



# Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

April 2019



Greetings!

Its spring and the 2019 Bluebonnet Demo is in the record books. Although the turnout was light, Rachel David and crew put on a good show producing a grand sculpture on a grand scale by transforming rather

large stock into a one of a kind work of art which they then donated for a future auction. Many thanks!

We also want to thank all the folks who worked so hard to make this event possible. So, thanks to John and Carolyn for hosting, to Dave and Elise for cooking, to Tim Tellander for all of his workshops, to Laura Armstrong for saving dinner after a catastrophic food malfunction, and all you other guys that helped prepare and repair the shop and all the equipment. Vince and Rudy did everything else to help make this thing a success. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Clear your calendars for the April meeting on the 27th. Doug Coroselli is hosting in Zorn, at his Blackhawk Millworks & Forge. Doug will be serving food all day so come early (8:30) for breakfast and stay for lunch and dinner. With lots covered warehouse and forging areas, this is a rain or shine event and many things to see and do. Demonstrators include Tim Tellander, Joe Travisio, Terry Estes, and James Johnson will bring one of his hammers. There will also be a wood turning demo and several vendors. Bring a chair and an auction item and anything you want to tailgate. Be prepared for a fun day. Be sure to check out the Balcones facebook page and Blackhawk Millworks page for more info and look for Doug's big new sign at the gate. It will be hard to miss.

## Meeting Date is Saturday April 27

*President's Message continued on page 2.*



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## SECRETARY'S REPORT FROM MARCH MEETING

*President's Message continued.*

The very next weekend, May 4th, will be the Stenico Brothers from Italy at the First Community Village in Austin at the Mobil Loaves and Fishes grounds. These guys are putting on a 2 day demo and need a little help getting back to Italy. Bring an iron-in-the-hat item if you can or make a donation to help out our fellow blacksmiths as they create a masterpiece while we watch.

Balcones Forge still needs your help. Vince needs meeting photos and articles for the newsletter, Aaron needs help with the t-shirts, and we need a few members-at-large to help the board with keeping this organization running. We also need folks to host a meeting and folks to demonstrate. Please contact one of the board members if you would like to help.

Be safe and see ya'll in Zorn.

Jerry Achterberg – Pres. Balcones Forge

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Expanding ones knowledege about blacksmithing seems infinite, especially for someone like me whose interest is in bladesmithing. I was fortunate enough to have been asked to conduct knife making workshops this year at the Bluebonnet Demo. Acquiring the lead in helping a class of interested students learn techniques about forging anything was beyond my wildest dreams, especially after taking classes from famous blacksmiths such as Mark Asberry, Lyle Wynn and William Bastos to name a few. My thanks to our Balcones Forge board of directors for the consideration and acknowledgement of my status in this particular field of blacksmithing.

The class also consisted of several seasoned and accomplished blacksmiths down to individuals that needed assistance in how to hold a hammer, but I can honestly say that the end product resulted in a functional as well as a blade that looked like the example I made for visual reference. Our friend and fellow bladesmith John Myer, assisted in co-ordinating student command of the metal to forge some very nice blades as well as quenching , and I could not have done it without his help. Thank you, John Myer! Attached are photos of knives after the tempering process.



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Of note, Balcones Forge had 4 existing gas forges built under Jerry Achterberg's supervision, but we were able to acquire 6 other gas HELL'S FORGE's that worked equally as well in the knife class and Rachel David's class which used metal three times as thick as the knife steel.

The artistic sculptured piece forged by Rachel and her crew was the first time I had ever seen such large pieces of metal actually being forged. Every technique, tool and then some I never heard of were used in her process including the butcher tools that John Crochet and Jim Elliott made a few days earlier. Most interesting to me was the use of a hand held compression riveter that was used to upset a piece of round rod into an oval shape to form the base for the five interesting top forms.

