



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

January 2021



We're still here!

We haven't gone anywhere; we were just hunkered down at home waiting for the storm to pass and while we were waiting, we moved right on in to the "too hot to hammer" season. Have patience; hopefully we will all

be able to get together again soon.

Maybe not a silver lining but this is a great time to work on your own smithy's and shops or add to your too collections. Just a few updates: my barn/shop is nearing completion as well Joe Travieso's shop near Pipe Creek. Aaron Tilton is about finished rebuilding his shop after a devastating fire and Tim Tellander has been busy upgrading his shop. John Meyer has also been finishing out and enlarging his forging area. Rudy Billings has built his new home at the ranch in Dime Box and is about ready to move in. Jerry Whitley has added an outdoor kitchen to his place in preparation for upcoming meetings. Rick Dawdy has also added to his forging area and is waiting for good weather to start hammering. All very exciting!

As for tools, with a lot of folks out of work and home for a while there is an increase in yard and estate sales as well as many businesses shutting down. We all feel bad for these people but a sale better than the prices you get at the scrap yard. Don't forget about our Balcones Buy/Sell page on the web site just be sure to update when your item is sold. You might want to keep an eye on the Balcones forge Facebook page as well. It has a rather large following and is a wonderful place to post some pics your best work.

The Iron and Wood Festival at Blackhawk Millworks in Zorn is tentatively scheduled for the last weekend in April of 2021. We still need lots of items for the auction and now is the perfect time to work on your projects.

Next Meeting Date is ????



Officers

President

Jerry Achterberg
treefarm@swbell.net
210/661-3293

Vice-President

Jerry Whitley
jerry.whitley@ymail.com
210/288-3961

Treasurer

Rudy Billings
rudy@balconesforge.org
512-461-7375

Secretary



Editor

Vince Herod
spotteddogforge@yahoo.com
512/799-3636

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Tim Tellander has retired from the Balcones secretary position and needs to be replaced as soon as possible. Tim, thank you so much for your wonderful contributions to the BFD and we will miss them dearly. Tim will remain on the Balcones board and will continue to help manage our group.

Balcones Forge call for help. We are looking for a few good hardworking people to help with the monthly activities like preparing meetings sites and materials for meetings and cleaning up after the events as well as taking over some the board vacancies. Some of our folks have just become too busy or just too damn old to carry on and need a well-deserved break. If you would like to help please give me a call at 210-842-3049 or email me at treefarm@swbell.net or contact one of the other board members.

I sincerely hope that all of you are doing well and wish you the best in this troubled time. Keep the faith and help those in need.

Jerry Achterberg – Pres. Balcones Forge



HOW ARE YOU SPENDING YOUR TIME?

I don't know about you, but between the heat and quarantine, I've not been forging much. We've missed several meetings, get togethers, and our big event in April – the Blackhawk Iron and Metal Fest. However, we are looking forward to the time when we can socialize again and especially the Blackhawk Iron and Metal Fest scheduled for April 2021. Mark your calendars now!

What do you do to fill in the gap? Read any good books lately? There are a lot out there. Mark Aspery has several. Lorelei Sims has a good one. There's a lot of good videos on YouTube whether you are a beginner or an old hand. I bet you can find one from easy to quite challenging. Why not learn a new trick? With a quick search you can find instructional videos by Bill Epps. Did you know Black Bear Forge has several interesting and challenging ones? Or, maybe you're building a new shop, an outdoor kitchen, or even write an article for the newsletter.

Aaron Tilton

Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America
259 Muddy Fork Road
Jonesborough, TN 37659 USA
January 2021

Greetings from the Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America —

ABANA New Executive Director

The Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America, Inc. has named Janie Grela as its first Executive Director. This year, ABANA established its headquarters in the train station in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. As Executive Director, Janie will develop a museum space, library and archive at the historic train station. Janie will be responsible for leading the non-profit organization in adherence to the strategic plan set forth by the Executive Board. Her experience in non-profit management and strategic planning will help further the vision of the organization through initiatives that support the development of ABANA and the community.

