



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

March 2013



February 28, 2013

We sure had a great time in Bryan at Steephollow Forge. Alan and Jeff put on one heck of a demo. I would like to thank Alan and Jeff for putting this together and also allowing us to honor my son by 'Ringing the Anvil'. It meant a lot to Marsha and me. We got news

that morning of the two Bryan firefighters that were killed in a fire and two others that were injured. Please keep them and their families in your prayers.

We saw the usual faces there along with a bunch of new ones. The North Texas Blacksmith Association was there with us this year. The boards of all three groups (Balcones, HABA & NTBA) got together after lunch and have hopes of opening up our lines of communication and working together to produce bigger and better events. We look forward to the possibilities.

Alan and Jeff worked up quite a sweat showing us what they could do. They took a little rest while Daniel Riffe forged a horseshoe and then, forged it into a heart. With his break over, Alan worked as a striker and he and Nathan Robertson forged a hammer. It was all very impressive. While all of this was going on, a leg vise was repaired and went into the auction.

We had a great turnout on our spurs. The winner was Dana Flinders. The talent and abilities of our members is truly amazing. So that everyone can get started early, next year our item for the competition is a hack saw. A recent edition of the Hammer's Blow showed their step by step process to build a hack saw.

Demo Dates are March 23 & 24

President's message continued on page 2



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President's message continued

March will be a very busy month. We always have Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg during spring break. Matt Czosnek is still looking for volunteers. For those that haven't done this, it is a great opportunity to show and talk to the public about what we do. A few years ago, I had the pleasure of working with John and Sue. My rewards were great as I was able to learn as I watched them at the anvil. Most of your time is spent making nails for the kids and explaining the difference between a blacksmith and a farrier.

March 23 & 24 is the Bluebonnet Demo. As always, it will be held at the Sycamore Creek Ranch. Thank you John and Carolyn. This year the demo features Mark Aspery and this will be one that you do not want to miss. We are looking forward to a great weekend. We will not have a trade item but do ask you to bring something nice to the auction. Bring your checkbook as it is this auction that will get us through the year.

This is a great organization with talent beyond measure. It takes a lot of work to put our monthly meetings and Bluebonnet Demo together. The majority of the work is done by a core group. For the membership that we have, that core is fairly small. If we could double or even triple the size of this core group, what could we do? The more that we can spread the workload, the easier it is for everyone. Please step up so that we together can make Balcones Forge even better than it is currently.

See you at the Bluebonnet Demo,
Jerry

Jerry Whitley
President, Balcones Forge

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LEARNING FROM THE MASTERS

DEMO CLASSES

Some of our newest members called to ask me about our demo classes. I decided that I should explain our system again for those who do not yet know how it works.

Each year, in conjunction with our Bluebonnet Demo, Balcones Forge makes an effort to have instructional classes taught by our demonstrator. Sometimes this works out, and sometimes it does not, depending on the demonstrator's schedule and availability.

These classes, when they happen, are small. At most, instructors tell us that they can handle about ten students at a time. If we can book the instructor for one day, that is ten class slots. If we are lucky enough to get two days, that gives us twenty slots.

These class slots generally sell for about one hundred dollars each. The purpose of this is to cover Balcones Forge's cost of paying the instructor for that day and providing the materials for the class. We make no profit on the classes.

This year's class slots were awarded, as usual, based upon each person's effort and contributions to the work of Balcones Forge. Whether they served as a demonstrator, hosted meetings, set up programs, or did other work to help us out, each person selected helped make our year a success.

The selection system we currently use is one we put into place over the last few years after our first big mistake when we announced the classes to the whole world and most of the slots were immediately taken by people we had never seen before - and mostly never saw again! Our hard workers and regular members never got a chance! We learned a hard lesson there.

Demo Classes continued

Since then, invitations to the classes are parceled out based on how much each person did to promote and help Balcones Forge that year. This seems hard to figure out, but in fact, it is always pretty clear to everyone. We all know who just put on our biggest meeting of the year at Steephollow Forge, and it was plain to everyone who was there how much work that involved. (Thanks Alan and Jeff. Great job!) We all saw what it took for William Bastas and Henry Stone to do our terrific anvil-forging event. We all know who comes to all the meetings and does the work. It is not hidden and we all see it - if we are there ourselves!

