



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

December 2014



Happy Holidays!

First of all, let me apologize for the lack of a president's message last month. And here's a tip: If you are on the Balcones board, don't miss a meeting at election time. There will be consequences!

Aside from that, I thrilled to be Balcones President (again), and I am just as thrilled to have Jerry Whitley as V P and to have the rest of the board intact. Many thanks!

And thanks to past president, Matt Czosnek for hanging in there when things got as busy as they ever could get with his job. We all understand that a man's gotta eat and take care of his family and bangin hot iron has to come second.

Also have to thank Dennis Moore for hosting the November meeting at the Buggy Museum in Blanco. I have never seen so many wagons and buggies in one place. Dennis also opened up the grounds to the Blanco School District on Friday who were entertained by Tom Leinning, Tim Tellander, Mike Norris and myself. Then on Saturday for the Balcones meeting, Andy Quitner surprised us with his knowledge of horseshoeing from a past life as a farrier in Louisiana. It was a good demo. Wayne Byrd also shared some vacation photos and stories of his trip to Germany (but I know he just went for the beer).

Jerry Whitley has been scheming and planning his don't-want-to-miss-it demo and dinner at his place in Devine. This is an all day event that will go till way after dark so plan ahead if it's too far to drive home (or in my case, too tipsy). Whitley has room for campers and RV's if you have one, just bring your own clean underwear, as he will not be loaning any out this year. Also bring a chair.

A java monkey is the competition trade item which is a campfire coffee pot poring device. I have always wanted one! A prize will be given for the best.

Continued on page 2



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President's Message continued

NOVEMBER SECRETARY'S REPORT

This event seems to be getting bigger and better each year and the auction is growing with it. There should be some good deals on hard to find books and tools.

Coming up: January – Gary Hilton's axe demo in Hunt. Make a garden critter to trade.

The February competition/trade item will be "a door knocker". We will again be partnering up with HABA, North Texas, East Texas and the Louisiana bunch for a joint meeting in Bryan at Steephollow Forge. This is an all day demo & dinner. Please bring something for the auction. The Lee (Blues) Brothers always put on a good show. This is another one you don't want to miss.

It's also time to start on your auction item for the Bluebonnet demo. This is our big fundraiser that keeps going throughout the rest of the year. This means look through your shop and donate your extra tools and stash some cash for the auction.

I know we ask for a lot. It seems like all we do is ask for donations and help, but there is always somebody asking us for help. Our Mission statement says that this is why we exist. We are the keepers of the art of blacksmithing and all the information associated with it. We have been teaching this craft and handing it down for nearly 40 years and this group is now stronger than ever with more equipment and teaching material than any time since its inception. Your efforts have put us here and we need you to keep us here.

Thank you for all that you do and I hope to see you all in Devine.

Keep in touch and be safe!

Jerry Achterberg
Balcones Forge President

The Blaco Buggy Barn Museum was the site for Balcones Forge blacksmiths to set up shop November 7, 8, & 9. Jerry, myself, and Tom The Blacksmith werethere demonstrating all 3 days. Aaron and his son Shane joined us on Saturday. Friday was the day for school trips and we were surrounded by very large groups of elementary though the 9th grade students that showed surprising interest in our craft. A few lucky individuals from the spectators were allowed hands on blacksmithing experiences.

Jerry Achterberg called the meeting to order at the Blanco Buggy Barn Museum on Saturday, November 8, 2014. He thanked everyone for the generous turnout. Daniel Harrington reported that the library is still being updated with videos and books but indicated that the Balcones Forge website is in need of an update. John Crouchet and Rudy Billings confirmed the observation and identified some of the problems individuals were having with accessing the site. It was agreed that a fix was needed and Rudy will investigate a solution by a vendor that is computer savvy enough to get the job done.

The next item Jerry addressed was having a member list available on the Balcones Forge website for public viewing. There was discussion about what that list might disclose and one that appeared most popular with the group was that it should not disclose individual addresses. Another member suggested a list that only Balcones Forge members could access, such as meetup.com. The most desirable list that the immediate group had no disagreement to was a printed list available only to BF members. Jerry said the matter will be discussed with the board members and information about a decision would be forthcoming.