'Iron to Art' Festival in Johnstown Rescheduled

The clinker in our firepot, COVID, has struck again. ABANA is rescheduling the April 2021 'Iron to Art' Festival to October 2021. A lot of work has been done for this celebration at our new headquarters, but we must do everything we can to keep our brothers and sisters safe. All of us at ABANA are disappointed but look for more information about the Festival as we move through the year.

#150mm Challenge Exhibition is in the United States

For the next three months the #150mm Challenge Exhibition will be at the Appalachian Centre for Craft in Smithville, Tennessee. The exhibition displays a curated collection of 150 metal objects, selected from over 400 pieces created by amateur and professional blacksmiths from around the world. The displayed items are made from a single piece of iron measuring 150mm x 20mm x 20mm (5.9 x 0.79 x 0.79 inches) with nothing else added. This is your chance to see an amazing display of work from around the world as the Exhibition moves around the United States. Click on the link for more details. <https://abana.org/donation-to-the-150mm-challenge-exhibition/>

ABANA'S Education Committee announces the National Curriculum

We have some exciting news from the Education Committee; ABANA has fully adopted the National Curriculum (NC), based on the curriculum of the CBA (California Blacksmith Association). As our core mission is to perpetuate the noble art of blacksmithing, we recognize it's incumbent as a national blacksmithing organization, to share a successful and practical working curriculum with members, affiliates, and the blacksmithing world at large.

What is the National Curriculum? The NC is a departure point for those that seek a structured program of study that can be used at schools, conferences, meetings, and individual shops through one on one,

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small groups and self-guided study. We present the curriculum as one way to learn blacksmithing, but certainly not the only way. From this set of goals, lessons, and benchmarks, smiths at any skill level can pick this up and continue their education. The curriculum provides the framework for the student to progress through increasingly challenging projects that focus on the skills expected of a journeyman smith, culminating with the Level III Grille.

<https://abana.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1018597368285578>

<https://www.instagram.com/abana.blacksmith/>

abanagroupnews@gmail.com

Sincerely,
Jerry Boyd
ABANA Affiliates Committee Chair
325-207-8253

EDITOR'S SOAPBOX

It is a new year and the return of the Balcones Forge Dispatch or more simply, the BFD.

In July ABANA started Affiliate newsletters and those are included in this month's edition.

Let me know what you have been up to during these strange times. Maybe write an article; all ways include pictures when you can.

Board Member elections have been postponed until we can safely meet in person. Anyone interested is stepping up?

Check out the info on the conference later this month.

More soon!

Call for Art: 'Iron to Art' Festival

In April of 2021, ABANA will host 'Iron to Art' Festival at our new headquarters in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. ABANA would like to invite the Affiliates, clubs and associated organizations to consider a project to be displayed at the Festival. There are a few areas in the new headquarters that will be a perfect place to show off your work as well as being a part of the historical mystique of our new building, which is the old train station.

Check out the new Trailer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGce0bnMN-Y> For 48 years, ABANA has not had a place to call its home. In 2020, the Board of Directors voted to give ABANA a permanent home in Johnstown, PA. Johnstown has a rich historical presence in the Steel and Iron industry. It only made sense that ABANA's first permanent home be in the historical steel town known as Johnstown. In 2021, ABANA will host an inaugural event welcoming the ABANA Membership to Johnstown. We have lots in store for the event.

Social Media Postings

Facebook has proven to be a great way to share responsible information and ABANA would like to share our Facebook postings on your Facebook page. Please accept a request from 'Blacksmith Helper' to join your group. John Dittmeier is doing a great job with the ABANA page and is posting the most recent news from ABANA on our Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/Artist-Blacksmiths>

Anything that impairs us in the shop is a possible hazard. Maybe completing that last project for Saint Nick or making the deadline to get every promised order in the mail has us stressed. Take a deep breath and stay focused on staying safe while we get our work done.

Sincerely,
Jerry Boyd
ABANA Affiliates Committee Chair
325-207-8253

Don't let 2020 get you down, lets start of 2021 with a great Blacksmithing Festival

For 48 years, ABANA has not had a place to call its home. In 2020, the Board of Directors voted to give ABANA a permanent home in Johnstown, PA. Johnstown has a rich historical presence in the Steel and Iron industry. It only made sense that ABANA's first permanent home be in the historical steel town known as Johnstown. In 2021, ABANA will host this inaugural Festival to welcome the ABANA membership to Johnstown. We have lots in store for the Festival.

