



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

March 2020



Greetings!

The Spring rush is on! Our next event is almost here....please mark your calendars!

For the March meeting we will be attending the Austin Forging Competition put on by the Austin Metal Authority at First Community Village which is home to Mobil Loaves and Fishes in Austin on March 7th. This is another event that you won't want to miss. Eight teams of well known blacksmiths will be hammering in this competition that will last for most of the day. Bring a chair, bring a camera, bring \$10 to get in. Balcones Forge will sponsor one of the teams again this year. Go to : <https://mlf.org/afc/> for more info and watch the video. This is your chance to see 16 world class blacksmiths in action on the same day. 9301 Hog Eye Road, Austin. Food will be available. **DON'T MISS THIS EVENT!**

Another day trip: April 4th & 5th is the New Braunfels Folk Fest put on by the Heritage Society of NB held at the Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture at 1370 Church Hill Dr. 78130. This is just off Hwy 46 west of IH 35. Sue, Tim and I will be demonstrating in the smithy. Lots of old German folk crafts to see.

April 24 & 25 is the Balcones Iron & Wood Festival just east of San Marcos in Zorn at Doug Caroselli's Blackhawk Millworks. Doug and Balcones Forge have already put in hours and hours to make sure this is an over the top event. Too many items to mention here but please check out the Balcones Forge and the Blackhawk Millworks facebook pages and Doug has created an Instagram page for this event as well. We need lots of auction items including a

Meeting Date is Sat March 7

President's Message continued on page 2.



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President's Message continued.

whole bunch of hand forged coat hooks that will be mounted on fine pecan and walnut boards that Doug is donating for the auction. We need 3-5 similar hooks with 1 or 2 holes for mounting per board. We need these hooks well before the event. You can bring them to me at any of the upcoming events.

Balcones Forge call for help. We are looking for a few good hardworking people to help with the monthly activities like preparing meetings sites and materials for meetings and cleaning up after the events as well as taking over some the board vacancies. Some of our folks have just become too busy or just too damn old to carry on and need a well-deserved break. If you would like to help please give me a call at 210-842-3049 or email me at treefarm@swbell.net or contact one of the other board members.

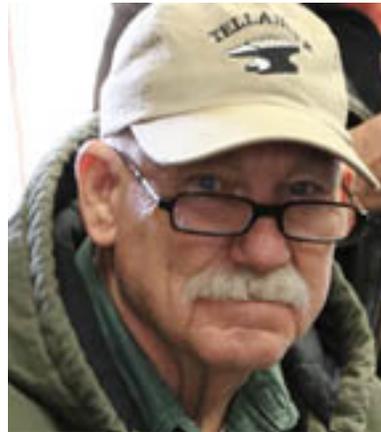
See ya'll in Austin.

Jerry Achterberg – Pres. Balcones Forge



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SECRETARY'S REPORT FROM FEBRUARY MEETING



The Lee brothers 10th Annual Steephollow Forge presented their final event February 22 and the presentation had all the qualities that blacksmiths enjoy and participate in one way or the other. Tailgating tools, equipment, and blacksmith supplies is the first indication that this day-long event is going to be memorable. Plenty of coal from Texas Farrier Supply which also had numerous pairs of tongs and wire brushes, Terry Estes with anvils, swage blocks, and vises, along with someone selling 5160 coil springs were the first group of 18 vendors displaying and demonstrating at today's meeting. The competition item of which many people (including myself) failed to make had 3 entries. I did include a picture of the three pieces, & even though I was ready to write the winners name down, I was unable to hear their names as Alan Lee introduced these individuals to the spectators but they did receive a big round of applause from everyone.

I did get to see Sue Howeter forge a garlic bulb and Janelle Engel demonstrate forging a turtle (see photo). Later in the day I watched a portion of James Helm & Tobin Nieto, both Forged In Fire champions initiate forging of a meat cleaver and a pole handled knife but had to leave before com-

pletion. Another interesting demonstration was cowboy Symanski letting youngsters 'forge a memory' by hammering out a knife made from a horseshoe. He was busy all day, and next to his tent was Jake Sewell that had a cage set up for tomahawk throwing and one could win one of his hawks by hitting the bullseye 3 times in a row. When I finished admiring Mark Links table of top of the line hand forged items and hammers as well as other blacksmithing tools, I admired the hundreds of knife handles that Terry Dunn had for sale.