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John Crouchet reported that the shipment of anvils (etc) still intact and safe in his barn. He outlined the work needed for the leg vises, anvil stands, tool holders and the need for construction steel in order to construct the individual forging stations. The steel plate and square tubing needed is still an expensive portion of this project as John pointed out, plus the expertise of job capable individuals devoted to completing the project. A specific work day has not been selected. Several members indicated that they had various pieces of steel that could be donated toward that end and would submit descriptions or photos to Jerry. Delivery time & site of donated items to be announced.

Jerry introduced Wayne Byrd to the group who informed members about a recent trip to Germany and the visitation to a forge that utilized a water driven power hammer. Wayne said the shop built in the 1700's is still totally intact and is still operational. He was allowed to operate the hammer and said it strikes 80 times a minute. They operated the hammer with 6 man teams and showed the group photos of the intricate and beautiful gates and windows that were produced by the forge and are displayed by a German museum. There was considerable amazement and respect from BF members as we all had our chance to listen to Wayne and view the photos.

The trade item for this meeting was a horseshoe, of which Jerry A. Aaron T. and myself made one (in my case - resembled one). I thought this would be simple enough to make but was surprised. I had read that a farrier is required to make 4 shoes and have the animal completely shod within 45 minutes, so I waited until the day before to start my 1 shoe - should have started 45 days before! This gave Andy Quitner an opportunity to tell the group about some of his experiences during the 18 years he spent as a farrier mostly on the horse race tracks in Louisiana. Andy is quite the demonstrator as he identified the blacksmith tools necessary to shoe a horse. The horse, Andy explained, needs a very knowledgeable farrier in order to compensate and correct certain hoof or bone deformities, as well as injuries. Andy also passed around a unique shoeing hammer that he had forged. It was my conclu-

sion that since those horse owners are critically concerned about the welfare of their horses and their ability to win races (ie money, money, money), then Andy was a farrier in high demand.

The iron-in-the-hat auction for today's meeting produced \$115. Jerry indicated that was good, but also reminded our members remember to bring something to each meeting which is essential for BF survival. BF members were reminded that December 13 is the meeting in Devine at Jerry Whitley's forge and the competition item is a Java Monkey.

Tim Tellander
Balcones Forge Secretary

DECEMBER TRADE ITEM

The trade item for December is a.....

Java Monkey

No store bought primates allowed. Make your own.

REMEMBER: you gotta make one to **ENTER THE COMPETITION**

THE NEW BALCONES FORGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jerry Achterberg, President
Jerry Whitley, Vice President
Rudy Billings, Treasurer
Tim Tellander, Secretary

John Crouchet
Daniel Harrington, Librarian
Jim Elliot
Vince Herod, Editor
Alan Lee
Jeff Lee

DECEMBER MEETING INFO

Just a note to remind everyone that due to the holidays, our December meeting will be held on Saturday the 13th. We are planning to do things a little different this year as far as the schedule. We will eat dinner and then move into the demos. We will again have a short memorial with the "Ringing of the Anvil" as we did last year. If there is someone that you would like to include, please let us know.

Along with three or four great demos, we will also have an auction. Go through your stuff and bring what you can. Start saving your nickels because last years auction was great and I would expect it to be even better this year.

We have ample parking, so if you would like to bring an RV or camper we would be happy to find you a spot to park. You are welcome to come early and leave late, just send us a note to that we will be expecting you.

This event will again have a competition trade item. It is a Java Monkey. If you cannot find one on Google, look up coffee pourer. I am sure that there will be a lot of Cowboy Coffee available throughout the event to make sure that they all work properly. There will be a prize for the best one. Get to work now while there is plenty of time to get one made. We will be putting our additional information on the demonstrators and the event and are really looking forward to seeing everyone here.

Jerry Whitley

A GREAT DEAL

Balcones Forge has Mark Aspery Books!

All 3 volumes:

- I - Basic Blacksmithing
- II - Leafwork
- III - Joinery

\$50 each -- no tax, no shipping, normal price \$59

Send your requests to Rudy@BalconesForge.org



Gallery item at ABANA.

photo by Alan Lee



3rd Annual Rustyk Forge - Demo & Memorial

Saturday, December 13, 2014

Board Meeting – 9:30

General Membership Meeting – 10:00

Memorial and “Ringing of the Anvil” – 10:45

Dinner – 11:00

Barbeque Brisket, Sausage, and all the fixins’

We will have iced tea and bottled water to drink. If you prefer an adult beverage feel free to bring it.

