



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

July 2012



Greetings!

Please note the 9am start time for the July meeting at the Boerne Agriculture Museum. Joe Traviseo and David Walden are going to crank up the gas forges a little early in hopes of finishing a knife billet before the noon day sun heats up the shop. We need

two or three more forges and anvils so that everybody can get in the fire. There will be open forging!

Competition trade item for July: An adjustable cooking trammel. This includes the "sawtooth" trammel. Another early American kitchen and camping item. Lots of styles to choose from. Competition means that there is a prize for the best and you get to take your own back home.

Show-n-tell: Since this is another knife making demo, bring us a knife or two that you have made and tell us about it.

Jerry Whitley hit a home run with our June meeting at Johnny Stout's. It was standing room only and then a few more folks showed up! I think we signed up eight new members. As usual, Johnny put on a great demo and made high end knife making look easy. Be sure to check his web site for more info on Johnny's knife making seminars: www.stoutknives.com

Also note: NO MEETING IN AUGUST! It's too hot and too dry. September will take us back to Conservation Plaza in New Braunfels at the old Stahl Blacksmith shop. Trade item will be: A fork. See ya'll in Boerne.

Jerry Achterberg
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Meeting Date is July 28.....9AM



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CONE MANDRELS

Our friends in Southern Oklahoma, The Salt Fork Craftsmen, have just recieved an order of 57 of their cone mandrels. Please check their website and let your editor know if you are interested in a purchase. If we get enough to do a bulk order, perhaps we can get someone to drive up and save us a bunch of \$\$\$ on shipping.

EDITOR'S SOAPBOX

Have you noticed that we still do not have a Secretary for our group? You might ask yourself "why is that"? Instead you should be asking, "why don't I step up and take on some of the responsibility"?

Balcones Forge is an organization the exists and relies on the strength of its membership. Ain't nobody making any money on all this work. There is a handful of folks that have, year after year, put in the bulk of the effort to keep this group going. Well I can tell you that some of us are getting tired!!!!

Elections for the Board of Directors will be coming up this fall. I ask that all our members seriously consider what they want to see out of the group. Do you want any change or do you like what you see? Do you expect things to keep going all by itself?

If more folks come forward to do just a little bit, then it all gets done so much better. Send an article. Send a picture. Send an idea. PARTICIPATE.

By the way, the bulk of the Secretary gig is going to meetings and writing up an article for the newsletter. Sounds like fun.....

OVER DUE

The following is a list of members and past members that have overdue books, videos or other materials taken from the Balcones Forge Library. If you find yourself or a friend on this list please check and email Jim Elliott as to whether you/they have the library item or not.

Craig Carpenter
Gerald Pollard
James Honig
Jose Llamas
Dennis Clark
Jerry Atcherberg
Aaron Tilton
Alan Lee
George Graham
Smokey Thompson
racca/bastas?????
Shannon Bower
Kathryn Kawazoe
Micheal J Harth
Guy Robinson
Mark Gelatt
Wayne Kirkpatrick
John Hawkins
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Please note new email address is:

oldjimelliott@gmail.com

The Balconers Forge Library is worth thousands of dollars and is a benefit of membership. Please return your over due materials NOW!

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DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE NOTHING TO DO

By Alan Lee

There are opportunities year round in our little region of the world. Let's call it the Oklahoma, Louisiana, Texas region. OkLaTex for short. Hopefully, everyone can take advantage of this year's national conference in Rapid City, South Dakota. Go if you can. Each one is unique and can be transformative. If not, don't forget about our regional chapters that hold conferences and events throughout the year. Here is the list as it stands today.

The most ambitious of these this year has to be the North Texas Blacksmith conference called Hammerfest 2012. Find out more at ntxba.org. A four day conference over the Labor Day weekend—August 31-September 3—at the Collin County Adventure Camp, Anna, Texas, just north of Dallas. There are 8 Demonstrators scheduled, as well as Pieh Tools and James Johnson with his Anyang Hammers and Tailgating. A quick look at the demonstrators shows 3 armorers, 1 spur and bit maker, 1 damascus jeweler, silversmith, blacksmith, 1 high end architectural fabricator, and 2 straight up blacksmiths, including blacksmithing's Energizer Bunny, Gordon Williams. Demonstrations throughout the weekend include sand casting in bronze, basic bladesmithing, and blacksmithing. Forge welding of tools and Damascus, mokume gane, repousse, articulation, and engraving will be shown. Open forges including coal and gas forges will be available for use.

