

GOOD Vibrations

NEWSLETTER OF THE RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER OF THE PIANO TECHNICIAN'S GUILD, INC.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Ruth Van Dine, RPT

Our meeting in June at the Harpsichord Clearing House was fascinating. I was most impressed with the organ/harpsichord combination.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at the PTG Convention in Grand Rapids. The council meeting had the most chapters represented in many years. I spoke up along with a few other chapters in favor of proposal 6 about the creation of the Allied Trade Member category since we had at least two members who could benefit from the category. Unfortunately this proposal was defeated. You can read all about the various items in the recent edition of the Northeast Regional News, including a short article from our new NERVVP, Paul Adams, RPT from Newton, NJ.

I wanted to take a moment to thank Mike Morvan for his years as a member in our chapter, being a welcome face at most of our meetings and parties. Mike recently moved his membership to the Boston chapter wanting to be more closely tied to the members of his business consortium.

September will bring two meetings for our chapter. First, the end of the summer party on Sept 13th at my home in Warwick. Then later in the week will be our chapter meeting on the 17th at Avery Piano in Providence, see the write up below about Scott Jones, RPT and his new product TouchRail.

Ruth

SEPTEMBER 2009

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Business Mtg

&

Technical

June 18, 2009

7:00 pm

Meeting at
Avery Piano Co.
256 Weybosset St.
Providence, RI

Remember to join us for dinner 5:30 Trinity Brew House before the meeting. Trinity Brew House is at 186 Fountain Street on the corner of Empire Street.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

TouchRail by PitchLock, Inc. - Scott Jones, RPT

PitchLock is proud to introduce an exciting new member of the PitchLock product family. The TouchRail easily replaces a grand piano's key stop rail to provide a precise level of touch weight reduction to each key.

With both macro and micro touch adjustment features, keys can be individually lightened and balanced to bring remarkable improvements to most any grand piano.



September 13 1:00 to 5:00 pm

PTG Summer Party

Gary & Ruth invite you to our home for a fun afternoon

Light snacks and punch will be provided

Bring your own beer, wine

BBQ grill available as well

Horseshoes, croquet, bumper pool and just hanging out

Directions available here...

Rain or Shine event

Van Dine
62 Stokes Street
Warwick, RI 02889
401-921-2456

Google Maps: <http://tinyurl.com/es4xs>

Harpichord Clearing House Tour

By David Dragone

We had a chance to tour the facility and see a number of instruments in various stages of preservation, some dating back more than 200 years. Dale Munschy graciously spent a good deal of his time explain what goes into strategizing a restoration for these instruments, many of which are historical and very rare. We also had a chance to meet Glenn Giuttari, co-owner of the shop. Harpichord Clearinghouse does more than 60 restorations per year and can handle rebuilding or technical services for any instrument of the harpichord family, whether built by them or not.

Newsletter:

Ruth Van Dine, RPT
 62 Stokes St., Warwick, RI 02889
 Email – ruth@vandinedesign.com

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NEEC SO 2010

by David Flanders, RPT

As you all know by now, Our Chapter and the Connecticut Chapter are co-sponsoring the NEECSO Regional Seminar next April 29-May 2. Our Planning Committee has been meeting for a year now, and has come up with a fantastic program at a great location, the Sheraton Providence Airport Hotel, in Warwick. Chris Haberbosch, our Institute Director, has lined up an all-star teaching staff; and we're thrilled to announce that Eric Schandall, former Director of Education, and concert technician, at Steinway & Sons will, with his wife, be coming in from Norway to headline the event.

Other happenings for the Seminar include a tour of the Mason & Hamlin factory in Haverhill, MA; an opening reception with Steinway artist Joe Parillo and his jazz trio; a Friday evening reception in Providence prior to a night on the town; and a cabaret performance with professional vocalist Josi Wails.

Working with this committee has been a labor of love. Every time a new chore is recognized, there are at least two people volunteering to do it - and, it usually gets shared by both. It's almost mind-boggling how much work has been accomplished. Our own Ruth Van Dine has done an incredible job of contracting exhibitors, greatly helping the entire project stay in the black. Relying on the Connecticut members' collective experience in this area has been invaluable; it would be impossible to imagine doing this without them.

And, while a lot has been done, there is still a lot more to do, now on the RI Chapter level. This fall, you'll be getting phone calls, asking if you could help in a particular way. We have to create a host chapter table, offering everyone from out of town all the printed material we can provide, to help them navigate the area. We'll need a sign-up sheet, coordinating those who need a ride to Providence with those who are driving in. And, there will obviously be much more as we get closer to the time. This promises to be a hallmark event for us, and one where we'll get out of it only as much as we put in. In advance, thanks for your support.

Heard at the PTG Convention Grand Rapids, Michigan July 2009

by Rob Mitchell, Editor "In Tune" San Francisco Chapter Newsletter

"Hey Thomas - so what's going on at Baldwin"? Thankfully, I don't know anymore. — *Thomas Malone*

"Get out of the 'technician mentality' where every problem must be fixed right when it's found. Do one task and go through sections or the entire piano" — *Wally Brooks*

"Customers will often claim a bad tuning, when in fact the problem is voicing." — *Roger Jolly*

"To be a wine connoisseur, you need to taste a lot of wine. To be an expert at voicing, you need to listen to a lot of piano performances." — *Arlan Harris*

"You're only as good as the last piano you tuned" — *quoted of Arlan Harris, but said by many*

"Tuners hate false beats, but pianists rarely hear or complain of them." — *Don Manino*

