



MEETING NOTICE

Monday January 5, 2004

**6:30 - 7:15 Applied Skills
6:30 - 7:30 Board Meeting
7:15 - 7:45 Food Served
7:45 - 8:00 Business Mtg.
8:00 - 9:30 Main Technical**

**Applied Skills:
Bill Edwards, RPT
Main Technical:
Yat-Lam Hong, RPT**

**Meeting will be hosted
at PianoWorks,
by Grant Wolack**

**PianoWorks
23225 Woodward Ave.,
Ferndale, MI
phone: (248) 547-6334**

CHAPTER PROJECT will be on Saturday January 10, 10:00 am. It will be held at The Piano Place, 444 W Maple, Suite E, Troy. North side of Maple between Livernois and Crooks, next to Thunder Bird Lanes. This month's main focus will be to finish up key bushing and begin hammer hanging. Soundboard and bridge repair will be covered in the near future. See you there!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's a brand new year with expectation of a terrific future. We're always looking forward to something better for ourselves and family. We say this year will be different: "I am really going to stick to that diet - this time I mean it."

Or "this year I'm going to help the needy." Or "I'm going to spend more time with my family", or "I'll make as many Chapter meetings as possible."

These are all great intentions, but what happens? Priorities get in the way and the time we set aside for others fades. We all have goals and missions in life but unfortunately we are only human. Like an old upright piano we worked on, we do the best with what we have to work with. In piano work this is all that is expected from us - no more, no less. But as individuals we will always be remembered for what we give and not by what we take.

2004's resolution should be to set aside time for family and friends. When you come to a chapter meeting offer something of yourself. Give some advice to others, encourage them to do better, and make this year one to remember.

**Your President,
Richard Bittner, RPT**

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Detroit-Windsor Chapter Officers

President

Richard Bittner, RPT
richardb@atdial.net
(248) 398-3876

Vice-President

Dennis Penney, RPT
dpenney1441@comcast.net
(248) 545-7812

Secretary

Zen Reinhardt, RPT
diskladame@provide.net
(734) 971-6143

Treasurer

David Foster
pepsi29@earthlink.net
(248) 276-9543

Past President (ex-officio)

Rick Bowen, RPT
rbowen@wideopenwest.com
(248) 524-4713

Chapter Chairs

Newsletter Editor

Larry Young, RPT
lyoung2@peoplepc.com
(734) 930-9227

Social Chair

Roberta Brown
rlbrown417@aol.com

Program Chair

Jan Bittner, RPT
jano@provide.net
(248) 398-8720

Tuning Examiner

Zen Reinhardt, RPT
(734) 971-6143

Technical and Written Exams

Richard Bittner, RPT



MAIN TECHNICAL - Termination Points in the Piano - by Yat-Lam Hong, RPT, D.M.A.

Yat-Lam will fully discuss the termination points in the piano. The focus will be on tone building and tuning stability. He will be showing the importance of downbearing and sidebearing, with consideration to the capo bar and agraffes. This technical will be for anyone who wishes to improve their knowledge of tone building.

Yat-Lam Hong has been an RPT member of PTG since 1971. He is also a former technical editor of the Piano Technician's Journal. Yat-Lam earned his Doctor of Musical Arts (D.M.A.) degree from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music after commuting from Kalamazoo for 21 years. With exams and all behind him, he discovered that the foremost requisite for earning a doctorate is perseverance - something no one ever told him at the beginning. With severe discipline he simply "toughed it out". Dr. Hong is currently the staff piano technician at Western Michigan University, a position he has held since 1973.

Applied Skills

The performance and tone of a piano is influenced by many factors. One important consideration is the shape and texture of its hammers. Bill Edwards, RPT will discuss these issues and demonstrate hammer shaping and filing techniques and their effects on the piano's tone.

The following article by Dan Reed, RPT appeared in the Dallas PTG Chapter's October '03 PianoWire newsletter:

Why File Hammers? I have noticed that 'worn' or 'string cut' hammers seem to dip or cup along the length of the contact area with the wire. In other words, the center of the hammer is lower than the front and back edges of the string cut crown. Check this out with your finger, and see if you feel the same dip that I find. I think this cupping is caused by the hammer blossoming open from the felt fibers being cut. A razor blade cut (from side to side) along the top of a hammer produces the same effect. The center of the crown of a string cut hammer may stay the same height, but the forces of the cut felt cause the felt for and aft, to let go, and spring up higher than the crown.

What Does This Do To The Tone? #1) The termination / contact area of the hammer is spread out over a wider area. A wider, flatter hammer transfers energy differently than a hammer with a smaller profile. The flat hammer also leaves the wire in a different manner, which we know from studies of hard versus soft hammers, has an influence relative to harmonic dampening, and the resultant tone color. I think of the 'flat' hammer as a force that jerks the wire, instead of flexing it. This jerking causes the tone to be abrupt, with a quicker decay. #2) The center of the hammer is not the first place the hammer contacts the wire. The 'edges' of the string cut hammer contact the wire before the center of the crown.

How About Fitting The Hammer To The Wire? This cupping we are describing is not the cupping we find in a new unfiled hammer, where the cupping is caused by the manufacturing processes of slicing the hammers from a glued up gang, like a loaf of bread. That cupping is from side to side and usually results in the center wire of a three wire unison to miss out on its share of the hammer. The result is a weak tone caused by the wires starting at different times, and with different amounts of energy.

Conclusion: Most unisons on new or old pianos have 'open' wires ... that is, wires that are not parallel with the plane of the hammer. They are called 'open' because if we gently press the hammer to the wires, with the dampers raised, and 'pluck' the strings, the wires that are not touching the hammer will ring ... like the 'open' string on a violin. If we choose to file hammers, fit the hammer to the wire. This process makes all the difference in the world. If the string cuts are not excessive, and you are not going to file the hammers, we still need to fit the hammer to the wire. Learn to level wire, and learn to fit the hammer to the wire profile when the wire cannot be leveled. There are several techniques to learn which are applied to the various types of terminations we find in different pianos and in different sections of the piano ... aggraffes, capo bars, bass section pin terminations etc ...

*Dan Reed, RPT
Dallas Chapter President*

Larry Young, Editor
4379 Walden Dr.
Ann Arbor, MI 48105



January 2004

January meeting will be at the PianoWorks in Ferndale, MI !

Disclaimer:

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visit our website at:
<http://ptg-ch481.org/>

Please note:

- if you have no email address on file or if your address has recently changed, please update your information. Keeping your chapter email information up-to-date will get communications to you faster. Updates are easy - go to our website. In the lower left of the homepage click the blue SPECIAL MEMBER NOTICE link. On the next page that comes up click the blue email link to alert us to your new address. THANKS!

I mportant Upcoming Dates and Deadlines:

- December 31: Bylaws proposals.*
- December 31: Award nominations.*
- January 31: Dues will be delinquent if not paid by this day. Delinquent members can expect phone calls from the Chapter President.*
- February 1: PTG officer nominations due.*