. In the eighteenth century it was applied specifically to the clavichord, then used in the nineteenth century to differentiate the square or upright piano from the German grandpiano, the *flugel* (wing shaped) or *fortepiano.*

Throughout the sixteenth and into the early seventeenth century, the keyboard compositions written in Germany and Austria were almost entirely organ music for religious services — Protestant and Catholic. This music, playable on an instrument tuned in regular meantone temperament, falls within a compass of twelve notes or less, never exceeding two flats or three sharps. It is quite likely that the clavier's tone quality and ease of tuning encouraged the development of music characterized by a bolder use of accidentals and dissonance. In addition, the clavier composers' experimentation with temperaments ultimately resulted in the obsolescence of regular meantone temperament.

Clavier composers often did not indicate whether their compositions were intended for harpsichord or clavichord, although many were suitable for either one, and some for organ as well. The German and Austrian regions were among the few where the harpsichord and clavichord achieved equal popularity.

Clavier Compositions and Tuning

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) is considered great, not for any innovations in composition or tuning, but for bringing to perfection musical trends originated and carried on by European composers before him. When clavier music first began to develop in Germany at the start of the seventeenth century, it was greatly influenced by the famous organist, composer and teacher of Amsterdam, Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck (1562-1621) — through his German pupils.

Sweelinck's own secular keyboard pieces intended for the harpsichord show resemblances to the style of the English virginalists, a few of whom were his personal friends. One of his illustrious German pupils, Samuel Scheidt (1587-1654), also wrote some music for the harpsichord reflecting the influence of the English school. Barbour's analysis of thirty-six Sweelinck compositions and forty-four Scheidt compositions indicate that with one exception none exceed a range of twelve scale degrees and all can be played in regular meantone temperament.

Germany's first outstanding clavierist was Johann Jacob Froberger (1616-1667). Froberger began as a Vienna choir-boy and then became a subordinate organist at the court. At the age of 21, he went to Rome and studied with Frescobaldi for over three years, then went on to a career as a performer and composer of organ and harpsichord music which brought him fame throughout Europe. In his harpsichord compositions, Froberger blended elements of Italian style acquired from his teacher Frescobaldi with organ techniques and patterns from Sweelinck, establishing a manner of composition and form followed by later German composers.

Froberger was also advanced in his tuning; like his teacher, Frescobaldi, he was in favor of equal temperament, according to Lindley. In contrast to Scheidt, about three decades earlier, who always stayed within the limits of traditional meantone temperaments, only half of Froberger's sixty-seven clavier compositions analyzed by Barbour did not exceed this compass. Overall, Froberger used accidentals ranging from G^{b} to $E^{\#}$ but wrote only fourteen compositions with one or two extra scale degrees over the usual twelve.

Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706) is better known as an organ composer, but he wrote a considerable amount of clavier music, much of it suitable for the modern piano. Although Pachelbel rarely exceeded twelve scale degrees, he frequently used accidentals outside the traditional E^{b}-$G^{\#}$ meantone compass. In one of his most advanced compositions the range is D^{bb} to B and an enharmonic modulation treats the F^{b} major triad as E major resolving to A minor.

The clavier music of Johann Kuhnau (1660-1772), an interesting personality overshadowed by his successor, Bach, continued the trend away from the limits of traditional regular meantone

temperament. Most of Kuhnau's pieces contain accidentals outside the usual $E^{\flat}$-$G^{\#}$ range, although the majority do not have over twelve different pitches to the octave. His work is of interest for other reasons also. He was a gifted musician, holding the post of organist and then cantor at St. Thomas' Church in Leipzig from 1684 until his death in 1722. In 1722, Bach took the position at St. Thomas', which he held for most of his career. Kuhnau was not satisfied with the pitch of the church organ and had it raised a full tone to A=480 Hz after he was appointed cantor. The organist then had to transpose when playing with other instruments. Bach left the organ at this pitch.

Kuhnau was the first composer to write keyboard "program" music and sonatas, as distinct from suites. Previously, the sonata had been a form for instrumental music only. His *Biblical Sonatas,* which depicted events from the Old Testament, became quite popular soon after publication in 1700. He was also an amusing writer of satire. One of his plays concerned rivalry between the *Stadtpfeifer,* the official town guild musicians and the amateur or semi-professional "beer-fiddlers" who busked in the streets or taverns.

In 1722 Bach published his first *Wohltempiertes Klavier* collection of preludes and fugues in all twenty-four major and minor keys to demonstrate well temperament. Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer (1665-1746) had preceded him in 1715 with a similar collection of preludes and fugues in twenty different keys, *Ariadne musica Neo-organoedum.* Fischer, considered one of the best performers of his time, is also rated as the most important keyboard composer of the period between Froberger and Bach.

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767), who was better known than Bach to their contemporaries, was offered the post of cantor at St. Thomas before Bach, but accepted an equivalent appointment for higher salary at St. Johns, Hamburg. In 1688, the organ there had become the first to be tuned in equal temperament. Telemann, one of the most prolific composers in musical history, wrote pleasing but shallow music. His clavier pieces cover a range from $G^{\flat}$-$B^{\#}$, but few contain more than twelve different scale degrees. Telemann wrote in church modal scales which were nearly obsolete by his time.

The fact that many of the compositions discussed do not exceed twelve scale degrees suggests the possibility that claviers could have been tuned in regular meantone with several accidentals retuned to give the specific range required for the piece being performed, a practice Barbour refers to as variable tuning. While not ruling out the possibility, Lindley could find little documentation for this procedure and believes the use of regular meantone temperament as a circulating temperament with acceptance of its dissonance was more frequent before the adoption of the less dissonant irregular circulating temperaments.

German Instrument Making

The seventeenth century German instrument makers were leaders in building fine organs but neglected the harpsichord and built inexpensive, poorly finished, roughly constructed clavichords. The quality of German domestic keyboard instruments rose rapidly soon after the start of the eighteenth century, reaching a level on a par with the finest made anywhere in Europe. Clavichords, developed to the greatest extent in Germany, were more popular there than harpsichords, which were used little outside the theater, opera, large churches, and palaces of royalty.

German craftsmen developed a new, larger, more sophisticated clavichord design. The old fretted four-octave, three-and-one-half-by-one-foot model continued to be made, but a larger unfretted five-octave or more instrument became popular; some had a third set of four-foot pitch strings to reinforce the lowest octave-and-a-half. Some clavichords for use in practice by organists were fitted with a pedal board attached by trackers to the underside of the lower keys. Even though clavichords had begun to disappear in most other European countries by the end of the sixteenth century, they were produced and played in Germany until the first quarter of the nineteenth century, and also in the Scandinavian countries which had instruments patterned after the German models.

The most advanced clavichords were close to six feet long by two feet wide, with a compass of at least five octaves. Their tone was brighter and more sustained. The length of the instrument made it unnecessary to use wound strings in the bass. Another, even larger type of clavichord invented by Gottfried Silbermann never found favor; it was called the *cembal* or *cimbal d'amour,* and had strings double the normal speaking length, struck by the tangents exactly in the middle, and separate soundboards and bridges on each side.

The makers of the most notable German harpsichords and clavichords are considered to have been Hieronymus A. Hass, who began his career in Hamburg in the early 1700s, and his son, Johann

Adolph. The Hasses went far beyond conventional harpsichord design in introducing such features as two-foot and sixteen-foot stops and a third manual for quick change in registration. The sixteen-foot set of strings, long enough to be uncovered, were on a separate bridge and soundboard of optimum area to give a clear tone. The few other German builders who included sixteen-foot strings did not place them on a separate bridge. No others provided two-foot registers. Besides about eighteen Hass clavichords, there are still in existence six or seven Hass harpsichords, large, elaborate, beautifully decorated instruments with bright, penetrating but harsh tone.

Although they received little recognition for their leadership at the time, the Hasses' craftsmanship served as a standard to raise the quality of the instruments of the other builders in the Hamburg area. Elsewhere, in Saxony and in scattered locations, builders were influenced by the Silbermann family. Gottfried Silbermann was the most eminent organ builder of the early eighteenth century. Construction of domestic keyboard instruments was secondary in his business but gained prestige because of his fame for the organs he made. The Saxon harpsichords were generally of lighter construction in simple, plain wood cases.

