



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

January 2017



Greetings forge fans!

Just was beginning to think it was never going to cool off, I was wrapping pipes, covering plants, and digging out the long Johns. It's cold but I love it! Now it's really forging weather. Hope everybody had a

good Christmas and a better new year.

Many thanks to the Whitley's for hosting the December Memorial Meeting and Demo. It took lots of hard work to put this event on and everything turned out better than we ever expected. The food was excellent and I saw that we did an excellent job of trashing your kitchen. Marsha was still smiling when we left so I guess she is not too mad as us. The all-girl demo was also an excellent idea that turned out well. Don't ever say "she hits like a girl" like it's a bad thing. You may have to deal with the consequences! Wonderful job ladies!

Lots of cool things on the agenda for 2017.

January 28th – James Helm will host in Elmendorf, TX. James has lots of great homemade equipment to show off as well as his great knife making skills and, if we are lucky, perhaps Forged in Fire winner Tobin will show up as well. Competition trade item: A knife. Show us what you can do, prizes for the best.

February 18th – Combo demo in Bryan, TX. The Lee Brothers have invited us to be part of this wonderful event once again. This is an all day demo with lots of things to see and do. Bring an auction item and some cash to help with the cost. Come early and help set up or to work at one of the tables. Several blacksmiths from the surrounding states will be in attendance with lots of equipment for sale or trade. Do not miss this one! The competition trade item: Belt buckle.

Meeting Date is Jan 28



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SECRETARY'S REPORT

This December meeting for Balcones Forge commenced with the brilliant idea of asking the talented female blacksmiths of our group to demonstrate their skills in the forge.

I'm not sure where or from whom this wonderful idea originated but once I heard of it, I was delighted and without any second thoughts. Most of us usually strain ideas coming from someone else through our cortex even before we discuss the pros and cons with others. Not this time! For me, the idea was immediate genius as well as respectful and considerate to honor their talents by asking for a demonstration. Accepting the challenge for the meeting held at Jerry Whitley's forge in Devine for December 10 was Sue Howerter, Laura Armstrong, and Mary Jo Emrick.

Before the demo began, Jerry Achterberg announced that the next hammer-in will take place January 28, 2017 at the forge of James Helms in Elmendorf, Texas. Next up was remembering past members as Jerry Whitley read the list for which everyone could ring the anvil in their honor. After this solemn moment, we broke for the ever so delicious lunch that Jerry and Marsha had prepared. Never underestimate the skills of country folk when they do something they like for people they love. After lunch, we all gathered in the barn for the ladies demo.

Sue's background in blacksmithing began in 1999 while full time employed by the city of Austin. She undertook night classes at Austin Community College in welding to construct unique designs for

functional plant support as well as unique beauty and interest. While attending the night classes, she discovered other students forging and with the combined elements of fire - and hammers - and anvils - and - she was hooked on blacksmithing. She was soon retired and by 2006 Rusty Toad Ironworks was in business. Sue's demonstration for today was a snowflake. The Fredrich Cross technique was utilized to construct this snowflake, but special tools designed and built by Sue were absolutely essential to forge and smith the flake into something beautiful. Sue came prepared with multiple sizes for bench top viewing and we discovered unique and personal designs such as flaring and splitting of the flakes tips for added beauty - you know those things that look so simple until one attempts it themselves, right. It was certainly appropriate for Sue to win first place in the "something Christmas" forging contest.

Our next demonstrator was Laura who, after 20 years working for non-profit organizations in an administrative capacity, realized that art is a valid pursuit unto itself. By yielding to her hearts desire, Laura enrolled in the Austin Community College to engage the visions in her mind of metal and art sculpture into functional designs of passion created by her own hands and talent. The Art Nouveau style, of which we other blacksmiths are quite familiar with by dozing through an Antiques Road Show episode, is of particular interest to Laura as she began demonstrating a simply beautiful and flowing Christmas tree design from quarter inch round stock. She indicated to the group that she wanted the design to be simple and originated the creation by drawing the design in the air with her finger and showed us how she came up with the idea. After the general tree shape took form, Laura introduced us to the Art Noveu technique by gently flattening certain curves which produced an amazing, yet simple elegance to it.

