



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

October 2014



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Meeting Date October 18, 2014

NOTICE

The October meeting of Balcones Forge is the official business meeting for the year. The elections for Board of Directors will be held at that meeting. Officers are appointed by the elected Board.

OCTOBER TRADE ITEM

The trade item for October is a.....

Lantern hanger!

From the ceiling, the wall, on a poll, in a mine.

File it, stamp it, engrave it, color it. Make it pretty.

REMEMBER: you gotta make one to **take one!**

THE BALCONES FORGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matt Czosnek, President
Jerry Achterberg, Vice President
Rudy Billings, Treasurer
Tim Tellander, Secretary

John Crouchet
Jim Elliot
Vince Herod, Editor
Alan Lee
Jeff Lee
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

SEPTEMBER SECRETARY'S REPORT

I shared a memorable ride to Llano, Texas with Jerry Achterberg, George Graham, Sue Murray and Jerry Whitley. Thought I would need stitches from laughing at all of the stories and comments each of them told on the way. Nothing, however, is printable in this newsletter! We arrived a little late because we couldn't locate a doughnut hut in Llano. Jerry refused to stop at any of the numerous huts we passed along the way - said there wouldn't be any left when we got there. Mission accomplished - no doughnuts for anyone!

Bob Phiel's shop sits adjacent to his lovely home. I haven't been to everyone's blacksmith shop but this one I classified as a dream shop. Anything and everything related to blacksmithing was neatly and correctly arranged in his very clean shop which was well ventilated and sufficiently insulated. We all enjoy visiting each other's work place so that we can implement and improve our own.

Bob started the event by demonstrating the use of a fly press. He cupped some 2 inch discs into pieces that could be used in many different applications such as candle holders on a candelabra.

In addition to demonstrating, Bob also passed on several tips about blacksmithing and associated activities. A notable account involved an elaborate fire screen that Bob had personally packed and crated being very careful to secure it so that it wouldn't get damaged during the shipping process by U_ S. It was virtually destroyed and needed a lot of reconstruction after the damaged goods were returned to his shop. Bob now utilizes a professional shipper that crates and ships his finished work and has not had any problems since.

A delicate leaf forging was his next project as ev-

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everyone absorbed and admired the skillful use of a power hammer, treadle hammer, and of course the hand held hammer and chisel as he artfully veined the piece. He says that he has done hundreds of these and utilizes different stem shapes to accomplish various impressions. Bob brushed it with a brass brush and utilizes Clear Guard by SCULPT NOVEAU that has a satin finish for outside pieces and a matt finish for the inside. Bob showed us a hand forged bench he made for his wife. The bench has sat outside under a crepe myrtle tree for years, and the piece we all admired was beautiful not only in the finish that he wanted us to see, but also in its impeccable blacksmith form. The seat was also a beautiful piece of mesquite that was sealed with WATERLOK (original).

Jerry Achterberg called a meeting to order to discuss the next forging events for Balcones Forge. October 18 the Chisholm Trail Day in Georgetown and the official meeting date for Balcones Forge in October. Demonstrators (and forges) are needed both days, especially Friday the 17th. The trade item for Georgetown is a lantern hanger. Jerry said that John Crouchet is the point of contact.

The Buggy Barn Museum in Blanco is scheduled for November 7, 8, & 9th (Balcones meeting on the 8th) and blacksmiths with forges are needed on Friday the 7th as well as the 9th. Trade item for Blanco is a hand forged horseshoe.

The Iron-In-The-Hat got off to a nice start with a can of anhydrous borax and many other blacksmithing tools. Impressive, are the subtle, yet generous acts exhibited by certain individuals I have observed during this popular event. First was John Crouchet who successfully bid on several hammers of various sizes. After the bidding stopped, John took out the one he prized the most and put the rest back on the table for someone else to bid on. That's when Rudy Billings began his bidding on the remaining hammers and after he had acquired them, he walked the hammers over to a young boy and gave them to him. What a nice thing for those two guys to do! IITH netted \$232.00 for the organization.

Jerry Achterberg also wanted to share with the group his successful implementation for acquiring improved performance in the use of air compressor operated tools. Simply replacing factory supplied fittings with a 3/8 coupler not only increases air volume to the tool but also increases the torque. He also commented on the need of a moisture separator at the end of the air supply line that not only inhibits the moisture but sediment, as well. He advises against PVC which can crystalize over time and discourages galvanized pipe which can produce a lot of sediment. Copper was the preferred type of line as well as black pipe. Jim Elliott pointed out that recent personal experience necessitated the use of black pipe made in the USA which will have industry standard fittings and thread size as opposed to pipe originating in China or Mexico.

Jim Schmidt presented a beautifully detailed ceramic bear he had handcrafted to look like one he and his wife had seen in a recent trip to China. Not only was the piece intricately designed with the use of ceramic material, Jim inlaid the interior of the bear with copper that obviously took a delicate and skillful hand to complete.

Jerry completed the meeting by reminding the group that October is the month for the election of new officers and board members for Balcones Forge.