After the sculpture was completed, I am sure there were as many individual interpretations and impressions perceived as there were admirers. I was doing my best to come up with purpose, function or representation as the forged piece was presented by the three gifted blacksmiths. My opportunity was soon awarded and apologetically, I told Rachel that my grandmother's tool shed had several old cotton hoes that had the same curved convex and round nose that graced her work. To my surprise, she said that was exactly what it was, a hoedag and gave me a little pat on the back. Whether it was or wasn't, she was successful in gaining even more of my admiration. Job well done, Rachel!

Tim Tellander  
Balcones Forge Secretary

## **Bluebonnet Lost & Found**

As always, at the end of our annual Bluebonnet Demo, we had a few odd belongings laying around. Here they are, the 2019 collection:

A well loved North Texas Blacksmiths Association hat

A brand new "Nu Iron Age" book

2 spiral bound notebooks, one green and one silver

That's about it for this year, folks. If you wish to claim any of these items, I will bring them all to our next meeting on Saturday, April 27. Often, we have found that the owners of our "lost & found" items simply intended to discard them. If that is the case, you do not need to do anything and we will make sure that they are properly recycled, discarded, or donated to a worthy cause. Thanks to everyone for attending this year's demo, and we hope to see you back in 2020!

John Crouchet  
830-798-3710

# STENICO BROTHERS

Mobile Loaves & Fishes is honored to announce a unique upcoming opportunity to witness two talented European artist-blacksmiths working at our shop!

The revered Italian blacksmith brother duo Martino and Jar dran Stenico have designed a bench that they will forge here over the course of two days. The finished bench will be installed for permanent display and use here at Community First! Village.

While attendance at the demonstration is completely free, please consider bringing a cash donation of any amount to support the brothers' journey back to Italy.

If you are a blacksmith, please also consider bringing a forged item of your own creation, as an auction will take place benefitting the brothers as well.

The demonstration will start around 9am on Saturday, May 4 and go all day. The brothers will continue on Sunday, May 5, until the bench is complete.

We have a few folding chairs, but you may want to bring your own if you plan on attending for a while. A bottle of drinking water is also recommended, and snacks or drinks to share are also more than welcome.

We would like to say a special thank you to our friends and partners at Balcones Forge, Steephollow Forge and the Austin Metal Authority for their generous support of this event.

Sat, May 4, 2019, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM CDT

Community First! Village  
9301 Hog Eye Rd, Austin TX 78724  
Austin, TX 78746

# Greetings to all our ABANA members!

Have you considered a commitment to ABANA by running for the board of directors?

We are seeking members with time available to help advance the mission of ABANA. Your support, suggestions, plans, and ideas are needed to guide our organization into the future. Please consider joining our board of directors to accomplish our mission and goals. Each year 5 board members are elected for a 3-year term.

To run for election, one is required to be an ABANA member in good standing and provide the following:

A nominating petition signed by at least 10 ABANA members,

A photograph, and

A candidate statement

All to be submitted to the central office by May 15.

All candidates who meet this deadline will be listed on the official ballot form.

All candidate's statements will be published on this web site as they are available.

## 2019 ELECTION TIMETABLE

May 15, 2019: Nominations deadline – Candidate's statements to be delivered to the Central Office.

Jun 1, 2019: Candidate Statements and Ballots Issued to ABANA members.

Aug 15, 2019: Voting deadline.

September 2019: Notification to elected Board members

Fall 2019: Board Meeting (Specific place and time to be determined) New Board members assume their duties.

# A Review of Our 2019 Bluebonnet Demo

*by John Crouchet*

This year's Bluebonnet Demo marked the 20th year that we have sponsored an annual demo. As always, it came with a few surprises. This year, the auction was small. The caterer literally NEVER showed up. (Yes, that really happened!) And the best surprise of all...it was still a success, thanks to a terrific show from our blacksmith demonstrator, **Rachel David**, and her crew.

We have been fortunate over the years to have some incredible blacksmiths here for our demos; big name "celebrity" blacksmiths like Robb Gunter, Uri Hofi, Elizabeth Brim, George Dixon, and Mark Aspery. This particular demo, however, generated more discussion and more interest from our Balcones Forge members than we have seen in many years.