Without minimizing the originality and craftsmanship of the Hasses, who built instruments to meet the specifications of their purchasers, modern specialists question the value of the two-foot stop; its effect is not considered worth the extra complexity. The sixteen-foot stop is also not a complete success. While the simple tones of several different types of organ pipes can be blended to produce different timbres, harpsichord string tone is more complex. Unless used with discretion, combinations with the sixteen-foot stop can give muddy sound. It is doubtful that Bach ever owned a harpsichord with a sixteen-foot stop, but he used the more usual German harpsichords with the same disposition as the French: 2x8', 1x4', on two manuals with coupler.

1983 HALL OF FAME

Fred Drasche

Hannah Grover

Coming Events

October 1, 1983
FALL FESTIVAL OF FILMS
Piano Store
San Leandro, CA
Contact: Sid Stone
16875 E. 14th Street
San Leandro, CA 94578
(415) 481-1903

October 2-4, 1983
FLORIDA STATE CONVENTION
Sheraton, Jacksonville Beach Resort Inn
Jacksonville Beach, FL
Contact: Barney J. Johns
3546 Oleander St.
Jacksonville, FL 32205
(904) 786-0868

October 15, 1983
OHIO STATE SEMINAR
Mount St. Joseph College
Cincinnati, Ohio
Contact: Robert D. Mollard
9335 Ranchill Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45231

October 14-16, 1983
TEXAS STATE CONVENTION
Downtown Holiday Inn
Wichita Falls, Texas
Contact: Jimmy Gold
2101 Walnut
Duncan, OK 73533
(405) 255-5804

October 20-23, 1983
NEW YORK STATE CONFERENCE
Executive Hotel
Buffalo, New York
Contact: Charles Erbsmehl
4165 Ransom Road
Clarence, NY 14031
(716) 759-6126

November 18-19-20, 1983
Third Annual N.C. State Convention
East Carolina University Music School
Greenville, NC
Contact: Don Wigent
East Carolina University Music School
Greenville, NC 27834
day — (919) 757-6069
night — (919) 355-2830

PIANO APPRAISALS

A Pretty Sticky Wicket

Joseph Anthony Meehan, RTT
Maine Chapter

VI. HELP! GET HELP!

Did you ever walk into a customer's house to do an estimate or appraisal and end up with a kind of dazed look on your face, as if to say: "wait a minute! What is this thing *really* worth?" It's hard, ain't it hard, and it's hard!!! . . .

If we asked one hundred piano tuners to sequentially examine one Steinway B, made in 1922 and still in very good condition, it is a reasonable guess that we would hear a wide variety of values. Believe me, jewelers examining a one carat diamond would do the same. And the same is true for any other profession which in due course affixes prices. Do you think that all real estate agents or art appraisers agree? Of course not! So I'm not saying either that we should or could. I am saying that if we all got together on the criteria for assessing values on pianos it might just cut down a mite on the vast extremes in our guesstimating.

If you haven't been in the business too long or you just haven't had the opportunity to do much appraising, look for professional help yourself.

Cardinal Rule Number 1 should be: Do no off-the-cuff appraising. When in doubt, it would be the better part of valor to admit you're just not sure what this piano is worth and you want to consult with some other knowledgeable people in the piano business.

Any customer will respect this straight approach. Sometimes the second opinion is only a phone call or two away. Sometimes some leg work may be required, but if you are charging a fair price, you'll earn it and get an education along the way.

For a piano that is hard to put a price on (and believe me, they are out there), try to ball-park the value in your own mind. Next describe it to other tuners and ask what figure they would put on it and why. Rarely, but it happens, there may be the need for someone else to actually look at the piano. If you're still just not sure, then ask your friendly piano dealer (presumably you are friendly with many of them) what he would sell it for and always ask why — the answers are often very enlightening.

An important point to be made here is that there are often too many perspectives (points of view) in selling and buying pianos. What I mean by this is that all kinds of not-so-important variables come into play. For example, I was recently called to do an appraisal on a run-of-the-mill Chickering square. I've just never really been wild about squares anyhow, and this one needed anything and everything including hammers, stringing, refinishing, etc.

I explained to the seller that the day of the square was over and that even at best they left a bit to be desired. My conclusion was that the piano was worth no more than $100 because (as we all know) the damned things make pretty good work tables, desks, etc.

I received a phone call a few weeks later. This person had come upon some information (through other sources) that (a) had high praise for square pianos in general, (b) some of the great composers had used them, (c) that this particular Chickering had been used by a U.S. Vice President, and (d) if one of these pianos were constructed from scratch today it would cost over $40,000.

The final blow was that they had successfully sold the piano for $850 "to someone who had always wanted one and was going to have it completely restored for her daughters to take lessons on."

My logic was based on considering the piano as an investment in a workable (or someday workable) musical instrument. So I stuck to my guns and mailed them some information supporting my point of view.

I've only seen two squares in completely restored condition (or very nearly so), and they were still disappointing, from both a technical and musical standpoint.

But in this example you can see that you'd be making a mistake to assume that, because you might be more knowledgeable, people will think and do as you expect. They won't. It's that simple. If you are confident in what you are doing and constantly seeking and gaining expertise, then you will do a solid appraisal based on clear thinking. Most importantly, you will be the master of the art and *your* opinion will carry weight.

Final Decisions

After a written appraisal has been completed and submitted to a client, in many cases the work is not yet complete. If the appraisal has been performed for someone who is looking to buy the piano in question, some verbal advice from you (based on your

knowledge and experience) is not considered out of order.

Quite often the said piano is in borderline condition. If it is the first piano that your client has seen or tried you might gently persuade them to look around.

Sometimes people are in a hurry getting themselves in a bind where the piano is not right for the situation. Examples would be: piano too large (in sound) for a small room, or piano is too small (in tone and response) for a professional pianist.

It is often very difficult because the final decision of *to buy or not to buy* is in the mind of the buyer. A little effort on our part to help them distinguish the different kinds of trees in the piano forest may possibly be misinterpreted as meddling. Ours is a service and to do a complete job may require more than just handing someone a printed page full of facts that can actually cloud instead of clear the picture when a decision is to be made. There are people out there (and we've all run into them) who just don't understand any kind of technical jargon. Best advice I can give on this matter is to be clear and concise. Both are a challenge.

Summary

Through experience and hard work you can make yourself not only a professional piano tuner-technician but also a professional piano appraiser. Not all technicians are automatically competent, knowledgeable appraisers. It's a real specialty and by proper application there's money and adventure awaiting.

Besides the obvious requests for accurate, unbiased piano appraisal for schools, churches, private individuals, etc., there is also a demand from auctioneers, insurance claims and moving companies.

It is an interesting and perplexing art trying to determine just what each individual piano is really worth monetarily. It has been the purpose of this limited series of articles to help the reader:

A) Understand clearly how and why an appraisal should be conducted;

B) Have the tools to plan how to attack each situation, and

C) Increase the number of appraisals he or she performs, thereby growing in proficiency.

From left: Frances Mehaffey, Lin Kuo-Hai, President Ernie Preuitt, WRVP Dan Evans, and Richard Loerfler at the Pearl River Plant.

Dear Mr. Preuitt:

It was a great pleasure receiving your letter dated 26th last month, and I was honored by reading your words concerning my application letter which was read at your annual convention. And your letter too was read repeatedly now to my colleagues and fellow craftsmen here for them to share our genuine friendship which had been built during your China visit.

Enclosed herewith my signed application form and the Declaration with no dues attached. Please bill me if there is a due that the affiliate membership ought to be paid.

I am deeply grateful and much obliged to you for many kindnesses you have done me, and here with my best wishes for you and your fellow technicians to win a prosperous new success in the field.

Sincerely,
Kuo-Hai, Lin
Engineer, Guangzhou Piano Factory

Shoptalk

Susan Graham, RTT
San Francisco Chapter

Help Wanted

What would you say to a job which pays less than the going rate, has more potential problems than other piano work, puts you in compromising situations, and requires you to tune in a room full of telephones ringing, people talking, and other instruments being played? What would you say to a job which offers you a chance to be paid to hone your skills, keep in touch with the latest developments in the piano field, and develop helpful relationships with the service departments of leading piano manufacturers? Would you believe me if I said it's the same job?