We do plan to have a campfire and an unending supply of Cowboy Coffee (gotta test the Java Monkeys)

Auction

Please bring your donated items as well as your nickels to support the auction.

Demonstrations 12:00 -5:00

Competition Trade Item – Java Monkey

There will be a prize for the best one.

Feel free to come early and stay late. Plenty of room for self-contained RVs, Campers and Tents

Featured Artists:

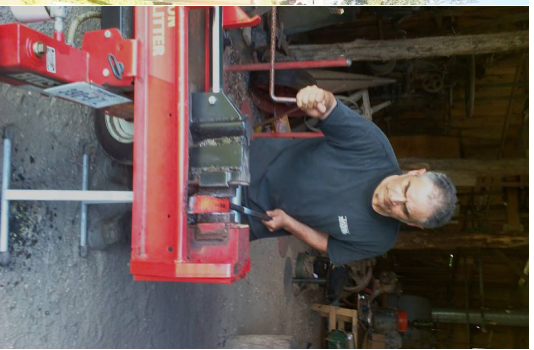
Sue Murray – Sue’s work can be seen in these three publications as well as various events throughout Central and South Texas.

Ironwork Today 3 Inside and Out, 2011, Schiffer Publishing - The Anvil’s Ring, Vol. #2, Spring 2014 - Ironwork Today 4 Inside and Out, Schiffer Publishing 2014

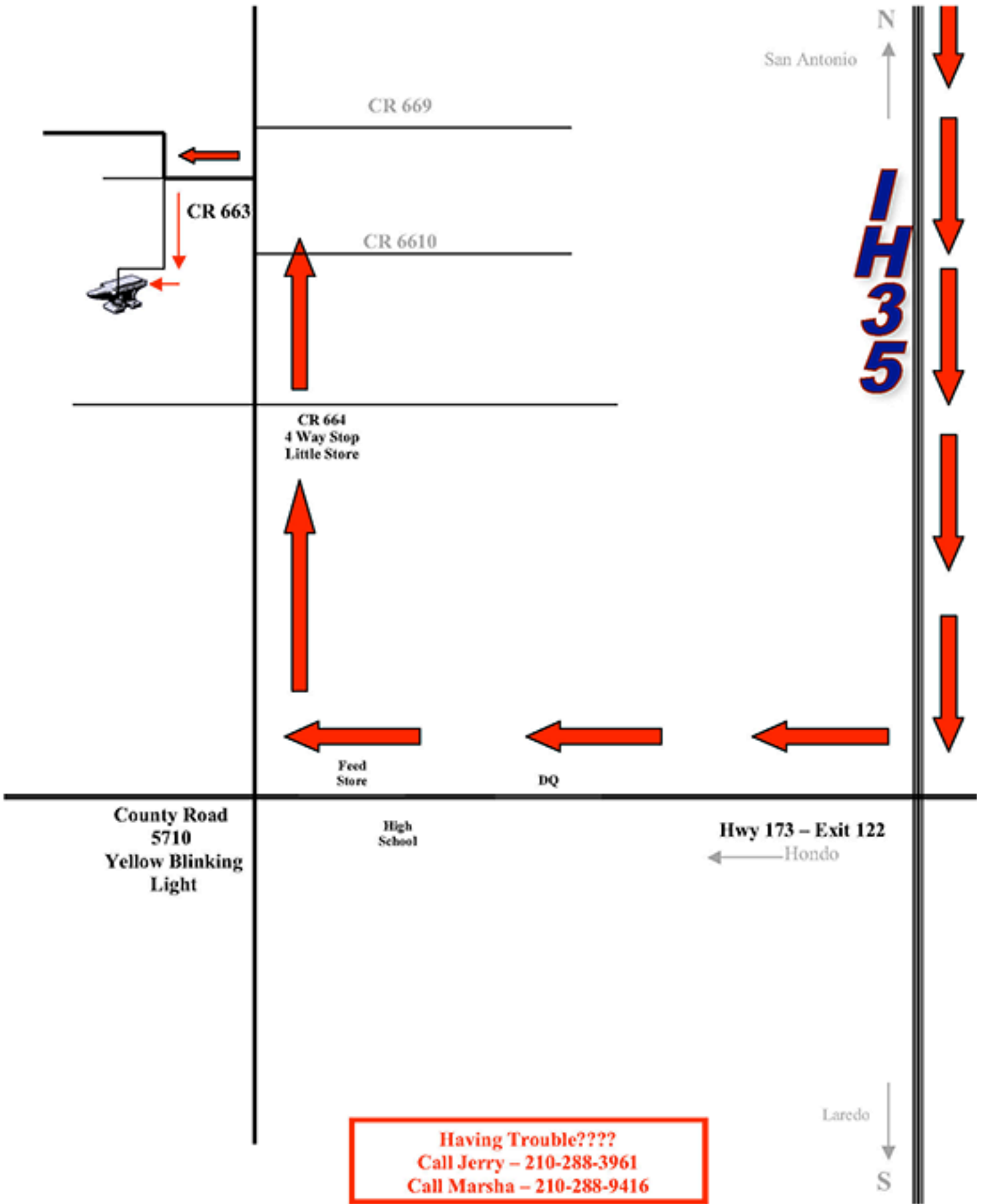
Aaron & Shane Tilton – They will work together to forge an axe using the “Iron Bloom” from our October 2013 event.

