



# Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

March 2014



Thank you Alan and Jeff for another job well done, a bunch of great demonstrators, an iron smelt, and the Blues Brothers. This is why their events are not to be missed. You never know what you might see. Another reason to come is all the new people you meet from groups like HABA, LAMA, and the new group forming in Goliad. It's great to see so many people sharing ideas on smithing and having fun.

Speaking of big events, the annual Bluebonnet Demo is coming up at the end of March. This year we are again hosting Mark Aspery. Make the time to come out and see Mark's great demonstrations and hear his wonderful stories about blacksmithing. And the week before the demo, Mark will be teaching classes, \$125 for members and \$150 for non-members. There is still some room left in the Tuesday and Wednesday classes, 3/25 & 3/26, so sign up today and get an experience of a lifetime.

We are still planning the rest of the meetings for the year, so if you have ideas please share them with the board.

Matt Czosnek  
President, Balcones Forge

## Demo Dates are March 29 & 30



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## EDITOR'S SOAPBOX

Well folks, I did not get a meeting report this month but since I was at the big goings on in Bryan, here is what went down.

The morning got off to an awkward start as it seemed someone had made off with Lyle Wynn's hammer. Fortunately the Blues Brothers appeared (they are on a mission.....a mission for blacksmithing) and gave Lyle his hammer. Soon after that both Lyle and Daniel Riffe commenced to demo in the dual format style of the day. Daniel showed the crowd how to forge a hammer punch and Lyle forged a coal rake with a horse head and bottle opener; very handy and somewhat of a theme.

As the inside demos continued a combined group worked outside to begin the iron smelt. Lots of eye candy was on hand for those who enjoy fine ironwork. You could also test drive an air hammer or puruse a selection of hand tied brooms.

An auction was held to help offset the costs of putting on such an event. At press time I do not have the total raised but I believe it was north of 2,500 dollars. That sounds good but it costs more than that to put on a show like the Lee Brothers present. Did you contribute to the "free" bar-b-que lunch?

After lunch we were treated to demos by Alan and Jeff as well as a section on dove tailed joints in iron by Gerald Franklin who came all the way down from Oklahoma for the event.

The team outside brought out the bloom in mid afternoon and then refined that down to wrought iron. It is an amazing amount of work to create a small bar of iron. We are lucky we can just run to the metal supply of our choice.

We owe the Lee brothers a big round of applause. It was a great show.

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Next up for Balcones Forge is the Bluebonnet Demo at the end of March.

Have you signed up for a class? Space is limited so check with one of the officers (contact info on the front page) if you are interested.

The auction is our big fund raiser and you can read about that elsewhere in this edition. But it won't be the same this year without George Craig. No one enjoyed an auction like George and his generosity will likely go unmatched. His enthusiastic support and wide smile will be missed.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the end of the month. Lets raise some money for the group.

Keep those submissions coming.

Anybody get a picture of the Blues Brothers in Bryan?

Vince Herod  
Editor



George and Cheryl Craig

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

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### **NO TRADE ITEM**

March: No Trade Item, instead make something cool for the auction, bring that extra tool to sell, and bring cash to buy it back.

### **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)

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

## **SPIDERS AND BLUEBONNETS**

You might remember seeing the spiderweb trellis I took to Jerry Whitley's last October for show-n-tell. Vince included a nice photo of it in the newsletter that followed. It will be an auction item at our Bluebonnet Demo at the end of March. Balcones Forge is putting together 10 fully-equipped forging stations to make our training workshops with visiting professional smiths even better and that's not an inexpensive venture! It's coming together beautifully and I'm hoping the "web" will help.

Here is a little info about the trellis: It's about 7' tall and 30" wide at the top. The first horizontal bar on the bottom is 15" up, so you have plenty of material that can be pushed into the ground. It's got 12 handmade rivets, flared finials and lots of wrapping! The trellis frame is mild steel and the web is mild steel with baling wire web strands and a copper wire zig-zag center. A web wouldn't be complete without a spider, so... there is a dangly spider that goes with it, made from copper wire and half a Brazilian oco-geode. For anyone wondering, the abdomen has crystals on the underneath! It will certainly give you something for your garden that doesn't die back in our 100\* summer temps and a native snapdragon vine or Cyprus vine would contrast great against it.

Sue Murray, gardening blacksmith!



