



# Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

February 2013



First off, Marsha and I would like to thank you for your prayers and support after the tragic loss of our son. He will be greatly missed. Please join us as we ring the anvil in his honor at Steephollow Forge on February 16th.

This month was a different then ever before. For those that did not know, due to the amount of traveling that we will be doing, we chose to have regional open forges. The forge at Zilker was open on Sunday, January 13th. A southern group met this past Saturday, January 19th at George and Cheryl Craig's, Alamo Lot Maintenance in San Antonio. We had a really good turnout and Jerry A. showed us several bending tools along with simple modifications that could make them even better.

Some worked on their spurs for our meeting scheduled for February 16th at Steephollow Forgeworks (the shop of Alan, Jeff and Carlton Lee) in Bryan, Texas. There were some tools made from coil spring with a lot of attention to the oil quench and tempering process. As we began to wind down, most enjoyed a barbeque chicken and sausage dinner that was delivered by O'Reillys.

A question for all – Is the Regional Open Forge type of meeting something we should continue?

It looks like we will be getting very busy for awhile:  
February 16 – Steephollow Forgeworks in Bryan, Texas (with HABA & North Texas Blacksmith Assoc).

Competition 'Trade Item' – Spurs

## Meeting Date is Feb 16

*President's message continued on page 2*



### Officers

#### President

**Jerry Whitley**

[jerry.whitley@ymail.com](mailto:jerry.whitley@ymail.com)

830/665-2285

#### Vice-President

**Matt Czosnek**

[mattczosnek@gmail.com](mailto:mattczosnek@gmail.com)

512/609-9724

#### Treasurer

**Rudy Billings**

[Rudy@BalconesForge.org](mailto:Rudy@BalconesForge.org)

512/461-7375

#### Secretary

**Laurie Wicker**

[lrwicker@gmail.com](mailto:lrwicker@gmail.com)

512/383-0874



### Editor

**Vince Herod**

[spotteddogforge@yahoo.com](mailto:spotteddogforge@yahoo.com)

512/253-6045

*President's message continued*

March 11-15- Spring Break – Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas. Matt is looking for volunteers to work the forge.

March 23 & 24 – Bluebonnet Demo featuring Mark Aspery. Sycamore Creek Ranch, Marble Falls, Texas.

April 20 – E.J. McCann has invited us to Louisiana. Will get additional information on the event.

April 27 – Open

May 18 – Texas Natural Swing and Music Festival. San Marcos, Texas

October 26 – Whitley's

We will be working on filling the remainder of the calendar.

Get to work on your spurs and we will see you in Bryan!

Jerry Whitley  
President, Balcones Forge

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Jerry Achterberg  
Rudy Billings, Treasurer  
Matt Czosnek, Vice President  
John Crouchet  
Jim Elliot  
George Graham  
Vince Herod, Editor  
Tom Lupton  
Jerry Whitley, President  
Laurie Wicker, Secretary



Balcones Forge members got busy at the January 19 gathering in San Antonio. More pictures by Gerald Pollard on page 7.



The Balcones Forge Newsletter is written by the editor except as noted. Balcones Forge, its officers, members, contributors, editors and writers specifically disclaim any responsibility, or liability for any damage, or injury as a result of the use of any information published in the newsletter or demonstrated at a meeting or conference. Every effort is made to insure the accuracy and safety of information provided but the use by our members and readers of any information published herein or provided at meetings is solely at the user's own risk.





# Metal Meet 2013

## February 16, 2013

**Steephollow Forgeworks**  
**7286 Mesco Dr.**  
**Bryan, TX 77808**

The **Metal Meet** will be joint meeting of **HABA**, **Balconies** and **North TX Blacksmiths Assoc.** held at the **Lee brothers' Steephollow Forge** in Bryan, TX. It will be open to the public as well. There is no charge to attend but proceeds from the auction and donations for lunch will be used to offset the costs. This will be a great experience for both old hands and people new to the art of Blacksmithing.