I'm talking about dealer work, of course. Store work has been very beneficial to my career, yet many technicians are prejudiced against it. I've even overheard a chapter officer advise a novice technician that she would do better to support herself waiting tables than to take a dealer job. What opportunity does waiting tables offer to practice tuning or repairs or even keep in touch with the piano business? Of course, there are some disreputable dealers; but there are also those with an interest in the condition of the pianos they sell. Particularly for a beginning technician, an association with one of these has benefits. We owe it to the industry to see that new pianos get good service. In this article I'll offer tips on maximizing the benefits and dealing with the problems of store work.

I went to work for a dealer because I'd spent several years working only in the shop and my tuning skills were rusty, but I couldn't face tuning my own piano over and over again for practice. A floor tuning job is a good accompaniment to a rebuilding practice: after several days in the shop, it's good to have an opportunity to tune where the schedule is usually flexible and the pressure to perform less. Most dealers specify that a tuner need not overexert for a floor tuning. Even though you don't strive for perfection, it is helpful that the pianos sit around and you have a chance to follow yourself up and check for relative stability and musical results. Dealer work also offers a chance to work on good pianos which an inexperienced technician might otherwise avoid — an opportunity to tune a nice grand without the pressure of an artist

hanging over you is beneficial. Practicing on old uprights is fine, but there comes a time when you need to work on a good piano to know if you're doing good work. If you have trouble, there is usually time to call another technician for advice or help. This can't be done if the movers are waiting, dolly in hand; but often the time schedule on a dealer floor is relaxed, and there are other technicians connected with the store who can help or supervise your work. If you are in the final learning stages, then, or take occasional breaks from tuning, a store job offers an opportunity to practice and learn with at least some pay.

Another payoff of store work is building a clientele. Most dealers include a free tuning after delivery; you have an opportunity to explain to the customer what their piano needs, and to present yourself in such a manner that they will call you when service is needed. You have the implicit recommendation of the store, a benefit which is particularly helpful to those of us who are younger or of a different gender than the standard image of a piano tuner. Take advantage of this situation and your business will grow steadily. You also get customers who call the store for a tuner simply because they don't know who else to ask. Unless there are balancing advantages for you, there is no good reason for the dealer to expect part of the fee you collect for such tunings or to insist that the free-service customers contact you through him so he collects a fee for that also. After all, it is to his advantage to have someone reputable to recommend, and these collect referrals are to balance out the reduced rates you charge him.

One of the frustrations of dealer work is time spent waiting while instruments are being demonstrated — it is pointless to continue to tune. Many dealers prefer that you not even try, since customers find this pressures or distracts them. If there are repairs which can be made discreetly, do them. If not, the time waiting need not be all wasted. If the salespeople are competent, a lot can be learned from them. We consider ourselves a breed apart, but we actually must sell ourselves and our services, and we share a common task of running a business. Good sales techniques can be picked up from the old hands around a piano store.

A well-run store offers an opportunity to study small business management. If, like me, your background is liberal arts rather than business, this chance to "eavesdrop" on the workings of a going concern is valuable. (If it's poorly run, you can learn from that, too . . .) Apart from just listening, talk with the salespeople: they can be excellent contacts. Social chat is to your advantage, to let them feel they know and trust you; also be tuned in to developments and rumors about the business, the manufacturers, etc. Most dealers notice and appreciate the technician who takes some interest in the welfare of the store beyond just the condition of the pianos, and, in truth, the better informed you are, the better equipped you are.

Don't get in the habit of complaining to the salespeople, though. If there is a problem with a piano, you're the technician — fix it. The owner or manager should be informed of problems, to approve repairs and extra charges, or to refer you to the manufacturer's service department, but they don't want to hear you rant and rave. Cursing and throwing tools is seldom helpful and will not impress the dealer with your ability to handle difficult situations. Think of the owner and his salespeople as customers, and treat them with the same courtesy you would in their homes. Sometimes this is hard when they chatter and type and interrupt you with 15 renditions of "Stardust"; it's easy to feel unappreciated. If you have a legitimate complaint, try to work it out calmly with the manager. Don't just adopt an adversary attitude or indulge in continual low-level griping.

As with other problems, the more you emphasize that it is to the store's advantage for you to be able to do good work, and the more you present yourself as interested in the welfare of the store, the better your chances of success. Some dealers stipulate that they want tuners on the floor at certain times when business is usually slow; this is reasonable and gives you more right to ask for the best possible conditions during those hours. Also, if you can arrange to come in regularly on a particular day, they can schedule deliveries around that and are less likely to schedule a delivery and then call you in a panic because the piano isn't tuned.

Finally, remember that we seldom get complete silence in homes, either. The combat experience of a showroom floor will accustom you to handling interruptions and noise as no other situation can.

The foundation for good relations with a dealer is to find out what he wants. Some want pianos in fairly good tune with all the clicks and squeaks ironed out. Some want to take the piano off the factory truck, spend a maximum of 15 minutes servicing it, and deliver it to the customer, planning further service only if there are complaints. The dealer's main concern is saleability; moderate your standards with that in mind, and approach him with suggestions for improvement from that standpoint. He is then more likely to consider you an ally whose advice he can trust, rather than someone merely trying to cut into his profit margin. Tell him that the pianos will sell better if they sound and look good; customers will be happier if the piano arrives in good condition; it is less expensive for him and less stressful for the customer if problems are solved on the showroom

floor. A customer who finds one defect looks for more; many difficult situations can be avoided by adequate service before the instrument is delivered. Situations may be complicated by the question of who should pay to correct a problem — the customer, the dealer, or the manufacturer? Store technicians must be familiar with the concrete terms of warranties, as well as the general service philosophy of the dealer and the manufacturer. Get an idea about these things before problems arise; chances are you will find yourself in the middle and need to know what to do. Avoid making promises for anyone else. Use the telephone or make a return visit, to be sure you are authorized before doing extensive repairs. Try to concentrate on technical problems, not financial matters which do not concern you.

If you are a reasonable person and a competent technician, the manufacturer's service personnel will notice, and will appreciate the work you are doing. They will want reports from you on recurring problems as well as strong points. If there is a system for reporting the condition of individual pianos, use it. Contrary to how it may seem, these reports do get read and changes made. Beyond that, it can work to your advantage for the service departments to get to know you; their trust enables you to help your customers, and may yield more interesting or challenging work for you as well. We have to accept the fact that new pianos are often not in as good condition as we would like; they usually don't get detailing in the factory, and it is the dealer technicians who perform this final and important stage in piano manufacturing. The service departments may understand this better than the dealer; try to work out with both of them who will pay you for the extra work beyond a simple floor tuning so you can at least feel that the pianos are in adequate condition.

What is appropriate service? Here's my typical service procedure on a new vertical piano. Remove the front and bottom boards and other case parts to have a clear view and access to all parts of the piano. Play every key (with and without the pedals depressed) and chalk mark where there are problems. Quickly look at the bridges, trapwork, soundboard and ribs; nothing is more frustrating than to tune a piano and then find a major defect which requires its return to the factory. I also check the piano over first to judge what is needed to get it in showable condition; if I need to emphasize more troubleshooting and less tuning I can allocate my time accordingly.

A smooth-sounding tuning is important, but the piano should also be at pitch or slightly sharp. New pianos fall flat quickly and need to be stabilized with frequent tunings; the showroom floor is the perfect place to master the 15-minute pitch change. If you raise pitch and tune it on the floor, then tune it again fairly soon in the home (try to get the dealer to stipulate that free tunings must be done within 3 months of delivery), half the battle is won. If you convince the customer to have you return in six months, the piano will always be more stable and easier to tune than one which never receives those first frequent tunings. If I find a piano flat, I pull it up first by a third as much — in other words, if it's 15 beats flat, I pull it 5 beats sharp, and run quickly through an entire "tuning." What this does is reload proper tension on the strings and pressure on the soundboard; it will settle back around pitch as quickly as you are done. Often new pianos are very uneven, being much flatter in some sections than others, and a quick evening of pitch will enable you to do a better and more stable tuning than to attempt to bring it into shape in one shot. It's less work in the long run: just bang through it, and I do mean bang — get those strings moving!

