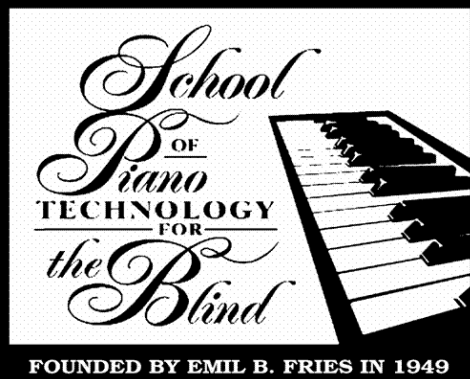


PIANO WIRE

FALL 2011 ISSUE



An Invitation to Join

Friends of Emil Fries

Help keep Emil's dream alive. This is your invitation to join a group of **Friends** dedicated to providing blind and visually impaired people with the training to reach their fullest potential. At a time when schools for the blind were phasing out piano tuning, Emil Fries established the School of Piano Technology for the Blind, the only post-secondary vocational school in the world dedicated to training blind and visually impaired students for careers as piano technicians. Fries was referred to as the "man who saved piano tuning for the blind." He understood that meaningful employment provides both a material and spiritual value.

Today, over 300 alumni have graduated from our School and over 80% of our graduates have lasting careers in piano technology. With an unemployment rate exceeding 70% for blind Americans, we are proud to provide an educational opportunity which has such a high success rate.

Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much – Helen Keller

To become a Friend of Emil, please note that on donation envelope

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A Message from the President of the Board of Trustees**Kim J. Capeloto****The Season of Change**

As I write this letter and look at the leaves changing color outside, I realize that change is constant and the only variable is how you deal with the change.

This newsletter marks some huge milestones for the School of Piano Technology for the Blind.

Our Executive Director, Len Leger, has retired after eight years of leading this school. Len and I have become close friends over the years. He is one of the most dedicated, loyal and hard-working individuals I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. While he will be missed, he and his wife, Jen, will now be able to spend more time doing what they like to do. The beauty of this situation is that they are staying local and therefore we will continue to see them at our various events throughout the year. On behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, we sincerely appreciate all that Len did to help the school continue its mission and continue to thrive, even in one the most challenging economic times we have ever seen.

Whatever will we do to continue and expand our mission and Emil's dream? Well, I am extremely pleased to announce that Jeff Lann has accepted the Executive Director position and the challenge of taking us to the next level. Jeff brings a strong business oriented, non-profit background, specifically centered around causes supporting blind and visually impaired individuals. Jeff has hit the ground running. He will be representing us at various conventions and meetings in the near future and has already attended various service club functions throughout the county. The Board is extremely excited that we were able to find someone of Jeff's caliber to help us capitalize on new opportunities and expand our outreach on behalf of our past, current and future students. Please join us in welcoming Jeff to our "Family".

Thank you all for your continued support of the School. You are truly making a difference in people's lives.

Alumni Perspective**Mark Burbey**

In many ways, pianos are great object lessons for this life. Among other things, we have the theoretical, the practical and the aesthetic to contend with, and we (or the piano owner) must choose what gets prioritized. The theoretical is what could happen in the absence of imperfections imposed by (for example) physics (i.e. an imaginary, perfect piano); the practical is gross reality setting in (i.e. the very existence of a Lester spinet) and the aesthetic can either mask or accentuate either one of those extremes depending on one's outlook (i.e. a beautiful case finish on a Lester spinet)! In business as in life, we have the option of choosing to make the most of the skill sets and prospects we have available or to become self-centered and held back by our limitations despite those various gifts, skills and opportunities.

I am not a person who is mechanically inclined on my own, and this career path was not my first choice pretty much for that very reason. I really struggled with figuring out how things work sometimes, and I am amazed by people who have the aptitude (apparently quite naturally) to do that whether sighted or not. I can, however, learn when I'm provided with the right situation, and that is what I found at the Piano Hospital (SPTB). Learning by clear verbal description, by feel and tactile processes instead of by struggling to interpret highly visual instruction helped me to focus more energy on what I was actually studying instead of how best to conceptualize it in the first place—a common challenge for visually impaired students in standard classroom situations.

