



# Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

June 2014



What goes better with hot metal, good friends, and food? Texas swing music in the great outdoors. That's what we had at Swing Fest again this year. We had lots of people come by and see us demoing. Several people brought items made from sucker rod, and the Jerrys (Achterberg and Whitley) brought some great tools that they had made.

We had plenty of room in the fire, so everyone that wanted to could play. Events like these are great opportunities for beginners to come out and learn.

Next up we have a demonstration of flower making by Lorenzo Fortunato at his shop in the Buda/Kyle area.

At this time we are going with our usual belief that July is just too hot for forging so no meeting, but that could change.

Finally if you have any ideas for demonstrations or venues for meetings please let the Board members know.

See you all at Lorenzo's!

Matt Czosnek  
Balcones Forge President

## Meeting Date is June 28



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## **JUNE TRADE ITEM**

The trade item for June is a colonial dough scraper.

See page 5 for visual aids.

REMEMBER: you gotta make one to take one!

## **THE BALCONES FORGE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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## **A GREAT DEAL**

Balcones Forge has Mark Aspery Books!

All 3 volumes:

I - Basic Blacksmithing  
II - Leafwork  
III - Joinery

\$50 each -- no tax, no shipping, normal price \$59

Send your requests to [Rudy@BalconesForge.org](mailto:Rudy@BalconesForge.org)

## **JUNE MEETING INFO**

Take the short drive down Kyle, Texas and visit the shop of Lorenzo Fortunato. You will get to learn how to make flowers and see the tooling that makes the job go faster.

9:30am on June 28, 2014.

It will be fun and you are likely to learn a thing or two. Plus, you can always stop at Cabela's on the way home.

Bring a chair or you will be in the "Standing Room Only" section.

## **SWAGE BLOCKS AND CONES**

Gerald Franklin is the man you need to talk to if you need a block or cone. These are great items at a fair price! Check them out on the Saltfork website:

[www.saltforkcraftsmen.org](http://www.saltforkcraftsmen.org)

Contact Gerald at:

[blackbullforge@yahoo.com](mailto:blackbullforge@yahoo.com)

580-467-8667

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# Bluebonnet Lost and Found

Someone kindly left me a couple of metal army cots at the Bluebonnet demo. I put them in my barn for storage, but would love to get them back to the true owner!

I also managed to inherit somebody's Gander Mountain chair! If you are the proud owner, send me an email at [jac@sycamorecreekranch.net](mailto:jac@sycamorecreekranch.net) and we will arrange to repatriate it to you.

Otherwise, folks, look for these as latter additions to good old "Iron in the Hat"!!

*Submitted by:  
John Crouchet*



# REPORT FROM THE MAY MEETING

The Texas Swing from a blacksmith's perspective was a near perfect event. When I arrived at 7am, two other blacksmiths were already there setting up under one of the largest shade trees on the historic, San Marcos square.

Many other vendors had set up the night before and by 9am the crowd of on lookers began mulling around. Matt Czosnek called a meeting to order by thanking everyone for the great turnout. No June event has been designated but something in the Buda, TX area has been discussed, nevertheless, the full summer schedule is still pending. Jerry Achterberg did confirm that participants are needed for the Texas Folklife Festival June 6, 7, 8, and to contact him for armbands. It was reported that the anvils ordered for Balcones Forge will be shipped under the auspices of Jim Elliot's son, Dennis. In regard to the usefulness of Balcones Forge members efforts, John Crouchet was instrumental in pleasing the crowd with the use of two large anvils and a forge that are designated for demonstration and instructional use among Balcones blacksmiths. This allowed everyone an opportunity to forge some hot iron in front of the wide eyed people experiencing something that many had never seen. Daniel had documented a list of books & other material that he brought with him that our members could have immediate access to references and projects. Daniel also stated that he is nearing completion for on-line access to the library in the near future.

The IRON IN THE HAT auction would not have been successful if Jerry Achterberg had not brought sucker rod connection ends for the auction. I purchased several pieces that will make great anvil tools, thank you Jerry & Vince.

