



Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

Jul-Aug-Sep 2019



Greetings!

We're almost there! Fall is in the air and the temperature continues to drop. It's time to crank up the forges again.

The Wendish Museum folks have invited us back to Serbin, TX once again for their fall fest. This is always a fun event with German music and wonderful German food, the antique tractor and tool people and many other cool things to do. This will be an open forge event so try and bring a forge and anvil as well as any show-n-tell items you would like to display. This will be a good chance to get in the fire and show what you know or to help one of the new folks to learn something about blacksmithing. We always get tons of visitors to come and watch and this is really a fun crowd.

The trade item will not be a trade item but make something to donate to the silent auction which helps to fund the Wendish Museum which is on site. There is also one of the Texas Painted Churches nearby that you need to see. Plan on it.

Please note: This meeting is on Sunday, September 22nd.

October will take us back to Jerry and Marsha Whitley's Rystic Forge in Devine for our 8th annual memorial meeting where we honor and remember all our fellow smiths who are no longer with us. Our special demonstrator will be Tom Lundquist of Bluebird Forge in Onalaska, TX. Tom has been blacksmithing for 44 years and puts on a good show. More info on this one next month.

President's Message continued on page 2.



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President's Message continued.

We are very excited to announce that Matt Pohorelsky has taken over the Balcones Forge library! Please let Matt know if there is a book or DVD that you would like to check out. Thank you Matt!

Balcones Forge still needs your help. Vince needs meeting photos and articles for the newsletter, Aaron needs help with the t-shirts, and we need a few members-at-large to help the board with keeping this organization running. We also need folks to host a meeting and folks to demonstrate. Please contact one of the board members if you would like to help.

Be safe and see ya'll in Serbin.

Jerry Achterberg – Pres. Balcones Forge

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UPCOMING MEETINGS

Sunday September 22, 2019
Wendish Fest in Serbin, TX
Open forging for the public

Saturday Oct 26, 2019
Rustyk Forge, Devine, TX
Tom Lundquist, Demonstrator

Nov: TBD
Dec: Tentative date is Dec 14, 2019
Jan: TBD

Saturday February 22, 2020
The Lee Brothers in Bryan, TX
10th Annual Combo Demo

SECRETARY'S REPORT FROM JUNE MEETING



The Balcones Forge June 29, 2019 meeting was hosted by Jerry & Marsha Whitley at their Rustyk Forge in Devine, Texas. The beautiful early summer day afforded the open forge event plenty of opportunity to set up under some enormous tree shaded area, as well as a tarp shelter and the blacksmiths started forging early in the day and well into the breezy afternoon. Quite a few younger kids were very interested in getting some hands-on practice as Matt Pohersky, Ric Dawdy, Jerry Achterberg, John Myer, John Thurnet, Ben Rath and others served as mentors for these eager beavers who turned out some interesting blacksmith work of which they were very proud of. To mention only the smiths as giving a helping hand, it would be unfair not to mention Joy Ream who volunteered to crank a Buffalo Blower for several hours later in the afternoon which proved too tiresome for winded blacksmiths.

Purchasing a \$10 ticket afforded more than 50 attendees a fantastically delicious BBQ sandwich with all the trimmings dished out by Marsha Whitley & Claudia Dawdy (who also brought several dozen donuts earlier that morning). Iced bottles of water & jugs of tea on tap were available all day.

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Prior to the lunch, Jerry introduced our special guests from REFORGED, a nonprofit organization committed to re-socializing combat Veterans who in combat risked their lives for each other which does not allow the eyes to unsee wars' horrific tragedies nor does it paralyze the mind from memories of combat raging within them, and further paraphrasing from the Reforged website, the vets feel very isolated when they come home. Chad & Marilyn Caylor along with other family members started a small blacksmith shop in their home garage in February 2018 under the mentorship of a Master Blacksmith.