Next up was Mary Jo, who also is connected to

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Austin Community College, not as a student, but as an instructor, teaches the welding courses there. Mary Jo was also a welder for the United States Navy and her knowledge of welding techniques, and properties of any metal you ask her about might quickly go over the head of most blacksmiths. She picked a project that quite honestly something I know nothing about, and that was titanium. Once she presented the group with this subject, and began explaining the different quality's of the grade 2 she would be working with, her knowledge was evident. No one had a question she could not answer. The demo involved making a simple reverse twist that turned out to be extraordinary. The colors were beautiful and the twists equal and elegant. Hope the ladies demo becomes an annual event, if not more so!

The forged competition this year was 'something Christmas' and there were numerous entries. First place went to Sue Howerter for the showflake and second went to Ben Rath for a treble clef. Two very nice pieces, indeed!

The iron in the hat began rather slowly, and given the damp and wintry conditions that afternoon the crowd began to shrink quickly. Jerry A. decided to conclude the auction early and everyone was in agreement.

Tim Tellander
Balcones Forge Secretary

President's Message CONTINUED

The end of March takes us back to the Sycamore Creek Ranch for the Blue Bonnet Demo. John and Carolyn Crochet will host this gala event. Start on your auction donation now and plan to attend. More details to follow.

And now a very special thank you goes out to Daniel Harrington for his long term as treasurer. Due to a career change, Daniel has to step down and focus on future fortunes. The good news is Peter Garza will be taking over his duties and John Meyer has also offered to help out. Thanks to all you guys!

As always, BFD editor, Vince Herod is needing your articles and photos to help keep our newsletter one of the best in the country. Be sure to join and like us on Facebook.

See ya'll in Elmendorf!

Jerry Achterberg
Balcones Forge President



Laura Armstrong, Sue Howerter and Mary Jo Emrick

photo by Tim Tellander

BUSSINESS OPPORTUNITY

I received the following request through the Balcones Forge Facebook page. If anyone is interested, please follow up by contacting Mr. Slusser.

Jerry Whitley

I live near Dripping Springs where I build outdoor and not so complicated indoor furniture. I have been using coffee table bases that I pick up here and there and putting mesquite tops on them.

What I would really like to do is find a blacksmith that could build me some handmade bases to go with the handmade tops. I would especially like a coffee and end table for my own living room. They need to be western or rustic looking and affordable.

I would like to talk with anyone that might be interested in discussing this project. I have quite a bit of mesquite available and would like to get started in the not so distant future.

*Paul Slusser
512.234.1960*

www.zoellerforge.com
7509 Geswein Road
Lanesville, IN 47136
Phone: 502 439-0812

Zoeller Forge sells gas forge parts and Refractory products. You can save money and build your own efficient Atmospheric Propane Gas 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

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 7th Annual Combo-Demo: Blacksmithing Demonstration & Metal Arts Exhibition

All-Day Demonstrations by:

Haley Woodward-Demo-Artist-Professor Austin Community College- Austin Metal Authority- ABANA

Colby Brinkman-Artist- ABANA- Austin, Tx

Evan Wilson-Artist-Community Village, Austin, Tx

Tim Shaffer-Artist- Austin, Tx

John McGee-Artist- HABA, ABANA. Bryan, Tx

Bill Moffet- Demo- Rose Hill, Kansas

Richard DelaHoussaye- Iron Smelt- Louisiana Metalsmiths Asso. Carencro, La.

Artist Gallery

Metals artists are welcome to participate by bringing their artwork for exhibition! Some of our exhibitors include:

Ziwa Forge

K Alexander

Suraiya Howerter

Competition Item:

This year's competition item is a "belt buckle". Start now and create your masterpiece! Enter it before noon February 18th at Steephollow Forgeworks. This friendly competition is always incredible for its varied entries. The winner will be crowned "The Best of the Best (for one year)."