After pitch location, I concentrate on smooth unisons and enough octave stretch to allow for some settling. The absolute uniformity of intervals we usually strive for are only appropriate for the preparation of artist instruments, or when the dealer requests it and will pay for the added effort. Otherwise, tune for a pleasing result which makes the instrument showable, gives indication of characteristic tone, and sets a foundation for pitch stabilization.

It's important that every note work; even a customer with a tin ear can find a sticking key. Check with the damper pedal engaged, so the weight of the damper lever is not there to assist sluggish keys. Use the palm of the hand to depress keys in groups and watch for slow returners. Check the case parts to see they aren't binding. Ease keys or remove wood where they are rubbing each other (carry a rasp so you can do this quickly).

Pull back on the hammer rest rail to see that the hammers follow: if not, there isn't enough lost motion. Now, as we know, the place to correct lost motion is in the capstans, right? Wrong. In dealer work, look for "wholesale" solutions to problems. In this case, adding thin felt (nameboard felt) to the rail supports will solve the problem. Drop and compact actions need appreciable lost motion or the jacks will hang up; err on the side of caution to allow for further settling.

Another common problem is insufficient or excessive dip. Here again, use a wholesale approach: change the balance rail. In some pianos, there are several pairs of screws to make this adjustment; one to support the rail, another to lock it on the lower screw. Other pianos have wood or cardboard shims. Look for these under the keys and use them to adjust the rail to correct the dip. This isn't cheating; in the factory, uniform punchings are placed under the keys

and dip is set in just this manner.

Employ this "wholesale" approach in analyzing other problems in the action. If one jack doesn't work, an individual button may need adjusting, but if a whole section of jacks hang up, look for a rail which has moved or something else which affects them all before adjusting individual notes.

Clicks and buzzes usually do have to be chased down note by note. Look for loose screws, or insufficient glue at the hammer head, butt and catcher joints. There may be drips of glue in the action — on the underside of the bridle strap, for instance, where the jack will click against it. Watch for foreign objects in the action — bridge pins, stringing hooks, burn-in knives, etc. It's good policy to remove debris from anywhere inside a piano before it wanders into the action.

A buzz can indicate a serious problem, such as a loose rib or soundboard, or it can be as minor as a loose music desk screw. Look for simple solutions before you panic. There can be problems with the strings and bridges which cause weird sounds or buzzing too. Misplaced notching, which can be corrected with a sharp knife, insufficient side bearing, which requires bridge pins to be bent over (slightly) or moved, or debris caught on or under the bridge are things to watch for. Of course, buzzing bass strings need to be twisted. With the advent of automated stringing, coils have been more uniform but occasionally a becket needs to be squeezed or even straightened out and reset to keep the string from pulling out of the tuning pin.

Avoid removing the action, but sometimes it's inevitable. Getting it back in is tricky; the action brackets won't line up with the bolts or bolt holes. This is due to the way actions are installed in vertical pianos; usually, the upper bolts are fastened first and then the supports are installed from underneath. It's easy for a worker to be a little heavyhanded tightening these and actually spring the action brackets. Then the piano is regulated. It comes to the store and something breaks, you remove the action and can't get it back in. What to do? If the bolts themselves are the removable kind, be sure to start them all into the plate before tightening any down. If this doesn't help or doesn't apply, you must turn down the lower supports until the brackets align, secure the action, and then turn up the supports again until the action resumes its original position (watching lost motion is the best way to check this — the hammers will stand up off the rail when you first reinstall the action on lowered bolts).

Check the pedals; if the bars bind on each other or on the plate, rasp off wood. Be sure the pedals are firmly anchored and correctly spaced — put cardboard under the support blocks if they groan on the board. Adjust so there is lost motion.

Put the case back together, checking the fit. Look for dings in the finish and fix or report them.

With luck, none of these problems will recur after delivery and the next thing heard from the customer is a request for the free tuning. If the store gives you the name and you call to set up an appointment, be sure to give them your name and phone number. This does two things: it enables them to reach you directly if a cancellation is necessary. It also has a psychological effect — many people think they'll remember an appointment and won't write it down. If you give them a number, though, they'll make a note. No-shows when you go to do a free tuning are aggravating; work out with the dealer how you are paid for these. It goes without saying that *you* honor appointments punctually. When you do go, take the time to explain to the customer that a new piano needs frequent tuning — three times in the first year — to stabilize it, that tuning is virtually the only service they need to protect their investment, and that their children will develop good ear training only by playing an in-tune instrument. Tell them how to clean the keys and the case and to leave the fallboard open to help prevent sticking keys by allowing air to circulate. Check that the bench leg bolts are tight. Use this chance to make them your customer — dress well, act professionally and discipline yourself to spend the extra time and effort even though you are making less on this initial call. Leave your business card and/or a sticker with the tuning date, and keep a file so you can call or send reminders. I have the customer self-address the card; in six months when I send it, they see their own handwriting, which reminds them of their commitment to take care of their piano. If you miss this chance, you let an excellent business-building opportunity slip by.

Dealer work has problems but it has rewards too. Someone has to do it and it might as well be you as your competition. Keep a level head and a sense of humor and it can be a beneficial association for all concerned.

Continuing Education

Stephen H. Brady, RTT
Seattle Chapter

In explaining the name I've selected for this series, perhaps I can also explain why I am presumptuous enough to write it.

When Jack Krefting suggested that the name of my column should make reference to the idea of the university technician, I thought that was wise, since the articles I contemplate are not coherently related by subject matter (except that they all deal with pianos), and since I am, after all, a university technician. After discarding the cute names such as *A View From the 'U', The Ivory Tower,* and *The Old College Try,* I thought that *The University Technician,* while straightforward, might be all right. The problem was that much of what I planned to write about is not specifically related to the university or to the problems of the university technician. Rather, the idea is to write about a wide range of topics which may be of interest to all piano technicians.

So I've chosen *Continuing Education,* because it fits the ideals of the Piano Technicians Guild so well, and still refers, obliquely at least, to the university atmosphere — most universities operate a "continuing education" program, whereby people in the community at large can broaden their vistas in a number of different fields. In my opinion, life should be viewed as a continuing educational opportunity. This is how we stay interested in our work. This is how we get better at it. This determines whether we have "ten years of experience," or "one year of experience repeated ten times."

I feel good about writing this series not because I think I know any more than the average Piano Technicians Guild member, but because I know that by doing this I am bound to learn a great deal. In a very real sense, then, writing these articles becomes part of my own "continuing education."

The Case of the Too-Heavy Action or The Trouble With Gram-Weights

Louise, a customer of mine, called to have me check her new piano's action. She had traded in a small grand of good make for a seven-foot grand by one of our leading makers of concert grands.

"In the right hand, I have to work too hard to get anything out of it," she said, "and I can't control it at all in the left hand."

She said she had waited to have the initial tuning and service done by a dealer technician, but that after the work was done she still felt it was too hard to play continuously. "After practicing," she said, "my hands and arms just ache."

I knew before going to see the piano what the likely problems were: tight key bushings, tight hammer-flange centers, too much weight in the hammer assemblies (or not enough weight in the keys), too much friction at the knuckles, or possibly repetition springs set too strong. Then there were the factors which might produce these symptoms psychologically: sharps set too high, hammers too soft, overly-soft room acoustics, let-off set too low, or dampers lifting too early.

One of the technician's chief diagnostic tools in a case like this is a set of gram-weights. By using these weights intelligently, the technician can often pinpoint the problem without even removing the fallboard. Accordingly, the first thing I did after playing the piano for a few minutes to get a "feel" for the problem was to take some gram-weight measurements on several keys. I found that the average downweight (weight required to depress keys to the point where the escapement process begins) was about 58 grams, a little on the heavy side. Measuring upweight (the amount of weight a key will lift from the fully depressed position), I found that the average key would lift about 20 grams. Both of these measurements are taken, of course, with the damper pedal depressed. Adding these two measurements and dividing by two gave me a weight resistance figure of 39 grams, which is within the normal range. Subtracting upweight from downweight and dividing by two gave me a friction resistance figure of 19 grams, a bit higher than I would like to see.