### Activities:

- Demos
  - Alan and Jeff Lee
  - Nathan Roberts on power hammer
  - Thomas Dean - Pine Cone Forge - leg vice repair
- Auction
  - Forged items – tools, utensils, works of art
- Hand forged spurs competition – judging in several categories
- Show, Tell, Sell: display area for members to show off and sell their work
- Anvil ring for Jerry Whitley's son, Matt
- Catered lunch
- Ang Yang will be showing off their power hammer
- Tailgating
- Hammer Making Class (requires advanced registration)

### Schedule:

- 9:00 AM – Start with the anvil ring for Matt Whitley who recently passed away.
- 9:30 – Demonstrations
- 11:30 – Auction
- 12:00 – Lunch
- 1:00 – Spur judging
- 1:30 – Demonstrations continue
- 5:00 – Close of meeting
- All Day Events – Hammer Class; Show, Tell, Sell; Tailgating; Ang Yang

For more information contact email Pete Farrell at [pmforging@gmail.com](mailto:pmforging@gmail.com) or email or phone Alan Lee at [aleedynaflo@msn.com](mailto:aleedynaflo@msn.com), 979-776-2864

Contact: Alan Lee  
Tel: (979) 776-2864  
E-mail: aleedynaflo@msn.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## EVENT NEWS RELEASE

### Steephollow Forgeworks- Hammer Making Workshops and 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Combo-Demo

Steephollow Forgeworks is hosting its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Combo-Demo on February 16<sup>th</sup>. It will be an open house with live demonstrations, an iron art exhibition, iron art auction, and will feature new and used blacksmith equipment. The event is free and will last all day long. Everyone is encouraged to go visit and appreciate the art of forging metal. The event is located at 7286 Mesco Dr, Bryan, Texas.



On February 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Steephollow Forgeworks will be having hammer making workshops. There will be a hand hammer class for \$100 and a sledge hammer class for \$120. At the end of the class you will leave with a hardened, tempered, and handled tool. Contact Alan or Jeff to reserve a place, call (979)776-2864. Classes are filling up fast so do not hesitate to sign up!



Steephollow Forgeworks is an open metal working fabrication business which utilizes traditional blacksmithing techniques and the use of modern equipment to create metal works for homes, offices and public spaces. Steephollow uses custom hand forged metal to create a unique piece of art. Steephollow Forgeworks provides a variety of metal work services from small gifts such as fireplace tools to custom industrial fabrication objects.

In December the Arts Council of Brazos Valley will feature Steephollow Forgework's Alan Lee in an exhibition of his work running from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup>.

If you have any questions, please visit Steephollow Forgeworks at 7286 Mesco Dr, Bryan, TX 77808, or call (979)776-2864. For more information about Steephollow Forgeworks, visit [www.facebook.com/Steepforge](http://www.facebook.com/Steepforge).



# Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America

ABANA is pleased to announce that it's next biennial conference  
will be:

13-16 August 2014  
in  
Harrington, Delaware  
at the  
Delaware State Fairgrounds.

The facilities at the fairgrounds are well suited to our needs and being located in the middle of the East Coast puts it within a day's drive of 1000's of our members. It's also within 2 hours of the major airports of Washington, DC and Philadelphia, PA

