



Blacksmiths of Central Texas

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May 2008



THE PREZ SAYS:

Next Meeting -- May 17 -- Next Meeting -- May 17

Hope we got your attention about the next meeting. Only occasionally do we change the date from the last Saturday of the month, so it has to be a good thing -- and it is! The venue for our meeting is the Texas Natural and Swing Festival where we can get some hands-on experience, do a little "educating," enjoy the food and vendors -- even sell our wares. Oh, there is probably dancing and great music, too! It's BYOA -- bring your own anvil, if you have one. See you there!

You know, it's OK to be a show-off. The Balcones Forge website (www.BalconesForge.org) has a gallery for members. Check it out -- you should be there!

Are we up-to-date? Do we have your current contact info and email address? Let us know when something changes.

Have an idea for a meeting or demo? Let any of your Board members know.

Forge on,
Rudy



Although no one seems to have had a camera at the April meeting, here are pictures that show the stunning work by our demonstrator, Valerie Osternak.

Photos by the Artist.



TRADE ITEM

The trade item for May has been selected by our Vice President Jerry Achterberg.

Survey says.....something American Colonial. Anything from the 1700's ought to do. Now is the time to get out that book on the Sorber Collection and get busy.

Remember, you gotta make one to take one!

SECRETARY'S REPORT

April 2008

The meeting for April 2008 hosted by Jim Schmidt and held at Pioneer Farms in North Austin was quite a different experience than our meeting there in November 2008. The air temperature for this Saturday's meeting was at least 50 degrees warmer than last November. Eighteen members and two new members attending enjoyed a demonstration in silver smithing by Valerie Osternak and a tour of the farm by Jim.

Rudy Billings opened our meeting in front of the Pioneer Farms General Store. He brought a sympathy card for Larry Stevens who lost his wife recently, which was signed by the membership. Jim showed us some copper bowls he had made.

There were four trade items: a cross, two bracelets and a silver earring kit. When Jim declared that the trade item was something to wear, I was thinking of armor that I just did not have time or talent to make. I need to start thinking smaller!

Valerie showed us some beautiful pieces she had made out of silver and explained the nuances and pitfalls of forging silver. Her impeccably polished hammers and tabletop anvil are an absolute necessity, she explained, in order to do good work. During the forging process, imperfections in the

hammer or the anvil are replicated in the work piece.

Light hammer blows and unerring accuracy in choosing the spot to hammer are of absolute necessity if the work is to come out as intended. She showed us a small earring she had done that had a slight twist in it that she didn't care for and said that it could not be corrected. She also said that, unlike steel, which can be heated in the forge many times, silver does not respond well to many re-heatings. The fewer heats you use the better your piece will come out.

We learned that pure silver is not the best to use for jewelry. Valerie said that she uses Argentenium Silver, which does not tarnish easily. Be sure to use solder for Argentenium Silver when soldering. And speaking of soldering be sure that the silver is absolutely clean, not even a fingerprint can be in the joint.

Tom Lupton
Secretary



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A STORY FOR US ALL

An Author, a Songwriter, a Blacksmith and a Elitist. What could they all have in common you ask? Good question. I'll try to tell you.

The award winning author who has been writing best sellers for years suddenly comes down with writers block, he can't think of nothing to say or write hence no new book. He is at a loss and he just doesn't know what to do. More later.

The songwriter; same scenario. He has 20 #1 hits to his credit, but this time he draws a blank, nothing, zilch, nada can't come up with nothing catchy, no music on the old brain lately. Record company execs are getting hot! What to do? More later.

The Blacksmith unless he is a fortunate one is always out in his shop working by himself. He doesn't talk to no one but the shop dog and a customer every once in awhile, so having nothing to say doesn't really bother him to much. Some times though he needs to say something and just can't come up with the right words to say. More later.

The Elitist, more later.

Now back to the Author, who after many days and nights of wondering what am I going to do? Bang finally wakes one morning and has an idea, a scheme, a plot to write about! Publisher loves it, another #1 bestseller.

He is back on top once again a member of a group known as the Elite.

The Songwriter same thing only most song writers get their best thoughts at night after a long day of not doing much but popping a few tops. Anyway he gets the best brainstorm of a life time. What do you know; another #1 hit on the charts.

He is also back among the Elite.

