



# Blacksmiths of Central Texas

Rudy Billings, President  
rudy@redhotironworks.com- 512/461-7375  
Harvey P. Wise, Vice-President  
hpw@tconline.net- 979/823-0813  
Smokey Thompson, Treasurer  
swthompson@aol.com- 512/694-9772  
Sue Murray, Secretary  
suraiyam@earthlink.net- 512/929-0416  
Vince Herod, Editor  
spotteddogforge@yahoo.com - 512/253-6045

## August 2007



### The Prez says:

Our third annual Summer Workshop was a grand success. If you missed it, you really missed it! Thanks to Dave Koenig for an outstanding demonstration. We learned so much no one wanted to leave. A special thanks also to our hosts, Carolyn and John Crouchet, for turning their home and shop upside down. Our volunteers and officers made the workshop run smoothly and you are greatly appreciated. Oh, almost forgot. Thanks to the auction donators and bidders. See Sue's article for more fantastic details.

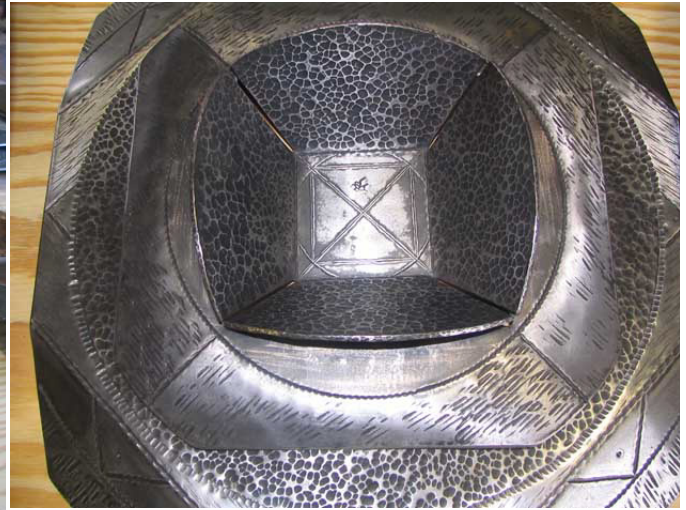
At the workshop, we honored two long-time members who have dedicated their lives to Balcones Forge and the blacksmithing community. Neil Hastings and Charles Stolte have donated, volunteered, organized, and mentored, and without them, Balcones Forge would not be what it is today. Thank you gentlemen!

Hey! Some of you have not been around for awhile! You've been missed! Hope you can make the next meeting. And bring a friend -- guests are always welcome.

See you then,  
Rudy

## The August meeting will begin at 9 am!

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



All these pieces are the fine work of Summer Demonstrator Dave Koenig.



Photos by Vince Herod

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

The July Balcones Forge meeting was used for our free summer demo, hosted by John Crouchet. At least 51 members and visitors attended and watched Dave Koenig, from the Houston Area Blacksmith's Association, create vessels.

Dave's demonstration showed us that gallery-worthy vessels can be shaped from steel and copper using a coal fire and only the basic tools that any blacksmith would have. Many of the tools used for shaping were found scrap objects, like the knuckle from a piece of heavy track equipment, a very large tooth from an excavator and a piece of pipe. He is still trying to decide how he will use the large tooth. Dave's work can be seen at [www.HABAIron.org](http://www.HABAIron.org), as well as in the Spring 2007 edition of the Hammer's Blow.

After making vessels, Dave showed attendees options for coloring them, using acrylic paints, which change color when they are heated. He did some experimenting to see which colors muted the best and found that the darker ones did. Finally, he demonstrated a good system for photographing our smaller work. He used a special nylon cube that starts flat, for storage, and folds out into a cube that you put the item(s) to be photographed inside. The cube is white and lighting is shown through from the outside, eliminating shadows. The front and top open for you to shoot through. A piece of solid color fabric is draped inside to set the work on so that it will show up well. Dave's particular Photo Light Tent was made by OBN Photography Equipment. There are similar products available on-line, such as Photo Studio In-A-Box, by American Recorder Technologies. Some come with lights and some do not.

Carolyn Crouchet took orders for Schlotzsky's

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sandwiches at the beginning of the day, for lunch time, and picked them up for us. Thanks a bunch Carolyn and everyone who brought deserts. Thanks also goes out to Michelle Collins-Stoke and her husband, David, for the great coffee con sessions.

During lunch, we had one of our famous, or is that "infamous", Balcones Forge Auctions. We had 58 items donated this time. Our spring and summer demos are how we pay for the really good demonstrators we bring in, so thanks to everyone who donated and parted with their hard-earned cash. The auction was a big success.

The most important order of business during the day was that Charlie Stolte and Neal Hastings were made Honorary Lifetime Balcones Forge members. These two gents have been, and still are, very special members of Central Texas' blacksmithing community and of Balcones Forge. Charlie and Neal, we sure do appreciate you, your knowledge and your endurance!

