



# Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

September 2018



Greetings!

Judging from the turnout, the toolbox workshop was a big hit! I don't think we could have done any better for an August too-hot-to-hammer meeting. Many thanks to Sue and Randy for pre cutting all the wood and to John

and Ruth for pre drilling all the holes, as well as all the folks that brought drills and sanders. John has his shop ready for action with several workstations set up and even did a great demo by building the first toolbox. It was very rewarding to see each member walk away with a completed toolbox.

Don't forget to start staining and painting your toolbox and add your personal touch for the competition at the October meeting where they will be judged.

September takes us to Serbin for the Wendish Festival. This is an open forge event so bring a forge and anvil as well as your show-n-tell items. Be sure to bring an item for the silent auction and we are welcome to sell our ironwork to the public. Come hungry and stay for lunch. Note: this meeting is on Sunday, September 23rd.

Start making plans for the October meeting on the 27th and Jerry Whitley's Rystik Forge in Devine. Jerry and Marsha have always big plans for us and the food is worth the trip. Come early and stay late. Watch for details.

See ya'll in Serbin!

Jerry Achterberg – Pres. Balcones Forge

## Meeting Date is Sunday September 23



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## SECRETARY'S REPORT FROM APRIL DEMO

This year's Bluebonnet Demo hosted Brett Moten, of Reno, Nevada and was accompanied by his



wife Felis. Bret had worked 20 years in the Reno area as a farrier and now has a successful artist blacksmith business know as Infinity Forge. An open forge is offered once a week and typically attracts 10-12 blacksmiths of which pay about \$20 for the

opportunity to have Bret assist with difficult techniques, demonstrate his style as well as answer questions. While I was talking with his wife Felis, she offered a tid-bit that describes the techniques and style about Bret's forging capabilities. She said that when Bret offers forging suggestions, the group wants to know how much more the difficult it's going to be to complete the project. The hands on forging project that Bret offered in the 2 day Balcones Forge workshops was a 3 prong coat rack that swiveled. Each step was carefully demonstrated to complete the joinery project as well as hammer forging the washers between each hook (see photo).

The Friday evening shrimp boil prepared by Dave & Elise Guerrero was superb, delicious and plentiful and the hospitality provided by John & Carolyn Crochet is always a lesson in kindness, appreciation and how to do things in a big Texas way.

Jerry Achterberg officially opened the Saturday demo with special thanks to the work crew that had set up the forging stations a couple weeks

before the actual demonstration and workshops could be utilized. Those included were John Crochet, Jim Elliot, Vince Herod, Rick Dawdy, Aaron Tilton, Rudy Billings, and Jerry Achterberg and without this unselfish effort, the event would not take place. Also, Balcones Forge acknowledged three Lifetime Membership Awards to Tom Lupton, Tom Leining, and Aaron Tilton. Bret Moten also presented Mr. James Hoenig with an engraved bronze plaque for his numerous years of dedication to the field of blacksmithing.

Saturday's demonstration enlisted a pair of coal forges with two talented and experienced blacksmiths at each as well as utilizing the main gas forge in the center of the workshop with several other smiths. These talented blacksmiths included Laura Armstrong, Dana Flanders, Stan Bryant, T. Hines, and Kevin Sorensen blacksmiths Thick slabs of steel were artistically molded into a base to accommodate the complex joinery of this bold statement of artistic beauty. For the limited talented 'me' to attempt description of the 10 hours of sophisticated blacksmithing skill & technique demonstrated by so many individuals, would not be worthy of their talents, but to emphasize the quality of this piece, it accepted the highest bid in the entire auction, if not more than everything else put together. Congratulations to Kari Nations and Michael Gibertini for the winning bid!

Along with other members of the board, thank you all for coming as well as participating in this memorable Balcones Forge event.