ABANA 2014

Joinery: Come Make Connections

13-16 August

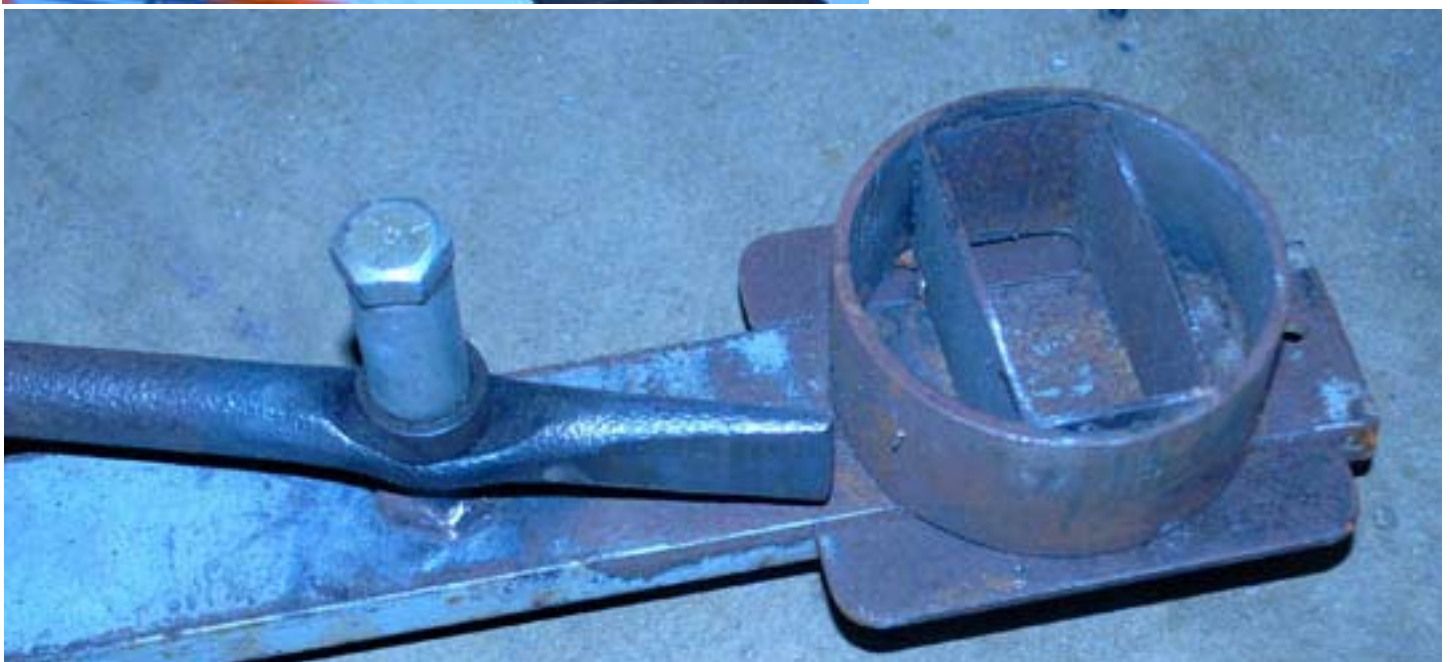
Delaware State Fairgrounds

Harrington, Delaware



The San Antonio portion of Balcones Forge got together at George Craig's place on the 19th of January for some open forging and spur making.

*photos by Gerald Pollard.*



## DECEMBER 2012 MEETING NOTES

*This article got lost in in your editors file management system; sorry for the delay! Vince*

We sure had a great meeting and demo today. Thanks to William Bastas and Henry Stone. They put in a very hard 3 hours and forged us a 10# anvil. Great job!

There were bargains on tools to be had and a small trailer with free scrap. The lucky ones brought a truck to haul their loot. John brought a set of bleachers and that was a good thing. Even with the bleachers there wasn't near enough seating. Turnout was super. We had several anvils that were made for the Show and Tell. Jerry A. made a nice one from a piece of railroad track from the Brachenridge Eagle at the SA Zoo. Alan Lee forge a stake anvil and one of our new members, Troy Smiddy made a nice little anvil. Troy was gone before we had our Show and Tell. I am making a striking anvil and stand and took it while it was light enough to move.

Jeff Lee had some rasp spurs that he was working on. He was tutoring us to get us started on ours.

We have not figured out what we are doing for January. Whatever we do, there will not be a trade item. This will give everyone a little more time to work on their spurs. No excuses.

Thanks to everyone that made today's meeting and demo happen. It was quite a drive but, well worth it.

We will work to keep you posted,  
Jerry W.



## TIME TO PAY

Your dues, that is!

\$20 per year if you want to get the newsletter electronically. For five dollars more, you can get print editions in the mail; your choice.



# PICTURES FROM THE PAST

## “A pair of antiques”

“Harvey Wise taking a break from the meeting at John Horrigan’s knife making demo.”  
April 2012

Photo and Title by Jerry Achterberg



Does anyone have some pictures from the December 2012 meeting that they would like to share with the unfortunate souls who were unable to attend? If so, please send them to your editor!



## THE METAL MUSEUM COLLECTS

The Metal Museum is pleased to announce a complete reinstallation of our permanent collection. Titled The Metal Museum Collects, the new installation features five exhibitions in expanded galleries.

New galleries include:

What Function? New Forms.

A survey of top contemporary metal artists who are asking new questions of old forms.

Samuel Yellin and JG Braun: Integrity and Innovation in the Early 20th Century

American blacksmithing changed drastically in the early 1900's. This gallery tells the story of that period, as represented by the work of these two men.