Ntxba.org promoted Ironfest from 1999-2005 and then slowed down awhile. Now they are back with a huge event that deserves to be supported by our region. Not that far from Oklahoma and just a few hours from Austin. They have made it very easy with low cost accommodations and single day fees (\$45-and that includes food). Check it out. See you there. Ntxba.org

Next in our region is ForgeFest, the Houston Area Blacksmithing Asso. Conference, October 5-7, 2012 in Oldenburg, Texas(near La Grange). This is a smart event to go to because it coincides with the biannual antique show and sale in the Warrenton, Round Top area, near by. Something for the blacksmith, and something for your significant other. This year habairon.org hit a homerun by inviting Jay Close. Jay, a long time demonstrator, spent 13 years as a smith at Colonial Williamsburg, as well being involved in Abana's controlled hand forging series. Jay will present a series of colonial hardware projects designed to reinforce "forging fundamentals" and "forging dynamics". Friday, Oct. 5, is the best opportunity for everyone to have one on one instruction from Jay Close. So bring your forge and anvil, setup, and learn from a master blacksmith. This event harkens back to Abana's early days when conferences were a social event with blacksmithing as the common bond. There will be a large contingent of tent and RV camping on site, numerous member forges setup, member selling their wares, tailgating, communal cooking, campfires, and probably music. This year there will not be a burn ban. Oldenburg is only 75 miles from Austin and HABA folks are "real" friendly. Support these guys by attending and maybe bring an auction item. Go to habairon.org or facebook.

The third weekend in October—20th & 21st---is time for the Saltfork Craftsmen Artist-Blacksmith Asso. conference in Perry, Oklahoma at the Noble County Fairgrounds. Saltfork is one of the larger and busy chapters in our region. There are more than 300 dues paying members in this Abana chapter. This club is very active and sets aside a different Saturday for up to 4 meetings per month in 4 different regions of the state. Their members support their local communities by providing black-

smithing demonstrations at more than 30 outside events and celebrations each year. WOW. That is active.

Saltfork has 2 demonstrators each year at their conference. This year will be Lucian Avery and Eric Ryser. They both demo at the same time in adjacent viewing areas. It is very easy to jump back and forth between demos. As well as a very large screen TV projection of the whole thing. Pretty cool! Lucian Avery is a Vermont based blacksmith who since 1993 has been producing early American hardware and one of a kind, functional pieces for sale. His work is stunning. He is also in high demand for his teaching skills. Eric Ryser is a serious student of the arts, having studied numerous disciplines including jewelry and blacksmithing. Since 2003 his body of work has been a three dimensional visual study in current military icons and imagery. One process in particular is the use of nitric acid to etch detailed patterns in steel. This allows him to make multiples of his designs, which is difficult in blacksmithing.

The Saltfork conference should not be missed if you've never been. There are plenty of indians and not to many chiefs. These folks have it together, great venue, great tailgating, great demos, great Saturday evening meal and auction. Even the Minnesota contingent comes down each year for this, including Nathan Robertson and his tooling. Look them up at saltforkcraftsmen.org and on Facebook.

After a 3 month lapse for the holidays, the next event will be Steephollow Forgeworks Combo-Demo, on February 16, 2013, in Bryan, Texas. This is really a dual meeting of Balcones and HABA that has become the antidote to the winter blues. Carlton, Jeff, and Alan Lee will do their best to entertain and enlighten the very groups that befriended them when they first started out. This event while having the feel of a conference, is actually a way for Steephollow Forgeworks to pay back the blacksmithing community at large for it's generosity. Did I mention it is FREE. No charge. There is a catered lunch(fed 120 last year) and an auction of donated items to defray costs. The Combo-Demo has become a place for artists and budding artists to display what they have been working on since last year, and space will be available to anyone wanting show or sell their artwork. This event is open to the public and many people from the local communities of Bryan/College Station, Tx. will be there. Tailgating is encouraged and vendors such as jewelers, broomsquires, and maybe even Anyang Hammers will be there. A friendly competition is part of the show each year and there were 32 bowls judged in 2012. The 2013 competition is a pair of spurs, so get started. The Lee boys try to improve their demo each year, but you have to be there to see it. Find out more at steephollowforgeworks.com and on Facebook.