Tim Tellander  
Balcones Forge Secretary

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## SEPTEMBER TRADE ITEM

**Please make or bring something for the silent auction put on  
by the Festival.**

### SECRETARY'S REPORT #2 From August Meeting

The trip to Sycamore Ranch in Marble Falls is one of those day trips one never gets tired of, and truck-sharing with a couple blacksmith buddies makes it even more enjoyable. Jerry Achterberg had just called the meeting to order just as we drove up and the plan for the day was unveiled. The primary focus was to build a blacksmith's tool box and

John Crochet took over from there by explaining that blacksmith interns were presented with this box at the end of their training and it allowed them to tote their tools from shop to shop until finding a job somewhere. All of the parts for the tool box were separated into individual bins, so with the assistance of Ruth Carter, John demonstrated the assembly of each piece.

The cost of the workshop which included a toolbox was free to Balcones Forge members, and about 30 individuals had signed up for the event. Typically, the majority of attendees to our blacksmith meetings have only an inkling about what it takes to prepare for any of our meetings and/or the time it takes to plan and setup. John had about half a dozen workstations set up with tools and the necessary screws, glue, and sanders for all of us to put our individual kits together. One of the most important people in helping to get this gig going, was Randy Howeter who cut all 6 pieces of lumber (TOTALING 180) into the correct and exact size. Not only did that take place behind the scene, but all the pilot holes were pre-drilled by John and Ruth, so it would be less likely for participants to make mistakes. Fortunately, I (with assistance from Ruth) was able to complete a functional toolbox. John had purchased 1/2 inch flat bar iron to go around the edges thereby protecting the box as well as adding integrity, strength, and durability.

Another behind the scenes scramble that occurs, is the \$10 delicious BBQ sandwiches that Carolyn Crouchet had ordered and picked up for this big hungry crowd, then invited us all into her home for a pleasant sit-down lunch in her kitchen. I don't know how many thank you's she got, but everyone meant a lot, so THANK YOU again Mrs. Crouchet!

Also, the Iron in The Hat was successful by netting a couple thousand dollars as well as quite a few blacksmiths obtaining some quality items for their forging projects.

Jerry intends to have everyone bring their toolboxes to our memorial forge meeting in Devine, at Jerry Whitley's Rustic Forge on October 27 where the boxes will be judged for originality in decoration and completion.

Tim Tellander  
Balcones Forge Secretary

This is the sculpture from the April Bluebonnet Demo in the Japanese garden where it will reside at the home of Kari Nations and Michael Gibertini.



## **OCTOBER MEETING INFO**

The date for the event is Saturday, October 27th, 2018.

Location is at the Whitley's in Devine, Texas

Make your plans for the 7th Annual Rustyk Forge Memorial and Demo. Mr. Bill Epps will be demonstrating for us. Feel free to arrive on Friday evening for a small social evening and open forge. Bill Epps will be Demonstrating for us on Saturday. Barbeque Dinner will be served along with iced tea. Donations will be accepted to cover the meal.

Please bring items for "Iron in the Hat" and the "Silent Auction" -  
These are the things that make events like this possible.

We have room for tents and campers for those that want to stay.  
Must be self contained.