Are you interested in being in next year's class? If so, qualifying is pretty straightforward. Pitch in and help out! We beg for people to serve as Balcones Forge officers every fall at selection time! **We currently need a librarian** so step right up! Our hardest event to staff is always the **Spring Break Week at the Pioneer Museum** in Fredericksberg in March. Call Matt Czosnek and tell him what days you will be there! He really needs the help! We still have months available when you could host a Balcones Forge meeting or do a demonstration! Call Jerry Whitley or Matt Czosnek and get on the schedule! Help set up and take down the tables at a meeting. Volunteer to handle the coffee and donuts! How hard could that be? Ask Jerry Whitley what he needs done! I promise you, he has a long list! I hope to see you in next year's class!

John Crouchet

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vince Herod, Editor
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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.



Photos by Dave Guerrero

Just a few examples of the amazing spurs made for the February meeting.





Jeff and Alan Lee were hosts of the February meeting



Daniel Riffe showed us how to make a shoe from scratch!



Photos by Vince Herod



A bronze mouse and a steel fish with a glass eye!

This information comes from Dave Mudge of the Louisiana Metalsmiths Assn. via the Appalachian Blacksmiths Assn. December 2012 newsletter.

Penetrating Oils

Machinist's Workshop MagT recently published some information on various penetrating oils that I found very interesting.

Some of you might appreciate this. The magazine reports they tested penetrates for

break out torque on rusted nuts.

They are below, as forwarded by an exstudent

and professional machinist. They arranged a subjective test of all the popular penetrates with the control being the torque required to remove the nut from a "scientifically rusted" environment.

Penetrating oils Average torque load to loosen

No Oil used	516 pounds
WD-40	238 pounds
PB Blaster	214 pounds
Liquid Wrench	127 pounds
Kano Kroil	106 pounds
ATF*-Acetone mix.....	53 pounds

The ATF-Acetone mix is a "home brew" mix of 50 - 50 automatic transmission fluid and acetone. Note this "home brew" released bolts better than any commercial product in this one particular test.

Our local machinist group mixed up a batch and we all now use it with equally good results.

Note also that "Liquid Wrench" is almost as good as "Kroil" for about 20% of the price.

Steve from Godwin-Singer says that ATF-Acetone mix is best, but you can also use ATF and lacquer thinner in a 50-50 mix.

*ATF=Automatic Transmission Fluid
This actually works well, power-steering fluid also works as well as trans fluid!

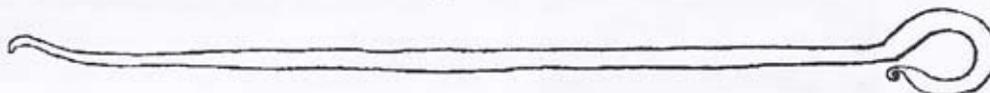
By the way, WD-40 is mainly used as a rust preventer.

Clinker Hook

Steve Williams of Mancos, CO shares this neat trick he learned from Chad Gunter of Tijeras, NM.

* * * * *

Use this tool to reach into the fire and hook that clinker and remove it without tearing down the whole fire!



Start with 3/8" round and forge to about a 20" -24" finished length.



Nathan Robertson and Alan Lee forge a hammer!

photos by Gerald Pollard



PICTURES FROM THE PAST

“Hofi greets an old friend”

Bluebonnet Demo 2005

Photo 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!



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 ma-
jor airports of Washington, DC
and Philadelphia, PA

ABANA 2014

This is to remind everyone of ABANA's 2013 elec-
tion 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 remaining schedule for the 2013 elections is:

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

June 15, 2013: Members receive Candidate State-
ments 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:
georgemathews@abana.org

Sincerely,

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



ABANA

NEW & RENEWAL MEMBERSHIPS

Name : _____ Membership ID # _____
 (For renewals. Optional)

Business Name (optional): _____

Street : _____

City : _____ State/Prov : _____

Zip/PC : _____ Country : _____

Phone : _____ Fax : _____

E-mail : _____ Website : _____

Membership Type: New Renewal

Regular (US, Mexico, Canada)	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$55	Two Years - <input type="checkbox"/> \$105
Senior (65+, US, Mexico, Canada,)	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$50	Two Years - <input type="checkbox"/> \$95
Full-time Student (US, Mexico, Canada)	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$45	Two Years - <input type="checkbox"/> \$85
Foreign	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$65	Two Years - <input type="checkbox"/> \$125
Public Library (US, Mexico, Canada)	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$45	Two Years - <input type="checkbox"/> \$85
Youth (18 years & younger) non-voting Hammer's Blow only	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$20	Not available
Educational Institutions	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$250	
Contributory Membership (amounts above \$55 / year may be tax deductible)	One Year - <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 and up \$ _____	