Rachel David operates "Red Metal" in New Orleans, Louisiana. She considers herself a "post-industrial blacksmith". That term did not mean a lot to me until I saw her working at the forge. She obviously draws inspiration from the "industrial age" forgings of the early 1900's. To really get a grasp of this, just think "locomotives and other huge iron machines". This time in history was the culmination of the industrial revolution. It was the age of giant steam hammers and a time when blacksmiths really did forge the parts for great locomotives, steamships, and the components of industry. There is a method and order to the forging of large components like crankshafts, U-bolts and such that allows for the systematic working of "big iron". Rachel has taken advantage of that to produce unique "statement" sculptures, as well as furniture and architectural work that is different and arresting.

Our "post-industrial" demonstration included a lot of yellow-hot big iron work at the power hammer, a lot of careful striking and butchering at the anvil, a number of stints with a very loud pneumatic air hammer, a few magic tricks, and a lot of what Rachel terms "mayhem"!

The final result was a beautiful iron sculpture that we will auction off to some lucky bidder. I have included a few pictures of the final sculpture for those who might have missed out on the mayhem.

I was fortunate to be in on some deep discussions over the next two days with several of our most experienced blacksmiths. Many of us were already at least somewhat familiar with the concept of industrial forging techniques, but watching Rachel adapt those methods to her very modern work was an eye opening experience. To be very clear, Rachel is NOT using industrial techniques to recreate antique locomotive parts.

She is utilizing these techniques to build her own commissions, components, and sculptures and to make an artistic statement that addresses the social inequalities, systemic prejudices, and the need for community that she cares deeply about.

For those of you who are interested in Industrial Age forgings, take a look at “Blacksmith’s Manual Illustrated” by J.W. Lillico. You will learn how to forge swages, axes, cranes, thumbscrews, and stamping dies, as well as brake shafts and other parts for your own personal steam locomotive.

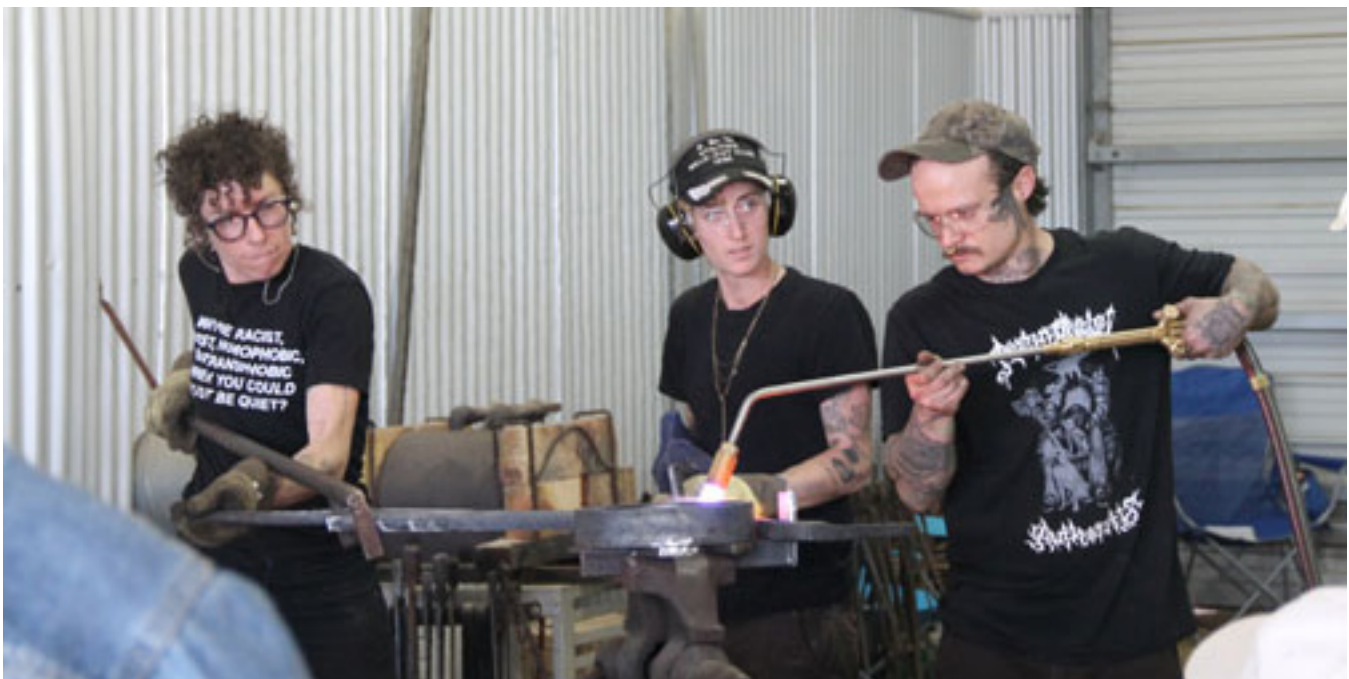
For those who are interested in Rachel David’s work, check her website at [www.redmetal.net](http://www.redmetal.net).