While I was taking these weight measurements, Louise mentioned that the dealer technician had taken the piano action to his shop and had added some weight to the fronts of the keys to lighten the touch. My weight resistance reading indicated that the weight aspect was now within normal limits, so I concluded that the store technician had done the right thing. It definitely appeared that the present problem had more to do with friction than with weight.

At this point, I pulled the action to find the culprit. First, I checked the fit of the key bushings, both at the front rail and at the balance rail. I found just the right amount of play at both points,

and the keys seemed to move freely up and down. I then checked the balance rail hole in the bottom of the key by lifting the fronts of the keys about one-eighth inch and letting them fall. They all dropped easily, with no sign of tightness. Satisfied that the keys were not at fault, I went on to the hammer-flange centers. Using the swing test, I found some tightness, but less than I expected. Many of the hammers checked right in at eight swings, with only a few getting six swings, and one or two getting three swings. I corrected what problems there were here by reaming and fitting, and then began checking the rest of the action.

Removing a few whippens at random, I found that the whippen-flange centers were free enough; with the weight of a penny set on the flange, each one dropped easily. I slipped the repetition springs out of their grooves and checked the repetition levers and jacks. They all moved freely.

The regulation (particularly repetition spring strength and let-off) looked fine, so I opted to lubricate one of the high-friction spots next: the knuckle. I did this by massaging a little talcum powder into each knuckle. Measuring the touch-weight again, I found that I had reduced the friction resistance by an average of two or three grams. "Now," I said to myself, "a downweight of 55 grams is not too bad." In most cases, I consider 50 to 55 grams to be the "normal" range, so 50 would be "light normal," and 55 would be "heavy normal."

Shoving the action back in, I invited Louise to try it. After playing for a few minutes, she turned to me and said she thought it was better than before, but she wasn't sure. "I still find it hard to control," she said.

Disappointed, I played for a few minutes myself, making mental notes. She was right, I thought, about it being hard to control. But *why* is it hard to control? Well, some keys are harder to push down than others. As I played, I noticed two or three keys that seemed to go down harder than others. Then, I went back and tried these keys individually, comparing them with their neighbors. To my surprise, they now felt no different than the others. When I weighed the touch, I found no significant difference.

Then I discovered the problem. Rechecking the tightness of the keys on the keyframe, I found, as before, that the bushings fit the keyframe pins well and were not too tight, but as I worked the keys up and down with a *slight side pressure,* they became extremely hard to depress, where without any side pressure, they worked easily. I found this to be the case with nearly all the keys. As a pianist, I know that there is almost always some degree of side pressure involved in normal playing. Naturally, this pressure varies with the amount of hand stretching or side motion necessary to play a given note in a given context, hence the heavy, uneven feeling and control problems Louise was experiencing in playing this piano.

I could see now that though the problem was a friction problem, it was not related to tightness. I checked the keyframe pins for roughness, but they felt smooth to the touch. Neither could I find any obvious roughness in the key bushings. At this point, I elected to lubricate the keyframe pins with Emralon, a dry, polyfluorocarbon telomer (generic name for Teflon) spray. I sprayed both the front rail and the balance rail pins, and did the capstans as well. The safest way to apply this type of spray is to work in a well-ventilated area, remove the action stack and the keys, then push newspaper down over the pins to protect the punchings, and then spray the pins. I like to spray from the sides, first from one side, then from the other. After waiting for the spray to dry, I reassembled the action and checked the touch-weight again.

My measurements showed that all my efforts had reduced friction by only one or two grams more, but as I played the piano afterwards, it seemed to play itself! I found that all the side pressure I could muster had little or no effect on the ease of playing the keys. It truly felt like a different piano. As Louise began playing, she immediately remarked on the improvement.

Since this experience, I've found many pianos with the same type of problem, and I've used a similar treatment with all of them. It has always resulted in an improvement, though the amount of improvement depends, of course, on how severe the problem is to begin with.

Other lubricants, such as talcum powder and DuPont Slipspray (which in our area has been replaced with a very similar product called DuPont Teflon Dry Spray), will also do the trick here. To be avoided are "wet" lubricants containing oils, and lubricants containing silicones, which can cause loose keyframe pins and even cracked keytops.

The answer to this problem was, as usual, deceptively simple, and I felt a bit silly that I hadn't caught it before. I think the most interesting aspect of the problem is that it's one of those things which gram-weights won't really pick up. And while I still consider gram-weights a valuable tool, well worth the weight they add to my tool kit, they don't always tell the whole story.

EACH ONE REACH ONE

Charles Huether
Vice President

This year we are playing a variation of last year's theme, "Membership is Everybody's Business." We hope this version will reiterate and clarify the idea that everyone has a responsibility for continuity in our organization.

Conversations with members at the Convention in New Orleans brought something home to me in a very direct way. It is this: Some members are suspicious of efforts to promote membership. They feel that active recruitment is, somehow, contrary to our ideals of maintaining a high level of quality work, ethics and professionalism.

I can see how someone might think this way if membership promotion is recklessly done. However, we have always emphasized, especially last year and again this year, that the responsibility for finding new members is primarily yours. You, who respect the ideals of the Piano Technicians Guild so highly, have the responsibility to insure that new members can and will have the same feelings and motivation towards responsibility and skill that you had when someone encouraged you to join. Your potential was recognized and encouraged. Look for and encourage that potential in prospective members.

It is human to try to perpetuate ourselves and our beliefs. We try to leave something for those who follow. Do this through the Piano Technicians Guild. Reach out and encourage that someone who you feel has the potential to be your successor in every meaning of that word.

Membership Points
Five (5) points will be credited for bringing in a new registered technician, four (4) for an apprentice, three (3) for an allied tradesman and one (1) for all other memberships.

President's Club
Those who achieve 15 points will receive the President's Club ribbon. At the Awards Banquet each will be presented with the 1983 President's Club pin, and the member who had the most points will be announced and honored.

Restorer's Club
Those who bring in a former member will receive the Restorer's Club award ribbon in addition to the point credits.

Booster Club
Everyone who brings in a new member will receive the Booster Club ribbon at the convention.

Note:
Your name and your own chapter should be shown *in print* on the candidate's application on the line "recommended by," for your guaranteed full point credit. (Sometimes credit cannot be applied because the sponsor's name cannot be deciphered.)

Corrections
Should there be a need for correction on the Booster Club or other lists, please notify the Home Office promptly. We want you all to receive full credit at all times.

Booster Club	Pts.	Mbrs.
BALDASSIN, Rick	20	4
BESSETTE, Roland	1	1
BIANCHI, John	1	1
BLEES, Willem	7	3
BRADY, Stephen H.	5	1
CAPP, Richard	5	1
COLEMAN, Jim, Sr.	5	1
EDDY, Joe	1	1
EVANS, George	5	1
GEERS, C.A.	3	1
GILBERG, Donald	1	1
GOETSCH, Lawrence	1	1
GREENBROOK, Reginald	1	1
HEIKKINEN, Dale E.	5	1
HENNESSY, Frank	1	1
HITT, Henry J., Jr.	4	1
HOFSTETTER, Robert A.	2	2
JESCKE, Al	5	1
JORGENSEN, Owen	6	2
KEAST, Lawrence J.	1	1
LAGHEZZA, Roger	4	1
LAIRD, Jon M.	1	1
LEARY, Janet	4	1
LORD, Joseph O.	1	1
LOWE, Lawrence B.	1	1
NICHOLSON, Steve	5	1
ODENHEIMER, Fred	2	2
PANNELL, Paul	5	1
PENNINGTON, David L.	5	1
PERKINS, Robert	5	1
PHILLIPS, Webb	15	3
PRIVETTE, R.V.	1	1
RASKOB, Richard	1	1
RITCHIE, Mark O.	6	3
SANDERS, Robert L.	1	1
SEABERN, Paul	5	1
SIMS, Willard	5	1
STONE, Sid	1	1
TURNER, Jeff	1	1
WELCH, Cy	1	1
WHITAKER, Craig M.	3	1

1983-1984 RECLASSIFICATIONS

Registered Technician

Baton Rouge Chapter
WHITMIRE, Sam D.

