

September 2012

# News & Notes



## Newsletter of the Boston Chapter *Piano Technicians Guild*

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### Aardvark Piano Restorations Absolute Piano Movie



September MEETING - Aardvark Piano Restorations.  
FEATURING: **The Movie "Pianomania"**

When: Tuesday, September 18th

Where: Aardvark Piano Restorations  
65 Sprague Street  
Hyde Park, MA

Schedule: **6:00 PM.** Gather, Converse, Eat  
**7:00 PM.** Chapter Business Meeting  
**7:30 PM.** Movie

#### The Movie "Pianomania" a review by Tom Huizenga

*Anyone with a piano at home can tell stories about piano tuners — or piano technicians, as they prefer to be called. In more than a dozen years of producing classical music here at NPR, I have a few stories myself about brilliant but picky pianists and the extraordinary demands they've made on our piano technicians. Like the time I had to page the entire building in search of a hairdryer so the felt hammers in the piano's guts could get a blow-dry. Now there's a new feature-length documentary that renders any average pianist vs. piano technician nightmare utterly trivial. Pianomania, directed by Lillian Franck and Robert Cibis, takes persnickety to a new pinnacle.*



From the web site: [www.npr.org/blogs/deceptivecadence/2011](http://www.npr.org/blogs/deceptivecadence/2011)

*The movie follows the adventures of Stefan Knüpfe, chief piano technician for the German branch of Steinway & Sons, who over the course of the film preps pianos for Lang Lang, Alfred Brendel, Rudolf Buchbinder, Julius Drake and the high priest of fussiness, Pierre-Laurent Aimard.*

*Very few pianists travel with their own instruments, so they're generally at the mercy of whichever piano resides in a given concert hall. Each pianist is in search of a perfect sound, and it's fascinating to see how they go about chasing it. Lang Lang shows up the morning of his concert in multicolored sneakers to test-drive a Steinway. After a few bars he stops, saying, "Somehow it's not so clean. It doesn't have a perfect disappearing." And there's a pedal problem. Later, at his recital, one wonders whether the pedal will even stay attached — or the keys, for that matter — as he practically pounds the instrument into matchsticks in Liszt's explosive Hungarian Rhapsody No. 6. He's a rock star. Brendel is more subtle. He runs his fingers lightly up and down the keyboard — something's not right. "Now we even out the tone," he says. Then calmly pronounces, as if reading the Ten Commandments, "A concert piano should have the same color from top to bottom and the same dynamic possibilities." Knüpfe steps in with his trusty wrench. Some clients are more enigmatic with their assessments. Drake, preparing to accompany tenor Ian Bostridge, gives it to Knüpfe in a single phrase: "There isn't any magic in the piano."*

*And then there's Aimard. The longest thread in the film follows Knüpfe's quest to find the perfect piano for Aimard's approaching Bach recording and tweak it along the way to fit each style of Bach the pianist plans to record.*

*At the piano, Aimard hits a single note and explains that the pieces based on harpsichord works need a "deeper expression," more of an echo. When Knüpfe asks him if he wants a big, blossoming tone for the note or a more compact, intimate tone, Aimard responds, "I would like to have both." Knüpfe pulls out a tool, makes an adjustment, and Aimard plays the note again. He's pleased, but the satisfaction doesn't last long. He creates a lexicon for his needs in all the styles of Bach. There's the "clavichord-situation," "harpsichord-situation," "organ-situation," "chamber-situation" and the "ensemble-situation." It'll be Knüpfe's job to make sure all those needs are met, no matter how esoteric.*

*The film's overall focus won't appeal to everyone. Piano technicians might be in heaven, but I suspect I'm not alone in wishing for more music. After all, Franck and Cibis landed some of the greatest pianists working today, and it would have been more satisfying to hear the results of Knüpfe's magic in the form of actual performances. And it's easy to grow weary with the many scenes of Knüpfe, nervously pacing the hallways of grand venues like Vienna's Konzerthaus, worrying about the next crisis, not to mention the seemingly endless, overly detailed scenes of Aimard's recording sessions.*

*Still, Pianomania provides a fascinating glimpse into a very specialized corner of the music world. Pianist Andras Schiff once said, "Whatever we do on the piano is a collection of illusions." After watching Pianomania, you will understand.*



## "PREZ SEZ"

Doug Tybor, RPT  
President, Boston  
Chapter PTG

Hello Everyone -

By the time you read this, Phase 1 of our chapter's hosting of the 2014 NEECSO Regional Seminar will be almost complete. Requests for proposals went out to the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, and 7 sites were toured in the spring. From that, 2 sites are the finalists, and we might close the deal with our site selection by the September or October chapter meeting.

