

News & Notes



Newsletter of the Boston Chapter
of the Piano Technicians Guild

NOVEMBER MEETING

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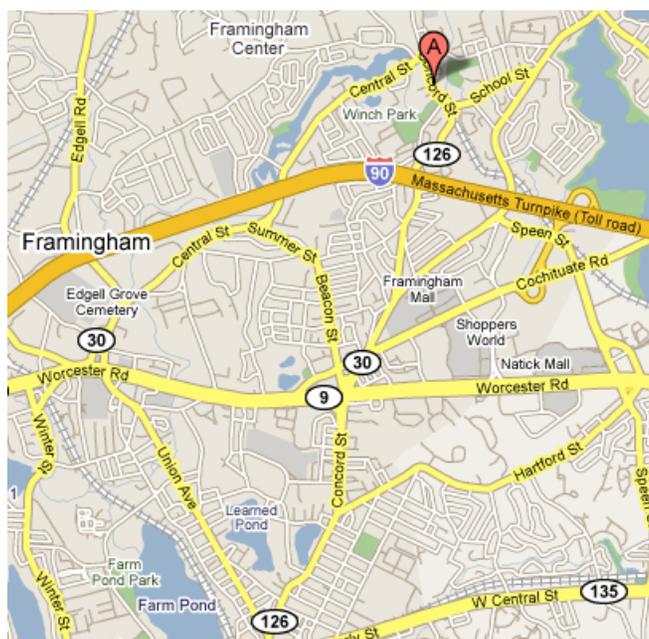
November 18, 2008

Hubbard Harpsichords, Inc
1 Watson Place
Framingham, MA

6:30 pm: doors open, refreshments put together by Evan Ewing

7:00 pm: Chapter Business Meeting

7:30 pm: Technical Presentation, Hendrik Broekman, Technical Director at Hubbard Harpsichords, Inc, on basic harpsichord repair and regulation for the piano technician. As time permits, there will also be a tour of their world-class shop and a demo of some of their instruments.



NBSS CORNER

First Year Student Bio:

Hi! My name is Andy Reach. I'm a native of Christiansburg, a small town nestled in the Blue Ridge mountains of Southwest Virginia. Although I had many interests as a child--from baseball

to computers to singing in the boy's choir--it wasn't until high school that I began to take an interest in piano.

My mom had a Story & Clark spinet which was rarely in tune, but often played. I took lessons, but never thought I'd get serious. Then, as a freshmen computer science major in college, I realized that music was my real love despite my facility with com-

puters. I went on to get my degree in music, studying piano, voice, technology and education.

At a loss for what to do after graduation, my technician recommended the North Bennet Street School, and I almost immediately knew it was right for me. I'm now 23

(Continued on page 2)

THE SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION SPOT!



Chris Pleim Piano Services, established in 1975.

My experience includes extensive apprenticeships and many years of independent service to individuals and commercial clients. With my technicians, we have over 70 years of experience and together provide friendly and professional service. CPPS will provide references at any time, representing a variety of services and customers.

Help wanted:

Apprentice or professional. Shop help in regulation, parts replacement, rebuilding. Road work: tuning, repair. \$10-\$30/hr depending on skill. Please see our website to see what we do and whether you might be interested. www.chrispleimpiano.com

Pianos for sale:

Yamaha Silent Piano-Gloss Ebony-M100 48" 1995 \$4,850.00

A hardly used full-sized upright with the feature that you can block the hammers from hitting the strings and listen through headphones to a beautiful sounding sample of a grand piano. It has a midi out to go through electronic processors or recorders.

Perfect for condos/apartments and all late night musicians.

Steinway M 1968 Walnut \$17,950.00

This piano is in mint condition in every way; it's regulated and ready to go. It lived its life in CA where the stresses from seasonal change are much less than NE, therefore the soundboard, pinblock, and action parts are completely preserved.

Tone is beautiful; can be voiced to taste. I have dropped the price almost \$2000 to sell this quickly before the holidays!

Yamaha GA1 \$6,850.00

This piano is perfect in every way. Gloss ebony finish without flaw; tuned and regulated. Built in 1999 but used very little. I got it on a trade in for a Steinway.

Price dropped almost \$1,000 to sell before the holidays!

All piano prices negotiable and with a 5% commission for you.

Many other pianos on our website: www.chrispleimpiano.com

Chris Pleim, RPT



NBSS CORNER

(Continued from page 1)

and in my 2nd year at the school, finding myself fascinated with all the aspects of tuning, regulating, and rebuilding these incredible instruments.

I still enjoy playing piano and singing (especially barbershop), and I'm continually trying to hone my skills as a musician as well as a technician. I hope to gain RPT status by the end of the year (give or take a few months), and I

hope to someday have a thriving piano business that incorporates teaching piano as well as piano tuning and rebuilding.

Andy Reach

THANK YOU, STEVE BRADY AND JUDITH COHEN!

Steve Brady, RPT and his concert pianist wife Judith Cohen gave a great talk on relations between concert piano technician and artist. Steve described how an artist's comment such as "I have to work too hard" will represent a problem, technical or otherwise, that should be approached with openness, flexibility, and courtesy by the technician. The friction or inertia could be too high, or the artist could be feeling weak or tired.

Steve and Judith role-played a couple of amusing and all-too-real scenarios in which strengths and weaknesses of the technician's possible responses were explored.

They presented with grace, humour, and insight, concluding their talk with Judith performing some grand Scarlatti on a rebuilt baby Knabe (?).