Upon leaving that area, I passed by a tent where Mary Jo Emerick was explaining some metallurgy facts (way over my head) to several blacksmiths including Frank Lily and William Bastas. They of course politely invited me in and William asked me why is it necessary to anneal a forged knife blade 3 times before quenching? Immediately, the point that Jerry Achteberg makes, is that annealing and normalizing is the same thing. Well yes & no, so I offered my two cents worth, but for this report wanted to clarify more about the process of annealing, but more specifically, normalizing before the quench. I had to refer to my notes in basic bladesmithing class taken in early 2002 with Jim Crowell and Roger Massey, both Mastersmiths with the American Bladesmith Society.

The point stressed during this course is that a hammer forged blade is better than a stock removal blade and that it is not impossible to refine the final grain size of factory heat treated steel through various forging process. However, just simply forging steel does not guarantee grain refinement and the opposite is more likely. Forging bladesmiths start with material that has already been hot rolled & has a grain which has elongated specific structural features. Using the term grain or grain size is more of an analogy than it is to resulting grain direction of refined steel. Forging refined steel produces minor yet significant change to the orientation of the grain which reduces toughness or strength referred to as stress risers.

Normalizing, which is grain refinement treatment can help decrease the grain size that is blown up during forging. Grain refinement or reduction of stress risers is not a forging process, it is a heat treatment process. Because of the thermal expansion causing steel growth, some sections are at a higher temperature (surface) than others(core) which necessitates 3 cycles of normalizing for backyard bladesmiths. Factories have huge oven cycling procedures which follow strict heat-treating normalization charts that vary with various steels and abundances of other metal additives such as chromium, magnesium, etc.

Per ABS protocol, after the forge blade has been allowed to air cool, reheat the blade until it is non-magnetic (1150 +/-) which is below critical temperature of 1350. Visualization of the color at this point is a dull red/orange and depending on the amount of surrounding light in your forging area greatly affects one's perception of the actual blade temperature. If you are using a gas forge, lower the temperature by turning the pressure down or if using a coal forge, place blade on top of coal bed, hold onto the tang with tongs and in both scenarios, keep checking for loss of magnetism. I have a silver dollar size magnet bolted onto a piece of scrap metal that I use to check the blade and when magnetism is lost, I immediately remove it from the heat source and cool it by swinging it back & forth beside my legs. I always hold onto the tang with my tongs during this heat treatment to insure I do not allow the blade temperature to reach 1350 degrees which will increase grain growth again and negate the normalization process - blade & tongs in one hand, magnet in the other. This will eliminate fumbling around trying to put down the magnet, finding your tongs and then 'finally' removing the steel from the heat source which by then will be too hot!

By swinging the blade by my side, I watch for the color of the blade to go black, and just to be sure it's

cool enough, I put my blade in a dark spot (ie: a bucket with a dark shadow in it) until there is no red color visible. This pre-ench procedure must be done 3 times to eliminate stress risers (weak spots) caused by forging and hammering your blade. The blade is now ready for the quenching which in itself rather lengthy and will save that for another day.

The Lee brothers have set the standard for successful demos, and with the help of our Balcones Forge members, we can have future successful demos as well. We will need about 200 coat/ hat hooks for our big iron & wood festival April 24 & 25. Please get busy early and find something that you can make to help us out in the auction. We want this to be a success.

Tim Tellander
Balcones Forge Secretary

Spring Break at the Pioneer Museum will be March 9th thru March 14th, 2020. Here is the list of volunteers to do Blacksmith Demos at the Museum.

