



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

January 2012



Greetings and Happy New Year!

Hope everybody had a good Christmas and made it through the holidays without incident.

We are ready to get back at it with another great year planned that includes the ABS knife show in San Antonio, the Lee Brothers with their non-stop forging in Bryan, Spring Break in Fredericksburg, and another don't-want-to-miss-it Bluebonnet demo in Marble Falls to start with. More on that later.

We also want to work in a couple more open forge hammer-in workshops. There were quite a few folks in the fire at the November meeting in Boerne at the Agriculture Museum and we have been invited back.

The number of invitations we have received to demo for the public is overwhelming and we try to make a few, but bottom line, this is still your organization and it's here for you. Let us know your thoughts. Where do you want to go and what do you want to do.

The February competition/trade item will be "a bowl". We will again be partnering up with HABA for a joint meeting in Bryan. HABA is going to donate all their items to the "Empty Bowls" program in Houston. We would like to do the same in Austin and San Antonio, bring your bowl. There will be prizes.

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.

And in your spare time, you might want to consider becoming a Merit Badge Counselor for the Boy Scouts. Most of you are qualified in Metalsmithing and Blacksmithing. There is a shortage of counselors and all it takes is to register with the BSA and get the Merit Badge books.



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DECEMBER MEETING REPORT

Balcones Meeting notes by Jerry Whitley

Wimberley, TX - Tom the Blacksmith, Host.

Date: 12/10/11

President, Jerry Achterberg called the meeting to order.

Future meetings:

January 28th- American Blade Society Expo at the Gunter Hotel in San Antonio. Harvey Dean is trying to score us some discount tickets. No formal meeting, no trade item. One day admission \$10.00.

February 18th- Lee brother's shop in Bryan, TX. HABA will be there. Trade item: forged bowl competition, to be donated to the "Empty Bowl" in each respective city.

Leah Adams is our new librarian. Contact Leah at jinxleah@gmail.com to request a book or video.

Tom Leining showed off his Civil War era "D-Handle toothpick" knife and then showed us how to make the "D-handle" which he fitted to a long blade cut from a large sawmill blade. He then donated the knife parts along with handle material to "Iron-in-the-hat" which was purchased by David Walden for \$50.00. Great demo!

The trade item was a forged Christmas item. Jerry Achterberg, Aaron Tilton and Jim Schmidt traded some cool pieces.

Aaron Tilton then demonstrated his trade item, a tree ornament Santa out of a piece of 1/2" square bar. Santa looked a lot like Aaron's forged cowboy except for the long pointy hat.

Next Jerry Achterberg brought out his Grizzly belt

You may also want to become high school mentor. Almost all of the schools now have a mentoring program and the students will receive a high school credit for the time they spend learning blacksmithing from you.

I have personally qualified more than 30 Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts for their merit badges and new member, Calyx Edmonson is now my second student to mentor. This is a great way to teach our young folks and give back to the community.

Matt Czosnek (mattczosnek@gmail.com) will be handling the scheduling for Spring Break in Fredericksburg at the Pioneer Museum March 10th & 12th-17th. If you would like to volunteer to man the smithy for a day, please let Matt know.

Keep in touch and be safe!

Jerry Achterberg
Balcones Forge President



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grinder and polisher with 8" cotton wheel buff to work with some deer antler and cow bone. On display were cleaver and knife handles, as well but-tons and flint knapping tools.

JANUARY MEETING INFO!

Please check out the web site below & the ABS site. Everything you ever wanted to know about the San Antonio ABS conference is there.

This will be the January (28th) meeting location and three of our past demonstrators will be there to show their wares: John Horrigan, Johnny Stout, and Harvey Dean. This should be quite a show.

http://www.americanbladesmith.com/index.php?section=events&subsection=show_events_details&events_id=34

Sheraton Gunter San Antonio
205 East Houston Street
San Antonio, TX 78205
(888) 999-2089
www.gunterhotel.com

Hope to see you there.

Jerry Achterberg
210-842-3049

TEXAS MONTHLY

In the January issue of Texas Monthly are some of my lights in the ad on page 155. The track is 20 feet by 8 ft on the left side is a cantilevered light and on the right is a wall sconce. Thanks for looking!