CB



THE POEM PLACE?

"and nothing quite so least as truth
—i say though hate were why men breathe—
because my father lived his soul
love is the whole and more than all"
E. E. Cummings, *Poem, Or
Beauty Hurts Mr. Vinal*
(1926)



WISDOM OVER COCKTAILS

How to Vote 2004

Father receives his instructions,
emphatically delivered
as my passion rises
with g & t lucidity.
He has borne such before from me.

A list of Nixon infractions,
when I was in college, offered
his loyalties a crisis:
intentions, assumed to be
best, lost credibility.

But then came worse ructions
than we ever weathered
politically. More unites us,
as we knew, than credulity
or summary truths from reality.

And facts can be distractions.
My message better worded
might not have precluded his thesis
that in a good family,
the father passes on to his son humility.

Christopher Brown

TECH TIP



Damper return noise is annoying and replacing damper felt expensive. I have had good luck employing steam as an alternative solution.

Upright dampers are particularly susceptible to noise as they reseal. The combination of inactivity, high humidity, and damper spring pressure can *felt* the damper felt against its strings to create a layer of inflexibility. The result can add to

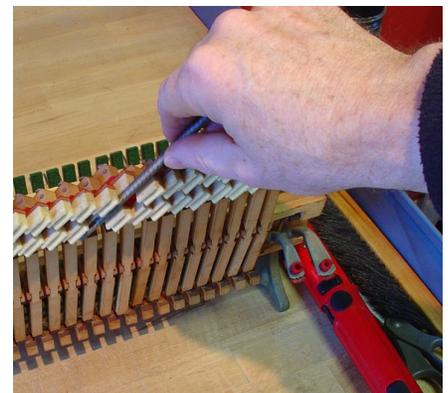
the played note a tap, zing, buzz, or slap upon release. Tuning, voicing, and regulating are ineffective in overcoming this annoyance and hours of good work can be completely undermined for the player (and payer) by this detail. The more work you've done to the instrument the more unacceptable the added noise becomes.

If you are able to remove the action without getting into a mess of broken bridle straps or other non-cost-effective setbacks, and if you have your steamer with you, a happy outcome is a few minutes away.

Steam gingerly applied to damper felt swells its surface soft again. Don't apply so much that parts come unglued. Mind the hammers, if they're on (as conveniently they are not in the image above), although in some cases a little steam can also benefit hammer felt.

Further improvement to the mono-chords can be had with a chainsaw file. Such filing can work without steam, if removing the action is not what you want to get into or you don't have your kettle. Support the dampers as you file (not demonstrated here as I have a camera in my left hand) to not damage the felt linking the damper to the damper head.

Christopher Brown, RPT



CLASSIFIED ADVERTIZING

Jobs Offered: *Chris Pleim:* Looking for tuning, repair and rebuilding help. See feature on page 2.

Pianos for Sale: *Rosewood Steinway A2,* complete rebuild, \$45K. 5% commission.
Contact: Chris Brown at 978-486-0610 or concordpno@verizon.com.

1964 Mason Hamlin CC, 9' concert grand, 5/0 tuning pins, still tuneable/playable. Ebony case, lots of wear. \$10k or best offer. Easy move from present location.

Contact: Debbie Cyr at 508-202-2862.

NBSS has two grands for sale--last Spring's student projects. One is a 5'7" *Baldwin* with mahogany case. The other is a *Hazelton,* approx 5 1/2'. Also brown mahogany. *Schaefer Grand piano,* 6'9". Late 80's vintage. Shiny black polyester. Once belonged to Kenny Rankin. Piano in Natick. Make an offer. *Baldwin spinet,* nice dark walnut finish with bench. In good shape, easy move. Piano in Wenham. Asking \$ 750.

Contact: Chris Lovgren at 617-227-2357 (NBSS shop).

Many *Grands and uprights* for sale. See feature, page 2.

Contact: Chris Pleim at www.chrispleimpiano.com

Steinway B 69933 Victorian Case in Ebony \$60K. Completely rebuilt. *Mason & Hamlin A 27219* Ebony \$45K. Redesigned and rebuilt.

Contact: Jude Reveley at 978-323-4545 or info@absolute-piano.com.

Get submissions
in two weeks
before each
meeting to be
guaranteed
Inclusion.

News & Notes

Email: news.notes@verizon.net
www.bostonptg.org

Boston Chapter PTG Officers

Patrick Draine, President
Gary Ford, Vice President
Joe Morocco, Treasurer
Elizabeth Snow, Secretary

Chapter Committees

Christopher Brown, Newsletter
Larry Buck, Programming
Jude Reveley, Librarian
David Nadworny, Tech Exam
Christine Lovgren, Tuning Exam

Come on. How bad do I need to beat
you up to get you to submit?
It's just easier for me to
write it myself than try
to figure out who
might... Give
yourselves
a break.

CB



CONGRATULATIONS, SAM GILMAN AND JOHN BERNARDINI!

Both recently became RPT's.

FEE INCREASE FOR TUNING AND TECHNICAL EXAMS

The fee for each of these exams is set to double in the new year. However, there is a grace period until the end of February 2009 during which you can take either exam for the old fee of \$90.00. Here are the requirements:

1. You must schedule the appointment for the exam before Dec. 31
2. The exam must take place before the end of February 2009
3. You must prepay for the exam before Dec. 31

Christine Lovgren, Tuning Examiner