Bob Phiel resumed his blacksmithing demonstration by forging 1/2 inch square tubing into a pair of fireplace tongs for not only positioning logs, but delicate and unique enough to grip individual pieces of coal.

To set the rivet point, he utilized a simple boss under the power hammer. The process took less than 30 minutes for this accomplished blacksmith and easy to like individual to complete. Bob uses Johnson paste wax for the finish on his fireplace tools.

The meeting was adjourned. Oh NO I finally realized - Now for the trip back home with you know who.

Submitted by Tim Tellander, Secretary

ABANA CONFERENCE REPORT

BY ALAN LEE

The 2014 ABANA conference was more than any one person could see or do. That's why it was so fun. If you have a short attention span, you would have been drawn from demo tent to demo tent, to nearby tailgaters, to teaching stations, to the gallery, to the tool vendors, to lecture classrooms, to the smelt, to the coppersmiths, or to the Patient Order of Meticulous Metalsmiths.

The conference was held at a state fairground. The site was convenient to all the events. The weather was fantastic in Delaware and the local seafood was delicious. Tailgating was pretty impressive. All the demonstrators were good at what they did, and it was hard not to wander. Jeff and I were impressed by a number of demonstrators including Matt Harris and Michael Robear's forged sculpture. The Baltimore Knife and Sword bunch like to have fun and were at it constantly. Sam Salvati is a hoot. Jeff Funk and Rachel David put on a good show. Jeff Funk forged a pair of tongs holding a hammer head.....out of one piece of steel. I had never met Daniel Miller but have always admired his work. A highlight for me was his slide show and group discussion of his work. His use of embracing joinery is genius. He revealed how he achieves the surface texture on his work, which confirmed for me what I had found on my own. The Punzo Family of coppersmiths were impossible not to watch. Impressive vessels forged from scrap copper one at a time, by a family that looked like a well-oiled machine. Incredible effort in each one.

The gallery was a stunning display of the wide variety of work artist blacksmiths are doing all over the country. I returned again and again, to steal all I could with my eyes.

A lot of time was spent visiting with old friends, who we only get to see at events like this, not to mention the new contacts we made. A great group from Texas was there, including HABA and Balcones and Four States Iron Munchers. We met Mark Krause, the self-contained power hammer guru. He is going to make a swing through Texas this winter. If you have a large hammer in need of work, this is your chance.

All in all, it was a very good, well run conference. The only glitch was at the auction Saturday night. It got off to a slow start (logistics) and they lost half the crowd. Other than that, anyone associated with ABANA that had a part should be proud of what they accomplished.

The 2016 conference is going to be in Salt Lake City. Start making your plans to be there. This only happens every other year.



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People in picture are
Rachel Conner
Alexander Kamelhair
Dana Flanders

Ed Malgrem
Jeff Lee
Tim Bailey

Alan Lee
Laura Armstrong
Pat Bossart and wife

Tommy Traylor

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Host of the September meeting, Bob Pheil, at his hammer.