Bob Pheil
Llano, Texas

Bob's work always looks great. Be sure to check it out. Editor.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

THE DATES ARE SET

The Bluebonnet Demo for 2012 will feature Elizabeth Brim. Check out the ABANA website for a gallery entry showing off her award winning talent. **The dates are May 5 & 6, 2012.**

More details to come next month.

LET'S DISCUSS IT

Do you have a question or some good news you would like to share with the group? In the past, it has been somewhat difficult -- or nonexistent -- to be able to do so. Good news! There are two ways to get info to the group besides our newsletter.

You can email to all members at members@balconesforge.org but you must do it from your Balcones Forge email -- not your personal email. Just login to your BF email account -- you can get there from the www.BalconesForge.org home page near the bottom. Reply to posts you receive like any other email and the discussion begins. If you have forgotten your username and/or password, send a note to Rudy@BalconesForge.org.

The second method is to use the Balcones Forge Facebook page. Of course, you'll need to login to your Facebook account, then search for "Balcones Forge." Feel free to post on the BF wall and let us hear from you.

Either one is easy. Don't worry -- this group is not overly chatty, so you won't be bombarded by a bunch of emails. So let us know what is on your mind. Post away!

Rudy Billings, Webmaster

FORGING ON THE RIVER

The 2012 Forging on the River Conference will be held on the grounds of The Metal Museum, March 30 – April 1st, 2012.

This year's conference features Alfred Bullermann of Freisothe, Germany (<http://www.bullermann.de>) as well as Haley Woodward (<http://haleywoodward.com>) and Colby Brinkman of The Austin Metal Authority (<http://www.austinmetalauthority.com>).

Alfred will be building an amazing bench to be permanently installed at The Metal Museum. Haley and Colby will amaze you with their tricks of the trade.

In addition to the chance to learn from a Master Blacksmith, Forging on the River provides metal-smiths and enthusiasts the opportunity to network with others who share their passion for the craft, exchange work and ideas and work collaboratively on projects, while enjoying the Metal Museum exhibitions and grounds. We have all kinds of exciting and inspiring activities planned for the weekend, so this event is a definitely a "Must Attend"!

Conference registration features a deep discount for students at \$80.00 for the three days. Non-Student Registration is \$100 before March 1, 2011; \$135 after Feb. 28, 2011. One \$80 companion ticket may be purchased with each full registration. **ALL MEALS ARE INCLUDED** in the conference fee, so this is a huge bargain. You may enroll online at <http://www.metalmuseum.org/store/c/14-Forging-on-the-River.aspx>

Please help us make this year's Forging on the River Conference the best ever by passing this email message on to your friends and fellow smiths.

Also, you may want to consider donating to the Saturday night live auction, which will be attended by some of the biggest collectors in the mid-south. The proceeds of the auction will go to support The Metal Museum and its unique programming, including the 2013 Forging on the River Conference.

To learn more visit <http://www.metalmuseum.org/FOTR> or email me: holly@metalmuseum.org

Holly Fisher
Project Coordinator
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Memphis, TN 38106

901.774.6380 ext. 207

YEAR 2012 (AND FINAL) BLACKSMITH CALENDAR

The 2012 calendar contains 20 images of old blacksmith activity. For a number of reasons, this calendar will be the last in the series. I'm not going to want to remain burdened for long with all the accumulated unsold material, so now would be a good time to fill in any gaps if you're interested in having the complete set while it's still available.

1-5 Year 2012 Calendars: \$17.00 each (will be \$20 on eBay due to excessive fees)

CD with over 8000 Blacksmith & Anvil images

Contains a wide (very wide) variety of images collected from many sources over a period of years.

(For Windows 2000 and later, not for Macs.)

1-5 CDs: \$15.00 per CD

over 5 CDs: \$10.00 per CD

Set of 25 Blacksmith Postcards

Note: This is not a new set of postcards. Only one set of 25 postcards has been produced.

Postcards: \$6.00 per set

(limited quantity remaining)

Year 2011 calendars are available for \$12.00 each.

Year 2001 through 2010 calendars are available for \$6.00 each.

The prices shown above include the cost of shipping to a U.S. or Canadian address. Insurance is extra if desired. If interested, please send a check or money order to:

Gill Fahrenwald, P. O. Box 2323, Olympia, WA 98507
or PayPal to anvilman@orcalink.com

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

Please join us March 16-18, 2012 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 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.