See you next month.

Sue Murray - Balcones Forge Secretary

### BOOKS ONLINE - FREE!

Check it out at  
<http://www.countryside.gov.uk/LAR/archive/publications/craftpublications.asp>

The August meeting begins at  
9am. Please be on time .

## AUGUST MEETING INFO

Our August meeting will be an unusual event. We will be touring the foundry and forge of SMI in Seguin. We'll get to see how the big boys do it.

We are set up to tour the SMI plant on the 25th @ 9AM. It takes about 2 hours and we will be in 2 groups. They will issue us hard hats and jackets.

There will be lots of stair climbing and walking, and it may be rather warm! PLEASE BE AWARE folks that are not in good shape that this is a long tour. Jerry will have water in the parking lot to drink before we start.

Jerry is still looking for something to do after the tour.....and has a few things to check out. HOWEVER, the tour is worth the trip all by itself!

We can do lunch in Clear Springs on Hwy 46, which will be on the way home for members.

## GET WELL JOHN CROUCHET

Everybody in Balcones Forge needs to give an extra big THANK YOU to John and Carolyn Crouchet for hosting the Summer Demo.

John is so concerned with us putting on a good show that he waited until a couple of days after the demo to have his appendix removed.



## IFORGEIRON.COM

If you are like me you might spend a bit of time at the computer to see what great blacksmithing information is out there on the internet. When Bill Epps was down to demo at the October meeting last year he recommended a sight called IFORGE IRON.COM and now, so do I.

Every Tuesday night at 9pm Central Time there is a live lesson presented in a special chat room set up just for that purpose. But what is really great is the archive of these "blueprints". There are many lessons from folks like.....Uri Hofi!

Check out the site and have a good look around. I know you will have a good time.

## GOOD STUFF

Iron -- it can be drawn, formed, machined, cast, laminated, hammered, inlaid, etched, punched, split, rolled, bent, chased, spun, welded, riveted, collared, and more.

## BAND SAW INFO

Do you have a small bandsaw that needs attention? Check out this site:

[www.tinyisland.com/4x6bsFAQ.html](http://www.tinyisland.com/4x6bsFAQ.html)

## DID YOU KNOW?

I stumbled across the origin of this saying, it's from Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, "The Tale of Melibeus," (1386): "Right so as whil that Iren is hoot men sholden smyte."

And, no, it's not spelled wrong, it's old English. Thought you might enjoy it.

Tom Lupton

## TRADE ITEM

The trade item for August is.....

A vessel!

Jerry Achterberg, our host, suggested the trade item be a vessel since we had such a fantastic demonstration by Dave Koenig at our Summer Workshop. So, make anything that will hold water -- a bowl, a vase, a barrel.

## CLAY SPENCER NEW INFO

New address is: 73 Penniston Private Drive, Somerville, AL 35670

New phone: 256 498-1498,

New cell is: 256 558 3658

New email is: [clay@tirehammer.com](mailto:clay@tirehammer.com)

Ray Clontz Tire Hammer Plans by Clay Spencer  
These plans are for a 50 lb. power hammer that uses the rear axle and hub from a front drive car and emergency spare tire and weighs about 700 lbs. It is powered by a 1 hp, 1750 rpm electric motor, 120 or 240 volts, runs about 250 blows per minute and uses a spring toggle mechanism similar to Little Giant hammers. The anvil is 6" solid round (minimum size) by 36" high and the frame is 5" square tubing. The plans are 40 pages, printed front and back on 20 sheets that include parts list, detail and assembly drawings, sources, notes, installation, adjustments and maintenance. Over 250 hammers have been built using these plans. Price is \$30US including postage to US and Canada, \$32US to other countries. Send check or money order to Clay Spencer, 73 Penniston Private Drive, Somerville, AL 35670. 256 498 1498 cell 256 558 3658

E-mail [clay@tirehammer.com](mailto:clay@tirehammer.com)

Beverly Shear Blades Sharpened. Remove blades from shear and ship to Clay Spencer, 73 Penniston Private Drive, Somerville, AL 35670. \$35 plus postage, additional cost for deep notches or blades previously sharpened at angle.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Balcones Forge Meeting Schedule for 2007

August - SMI

Sept - Blacksmithing at Sauer-Beckmann Farm, LBJ SP&HS

Oct - Bob Pheil

Nov - Pioneer Farms, Austin

Dec - Open

## SCHOLARSHIP DRAWING

Blacksmith Supply ([www.blacksmithsupply.com](http://www.blacksmithsupply.com)) is giving away a \$500 scholarship this year. Nothing to purchase -- just fill out the form on the website to enter. Winner selected by random drawing on Nov 15, 2007. Only one entry per person per month.

## AUGUST MEETING DIRECTIONS

Please see the map on page 7. What time does this meeting start?