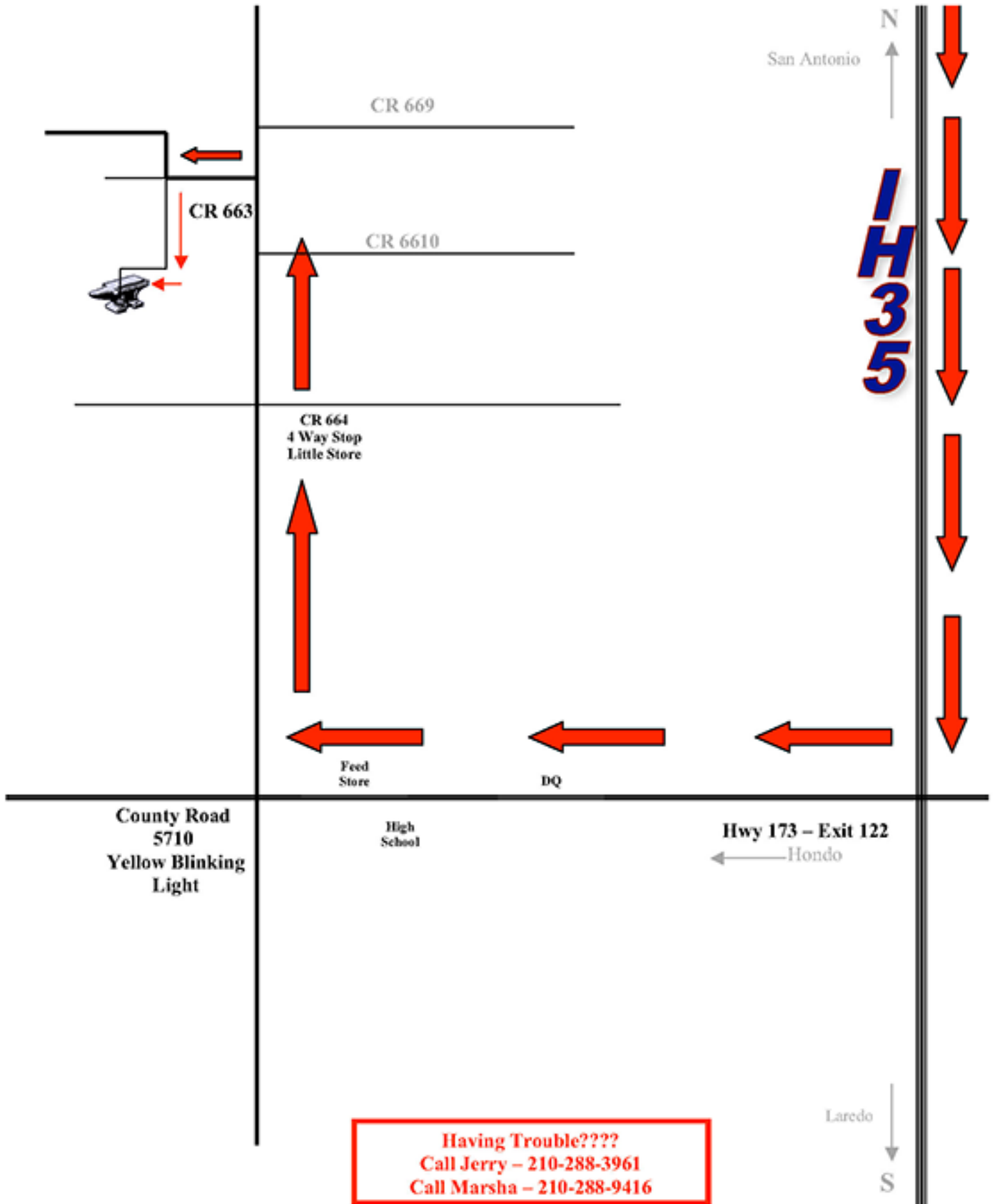
Bring your eye and hearing protection  
Lawn Chairs  
Forge, Anvil & tools for open forge.

We have big plans for the "Competition Trade Items"  
Details to come soon.

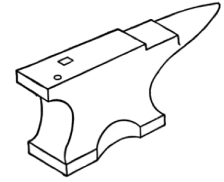
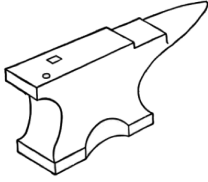
For those that have not been to past events,  
this will be at our house / forge.  
295 CR 663, Devine, Texas 78016

Save the Date!

We look forward to seeing everyone here!



# 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Rustyk Forge Demo & Memorial



Saturday, October 27, 2018

**At: Jerry & Marsha Whitley's  
Rustyk Forge  
295 CR 663  
Devine, Texas 78016**

**We will fire up the forge at 9:00am  
Our Featured Artist & Demonstrator will be  
Mr. Bill Epps**

**Barbeque Dinner will be served**  
(Donation to cover the dinner will be greatly appreciated)

**For those that would like to participate in the Open Forge,  
we will have a shaded area set up away from the demo area.  
*Bring your Forge, Anvil & Tools***

**We will have three Competitions with \$\$\$ prizes this year;  
Tool Box  
Traditional Fire Starter Kit  
Fire Starting**

**Please support Balcones Forge and this Event by bringing  
something for the Auction.**

**Bring your "Tailgate" & "Show & Tell" items.**

Fine Print – To participate in the "Open Forge", you must be a member and signed in on the sign in sheet.