Monday	Mar 09	Matt Pohorelsky and Matt Schreiner
Tuesday	Mar 10	David Kay and Matt Schreiner
Wednesday	Mar 11	David Kay and Matt Pohorelsky
Thursday	Mar 12	Rudy Billings and Laura Armstrong
Friday	Mar 13	Aaron and Shane Tilton
Saturday	Mar 14	Aaron Tilton and Tim Tellander

Matt Pohorelsky has agreed to work as the event coordinator working with Caitlin Hoover, the Pioneer Museums Program Director going forward. Thanks to Gary Hilton for arranging this year's volunteers.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday March 7, 2020
Austin Forging Competition
Mobil Loaves & Fishes

April 24 & 25, 2020
Balcones Forge Iron & Wood Festival

CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Jerry Achterberg
Jerry Whitley
Vince Herod
Tim Tellander
Rudy Billings
John Meyers
Aaron Tilton
Ben Rath
Rick Dawdy



One of the many benefits I have enjoyed being a Balcones Forge member these many years is the exposure to extremely talented artists/craftspeople. I'm especially amazed at the skill and creativity of our own members, along with the willingness to share their talent. You may have heard me say many times, "There is only one reason a blacksmith will not *tell* you something. That is because he or she is about to *show* you."

Over the years I've had the privilege to obtain many creations, either from the Trade Item at the monthly meeting or the many auctions we have. Oh that's another thing – the generosity of our members donating their blood, sweat and tears is outstanding. Hopefully, mostly sweat rather than blood and tears.

It has been awhile but I think the very first item I got was this fork created by Clif Ladd. Being new to blacksmithing, I was astonished at how far he was able to draw out the railroad spike. You can't see it, but there is a value-added feature at the end of the handle – a bottle opener. Handy!



One of my coolest items is this tomahawk created by Aaron Tilton. You should feel the satin finish on this blued beauty. The handle is just a perfect complement to the unique head. So many fun things can be created by blacksmiths.

I've been lucky enough to attend two of the three demonstrations by Dorothy Stiegler hosted by BF. Always amazing, she showed us how to forge silicone bronze some time ago. Her leaf was fantastic when created and keeps getting more beautiful as time enhances the patina. Forging bronze is very challenging but extremely rewarding!



The most recent item that made its way to a special place in our home is the garlic bulb created by Suraiya (Sue) Howerter. I can't imagine the process or hours it took to make this come to life. Joyce was totally thrilled. Simply complex!

One of these days, I'll try to find time to count the many metal wonders adorning our home. I'm sure there will be many more to come. If you like, let me know and I'll send more filler to help Vince with creating our great newsletters. That's something you can help with – contributions are always welcome and appreciated. Send to Vince at spotteddogforge@yahoo.com. Thanks!

Rudy

Mobile Loaves & Fishes and Austin Metal Authority are honored to welcome you to the fifth annual Austin Forging Competition!

This truly unique event celebrating the art of blacksmithing features a contestant lineup selected from the top tier of contemporary metal-workers. AFC 2020 will offer you a rare, up-close experience of the dynamic processes these accomplished artists use to manipulate their raw materials into works of art.

Our panel of judges will determine 1st, 2nd and 3rd place awards. As a member of the audience, you will also have a chance to participate in the judging by casting your ballot for the coveted People's Choice Award.

During the day-long event, you'll be able to enjoy tours of the innovative and nationally-recognized Community First! Village, live music provided by several great bands, a delicious lunch (including vegetarian options) available at our on-site Community Grille, and a pop-up market where you can purchase handmade products created by our talented, formerly-homeless neighbors. Our resident craftspeople receive 100% of the profits from the sale of their products, enabling them to earn a dignified income, experience greater stability and encounter a greater sense of purpose.

Doors open at 9:00am. Forging starts promptly at 10:00am, so be sure to arrive on time to catch all the action!

Due to the personal needs of some of our valued neighbors living at the Village, we request that no alcohol be brought onto the property. Families, children and dogs on leashes are welcome.