Date of event: April 22nd -24th 2021

Location:
Peoples Natural Gas Park
90 Johns Street
Johnstown, PA

October 2020

Blacksmith's Pub ep. #86 - Interview with ABANA President Leigh Morrell
Hear first-hand about ABANA's new home base, metal gallery, fresh educational opportunities, and more!

Jesse and Rick of the Blacksmith's Pub interview Leigh Morrell in this conversational and informative 45-minute podcast (Episode 86, originally recorded on Oct. 20, 2020). You can learn where ABANA is headed and of the new energy being infused into the organization. Link to it here: https://theblacksmithspub.com/tbp_ep86

Education

"Since its founding in 1973, ABANA has been committed to the education of its members."
ABANA can provide financial assistance to our brothers and sisters for education. If an Affiliate is planning an educational event and needs help with funding take a look at the Loans and Grants program. https://abana.org/wp-content/uploads/affiliate-resources/aff_grant.pdf"The purpose of the ABANA Affiliate Loans & Grants Program is to provide financial support to ABANA Affiliates sponsoring visiting artists for educational purposes such as conferences or workshops."

Call for Art: 'Iron to Art' Festival

Plans are being made. In April of 2021, ABANA will host 'Iron to Art' Festival at our new headquarters in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. ABANA would like to invite the Affiliates, clubs and associated organizations to consider a project to be displayed at the Festival. There are a few areas in the new headquarters that will be a perfect place to show off your work as well as being a part of the historical mystique of our new building, which is the old train station. Get the recognition your members have earned. More info to come but be thinking about what your group would like to do.

We always want to keep safety at the top of the list but today I kind of drew a blank, so I found this on the ABANA website <https://abana.org/> concerning PPE. "Use a respirator when grinding. Use a respirator when using chemicals." We also know that there is not just one respirator to do all jobs. Know what you are working with and make sure you are using the correct respirator.

September 2020

Greetings from the Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America —

Although there are still a few hot days ahead for some of us, Fall is on its way. Working in a cooler shop certainly will be more productive and enjoyable. I encourage you to keep an eye on the current issue of the Anvil's Ring magazine. Pages 30 and 31 highlight some of the outstanding work done by our brothers and sisters of three different Affiliates worldwide. If your group has been working on a special project, please consider sending pictures and comments to the editors of the Anvil's Ring at ringareditor@abana.org or the Hammer's Blow at hbeditor@abana.org. You deserve to be seen.

Call for Art: 'Iron to Art' Festival

Get ready to display your group's work! In April of 2021, ABANA is planning the 'Iron to Art' Festival at our new headquarters in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. ABANA would like to invite the Affiliates, clubs and associated organizations to consider a project to be displayed at the Festival and beyond. There are a few areas in the new headquarters that will be a perfect place to show off your work as well as being a part of the historical mystique of our new building, which is the old train station. Get the recognition your members have earned. More info to come but be thinking about what your group would like to do.

Website Help:

A professional website is a powerful tool in promoting a blacksmith group, or business. Frank Van Pelt at our Central Office has graciously offered his help to the ABANA Affiliates and members in getting your page just right. <http://helpinghands.abana.org/> Contact Frank at 423-913-1022 or frankvanpelt@abana.org

Updating Contact Information

As time marches on and the Affiliates change leadership, please remember to update your contact information with the central office. (423) 913-1022 ABANA Central Office

We are always looking for a "one sentence" solution to every problem, unfortunately when it comes to safety seldom does one sentence cover everything. I found this on the ABANA website. <https://abana.org/> What a great statement. "If it looks unsafe, it probably is. Don't do it."

Sincerely,

<https://abana.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1018597368285578>

<https://www.instagram.com/abana.blacksmith/>

abanagroupnews@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Jerry Boyd

ABANA Affiliates Committee Chair

325-207-8253

August 2020

Greetings from the Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America —

I'm hoping all is well and you are able to get work done as we enter the difficult days, for a blacksmith, in an already hot shop. I apologize for getting the newsletter out so late in the month, but it has been quiet an ordeal with the email provider. Thanks to the Central Office for helping with this.