The first early spring conference in our region, is in Lafayette, Louisiana each year. The Louisiana Metalsmiths Asso. Conference will be March 15-16,2013. Some people don't care who is demonstrating, they come for the food. The first harvest of crawfish(Saturday night boil) for the year, jambalaya and po boys for lunch, crackling and boudin for breakfast. They always have a top notch demonstrator, but as of July 7, 2012, they still have not booked one. Not to worry, they will, but if you have a suggestion, please let them know at lametalsmiths.org. or call Jerry Baker at 337-277-2820. The Minnesota group always comes out of hibernation for this event, which means Nathan Robertson hammers will be available. This is a friendly conference with true acadian hospitality on display. The venue site is located at Vermillionville Living History Museum and Folklife Park. The park is a picturesque representation of a village from a time period of 1765 to 1890. The park is a tribute to the Cajun/Creole heritage of the area. LAMA makes it easy to support this event. If you come to this one once, you will probably be back each year. When their demonstrator is confirmed, LAMA will notify all regional chapters.

A couple of weeks later is the annual Bluebonnet Conference in Marble Falls, Texas, on March 23-24, 2013. Balcones Forge never disappoints anyone, and this year they have a world class blacksmith named Mark Aspery, from California. Mark is one of the best teachers and instructors in the nation. His three books on basic blacksmithing are a must have for any library. His cow poop theory of blacksmithing is unique and very easy to understand. His teaching style and info is well thought out. He makes a lot of sense out of what we all try to make difficult. The ease of his hand forging will inspire everyone. His wit and humor will keep everyone glued to their seat. Check him out at markaspery.com. Additionally, he is all over You-Tube with gems of visuals. There will probably be 2-3 days of workshops related to the conference, so save your money and vacation time for a class without having to travel so far. The Bluebonnet Conference is held each year in one of the most picturesque places you could have a conference. John and Carolyn Crouchet host this event on their 450 acre ranch in the rugged hill country of central Texas. This year's event has moved back to it's normal time, when spring has sprung and the hill country is in full bloom. Tailgating and show & tell is encouraged and the auction is always a way to score a one of a kind piece. Find out more at balconesforge.org and on Facebook.

Try to support as many of these groups and conferences as you can each year. We don't do enough to support one another. These are all noteworthy events and demonstrators. Our region of the country has year round opportunities that if supported just get better every year. If you want to know, you got to go. See you there.

Editors note: Many thanks to Alan for putting all ths great info into one article.





Elizabeth Brim demonstrates (and teaches) at the Bluebonnet Demo in May

Photo by Gerald Pollard

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

YEAR 2012 (AND FINAL) BLACKSMITH CALENDAR

JULY MEETING DIRECTIONS

Directions from San Antonio: Take I-10 West to Boerne. Exit Highway 46 (towards New Braunfels) and follow Hwy 46 East to City Park Road. Turn right onto City Park Road. The Museum entrance is on the right at 102 City Park Road.

Directions from Austin: Take I-35 South towards New Braunfels. Turn onto Hwy 46 West towards Boerne. Take a left onto City Park Road. The Museum entrance is on the left just past the Kendall County Fairgrounds.

See the map on the backpage of this newsletter or check out the museum website at:

www.agmuseum.us

Remember the meeting will start early at 9am!

The 2012 calendar contains 20 images of old blacksmith activity. For a number of reasons, this calendar will be the last in the series. I'm not going to want to remain burdened for long with all the accumulated unsold material, so now would be a good time to fill in any gaps if you're interested in having the complete set while it's still available.

1-5 Year 2012 Calendars: \$17.00 each (will be \$20 on eBay due to excessive fees)

CD with over 8000 Blacksmith & Anvil images (For Windows 2000 and later, not for Macs.)

1-5 CDs: \$15.00 per CD

over 5 CDs: \$10.00 per CD

Set of 25 Blacksmith Postcards

Note: This is not a new set of postcards. Only one set of 25 postcards has been produced.

Postcards: \$6.00 per set

Year 2011 calendars are available for \$12.00 each.

Year 2001 through 2010 calendars are available for \$6.00 each.

The prices shown above include the cost of shipping to a U.S. or Canadian address. Insurance is extra if desired. If interested, please send a check or money order to:

Gill Fahrenwald, P. O. Box 2323, Olympia, WA 98507 or PayPal to anvilman@orcalink.com