The Blacksmith he is still working when he can and getting by. He has things happen to him that he just doesn't think would ever happen to him and he just don't know exactly what to say. So after a lot of thought and deliberation he comes up with plan. He can't tell everybody face to face how he feels because he still gets Teary Eyed at the thought of what has happened to him. And he doesn't want people to see him like, he is plain too tuff for that, (he ain't as tuff as he puts on).

Just the HONOR of being voted as the third Life Member of Balcones Forge was great enough by itself; I still can't believe it sometimes. I keep going back and re-reading about it in the newsletter. The group also took it upon themselves to make a monetary donation to help out with hospital bills. He, the Blacksmith is elated and amazed. He is dumbfounded. He has just been given two things that most people won't ever get in their lives. Number One, he has the knowledge of having many, many friends who care about him GREATLY, evidenced by all the cards, letters and e-mails that he and his wife and received in last year. Number Two, he has just been elevated to a position of great Honor. He is among the Elite.

“More later” time.

Webster’s Dictionary describes the Elite as one of “choice element”. The real Elite ones here are the members and Board of Directors of Balcones Forge, who through their showing of Love and Generosity have greatly made mine and Helen’s life bearable. It has been a tuff time over the last year and three months, but we are getting stronger all the time. And with friends like we have and the help of GOD we know it is going to be OK.

I know we have so many great friends. We think of you always. I am truly HONORED, Blessed and will forever remember what the members of Balcones Forge have done to enrich our lives.

We truly miss not being able to travel to all the meetings as we have done in the past but will see you soon. Hopefully.

From the Elite to the ELITE, Helen and I know that THANK YOU is not enough but it will have to do, as I am like the Author and the Songwriter I just don’t know what else to say, other than we love you all!!!!

Harvey and Helen Wise



Harvey Wise and his daughter Holly in front of the “de-lux” chicken coop!

photo by Helen Wise

MEETING INFO

The May meeting of Balcones Forge will be held in conjunction with the Texas Natural and Swing Festival on May 17.

The May meeting will be earlier in the month than normal so get ready now!. We will be meeting at the Texas Natural and Swing Festival on the square in downtown San Marcos. Some of us have demonstrated at this festival for several years and we will be setting up on the west side of the square, just south of the sidewalk (by the chuckwagon cook!) If you would like to stay and demonstrate, bring your favorite hammer. If you have a portable anvil...bring that too. If you would rather listen to the music, it's free and bands will be playing all day. Come on out! Food and drinks are not free at this festival, so bring what you'd like to munch on or feel free to purchase something from the vendors on-site. We will be allowed to sell things we have made in exchange for our demonstrating.

For those that want to set up and demonstrate please be set up by 8:30 am since the event starts at 9:30am.

Here is the web address to a map with directions to the square in San Marcos for the May 17th meeting:

http://www.ci.san-marcos.tx.us/departments/mainstreet/Docs/Tx_Natural_map.pdf

Or just look at the back page of the newsletter!

If you'd like more information, contact Sue Murray at suraiyam@earthlink.net.

CLASSIFIEDS

I still have my 100#er and 250#er for sale. Both machines are in great shape. The 100 has a brake, plus a spring guard. I've had this hammer for about 10 years now, but has been used very little. The 250 has a newly reworked motor. I had the bearings replaced as they were getting a little noisy, plus while the motor guys were doing that

they also checked out all the wiring, made it look new inside. Has a great tone to it now. It pulls 6 fanbelts. This is the newer style LG, made in the 40's, and has the massive clutch at the back.

Prices reduced on both Giants. The 100#er is now \$5,500, and the 250#er is now \$7,500.

You won't find better machines than these. Come to Uvalde and try them out yourself, both are still connected to my 3 phase service. The 3HP motor on the 100#er can be changed out by simply replacing the motor should you want single phase. The 7.5 HP motor on the 250 is another story, I think you'd need one of the converters for it.

Email Robert Hensarling at:

RHRocker@hilconet.com.

I'm available almost any day. Work # is 830-278-1832.

PUT ON YOUR THINKING CAP

Blacksmiths have three types of welding available to them. If you think you know what the three types are, contact Rudy. The first person with the correct answer will receive a BF T-shirt and a bronze cross, compliments of Red Hot Iron Works.

Email -- Rudy@RedHotIronWorks.com or phone -- 512-461-7375.

Careful -- the answer is not as obvious as you may think.

ATTENTION ABANA MEMBERS

Get 10%-50% off purchases from Grainger. That's right! You can get 46% off Milwaukee tools, or 28% off motors, just to name a few. See the ABANA website (www.ABANA.org) for more info. It pays to be a member!



