



Blacksmiths of Central Texas

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February 2007

In "The Art of Blacksmithing" Alex Bealer writes, "As a stage setting for this symphony the fire brightens and sparks from the charcoal fly, dancing up the chimney, while the iron gradually turns a brighter red, then white, until welding heat is reached, and a whole corps of tiny white incandescent sparks, like fleas of Hades, leap from the semimolten iron to perform an airy ballet in the heated air above the fire. No wonder the old-time blacksmith shop was such a popular gathering place in towns and villages."

Wow! It seems not much has changed through the decades. We are still mesmerized by the fire and how it transforms the iron we use.

You will also be amazed by what you see at our upcoming workshop in March. Have you registered for the Bluebonnet Workshop yet? Dorothy Stiegler is an outstanding demonstrator with an abundance of knowledge. Don't miss it!

Important Fact: The Annual Workshop Auction next month is how Balcones Forge generates the funds to operate throughout the year. You can help by forging, finding, and funding items to be donated. The handpainted wooden signs were a big hit last year. Do you have a blacksmithing book you no longer read? Are there spare tools taking up space in your shop? Be creative, be generous. Your organization depends on it.

See you on the 24th at the shop of John Van Strien. I've seen John's new shop -- you'll want to see it too!

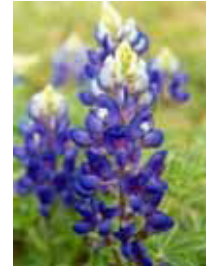
Forging ahead,
Rudy

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

Balcones Forge ~~Winter~~ Bluebonnet



Workshop featuring **DOROTHY STIEGLER**



March 31-April 1, 2007 Marble Falls, Texas

Balcones Forge is delighted to present a dynamic and entertaining two-day team demonstration by world famous blacksmith **Dorothy Stiegler** and her very accomplished apprentice, **Jake Hill**. This very special exhibition will include a wide array of Dorothy's own practical and productive forging secrets and tricks of the trade, as well as exciting displays of team forging. Learn to add value and artistic interest to your forged work with Dorothy's special demonstrations of bronze forging. As Dorothy says, "It looks old, it feels old."

Dorothy Stiegler is renowned for her artistic work in both iron and bronze. She has received the Alex Bealer Award, the highest honor that ABANA can bestow. She has served for many years on the ABANA Board of Directors and has worked with many of the finest blacksmiths of the past, present and future! Her demonstrations are packed with learning and laughter and she makes new friends wherever she goes! Come join us for a wonderful weekend in the Texas Hill Country and meet our friend, Dorothy Stiegler!

The Balcones Forge Workshop will present a wonderful dinner on Saturday night, catered by our friends at **The Jamin' House**, the finest restaurant in Marble Falls. Dinner will be followed by our famous annual **Balcones Auction!** Buy yourself a new (or old) blacksmithing hammer, maybe a forge or anvil, some smithing books, or maybe Dorothy's latest creation, or just enjoy our rousing, old-time auction! We will finish Saturday night with Dorothy's entertaining **slide show**, featuring the intricate and fascinating bronze work she and Jake have forged over the last three years.

The Balcones Workshop will be held March 31 and April 1. Here in the **Texas Hill Country**, folks, that is **Bluebonnet Time!** Plan to ride some of our scenic country back roads and enjoy the finest display of wildflowers in America! We are located right in the middle of Texas' best bluebonnet area! Whether you ride the back roads on your trusty motorcycle or by automobile, it is a sight you will not want to miss!

Times: Saturday: 9:00-Noon – Morning Demo
Noon-1:00 – Lunch: Drinks provided; bring a sack lunch or there are numerous places to eat nearby
1:00 – 5:00 – Afternoon Demo
6:00 – Tasty catered dinner, only \$15
7:25 – If you do not attend the dinner, please join us at this time for the Old Time Auction and Dorothy's slide show

Sunday: 9:00-1:00 – Demo

Our host is Larry Crawford at his Hammerfest Forge, 2401 Commerce St. Directions: **From Burnet on Hwy 281**, State Street will be the second traffic light once you enter Marble Falls. You will turn left (East) onto State Street. **From San Antonio or Hwy 71**, start counting traffic lights once you cross the Colorado River into town. State Street will be the eighth traffic light and you will turn right (East) onto State Street. **From Ranch Road 1431**, you will turn right (North) onto Hwy 281. State Street will be the third traffic light once you are on Hwy 281. You will turn right (East) onto State Street. **Everybody:** Go one block to the end of State Street. Turn left and go twenty feet. Turn right into Larry's driveway. Lost? Just call John Crouchet for directions at 830-798-3710. Web map: maps.citysearch.com/map/view/10195073