Rachel is currently exhibiting at the 2019 Smithsonian Craft Show in Washington, D.C.

Following the Smithsonian exhibit, she will be teaching at the Haystack Mountain School of Crafts for the Maine Craft Association and then at the Peters Valley Craft School in Layton, New Jersey from July 5th through 9th.

From August 19th through 30th, Rachel will be teaching a sculpture workshop at the New Agrarian School in northwest Montana. ([newagrarianschool.org](http://newagrarianschool.org))

**A very special thanks** to everyone (and there were plenty) who contributed their time, effort, and hard earned money to make this year’s Bluebonnet Demo happen. We have developed some very specific goals for next year’s demo. At the top of the list is **dinner!**





**Over 5000  
Square Feet of  
Covered Display  
and Demo Area**

**Home Cooked Food  
and Drinks Available  
All Day!**

**Tailgate Sales  
Welcomed!**

**Gates Open at 8:00am  
Event Starts at 9:00am  
Rain or Shine Event**

## **April 27, 2019 Balcones Forge Meeting**

**Vendors and Demonstration hosted by Blackhawk Forge and Blackhawk Millworks.**  
2780 Dreibrodt Rd, San Marcos, TX 78666

We are proud to announce there will be blacksmithing, knife making and woodworking demonstration for Balcones Forge. Blackhawk Millworks welcomes everyone to come participate. All demonstration items will be auctioned off at 3pm the day of the event.



### **LIST OF DEMONSTRATIONS**

#### **KNIFE MAKING & KNIFE MAKING MATERIALS**

**Joe Travieso**

Forging Damascus for knives.

**TNT Enterprises**

Knife scales and stabilized knife scales.

**Blaine Floyd**

Forged knife grinding and handle installation.

**Tim Tellander**

Knife forging, grinding and handle installation.

**Adam Nichols**

Knife handle material demo and information.

**Balcones Forge Young Blacksmiths**

Knife forging.

**Balcones Forge Young Blacksmiths**

Hook forging.

#### **BLACKSMITH DEMOS**

**Terry Estes**

Signature nail making demo.

**Terry Estes**

Forging tools, repurposed from old hammer heads.

**Doug Caroselli**

Hammer making. A demo of punching/drifted a hole and shaping of the hammer.

**Balcones Forge member**

Demo forging welding mild steel.

**Forging Your Signature Nail**

public welcome to participate. All minors must have a parent or guardian physically present during forging.

**Balcones Forge Member**

Forging Damascus for a hammer billet.

#### **HEAT TREATING**

A demo will be done heat treating two knife blades.

#### **PHOTOGRAPHER**

**Iron Hound Studios**

Photos of members and public. Candid or posed. A photo is a lifetime of memories.

#### **WOOD RELATED DEMOS**

**Turn Tex**

Pen turning.

**Bryan Morris**

Bowl turning.

**Natalia Caroselli**

A demo of mixing epoxy with and without pigment, using epoxy inlay for wood products.