"Tuning a piano is an amazingly difficult, athletic feat" — *Dan Levitan*

"Charge for what you deliver, not how long it takes you to do it." — *Jack Wyatt*

"Your customers are your sales force. Make an impression so they talk about you. Tell them what to say about you to others. The first and last 5 minutes of your service call are the most important." — *Carl Lieberman and Dean Reyburn*

"Invest in your professional skills. At a convention you may learn more from a 5-minute chat in the hallway than anywhere else." — *Jack Wyatt*

Dealing With Customers by Wim Bles, RPT, from the June 2007 PTG Journal

Reprinted in the **Agraffe Graffiti** newsletter of the Phoenix Chapter of Piano Technicians Guild

There is a lot of psychology involved when dealing with customers. How you react, talk, and work with your customers will help you in your relations with them. Although technical trouble-shooting is important, sometimes the problems aren't with the piano.

What customers remember most is how they are treated when they talk to you, either to set up an appointment, ask a question, or complain about the work you did. When a customer calls you on the phone, you never know if you are dealing with someone who is "just shopping around," or it's someone representing a school district with 100 pianos – willing to pay full price. Therefore, we need to treat each person with whom we come in contact as the most important person in the world.

A big rule of thumb when talking to a customer is to know what it feels like to be on the other end. In other words, don't forget the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Treat each customer like you want to be treated.

We live in a service-oriented society. People skills are as important, and sometimes more important, than technical skills. The customer is a person who buys your service. You should always keep in mind, for instance, that no matter how aggravating answering the phone might seem, that the customer calling you is not an interruption to your work, the customer is your work.

When customers call a place of business, they are looking to make a long-lasting relationship with that business. How you deal with those customers will make a big difference in whether or not you're going to keep those customers.

Research has found that there are lots of reasons why customers do not go back to a place of business. One percent of your customers have died. Obviously there isn't much you can do about that. Three percent of your customers moved out of town. Again, not much you can do about them.

Five percent of your customers have formed other loyalties, like a neighbor, a friend, or a relative, etc. Depending on the closeness of that relationship, you're most likely going to lose that customer. Nine percent of the time customers leave for competitive reasons, like a coupon, or an ad in the paper, or a recommendation from a friend. Don't give up on these customers. Unless the other technician does a noticeably better job than you, you have a good chance of gaining that customer back, but for now, you've lost the income, at least for a while. Fifteen percent of the time, customers leave because of service dissatisfaction. Chances are, you're not going to get this customer back, although there is still a chance.

The most overwhelming reason customers do not go back to a place of business, 68 percent of the time, is because of indifferent attitudes or rudeness on the part of a representative of the company. There are many forms of this indifferent attitude and/or rudeness. The phone wasn't answered right away, or not at all. The person answering the phone was rude, or didn't know the answer, or showed indifference to the caller. The service representative was rude on the job, didn't know his/her work, or showed indifference to the customer or the product that was serviced. The common thread here, whether real or perceived, is a feeling of "indifference."

To avoid the situation, there are things you can do from the moment you come in contact with the customer by following the Seven C's of customer service:

1. **Customer comes first.** This is an effective means to take care of the customer. Let customers know they are important to you.
2. **Craftsmanship.** Know the technical aspects of your job.
3. **Courtesy.** Treat customers as you would like to be treated.
4. **Confidence.** Show that you know what you are doing.
5. **Creativeness.** Find new ways to solve recurring problems.
6. **Calmness.** If a customer gets mad at you, take it professionally, not personally.
7. **Caring.** What goes around, comes around.

Using these seven points will help build a strong business relationship, keep the customers you already have, and add to your customer base.

Piano Buyer Web site opens

Aug.20, 2009 PTG-Blog



Are you looking to buy a new piano? PianoBuyer.com has a wealth of information about buying new pianos. Larry Fine has taken the pricing data from his Piano Book Supplements and made it available online. You can find prices for acoustic and digital pianos in any price range and style. There are almost 3000 piano models listed in this database. This is a big undertaking for Larry and should be a valuable tool for both piano buyers and people in the piano industry. The magazine can be read online or a subscription available to be received in the mail.

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Tid Bit

from The Pitch, newsletter of the Syracuse Chapter of the Piano Technicians Guild

George Shearing (1919-) Jazz pianist, born in Britain. Came to the USA in 1947. He was blind from birth. Asked by an admirer whether he had been blind all his life, Shearing replied, "Not yet." One afternoon at rush hour, Shearing was waiting at a busy intersection for someone to assist him in crossing the street. Another blind man tapped him on the shoulder and asked if Shearing would mind helping him to get across.

"What could I do?" said Shearing later. "I took him across, and it was the biggest thrill of my life!"

Rhode Island Chapter
www.RI-PTG.org
Ruth Van Dine, RPT
62 Stokes Street
Warwick, RI 02889



Upcoming Meeting Dates:

Sept 13th - End of Summer Party - Ruth & Gary's home, 62 Stokes St, Warwick, 1-5pm

Sept 17th – TouchRail by PitchLock, Inc. - Scott Jones, RPT at Avery Piano, Providence RI

Oct15th – PolyesterFinish - Ruth Van Dine, RPT

Nov 19th – TBA

Dec & Jan– No meetings until February



**Rhode Island Chapter
www.RI-PTG.org**

October 1, 2009—October 4, 2009

SERC

Sheraton Charlotte Airport Hotel, Charlotte, NC

April 29, 2010—May 2, 2010

NEEC SO

Sheraton Providence Airport Hotel, Warwick, RI