Jeff Jambers & Dustin Mundorf – Together they will forge a hammer.

Joe Travieso – Joe can be seen at the Boerne Ag. Museum. He will use a hydraulic press to make “Damascus Steel”.



Bring your lawn chair and don't wear your good shoes. You will be out on the farm and you never know what you might step in.



Map to the December meeting

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG



One of the many reasons to attend the ABANA conference is the opportunity to view the inspiring art presented in the gallery.

Many thanks to Alan and Jeff Lee for sending these pictures so they can be shared with the Balcones Forge members.

YOU'VE NEVER SEEN THIS BEFORE!

By Daniel Harrington

There's a lot of great stuff in the Balcones Forge library for all of us to enjoy, some of our books are VERY old, and some are brand spankin' new. We have DVDs and VHS tapes (which can be converted to DVD - just ask!) ranging from the very basics, finishes, forge welding, Damascus and much more. This month I'm going to provide a quick look at a number of books and videos which are new to the library... That's right! You can be the first smith on your block to check out and enjoy these flaming hot offerings from the Balcones Forge Library!!

BLACKSMITH SHOP & IRON FORGING - Reprinted by the fine folks at Lindsay Publications, this little book was first published in 1909 - talk about a look back in time. This book is packed with information, all of it useful. From different types of forges, welds, hammers, tongs, anvil tools, punches... You name it, this book covers it. The information is clear and concise to the point of not a single word wasted. Even the experienced smith is likely to run across some new information here.

BUILD AN OIL-FIRED TILTING FURNACE - I have to admit, this one kinda hurt my head to read - reminding me of my high school calculus class. However, there's at least a couple of members who I expect would gobble this book up and ask for more. In this book, Steve Chastain provides complete and nicely illustrated detail on his homemade aluminum-melting furnace. This beast can be powered by either oil or propane (he shows how to do both) and produces *at least* 100 pounds of aluminum per hour. Filled with charts, graphs, drawings, formulas, photos and illustrations, if you need to melt some aluminum, then this is your ticket.

THE MASTER OF THE FORGE - This is a fictional tale of Numukeba, an African blacksmith who leaves his home and forge after years of refining his craft, in order to seek adventure. Harold Courlander spins a series of epic tales which account for many years of Numukeba's life, starting with his decision to claim his place among the heroes of his village, despite being "just a blacksmith." After proving himself worthy of the moniker "hero," Numukeba travels to distant lands righting wrongs, slaying the wicked, saving the innocent and occasionally borrowing some time at a forge to create weapons, armor and powerful talismans. I found it to be a great read, and a nice departure from the typical "western" storytelling style.