Like most everyone else, I am so geared up in getting to a blacksmithing event, I forget about loading that box of designated useful items that was packed several weeks ago for the IRON IN THE HAT auction. The encouragement that John

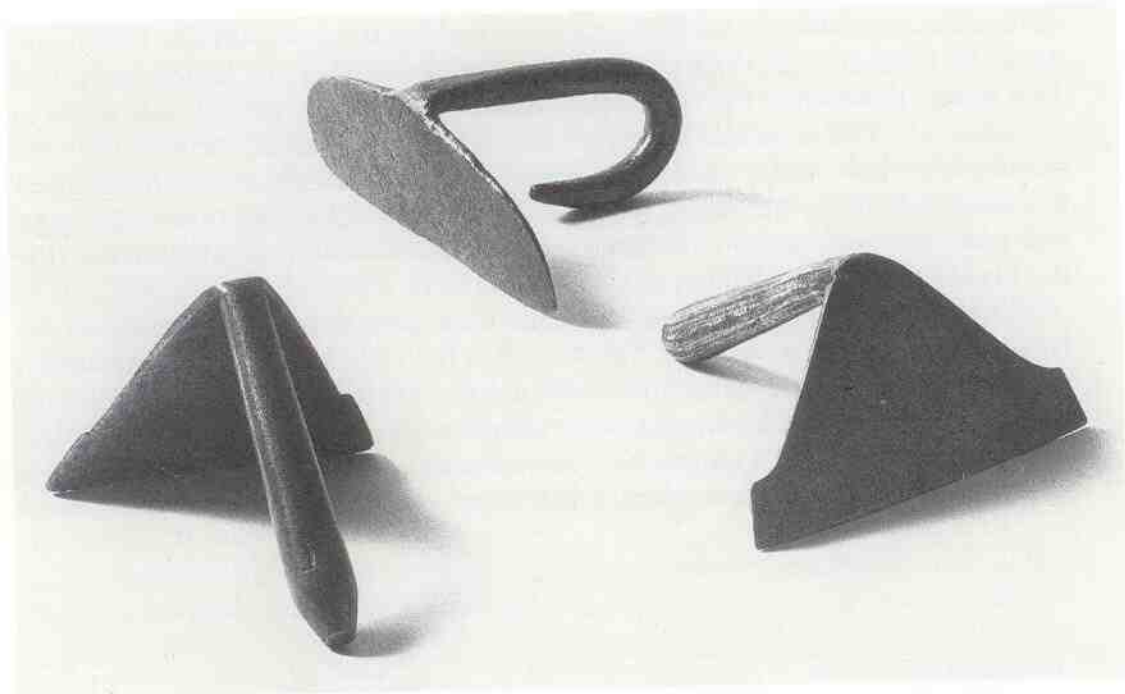
Crouchet and Jerry Achterberg constantly mention is a fundamental element for the existence of Balcones Forge as well as offering some very useful blacksmith tools and equipment for members. The "something made from sucker rod" trade item was gifted with 3 unique items which included a spoon, bottle opener, and a knife. The participants seemed quite pleased with comments like 'I'm glad my mom didn't have that spoon for spanking us kids, Oh boy - another beer opener for a gangly group of blacksmiths and it was made by someone studying to be a preacher, and I'll bet that knife won't cut hot butter. "Such" are some of the friends I associated with on this otherwise beautiful day - it's all fun. Vince also mentioned that he had ABANA raffle tickets for 3 items, quickly triggering an unruly mob of dirty, sweaty, smiths bumping elbows to get at their pocketbook first. I am personally gambling on the Nimba anvil.

Wafting through the coal smoke was the faint smell of something cooking. Jerry Whitley brought an entire kitchen to prepare spaghetti. He quickly put Sue Murray's Dad, Don, to task setting the tables, and it wasn't long until generous helpings of the delicious spaghetti, with a savory meat sauce, and a side of crisp, tasty salad were provided for everyone. On behalf of the other blacksmiths, thank you Jerry for that wonderful food.