After refining the idea of offering free knifemaking classes led by Chad to Veterans, mental health care concepts were also integrated by his wife Marilyn, a licensed professional counselor to assist clients to overcome Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Marilyn has recently completed her PhD and is also working on a certification in biofeedback. Chad is a retired MSG from the US Army and works fulltime for USAA as a Process Engineer, but their entire family and other volunteers devote their weekend teaching them how to transform a billet of steel into a beautiful knife with their own hands. In the casual environment of the forge, amongst others who shared similar experiences the Veterans naturally gravitated toward difficult to discuss topics and shared skills they use to cope. Chad noted he promoted mental health treatment for PTSD with many of the Veterans who forged a knife. The students relate their experiences to the transformation of the steel through heat and hammer blows. Students are taught how the steel may seem it cannot withstand the stress, but with dedication, work, and assistance, a piece of steel endures so much yet can become something beautiful and useful.

The iron in the hat auction conducted by Parker Allen was again, very successful and the trade items made from 6 inches of 1/2 inch barstock did nothing but elevate the emotions of participants and I was especially happy to receive a bottle opener / ice pick combination from Ben Rath. I think everyone would like to see more trade items or even show & tell pieces of iron on display. Try inviting a few guys over to your own forge and make an evening of fun out of it. It promotes as well as strengthens friendship and one can learn a thing or two about the basics and sometimes very unique tips in blacksmithing. Some of my favorite mentors are George Graham and Sue Howeter not to mention the striker combination of Aaron & Shane Tilton - just like to watch them make things look so easy. As a matter of fact, the truth is (to me) that almost anyone makes it look easy until I try it for myself but in the end I make money dealing with the recycling yards. Oh, insuring everyone that reads this ubiquitous scroll and relies on me for important updates and follow-up, I have noted discrepancies in the Meeting Sign-in sheet to wit: George Graham did not sign in and Randy Howeter signed in twice!

Tim Tellander
Balcones Forge Secretary

DEMO OPPORTUNITY

Hello we are hosting a pioneer day here in Laredo Texas and was inquiring if your group does demonstrations. Our Event is on November 16. We are also bringing the Texas Rangers re-enactment group. We would love to have a blacksmith demonstration. Please let me know what we need to do and if this is an option for your group. Thank you

Nora May
Recreation Superintendent
City of Laredo Parks And Recreation Department, Tel:(956)-729-4600



Andy Quittner & forging hammer (made by Doug Caroselli) won thru Balcones Forge raffle ticket at the Blackhawk Mills venue.

photo by Tim Tellander

2 real champions at Rustyk Forge in June. On the left is Chad Caylor of Reforged - a real champion for veterans. On the right is Alex Ruiz - a 2017 Forged in Fire Winner.

photo by Andy Quittner

<https://texaswendish.org/2019/06/12/31st-annual-wendish-fest/>

Check out this web site for great info on this month's meeting!



Trade Items from June
photos by Tim Tellander



Clever way to keep those tanks from rolling around during transport.
photo by Tim Tellander



the Goliad Brewing Company - 252 Metting Road - Goliad

October 11 & 12, 2019

sponsored by

The Goliad Forge

& the



Friday evening – October 11:

6:00 p.m. McMillan's famous Bar-B-Que buffet dinner, accordion music by Christina Valdez, demonstrations by The Goliad Forge blacksmiths, and displays by vendors

6:45 p.m. Video presentation by The Goliad Forge, introduction of sponsors, & awarding of plaques

7:30 p.m. Auction of items crafted by The Goliad Forge

After auction- accordion music, demonstrations by The Goliad Forge blacksmiths, and displays by vendors

Saturday – October 12 - beginning at 12:00 noon

- **TGF Blacksmith demonstrations and sales of crafted items throughout the afternoon**
- **Music throughout the afternoon by Christina Valdez and a country and western band**
- **Raffle Tickets on sale for The Goliad Forge Blacksmith crafted items (*Items to be raffled off throughout the afternoon*)**
- **The Goliad Brewing Company's cold beer on tap, amber ale, and root beer**
- **Kid programs**
- **Fun activities**
- **Bar-b-que**