THE COMPLETE METALSMITH - Tim McCreight has put together a fabulous illustrated reference guide which is handy for anyone working with metals. Presented in a quirky hand-written font, with loads of illustrations and VERY busy pages, this book had me on the fence between love and hate for a good while. But once I started to get over the strange layout and uncover some of the great information it contained, I fell for it. Need to know the melting point of a particular metal or alloy? It's in here. Looking for a dozen distinct types of chains? Yep, got that, too. Interested in casting using sand, wax, charcoal or cuttlefish? No, I'm not kidding, all of this and more are in this oddly delightful book.

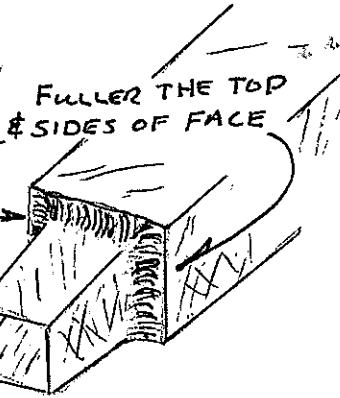
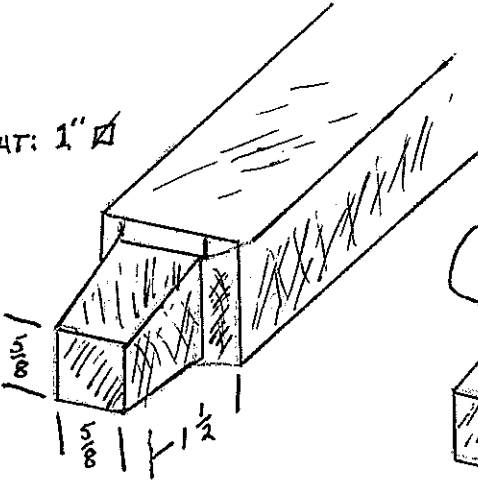
ORE TO AXE (DVD) - Remember the awesome iron bloom that Aaron and the guys made last year at Steephollow Forgeworks? Well, our library now includes a copy *Ore to Axe*, the video in which Lee Sauder and company fell a tree, use an ore dog to find some iron ore, build a bloomery, produce an iron bloom and forge an axe from it. Wow!! An incredible amount of work, and an inspiration to anyone who really wants to "do it the old-fashioned way." This video is very well produced, and is just great entertainment. Check it out!

HOT TIPS FOR THE BLACKSMITH (DVD) - In this video, Doug Lockhart provides some great instruction for beginner smiths. He starts by showing a technique to create a very nice heart shape, and gives great detail on what to do and what NOT to do when drawing out and shaping the metal. The second segment of the video is a brief but useful tip on the best way to draw out metal accurately... a basic skill that many of us take for granted, and may not be doing as well as we should. After giving some great tips on leaf-making, Doug finishes the video by reviewing the forge weld, and has some great tips for making your forge welds successful every time.

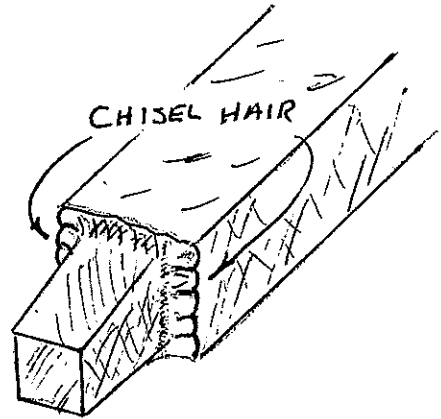
BEAR HEAD by ALWIN WAGENER

ASHVILLE N.C.