**TimberKing Sawmills**

Milling large slabs of Lumber.



## AUCTION ITEMS

Live Auction will start between 2:30 and 3pm  
Current list of live auctions items, subject to additions Or substitutions.

- Hand Forged Knife from Blaine Floyd*
- Hand Forged Knife from Tim Tellander*
- Hand Forged Hammer from Douglas Caroselli*
- Turned Bowl from Bryan Morris*
- Forged Repurposed Tool by Terry Estes*
- One Photo Taken at the Day of Event by Iron Hound Studios*
- One Pen made the day of event from Turn Tex*
- One Damascus Knife Billet from Joe Travieso*



## THANK YOU TO OUR VENDORS



**Chile Forge**  
<http://www.chileforge.com/index.html>



**TurnTex**  
<https://www.turntex.com/>



**Terry Estes**  
<https://www.facebook.com/terry.estes.3154>



**Anyang USA North America**  
<https://www.facebook.com/Anyang-USA-North-America-165691366809549/>  
<https://www.anyangusa.net/>



**Fontanini Anvil and Tool**  
<http://fontaniniamvilandtool.com/>



**EcoPoxy**  
<https://www.ecopoxy.com/>



**Iron Hound Studios**  
<https://www.ironhoundstudios.com/>



**Texas Farrier Supply**  
<http://texasfarriersupply.com/>



**TNT Enterprises**  
Terry Dunn  
<https://m.facebook.com/pages/category/Product-Service/TNT-Enterprises-139493593584919/>



**Blackhawk Millworks** will be Demonstrating their Timberking Sawmill  
<https://timberking.com/>





Bluebonnet Demos require days of set up and preparation as well as the restoration of John's shop.

Pictured here are Ruth Carter and Tim Tellander on the left.

Jim Elliot (on the right) at the air hammer forging bottom tools for the classes.

Photos by John Crouchet



Early Registration is now open!

Register early, get a free T-shirt and save \$55.00!

ABANA 2020 Saratoga is on its way. It is THE blacksmithing get-together that you have been waiting for. We have a distinguished array of demonstrators in eight separate demo sites, a 20 forge teaching area, a youth teaching site, lectures, competitions, vendors, tailgating, family programs, members' gallery, auction and the Blacksmith's Arm Pub. There will be a Saturday night BBQ dinner, and coffee and donuts early mornings. Also there will be food available onsite all four days. Whether you are a novice, a part-time smith or a full time professional there will be something for everyone, including time to sit and share ideas, techniques, and learn from each others' experience. Even for those who are just curious about blacksmithing this is the place to see smithing at its best. You won't find a better place for all things blacksmith whether you come for just a single day or the entire four days.

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG





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WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

# Making It Happen

*By John Crouchet*

Special thanks to all the folks who show up early, work late, and take on all that needs to be done to make our annual Bluebonnet Demo and workshops happen. In many cases, these same people show up year after year for just a "Thank you!"

To the worker bees who build the tools, move the anvils, haul the equipment, handle all the registration for the demo and for the workshops, deliver the tables and chairs, take back the tables and chairs, take out the garbage, put up the signs, set up and run our great sound system, handle the check in, run the kitchen every day and cook all that food, fetch the class lunches, run our auctions, move in the bleachers, move out the bleachers, buy and set up our class and demo supplies, and especially jump on anything that comes up that needs tending to -and there is plenty-

## **Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.**

When I say we could not do it without you, that is not just a polite saying. We **REALLY** could not do it without you!

When you see these folks, give 'em a hug, buy 'em a beer, pat 'em on the back. They make it happen.

Jim Elliott  
Tim Tellander  
Ruth Carter  
Sue and Randy Howerter  
Dave and Elise Guerrero and Maddie  
John Meyer  
Vince and Jenny Herod  
Aaron and Shane Tilton  
Rudy Billings  
Pete Lee  
Laura Armstrong  
Jerry Achterberg  
Carolyn Crouchet

And everybody else who pitched in, moved it around, put it back, and made it go!



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.*

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

