



# Balcones Forge Dispatch

President's Corner

November 2018



Greetings!

Not sure how the Whitleys keep making the Memorial event better each year, but they nailed it again! It was a great time with lots of good food and many of our old friends as well as a few new ones. Great turn-

out and if you stayed after sundown you got to see movie on the barn wall. Thanks for doing this year after year.

We were delighted to have our old friend Bill Epps back to demo for us. He has got to be one of the most creative blacksmiths I have ever seen turning out several wonderful pieces that are easy to make. All you have to do is pay attention! Thanks for a wonderful show.

November will take us to Zorn, TX to Doug Caroselli's Blackhawk Millworks. The meeting will be early, on the 17th. Doug has mastered his sawmill and will show off many of his custom creations made from native Texas trees. Doug and friends have been working very hard to put on this event and have some very cool things like wood turnings and bladesmithing lined up to keep us entertained. Plan on staying for lunch, this will probably last all day. You won't want to miss this one. Trade item: Make something of wood and metal. Check out [www.blackhawkmillworks.com](http://www.blackhawkmillworks.com) and look for Blackhawk-millworks on facebook and keep Doug in mind if you need that old dead tree cut into slabs and kelm dried.

## Meeting Date is Saturday November 17

*President's Message continued on page 2.*



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*President's Message continued.*

The December meeting is also early. It is on the 15th on the near south side of San Antonio. A bunch of the San Antonio Forged in Fire bladesmiths have invited us to tour their facility and watch as they strut their stuff. Alex, Tobin, Brian, James and a few others will host and demo. This is another one you won't want to miss. Trade item: A letter opener. Sounds easy, show us what you can do.

Balcones Forge doesn't just happen or run by itself! We are still looking for a few good people. You can help by volunteering at the events, writing an article for the newsletter, bringing you handmade items for show-n-tell, donating items to iron-in-the-hat. You may even want to serve on the board or run for office. Please let a board member know if you would like to help. (It will make it easier on us old timers).

See ya'll in Zorn!

Jerry Achterberg – Pres. Balcones Forge

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT FROM OCTOBER MEETING**



I eagerly arrived at The Whitley's Rustic Forge in Devine a day early in order to help Jerry get set up for Saturday demonstration by the infamous and artistic blacksmith, Bill Epps. There were some parking

issues due to recent heavy rains and Jerry cautioned me about certain muddy areas and being very careful and thoughtful, I managed to sculpt an undeniable muddy rut from the road straight to the barn - right where the majority of foot traffic would have to hop and hurdle their way into the main demo barn for the next few days. Needless to say, one of my first concerns was to help set up some boundary lines for the next oncoming caravan.

However, because Jerry is so well organized, there was little left for me to do except wait for Bill to arrive. The brisket barbecue was already cooked, and all I had to do was help tote a few buckets of coal from one barn to the next. When Bill arrived, the forge fire was ready & after some introductions, he began forging a pair of tongs for use during his demo. Simple and to the point, it took about an hour of which he apologized because it use to take him about 30 minutes. Quite a few observers had already arrived and Bill demonstrated a few unique items and we were all curious about what prices he got. I usually just have a tip can on the table he said, for people to leave whatever they want and that has worked well. Henry Vera assisted Bill by hunting down certain steel sizes, holding pieces for Bill to forge, and Kevin Stanford helped out by forging a coal rake for Bill. The open forge was available to everyone, but listening to Bill tell a few stories about his earlier career as a farrier was quite entertaining.

The next morning demonstration began with introductions and of course a memorial citation of bygone blacksmith friends and family that was followed by prayer and ringing of the anvil by everyone in attendance. Bill forged several pieces that morning such as a horse head with a tail from a single horseshoe, a leaf keychain fob, a double twist handle for attachment to any appropriate tool, and one of my goals to forge, a 3/8 round bar flattened then separated into the shape of a heart

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which is subsequently forge welded at the bottom to form a hook.

I counted about 40 people in the audience but the group continued to grow as well as 'Iron in The Hat' donations. Vince Herod held a live auction before lunch, and then we were all treated as special guests by Marsha and her assistants with the feast that followed. There were plenty of sweet treats to go along, mine being the lemon cookies baked by Jan Lee.