Anvil's Ring, Hammer's Blow Ask for Topics:

Perhaps your club, organization or even an individual member is doing something special in your community to promote our craft as blacksmiths, ABANA would like to highlight it in one of our quarterly publications. If you have something of interest please contact Anvil's Ring editor Mark Kochan areditor@abana.org or Hammer's Blow editor Nathan Griffith hbeditor@abana.org

Position Available: (Please share via your Facebook group/page, email and newsletter)

Executive Director of ABANA

The Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America, Inc. seeks a highly-qualified Executive Director responsible for the day-to-day operation of ABANA's permanent headquarters in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. The Executive Director will report to the ABANA Board of Directors. Responsibilities include furthering ABANA's mission by administering programs, fund raising, marketing, community outreach, strategic planning, and other new initiatives such as creating at the headquarters a gallery of forged metal art, a retail store, a library of ABANA documents, and a repository of legacy tools and blacksmith work.

Candidates interested in this position are invited to provide a 200-word statement that sets out their vision for ABANA's mission, growth and accomplishment. Please transmit this statement along with salary requirements in a one-page letter of intent to president@abana.org. Qualified candidates will receive the full position description and an invitation to formally apply.

ABANA does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin. ABANA will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants and employees are treated fairly and without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin.

Controlling Our Heat:

Everyone knows the difficulties of working in the August heat, the need to stay hydrated and cooling off when we get too hot is paramount. Don't forget to manage the extreme temperatures we deal with every day and be vigilant protecting ourselves and property from a disastrous fire. I would encourage you to keep a properly operating and inspected fire extinguisher in the work area. A small expense could save a huge loss. Even though we comfortably negotiate the task of a blacksmith, we work in a dangerous environment, please be careful.

Please use any information from this newsletter in your club publications.

July 2020

I'm Jerry Boyd, a relatively new ABANA board member. As chair of the Affiliates Committee, I'd like to build a stronger relationship with affiliates.

To that end, I'll communicate regularly with you via e-mail to keep you posted on the latest goings-on. Feel free to include these updates in your affiliate newsletters or forward the e-mails directly to your members. And please reach out to me with any questions — my contact information is below.

Mini-Grants available:

Is your affiliate aware of the Mini-Grant Demonstration Program? As the country gradually opens up and we begin to meet again, a Mini-Grant might help offset expenses of setting up a demonstration for education of the general public. Check it out here: <https://abana.org/affiliate-mini-grants/>

Voting for ABANA board:

Voting is now open for ABANA Board of directors. The candidates are Pete Engelbert, Stuart Shirley, Annie Arthur, Josh Reynolds, Chris Rowan, Patrick Mullane, Linda Tanner, and Leigh Morrell. There are five open positions for three-year terms. Please get your vote in before the end of July. ABANA members may read the candidate profiles and sign-in to cast their vote here: <https://abana.org/abana-elections-2020/#myaccount>

Keep in Touch:

We respectfully request when an Affiliate changes leadership, please send contact updates to JoAnn Bentley at the ABANA Central Office so that we can maintain uninterrupted communication with each other. Phone: 423-913-1022 Email: ABANA Central Office

As we tiptoe back into normalcy from a most unusual year, we at ABANA hope you are well and that your affiliate is adjusting to the new circumstances.

As a quick reminder from a new hearing aid wearer, when working in the shop, wear hearing protection when appropriate. I was missing hearing my grandkid's voice clearly until I got hearing aids. If I had been diligent with hearing protection, perhaps I would not need hearing aids now.

