



# Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

August 2016



Greetings forge fans!

Well it's still too hot to forge, but fall plans are well under way.

Our September meeting will take us to Serbin, just south of Giddings for the Wendish Festival. The meeting will take place on September 25th,

which is a **Sunday**, at our usual start time of 9:30a. Hopefully this will give some of folks with Saturday jobs a chance to attend. This is an open forge event which means we will need a few forges and anvils set up for ourselves as well as to demo for the public. Please bring your show-n-tell items and anything else that you might want to sell. We would like to see trade items donated to the festival silent auction, however there will be a prize for the best. Please see the attached link for directions and more information on the event. <http://texaswendish.org/2016/08/28th-annual-wendish-fest-on-september-25/>

**COMAL BLACKSMITH SHOP AUCTION OCTOBER 29TH**  
October will take us to the Comal blacksmith shop located just south of New Braunfels on the 29th, where Balcones Forge will auction the entire contents of the smithy. The shop is now owned by the Zipp family, who will be hosting the meeting. The smithy has not been in operation for many years and is now in disrepair. The Zipp family would like to see this equipment go to blacksmiths that will continue to use it and pass it on to future smiths.

Meeting time: 9:30.

Trade item theme :Halloween

There is also a historical marker in the front of the shop.  
Comal Blacksmith & Mechanical Shop  
New Braunfels  
Comal County, Texas  
29 38.725' N 98 13.395' W

**There will be no meeting in August**



## Officers

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*President's message continued from page 1.*

Text: The Wenzel/Schwab (aka Comal) Blacksmith Shop was originally established sometime prior to 1915 by Peter Ignatz Wenzel, one of the original founding colonist of New Braunfels, Texas. On June 10, 1851 and again in 1864 Ignatz Wenzel purchased 100 acres and 303 acres of land, respectively, in the Comal Settlement Area (seven miles southwest of New Braunfels, Texas) where besides farming operations he established the community's first blacksmith shop (exact date of formation unknown) along the historic "Post Road" that has since become FM 482. In 1915, ownership of the blacksmith shop passed to Bruno Schwab, grandson of Valentine Joseph Schwab an original settler of the Comal Settlement Area and after whom Schwab Road is named. Bruno was an inventor who developed many devices for use by the farmers of the area such as a "Pear Burner" for use in burning off the stickers of the cactus plant so the cattle could eat the cactus in very dry seasons when no vegetation was growing. He patented the first hard rubber tire remover with the U.S. Government Patent Office. He was an original manufacturer of farm implements and ranch gates spread throughout the Texas Hill Country area. Bruno enjoyed music and played in bands for special occasions throughout the Comal County area. The blacksmith was a vital to the prosperity of the farming communities due to the farmer's dependence upon the blacksmith's skills to keep their horses shod, wagons repaired, cattle branded, etc. Presented by the Schertz Historical Preservation Committee.

Stay cool!

Jerry Achterberg,  
President, Balcones Forge

## **WEB PAGE UPDATE**

Hello Balcones Forge members. The website now has many new aspects to it. As some of you know you can now fill out membership applications online under the membership page. Also the member gallery needs an update so please send some pictures of your work along with a short biography as to how you became a blacksmith. Please email this to Shane Tilton at:

[flex201214@gmail.com](mailto:flex201214@gmail.com)

On another note many of our members offer teaching or other blacksmithing related services. If you are one of these individuals please email Shane the title of your service, prices or a price range and method of contact for the service. I look forward to your submissions and emails.

Thank you,  
Shane Tilton

### **THE BALCONES FORGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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# NEWSLETTER CHANGES COMING

by Daniel Harrington

Balcones Forge has offered members a printed and mailed copy of the Balcones Forge Dispatch at a very low cost (\$5/year) for a number of years... Probably forever. We have also known for some time that the actual cost of producing and mailing these letters is higher than the additional membership fee.

After looking into the actual costs to produce these letters, which about 33% of our members receive, we got a big surprise! The cost to print and mail twelve newsletters to a single member is **over \$26.00**. Since we're only charging \$5, that mean's were losing... Well, y'all can do the math.

The Board chewed on this one for a while and looked for ways to fix the problem. We considered increasing the fee for membership with hard copy newsletter to \$30/year (from \$25,) but that still leaves us \$16 short for every member receiving a newsletter in the mail. We agreed that increasing the cost to our members any further than that was not an option. This essentially left us with two choices: continue to provide the newsletters at a loss, or move away from the printed newsletter altogether.

After much wailing and gnashing of teeth, we decide to stop mailing the newsletters. The last issue to be mailed out to members will be December 2016.

Our hope is that members understand that this was a difficult decision, but one we felt necessary to make. Our goal is to continue to produce a dozen or so hard copies to be made available at meetings for those who would like to take a hardcopy home with them. Otherwise, the newsletters will be available on our website, and all members who have provided an email address will receive a link each month.

Happy Forging,  
DH

## SEPTEMBER MEETING INFO

We are doing something a little different for our September meeting. We will be having our meeting on Sunday, September 25th, 2016 in Serbin, Texas.

For those that don't know where Serbin, Texas is located, (I had to look it up too) it is located midway between Bastrop and Brenham, about 7 miles from Giddings. This will be very convenient to our eastern members as well as some of the HABA group. Instead of a "Trade Item" we would like to suggest a donation of a forged item to their silent auction.

This is going to be a great event, and we are looking forward to seeing everyone there.

Jerry Whitley

<http://texaswendish.org/2016/08/28th-annual-wendish-fest-on-september-25/>



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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Country: \_\_\_\_\_

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\$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)

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Credit Card Information

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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

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