Central Illinois Chapter
ADAMS, William D.

Cleveland Chapter
KABAT, Stephen E.

Columbus Chapter
SCHOPIS, Paul J.

Conservatory of Boston
SOMMERS, Patricia F.

Los Angeles Chapter
SPOSTO, David

Nebraska Chapter
ARMSTRONG, Sue E.
SANTO, J. Lee
WILKEN, Candace L.

Northern Virginia
FREASE, David H.
TOLBERT, Bernard

Philadelphia Chapter
BROWN, Norman T.

Phoenix Chapter
SILVERMAN, Aiko

Tucson Chapter
Peirce, Roger J.

Twin Cities Chapter
GRIM, Mark D.
MANTHEY, Mary R.
ROM, Paul M.

Washington D.C. Chapter
EVANS, Eliot D.

Waukegan Chapter
DORNFELD, Bruce G.

Apprentice

Cleveland Chapter
MILLER, Rolland S.
ZAHTILLA, Robert A.

Northeast Florida
CARLILE, George G. Jr.

Orange County Chapter
BARKER, William E.
JACKMAN, Robert G.
THOMPSON, Rex M.
VALDEZ, Fred
VANDERLIP, David A.
ZOPF, Bill D.

Philadelphia Chapter
LYON, Ellen J.
SACKS, Isadore

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Auxiliary Exchange

President's Message

Greetings from the land of 10,000 lakes, magnificent Minnesota. We love our Twin City area. But as we travel across the country, we find most people are very happy and excited about where they live. It's called "contentment," a precious commodity! Webster used the word "satisfied" in describing contentment. A fine line exists between being contented and satisfied, happy about who we are, enjoying our everyday lives and yet growing and expanding our horizons. It takes work! It takes discipline! But the rewards are great. The older we get, the more exciting it is to stretch our minds and broaden our horizons. How many people do you know who have become dull and uninteresting — negative and just not fun to be around? They have stopped growing! These people are willing to accept the status quo — regardless of possibilities for growth that surround them.

What makes you excited? What makes you happy? Maybe it is talking about your children or your grandchildren! Perhaps it is your piano business! It could even be your favorite rose garden. Granted, it takes a bit of energy to be excited, but it takes much more energy to be a negative, unhappy person.

What does all of this have to do with our Piano Technicians Guild Auxiliary? One of my desires this year as your president is to create an attitude of excitement within our members and among those who have never seriously thought about becoming part of our Auxiliary. How do we do it? *We* become excited! Believe me, *enthusiasm is contagious!!* When we get our people delighted — even ecstatic — about the Piano Technicians Guild Auxiliary, we will see a stretching and a broadening of our horizons. Dear people — we cannot be a "status-quo" organization! We will only survive as we go and as we grow! Growing people are not interested in being involved with an organization that is not making progress. Right? But I have *good news for you — and for them!* We are *alive . . . and roaring . . . and making progress!* You who attended the convention in New Orleans know we are not hung up on dead center — we are on the move! In my mind I visualize the most beautiful people in all the world — happy — excited — growing — our Piano Technicians Guild Auxiliary. What a great year before us! You'll hear me talk excitement and enthusiasm all year long!

Hop on our bandwagon — see yourself as a special person — a part of a very special organization. We love you — and want you! As you help us spread contagious enthusiasm, you will become an exciting person who is truly stretching and broadening your horizons.

Yours for a growing and an exciting Auxiliary,
Belva Flegle, President

From Ginny Russell

Thanks to all of you for your support while I was treasurer of the Auxiliary. I was pleased to be able to serve. The Auxiliary will always have my support in any capacity.
Ginny Russell
Mayfield Heights, Ohio

From Marian Damon

To the Officers and Members of the Council which met in New Orleans: I shall treasure this honor for the rest of my days.

Thank you so much for your support.
With love,
Marian Damon
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

From Bert Sierota

As I sit here at the keyboard — the I.B.M., not the Steinway — I am thinking of what a task it is going to be to follow in the footsteps of Agnes Huether. Agnes has done such a remarkable job as the Auxiliary Corresponding Secretary for the last five (5) years that I'm fearful I won't measure up to her standards, but I'll give it my all. Correspondence, as defined in the dictionary — harmony, agreement; exchange of letters; letter writing, etc. — is self-explanatory. I will do my best to keep in touch with Auxiliary members and strive to keep the lines of communication open, with the help of the "Sunshine Committee." A list of Sunshiners will be available soon. Please feel free to contact me, or the Sunshine Gal in your region, if you have news of any nature you wish to share with the Auxiliary. *Keep in touch!*
Bert Sierota, Corresponding Secretary
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Great 88

"The Great 88" is a magazine about pianos and piano technicians. The magazine's editor and publisher, Ms. Jackie Prince, produced the first edition

of "The Great 88" last spring and presented it to her eighth grade English class as part of an assignment on magazine production. It is easy to see by reading through the 25-page volume that Jackie's interest in pianos and admiration for piano technicians was nurtured years before the class assignment was made.

Jackie is the granddaughter of Sarah and James Lampiasi and attended the last national convention of the Piano Technicians Guild with her grandparents. Before printing her magazine, Jackie observed her grandparents at work on pianos and took several photos which appeared in the magazine. The publication stressed proper maintenance of pianos and highlighted several interesting facts about pianos. Our congratulations go to Jackie for choosing such a fascinating topic for her magazine and for covering the subject with such professionalism. We will be watching for future articles about piano technicians from Jackie's publishing headquarters in Long Beach, California.

In Memory of Camille Gearman

On Thursday, June 29, 1983, Camille Gearman died at the age of 96. Camille was the widow of Henry J. Gearman of Milwaukee and was an Honorary Life Member of the Piano Technicians Guild Auxiliary. Marian Damon writes us that "Camille was bright and full of humor right up to the day before she died, and the rector stressed that we should not feel sad but rejoice that she had been given 96 years to bless her family and friends."

Highlights of the 1983 Piano Technicians Guild Auxiliary Council Meeting

The Council convened in New Orleans on the morning of July 5, 1983, with 29 delegates, alternates, and officers in attendance. Officer and committee reports were presented and accepted. The new suncatcher project was displayed and discussed. The Council decided to drop the idea of ordering needlepoint kits because there had not been sufficient reponse to form a customized order. Beva Jean Wisenbaker of the Houston Chapter presented a crocheted banner of the Piano Technicians Guild emblem; the Houston Chapter is selling the plans for this project for $10. The Council approved a budget for officer advances at the same amounts as the preceding year. The Cleveland Chapter's proposal to make Marian Damon an Honorary Life Member was read and passed unanimously. A maximum of $500 was appropriated for convention entertainment at the next national convention to be held in Indianapolis in 1984. Belva Flegle presented the nominating committee's slate of officers for 1983-84. The slate was accepted, and the following women were elected:

Belva Flegle, President
Louise Strong, First Vice President
Norma Lamb, Second Vice President
Helena Thomas, Recording Secretary
Bert Sierota, Corresponding Secretary
Kathryn Snyder, Treasurer

The Council elected the following people to be the 1983-84 nominating committee: **Norma Lamb,** chairman; **Esther Stegeman** and **Shirlie Felton,** members. President Julie Berry recognized Agnes Huether, Ginny Russell, and Ginger Bryant for the service they had given to the Auxiliary. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Catch A Suncatcher!

The blue, white and silver suncatchers, commissioned by the Auxiliary and made available for sale for the first time at the New Orleans convention, were a resounding success. The suncatchers are approximately 3½" in diameter. They resemble the Piano Technicians Guild logo without the words. The outer circle is a deep blue; the center is creamy white; the crossed tools and piano are silver. Suncatchers may be ordered by mail from the Auxiliary's First Vice President, Louise Strong, at One Knollwood Drive, Rome, GA 30161. The cost (payable by check to the Piano Technicians Guild Auxiliary) is $5.00 plus 50¢ handling for each suncatcher.