A Sublime Moment, Frozen: John Marshall's work from 1977 - 1983

Featuring large-scale work from a master of American silversmithing, created at a turning point in his career. This is the first time in almost 30 years that this monumental body of work has been on view.

A Metalsmith's Menagerie

Fuller, the Museum's cat, presents this collection of animal imagery in metal. Educational and fun for the whole family! (Pictured above, Carl Jennings Monkey Head)

Gates, Grilles, and Fences

See historic and contemporary examples of these forms in variety of metals and methods.

The Metal Museum is regularly open Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm and Sunday, noon - 5 pm at 374 Metal Museum Drive, Memphis, TN 38106

For more information, call 901-774-6380 or visit [www.metalmuseum.org](http://www.metalmuseum.org).

## 2013 CONVENTION

To help celebrate ABANA's 40th Anniversary, the first ABANA Convention will be held at the Historic Westville Village in Lumpkin, Georgia and at the Convention Center in Columbus, Georgia on March 15-17, 2013.

You can see more details the ABANA website.

Cost to Attend the Convention: \$95.00

Please click on the links below to register or RSVP:

Come help us celebrate this historic event for ABANA!

Cost to attend the entire Convention: \$95.00

(includes the Friday buffet, a Bus ride from Columbus to Westville, Lunch at Westville, Dinner Buffet back at Columbus and Sunday Breakfast Buffet!)

Founding Members will speak about their Experiences at the original Westville Hammer-In and their past 40 years of Blacksmithing.

Founding Members Currently attending:

Ivan Bailey  
Dimitri Gerakaris  
Mike Riegel  
Peter Renzetti

Guests who only wish to participate on Saturday (9 am-4 pm) at Westville can simply pay the Westville entry fee of \$15.00 (lunch is not included with this entry fee)

ABANA Central Office  
Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America  
[centraloffice@abana.org](mailto:centraloffice@abana.org)  
(423) 913-1022



November is just past, and since the elections are still on most peoples mind, we thought we would take this opportunity to remind everyone of ABANA's own 2013 election for five (5) Board of Director members. The process is quite simple and about as painless as we can make it.

Details can be seen at: [http://www.abana.org/business/abana\\_board.shtml](http://www.abana.org/business/abana_board.shtml).

The schedule for the 2013 elections is:

December 20, 2012: Notice of Election published in The Anvil's Ring

April 15, 2013: Nominations deadline for candidates. Statements to be published with ballot in Summer Issue of The Anvil's Ring

June 15, 2013: Members receive Candidate Statements and Ballot in Summer Issue of The Anvil's Ring

August 15, 2013: Postmark date for completed ballots. Those ballots with postmark after this date will not be counted.

September, 2013: Notification to Elected Board Members

November 7, 8, 9, 2013 Annual ABANA Board Meeting in Hanover, MD. New Board Members assume their duties.

We are at an exciting time in ABANA's history, so please think about taking this opportunity to serve not only ABANA but other blacksmiths as well.

If you have any questions, please contact me at: [georgemattthews@abana.org](mailto:georgemattthews@abana.org)

Sincerely,

George Matthews, ABANA Election Chair  
Artist Blacksmith Association of North America

# The Bottom Line

## *-Who Pays the Bill?-*

It's shocking how much money it takes to put on a major demo. Lots and lots of money! Thousands of dollars! And yet, Balcones Forge does it year after year. This year will mark our thirteenth major blacksmithing demo and we have managed to pay the bills every year!

How do we do it? One simple truth.....Everybody pitches in and helps. Every year, our members step up. There is no other way. The costs are just too great for a few people to pay the bill. We hire absolutely the finest blacksmithing talent we can find for our demos. We fly them to Texas and fly them home. We pay all their expenses. We buy iron, coal, tools, food, drinks, and we pay hundreds of dollars for things you might not even think of, like porta potties and table and chair rentals. It really adds up!

So where does the big dough come from? Not from demo admission fees! They never add up to enough to write the big checks! The thing that puts us over the top every time is **THE AUCTION!!! Each and every time, the auction pays the bills!**

So, how do we each do our part? First, we need good items to auction. We need to raise some serious money here, so think hard. Do you have books, tools or blacksmithed items that others would bid for? Can you make something that will bring in some money? Many of our members make a fancy item for the auction each year. We sell hammers, tongs, tomahawks, knives, letter openers, hooks, bending wrenches, plant hangers, trivets, door handles, slide bolts, and even anvils, forges, and leg vises. Every one of them brings in more and more money and it all adds up! Think hard. Be original. (This year's auction includes a cannon! It is just the right size to defend your smithy against the invaders!) Somebody wants something that is just gathering dust in your shop. Someone will bid for a tool you can forge and donate. Start early, work hard, and bring something to contribute!