Past Competition Items

When: Saturday, February 18, 2017 at 8 AM - 5 PM

Where: Steephollow Forgeworks

The Event is FREE to all attendees but book your classes before they fill up!

The 7th annual Combo-Demo will be February 18, 2017 at Steephollow Forgeworks in Bryan, Texas. This celebration of Blacksmithing.....a combined meeting of all the clubs in Texas and Louisiana, will feature "up and comers" and old reliable smiths. This year will feature The Austin Metal Authority with Haley Woodward and Colby Brinkman. This one-day event free-of-charge will also include an iron smelt, tailgating, vendors, live music, food, art displays, live and silent auctions. Come early or stay late. Artists are welcome to display, sell, or promote their work. The public is invited to come see what Blacksmithing is all about. Blacksmithing is not dead it's ALIVE at Steephollow Forgeworks February 18, 2017

An iron smelt led by Richard DelaHoussaye from Louisiana will begin on Friday with the construction of the furnace. The smelt will be scheduled to be finished by 4pm Saturday. If you would like to be involved, just let us know.

Vendors like James Johnson with Anyang Hammers will have one of his hammers available for a test drive (he is also a Chili Forge dealer) and Richard Epting- knife maker. Eptingknives.com. There will be a large amount of used blacksmithing equipment available by dealers from Austin and Kansas. There will be dozens anvils and vices, hundreds of tongs and hardy tools, and several mechanical hammers. Forges and blowers, swage blocks and hammers.

Book a Blacksmithing Class!

February Blacksmithing Classes

Day-long classes with Lyle Wynn and Stan Bryant
Mississippi Forge council

Monday 2/13 -- Friday 2/17 will be hammer making classes. Make a hammer or the tools to make the hammer.

All classes are \$150/day plus tax. The hammer classes are going fast. Buy and reserve your spot at steepforge.com. Go to the products page or call us at 979-776-2864.



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

STEEL SNOWFLAKE

By Sue Howerter

For the December memorial Balcones Forge meeting at Jerry Whitley's in Divine, I wanted to demo an ornament of some kind that I thought our members would want to try. I ran across the steel snowflake on blacksmith John Bennett's website and, because it was made similar to the Frederick Cross and so many of the Balcones Forge folks enjoy making those, I figured they'd like seeing it.