Today as a business owner, I'm realistic about my own set of limitations and my current skill level as I improve the aesthetics of this world one little note at a time.

Mark Burbey, Class of 2011, Owner, Keynote Piano Care, LLC, Minneapolis, MN

Meet Our Students

Christopher Dahmke – Louisville, Kentucky - "I'm interested in opening my own business, the school has more than met my hopes, I did not expect the business management courses." Class of 2013

John Furniss – Salt Lake City – "I love this kind of work. I love the piano for the machine that it is as much as for the instrument that it is." Class of 2012

Andy Park – Douglastown, New York – "People appreciate music more when it sounds better. My job is to make the music sound better." Class of 2013

Mac Potts – Kalama, WA – "I started to play the piano when I was three years old. The 5 pianos my family purchased all came from the Piano Hospital and I attended the two day career and evaluation workshop when I was 15 years old. Years before I was eligible to attend the school." Class of 2012

Thanks to our 2010 Donors

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Len Leger Educational Fund Established



Len Leger, Kim Capeloto, Jeff Lann

Kim J. Capeloto, President of the School of Piano Technology for the Blind announced on Friday, October 21, the establishment of the Len Leger Educational Fund. The fund is in honor of outgoing Executive Director Len Leger for his commitment and accomplishments during his seven year adventure at the School of Piano Technology for the Blind. The primary purpose of the Len Leger Educational Fund is to provide financial resources to achieve the educational goals of the School of Piano Technology for the Blind.

School of Piano Technology Goes GREEN!

America is shifting to a “green culture” where over 300 million citizens are embracing the fact that environmental responsibility is everyone’s responsibility. To help us save the environment and to reduce our costs you can receive future mailings from us online.

Please send us an email with your information to julial@pianotuningschool.org

Wish List

Do you have sources for anything on our Wish List?

- High tuning quality piano for our students to work on
 - 7 Passenger Van
 - Braille Embosser
 - Microwave Oven
 - Office Chairs

Executive Directors Report



Jeff Lann

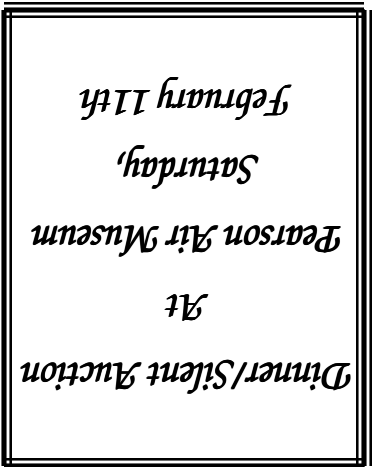
Greetings everyone! I am more than delighted to be writing to you as the new Executive Director of the School of Piano Technology for the Blind. Thank you to everyone for the warm welcome I have received to date. I'd like to share with you what attracted me to this position in the first place and what I see as the challenging and exciting work before us.

Research has shown that organizations that have a relevant mission and vision for their role in the community are better positioned to thrive. Mission and vision are key drivers in an organization's ability to instill passion in its volunteers, donors and partners. The story of the School of Piano Technology for the Blind is a very compelling story and it's mission of providing specialized quality education for blind and visually impaired individuals carries a strong impact.

Emil Fries, founder of our school, understood that meaningful employment provides both a material and spiritual value. Former Executive Director, Len Leger described us as a **small school doing big things – we change people's lives**. After talking to the students, board of trustee's, staff and volunteers my conviction about the value of our program only deepened. What I have heard echoed time and time again rings true...we are making a difference. The passion, commitment and investment of time and resources from our supporters is the driving force that sustains this organization. It is truly a privilege for me to work with so many remarkable people dedicated to our mission and I welcome this opportunity.

As with all not for profit agencies, these are precarious times we live in when it comes to finances and our abilities to sustain the valuable work that we are doing. As Executive Director, I will work to ensure that we spotlight our organization, institute systems of support and work collaboratively towards a more stable future.

To those of you I've already met, I say "thank you" for your remarkable hospitality and sharing your stories. I look forward to getting to know many more of you over time. I welcome your ideas and suggestions as we construct the future together.



Save the Date!

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