Bill continued the demonstrations well into the afternoon, another live auction, and finally the forging of a rams head was started. This all done with hammer and chisel (no bandsaw like me), as well as the technique of quenching the outspread horns, then the proximal face to complete the head to display proper and pronounced features. I think this will definitely help me complete my past years of attempts in finally mastering that task.

I elected to leave early that afternoon but did observe enough to reflect on the creativity of blacksmithing and the basics of moving hot metal to improve my struggles and accomplishments. When I first started into blacksmithing, I purchased a book from a feed store written by Lorelei Sims and in conclusion she writes that "Taking the mystery out of blacksmithing does not take the magic out of the craft. When you understand how metal moves, and how to control the metal movement, you gain the knowledge, which enhances the magic." This underscores my experience about watching Bill Epps, and certainly inspires me to try even harder.

Thank you Marsha and Jerry Whitley, and members of Balcones Forge for another memorable forge demonstration.

Tim Tellander  
Balcones Forge Secretary

## Hammer For Sale

There is a guy in Floresville with a 50 lb Moloch power hammer that he has done some upgrading on. He will likely list it on the Balcones website as he is having trouble getting the HABA folks to respond. He's asking \$4000.00 for it. His number is 210-279-3518. I didn't get his name because my hearing is poor but he's a friend of Wayne Byrd.