Schedule for NTBA Hammerfest 2012

		<u>Friday</u>									
		Pavilion A	Pavilion B	Cafeteria	<i>Noon</i>				Lunch		
7:30					1:00						
8:00						1:30	Robert Macpherson - Articulations Demo	Gordon Williams - Blacksmithing Basics			
8:30						2:00					
9:00						2:30					
9:30						3:00					
10:00						3:30			Ugo Seranno - Repousse Basics		
10:30						4:00					
11:00						4:30	Open Forge	Open Forge			
11:30						5:00					
Noon	Arrive and Set Up				5:30			Dinner			
1:00				6:00							
1:30				6:30							
2:00				7:00							
2:30				7:30							
3:00				8:00							
3:30	Patrick Thaden - Sandcasting	Chuck Stone - Beginning Blacksmithing		8:30							
4:00						9:00					
4:30						Sunday					
5:00							Pavilion A	Pavilion B	Cafeteria		
5:30				7:30			Breakfast				
6:00				8:00							
6:30				8:30							
7:00				9:00	Robert Macpherson - Metal Forming Raising and Roping	Mark Herndon - Mokume Gane	Greg Darnall - Advanced Engraving				
7:30				9:30							
8:00				10:00							
8:30				10:30							
9:00				11:00							
				11:30							
				Noon			Lunch				
				1:00							
				1:30	Kelly Kring - Forge Welding Tools	Gordon Williams - Blacksmithing Intermediate	Ugo Seranno - Repousse on Steel				
7:30			2:00								
8:00			2:30								
8:30			3:00								
9:00	Wade Allen - Articulations Authentic Show and Tell	Mark Herndon - Damascus		3:30							
9:30						4:00					
10:00						4:30	Open Forge	Open Forge			
10:30						5:00					
11:00						5:30			Dinner		
11:30											

6:00	
6:30	
7:00	
7:30	
8:00	
8:30	
9:00	

Monday

	Pavilion A	Pavilion B	Cafeteria
7:30			Breakfast
8:00			
8:30			
9:00	Will Friary - Forging Leaves and Flowers		
9:30			
10:00			
10:30			
11:00			
11:30			
Noon	End		
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Cool iron work in downtown San Antonio

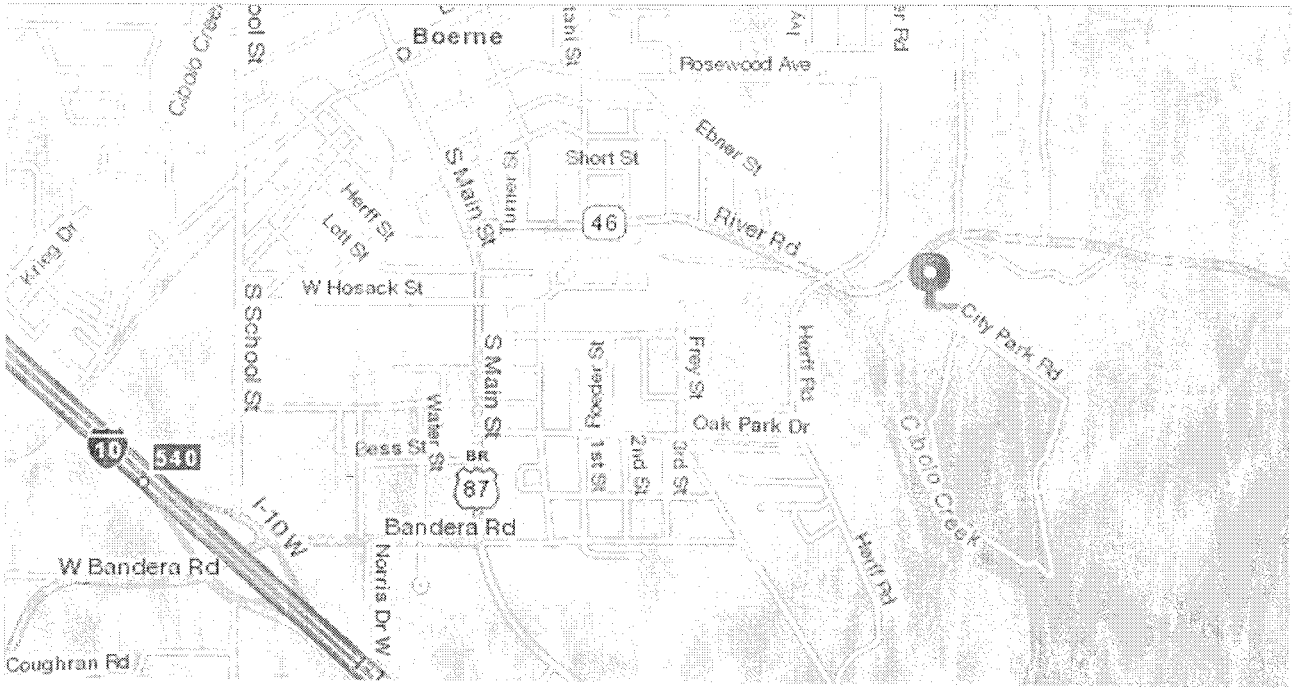


Scenes from the June Meeting
Photos by Vince Herod





WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG



Map to the Ag Museum in Boerne. Meeting starts at 9am!

Return Service Requested

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