**9am**

Please be on time.



Dave makes one of the big bowls even bigger!



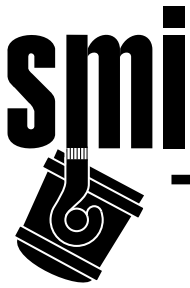
Here it is folks. That store we have all needed at least once in our lives.



Dave Koenig  
preps the  
copper disk.



The final product. Just  
one of the great demon-  
strations at the Summer  
Demo.



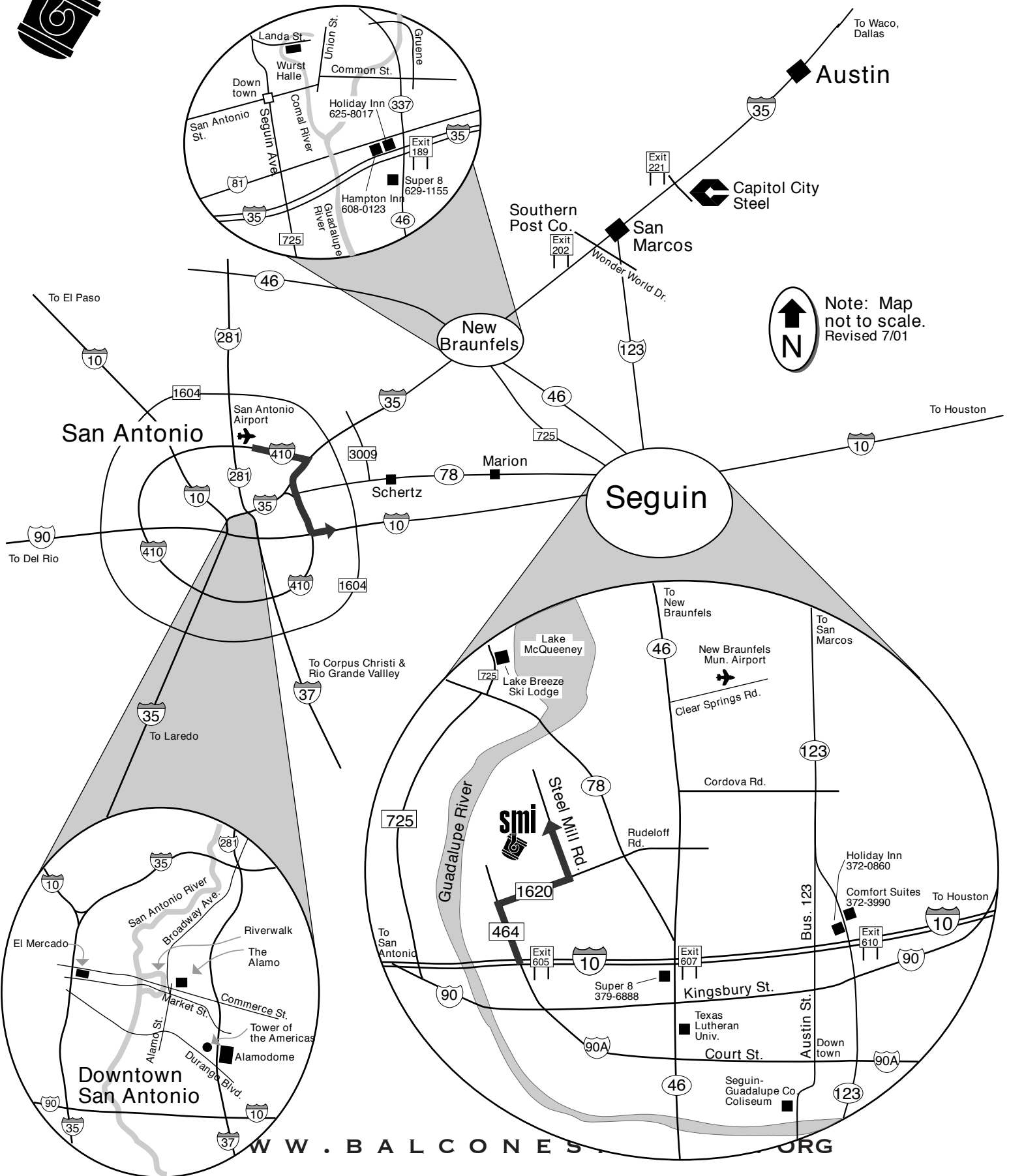
# SMI-Texas

Box 911, Steel Mill Rd. Seguin, Texas 78156-0911

830/372-8200

## Approximate Driving Times

Austin	1 hr.
Houston	2-1/2 hrs.
San Antonio - Airport	1 hr.
San Antonio - Downtown	45 min.
San Marcos	30 min.



# Dave Koenig at the Balcones Forge Summer Demo



Vincent Herod  
Spotted Dog Forge  
166 Granite Road  
Paige, TX 78659-4922

Return Service Requested

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