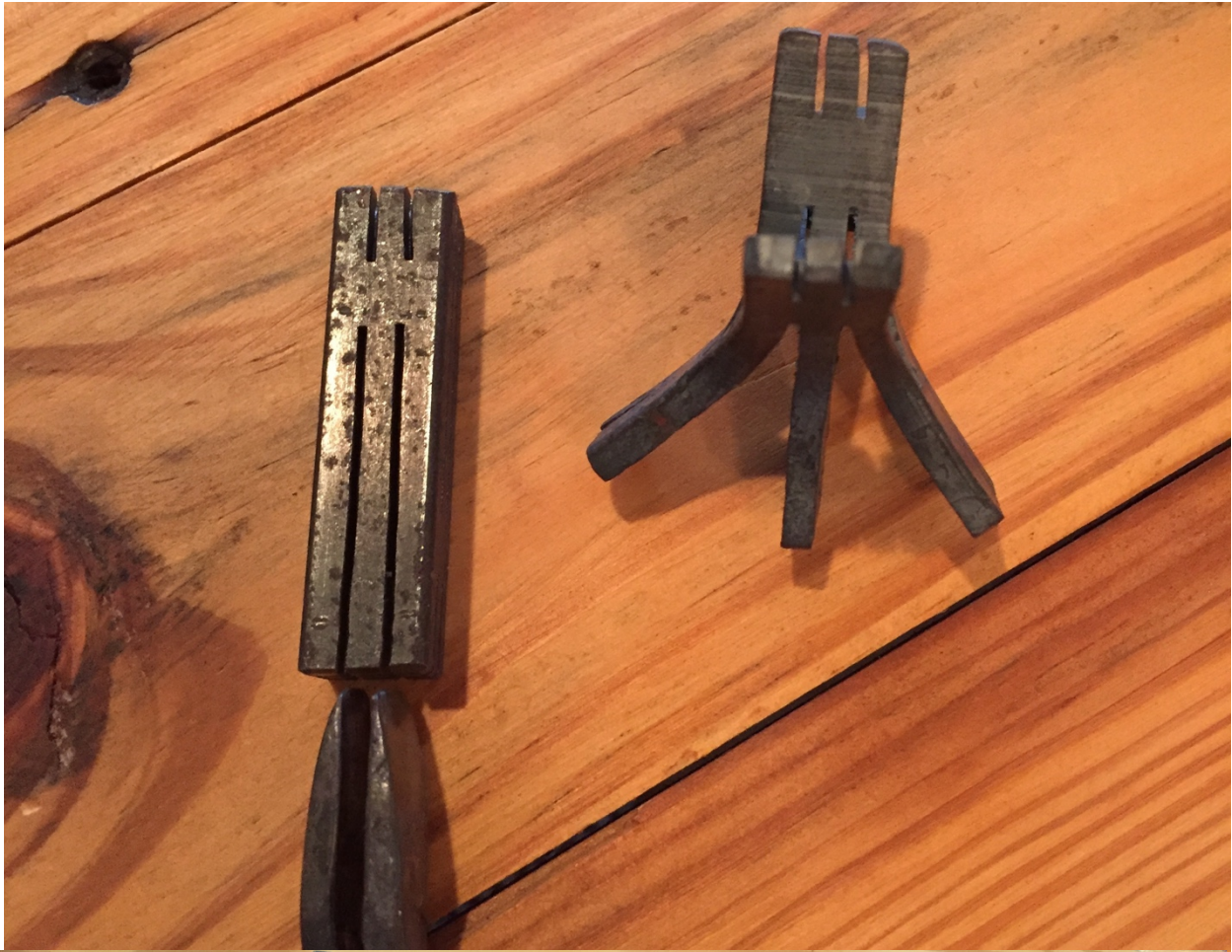
The snowflake on John's sight was made out of $\frac{3}{4}$ " square bar. I made one and thought that I'd like to try some smaller ones too, so also used $\frac{5}{8}$ " and $\frac{3}{8}$ " square. I also enjoy decorating my ironwork, so I used small punches, chisels and fullers to spiff them up. The snowflake is made using eight cuts, as opposed to two for the cross. The cuts are made from opposite ends on two sides, like they are for the cross, but the snowflake opens up three-dimensionally.