Presented by *The Goliad Forge*



Live Music

Featuring

Christina Valdez

October Fest at Goliad Brewing Company

**Saturday October 12, 2019
12:00 - 9:00 pm**

PUMPKIN PATCH • HAY RIDES

FOOD BY MCMILLIANS BBQ

RAFFLE INCLUDING HAND FORGED ITEMS

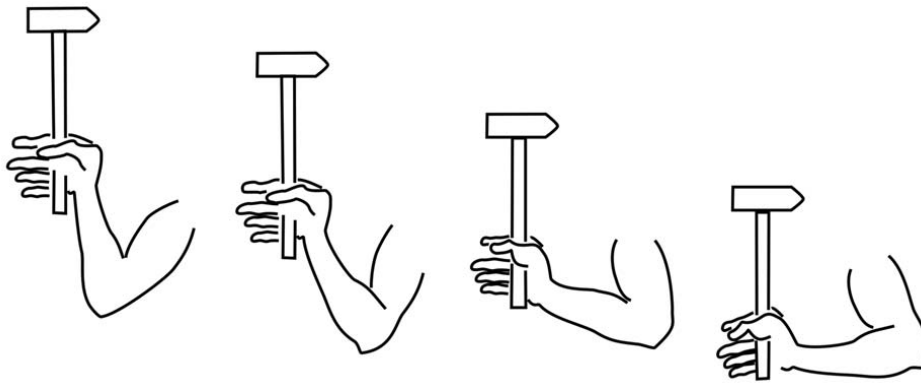
**252 METTING RD. • GOLIAD TX 77963
www.goliadbrewing.com
832-600-4031**

Hammer Control

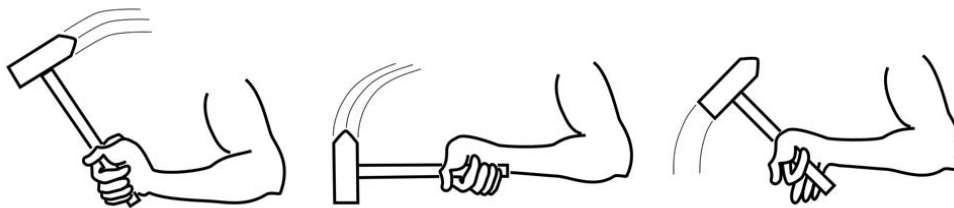
Beth Holmberg, San Diego

Learning to swing a hammer correctly will lead to faster forging and fewer injuries. With the right technique, even a light hammer can get lots of work done. Pay attention to your hammer swing until you have developed the muscle memory needed to do it automatically!

Your grip is the keystone of a good, efficient swing. It should be loose, with the thumb and forefinger doing most of the work holding the hammer handle. Through most of the swing, the hammer is held vertically.



Just before impact, briefly squeeze the hammer handle with your other fingers to accelerate the hammer onto the metal with a snap.



Relax your grip immediately, and the hammer will rebound back to near vertical on its own, ready for another lift! This squeeze-and-release snap is similar to how a drummer holds and swings a drumstick.

Why does this make sense? For most of the swing the hammer is being moved by the big muscles in your arm and shoulder. The final snap and rebound greatly increases the speed with which the hammer strikes the metal, and that exponentially increases the force of the blow. Really! Check a physics book. Impact force is proportional to velocity squared. Letting the hammer rebound means you don't have to use your dinkier hand muscles to lift the hammer. The big muscles do it.

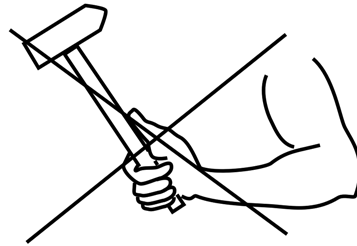
Hammer Control

To improve your accuracy, there are two things to do. The second of these is to always look at the spot you want to hit and to keep looking at it until the blow is done. This is the same as keeping your eye on the ball in sports. The first and most important thing to do is to modify the shape of your hammer handles! Most hammer handles are just too big and too long. Work to get them down to a size you can really swing with speed and a relaxed grip. Use a sander or wood rasp to make the sides of your handles flat and parallel. If you never hold the hammer at the end of the handle, then cut off a couple inches. All this will make it easier to grip the handle loosely and to control and steer the hammer.