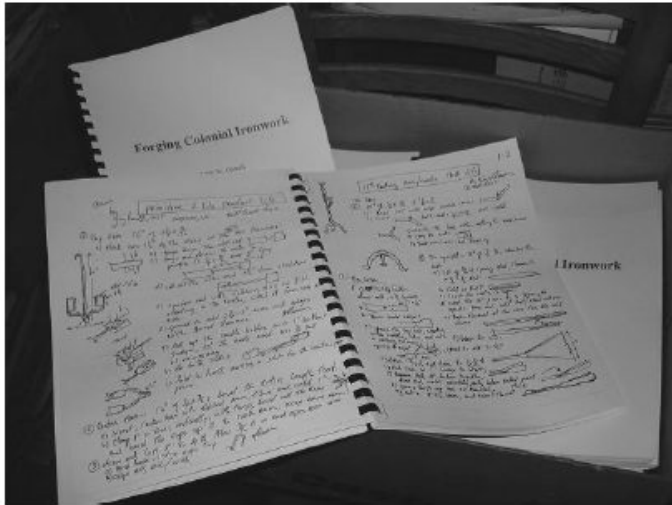
Sincerely,

Jerry Boyd
ABANA Affiliates Committee chair
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<https://abana.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1018597368285578>
<https://www.instagram.com/abana.blacksmith/>

Forging Colonial Ironwork

Master blacksmith Jerry Darnell's book *Forging Colonial Ironwork* is a compilation of over 22 years of teaching notes at the John C. Campbell Folk School and various conferences throughout the US. It has about 120 pages both sides, divided into 4 chapters Colonial Lighting, 18th Century Hearth Equipment, Early American Hardware and Hooks and Hangers. There is a mix of projects from simple to advanced.



Forging Colonial Ironwork II

This book is the same format as the first and third books but has 65 completely new projects!



Master blacksmith Jerry Darnell has completed his third book!

Forging Colonial Ironwork III

It is in the same format as Book I and Book II, with some very challenging and unique projects.

Contact Information:

Jerry Darnell
Mill Creek Forge
4512 Busbee Road
Seagrove, NC 27341

Email: forge_on@rtmc.net

Website: www.millcreekforge.com

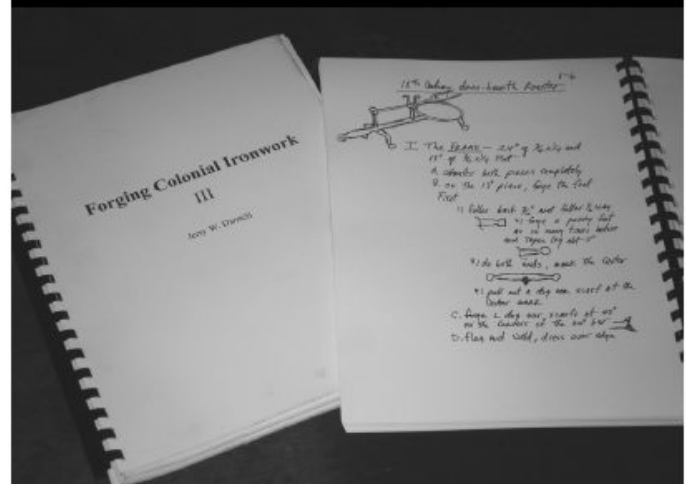
Phone

(910) 464-3888 (Shop) (910) 464-2636 (House)

Mail a check or call to order by Visa/MC

These three books are all the same price

\$20. plus 6.75% tax
and \$10.00 for shipping and handling.



The Texas Blacksmithing Conference 2021

Coming up on January 30th in Lagrange, Texas at the Texas Czech Heritage and cultural center. This one day event will include morning and afternoon blacksmithing demonstrations, vendors selling tools, blacksmithing supplies, and other forged work. Also included will be an iron smelt put on by members of Louisiana Metalsmiths. Alongside the blacksmithing event will be the Texas Gas Engine Reunion. The day before this event, on Friday, we will be offering a hammer making class, where each student will leave with a finished 2.5lb classic rounding hammer and the knowledge to make them. On-site camping and RV spots available for overnight stay. This will be an event you don't want to miss!!

Check out all the info on Facebook!