Community First! Village. 9301 Hog Eye Road, Suite 950, Austin, TX 78724

For more info: WWW.MLF.ORG

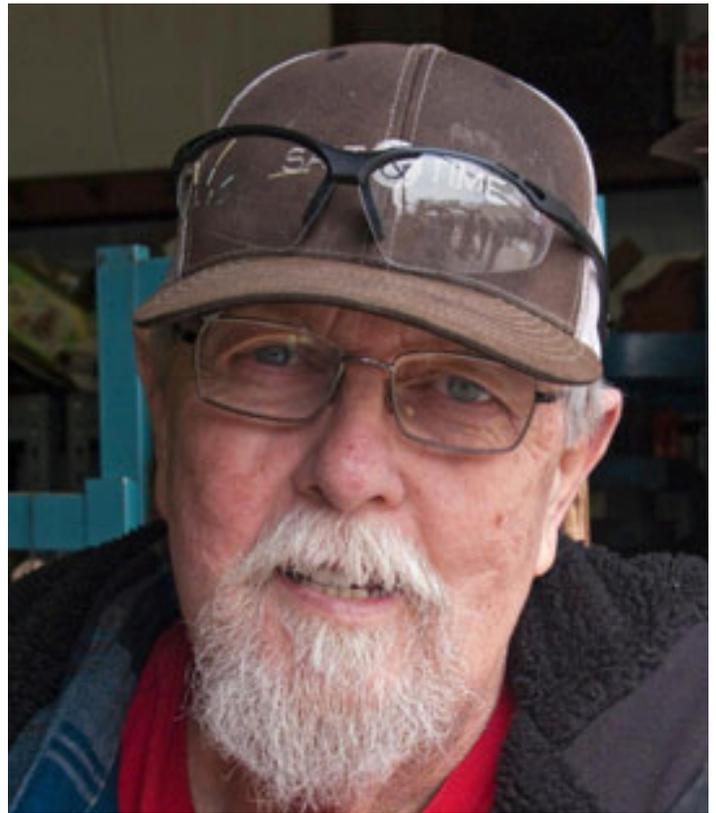
The Austin Forging Competition features a selection of extremely talented blacksmiths who prepare all year to put on the best show they can during their three-hour competition round. AFC contestants are restricted to the use of unpowered hand tools only, but are allowed to create anything they want, be it sculptural, functional or both. AFC offers spectators a thrilling, up-close window into the dynamic processes these accomplished craftspersons use to manipulate raw metals into enduring works of art.

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG



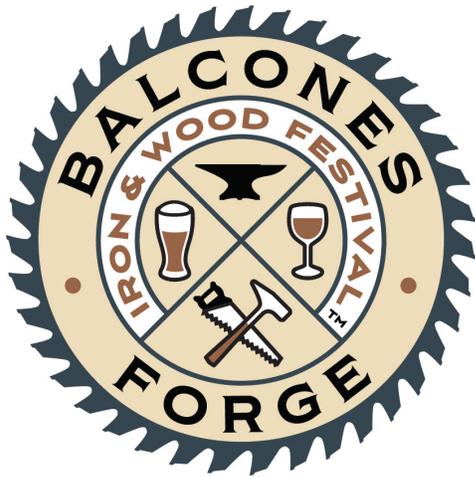
Words are not enough but that is what we have....

Thanks to Alan and Jeff for ten incredible years!



Harvey P. Wise and Smokey Thompson. Great to see them both.
Photos by Harry Cabluck.





HOSTED BY

BLACKHAWK MILLWORKS

2780 DREIBRODT ROAD
SAN MARCOS, TX 78666

@BLACKHAWKMILLWORKS

APRIL 24-25, 2020



FEATURING

COWBOY SYMANSKI
PHENIX KNIVES
FORGED IN FIRE COMPETITOR

ALEX RUIZ
TEXAS KNIFE MAKERS GUILD
FORGED IN FIRE CHAMPION

JAMES HUSE
HUSE KNIVES
FORGED IN FIRE CHAMPION

JIM POOR
FLATLAND FORGE
FORGED IN FIRE CHAMPION
WORLD CHAMPION FERRIER
CHAMPION BLACKSMITH

SHANE STANTON

PARKER ALLAN
AUCTIONEER

RAIN OR SHINE!