Things to Avoid and Why

Thumb or finger on top of the handle. This prevents the hammer from rebounding fully, which in turn reduces the force of impact. Meanwhile, your finger/thumb is absorbing lots of shock with every blow, which can't be good for you!

Firm, full-hand grip. The hammer head will never have as much speed with this grip, so the impact on the metal will always be less. Constant, firm gripping is usually the cause of blacksmithing tendinitis (tennis elbow). If you don't feel like you can control your hammer without a tight grip, then it is time to reshape the handle! ♣



© Beth Holmberg 2017

Hold the hammer at the end of the handle!

A Francis Whitaker story

This is, perhaps, an apocryphal story about Francis, one which I heard many years ago at the John C. Campbell Folk School, supposedly from someone who witnessed the event.

Francis was teaching a blacksmithing class. As part of the class, he repeatedly told the students to *hold the hammer at the end of the handle*. But, there was one student who kept choking up on the handle, even as Francis got more and more agitated. Finally, Francis could stand it no longer. He grabbed the hammer from the hapless student, noting where the student had consistently held the hammer. Clamping the hammer in the vise, Francis proceeded to saw the handle off in front of the shocked student, sawing it at the point where the student held it. Francis returned the now-shortened hammer to the student, repeating:

Hold the hammer at the end of the handle!

A Call for Help!

ABANA is aware of the needs suffered by natural disasters. We wish to enable active ABANA blacksmiths to quickly resume operations of their smithing enterprises through donations from our Disaster Relief Fund. We realize the time, effort and commitment to recover lost equipment, shops and inventory can be devastating to our blacksmiths who rely on day-to-day operations to exist.

Consider Donating now - it could be you looking for help later.

The ABANA Disaster Relief Fund is designed to enable active ABANA Blacksmiths to continue operations of their smithy in times of disaster.

Please consider supporting our blacksmithing family recover from future devastating disasters.

Just go here <https://abana.org/donations/#!form/Donations>

Your donation could help a fellow smith in their darkest hour.

There is also an option on the ABANA renewal form so you can renew and contribute at the same time:

<https://abana.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Membership-form-05-07-19.pdf>



Early Registration is now open!

Register early, get a free T-shirt and save \$55.00!

ABANA 2020 Saratoga is on its way. It is THE blacksmithing get-together that you have been waiting for. We have a distinguished array of demonstrators in eight separate demo sites, a 20 forge teaching area, a youth teaching site, lectures, competitions, vendors, tailgating, family programs, members' gallery, auction and the Blacksmith's Arm Pub. There will be a Saturday night BBQ dinner, and coffee and donuts early mornings. Also there will be food available onsite all four days. Whether you are a novice, a part-time smith or a full time professional there will be something for everyone, including time to sit and share ideas, techniques, and learn from each others' experience. Even for those who are just curious about blacksmithing this is the place to see smithing at its best. You won't find a better place for all things blacksmith whether you come for just a single day or the entire four days.

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

ABANA 2020 CONFERENCE by Bob Menard

The Northeast affiliates want to welcome you to the 2020 ABANA conference near Saratoga, New York.

I know 2020 seems quite a ways off but we have a lot to talk about and only 10 months (approximately 309 days) to do it. There will be subsequent articles that will get into the specifics of the demonstrator slate. If you don't want wait then check out the ABANA 2020 Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/658025131256702/>) to see demonstrator profiles and other conference info. For now let me tell you a little about the basic structure of the event and the area.

What we have planned

The conference slogan is 360 degrees of Blacksmithing

We will be featuring eight disciplines of Smithing with at least three talented Smiths in each.