Ideas. It's your turn.

Suggestions. Welcome.

I'm sure many of you have enjoyed classes at past regional and national conventions, and it's time we heard your input as to what you liked, and also what you may not have liked as much. It's not just up to the seminar's organizing committee to hatch all the ideas and have all the answers. We want to hear from you.

Is there an all-day class that you would really like to see? Is there an instructor whose class you may have missed at a prior convention and would like to see repeated? If you can't make a chapter meeting, email me with your suggestions.

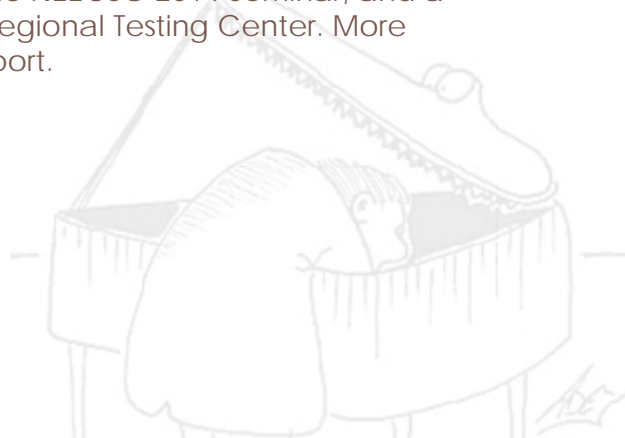
We had a chapter executive board meeting in mid-August. The past year's finances were reviewed, and forecasts made for the next fiscal year. There was extensive discussion about the state of the NEECSO 2014 Seminar, and a continuing of the discussion on setting up a Regional Testing Center. More details are part of this month's Secretary's Report.

I hope to see you at our meeting!

Thanks,

Doug Tybor  
President, Boston Chapter PTG

781-592-4696 (office)  
617-645-3519 (mobile)

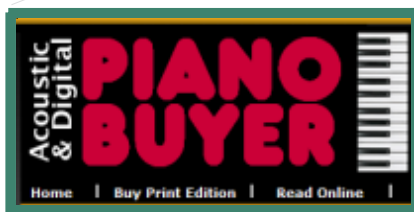


## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

### Pianobuyer.com Updates:

The Fall 2012 issue of Piano Buyer will be out this coming week at [www.pianobuyer.com](http://www.pianobuyer.com). Feature articles for this issue include one about "boutique" (workshop-based) piano makers, why buyers of performance-quality pianos should know something about regulation and voicing, and a review of three different versions of the Seiler model 186 (6' 1") grand.

Also debuting with this issue will be the Piano Buyer Local Services Directory, where technicians and other piano-service providers (teachers, dealers, movers, and rebuilders) can advertise online to their local market inexpensively (\$95 per year). We'll even create your ad for you at no additional charge. There will be a link to it from the PianoBuyer.com home page, or you can access it directly at [www.pianobuyer.com/localservices/directory.html](http://www.pianobuyer.com/localservices/directory.html). within the industry.



### 2012 Council session delagate's Report"

Patrick Draine (Delegate) and Jude Reveley (Alternate Delegate) headed out to Bellevue, Washington (the Microsoft campus suburb of Seattle) to represent the membership of the Boston Chapter in early July. I

(Patrick) flew out of Boston on mid-afternoon of Saturday July 7; Jude took the redeye and arrived in the early hours of Sunday. I attended (as an onlooker) the Sunday morning session of the PTG Board's pre-Council session, hoping to glean some information on the upcoming sessions.

On Monday morning July 9 the PTG Council session convened; the minutes of various committees' reports, and officers' reports (published in the delegate book) were accepted. I covered some of the other various aspects of the session in my NERVP newsletter, and you will receive a copy of the session's full minutes next month.

When we got to Bylaws Proposals #1, I (and Jeff Hickey of Portland, Oregon) argued against the deletion and substitution offered for our Mission and Principals (Section B - 2), but the majority was not convinced by my position. Proposal 1, and Proposals 2 through 20, were all approved (the changes to # 2 through 20 were mostly done to make the document clearer and better organized after years of amendments). Proposals 21 and 22 were withdrawn after some brief discussion.

I'm sure Jude will provide his own observations at our next meeting. I'll be happy to field any questions and comments at our September chapter meeting.

Thanks for allowing me to represent you at Council this year!

