



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

Feb/Mar 2023

March Letter

Greetings!

The work day in Zorn was a success. We got a lot accomplished and only have a few small things to finish up. Thanks to those who were able to help.

We had another good turnout for our February meeting. Some new members joined/attended as well as some folks we hadn't seen in awhile. Everybody was able to get some time in the forge. We were able to deliver two more forging stations to the Hand Made Furniture Museum in New Braunfels helping more members get smithing time. The trade item seems to be gaining in popularity. We had six entries with a leaf design. I was humbled to be chosen as the winner.

The trade item for March is some type a candle holder. Why not try something new? The March meeting will be on the 18th at the Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg. This is a really neat place.

Hope to see y'all there!

Aaron

Arron Tilton
Balcones Forge President

Meeting is on March 18

Start time is 9:30



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER FROM FEBRUARY

We had a good turn out for our January meeting despite the weather. If you were unable to make it, you missed a good demo. I would like to welcome all the new members we were able to sign up. By the way, it is time to renew your memberships if you haven't done so already. We had five entries for our trade item this month. Suraiya Howerter was the winner. She picked something incorporating a leaf for the February meeting which is coming right up. It will be at The Hand Made Furniture Museum in New Braunfels on the 11th. Remember you have to make one to take one.

Arron Tilton
Balcones Forge President



The winning trade item from the January Meeting

MISSING FEBRUARY

Well folks, I must apologize for missing last month's edition of the BFD. The tough combination of an "early in the month" meeting combined with the side effects of the "dreaded real job" just did me in.

I hope you enjoy this combined edition. *Vince Herod, Editor*

More info in the two Balcones Forge Facebook pages. (You can check out the posts without having a Facebook account.)

<https://www.facebook.com/BFCTB/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/688735415468063>

W W W . B A L C O N E S F O R G E . O R G

SECRETARY'S JANUARY MEETING NOTES

The January meeting was a lot of fun. Lots of former members and current members showed up to support the Blacksmith shop project at the Texas Czech Heritage & Cultural Center in LaGrange. The trade item for this meeting was a bottle opener and there were 5 participants. There were demonstrations by two smiths, Josh Rachita, and Mark Sperry, from Colonial Williamsburg and a smelting project. There were vendors selling tools and supplies for blacksmithing and knife making. The weather was less than optimal but there was adequate cover for all.

It's time to renew your membership. If you contact Rudy Billings he can provide you an invoice if that is easier for you. The website has information as how to do this by mail but if you come to the meeting in February, we will gladly sign you up. We want to thank the Texas Blacksmithing Conference for allowing us to participate in the event.

Hope to see a lot of you at the meeting in February (and March). Come and connect with fellow smiths it always is a lot of fun and informative.

Regards,

Lance Jensen
Balcones Forge Secretary

UPCOMING MEETINGS

March 18 at the Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg

April 15: Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture in New Braunfels

May: ??????

June 25: Pioneer Farms in Austin

TRADE ITEM DETAILS

For March, the trade item is a candle holder! To participate, simply make the item chosen for the month. Sometimes there are detailed instructions and sometimes you get to make what ever your imagination tells you. Bring it to the meeting, participate in the trade and you will walk away with another smith's version of the item.

Remember, you gotta make one to take one!

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CHANGES

In case you haven't noticed there are some changes happening with Balcones Forge.

Change is good; it keeps things fresh.

One of the big changes we will no longer be storing our forging stations at Blackhawk Millworks. We are deeply appreciative to Doug Caroselli for his generosity over the years for not only storing but also allowing us to have several meetings over the years.

While change is good, so is stability which is where the other big change comes in.

We will be making the Museum of Texas Handmade Furniture home base. You may have noticed by attending some of the meetings or looking at the schedule we have had several meetings there already. It's a really neat venue and I feel a good fit for Balcones Forge. It has the ability to have 6 full forging stations set up. We are having our April meeting there with Forged in Fire champion Alex Ruiz as the demonstrator. We also have someone there every second Saturday so there is plenty of opportunity for our members to get some forge time. Come by and check it out.

Aaron Tilton
President Balcones Forge



February Trade Items. The winner is above.





A few pictures from the January meeting.

Sorry, but I am not sure who took these.

Editor





Around the Forge

The Official ABANA Newsletter

January 2023

Marketing for Demonstrators:

Demonstrations are pretty ubiquitous in the blacksmith community as they provide context, direct learning experiences, and advance the craft as a whole. Here are a few tips to consider if you are engaged in demonstration work that will make it easier to market yourself and ease the burden for those working to put together an event.

Update Your Bio or Artist Statement:

Write a short version of your bio (200 words or less) that hits only the highlights. This is good for use on social media, flyers, and so on. Then craft a second, more in-depth version that would be more appropriate for use on a website or event program.

Get Professional Pictures of Your Work:

Pick a few key pieces that show the range of your work (or that focus on your specialty) and get good, quality digital images. Be prepared to provide 3-5 stellar images of your work to event organizers.

Provide Multiple Recent Photos of Yourself:

If you haven't taken a picture within the last 5 years, take new photos. There are 3 main images that work well for advertising a demonstrator or speaker: an action shot, a basic headshot, and a candid photo. Hire a pro or ask a friend or family member who is a shutterbug, but recent photos of yourself are important. Consider updating these every 2 years to keep things fresh.

The key is to provide a variety of information, in a timely manner, to event organizers. The last thing an organizer wants to do is use the same image and paragraph on every single piece of event marketing.

Pro Tip:

If you have a website, create a page that includes all of these items - bios, artist statements, work examples, and photos of you - but don't link it to your menu. Then you can simply copy and paste the URL into an email to send all the info to event organizers for them to pick and choose what works best for their needs.

Have you seen the NEW



February 2023

We've been working hard to deliver a better online experience. Due to updates on our website, all affiliate organizations should check any links being used on your website, emails, newsletters, etc. to make sure they are correct.

Here are two links of note:

abana.org - The main web address has not changed. This is the perfect link to use as a default to link to any info pertaining to ABANA.

abana.org/join - This is pretty self-explanatory and should be used anywhere that you mention joining ABANA. This link is different from our old website.

You should also check out the new Media Kit page which contains logos, membership links, an introductory video, and a place to request brochures for meetings and events. If there are additional resources that your organization needs, please let us know!

Watch ABANA on YouTube



We're adding our Level II tutorials to our YouTube channel - the most recent was Victoria Ritter teaching the Basket Handle Fire Poker.

Like and subscribe to be alerted when the next video drops!