Additional contributions to ABANA's special funds:

Exhibition Fund	\$ _____
Metal Museum Library Fund	\$ _____
2012 ABANA Conference Seed Money Fund	\$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Credit card orders can be faxed, be sure to sign this form. Fax: 423-913-1023

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Card Number

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Expiration Date

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CVS

Mail to: ABANA, 259 Muddy Fork Rd, Jonesborough, TN 37659 USA

(Please pay by Check, U.S. Money Order or Credit Card)

Phone: 423-913-1022 or join online at www.abana.org

Web version Feb 19, 2012

Visiting Marble Falls

The Jewel of the Hill Country

One of the best things about our annual Bluebonnet Demo is that it all happens in beautiful Marble Falls in the Springtime! There is no better place to be at this time of year!

Spring flowers will be blooming all around the Highland Lakes, along the country roads and over the hills, off into the distance. Be sure to make some time for just riding around and enjoying our world-class scenery.

Marble Falls is a "tourist town", nestled on the Colorado River, right at beautiful Lake Marble Falls. Visitors are the life blood of this pretty little place and we love to see new faces! This is a town with forty-five restaurants! We have art galleries, antique stores, thrift shops, boutiques, handcrafts stores, sporting goods specialists, movie theaters, bakeries, ice cream and yogurt shops, and everything we can think of that visitors might want!

A great place to start your explorations is on Old Main Street, just one block west of Highway 281. This a great place place to just walk around, poking your nose into different shops and galleries, getting a sense of the town. You may notice that we have sculptures ranging from serious to hilarious positioned every few yards along the Main Street median. Marble Falls is an "Art!" town!

At the south end of Main, you will find our excellent library. It's a great place to read a magazine or just browse.

Two blocks west of Main Street, you will find Avenue J. If you head south on Avenue J, you will come to Johnson park, a nice, quiet place to walk beside the water and enjoy our resident ducks and geese under huge live oak trees. There are benches and swings for the kids and lots of places to just stop and relax and eat that fancy pastry you bought at Brother's Bakery on 281 and Sixth Street.

The center of town is the intersection of Highway 281 and Ranch Road 1431. Head west from this intersection and you will roll past our local HEB grocery and on to Kingsland on Lake LBJ. Heading north will take you past Walmart and out of town on to Burnet. Heading south will take you back across the Colorado River and heading east for five a a half miles will take you right to Sycamore Creek Ranch and the Bluebonnet Demo! See you there!

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

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

Jerry Achterberg 210-842-3049 or treefarm@swbell.net

Rudy Billings, 512-461-7375 or 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) for Registration Form

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

Ready for the Big Auction? Please Don't Forget Us!

It's almost auction time again. Please pitch in and help us out! We need your donations to keep this thing going. Every year Balcones Forge spends a whole basket full of money to bring in THE BEST blacksmithing demonstrators in America and to put on our big event and every year, we hope to make it all back at our big auction. So far, so good!

This is always a team effort! None of us can afford this extravaganza by ourselves and none of us can do this auction alone!

Things we need:

Blacksmithing tools: Hammers, chisels, forges, jigs, bending wrenches, twisting wrenches, tongs, blowers, center punches, saws, vises, ANVILS!

Iron and metal stock: Tool steel, railroad spikes, Spring steel, bar stock, any pieces of real wrought iron, steel sheet, and heavy plate.

Books: Instructional metalworking and welding books, magazines, blacksmithing picture books (the pretty stuff!), and DVD's.

Blacksmithed pieces: Tomahawks, knives, kitchen utensils, racks, hooks, shelf brackets, plant hangers, sign brackets, door knockers, handles, latches, door bolts, any and all hand forged hardware! All that stuff you make for Christmas presents? Bring us some of it!

Welding stuff: Yes, real blacksmiths use welders! We can sell welding rods, welding helmets, torches, hoses, regulators, tips, MIG wire, chipping hammers, welding gloves, flux, and goggles. We have even sold complete welding rigs! Think big!

Thanks for your efforts! Bring something for the auction and encourage your friends to do their part, too! Together, we can make it happen!

John Crouchet

Balcones Forge Auction

Donor Name _____

Item _____

Description _____

Thank you for your donation!

Winning Bidder _____

Winning Bid \$ _____

Please use these forms for your auction items!

Balcones Forge Auction

Donor Name _____

Item _____

Description _____

Thank you for your donation!

Winning Bidder _____

Winning Bid \$ _____

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