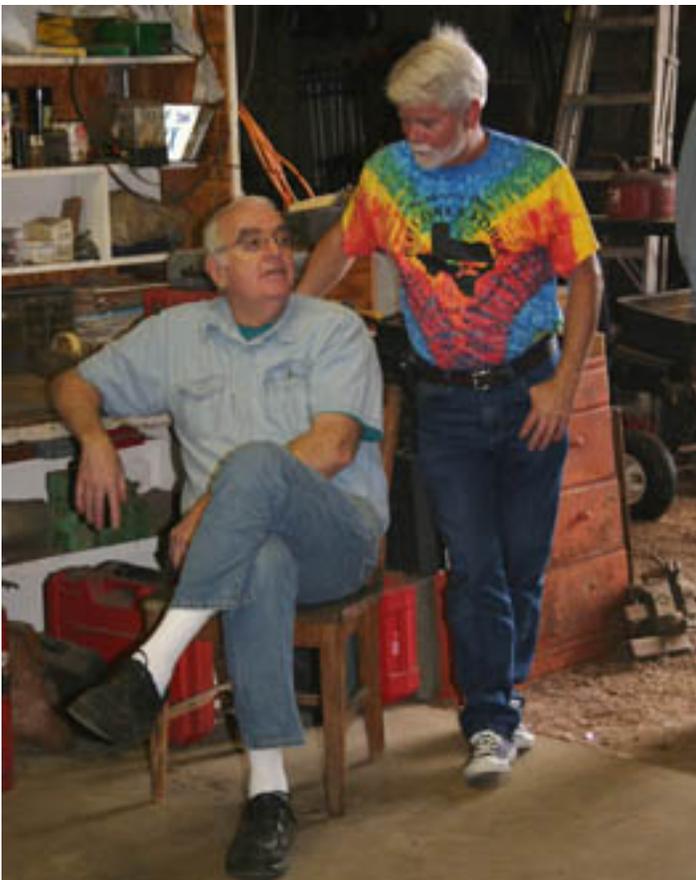
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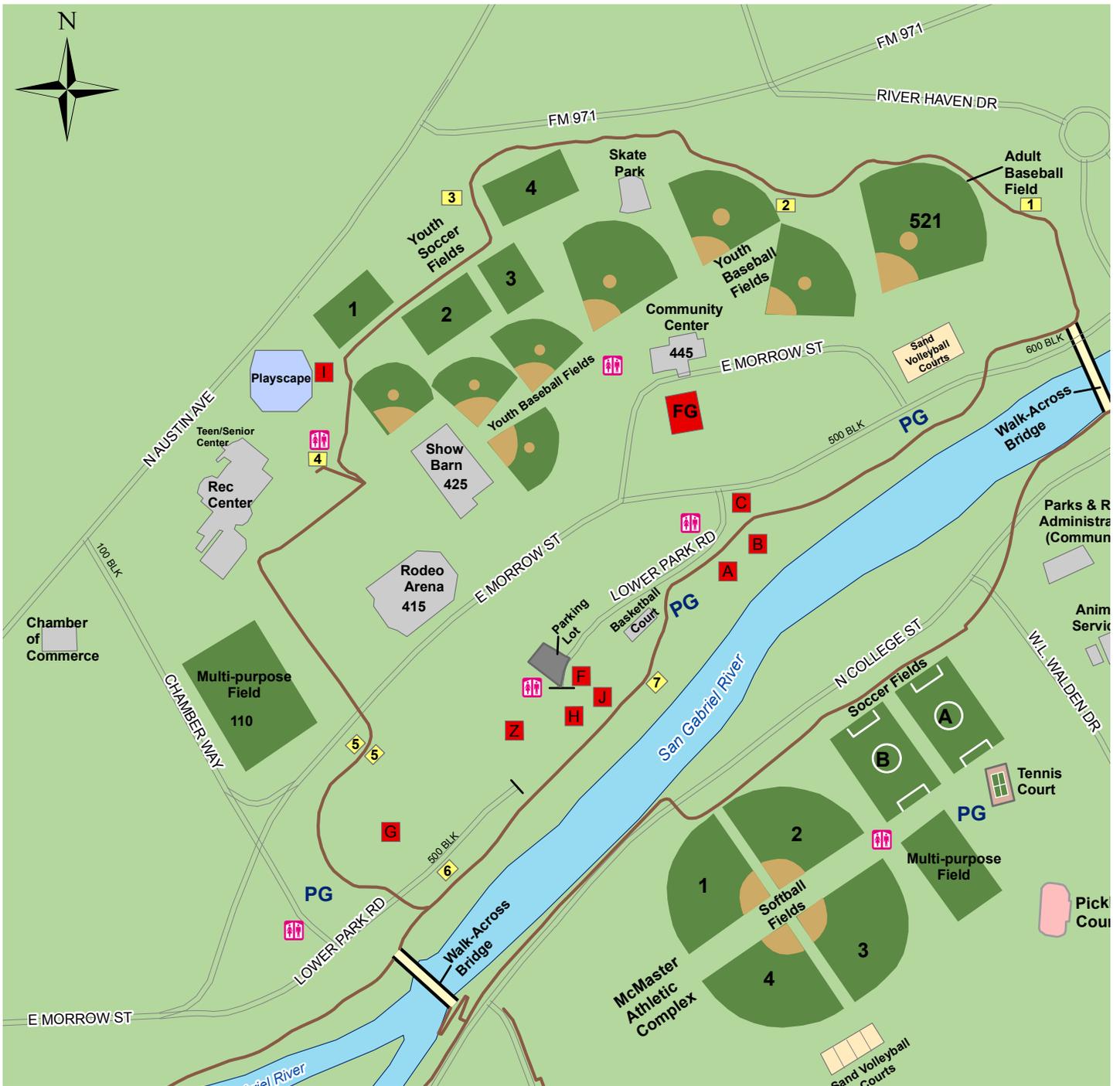




Pictures from September meeting of Balcones Forge submitted by Jerry Whitley.

Above: trade items from September.
Below: young blacksmith with new hammers





San Gabriel Park in Georgetown, Texas, sight of the October 18 meeting of Balcones Forge. Parking is usually available near the Show Barn. The blacksmith's usually set up somewhere between the red letter "G" and "Z" on this map.

FUTURE BALCONES FORGE MEETINGS

October 18, 2014: Chisholm Trail Days
Annual Balcones Forge Business Meeting
San Gabriel Park, Georgetown, TX- (looking for volunteers the 17th)

November 8, 2014: Buggy Barn Museum - Blanco, TX
(looking for volunteers 7th and 9th)

December 13, 2014 Jerry Whitley - Devine, TX

January 2015: Gary Hilton - Hunt, TX
February 2015- Lee Brothers @ Steep Hollow Forge - Bryan, TX
March 2015- Pioneer Museum - Fredericksburg, TX
April 2015- Bluebonnet - Marble Falls, TX
May 2015- Swing Music Fest - San Marcos, TX