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, wineries and museums.

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.

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).

2012 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

Little Giant is located at 420 4th Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410.



ABANA Publication Changes

It is with great excitement that I bring you news of changes the ABANA Board has made to our publications in an effort to best meet the needs and desires of our membership. The challenge was to find a means of saving money while keeping our high level of quality in both magazines, and finding a way to give even more to the membership. A steep order for a board of volunteers to do, but under the leadership of Committee Chair, Linda Tanner, and her committee members we have accomplished ALL of these things.

Jim Almy has been selected as the Anvil's Ring Editor effective January 1, 2012. Jim is a perfect candidate for the job with his print/editing experience in the professional world and his editorial efforts for the NWBA ABANA Affiliate in the blacksmithing community. His love of the fire and the experience he carries in his hands made him the perfect choice. Please join me in welcoming Jim to the Editor position for the Anvil's Ring. He is your guy to get your work showcased! Get some high resolution photos and a write up together and send it to him soon!

Jim Almy
1531 North Prospect Street
Tacoma, WA 98406

Ph: 253-879-8455

email: AReditor@abana.org

Mark Aspery is staying on with the Hammer's Blow editor. His work from the ABANA curriculum to the youtube videos that go along with the magazine have really taken us to a whole new level. Please join me in thanking Mark for seeing the importance and meaning in ABANA and our educational publication and agreeing to stay with us. Mark is always looking for input so if you have a great shop idea,

trick, or technique please put something together and send it to him:

Mark Aspery
P. O. Box 523 Springville
CA 93265-0523

Ph: (559) 539-3351

email: HBeditor@abana.org

Rob Edwards, Mimi Clark, and Linda and Denis Murphy need to be given credit for the efforts they have given to ABANA's publications over the past years. Join me in thanking them for all of their hard work!

Along with reporting on the changing faces of ABANA's publications, the changes have resulted in significant cost savings. These savings mean there are more resources available for the board to advance and expand our educational mission. There will be more details in this coming out soon after committee work and board approvals.

Along the same lines of doing more for our members the board is taking this opportunity to break apart the publications, going back to the way it used to be! This means you will get 8 separate mailings instead of the 4 bulk mailings. This will allow better communication, better advertising opportunities, and a steady flow of blacksmith enjoyment throughout the year. This was one of the big items resulting from our member survey. You should be proud of your ABANA Board in clearing this hurdle on its way to making ABANA the greatest blacksmithing organization out there today.

ABANA has gone from several years of just trying to survive to holding the elements needed for ABANA to thrive in 2012 and beyond. Shout it from the mountain tops that ABANA is here to stay and ramping up for our Rapid City "Reunion on the Plains" in July. Hope to see you all there.

Yours in service,
Peyton Anderson
ABANA President

**ABANA 2012 CONFERENCE
POSTER CONTEST
VOTING HAS BEGUN**

All of the submissions are displayed on the ABANA website. Anyone can visit the website and vote for the poster that they like best. The poster receiving the most votes will win. One need not be an ABANA member to vote. Voting started today Jan 2, 2012

Go to the ABANA website to see the Posters and to vote for your favorite!

Anyone can vote, so forward this info to all your friends!

**GRANT SARVER
AUG 24, 1947 - JAN 2, 2012**

Fellow Blacksmiths,

We are sorry to announce that Grant Sarver passed away on Jan 2, 2012 due to a aortic aneurism.

Grant was a Founding Member of the NWBA, past Board Member and a very gracious supporter and contributor to our organization and the world of blacksmithing. He was a unique fire that burnt brightly amongst our forges and will be very much missed.

Our condolences go out to his family and we will post any services information here once they are determined.

NBWA Board of Directors

**FRANCIS WHITAKER
BLACKSMITHING SCHOLARSHIP
AT JOHN C. CAMPBELL FOLK
SCHOOL**

Two \$600 scholarships will be awarded for the Traditional Joinery Projects Class taught by Clay Spencer, April 8-14, 2012

Check class description on the school's website.

Traditional Joinery Class - Clay Spencer

Students must be intermediate to advanced skill level and will be responsible for any expenses not covered by the scholarship such as meals, lodging/camping, materials and fuel fee.