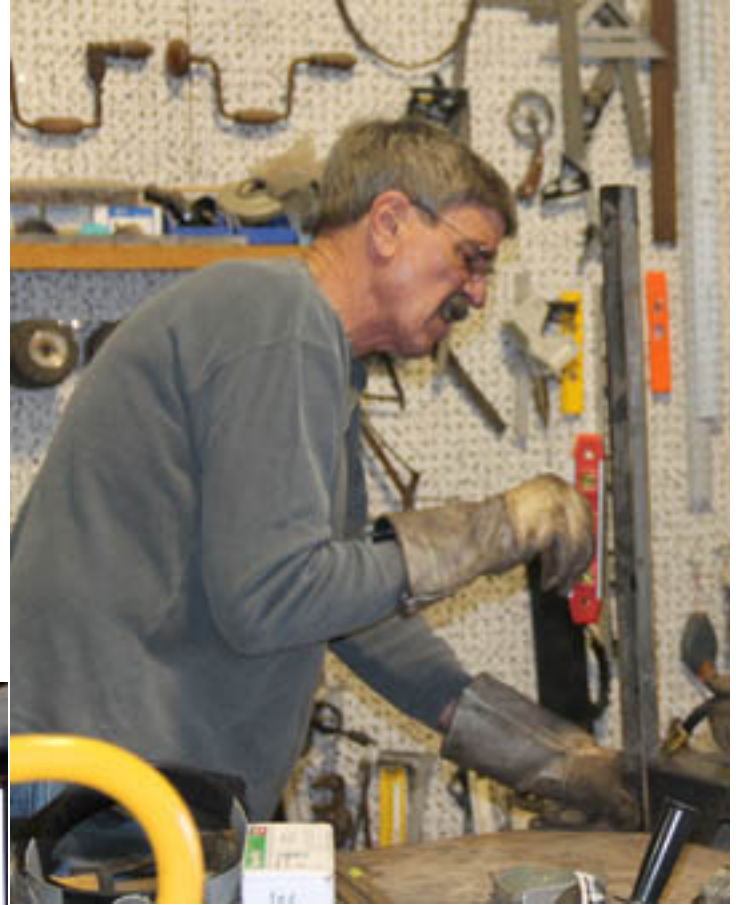
## BALCONES FORGE TEACHING WING

As you can see, we are homing in on completion of the new space for demo classes. This is Old Jim ("I didn't really do much") Elliott, at work as usual. I just need to mention that this guy gets here early, hits it all day, and leaves late day after day after day. FOR NO PAY! This has been going on for weeks and weeks. Notice that he has taken this place from nothing to just about done. I help him when I can, but I have a full time job like most of you folks, so you can imagine how little free time I have to go help old Jim. It ain't much. He has hired some help when he could. Henry Stone and Scott Pyle helped with the welding and Jim's friend, Ron O'Dell, helped with hanging the sheet metal, but by and large this place has been built by Jim.

I don't know if anyone has ever done this much sheer labor for Balcones Forge. He is very pleased with what a great classroom this will be. (Day or night, thanks to Jim's mega-lighting!) Don't forget to say thanks next time you see Jim. And when he says he didn't do much, ignore that bull\*\*it!

John Crouchet





On the 11th of January a work day was held to continue the work to create the Balcones Forge Teaching Wing.

photos by Vince Herod



## **NEW BLACKSMITHING OPPORTUNITIES AT THIS YEAR'S BLUEBONNET DEMO**

By John Crouchet

Mark your calendars for March 25th through 30th, 2014. You will not want to miss the new things happening at the Bluebonnet Demo.

**Mark Aspery** will return to Sycamore Creek Ranch this year to teach FOUR one-day classes on coal forge operation and traditional blacksmith joinery. (Check out his latest book: *Mastering the Fundamentals of Traditional Joinery*.) There will be all-day classes on Tuesday, March 25th through Friday, March 28th. Ten students will be allowed in each class. We will have a coal forge and anvil available for each student. (That's a lot of coal forges!) Do not miss this excellent chance to learn joinery from a master! Bring your favorite hammer and a lot of energy!

Free camping spots will be available all week around the pond on beautiful Sycamore Creek. Bring your tent or trailer and your fishing pole! Spring is a great time to be out in the Texas Hill Country under starry skies!

Friday night, show up at the shop for the Balcones Shrimp Boil, a party that has become a tradition! We would love to see you there!