Patrick



Avoid falling pianos stay alert!  
Look up when coming close to buildings, be diligent and never let your guard down.  
Remember a falling piano does not discriminate. You may know everything about what is going to hit you but the piano does not care. It will flatten you just the same.



**Nancy,**

**LIFE DOESN'T ALWAYS TELL YOU WHAT'S AHEAD... MAKE SURE YOU'RE COVERED!**



It may not be a falling piano, but you never know what's around the corner...

Like when you're unable to work, and the debts are piling up - fast!

That's when you need Payment Protection to cover your loan obligation with:

*Financial Institution Name here*

**Remember, no matter what life drops on you, you can have peace of mind by reducing your financial risk. Call us today!**





ASSIST WITH THE TUNING EXAM—We have been doing quite a few tuning exams lately. Any RPTs out there willing to help out? The tuning exam requires one CTE (Certified Tuning Exam-iner) and two (or more) RPTs. Recently I asked several RPTs to help out and both were under the mistaken impression that one had to be a CTE to take part in a tuning exam. Not so. Any RPT can help. It's a good way to give back to our organization, have fun and probably learn something. Plus you have the satisfaction of knowing you are helping uphold the high standards of PTG! There is no monetary reward, but you might get a sandwich and cup of coffee, and reimbursement for parking.

Another reminder—the pool of CTEs nationwide is shrinking. If any RPT is considering becoming a CTE, the first step is to take the full tuning exam (entirely by ear) and pass all categories at 90 or above. THE TEST FEE IS WAIVED, whether or not your scores are all 90 or above.

The Boston Chapter does testing on a by request basis. So, if anyone is thinking about taking the tuning exam, it usually takes a few weeks to set up a time. Testing is done at North Bennet St. School on one of three approved pianos: A Steinway L, a Mason & Hamlin BB or a Kawai RX2. Questions? Call or email me. - *Christine Lovgren*





Joe Morocco presented the review of last years budget.

The first order of business was the issue of the donation to North Bennet Street School. The issue seems to be moving in the direction of establishing a Regional Testing Center in cooperation with the North Bennet Street School and its faculty. One prototype for the RTC is the Southern California Testing Center and input has been received from Carl Lieberman in California including many documents. David Nadworny's shop will likely continue to be the testing center for the technical exam, and North Bennet Street School will continue to be the site for the tuning exams. The exams will continue to be open to people in the Boston/New England area who are not graduates of North Bennet Street School and in the past 6 years there have been 6-7 examinees who were not current or former students. The North Bennet Street School faculty will continue to administer the tuning exams, and this will likely continue if there are new teachers in the Piano Technology program. The Executive Committee expressed their appreciation to the Chapter members and locations who have continued to donate their time and space to keep this opportunity available.

The Home Office will still get half of the testing fee. Debbie Cyr had a copy of Carl Lieberman's charter for the Southern California Testing Center, and, similar to that charter, the other half of the test revenues would go to the Testing Center. There was a question about start-up costs. The Boston Chapter will consider some amount of a "grant" to help with some of those costs. In the past there have been 1 or 2 donations for "shop rental" expenses. For the technical exams, there are usually 3 days of scheduled exams throughout the year.

Congratulations to Patrick Draine who is the new New England Regional Vice President.

Pat presented the idea of a Traveling Associates Day. He stated that while Registered Piano Technicians are still the majority of PTG members when compared to Associates, the number of RPTs is in fact getting smaller.

The Yamaha Little Red School House, which presents a 5 day, 37-step regulation procedure, will be "imported" into the Piano Technicians Guild. It will be presented as a 3-day class in Kansas City at the PTG Home Office over the first 3 days of November. There will be 7 instructors including LaRoy Edwards. The price to take this class will be around \$999, and does not include airfare.

Regarding Technical Programs for the next year of PTG meetings, the first meeting will be at George Crawford's shop at 65 Sprague Street in Hyde Park and the



technical will be a presentation of the movie "Pianomania." October is still open. In November, the meeting will likely be at Steinert's on Monday November 5th, and will feature Ed Foote and his presentation on three types of action regulation. December is off for a PTG meeting, although the Beethoven's Birthday celebration at North Bennet Street School is scheduled for December 19 in the early afternoon. January is still open. February will likely be David Stanwood at Brandeis although the details of the date are unconfirmed. March will likely be at North Bennet Street School. April is off because of the MARC convention. May will likely be at Steinert's. June will be held at Jude Reveley's shop.