MAT: 1" \square

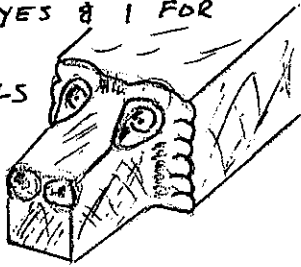


FULLER THE TOP & SIDES OF FACE

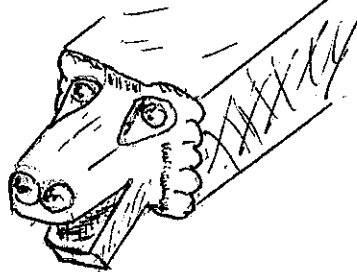


CHISEL HAIR

USE 3 PUNCHES FOR THE EYES & 1 FOR THE NOSTRILS



CHISEL THE MOUTH



CHISEL A LINE FOR THE TONGUE & SPLIT THE NOSTRILS



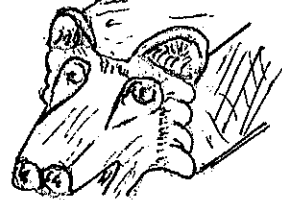
FULLER TO CREATE TEETH



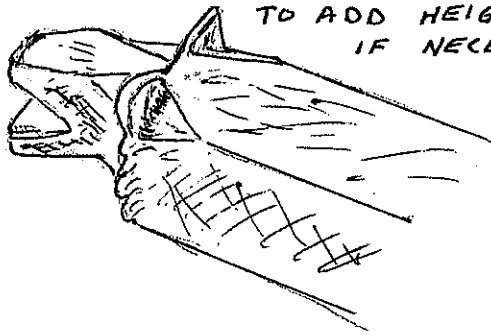
FULLER ABOVE THE EYES TO START THE EARS



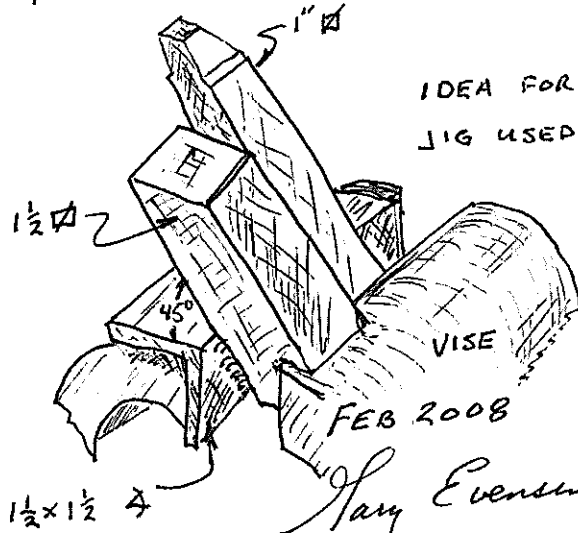
USE ROUND PUNCH TO ENLARGE THE EARS



CHISEL BEHIND THE EARS TO ADD HEIGHT IF NECESSARY



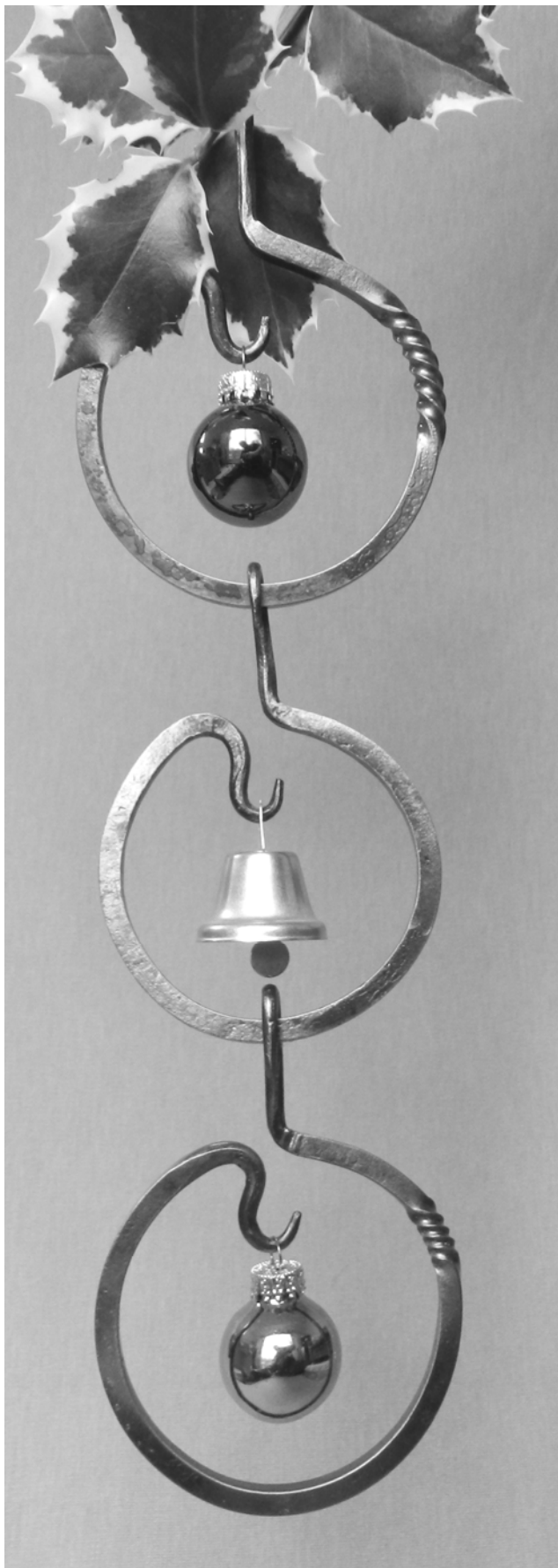