Saturday, Mark Aspery cranks up another fabulous demonstration of the skills of a blacksmith! You will quickly see why this guy is famous! If you are interested in the skillful forging of red hot iron, you are going to love this demo! It is all about the traditional methods and tricks and fundamentals of working hot iron at the anvil! I promise you will come away with a new appreciation for this wonderful ancient craft.

Saturday evening, look for our annual Blacksmiths Barbeque Dinner and Auction. It's not just a big party! It is also our big fundraiser for the year that allows us to keep bringing you the greatest blacksmiths in America!

Wake up early on Sunday morning! You won't want to miss the free Cowboy Breakfast before Mark begins the demo again at nine thirty! By the time you head out on Sunday afternoon, expect to have a whole new perspective!

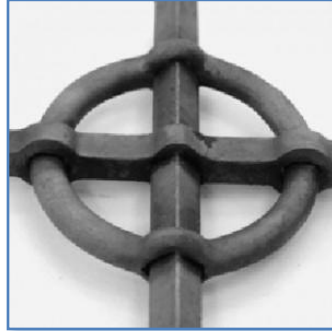
*If this is your first time to attend the annual Balcones Bluebonnet Demo, you are in for a treat. Marble Falls is a lovely little town sited right on Lake Marble Falls on the Colorado River just sixty miles northwest of Austin. You will find over FORTY restaurants in the Marble Falls - Horseshoe Bay area! This is tourist heaven! We are famous for antique stores and art galleries. Fabulous Longhorn Cavern, hideout of the outlaw Sam Bass, is just five miles away with tours every couple of hours on weekends! Bluebonnets? Are you interested in Bluebonnets? Folks, this Bluebonnet Country! And the end of March is exactly Bluebonnet season. Bring your camera, because your friends back home won't believe you!*

**Reserve your spot at the Bluebonnet Demo by sending the registration form (on the back page) to Rudy Billings.**

# Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Demo

featuring

## MARK ASPERY



**March 29-30, 2014**

**Marble Falls, Texas**

**Mark** returns to Texas for our two-day demo and to teach **FOUR** one-day workshops on coal forge operation and traditional joinery. Do not miss this excellent chance to learn joinery from a master! Classes run Tuesday-Friday (25-28), ten students per class, \$125/members, \$150/non-members. Send check (Balcones Forge) and date preference to Jim Elliott, 1102 Walnut Street, Georgetown TX 78626. Space is limited -- first come, first served. Registration for the demo is separate.

Free camping spots are available all week around the pond on beautiful Sycamore Creek. Bring your tent or trailer and your fishing pole! Spring is a great time to be out in the Texas Hill Country under starry skies! Friday night show up at the shop for the Balcones Shrimp Boil, a party that has become a tradition! We would love to see you there!

Don't miss the catered barbeque dinner Saturday night followed by our famous annual **Balcones Forge Auction**. Please create items and find unused tools to donate and prepare to bid on fantastic creations and blacksmithing tools -- maybe one of Mark's latest creation!

**Demo Times:** **Saturday:** 9:00–Noon – Morning Demo  
Noon–1:00 Lunch: *Since Marble Falls is about 20 minutes away, it is recommended to order a sandwich, chips and drink for \$7 that morning or bring a sack lunch.*  
1:00–5:00 Afternoon Demo  
6:00 Dinner -- only \$15  
7:15 If not attending the dinner, please join us at this time for the fantastic auction  
**Sunday:** 8:00 Cowboy Breakfast 9:00–1:00+ – Demo

Our hosts are John and Carolyn Crouchet at their beautiful Sycamore Creek Ranch. **Directions: From Austin:** Hwy 71 northwest to Hwy 281. **From San Antonio:** Hwy 281 north to Marble Falls. Cross the Colorado River into Marble Falls, count 5 stoplights and turn right (east) at Ranch Road 1431. Go 5.6 miles and look for the "Anvil" signs. At our gate, you will see a small sign to the right that says, "Sycamore Creek Ranch, 5828 East Ranch Road 1431." If the gate is open, just drive in. If the gate is closed, there are cattle in this pasture, so please close the gate behind you. Continue crossing 4 cattle guards before you see the big metal shop on your left. Welcome! Lost? Call John at 830-798-3710.