The Day the Piano Died

The sky was a deeper, purer blue than we see over us in the city, with puffy white clouds along the edges like clumps of white hair over a bald man's ears. The white and silver barn glistened in the summer sunlight as the unnamed piano technicians pushed back the barn's sliding doors so there would be room to roll the piano outside. Many times before that piano must have been rolled from one place to another, usually in preparation for a family musical evening or when the rooms were being rearranged, I would imagine. But on this summer Sunday afternoon there would be no loving family gathering around the keyboard, for this piano was on its way to its demise.

The technicians approached with some restraint at first, not being accustomed to vandalizing pianos themselves. "Go ahead," urged the unnamed host, "treat it the way all those other people treat old uprights. See how much damage you can do." And damage they did, ripping out hammers, twisting hammers on their shanks, pulling out action parts, throwing parts of the action on the ground. In the beginning a few of them whispered to their comrades that they hoped their customers would never hear of the indignities being done to the piano by a group of technicians, but most of the technicians seemed to feel there was a cathartic effect in being able to treat a piano this way one time. It made up for all the junky pianos they had been called to work on in the past.

The son of the unnamed host passed out cans of different colored paints and brushes, and the second level of indignities began. Names of famous brands of pianos were slathered across the fallboard and back of the piano. Three or four unnamed technicians took turns splattering the keys with different hues, making reference to a Jackson Pollock work of art. The strings became a rainbow of color. As the unnamed technicians would accidentally get some of the oil-base enamel on clothes and shoes, the gracious hosts would appear on the scene with paint remover. No such mercy was shown the piano that day in July on the unnamed farm at the unnamed chapter picnic.

After painting was culminated, the host appeared with a chainsaw and began sawing cuts through the backposts and the front legs of the old upright. The technicians stood back and waited for the piano to burst and die, but this piano was not one to give in easily. It took several blows from a 20-pound sledge hammer before the thud of a broken plate signalled the end of this piano's musical career. One of the more sensitive technicians could feel the spirit of the piano rise from it at that moment. The piano was declared dead, and a bonfire was prepared.

As we drove away from the farm that day to return to our home state (which, incidentally, is not the state in which the indignities took place), one of the technicians said he didn't want to read the details of this in my column in the *Journal.* It is, therefore, out of respect to this technician that I have declined to mention any names or locations in this account of the day the piano died.
Julie Berry

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Box numbers and zip codes count as one word. Telephone numbers count as two words. Names of cities and states count as one word each.

Send check or money order (U.S. funds), made payable to the Piano Technicians Guild, to Classified Ads, THE JOURNAL, 1515 Dexter Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109.

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Piano Technicians Journal

UPDATE

October 1983

August, 1983 Chapter Mailing

Sent to your chapter president August 15:

MESSAGE FROM YOUR GUILD PRESIDENT A special message discussing Piano Technicians Guild membership and asking for your individual responses.

MEMBER ENQUIRIES Description of new procedure for handling member enquiries.

1983-84 DIRECTORY Urgent request for information for the 1983 directory.

CONVENTION QUESTIONNAIRE Form for each member to send information on convention attendance. More forms are available if your chapter needs them.

CHAPTER DUES COLLECTION The official form to request Home Office to collect your chapter dues for 1984.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS CARDS Green postal card to use to notify Home Office of any change of address.

NEED ANY HELP Invitation to call on your Home Office whenever we can be of help.

International Association of Piano Builders and Technicians

At the recent meeting of the international association in Japan the new board of directors was elected for the next two-year term:

Nobuo Tanaka, *President, JPTA*
Charles Huether, *Vice President, PTG*
Kazuyuki Ogio, *Secretary, JPTA*
Fred Odenheimer, *Board member, PTG*

Japan and the USA each have two members on the board until application and admittance of additional member organizations. Further reports on the IAPBT session will be made later and in the meantime the Guild is already making plans for the next international meeting which will be held in Kansas City in conjunction with the 1985 Piano Technicians Guild convention.

Are YOU a member of the Friends of the International Association of Piano Builders and Technicians? The annual dues are only $15.00 and may be sent to the Piano Technicians Guild Home Office. An IAPBT membership card will be sent by return mail.

The Journal on Cassette

The *Piano Technicians Journal* on cassette, read by George Defebaugh, is sent free of charge to all members who are listed as visually handicapped on the Guild records and who have requested the tapes.

Chapters are asked to check that their visually handicapped members are aware of this and encourage them to send in the request for the cassette.

CALENDAR

OCTOBER	Review the Guild Bylaws & Regulations. Proposed amendments should be discussed now in your chapter meetings. Send suggestions or resolutions to Ron Berry, chairman of the Bylaws Committee.
OCTOBER 17	Deadline for receipt of requests from chapters to have the Home Office collect chapter dues. This date is firm. Please make all requests on the special Chapter Dues Collection form and mail to the Home Office.
NOVEMBER 15	Last date to mail Sustaining Member Applications to the Home Office for presentation to the Board of Directors.
NOVEMBER 15	Send your agenda items for the next Board of Directors meeting to your RVP before this date.
DECEMBER 31	Closing date for nominations by chapters for Piano Technicians Guild awards. Mail nominations and all information to Chairman Willis Snyder.
JANUARY 1	Last date for Bylaws amendments to be sent to Ron Berry.

An Open Letter to Non-P.T.G. Technicians

Greetings,

I would like to invite you to attend our first meeting of the '83-'84 year and, if you are so inclined, become a member of the organization. The Piano Technicians Guild has made some big improvements in the past few years and I've always thought the Detroit-Windsor chapter was one of the stronger.

Here are a few reasons why one might belong to the guild: make more money . . . Blue Cross, Blue Shield . . . constantly gaining more knowledge of craft . . . become more professional . . . builds self esteem . . . tours ranging from South Haven, MI to South Korea . . . guild members are more likely to be called on by manufacturers for field work . . . gives you a chance to rub lbows with your peers . . . gives you a chance to meet and learn from others in a different area of piano technology . . . find out the latest from manufacturers . . . get to know local dealers . . . monthly meetings . . . regional seminars . . . national technical institute . . . international conventions . . . student seminars . . . introduces you to manufacturers . . . the *Journal* . . . get technical questions answered faster and easier . . . see how your work compares to a national standard . . . the Christmas party . . . the summer picnic . . . after glow sessions after monthly meetings . . . expand your horizons in your craft and get to know your peers and friends.

If you consider yourself a professional, you owe it to yourself to come and check out your Guild. If you have any questions about the Guild, feel free to contact me or any Guild member. I hope to see you on the 12th.

Sincerely yours,
Steve Hornbeck
Prsident, Detroit-Windsor Chapter

Chapter Notes

The July 5, 1983 meeting began at 8:12 PM at our new meeting place, the Finnish Brotherhood Hall in Berkeley. V.P. Kathy Sheehy presided in Pres. Callahan's absence. There were 11 members and 3 guests present.

Under committee reports, Michael Kimbell of the exam committee reported that there are two people waiting to take the tuning exam. Chris Ris and Chris Johnson both passed the bench test at craftsman level, making Chris Johnson our newest craftsman member. Congratulations, Chris and Chris! Librarian Margie Williams gladly gave over her job to Rhys McKay, who haplessly opened his mouth at the wrong time and was named chapter librarian by acclamation. Hester Lox and Elizabeth Knittle volunteered to chair the refreshment committee.

Reporting in her capacity as technicals chairperson, Kathy Sheehy outlined her ideas for the year's technical presentations. In order to insure quality and variety, each chapter member will be expected to contribute to a technical or mini-technical, or arrange for someone else in a related field to present one. The next several minutes were spent brainstorming to gather ideas for technicals. Every subject from moving pianos to sharpening tools is on the list of prospective topics.

San Francisco Chapter

THE PIANO TECHNICIANS FOUNDATION

A quotation from President Ernie:

"I urge you to make your mark and offer a donation to honor or in memory of someone who means much to you. Your gesture will remind us all how much we owe to so many for the progress and success of our beloved Piano Technicians Guild."

The Foundation has three categories:

THE STEVE JELLEN MEMORIAL LIBRARY
THE PIANO TECHNICIANS FUND FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
THE PIANO TECHNICIANS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

All donations to the Foundation will be published in the *Journal* showing the name of the donor, the person honored and the category specified for the donation. A memory book, maintained at the Home Office, will be on view at the annual conventions and will show the names of those honored and the donors.