The afternoon crowd seemed to enhance, which in itself, gives energy to a squad of sweating smiths. And many were riveted to Jeff & Dustins forging of a hammer which took most of the day for them to complete, and the end result was remarkable.

True to the genuine good heart that embodies a group such as Balcones Forge, everyone pitched in to assist others in packing up for their trip home. Most slap-on-the back of thanks went to Aaron Tilden and John Meyers for lugging those 100 pound anvils and placing them gently in their designated cargo spot.

Tim Tellander  
Balcones Forge Secretary



Dough scrapers, 1-86  
L/r: 4x4, 4x5, 4x6



Dough scrapers, 1-87  
L/r: M. FOX 4x3; S.A.B. 3x3; P.D. 1842, a scraper made by Berks County, Pennsylvania blacksmith Peter Derr.



## Door Hardware made by Gary Hilton

A friend copied some door hardware about ten years ago for additions to a house built in 1921. He thinks the original hardware was done by Erich Riesel. This same property is having a guest cottage added and the owner wants to match the main house door hardware. I copied my friends work as he has good notes from the original job. This job was his but shoulder surgery prevented him from finishing the job when he wanted so he asked me to do it.

The job includes front door hardware, hardware for five interior doors, and latches for two closet doors. Later some fake hinges will be added.

The front door is a right hand door that will have a 1/8" by 3" by 17" faceplate that has a hole for a deadbolt, a handle, and a thumb lifter. The latch bar plate and latch plate are pictured as well. The latch bar plate is 1/8" by 3 1/2" by 7 1/2" and the latch bar is 4 1/2" long. Latch plate (on left) is 2 1/2" by 1 3/4".







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The five interior doors are left and right hand doors. The faceplates are 1/8" by 2" by 12" with a handle and thumb lifter. The thumb lifter has a small hole drilled through it. A short piece of flame welding rod run through the hole and tack welded on either side of the thumb lift provides the pivot.



A unique drift punch is used to cut the slots for the thumb lifts and in the latch bar plate for the front door. This punch can be found on page 90 in Donald Streeter's book "Professional Smithing". It's called a slotted hasp drift.

The Blacksmith's Journal is a good reference for this latch.

I think these latches may be Norfolk latches.





Everything is heated for color after cleaning the scale off. All interior items are painted with clear satin. The front door faceplate is painted black.

All lifters are made from 5/8" by 1/4" flat and are finished about 8" long.

Handles for interior door faceplates are from 1" by 1/4" and are about 9" long after bending.

The latch bar plates are about 8 ½" long. Small chain has locking mechanism attached.

Rectangular plate is 1/8" by 2" BY 3 ½". Triangular plate is 1/8" by 2" by 3 ½".

Rivets are ¼" about ½ "long.