10,000 SQ FT
INDOOR FACILITY

30' x 90'
VENDOR AND EXHIBITOR TENT

20' x 60'
FOOD, BEVERAGE AND MUSIC TENT

YOUNG SMITHS FORGING

COME TO
LEARN
AND JOIN IN!



FORGED IN FIRE



USE THIS
QR CODE TO
VISIT US ON
FACEBOOK!



WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

FRIDAY, APRIL 24

8:00 AM

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**ALL CLASSES OPEN, VENDORS
SET UP, FOOD TRUCKS ON SITE**

\$10.00 PER PERSON

FREE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 10

**ENTRY DONATION TICKET USED FOR HOURLY
DRAWING FROM 2:00 PM TO 6:00 PM**



**COWBOY
SYMANSKI
PHENIX KNIVES
FORGE A MEMORY**
AVAILABLE BOTH DAYS!

**MEET & GREET
AND LIVE MUSIC**

**FM31 FOOD TRAILER
CROSSWALK CAFE &
COFFEEHOUSE
BS BREWING
BLUE LOTUS WINERY**

**12:00 NOON TO 8:00PM
AVAILABLE BOTH DAYS!**

LEARN TO FORGE

NEW MEMBER SIGN UP

**\$20, ADULTS AND CHILDREN TO
FORGE 45 MINUTES PER SESSION
AVAILABLE BOTH DAYS!**

SALUBRIOUS FOX

5:00 PM TO 7:30 PM

**TEXAS KNIFE
MAKERS GUILD**

**ALEX RUIZ FORGING
KNIVES DAILY**

**FORGED IN FIRE CHAMPION
AVAILABLE BOTH DAYS!**

SHANE STANTON

MOKUME GANE BILLET

\$150, 10:00 AM TO 1:00 PM

KNIFE FORGING

**\$150, 2:00 PM TO 5:00 PM
CONTACT RUDY@BALCONESFORGE.ORG
TO REGISTER**



WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

SATURDAY, APRIL 25

8:00 AM

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

**ALL CLASSES OPEN, VENDORS
SET UP, FOOD TRUCKS ON SITE**

\$10.00 PER PERSON

FREE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 10

**ENTRY DONATION TICKET USED FOR HOURLY
DRAWING FROM 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM**

JAMES HUSE

BOLSTERS & GUARDS

8:30 PM TO 10:00 AM

DAVE KOENIG

COPPERSMITH

9:30 AM

JIM POOR

**BLACKSMITH
FORGING TONGS**

10:00 AM TO 12:00 NOON

LEE BROTHERS

**STEEPHOLLOW FORCE
POWER HAMMER DEMO
BLACKSMITHING**

1:00 PM

LIVE AUCTION

12:00 NOON SHARP!