So, did y'all wonder what Sue was going to do with her prize from the big demo?
And who says cows do not appreciate advanced geometry?

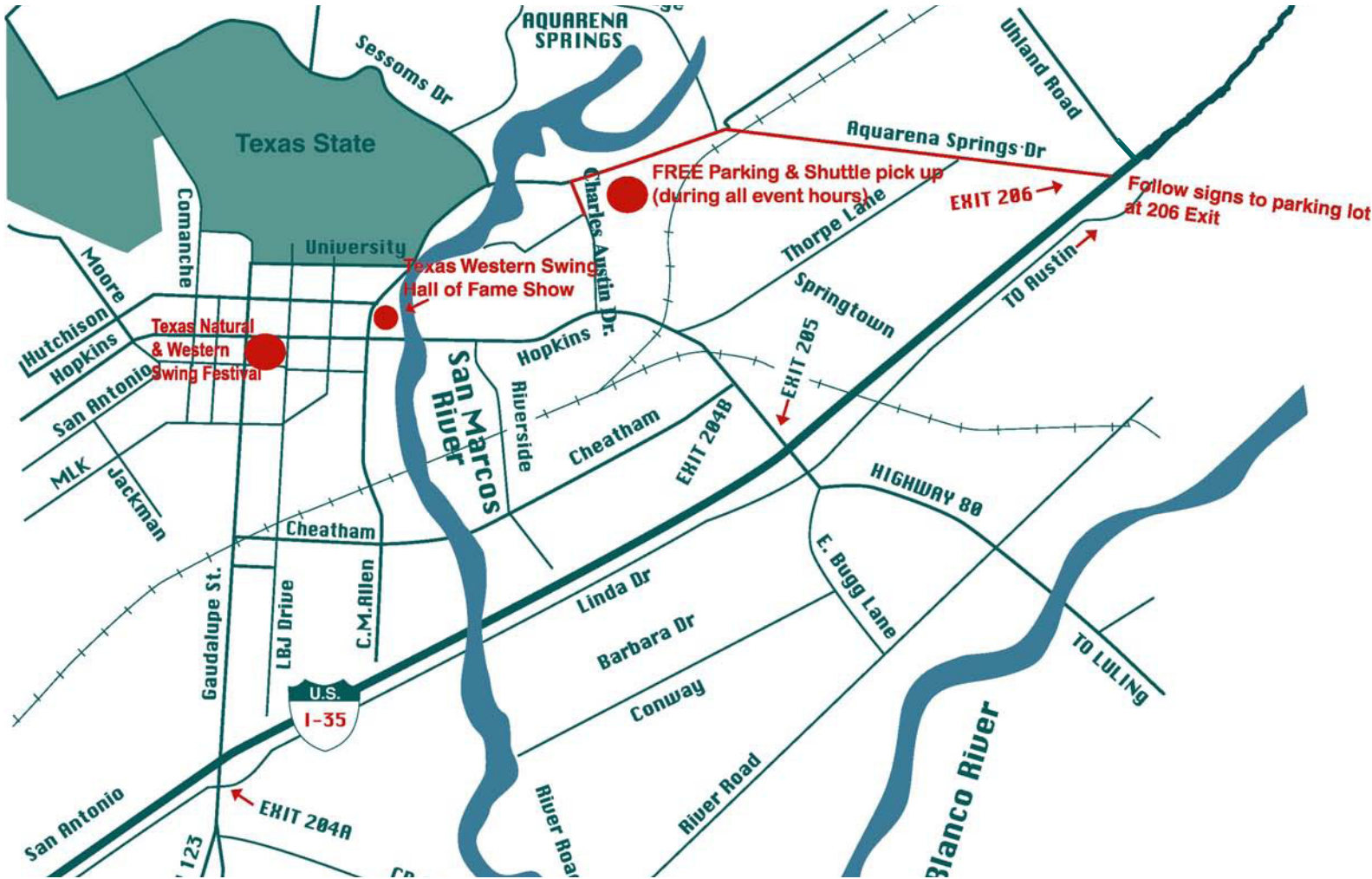
Photo by Sue Murray

Websites that give more information on Platonic and Archimedean solids

<http://www.scienceu.com/geometry/facts/solids/>

<http://mathworld.wolfram.com/ArchimedeanSolid.html>

<http://www.geometrycode.com/sg/archimedean.shtml>



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