Submitted by Gary Hilton

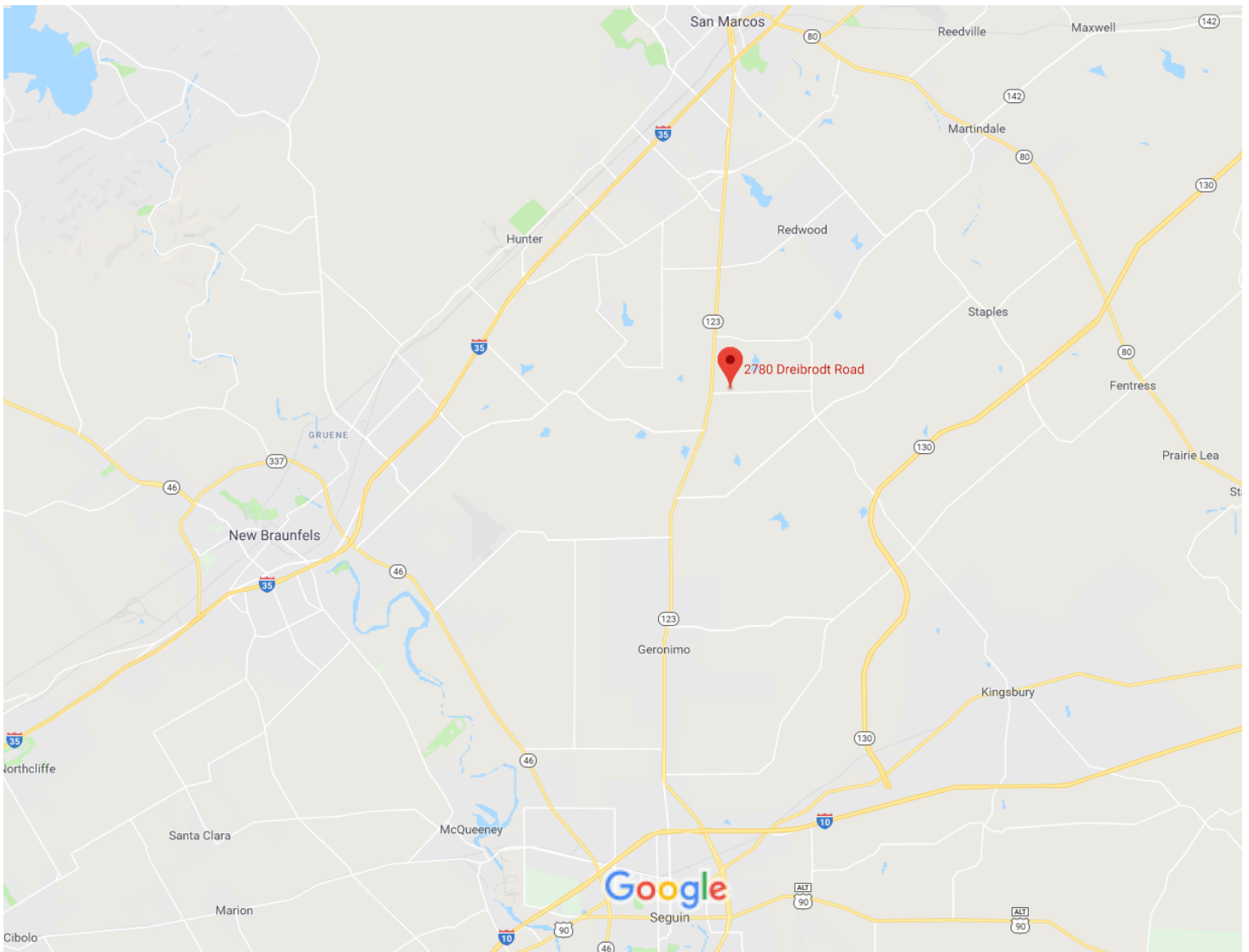
## Future Meetings

Dec 15, San Antonio, TX. Trade Item will be a letter opener.

Jan 26, Austin, TX. Mary Jo and Sue will demo at Mobile Loaves & Fishes.

Feb 16, Bryan, TX. Join the Lee Brothers for their annual Combo-demo.

## 2780 Dreibrodt Rd



# Map to November Meeting

# Directions to November Meeting

From IH 35, at San Marcos take Hwy 123 toward Seguin, at Zorn, TX, turn right on Dreiboldt Rd to 2780, Blackhawk Millworks. 78666

From IH 10, at Seguin take Hwy 123 toward San Marcos,, at Zorn, TX turn left on Dreiboldt Rd to 2780, Blackhawk Millworks. 78666

When you can't find it, Doug Caroselli can be reached at 512-738-1770

## Trade Item for November is something made from both metal and wood.

October 2012

Pittsburgh Area Artist – Blacksmiths Association

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## A Quick Scroll Wrench

Jim Bequette - j.d.bequette@gmail.com

*This article was sent to us by Jim via PAABA Member, Chuck Hughes*

1) Start with a piece of flat bar suitable for the size of the wrench needed (I used 3/4" x 1/2" for my last one). Dress the corners of the the bar.

2) Punch or drill two holes for the prongs. Make sure there is adequate material on the side walls of the holes. I used 7/16" diameter.

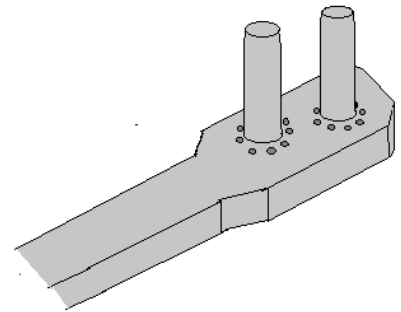
3) Forge a taper on the end of some 7/16" round stock for the prongs. When you calculate the length be sure to account for the thickness of the handle material when you decide on the length.

4) With the prongs in place take a heat and use a center or ball punch to punch a number of dimples around the base of the prongs. Place them close enough to the prongs so the material grips the prong tightly.

5) Dress all sharp edges.

This tool can be forged quickly with minimal tooling and works well. I place my dimples in an alternating pattern (12 o'clock, 6 o'clock, 9 o'clock and so forth).

You can draw the handle out or leave it full. I find it convenient to leave it full so I can lock it securely in the vise when needed.





## Just Try Two! by Glenn Horr

1. This little jig idea that can make a difference in your work.

Right and left handed twisted square bar welded side by side to a block so I can use it on my hammer.

Makes a nice leaf form or whatever.

I have used round and square stock, square is nice to use on the diamond.



2. Thought this tip may be something folks would be interested in. Sometime back, someone told me about using nonstick cooking spray for weld-spatter, works OK, (but a mess to clean if you are painting). I was

forging with spring dies, also those leaf dies, the cooking spray was on the bench...Hey, why not try it as a die release, so I did, works OK.! It was just the cheap stuff.

## Lighten Up! By Grant Michener

This candleholder known as a "Window Sash" or "Night Stick", was made at Brad Weber's during our May, 2016 WRABA/PAABA, joint meeting. Grant Michener demonstrated making this item which is a perfect project for a gift, fund raiser item, or just for fun using material you already have in the shop!

Grant's interest is early colonial ironwork. He has a small shop at his home, but is also active at the Century Village, located in Burton, Ohio. He started out with a pie tin, a hair dryer and some mud as his first forge...that is what you call ingenuity and determination! Needless to say, he has refined his forging equipment and also has developed his skills.