### For more info contact:

**John Crouchet**, 830-798-3710 or [John@TexasWroughtIron.com](mailto:John@TexasWroughtIron.com)

**Jerry Achterberg** 210-842-3049 or [treefarm@swbell.net](mailto:treefarm@swbell.net)

**Rudy Billings**, 512-461-7375 or [Rudy@BalconesForge.com](mailto:Rudy@BalconesForge.com)

### Hotel Accommodations:

Hampton Inn on the Lake, 704 First St., 830-798-1895

Quality Inn, 1206 Hwy 281 North, (866) 307-2224

Best Western, 1403 N Hwy 281, 830-693-5122

Hill Country Inn, 1101 Hwy 281, 830-693-3637

La Quinta Inn, 501 W. FM 2147, 830-798-2020

See the latest newsletter or website ([www.BalconesForge.org](http://www.BalconesForge.org)) for Registration Form

**DON'T FORGET YOUR SAFETY GLASSES AND CUSHION. HELP US BY REGISTERING EARLY!!!**

# The Story of A Poor Abused M&H Armitage Mouse Hole Anvil

When I attend the HABA functions in Oldenburg, my wife likes to go along. She does take a great interest in blacksmithing but, they have hundreds and hundreds of acres of ~~junk~~ antiques and collectables. Of the two it is the ~~junk~~ antiques and collectables that calls her the loudest. A few years ago, she was doing her treasure hunting and found an old abused, and I mean VERY abused Mouse Hole anvil. She surprised me with the gift.

*(Starting Weight 1 . 1 . 13 or 153 lbs)*



As beat up as it was, I did like using the anvil. How great would it be if it had a nice face?

There are a couple of founding members of Balcones Forge that go back even to the TABA (Texas Artist Blacksmith Assoc.) days that have ventured into the realm of anvil repair. I talked with Jerry Achterberg and conversed with Hollis Wooldridge on Iforgeiron.com about the process. I will walk you through the process.

I acquired a piece of  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch leaf spring stock. It had never been used and was fully annealed. I took the leaf spring to a metal fabrication shop and for a little less than \$40.00; I had the 1 inch hardy hole cut. When I got it back, I was able to cut it to length with my Shop Fox bandsaw.



Here is the picture of the new top plate.  
The 1 inch hardy hole and the pritchel hole have already been cut and drilled.

The plate was leaf spring stock, having never been used, it was fully annealed.  
I was able to cut it to length with my bandsaw.





**I started off by welding a piece of 3/4 inch mild steel plate for the new table.**

**The new step was set back just far enough that the new top would extend over it about 1/16<sup>th</sup> of an inch.**

**I ground a large bevel in the new step and the anvil. It was welded on with 6011 welding rods.**



**The hardy hole was framed with 3/8 inch square stock and 3/8 inch round welded down the center.**

**A small piece of 3/8 inch plate was cut just large enough to cover the pritchel. This will be drilled out again after the top is welded on.**



**I am not a welder and was very concerned that I was getting myself in way over my head. I showed Jerry A. what I had done and checked to see if there was anything else that I should do before I reach the point of no return.**

**He was concerned about the top pulling down as it was welded on and suggested I add some additional support to the sides. More 3/8 inch round**



**A piece of 1 inch square stock was used to orient the new top plate.**



**Two pipe clamps were used to hold the new top plate in place until the first welds were completed.**



**A large bolt was tack-welded to the base of the anvil so that I would have a good connection for the ground clamp.**



**With the anvil on its side, I welded with 6011 welding rods down one side and then the other.**

**I let it cool after both sides were done before continuing.**



**There was quite a bit of waste because of the depth to the center of the face.**

**In the end I think I used just shy of ten pounds of 6011 welding rods.**



**I continued to turn the anvil side to side, welding each side until all of the welds were above the surface and could be ground to finish.**



**The welds along with the top plate were all ground until they were even with the sides of the anvil.**

**I used 4 ½ inch angle grinders with grinding wheels and sanding discs.**

**I would opt for larger grinders if I were to do this again.**



**The grinding went much faster and easier than I had anticipated. It wasn't really quick and easy, just quicker and easier than expected.**

**I had some holidays in my welds. I went back with my mig welder and filled them in.**

**I hammered them and then I ground them smooth.**



**I used a propane pear burner to heat the entire anvil. The heat was focused on the body of the anvil until I started to see slight color in the fresh metal.**