Application Requirements:

1. Describe your blacksmithing training/experience: any classes, demonstrations, jobs, commissions, craft shows, how much you work at your forge, etc.
2. Several photos of your work.
3. Drawing of the project you propose to do in class. It should be to scale showing stock size and joinery, no MIG or arc welding in project. Include list of material with sizes and lengths.
4. Goals for your blacksmithing, briefly.
5. Why you need scholarship help, briefly.

Your application will be graded against others received.

Send to Clay Spencer at:

email: clay@otelco.net

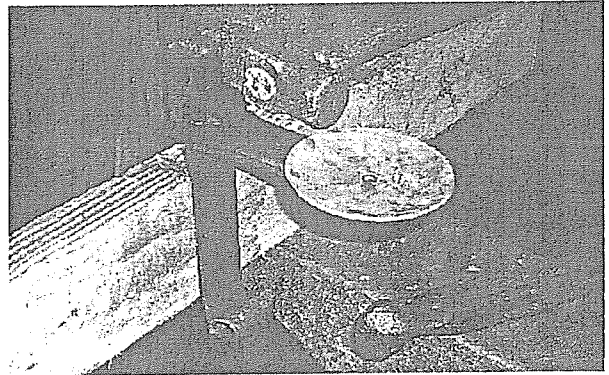
or

73 Penniston Pvt. Drive
Somerville, AL 35670

You may call 256-558-3658 or e-mail with any questions. Application must be received by March 1, 2012. Do not send before February 1.

Deck Railing Bracket By Mike Meyer, OKI Forgers

My demonstration for the August meeting was a deck railing bracket - which is what I am calling this item for want of a better name. The deck railing at my house is basically a piece of vertically mounted 2" X 6" pressure treated lumber and I have wanted for some time to make some type of bracket which would allow me to attach candles, lanterns, flower pots, and etcetera to the deck railing in such a way that it would not only safely hold the objects but would also allow me to easily move them from one location to another without having to fuss with wood screws or other hardware.



My answer to this problem was to make the bracket as shown in the illustrations below.

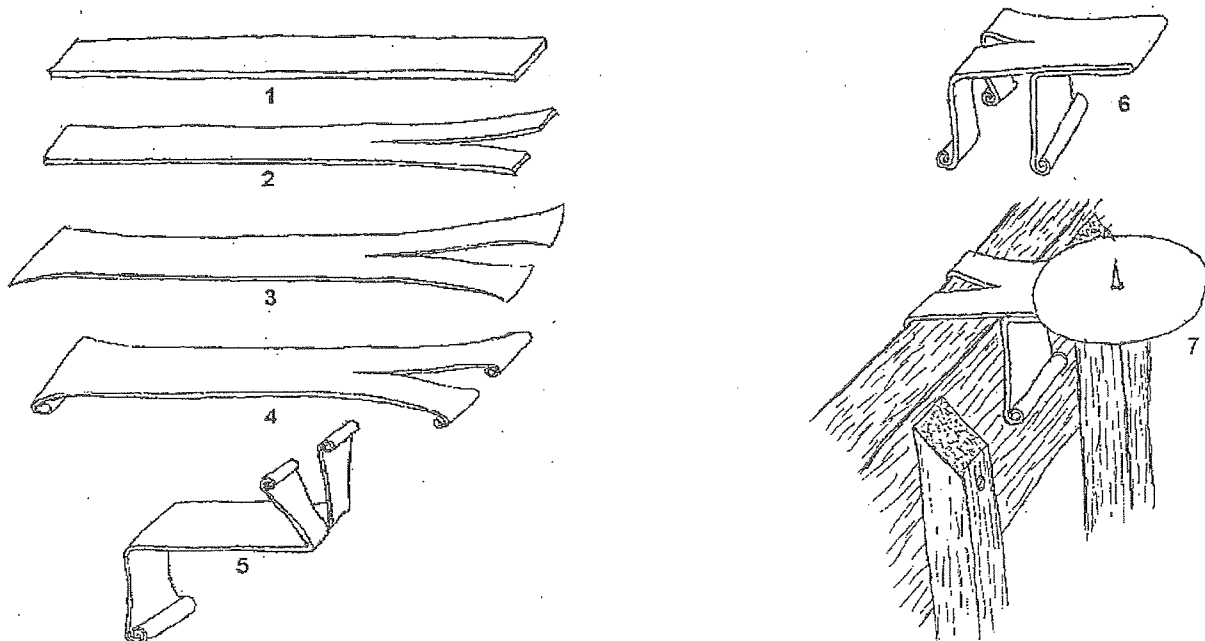
Step 1. - I started with a piece of 1/8 X 1 1/2 inch flat stock, about 20 inches long.