ART: with Daniel Miller, Zeevick Gotleib, & Ellen Durkan

PERIOD: with Peter Ross, Dick Sargent, & Bob Valentine

TOOLS: with Patrick Quinn, Jeffery Funk, & Eric Schatzel

KNIVES: with Matt Parkinson, Lin Rhea, & Jeff Helm

POWER: with Bruce Jarrell, Steve Parker, & Randy McDaniel

FARRIERS: with Dave Farley, Roy Bloom, Tom Willoughby

TEACHING: with Mark Aspery, Gerald Boggs, & Randy Augsburger

FARM: with Joel Tripp, Judson Yaggy, Dereck Glaser, Lucian Avery, and Med Chandler

YOUTH TEACHING AREA with Jeff Dunkleberger and team

WELDING with Rochester Arc & Flame hosting hands on MIG & TIG welding

Having a minimum of three demonstrators per venue gives us a depth of knowledge and experience that is unprecedented. Some will demonstrate solo and others will work in teams. It will be active and nimble. On the days that some demonstrators may not be found in the demo site, they may be presenting in the ongoing lecture series.

The Patient Order of Meticulous Metalsmiths featuring Tom Latane, Peter Renzetti, Carl Close, Tina Chisena, and Kevin Clancy will also be joining us.

The lecture series will be featuring such notables such as Pierre Nadeau, Howard Schechter, Doug Wilson, Bill Hochella, & members of the demonstrator staff.

Competitions will be held Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings. The nightly competitions will be arranged for novice, intermediate, and open class Smiths. Mark Aspery will be designing the scope and rules.

The conference will also be hosting the very popular youth teaching site as well as family programs for the non-blacksmiths.

The raffle will include a BAM box donated by Pat McCarty and a Big Blue power hammer.

Tickets for the raffle will be on sale before the conference.

The Iron in the Hat is pleased to announce the return of Len Ledet with his special blend of entertain-

ment and wackiness.

You can follow us on our face book page, ABANA 2020 conference. The website is abana2020.com Registration will be through a new event management company and there are links on the website and the ABANA home page. Forms will be available through the central office for those not electrically inclined. There will be daily posts during the conference accessible through your smart phone. The fairground has its own cell tower and there will be Wi-Fi available in the administrative and vendor area.

Care and Feeding of our Guests

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be available on the site supplied by food trucks and other food vendors. We are planning on a broad selection of choices for every palette. The Saturday evening banquet is being revived for this conference. A catered northeast style BBQ is included in the regular conference fee. A local microbrewery will be setting up on the fairgrounds as the Blacksmith Arms Pub. They will be serving some of their house brews through the 4 days of the event. In another first for an ABANA conference, we will be partnering with Springbrook Farm Distillery as they present our signature label bourbon, Slack tub Bourbon. Like the Blacksmith Arms Pub, Springbrook will be offering bourbon during the conference, as well as by the bottle. We are pleased to announce the offering of collector edition two-liter wooden casks with our special label, laser inscribed on them. These casks are a special order item that can only be picked up at the conference and must be reserved through the abana2020.com website. The cost is still being worked at the moment, but updated information should be available on the website soon.

The conference grounds:

The conference site is the Washington County Fairground in Greenwich, New York at 392 Old Schuylerville Rd. The conference site is a large agricultural fairground with a blend of fully enclosed buildings and concrete floors to open sided pole barns. The fairgrounds are a twenty-minute drive from Saratoga. A majority of the available lodging is in Saratoga.

There is plenty to see in the area of the conference site. There is a famous, to the Northeast at least, horse racing track in Saratoga. The Saratoga Race Track is the fourth oldest track in the US and the National Horse racing Museum is in Saratoga. The region is situated at the southern boundaries of the Adirondack Park, the largest protected area in the lower 48 states. It boasts mountains, lakes, rivers, and rolling farmland. The baseball hall of fame is in Cooperstown NY, a two hour drive west.

If you have interests concerning the Revolutionary War, you will be pleased to discover the history of the region. In late September and early October of 1777, two decisive battles were fought in Saratoga that are described as the turning point in the war. A visually stunning monument was erected in Saratoga memorizing the battles. A short distance from the fairground is the field where the British surrendered. Sixty-two miles north is Fort Ticonderoga. This is an important restored military site on the shores of southern Lake Champlain with guided tours and an exquisite formal garden. Many other historically significant site are in the immediate area.