Donations should be made out in the name of the **PIANO TECHNICIANS FOUNDATION** and sent to the Home Office at 1515 Dexter Avenue North, 4th Floor, Seattle, WA 98109. Please send the form below with your donation or a letter giving the same information.

I wish to honor _____ by making this donation _____

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OF THE PIANO TECHNICIANS FOUNDATION

signed _____ date _____

address _____

Chapter Notes

Dear Piano Technicians Guild Member:

Jumping Jehosaphat, what a line-up of stars for the coming organizational year in the **Detroit-Windsor** Chapter, with the cool hand of Stevey Wonder Hornbeck at the throttle. Our Cosa Nostra plunges forward into some terrific programming. The summer doldrums end with the Monday, September 12, gathering featuring Floyd Stevens, technical services chief for Tokai. Floyd has had several years with this progressive Japanese firm and is also author of "Complete Course on Piano Tuning, Repair, Rebuilding," published in 1972 and a standard reference in most public libraries. A more recent "Complete Course in Electronic Piano Tuning" has likewise a significant place in piano literature. A past president of the Dayton, Ohio Chapter and an ubiquitous, omniscient and gregarious technician, his wise and witty insights into the craft will prove milestones in your life-long college of piano knowledge. The Alma Mater for many of us has been "ouch." Here's an opportunity to pick a good man's brains and so avoid learning by the "ouch" method.

We meet at Professional Keyboard, 3921 Rochester Road, Troy. This is about a quarter mile south of 17 Mile Road, also called Wattles Road, west side of the street with ample parking. Festivities begin promptly at 7:30 p.m. with a short film trip through the Tokai factory.

Proprietor Larry Accioni and staff will be on hand for the after-glow following the technical show, plying you with coffee and goodies. For the real bitter-enders, there's the Bootlegger down the road where you can put on a resplendent glow.

Forthcoming programs: Shiela Edwards on *How To Succeed In Business Without Half Trying;* Ron Berry, National Piano Technicians Guild Secretary-Treasurer and Chairman of the Tuner-Testing Committee; Pettit of Pianoworks **Some Piano Challenges Unscrambled;** Kimball research and technical team, LaPrima Music Company; Prof. Owen Jorgensen, *Historic Ear Tunings.* Oakland University; Willard Sims, Baldwin Music Company at Evola Music *Getting That Grand Piano to Sing;* Paul Smith of Pianotech, Toronto and Detroit, *Voicing from a Ten Year Operation of Canada's Version of the Yamaha Little Red Schoolhouse;* Cal Champine on bridge building and recapping. How about this stellar roster!

All officers are asked to be on hand at 6:30 p.m. for board business. See you Monday, September 12 at Professional Keyboard for a most profitable evening.

Stanley Oliver

The **Syracuse Chapter** membership was invited to tour three very important factories affiliated with the piano industry. First was a tour of the Ronsen Hammer Co., where Bob Johannsen and Ray Nigron demonstrated their expertise and knowledge in the construction of fine quality piano hammers, including the various processes for duplicating common and very uncommon sets of hammers. Next was an amazing tour of the American Felt and Filter plant, where we were shown in great detail the actual production of piano hammer felt, from the cuttings through the various stages of separation and coordination of the fibers — laying out of patterns for different styles and brands of hammers, pressing, acid baths, moth proofing, drying, etc.

This tour was most enlightening with respect to all aspects of hammer voicing. I recommend it highly and extend my thanks to Jim Plunkett, Don Gedry, and Ray Barnes for all their help throughout that tour.

Last of all we met at the Charles Ramsey Co. where Frank Kotts, their president, and Vince Hart proceeded to show us the construction of various piano hardware, from pressed and cast piano pedals to various hinges and lid props. Virtually all the piano hardware you could imagine is made right there in Kingston, N.Y. I would like to say that this sort of activity among our chapter members has increased our overall enthusiasm, knowledge, and service exceedingly, and I urge all chapters to endeavor along similar paths of learning.

Joseph Karwacki
President

Idle thought number . . . I lost count. I saw an advertisement for 25 lb. piano hammers. In recent years we've seen hammers go from 17 to 19 to 21 and now to 25. I wonder where it will end; maybe 50 lb. hammers for the piano with no tone? Then perhaps proper engineering or repairs or replacement of soundboard and bridges wouldn't need to be done. As they say, if at first you don't succeed, use a bigger hammer.

Wichita, Kansas Chapter

1984 GUILD DUES

1984 Guild dues remain the same as for 1983 dues. Billings for 1984 dues will be sent end of November. Students' dues are due on the anniversary date of entry into the Guild.

DUES

Registered Technicians, Apprentices, and Allied Tradesmen	$114.00
Associate Members and Affiliate Members	$ 57.00
Chapter Sustaining Members and Chapter Dues Waivers	$ 38.00

REMEMBER: Annual dues must be paid in one sum as the partial payment method was cancelled by the delegates in council session in 1981.

Please pay the full amount shown on your annual billing.

CHAPTER DUES If your chapter has requested the Home Office to collect your chapter dues the amount of the chapter dues will be clearly indicated on your annual Guild Dues Billing. Please pay the total shown as the chapter dues are automatically credited first on receipt of payment.

NOTE: Do not send chapter dues *unless* your chapter has already signed the official collection notice.

What? Never Before Written About In The Journal?

At least this writer does not recall such an article being written about the worship services at the national and some state conventions when the convention opens or continues on a Sunday.

Every year the attendance at these worship services seems to grow larger. The congregational singing sounds almost like that of a large trained choir. The special music is always tops and the prepared messages for tuners and their spouses are inspirational and appropriate.

For example, take this year at New Orleans: Belva Flegle played the piano while Dick Flegle led the singing. Both have had years of experience directing good church choirs and leading congregations in song. That is partly why the singing this year was so musically rich, plus the fact that the congregation is made up of musicians both in and out of the choirs in their home churches. The Scripture lesson was read by Dan Evans who also led in prayer, and Ernie Preuitt sang the beautiful solos. (Last year in Washington we were thrilled with the beautiful voice of Jim Coleman.) The well prepared message was given by Sid Stone. Since a group had just returned form the Orient he shared his time with Marge Evans, who a few days earlier had spoken to another group on the subject of: "The Church in Korea" as they saw it. These two messages were excellent. You will also notice that this year all the men participating were officers of the executive committee — not a usual practice but what a compliment to our Piano Technicians Guild leadership.

In my years of attending these services I have found them to be of high quality because all participants are really *prepared,* as they would be in a large church.

I mentioned earlier the good attendance although the main body of the Piano Technicians Guild members had not yet arrived. It was mostly board members and council members and their spouses in attendance. As Sid pointed out, think what the attendance would be like if Sunday had fallen during the time that the entire convention was present! Most conventioners arrived on Monday.

There is such a good feeling of comradeship and ecumenicity in a common service and we especially commend those of the Jewish faith who consistent ly join with us in these services. I conclude with the first phrase of a popular hymn which sums up our joy in every worship service: "WHAT A FELLOWSHIP."

Harry Berg

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We have received requests from chapters and members to make copies of Guild films. Please note that all films and tapes have been copyrighted and may not be duplicated without Guild permission.

1984 Annual Convention Volunteer Mini-Classes

Do you have a short subject on Piano Technology, maybe a new gadget or a new or modified tool to make a job easier? Well, if you do, and would like to share your knowledge with others at the Indianapolis Convention in July, this class is for you. Any Guild Classification may participate. The class time for each person will be one 20 minute time slot. The class period will be 1½ hours, which will allow 4 different subjects per class. This volunteer type class has been well attended for the past three years in the New England Regional Seminars. If you plan to be in Indianapolis and plan to share your knowledge of tuning, business, etc., with your fellow technicians, please fill in the form below, and send it to: **Dick Bittinger, Institute Director 1984**
107 West Main Street
P.O. Box #51
Brownstown, PA 17508

----------CUT ----------CUT ----------

NAME: _____ CHAPTER NAME: _____ No. #_____

STREET ADDRESS: _____ PHONE: ( ) _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ CLASSIFICATION: _____

20 MINUTE VOLUNTEER CLASS TITLE: _____

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CLASS: _____

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