There was a discussion regarding reimbursements for the Technical Programs. It was agreed upon that if someone's presentation is specifically focused on the sale of a particular product, that person will likely not get paid for the presentation. There was a point to mention that Mike Morvan did get paid for his presentation because of the amount of technical knowledge presented. There was a question regarding reimbursement to Steinert's. There was a discussion about amending the bylaws so that every presenter be offered a flat \$150 presentation fee with the understanding that they could decline to accept the fee as a donation to the chapter. This was suggested to better resolve the issue as to where to draw the line between what is a technical presentation and what is a product demonstration. There was mention that the Los Angeles Chapter pays \$250 per presentation and that maybe Boston should consider raising their reimbursement rate.

Jim Ialeggio has supposedly been in touch with Bill Bremmer about the possibility of coming to Massachusetts and presenting to the Chapter and there was some discussion as to whether he will be presenting at North Bennet Street School at the same time.

Nancy Parry decided against having the summer party at her place in Cape Neddick this summer, and Christine Lovgren mentioned that she might be interested in hosting some kind of event in Rockport next summer.

Steve Taylor's name was mentioned again and Doug gave a thorough explanation of Mr. Taylor's role in the 2014 NEECSO convention outside Boston. Essentially, Mr. Taylor has agreed to take on most of the financial risk with regard to profit from the convention. Doug Tybor said he has professional seminar registration software so that we won't have trouble with pre-registration. He is convinced that all of the supply houses will be present at the 2014 event. Furthermore, Mr. Taylor has already negotiated the room rates down to \$119/night at the more-suitable of the two convention locations. The profit split will in the end be 75% profit to Mr. Taylor, 25% to the Boston Chapter. The added benefit is that Mr. Taylor will take on a huge amount of responsibility in running the event, and take away the task of having to learn to produce the event and deal with administrative issues since he has the professional experience.

Tom Driscoll presented the idea of having Del Fandrich at the convention and trying to bring new classes to the program to make the convention more enticing and draw a larger crowd. An idea was presented to have some kind of tour or presentation at North Bennet Street School as the Friday night event for the 2014 NEECSO; Saturday night will be the banquet; Sunday will feature the closing ceremony/brunch with presentations to formally end the event.

In late October, there will be an unannounced meeting at the two final sites to hopefully make a final decision. The date for the 2014 NEECSO will be April 24-27, 2014. There was some discussion about organizing to get pianos from piano retailers associated with the Chapter and to look into hiring movers specifically for the event. Next summer the National Convention will be in Chicago.





Chickering and Sons 5'9" grand piano 19,900.00



Steinway grand piano model, M 5'7", in a mahogany cabinet. 26,500.00



**Martin Snow**  
781-837-6531  
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Yamaha upright piano model U1  
1990s \$5200.00

Yamaha grand model G2, 5'8". \$11,900.\*

Yamaha grand model G3, 6'1". \$13,500.\*

Yamaha grand model G5, 6'5". \$15,900.\*

Yamaha upright piano model U1, 48" tall. \$4600.\*

Yamaha upright piano model U2, 50" tall. \$4700.\*

Yamaha upright piano model U3, 52" tall. \$4900.\*

Yamaha upright piano model UX, 52" tall. \$5300.\*

Kawai upright piano model KS2, 49" tall. \$4500.\*



Steinway grand model M, 5'7". Originally manufactured in 1926. \$26,500.00

\*All these pianos are factory reconditioned in Japan to a Like New condition.



Kawai RX-3 Professional Piano purchased new in Feb of 2000 from a large Kawai dealer in Boston. This piano is in excellent condition, near mint and has been tuned regularly. It's 6-feet 1-inches long and classified as a Grand Piano, not a "Baby Grand." Its has the sound necessary for a professional concert or for a recording artist. If your shopping for a high-end piano research this model, its one of the best for talented players, students and professionals. Before purchasing this we studied the famous green Piano book which has rated the Kawai pianos one of the best in the world because of its sound, quality and craftsmanship. I just had this piano tuned, so it sounds beautiful. Additional pictures available upon request. Located in Salem MA - \$13,500.00. If your interested, email me to set up an appointment to come by and play it: fredcma@comcast.net



Steinway Console, serial number P322641, dated 1947. One owner, well maintained. Asking \$4000. Please call Susan for more info at 617-721-7036.

For Sale: Samick Grand Piano with working, fully functional Pianocorder P100 player system. Piano model is G-1A (5' 1"), serial number 820225 (30 years old), walnut polish finish. Original owner, properly tuned and maintained. Bench is included. Also included are Pianocorder user manual and 22 tapes. Can also provide contact information for service professionals familiar with Pianocorder systems. Additional photos available upon request. \$5500. Located in Beverly, MA.