Of course, all those fancy auction items need to go to a good home, so bring a little extra money and take home a new hammer or a nice pair of tongs. Together, we will manage to pay the bills one more time and next year we will proudly put on our fourteenth Balcones Forge Big Demo! Thank you for your help and thanks for being a part of Balcones Forge!

*Submitted by John Crouchet*

# Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Demo

featuring

## MARK ASPERY



**March 23-24, 2013**

**Marble Falls, Texas**

**BALCONES FORGE** continues its tradition of bringing the world's most outstanding blacksmiths to Central Texas and this year we have **MARK ASPERY** for our 13th annual two-day demonstration. Mark is not only an outstanding blacksmith and demonstrator, but also an accomplished author and instructor. His first two books are excellent handbooks for fundamentals of blacksmithing and leafwork, and his third book on joinery is highly anticipated. You won't want to miss this opportunity to learn from a master such as Mark! Check out Mark's website -- [www.markaspery.com](http://www.markaspery.com)

Balcones Forge will present a catered dinner Saturday night. Dinner will be followed by our famous annual **Balcones Forge Auction**. Please create items and find unused tools to donate and prepare to bid on fantastic creations and blacksmithing tools, or maybe one of Mark's latest creation!

**Times: Saturday:** 9:00–Noon – Morning Demo  
Noon–1:00 – Lunch: *Since Marble Falls is about 20 minutes away, it is recommended to order a sandwich, chips and drink for \$6 that morning or bring a sack lunch.*  
1:00–5:00 – Afternoon Demo  
6:00 – Dinner -- only \$15  
7:15 – If not attending the dinner, please join us at this time for the fantastic auction  
**Sunday:** 9:00–1:00+ – Demo

Our hosts are John and Carolyn Crouchet at their beautiful Sycamore Creek Ranch. **Directions: From Austin:** Hwy 71 northwest to Hwy 281. **From San Antonio:** Hwy 281 north to Marble Falls. Cross the Colorado River into Marble Falls, count 5 stoplights and turn right (east) at Ranch Road 1431. Check your odometer and go 5.6 miles to our gate. As you head out of Marble Falls on 1431, you will notice that you are on a winding, two lane blacktop road with no shoulders. At the top of a long, winding hill, the road changes and suddenly has shoulders. Go fifty yards further -- you'll see white stripes on the roadway. Also look for the "Anvil" signs. At our gate, you will see a large oak tree to the left and a small sign to the right that says, "Sycamore Creek Ranch, 5828 East Ranch Road 1431." If the gate is open, just drive on in. If the gate is closed, then there are cattle in this pasture, so please close the gate behind you once you enter. Continue on down our driveway for one mile, crossing 4 cattle guards before you see the big metal shop on your left. Welcome! Lost? Call John at 830-798-3710.

### For more info contact:

**John Crouchet**, 830-798-3710 or [John@TexasWroughtIron.com](mailto:John@TexasWroughtIron.com)

**Jerry Achterberg** 210-842-3049 or [treefarm@swbell.net](mailto:treefarm@swbell.net)

**Rudy Billings**, 512-461-7375 or [Rudy@BalconesForge.com](mailto:Rudy@BalconesForge.com)

### Hotel Accommodations:

Hampton Inn on the Lake, 704 First St., 830-798-1895

Quality Inn, 1206 Hwy 281 North, (866) 307-2224

Best Western, 1403 N Hwy 281, 830-693-5122

Hill Country Inn, 1101 Hwy 281, 830-693-3637

La Quinta Inn, 501 W. FM 2147, 830-798-2020

See the latest newsletter or website ([www.BalconesForge.org](http://www.BalconesForge.org)) for Registration Form

**DON'T FORGET YOUR SAFETY GLASSES AND CUSHION. HELP US BY REGISTERING EARLY!!!**

LEARN HOW TO MAKE YOUR LITTLE GIANT  
POWER HAMMER WORK HARDER THAN  
EVER!