For more info contact:

Rudy Billings, 512-461-7375 or Rudy@RedHotIronWorks.com

John Crouchet, 830-798-3710 or John@TexasWroughtIron.com

Jerry Achterberg, 210-661-3293 or treefarm@swbell.net

Hotel Accommodations:

Hampton Inn on the Lake, 704 First St., 830-798-1895

Ramada Limited, 1206 Hwy 281, 830-693-5731

Best Western, 1403 Hwy 281, 830-693-5122, 800-528-1234

Hill Country Inn, 1101 Hwy 281, 830-693-3637

See the latest newsletter or website (www.BalconesForge.org) for Registration form.

REGISTER EARLY!

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

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The January meeting was held at the blacksmith shop in Zilker Park and we had at least 22 people attend. Rudy Billings, Shannon Bower and his son, Colt, came early to set up forges and got them fired up for the meeting. Zilker meetings are a good place for members without shops at home to practice, as the forges are always fired up and ready to go. Keep that in mind and bring along a hammer when we have them there.

Jaylon Lloyd updated the group on the state of the library and he asked that anyone with ideas on a specific book or DVD we should add get in touch with him. We also found out that premier blacksmithing author, Dona Mielach, has passed away. Dona wrote many, many books displaying photos of work created by a host of different metalsmiths. We have several of her books in our library. They contain very good examples of the many different things a person can create from metals of different types. She'll certainly be missed by blacksmith librarians, as well as smiths looking for photos and info on the latest creations.

Our meeting was primarily an opportunity to forge; however, before we opened up the fires... Rudy Billings gave a demonstration of some patina products he uses. For a nice, satin black patina, he uses a liquid product from Sculpt Nouveau called, "Dye Oxide". It works on metal that has been heated to 200 degrees F. The work is wire brushed, then the color is applied. Afterwards, he uses a wax for iron and steel, from the same vendor, which is applied to cold or warm metal, just for a slight highlight. The wax is buffed off before it is completely dry and becomes very hard. The waxes come in clear, green, black, and other colors, and contain UV and rust inhibitors. If you are interested in checking out Sculpt Nouveau products, the company