**I let it cool slowly overnight.**



*(Ending Weight 169 lbs)*

**Except for the face, I sandblasted  
the entire anvil.**

**I followed this up with several applications  
of Auburn Rust for SSS Steel Supply  
to restore the patina.**

## **\*Just so there is no confusion\***

**To install the new table, the anvil table and plate were both bevel ground and it was attached by welding around the perimeter. This should be sufficient as it should not take the beating that the anvil top will.**

**The first welds to attach the top plate can be a little tricky trying to get the rod to the center of the 3/8" spacer without hitting the anvil or the top plate first. As much as the 3/8 inch spacers would allow, the bottom of the top plate was fully welded to the top of the anvil. I would weld a full pass on one side then turn the anvil and weld a full pass on the other side. Turn the anvil again and using a long skinny punch I would chip the slag. After blowing it out, I would start the next pass. This process was repeated until the entire void between the new plate and the anvil top was welded solid.**

**Am I pleased with the results? What would Phil say? HAPPY, HAPPY, HAPPY.**

**Would I do it again?**

**Yes I would.**

**I would consider preheating the anvil next time. As the work progressed, the plate pulled down slightly side to side. Not enough to ever be noticeable by eye but enough to notice with a straight edge. I ended up with a crack on one side in the middle of the anvil. It was about 1 1/8 inch below the weld and 4 inches long. I feel that it was pulling hard enough to cause this separation. This is the reason that I heated it up when all was done, hopefully relieving any stress that may still be there.**

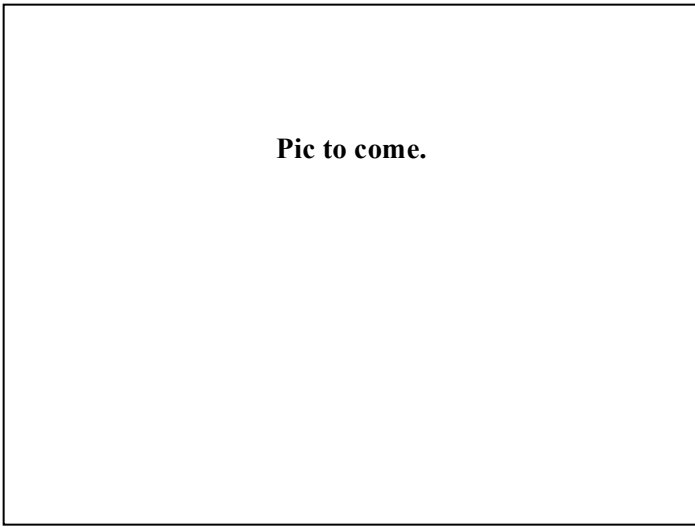
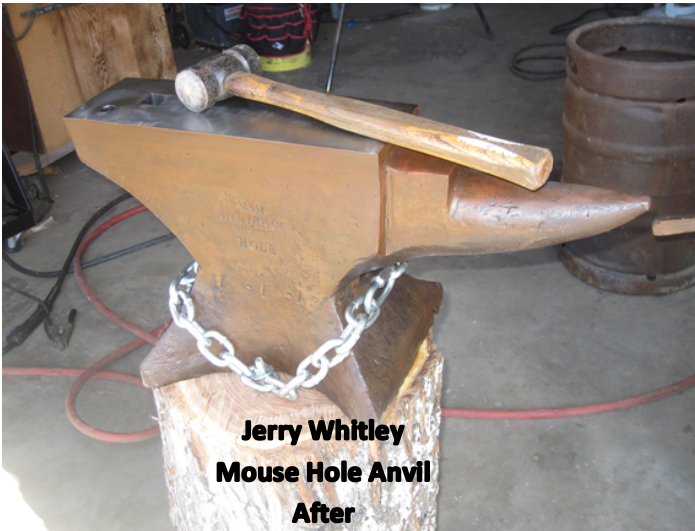
**I used a thin grinding wheel on my 4 1/5 in grinder and ground down through the crack and well into the anvil. I worked my way up to a 1/4 inch thick grinding wheel and widened the cut. I came back with my mig welder and filled the void.**

**Without the support of those that came before us, many of us would not be where we are today. I would like to thank Jerry Achterberg and Hollis Wooldridge for their support. Both have done more than their fair share to help perpetuate the blacksmith craft. I hope that I will be in the position to do the same one day.**

**Jerry Whitley / Rustyk Forge**

*jerry.whitley@ymail.com*

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



## APRIL MEETING INFO

The April meeting will take place in Drippings Springs at the historic Pound House.