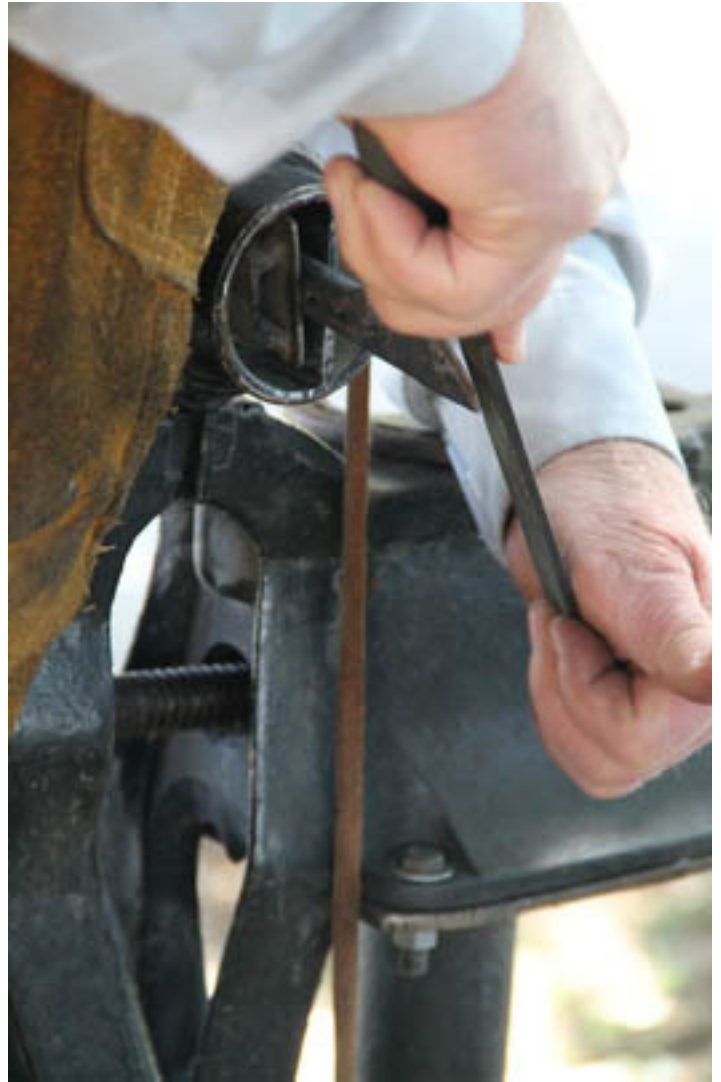


Closet Latches with finger lift for outside opening and an extra hole to tie a piece of rawhide to thread through a hole so the door can be opened from the inside.



The rivets are flush on the back of the triangular plate so they've been counter sunk, peened, and maybe tack welded..



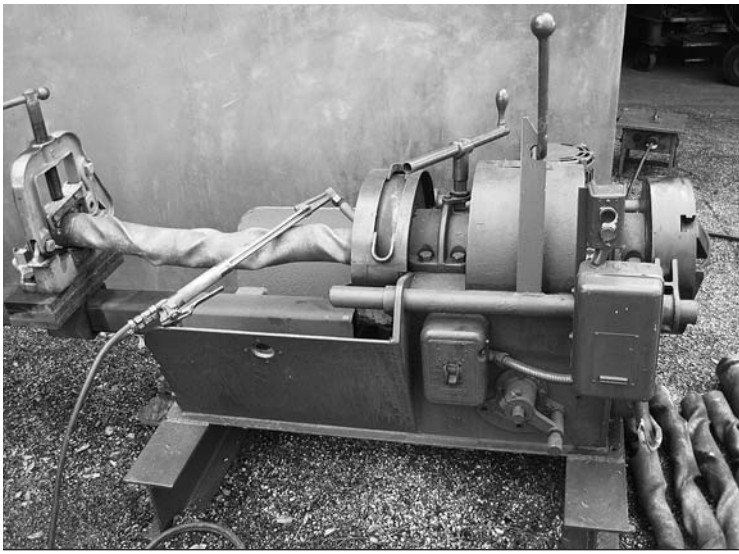


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# Twisting Machine

*Bill Sorich, La Honda*

Many years ago I saw a picture of Albert Paley and his twisting machine made from an old elevator hoist. I vowed that someday I would have an awesome machine like that, with a huge rosebud torch in my hand.

Time has marched on, and finally, my machine has come to life. A big pipe threader machine, a Toledo 124 – the *mondo matic* big dog of the day – fell into my hands. My mission for this baby was to twist 3" to 4" muffler tubing – aluminized good stuff – that I just happened to have. I had a truck load of tubing marinating away for 35 years.

First I amputated all the stuff west of the chuck, then welded an 8' piece of 4" x 4" square tubing, parallel with the axis of the chuck. A pipe vise is mounted on an 8" long piece of tubing which floats on the 4" square tubing. The vise has spacers under it to make the center line of the chuck even with the center line of the vise so that different sizes of material can be twisted straight this way.