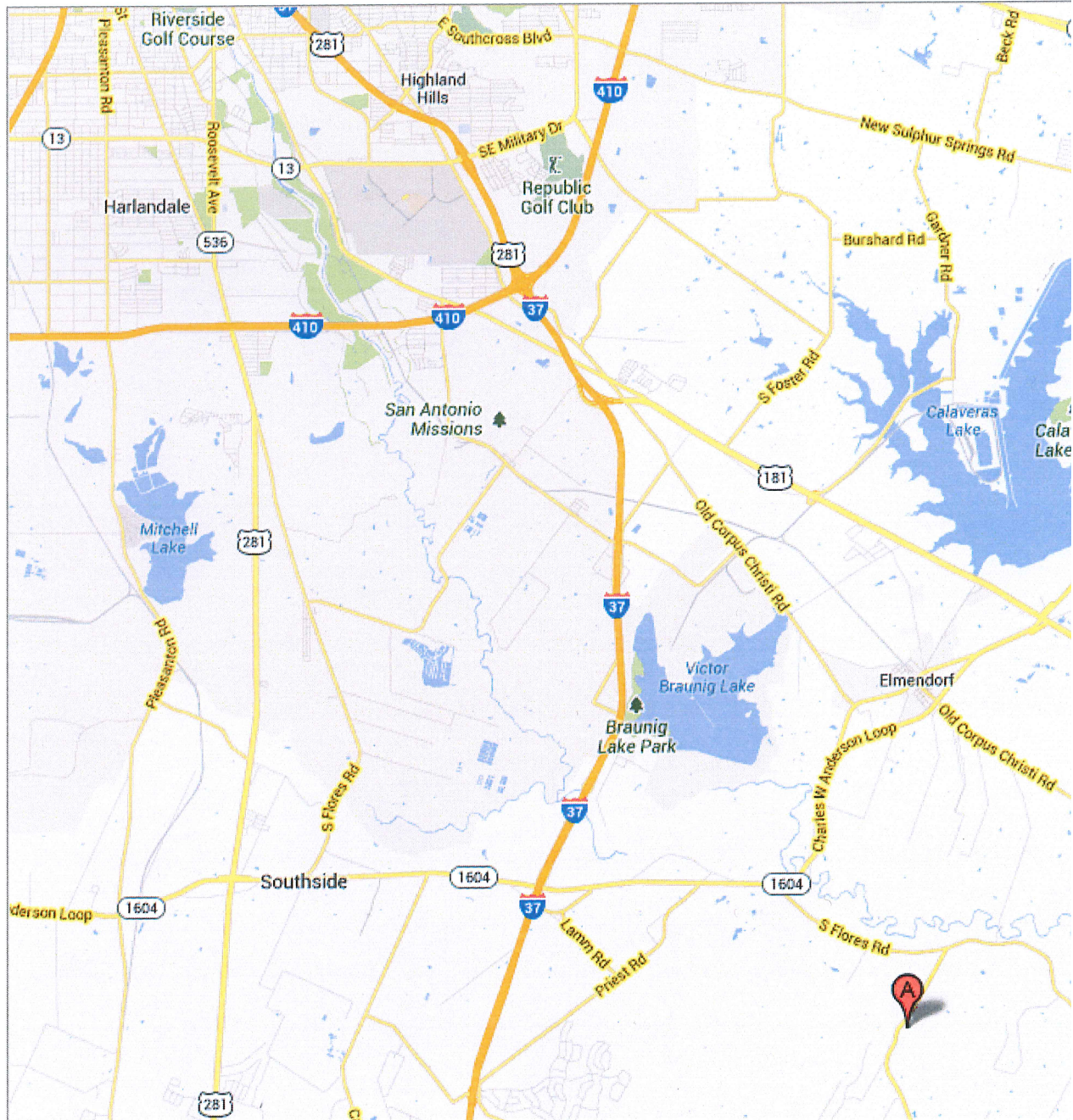
Here are the measurements I used for each size:

<u>Bar Stock Size</u>	<u>Stock Length</u>	<u>Long Cuts</u>	<u>Short cuts</u>
3/4"	3"	1-3/4"	5/8"
5/8"	2"	1-3/8"	5/16"
3/8"	1-1/2"	7/8"	5/16"

For those who would like to see a video, John Bennett has a You Tube video of the process (Forging a 3D Snowflake). I made special tongs to make opening the sections easier without pressing opposing sections together and for pulling over the decorative ends. Instead of a chisel, I made tongs with very thin chisel like jaws that were straight on the inside but slightly curved on the outside so I could insert them into the cuts, tap down and the curve would push the outside sections outward without moving the center section. With the spread started, I was able to grab them with small tongs to open them the rest of the way.







James Helm
7458 FM 2579 Unit B
Floresville, TX 78114

Coming south from San Antonio on I-37, you exit on 1604 and head east, toward Elmendorf. After 3 miles, turn right onto FM 1303 and drive 2 1/2 miles. There will be a white convenience store on the left and a bar called The Outhouse on the right where FM 2579 intersects with 1303. Turn right onto 2579, and drive one mile. The entrance will be the first one on the left, and the shop is the tin building on the left.

**LEARN HOW TO MAKE YOUR
LITTLE GIANT POWER HAMMER
WORK HARDER THAN EVER!**

Please join us March 10-11, 2017 for our annual Little Giant Rebuilding Seminar!

This class was first taught by our good friend Fred Caylor of Zionsville, Indiana. We carry on his tradition of teaching how to make Little Giants run well and hit hard.

This 2 day class is a hands-on format. You will help transform a 25 LB Little Giant hammer from functional but sloppy condition into a well tuned, quiet, hard working hammer. Sid Suedmeier, owner of Little Giant, will share all his knowledge and experience gained from working with Fred and from 25 years of repairing and rebuilding Little Giants.