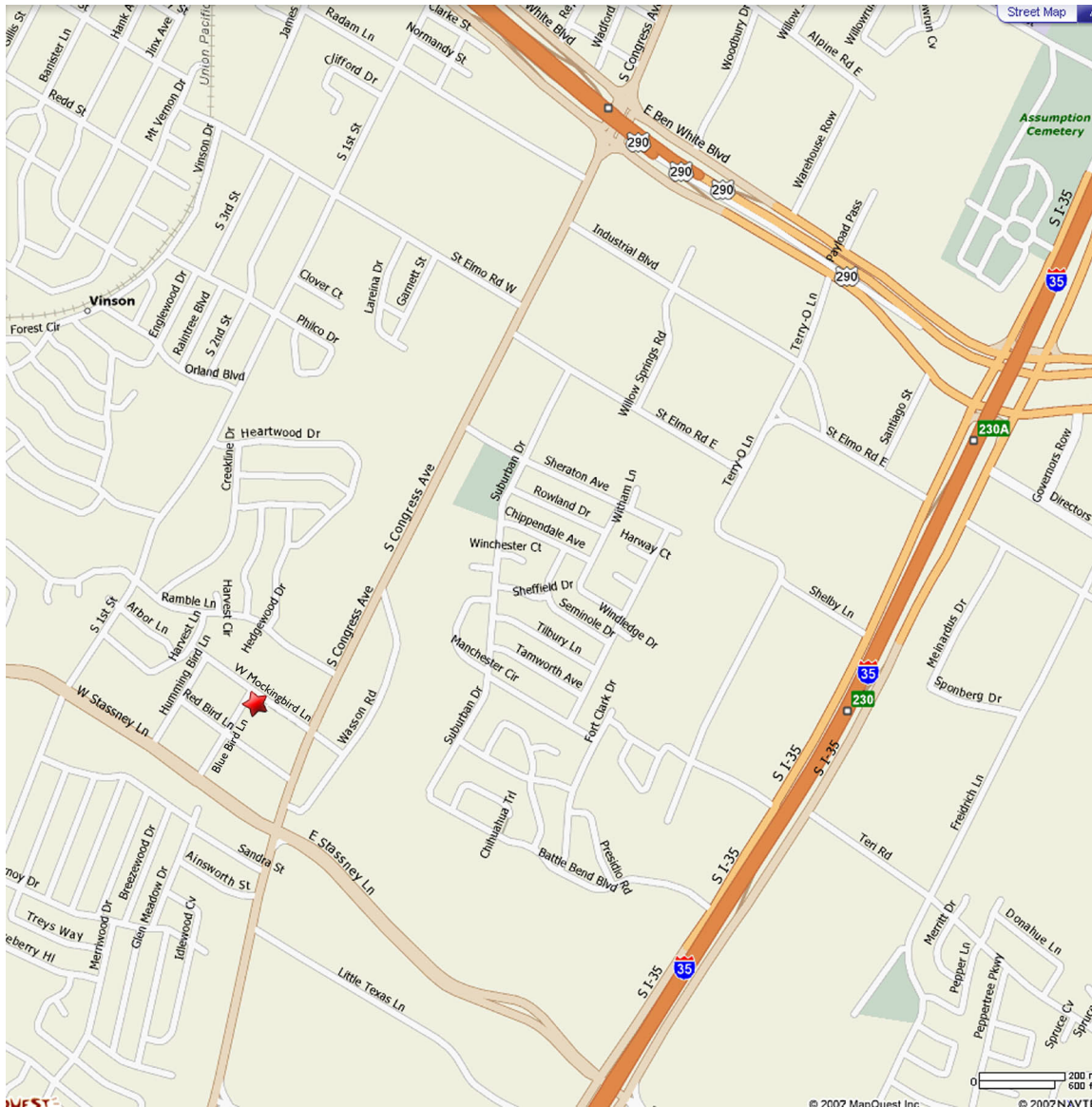
can be reached at 800-728-5787 or on the web at <http://www.sculptnouveau.com/>.

The trade item this month was for a heavy duty leaf, which could be used in one of the panels individuals will be making to replace the Zilker Blacksmith Shop gates, if they like. There were nine items made. We have some very talented folks in our group, I must say. I encourage everyone to participate by making trade items, as it is a great way to practice different elements or techniques.

Rudy has broken down the shop gates, on paper, into 32 different size panels. There are panels that will make up the lower gates, which will be seen by visitors from one side, and upper gates, which will be seen by visitors from two sides. Rudy has made an instruction sheet for each panel and many were passed out to members at the meeting who volunteered to create one. There are many panels left, so if you would like to make one and have your work displayed for all visitors of the park to see...contact Rudy. The panels created will eventually be welded together to replace the wire mesh over the gates now. The design is whatever kid-friendly design you'd like it to be, but it must be sturdy enough that it will stand up to swinging kids and annoying potential thieves. If you don't have a shop, or don't want to work on the project by yourself, we encourage folks to find a partner to work with and to do a joint project. Any member who wants to can participate, so...take advantage of this venue to have your work seen.

Sue Murray, Secretary

The Balcones Forge Newsletter is written by the editor except as noted. Balcones Forge, its officers, members, contributors, editors and writers specifically disclaim any responsibility, or liability for any damage, or injury as a result of the use of any information published in the newsletter or demonstrated at a meeting or conference. Every effort is made to insure the accuracy and safety of information provided but the use by our members and readers of any information published herein or provided at meetings is solely at the user's own risk.



FEB
24
2007

9:30
am

In the summer of 2004, I spent 6 weeks visiting and photographing the beautiful and bizarre world of European Art Nouveau architecture in Barcelona, Brussels and Paris. I also traveled to Rome, Florence, Assisi and Venice, and saw many wondrous sights. I took a lot of pictures and am going to share the best ones with you.

I will also be showing you some new technologies in lighting, including LEDs, electroluminescent wire and Flat light panels. For people wanting to add light to their projects, these technologies will easily allow you to do it in ways that incandescent and florescent lighting simply can not.