It will be on the 26th at 9:30 and our host will be Dominic Shaw. This is the week of the Founders Day celebration and they want to include us in the press release.

Sounds like a good event for period (1855) clothes.

**Competition** Trade Item: An antique. Make something that would have been made and used 150 years ago. Give it a nice patina and make it look old. Prizes for the best.

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

### SWAGE BLOCKS AND CONES

Gerald Franklin will be attending the March 25 class in Marble Falls. If you are in need of a Saltfork Craftsmen swage block or cone mandrel, get in touch with Gerald to see if he can bring one down. 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

## FROM THE LEE BROTHERS

A huge heartfelt thanks to everyone who supported the Combo-Demo on February 22. Especially the members of Balcones Forge, HABA, and LAMA. From those of you who pitched in to help, to the volunteer demonstrators, to those of you who donated to the auction, to those of you who bought an auction item, thank you, thank you, thank you for making it all a success. This is truly a combined effort that can only happen in a community caring and sharing artisans.

The iron smelt was such a success, there are plans to do it again next year. Thank you Richard Delahoussaye, Jerry Baker, Joe Travieso, Aaron Tilton, Richard Meyers, Jeff Shockley, Ed Malmgren, and Matt Pohorelsky for making the smelt possible.

Thanks also to Lyle Wynn, Daniel and Chris Riffe, and Gerald Franklin for providing excellent demos at no charge. These people and those who step forward next year are the spirit of this event, giving back to the community of blacksmiths.

Now it is time to support the next major conference, the Bluebonnet Conference March 29-30 in Marble Falls, Texas. Mark Asprey is a master blacksmith and a wonderful teacher each of us can learn something from. Book your spot in a workshop class now and plan to attend the Saturday and Sunday demos.

The LAMA conference, "Bangin' on the Bayou" is March 8-9 with our own Dr. William Bastas demonstrating. If you've never been to this one, it's worth the food alone.

We are making plans for next years' Combo-Demo. If you would like be a part of it, please give us a call.

Hammer and Tong,

Jeff and Alan Lee



**SCENES FROM THE COMBO-DEMO  
FEBRUARY 22, 2014**







photos by Vince Herod



# Enjoy Springtime on the Ranch!

There is nothing better than Springtime in the Texas Hill Country! Why not plan to campout during the Bluebonnet Demo right here at the ranch, around our big pond on Sycamore Creek? This year, we will have a porta-pottie placed down near the pond for your convenience. Bring your tent or your camper and make yourself at home under the Texas stars!

We will have free camping available all week long. You might want to sign up for a blacksmithing class with Mark Aspery on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday and just enjoy camping out and communing with nature until Demo Days on Saturday and Sunday! Even if you are not enrolled in a class, you are still very welcome to come up to the shop and watch the classes for free. There is a lot to learn watching classes this good!

Please leave your dogs at home. We have free-range chickens that are definitely NOT dog compatible! Also, keep in mind that this is a real ranch, not Disneyland! We have scorpions, rattlesnakes, copperheads, and lots of stuff that sticks, stings, or bites. Just use common sense and think like a cowboy!

Just not a "camping type"? Check out the Chamber of Commerce website at [www.marblefalls.org](http://www.marblefalls.org) for an endless list of hotels, motels, bed and breakfast, and other accommodations. Keep in mind that EVERYWHERE in Marble Falls is close to the ranch, so you will never have far to go!

While you are here, remember that Marble Falls is a great place to spend some time. This is a friendly tourist town, right on Lake Marble Falls. We have forty-five restaurants in the Marble Falls - Horseshoe Bay area! My favorite place to eat is still Noon Spoon Cafe on Broadway, but lots of folks swear by the famous pie and chicken fried steak at the Bluebonnet Cafe right on Highway 281. If you are up for good Italian food, try Bella Sera on Highway 281. Mexican Food? It's hard to say. There are lots of good ones. Jim Elliott loves the Enchilada Platter at Janie's! Fast Food? It's everywhere! We have three Subways, a Whichwich Sandwich Shop, Sonic, McDonald's, Whataburger, Storm's, Taco Bell, and lots of pizza places. Looking for fancier? Dine by the water at River City Grill or Chili's, next to Hampton Inn on the lake or head across the river to Russo's for the greatest view in Marble Falls and some very fine dining. In Marble Falls, you will NOT go hungry!