TEXAS BLACKSMITHING CONFERENCE 2021

Hosted with The Hume L. Baker
Texas Antique Gas Engine Reunion

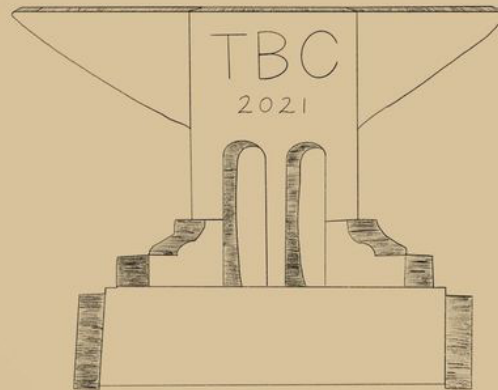
Texas Czech Heritage & Cultural Center

250 West Fair Grounds Rd., La Grange, TX 78945

8 am - 5 pm • Saturday, January 30th, 2021

Proceeds benefit the TCHCC Blacksmith Shop Project

- Demonstrations
- Iron Smelt
- Vendors
- Food & Drinks
- Engine Show
- Onsite camping
- Auction



Hammer Making Class

Friday, January 29th

\$175 per spot

Find us on Facebook @ "The
Texas Blacksmithing
Conference"
and Instagram
@texasblacksmithingconference

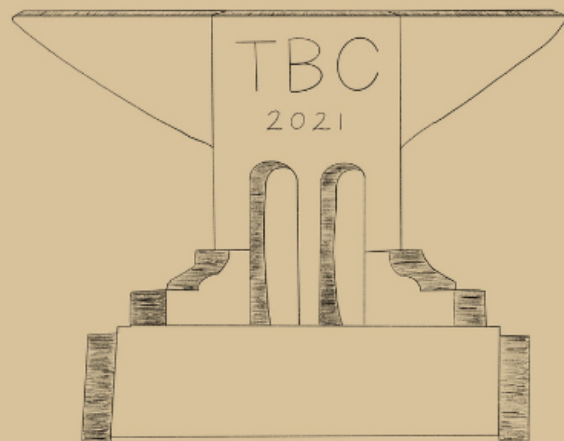


On Friday 1/29, there will be a hammer making class taught by Mark Ling assisted by Ethan Harty, Andrew Larson, Russell Feller and Josh Rachita. These young smiths have over 25 years of smithing between them. The class is \$175 and we ask for a \$50 down payment to secure your spot. By the end of the day you will leave with a "Brazeal Style" rounding hammer that you and a striker made. This class is considered an intermediate class. Participants should have a good grasp on the basic concepts of forging. Lunch is also included. Space is limited so sign up early. Use this address to sign up: <https://forms.gle/kxQtQnHm2QbHah8a6>

HAMMER MAKING CLASS

TAUGHT BY MARK LING
ASSISTED BY ETHAN HARTY
AND ANDREW LARSON

THE CLASS COSTS \$175 AND YOU
WILL LEAVE WITH YOUR OWN 2.5 LBS
HAMMER THAT YOU FORGED
YOURSELF!



FRIDAY JANUARY 29, 2021
250 WEST FAIR GROUNDS RD, LA GRANGE TX

SIGN UP IN THE LINK BELOW:
[HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/KXQTQNHM2QBHAH8A6](https://forms.gle/kxQtQnHm2QbHah8a6)

Lud's Scrolling Jig Holder-from a Pipe Threader

Write up by Steven Spoerre, a MABA member

If you have a small shop or limited “swing” area around your vise, mount your scrolling jig into a modified ratcheting pipe threader. When this combination is clamped into the vise, long pieces of stock can be wrapped around the scrolling jig while standing in one place. Lud Lazarowicz showed this set-up at a Mankel Blacksmith Shop open house years ago.

Replace the thread cutters with spacer blocks that let you drop the scrolling jig into place like a bottom tool falls into the anvil's hardie hole.

Clamp the pipe threader handle in the vise and initially set the toggle so the jig will ratchet away from you.

Now, while you stand in a one place, hold the end of the stock at the starting point on the jig, pull the stock towards you until you reach the shops/areas “swing” limit, then ratchet the jig away from you and form the stock around another portion of the jig. At some point the ratchet toggle will need to be flipped to keep the stock pull direction the same – repeat until the scroll is finished.

The scrolling jig pictured was originally made to clamp in the vise jaws, so it orbits the pipe threader as it's moved for better stock alignment. Ideally the scrolling jig tail should be bent under the scroll, then bent down 90 degrees so the jig would be centered over the ratcheting head.

Reprinted from The Upsetter, Newsletter of the Michigan Artist Blacksmith Association