LIVE MUSIC

2:00 PM TO 5:00 PM

TIMBERKING SAWMILL

DEMONSTRATIONS ALL DAY

TEXAS SKI RANCH

TOMAHAWK THROWING

FACE PAINTING

**FOR CHILDREN AND
ADVENTUROUS ADULTS**



WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

VENDOR & EXHIBITOR LIST

 <p>Texas Knife Makers Guild texasknifemakersguild.com</p>	 <p>Balcones Forge balconesforge.org</p>	 <p>Huse Knives facebook.com/huseknives</p>
 <p>Chile Forge chileforge.com</p>	 <p>Texas Lone Star Leather texaslonestarleather.com</p>	 <p>Steep Hollow Forge steepforge.com</p>
 <p>Turn Tex Curtis Seebeck turntex.com</p>	 <p>Fantasia Custom Designs fantasiacustomdesigns.com</p>	 <p>Tim Tellander Knives facebook.com/tim.tellander</p>
 <p>Anyang USA James Johnson - Owner anyangusa.net</p>	 <p>Angel Fire Knives angelfireknives.com</p>	 <p>Parker Allan Licensed Auctioneer @pa_auctions</p>
 <p>Texas Farrier Supply James Cox - Owner texasfarriersupply.com</p>	 <p>Texas Ski Ranch texasiskiranch.com</p>	 <p>FM31 Food Trailer fm31foodtrailer.com</p>
 <p>Ewald Tractor ewaldkubota.com</p>	 <p>Juarez Industrial Designs juarezindustrialdesigns.com</p>	 <p>Kanye & Son Blacksmith Depot blacksmithsdepot.com</p>
 <p>Timberking timberking.com</p>	 <p>Sycamore Creek Creations @sycamore_creek_creations</p>	 <p>Commercial Diesel Parts & Service cpdstexas.com</p>
 <p>Tierra Prometida Alpacas alpacausa.com/</p>	 <p>TAB Gear tabgear.com</p>	 <p>Paragon Kilns paragonweb.com</p>
 <p>TNT Enterprises facebook.com/TNT-Enterprises-139493593584919</p>	 <p>Estes Forge @estes_forge_fabricate</p>	 <p>Phenix Knives Cowboy Symanski phenixknives.com</p>
 <p>BS Brewing bsbrewingtx.com</p>	 <p>Flatland Forge flatlandforge.com</p>	 <p>Shane Stainton facebook.com/shane.stainton.7</p>
 <p>Blue Lotus Winery bluelotuswinery.com</p>	 <p>To The Point txknifemakers.com</p>	 <p>Honey Bucket honeybucket.com</p>
 <p>Print This printthistx.com</p>	 <p>Crosswalk Coffeehouse & Café crosswalkcoffee.com</p>	 <p>Ozona Bank ozonabank.com</p>
 <p>Metal Central metalcentral.com</p>	 <p>Schmitz Hotel facebook.com/schmitzhotel</p>	
 <p>South Texas Association of Bladesmiths facebook.com/stabhq/</p>	 <p>Silver Plate Portrait Design silver-plate.com</p>	

Competitions at the 2020 ABANA Conference: something for every smith!

Hopefully, you have all received your latest copy of ABANA's Hammer's Blow magazine by now.

Inside, you will have found the step-by-step guidelines for the Chain-Making competitions to be held during Wednesday evening at the June conference.

We have something for every level of smith, from novice to experienced, with three levels of entry to choose from.

Plan to join us for these events. I find that competitions are a great way to enhance camaraderie amongst smiths, and bolster your skill level.

Novice division:

You have 20 minutes to make the best three links of chain that you can. Each link must be forge welded shut to produce a short length of chain.

You will be given three 6-inch long pieces of 3/8-inch round bar from which to form the links. There will be a bucket with more stock available if you have an issue with a link.

ABANA will provide all the tooling you will require: a hammer, 3/8-inch V-bit tongs (courtesy of Blacksmith's depot), flux and a flux spoon.

No finish (wax or other) is allowed on the completed links

Never competed before? We've got your back!

Wednesday afternoon will be open to all in the education tent. Jennifer Petрила (competition Judge) and the education team, will be giving demonstrations and providing hands-on instruction aimed at the novice level of smith.

Intermediate division:

You will have 30 minutes to make two links of chain and a repair link. The chain links must be forge welded shut. The repair link is forged from a length of 3/8-inch square bar.

You will be given two 6-inch long pieces of 3/8-inch round bar from which to form the links, together with a short length of 3/8-inch square bar. There will be a bucket with more stock available if you have an issue with a link.

You are required to provide your own tooling, hammer, tongs, punch, drift and flux spoon. Flux will be provided.

No finish (wax or other) is allowed on the completed links.

Open Division:

You will have 75 minutes to make two links of chain, a split link and a bottom tool for the anvil.