There are antique shops and art galleries galore and plenty of quaint shops and even candy stores to browse through down on old Main Street. For a nice, quiet park with benches, tables, swings, ducks, and geese under huge live oaks along the water, try Johnson Park down at the south end of Avenue J. (North-South streets in Marble Falls

follow the alphabet. Makes it easy to find Avenue J.) Want to put your feet in the lake? Head for Lakeside Park on Buena Vista!

There is a big H.E.B. grocery store on Ranch Road 1431. If you don't mind buying Chinese stuff, we also have a Super Walmart on the west side of Highway 281 at the North end of town. If you are planning on fishing in the big pond at the ranch, you might want to stop by Rods, Barrels, and Strings at 1008 Hwy 281 for some fishing gear.

Need to entertain the kids for the afternoon? Head North just sixteen minutes from Marble Falls on Highway 281 and left on Park Road 4 for Longhorn Caverns, hideout of the famous outlaw Sam Bass! There are tours through the cave every hour on weekends and every two hours during the week. It's a fun tour with plenty to see. Wear your sneakers!

Interesting stuff is everywhere around you in the Hill Country. Maybe you noticed the buffalo family that lives right across the road at our Ranch entrance. Balcones Wildlife Refuge is just five miles down the road at Hwy 1174. Turkey Bend Recreation Area is just three miles away in Smithwick. It's hard to be bored out here in the Texas Springtime!

For more information on Marble Falls or camping here at the ranch, just email me at [jac@sycamorecreekranch.net](mailto:jac@sycamorecreekranch.net). Hope to see you soon!

John Crouchet

## **NEW LIBRARIAN**

Please welcome Daniel Harrington, our new librarian. Daniel has jumped in with both feet to take over this task and to give Jim Elliott a long overdue respite. Expect to hear more about the excellent resource we have available to BF members. Thanks Daniel!

Submitted by Rudy Billings

# BEEN TO THE LIBRARY LATELY?

By Daniel Harrington



## Not the Public library, the Balcones Forge library!

In case you didn't know (or just forgot,) one of the many benefits of membership in Balcones Forge is access to our incredible library. And I'm telling you, INCREDIBLE doesn't even do it justice. There are books, pamphlets, journals and periodicals – we have more than 200 texts – which cover a wide range of subjects; working sheetmetal, repressé, foldforming, welding, knife-making, forge-building, ornamental ironworking... the list goes on and on.

In addition, we have almost 100 videos (DVDs and VHS) providing insight and instruction on power hammer forging, hollow grinding, forge welding, TIG welding, plus lots of demonstration and ABANA conference videos, too.

And the best part?

It's FREE for Members to use!

Many of our members already know about the great library we have (and have books sitting beside them at home, waiting to be returned... *hint, hint,*) and they can tell you how great it is to refine a technique or learn a completely new one by reading or watching a master smith who took the time to pass along their knowledge.

So, grab a book, fire up the forge and get into some new metalworking! But try to keep the books away from the forge... we love our books without the singe marks, please!!!

## WANT A BOOK OR VIDEO?

So, how do you take advantage of these excellent resources? It's easy. You even have options:

- 1) Grab the new Librarian (*that's me*) at the next meeting, take a look at the master list, and pick out an item or two that sounds interesting. Give me the requests before the end of the meeting and I'll get them to you.

*or*

- 2) Go to the website ([www.balconesforge.org](http://www.balconesforge.org)), scroll down until you see "Member Services" on the right, and click on Library. Take a look at what we have and email a request to [librarian@balconesforge.org](mailto:librarian@balconesforge.org).

*Either way, I'll have your books/videos for you by the next meeting (or sooner if you're relatively close to North Austin and want to meet up with me to get them.)*

***A little about me:*** new to metalworking, looking for an apprenticeship, avid reader, writer, gamer and computer geek. Glad to be part of the Balcones Forge team, and honored to be entrusted with the duties of Librarian. See you at the next meeting!



# IT IS TIME FOR A TEAM EFFORT, COMPADRES!

Whoa! It's not a big secret that we spent some major money this year getting ready for the Bluebonnet Demo and Classes. While we have definitely upped our game as a blacksmithing organization, it has left us in real need of funds.

If you have been a Balcones member for awhile, you already know where the funds come from each year. Yep! **It's Auction Time Again!**

**Let me explain, in case you don't already know...**

**1. We don't make any money from the demo fees.** That's right. The fees you pay to see the big demo do not even pay the expenses of the demo. We lose money every year on the demo, but we keep the price down to make that great demo affordable for everybody!