The next thing to do is slow the baby down. I brazed a 3-groove B belt pulley on the original chain drive unit, and then I got an old  $\frac{3}{4}$  HP 14.5 RPM geared head motor and hung it on a hinged plate with an extension handle.

To use, pull in to idle position with clutch disengaged. Push out to tighten belts in order to start the twist. Push harder for more twist; pull back a little to feather off twist. The belt drive is also a safety feature: If the piece being twisted has greater resistance than the machine, the belt slips and saves the machine from damage.

One more thing, the gear box had a clutch that slipped way too soon. I tack-welded it so that it wouldn't work.



photos provided by the artist



## Twisting Machine



*Entrance gate with twisted muffler tubing.*

The maiden voyage produced some 3½" tubing without kinking as the chuck and vise kept it straight.

The machine has a forward and reverse switch that makes switching directions a breeze. Tubing is heated locally to the area you want to twist. Heating 6" gives you a tight twist. Let that cool, move down the tube, reverse the motor, heat that area, and reverse twist that. The previously twisted area won't untwist, because it has cooled down.



Another method is to heat one side hotter than the other. The twist collapses the tube more on that side. *Unchuck* the tube; turn it 180°; tighten the chuck, and then you can work the backside of the tube in several places. Finally, you have worked the whole length by working on short separate areas.

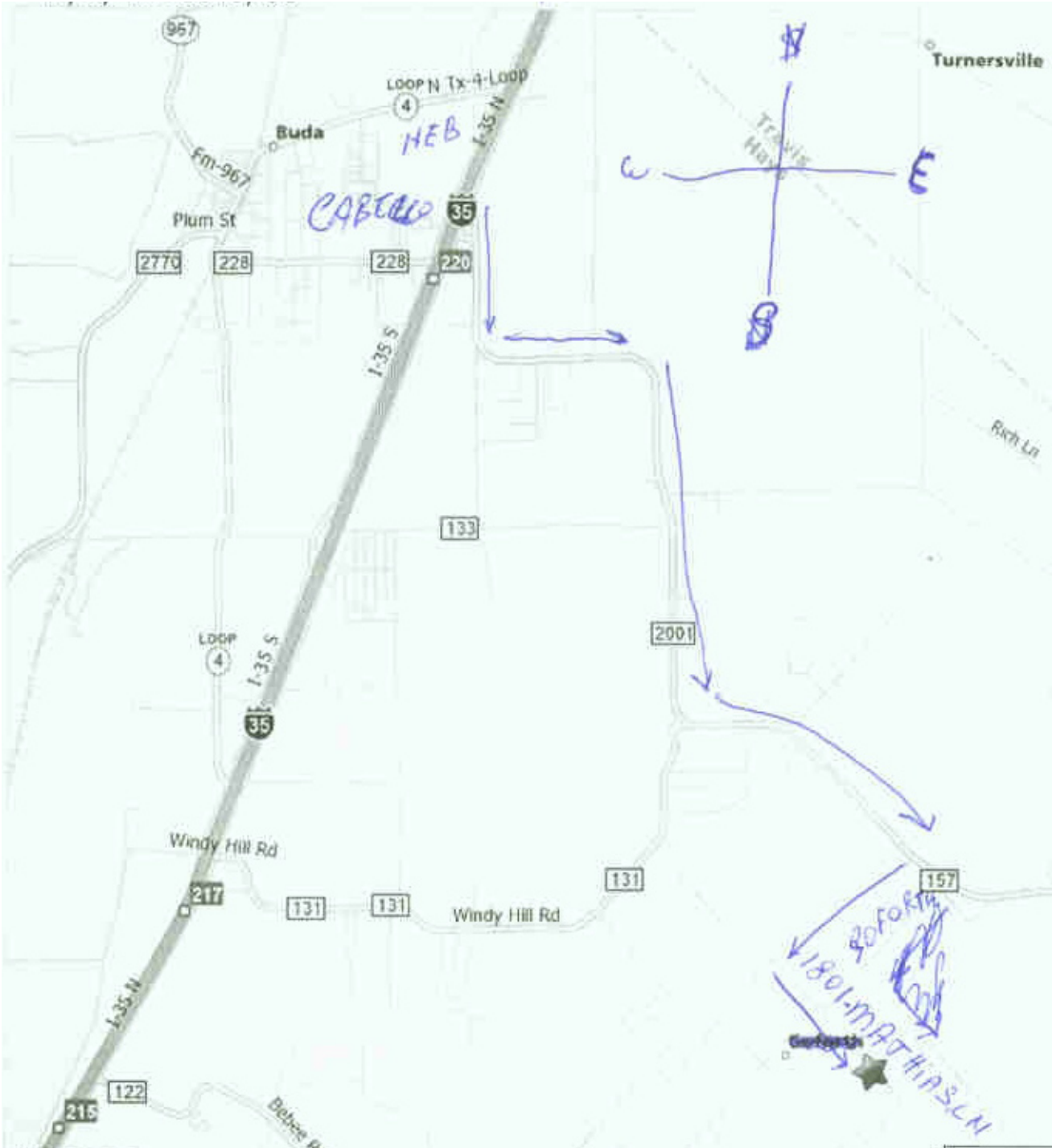
I just scratched the surface of what this machine will do. By the way, if you need one, I've got a couple to sell cheap. ♣