We are able to offer something that many past conferences could not, comfortable daytime temperatures. It will be mid to upper 70s F during the day to mid 50s F overnight. The site is slightly above the 43rd parallel. At the time of the conference, the days will be approximately 15 hours 10 minutes long. With no large population centers close by the air will be sweet and clean. The nighttime sky will be

peppered with rich star fields. Even though it sounds perfect no place really is. It could rain so bring a raincoat. That time of the year is the time of the unofficial New York state birds, the mosquito and the black fly. Fortunately, these annoying little biters can be held at bay with bug spray. That is it; there is little else to annoy your stay.

If you are flying in, the closest airport is Albany International Airport. This is about a 40-minute drive to the site. If you are driving, the fairgrounds are about 10 miles off interstate 87. The conference committee is working with a few Saratoga motels on special conference pricing. We will be posting updates on the conference website. We are encouraging participants to reserve their lodging as soon as possible. There is a partial overlap of our conference with a large motorcycle convention, Americade, with an estimated 50,000 patrons. They will be mostly in the Lake George area but Saratoga is close enough to be affected.

The fairgrounds offers many useful amenities for an ABANA conference. There is extensive camping for our guests that prefer that type of travel. Fifty full camper hook-ups with water, 50 amps of shore power and waste dump. Another 100 camper sites with water and 30 amp. shore power are available. There is an onsite waste disposal facility. Tent camping is effectively unlimited. The entire camping area is situated on grass with well-drained soil and no nearby rivers. The risk of a flooded camping area is nonexistent. It is only a short walk to all the action. Shower facilities will be available to those that want it. There is a 100 bed bunkhouse for our use at a much lower cost than a hotel. Just know this, it is a bunkhouse. It is typically used during the fair for young people that are competing. It has its own communal bathroom and showers.

Indoor vendors and the gallery are going to be housed in the enclosed buildings with concrete floors. For most of the tailgating, we can offer open side pole barns. The demo sites will also be in open sided pole barns. The pole barns have dirt floors. All the buildings have a power infrastructure typical of an agricultural fairground with lighting, plenty of outlets, and many with 100 amp panels. There are a blend of paved and gravel roads permeating the site so if it does rain it should not be a big mess. A large tent filled with tables and chairs will serve as a place to eat and congregate during the conference.

The important details of our party are set. We are anticipating a big crowd and it will be an event to remember.

31ST ANNUAL **WENDISH FEST**

SEPTEMBER 22, 2019

**Texas Wendish Heritage Museum &
St. Paul Lutheran Church Picnic Grounds, Serbin, Texas**

Located 5 miles SW of Giddings @ FM 2239 & CR212

English & German Worship Services - St. Paul Lutheran Church, *One of the Painted Churches of Texas*

English 8:30 a.m., German 10:30 a.m.

Guest Speaker Rev. Mark Barz, 3rd Vice President, Texas District, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

Greetings to all

It is with great sadness that we share this message. Our good friend, teacher and honorary member, Lyle Wynn and his wife Patricia lost their son, Brian Tyler Wynn on August 25, 2019 in a motor vehicle accident. Brian was 29 years old and leaves behind his wife of eight years and two daughters.

Here is a link to his obituary - <https://www.ottandlee.com/notices/Brian-Wynn>

If you want to do something, flowers are always nice, but a Go Fund Me page has been set up to help the family.

Here is the link to that page; https://www.gofundme.com/f/tyler-wynn-family-fund?fbclid=IwAR2AIPr1XcAl6KtQxj6MruNdjBOi7OKUr6aj879RX_1eb7RShKfZ1BwzseY

This is a very difficult time for Lyle and their family. They are leaning heavily on their faith and each other as they deal with their loss. Please keep the Wynn family in your prayers.

Eternal Rest Grant onto Him O'Lord.
Let Perpetual Light Shine Upon Him.
May He Rest in Peace.
Amen.

Our 8th Annual Memorial and Demonstration is scheduled for Saturday, October 26th. We will be ringing the anvil for all that have gone before us to remember and honor them on that day. We will have Brian on the top of our list. If you have anyone that you would like to remember on that day, please send in your names or bring them to the event.

Jerry Whitley
VP Balcones Forge



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