**2. We don't make any money from the class fees.** Right again. The fees you pay to be in Mark Aspery's classes will not even cover the cost of the class. Why do we do it? Again, we are trying HARD to make them affordable for everyone!

**3. We don't make a dime from the Blacksmiths Dinner!** Once again, we are working to keep the cost down. We know lots of our members are students and retirees and just not made out of money, and we try our best to keep that in mind.

**So.....Where does the money come from ????**

The real money (ALL THE MONEY) comes from the big Auction. That one auction pays for everything we do all year long! The auction is not just important. It is really really really important. Scholarships, public demos, classes, and everything we do depends on money from that one auction.

**Please lend us a hand this year.** We need good auction items and lots of them! Blacksmithing tools are always good sellers. Tool steel, railroad spikes, spring steel, bar stock, heavy plate, and wrought iron and welding equipment draw good bids. Blacksmithing books, welding books, instructional books, and DVD's all sell well. Best of all? We are Blacksmiths, folks! We love to bid on blacksmithed pieces! Try tomahawks, knives, kitchen utensils, racks, hooks, shelf brackets, plant hangers, sign brackets, door knockers, handles, latches, fireplace tools, and tongs!

And if you can spare some cash, we certainly need it this year. Please come to the Auction, enjoy yourself and **BID BIG!** Thank you.

John Crouchet

## Balcones Forge Auction

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Item \_\_\_\_\_

Description \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your donation!

Winning Bidder \_\_\_\_\_

Winning Bid \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Balcones Forge Auction

Donor Name \_\_\_\_\_

Item \_\_\_\_\_

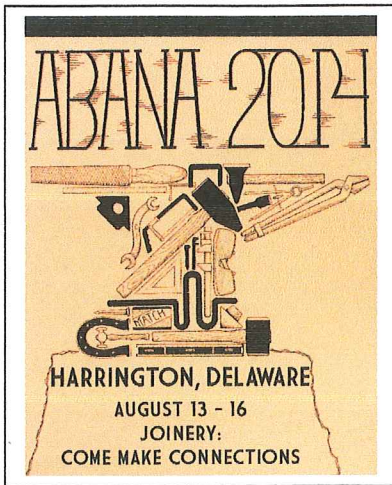
Description \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your donation!

Winning Bidder \_\_\_\_\_

Winning Bid \$ \_\_\_\_\_



# 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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ABANA ID # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail (confirmation only) \_\_\_\_\_

**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) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**NAME OF FAMILY MEMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Size** \_\_\_\_\_ **(\$40 EACH)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**NAME OF FAMILY MEMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Size** \_\_\_\_\_ **(\$40 EACH)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**NAME OF FAMILY MEMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Size** \_\_\_\_\_ **(\$40 EACH)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

**EVERY REGISTRANT MUST SIGN THIS FORM!**

Credit card orders (Visa/MC/Disc) can be faxed or mailed; be sure to sign this form. Fax: 423-913-1023  
 Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ CVVS \_\_\_\_\_

# Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Demo

featuring **Mark Aspery - March 29-30**

Please print clearly

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I prefer a hard-copy of the monthly newsletter mailed to me. I have added \$5 to the normal \$20 annual membership fee.

Current Member .....\$45 \_\_\_\_\_

2014 Membership if unpaid . \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

\$25 if you wish monthly newsletter mailed

Non-member .....\$65 \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I wish to become a BF member

Saturday Evening Meal ...\$15 \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*Please register by March 15\*\***

Make check payable to **Balcones Forge.**

Send to Rudy Billings,

12302 Indian Mound, Austin, TX 78758

**PLEASE READ AND COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING RELEASE FORM: FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND DATED BY EACH MEMBER, GUEST AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF ANY MINOR IN ATTENDANCE.**

In consideration of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association providing demonstrators and making these demonstrations available and granting permission to enter the area of said demonstration, I, individually and as parent or guardian of the minor child attending such demonstration, hereby waive all claims for damage and/or loss to my person or property, or the person or property of such minor child, which may be caused by an act, or failure to act of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association, its officers, directors, agents or employees and the hosts and demonstrators. I understand that there are inherent dangers in blacksmithing and I assume all risk of all dangerous conditions in and about such demonstration and waive any and all specific notice of the existence of such conditions. By signing this waiver, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this waiver.

X

Date

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