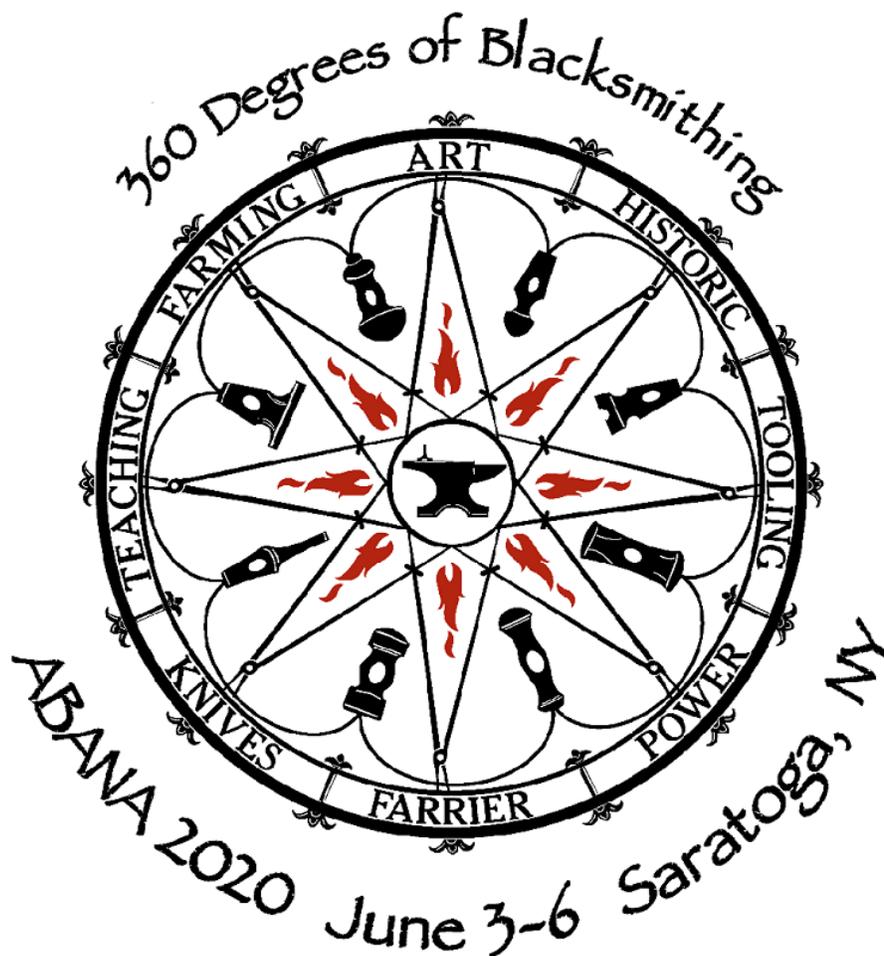
You will be given four, 6-inch long pieces of 3/8-inch round bar from which to form the chain links, split link and the stamp for the bottom tool, together with a 4½-inch long piece of 1¼-inch square mild steel from which to make the bottom tool.

You will be furnished a heading-block (courtesy of Ball and Chain Forge) and a sledge-hammer. You are required to provide your own hammer, tongs (3/8-inch and 1¼) and flux spoon. Flux will be provided. I have a limited supply of 1¼ tongs available if you make prior arrangements with me.

No finish (wax or other) is allowed on the completed links or bottom tool.

I'll see you there.

Cheers, Mark Aspery





Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip/PC: _____

Country: _____

Type of Membership

Regular\$55 Overseas\$65

Student\$45 Contributing.....\$100

Senior (65+)...\$50 Library\$45

\$5 discount for two year memberships and renewals

ABANA Chaper Affiliation: _____

Application may also be made at the ABANA web site:

www.abana.org

E-mail: _____

www url: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Credit Card Information _____

Visa Mastercard

Expiration Date: _____

Card# _____

Submit check, money order (US banks only), or by credit card: _____

Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America, Inc.

259 Muddy Fork Road

Jonesborough, Tennessee 37659

Phone: [423-913-1022](tel:423-913-1022), Fax: [423-913-1023](tel:423-913-1023)

centraloffice@abana.org

M E M B E R S H I P A P P L I C A T I O N