*Tubing in copper, brass and steel.*





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[www.italianironworks.com](http://www.italianironworks.com)

512-653-3115

1801 Mathias Lane, Kyle, TX 78640

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To all Affiliates of ABANA,

Master Blacksmith/Teacher Jerry Darnell's second book

“Forging Colonial Iron Work II”  
is fresh off the press as of June 5th.

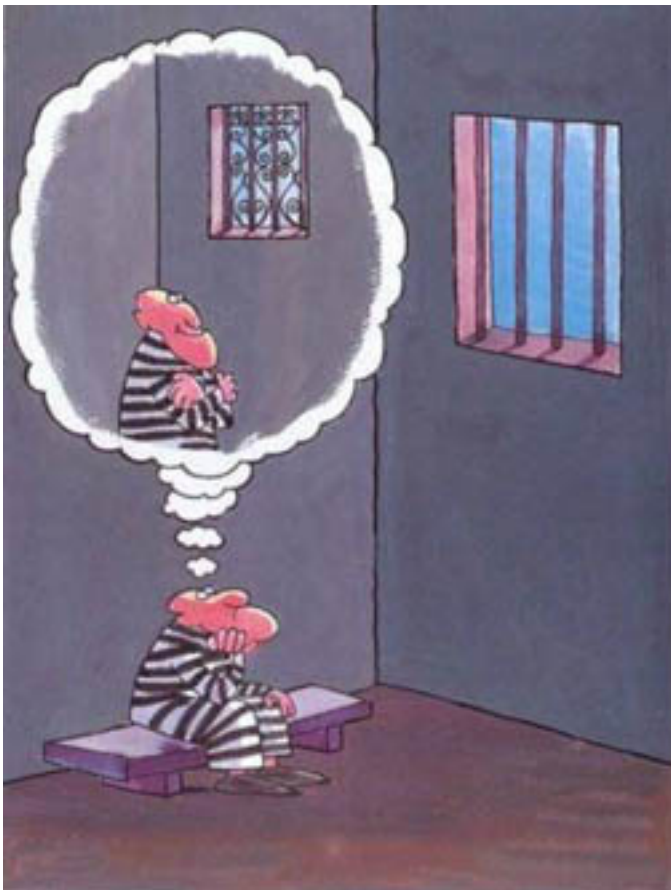
Cost \$20.00 plus shipping/handling.