We can get you signed up at the event with \$25.00 and a completed Registration Form.

I am sure that we can come up with a hammer or two, but if you plan to forge please try to bring your own tooling and stock.

Feel free to bring your anvil and forge.

***Beginners Forging Lesson  
At Wendish Festival***

Sunday, July 23

Next Sunday, September 23, John Crouchet will teach a short hands-on lesson for beginners on the techniques of tapering and scrolling. We will learn these basic blacksmithing techniques by forging traditional double-ended iron hooks.

Materials and tools for this lesson will be provided by Balcones Forge. All you will need to participate is a pair of safety glasses and, if you wish, your favorite forging hammer. Extra hammers will be available.

Due to our insurance requirements, you must be a Balcones Forge member if you wish to hammer hot iron with us. Membership dues are a very reasonable \$20 per year and can be paid at the meeting.

This short class is also an opportunity to brush up on your skills if you have not spent much time at the anvil over the summer! We will be using coal forges for this lesson, but the techniques are the same when using propane gas forges.

Questions? Just text John at 830-798-3710. See you at Serbin, Texas for the Wendish Festival this Sunday, September 23.





WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG



Finished tool boxes from the August meeting.

Photo by John Crouchet

**30<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL**

# **WENDISH FEST**

**SEPTEMBER 23, 2018**

**Texas Wendish Heritage Museum &  
St. Paul Lutheran Church Picnic Grounds, Serbin, Texas**

Located 5 miles SW of Giddings @ FM 2239 & CR212

English & German Worship Services - St. Paul Lutheran Church, *One of the Painted Churches of Texas*

English 8:30 a.m., German 10:30 a.m.

Guest Speaker Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison, President, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

<http://texaswendish.org/2018/09/03/30th-annual-wendish-fest-on-september-23/>



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## DEMO OPPORTUNITY

Hello and Happy Fall!

I am president of the Friends of Nameless School, a one-room schoolhouse and the one remaining structure of the Nameless Community on Nameless Road in Northwestern Travis County. You can find us on Facebook to see more about us at Friends of Nameless School.

We are again inviting the community and surrounding areas to spend some time at the school to experience some old-time festivities from the late 1800s to early 1900s.

To that end, we hope to have soap makers, story tellers, spinners and weavers, folks who might present some “living history”, reenactors, and demonstrators from bygone eras (Civil War, early West), music, etc.

In addition to our “Day in Historic Nameless” we will also host our biennial community-wide barbecue. If the April 2019 Saturday is anything like this past April 7, we will be even more crowded inside the schoolhouse—but that’s ok!

We won’t be charging money to attend, nor will we offer remuneration to presenters/participants. We are a non-profit, 501(c)(3) association, so any participating you do will qualify as tax-deductible on your part.

We hope you’ll consider sending a representative (or several!) to join us **Saturday, April 13, 2019** for A Day in Historic Nameless. Please forward this to friends who also might be interested in joining us! Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Mary Cameron, President  
Friends of Nameless School  
maryc2@austin.rr.com

## ANOTHER (MUCH SOONER)

### DEMO OPPORTUNITY

I wanted to reach out to Balcones Forge to see if any of your members would be interested in volunteering for a huge field trip we have coming up here at the Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg.

On **November 26 and 27, 2018** we will have 220 students come through the museum for a field trip tour. Since it’s such a large group, I’m hoping to have several presenters on the grounds to show the children different aspects of pioneer life, and I’d love for blacksmithing to be a part.

Would any of the Balcones Forge members like to come and volunteer on one or both of those days? It would be 3 or 4 hours each morning, and about 110 children per day coming through in small groups.