IDEA FOR SUPPORTING JIG USED IN A VISE



FEB 2008

Jay Evensen

1/2 x 1/2 \square

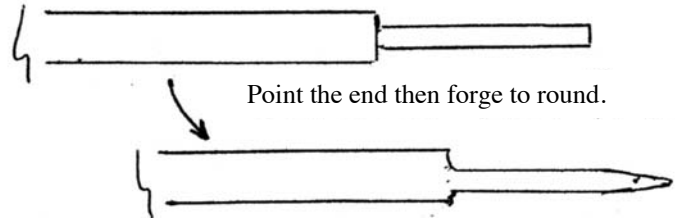


Christmas Ornament Hanger

By Steve Anderson,
a MABA member

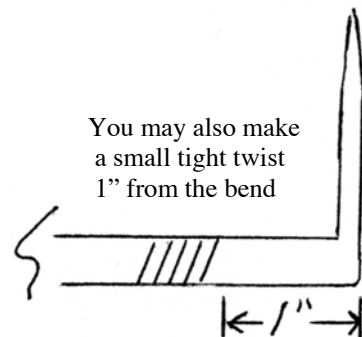
Stock: 3/16" square x 9-3/4"

Starting 1-1/4" from the end, forge to 1/8" square.



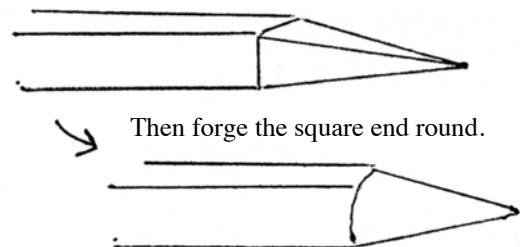
Point the end then forge to round.

Bend to 90° in a vise.



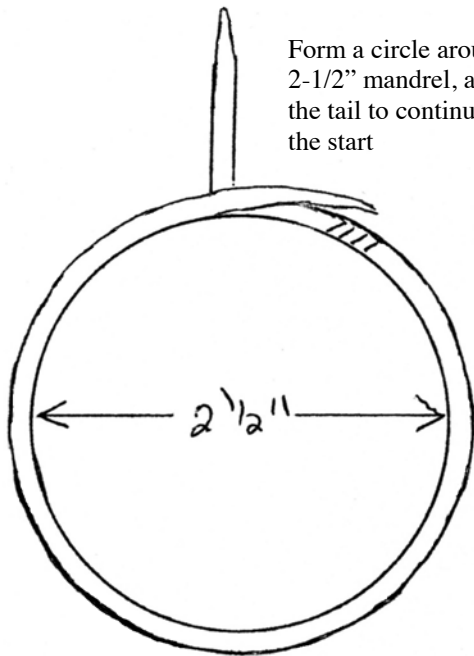
You may also make
a small tight twist
1" from the bend

Forge a long square taper starting 1" from the other
end.



Then forge the square end round.