This is a link to a map of my house - <http://tinyurl.com/yezox>

john van strien
207 W. Mockingbird Ln
Austin, 78745
512-912-7558



HAMMER HEAD INFO

Place your hammer into automotive antifreeze for about 48 hours. The wood swells and fills the wood fibers in the handle. The hammer comes out clean -- just wipe with a rag and the hammer is ready to use. This protects the hammer against drying out and helps keep the head tight and secure. The process may need to be repeated periodically, depending on how dry the climate is where you live.

Submitted by Janet Ross

READY TO HOST A MEETING?

We have a few spots still open for 2007. Contact our VP, Harvey Wise at hpw@tconline.net if you're interested.

TRADE ITEM

For February the trade item is:

Something consisting of two or more pieces of metal, all riveted together.

A CALL TO AUCTION

Now that you all have your calendars marked for the big event at the end of March, it is time for you to get out in your shop and create an item to donate to the auction.

Out of all the various fund raising activities spread through out the year the auction at the big demo is the one to attend. The truth is, without the auction, the big annual demo would lose money. Balcones Forge tries hard as an organization to keep the cost of membership low and keep the demos affordable.....and I think we do a good job!

So take some time in the next month or so to make an item or perhaps do a bit of shop cleaning and pass an unused piece of equipment along to someone who needs it to get going in the craft. Anything related to the craft will help. And don't forget, the auction is a family affair so make something for them as well.

Remember this is YOUR organization and it is up to YOU to help out .

Vince Herod, Editor

WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?

Has your email address changed recently?

Do you have a new home?

We get returned mail -- both types -- quite often.

Please update Sue or any officer when something changes.

We like to keep in touch!



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abana@abana.org € www.abana.org

President's Message
February, 2007

ABANA NEEDS YOU

Well it's happened ... the kids (ABANA Affiliates) are showing the old folks (ABANA) how it should be done. Yes, I am admitting that you put on more efficient conferences than we do.

Some of you have already known this and are probably saying right now, "Hey, we've been trying to tell you this for years." And again you'd be right. All I can say at this point is this - the straw hit the camel's back ... and it broke.

No longer can ABANA sponsor conferences as before. They have become too cost prohibitive to produce and attend. Now is the time for us to learn from you. Here are just a few fine examples –

Quadstate RoundUp in Troy, Ohio
Southern Blacksmith Association Conference in Madison, Georgia
IronFest in Grapevine, Texas
CanIron in a different Canadian Province every two years
California Blacksmith Association Conferences in California

So where do we go from here? What I would like to start is a dialog with you. I will be getting in touch over the next several months with many of you to discuss conferences and ABANA. In the meantime you can get in touch with me, clareyellin@abana.org

Our ears are open and with your help and guidance the parent can learn a thing or two from the kids.

Clare Yellin, President
721 Moore Avenue
Bryn Mawr, PA 19010
(610) 527-2334
clareyellin@abana.org



Scenes from the January meeting.



Photos by Helen Wise



A FAVOR PLEASE...

To allow your officers, especially your Treasurer and Secretary, to enjoy the Bluebonnet Workshop also, please do not wait until that day to bring in your registration. Take the time now to send your registration form and check to Sue at the address on the form. It is important to inform the caterer how many will be attending the dinner, so we cannot wait until the day of the dinner.

Please do it today. Thanks!

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

Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Workshop

featuring **Dorothy Stiegler - March 31-April 1**

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Yes, I prefer the electronic version of the newsletter. (You will be notified by email when the latest newsletter has been posted.)

Current Member \$45 _____

2007 Membership \$15 _____

Non-member..... \$60 _____

Yes, I wish to become a BF member

Saturday Evening Meal ... \$15 _____

Total _____

Make check payable to **Balcones Forge**.
Send to Sue Murray, Secretary,
5112 Cloverdale Lane, Austin, TX 78723

PLEASE READ AND COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING RELEASE FORM: FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND DATED BY EACH MEMBER, GUEST AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF ANY MINOR IN ATTENDANCE.

In consideration of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association providing demonstrators and making these demonstrations available and granting permission to enter the area of said demonstration, I, individually and as parent or guardian of the minor child attending such demonstration, hereby waive all claims for damage and/or loss to my person or property, or the person or property of such minor child, which may be caused by an act, or failure to act of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association, its officers, directors, agents or employees and the hosts and demonstrators. I understand that there are inherent dangers in blacksmithing and I assume all risk of all dangerous conditions in and about such demonstration and waive any and all specific notice of the existence of such conditions. By signing this waiver, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this waiver.

X

Date

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Vincent Herod
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