If anyone is interested in this opportunity, let me know and send your information to me? I can give any additional details and take it from there.

Thanks, and I look forward to hearing from the members of Balcones Forge!

Caitlin Hoover  
Program Director, Pioneer Museum  
caitlin.j.hoover@gmail.com  
(512)809-9394

**YET ANOTHER  
DEMO OPPORTUNITY**

Mr. Dustin Marx is hosting the 47th Annual State Show on October 5 - 7, 2018. He is with the Early Days Tractor and Engine Association in Temple, Texas. He would like to have blacksmith demonstrators at his event and I told him that I would try to help by posting the information to the group.

Contact information:

Dustin Marx

[j.dustin.marx@gmail.com](mailto:j.dustin.marx@gmail.com)

254-760-7358

All he asks is that you not post his contact information to the world on Facebook.

Hopefully we can find someone to help out on this weekend. If you are interested, you may want to get ahold of him quickly. I have also posted this to the North Texas Blacksmith Association.

Thanks a bunch for all of your help,

Jerry Whitley

210 288 3961

**NEED SOME COAL?**

One of our new members (Troy Smith) informed me that someone from Liberty Hill is advertising coal for sale on Craigslist. They have 2000 lb bags as well as 40 lb bags and offer some discount if you buy in bulk. The downside seems to be that it's in large chunks however Troy is going to get some and give us his views on how good it is. If anyone has tried this coal please let us know what you think of it.

The price is \$0.50 a lb but I'm guessing the 2000 lb bag would be considered bulk.

Gary Hilton

**The Goliad Forge  
Serving South Texas**

Website: [thegoliadforge.wixsite/goliadforge](http://thegoliadforge.wixsite/goliadforge)

Email: [thegoliadforge@gmail.com](mailto:thegoliadforge@gmail.com)

Facebook: [@goliadforge](https://www.facebook.com/goliadforge)

Eric Scott, President

Tyler Scott, Secretary

Otto Bluntzer, Board of Directors

President and Newsletter Editor

## Pennsic Blacksmithing adventure By William Danks (SCA “Thorgeir Bjornsson”)

From July 27 to August 12, 2018 I attended Pennsic War. It is a Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) event that had just under 11,000 people in attendance. While there along I was able to work with a blacksmith from MN who uses a reproduction of a forge based on an Anglo Saxon dig. The Blacksmith I worked with goes by the name of Danr Ketilsmior in the SCA and runs a merchant booth at Pennsic selling his items. During the 2 weeks there I was able to spend some time working with Danr who let me assist him in the process of operating the forge at his shop Irontree Works.

During my time with Danr, the style of blacksmithing was medieval related. He shared knowledge of his forge which was an early period western European style that was very common. It is a side draft forge with 2 bellows. It has an addition for one person use since the use of slave labor is not legal anymore. With the addition one person can operate both bellows from either side of the forge. It makes for a very nice set up that I would like to try myself in the future.

While working with him he explained and showed me his story stick. This is something he says many old blacksmiths would have back in that time period as paper blueprints were not used. The story stick is a metal template that has holes to mark important places on the metal. We used a story stick to cut out pieces for 4” hinges. The complete 4” hinges were treated for protecting with a mixture that Danr came across. The mixture is equal parts of Beeswax, turpentine, and boiled linseed oil. The mixture will harden and needs to be melted before using.

I was informed by friends that Danr would was always willing to teach

new blacksmiths. I found him to be very knowledgeable and enjoyed explaining things to new blacksmiths. I have met several SCA blacksmiths who have invited me to their forges for more learning.

Other than working with Danr, Pennsic has a wide variety of shopping including blacksmith supplies. Several blacksmith merchants were in attendance including couple of previous Forge in Fire contestants. I was able to pick up a 4" Post Vise with all parts, and a few hand tools.

With the shopping and blacksmith learning I would consider Pennsic a complete success.



Many thanks to new member William Danks for this article!



# ABANA

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](http://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](mailto:centraloffice@abana.org)

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