An old style 25 LB Little Giant will be rebuilt during the class, and a new style machine will be on hand to demonstrate proper assembly and adjustment of both styles.

The class is held in our shop in historical Nebraska City, Nebraska. The city has a wide variety of cafes, outlets (including Pendleton Woolen Mills), antique and gift shops, orchards, wineries and museums.

No experience is required to attend this class. Past students have ranged from age 15 to 90, and from all walks of life. Anyone who wants to learn will benefit from this class. We approach the rebuilding process using tools that can be found in the average home workshop.

If you are in the market to buy a power hammer, this class will make you an educated shopper. If you already own a Little Giant, or any other brand of power hammer, this class will teach you how to get the best performance possible.

The class costs \$95, refundable up to 7 days prior to the class; advance registration is required. We limit the class to 25 participants. The class starts at 9 AM sharp on Friday, and usually ends by Saturday evening. We will be available on Sunday until noon in case we encounter any exceptional problems in rebuilding, and to answer remaining questions.

When we receive your registration, we will send you a city map, along with travel and hotel information.

Airports are located in Omaha (45 miles north), Lincoln (50 miles west) and Kansas City (125 miles south).

2017 REGISTRATION

Name: _____
Business name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone: _____
Email address: _____

PAYMENT

- Check enclosed
- Visa
- MasterCard
- Discover
- American Express
- Number: _____
- Expiration Date: _____
- 3 or 4 Digit Code on Back: _____

POWER HAMMER INFO

Brand: _____
Size: _____
Serial Number: _____

Please call or email if you have any questions, or prefer to register by phone. You can reach us at 402.873.6605 or Sidsshop@roindstream.net.

Little Giant is located at 420 4th Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410.

W W W • B A L C O N E S L O R G

**IF YOU HAVE A LITTLE GIANT, THIS
CLASS IS FOR YOU!**

DO YOU WANT TO TEACH?

Texas Southmost College is seeking a Black-smithing Educator/demonstrator to lead a Black-smithing workshop. Texas Southmost College is a community college located in Brownsville, Texas. Brownsville currently ranks number two within the state of Texas in terms of the number of Historic buildings in the city. Brownsville, and the Rio Grande Valley in general, is proud of its rich historical heritage, however there is a shortage of skilled labor professional who can perform restoration work or renovation of historic buildings. Therefore, Texas Southmost College Architecture Program in partnership with City of Brownsville and the Brownsville Preservation Society is developing a new certificate in Historic preservation and restoration.

The Historic Building Preservation & Restoration Certificate program hopes to offer hands-on training in construction with emphasis on the preservation and restoration of historic buildings. The hands-on workshops and courses are designed to develop comprehensive skill sets that are primarily occupational, providing opportunities for individuals seeking a career in the field of historic preservation. Topics include field techniques and documentation; traditional carpentry and masonry techniques; and metal-smithing.

The plan is to offer this certificate as a Continuing Education/Workforce Training. The program will be offered in partnership between TSC Architecture Program and Institutional Advancement & Workforce Training.

We are actively seeking qualified individuals who may be interested in teaching the following course here at TSC in Brownsville.

Metal-smithing (96 contact hours)

Course Description:

Basic skill development in hand-forging steel, forge welding, scroll-forming, shaping, and joinery utilizing hammers, anvils, and coal and gas forges. Emphasis on techniques and processes to demonstrate versatility and skill.

Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the uses of coal and gas forges.
- Discuss various hot working techniques.
- Demonstrate safety procedures; demonstrate the basic principles of shaping metal with hammers and anvils.
- Identify the design benefits of forge welding and traditional joinery.

If interested contact:

Christopher R. Collins <Christopher.Collins@tsc.edu>



ABANA

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

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.
 259 Muddy Fork Road
 Jonesborough, Tennessee 37659

Phone: [423-913-1022](tel:423-913-1022), Fax: [423-913-1023](tel:423-913-1023)
centraloffice@abana.org

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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