He is greatly inspired by the work of Jerry Darnell from Mill Creek Forge in North Carolina. Jerry's work is greatly admired by many smiths that love colonial houseware ironwork. With Grant's keen interest, apprenticeship working with Ralph Neumiester, and an excellent reference point of Jerry Darnell, we will be seeing more of his work in the future!



### Materials:

1/4" X 1 1/4" X 4 3/4"

5/16" round bar about 5" long

Candle cup material-16gauge (see pattern below)

3/16" rivet

### For Bottom Plate:

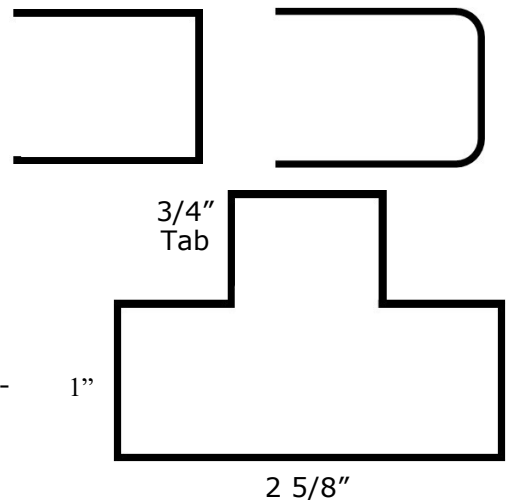
1. Round corners on flat bar. (Right)
2. Texture and chamfer edges.
3. Let air cool

### For Handle:

1. Scroll one end of the round bar.
2. Flatten other end about 1/2" and make shoulder.
3. Let air cool.
4. Drill Hole, and counter sink in plate and flatten end of handle, ready to rivet.

### For Candle Cup:

1. Use a swage block to round candle cup, do the ends first.
2. Tip: Place in fire to get rid of "shiny".
3. Cold rivet candle cup and adjust handle.



## DEMO OPPORTUNITY

Hello and Happy Fall!

I am president of the Friends of Nameless School, a one-room schoolhouse and the one remaining structure of the Nameless Community on Nameless Road in Northwestern Travis County. You can find us on Facebook to see more about us at Friends of Nameless School.

We are again inviting the community and surrounding areas to spend some time at the school to experience some old-time festivities from the late 1800s to early 1900s.

To that end, we hope to have soap makers, story tellers, spinners and weavers, folks who might present some “living history”, reenactors, and demonstrators from bygone eras (Civil War, early West), music, etc.

In addition to our “Day in Historic Nameless” we will also host our biennial community-wide barbecue. If the April 2019 Saturday is anything like this past April 7, we will be even more crowded inside the schoolhouse—but that’s ok!

We won’t be charging money to attend, nor will we offer remuneration to presenters/participants. We are a non-profit, 501(c)(3) association, so any participating you do will qualify as tax-deductible on your part.

We hope you’ll consider sending a representative (or several!) to join us **Saturday, April 13, 2019** for A Day in Historic Nameless. Please forward this to friends who also might be interested in joining us! Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Mary Cameron, President  
Friends of Nameless School  
maryc2@austin.rr.com

## ANOTHER (MUCH SOONER)

### DEMO OPPORTUNITY

I wanted to reach out to Balcones Forge to see if any of your members would be interested in volunteering for a huge field trip we have coming up here at the Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg.

On **November 26 and 27, 2018** we will have 220 students come through the museum for a field trip tour. Since it’s such a large group, I’m hoping to have several presenters on the grounds to show the children different aspects of pioneer life, and I’d love for blacksmithing to be a part.

Would any of the Balcones Forge members like to come and volunteer on one or both of those days? It would be 3 or 4 hours each morning, and about 110 children per day coming through in small groups.

If anyone is interested in this opportunity, let me know and send your information to me? I can give any additional details and take it from there.

Thanks, and I look forward to hearing from the members of Balcones Forge!

Caitlin Hoover  
Program Director, Pioneer Museum  
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(512)809-9394



# ABANA

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Student .....\$45     Contributing.....\$100

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\$5 discount for two year memberships and renewals

ABANA Chaper Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Application may also be made at the ABANA web site:

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Submit check, money order (US banks only), or by credit card:

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