Please join us March 22-24, 2013 for our annual Little Giant Rebuilding Seminar!

This class was first taught by our good friend Fred Caylor of Zionsville, Indiana. We carry on his tradition of teaching people how to make Little Giants run well and hit hard.

This 2 ½ day class is a hands-on format. You will help transform a 25 LB Little Giant hammer from functional but sloppy condition into a well tuned, quiet, hard working hammer. Sid Suedmeier, owner of Little Giant, will share all his knowledge and experience gained from working with Fred and from 20+ years of repairing and rebuilding Little Giants.

An old style 25 LB Little Giant will be rebuilt during the class, and a new style machine will be on hand to demonstrate proper assembly and adjustment of both styles. All information applies to all sizes of Little Giants.

The class is held in our shop in historical Nebraska City, Nebraska. The city has a wide variety of cafes, outlets (including Pendleton Woolen Mills), antique and gift shops, orchards and museums. Friday night a tour of the Kregel Windmill Museum is open to all class participants. Learn more about this at [KregelWindmillMuseum.org](http://KregelWindmillMuseum.org).

IF YOU HAVE A LITTLE GIANT, THIS CLASS IS  
FOR YOU!

No experience is required to attend this class. Past students have ranged from age 15 to 90, and from all walks of life. Anyone who wants to learn will benefit from this class. We approach the rebuilding process using tools that can be found in the average home workshop.

If you are in the market to buy a power hammer, this class will make you an educated shopper. If you already own a Little Giant, or any other brand of power hammer, this class will teach you how to get the best performance possible.

The class costs \$95, refundable up to 7 days prior to the class; advance registration is

required. We limit the class to 25 participants. The class starts at 9 AM sharp on Friday, and usually ends by Saturday evening. The schedule runs Sunday until noon in case we encounter any exceptional problems in rebuilding, and to answer remaining questions. The last 2 years the class has filled up by the end of January.

When we receive your registration, we will send you a city map, along with travel and hotel information.

Airports are located in Omaha (45 miles north), Lincoln (50 miles west) and Kansas City (125 miles south).

2013 REGISTRATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT

- Check enclosed
- Visa
- MasterCard
- Discover
- American Express
- Number: \_\_\_\_\_
- Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

POWER HAMMER INFO

Brand: \_\_\_\_\_

Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please call or email if you have any questions, or prefer to register by phone. You can reach us at 402.873.6603 or [lgiant@windstream.net](mailto:lgiant@windstream.net)

Little Giant is located at 420 4<sup>th</sup> Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410.



Yes, that is John Crouchet with a cannon. And if you want to take the cannon home, all you have to do is win it in the auction at the Bluebonnet Demo.

Nimba Titan anvil won by Rudy Billings at the 2102 ABANA conference. Rudy will be donating this anvil to the auction at the Bluebonnet Demo in the Spring of 2013. Start saving now, this will have a reserve!

*photos by Vince Herod*



W W W . B A L C O N E S F O R G E . O R G

# Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Demo

featuring **Mark Aspery - March 23-24**

Please print clearly

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I prefer a hard-copy of the monthly newsletter mailed to me. I have added \$5 to the normal \$20 annual membership fee.

Current Member .....\$45 \_\_\_\_\_

2013 Membership if unpaid . \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

\$25 if you wish monthly newsletter mailed

Non-member .....\$65 \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I wish to become a BF member

Saturday Evening Meal ...\$15 \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please register by March 15\*\***

Make check payable to **Balcones Forge.**

Send to Rudy Billings,

12302 Indian Mound, Austin, TX 78758

**PLEASE READ AND COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING RELEASE FORM: FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND DATED BY EACH MEMBER, GUEST AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF ANY MINOR IN ATTENDANCE.**

In consideration of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association providing demonstrators and making these demonstrations available and granting permission to enter the area of said demonstration, I, individually and as parent or guardian of the minor child attending such demonstration, hereby waive all claims for damage and/or loss to my person or property, or the person or property of such minor child, which may be caused by an act, or failure to act of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association, its officers, directors, agents or employees and the hosts and demonstrators. I understand that there are inherent dangers in blacksmithing and I assume all risk of all dangerous conditions in and about such demonstration and waive any and all specific notice of the existence of such conditions. By signing this waiver, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this waiver.

X

Date

Return Service Requested