Doug Tybor:  
[cybertybor@comcast.net](mailto:cybertybor@comcast.net)  
or  
617-645-3519





Bill Fucito at 978-692-3293  
(Westford, MA).  
Barry Rosenberg, RPT



I have a customer who must sell his 5'2" Knabe grand by the end of this month (August). It is in very good shape for original parts (I replaced an agraffe, the two strings that went through it and one hammer head). He wants \$4000 or best offer.

Steinway L for sale. Serial #225837. Made in 1924. Has a stunning, highly figured/ribbon mahogany case. Piano has been completely rebuilt with a new soundboard and pinblock. It has new Renner shanks and flanges, Hamburg repetitions, N.Y. hammers and N.Y. damper backaction. It also has a Stanwood™ action rebalance. Has a big, sweet sound and very even touch. \$36,000. Piano is located in Bedford, MA.



Ken Prescott

781 687-9181k. prescott@comcast.net



Boston grand piano for sale.  
GP-193 6'4". 10 years old. Polished Mahogany Finish. Pristine.  
Comes with M.Steinert trade-up guarantee.

Claudia Cimenti  
email: cimenti@gmail.com Stowe, MA



Steinway B from around 1900. Completely redone in the mid 80's at Camaleri in NY. Spade legs (not original), black case. Authentic Steinway parts used throughout. Plastic keytops. 88 notes. Well maintained. Piano located in Cambridge. Asking low 30's. Call Christine Lovgren 508 733 2935

Original owner of an upright Charles R. Walter (1999) Traditional Console Model 1520, serial # 524283, with a Cherry Finish and Bench. The piano is in excellent condition, has been regularly tuned, and played only by our daughter. \$2,400 or Best Offer. Boston Tel: 617-620-8651.

Steinway 45 upright, Serial #553473 (circa 2000)  
Mahogany "Crown Jewel Collection"  
Dampp-Chaser installed  
Owned and played by an RPT, second owner  
Hammers recently filed, action recently regulated, tuned regularly,  
tight pinblock, perfect soundboard  
Middle pedal is true sostenuto mechanism  
Asking \$14,500.00

Christopher A. Storch  
(617) 489-6436



June 2012  
Steinway M - \$10950  
(Allston)



Beautiful tone 5'7" baby grand from the '20's, Steinway's golden age. As far as structural work, it has replaced pinblock, strings, dampers, which generally costs at least \$6000. The action has had the hammers, shanks and flanges replaced, which are the parts that wear and have the dreaded "vertigris" found in most older Steinways. We are regulating it now, which is the fine action adjustment to make the touch feel like new. This action work is normally at least \$3500.

It has been refinished in an open grain walnut worth \$4000. Adding all the work done, the piano is less than free at this price. We are paying you to buy this piano!



Classic Knabe 5'2" baby grand in original condition; thoroughly regulated and voiced. \$2000.

Chris Pleim  
119 Braintree St Rm 511  
Allston MA  
617-783-1030  
chrispleimpiano@me.com

2 Ivers and Pond Full Sized Uprights - \$1650 (Allston) and \$1950



The final evolution of the full sized upright; deep rich sound surpassing most baby grands. Uprights this good are mostly no longer made, and when they are they cost well over 10K. Original mahogany finish in good shape. Includes complete Life Saver System (humidity control which costs \$600 installed). This piano is fully tuned, regulated, and guaranteed.

### Mason & Hamlin "A" 5'8" Grand Piano



Unique, customized instrument with many design improvements resulting in a very special, one of a kind piano. \$35,000.

2001 Steinway grand piano Model M Serial # 558545 in ebony satin. This piano is in excellent condition, like new, and has been lovingly maintained and regularly tuned. It has beautiful rich sound. It has had little play.



Victor Belanger:  
617-484-4678  
vbela@mit.edu


  
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*Crafting the best pianos at an affordable price is an art.*

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**E. J. Buck & Sons Piano**  
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 larry@ejbuckpiano.com



## CHAPTER ADMINISTRATION

News & Notes  
[www.bostonptg.org](http://www.bostonptg.org)



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Chris Storch, Vice President  
Eric Donnelly, Secretary  
Joe Morocco, Treasurer

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Tom Driscoll, Tech Programming  
Jude Reveley, Librarian  
Bill Trotman, Newsletter

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## LOCATION MAPS