Form a circle around a 2-1/2" mandrel, allowing the tail to continue above the start

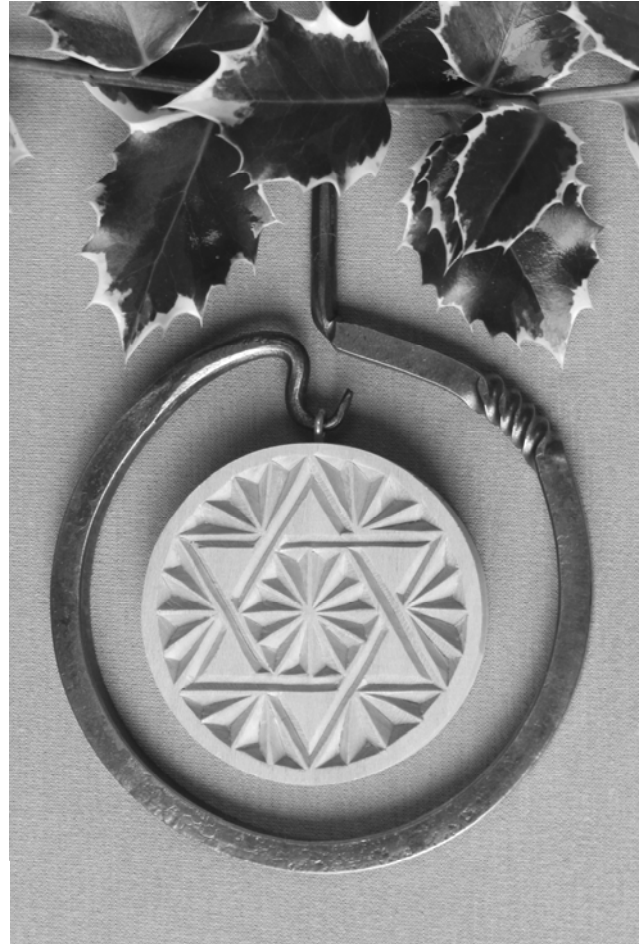
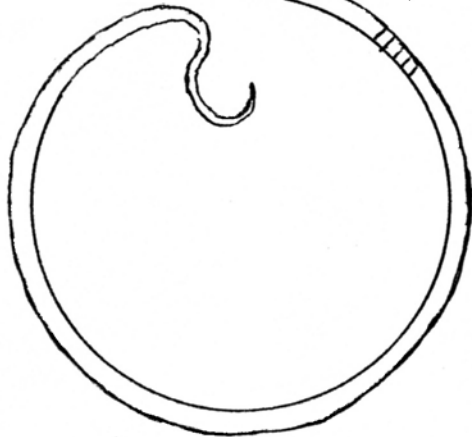
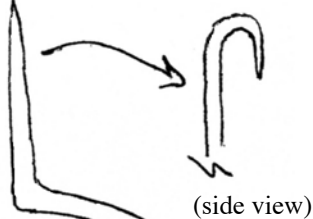


Editor's note: When Steve Anderson sent us a sample of the ornament hangers with his article for the newsletter, we knew the large 3-1/2" diameter hanger would be perfect for a chip carved ornament made by my cousin, Dick Baker.

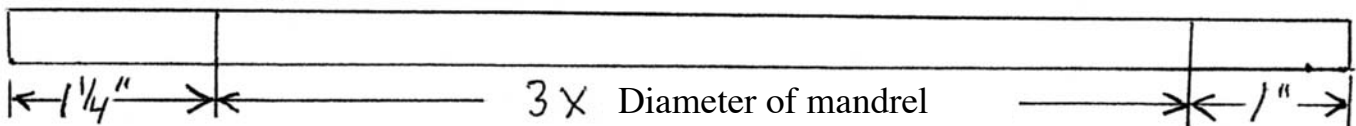
We hope you enjoy making these hangers to accent your special ornaments. Happy Holidays!

Bend the top point back to form a hook.

Heat the tail and use a scroll tongs to shape a hook, centered under the upper hook.



To finish, use hot wax or use a wire wheel and a clear coat to finish. Using a brass brush is optional.
For a different size mandrel, use the dimensions below, you may want to go up to 1/4" square stock for larger hangers.



FUTURE BALCONES FORGE MEETINGS

December 13, 2014 Jerry Whitley - Devine, TX

January 2015: Gary Hilton - Hunt, TX
(study your axe making)

February 2015- Lee Brothers @ Steep Hollow Forge - Bryan, TX
(spurs and more)

March 2015- Pioneer Museum - Fredericksburg, TX

April 2015- Bluebonnet - Marble Falls, TX
(Dorothy demos bronze)

May 2015- Swing Music Fest - San Marcos, TX