Step 2. - Slit one end of the stock down the middle for about a third of it's length (about 6-7 inches). This can be done with cold chisel, hacksaw, or any other method that works.

Step 3. - Heat the ends of the stock and peen the ends of the stock in order to spread and thin them out into a fishtail shape for scrolling. This step is optional, since it really doesn't affect the functionality of the finished product. However, my personal opinion is if I'm going to go to the trouble to make something like this I'd like to make it look halfway decent so I added the scrolled ends.

Step 4 - Heat the ends of the stock and use your scrolling pliers or the anvil and hammer to curl the ends into nice scrolls. As with step 3, this step is optional. If you are adding the scrolled ends, be sure that both scrolls are on the same side of the stock, as shown in drawing #4.

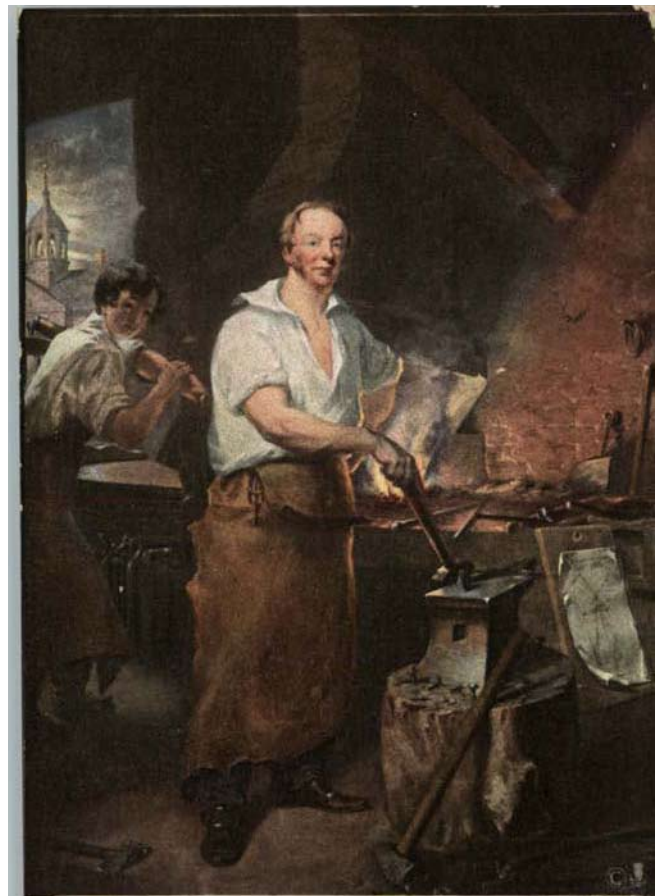
Step 5 - Heat the stock and make right angle bends in it about 6 to 7 inches from each end to form legs on the stock. If you lay the stock with the scrolled ends facing down, the end which isn't slit should be bent down and the end which is slit should be bent up, as shown in drawing #5.



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Step 6 - Heat the stock in the middle and fold it over to produce the finished railing bracket. The only tricky part with this step is to decide where to make the fold at. You should be able to do this by locating the midpoint between the two sets of legs, and offsetting the fold 1 1/2 inches (1 1/2 inches in my case since that's the thickness of my deck railing) towards the leg which was not slit.

Step 7 - Once the bracket is finished, you can modify it in whatever way you want to attach things to your deck railing. The one I made for the demo, and also illustrated in drawing #7, is made to hold a large candle. With other variations you could also adapt it to hold flower pots, birdbaths, or any number of other items.





**SCENES FROM THE
DECEMBER 2011
MEETING**

**PHOTOS BY JERRY
ACHTERBERG**





WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG



Return Service Requested

Vincent Herod
Spotted Dog Forge
166 Granite Road
Paige, TX 78659-4922