Please contact Jerry directly:

Phone---

(910) 464-3888 (Shop)

(910) 464-2636 (House)

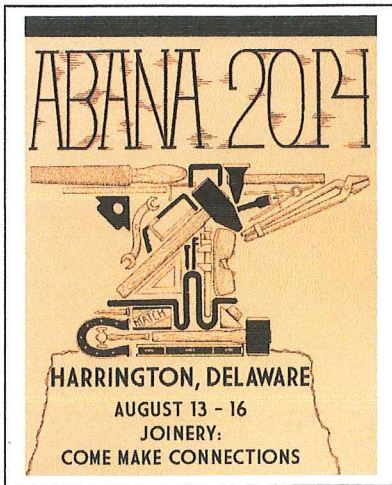


## ROCKY MOUNTAIN BLACKSMITHING CONFERENCE

August 6-10, 2014, Carbondale, Colorado

Demonstrations by Peter Ross, Mindy Gardner,  
**James Honig** and James Makely.

Complete information at:  
[www.rockymountainsmiths.org](http://www.rockymountainsmiths.org)



# 2014 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

## August 13-16, 2014, Harrington, Delaware

Registration for the ABANA 2014 Conference is now open! Use this form or call 423-913-1022 to register. **Until 1/15/2014**, full conference registration is \$125 for current ABANA members. Non member registration is \$175.

I plan to tailgate \*  yes  no \*The Central Office will contact you with more information.  
 I plan to camp \*  yes  no

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**2014 REGISTRATION (PER PERSON): BEFORE 1/15/2014 \$175-NON MEMBER, \$125-MEMBER**  
**2014 REGISTRATION (PER PERSON): 1/16 to 6/30/2014 \$225-NON MEMBER, \$175-MEMBER**  
**2014 REGISTRATION (PER PERSON): AFTER 7/1/2014 \$275-NON MEMBER, \$225-MEMBER**

**Family Conference Passes:** Allows family members to accompany a full conference registrant at a much-reduced rate. A family is defined as a head-of-household plus his/her partner living at the same address and their children up to age 17.  
**Conference T-shirts included in registration fee, and can be picked up at the registration desk at the Conference.** Shirts are **adult only**, pocket, in the following sizes: Small, Medium, Large, Extra-large, 2-X large, and 3-X large.

T-shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_ (S,M,L,XL,XXI,XXXL) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**Conference Day Passes:** Good for all activities on a specific day. ABANA membership not required.  
**Color-coded passes at \$75 per day will be available at the Registration Desk.**

**Total Price includes Saturday Evening Dinner and Conference T-shirt** **TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK REQUIRED**

Each Person will be required to sign an Acknowledge and Assumption of Risk in order to be admitted to the Conference (including minors through a parent or guardian).

*I acknowledge that blacksmithing and related activities are inherently dangerous and involve risks and dangers to participants and spectators that may result in serious injury or death. In deciding to attend the ABANA 2014 Conference, I have considered these risks and I knowingly assume them. I agree that I am responsible for my own safety during the Conference, including wearing appropriate clothing and protective gear and remaining a safe distance from all dangerous activities. I agree to hold ABANA, Delaware State Fairgrounds, and others involved in the Conference harmless from liability and expenses arising from my own actions or omissions. I agree that my admission to the Conference constitutes consideration for this acknowledgment.*

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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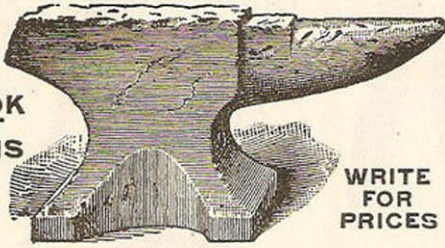
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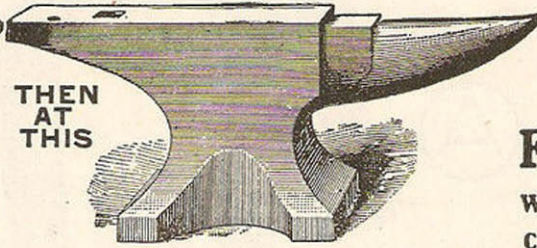
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