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# THE FORGE FIRE

The Newsletter of the Indiana Blacksmithing Association, Inc.

**An Affiliate Of The Artists-Blacksmiths' Association of North America, Inc.**

IBA is a Not For Profit Indiana Corporation recognized by the IRS under section 501(c)(3)

10:00 AM is the regular meeting time for IBA Hammer-Ins  
with beginner training available at 9:00 AM.  
**PLEASE MAKE SURE TO ASK FOR HELP!**

**If you would like an IBA membership application form,  
please contact Farrel Wells, Membership Secretary  
(765) 768-6235.**

BULK LOTS ARE AVAILABLE TO DEMONSTRATORS,  
SHOPS, SHOWS AND OTHERS WILLING TO MAKE THEM AVAILABLE.  
WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP.

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**More nearby resources and organizations for blacksmiths:**

**Rural Smiths of Mid-America:**  
Meetings are on the first Saturday of each month  
Call Moe Handy  
(317) 862-5647 for details.

## IBA MEETING SCHEDULE

Check the latest *Forge Fire* for monthly IBA revisions.

Jan 19  
2013

**FALL CREEK BLACKSMITH SHOP  
MIDDLETOWN**

Feb 16  
2013

**KEN DETTMER SHOP  
COLUMBUS**

Mar 16  
2013

**IBA BUSINESS MEETING**

Apr 20  
2013



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HAMMER IN

## **Dates to Remember**

March 15-17  
ABANA  
Convention

April 13-14  
New Salem  
(Illinois)  
Hammer In

May 31—June 2  
IBA Conference

July 19-21  
UMRBC  
(Pontiac)

## **Editors Message**

Happy New Year!!

The December Hammer In was a great success. Doc (Vicki) Shertz put on a wonderful demonstration, making stag horn hinges. Her was beautiful as she split and forged the hinges. Quite a bit of time and tweaking was required to produce two identical pieces. Tom Shertz assisted, and he also provided a quick demonstration on forging slitting chisel out of a ball peen hammer. As always Chaz Kaiser was a great host. The crowd was large and everyone had a good time.

The first hammer in of 2013 will be hosted by the Fall Creek group at John Zile's shop in Middletown. John provided the following information about the demonstration:

*Andy Davis has agreed to do the demo at the Jan.19th meeting . I left the topic up to him. He is an IBA member, specializing in Knives and Swords. Hope to see you at the meeting also. John*

This edition of the Forge Fire has a wide variety of information.

For members in the southern part of the state, take a look on page 6. The Kentucky Blacksmith's Association is looking to revitalize itself. If you have interests in both Indiana and Kentucky blacksmithing, you may want to participate.

There are number of upcoming events:

- ABANA is hosting a 40th anniversary conference March 15-17 in Columbus, Georgia. Check the ABANA website (<http://www.abana.org/Conventions/2013Convention.shtml>) for details.
- Also in March is a Little Giant power hammer class, details on page 10.
- The Illinois blacksmiths have their annual New Salem Hammer In April 13 & 14 (see pg 11 for details).
- The IBA Business Meeting will be held in March. I misplaced my information on the location. Check the February Forge Fire for details.

**Visit the IBA website at: [www.indianablacksmithing.org](http://www.indianablacksmithing.org)**

## IBA Satellite Groups and News

### **Sutton-Terock Memorial Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Fred Oden (574) 223-3508  
 Dennis Todd (574) 542-4886

### **Wabash Valley Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Doug Moreland (217) 284-3457  
 Max Hoopengartner (812) 249-8303

### **Maumee Valley Blacksmiths**

Meet: 2nd and 4th Saturday  
 Contact: Clint Casey (260) 627-6270  
 John Schamber (260) 579-7303

### **Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Ted Stout (765) 572-2467

### **Whitewater Valley Blacksmiths**

Meet: 2nd Saturday  
 Contact: Keith Hicks (765) 914-6584

### **Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths**

Meet: 1st Saturday  
 Contacts: Doug Neukam (812) 259-4430  
 Steve Stoll (812) 486-9668  
 Kathy Malone (812) 725-3310

### **Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild**

2013, I just got used to writing 2012, where does time go? I guess if we are having fun time travels fast. Our next Rocky Forge meeting will be Saturday, January 12 at Ted's shop. Coffee and doughnuts will be ready by 8:30. I am ready to start our new year with a clean slate, no shows, no demonstrations, no serious commitments until mid year. Lets meet on the 12th and have some fun talking, blacksmithing, eating and doing some more blacksmithing. The theme of the day will making cheese cutters, yes cheese cutters. We plan on cutting the cheese that day. If your design requires a wire, Dominick is bringing a roll of 0.035 stainless wire. Go to the internet, look in the catalogs or search your mind for a neat design.

For lunch bring some cash and we will order pizza from Arnie's and split the cost. If you want to bring some health food to offset the pizza feel free to do so. Also, bring your favorite beverage (non alcoholic please). The weather forecast is iffy for that day so some of you may or may not be able to work outside (I know, Searcy and McCormick will be outside). If you want to bring a gas forge to work inside that is okay too. Don't forget iron in the hat, the club really needs the proceeds.

I hope to see several new members at this meeting so make everyone welcome and ready to give some instruction. Remember we were all there once. See you all on the 12th.

Ted

### **Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 2nd Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contact: Ray Sease (812) 522-7722

### **Fall Creek Blacksmith Shop**

Meet: 4th Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: John Zile: (765) 533-4153  
 Larry Singer (765) 643-5953  
 Farrel Wells (765) 768-6235

### **St. Joe Valley Forgers**

Meet: 4th Saturday at 9 AM  
 Contacts: Bill Conyers (574) 277-8729  
 John Latowski (574) 344-1730

### **The Southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers**

Contacts: Billy Merritt (812) 338-2876  
 Steve King (812) 797-0059  
 Jeff Reinhardt 812-949-7163

### **One Armed Blacksmith's Shop**

Meet: 1st Saturday  
 Contact: Tim Metz (812) 447-2606

### **"Doc" Ramseyer Blacksmith Shop**

Location: 6032W 550N, Sharpsville, IN 46060  
 Meet: 3rd Sunday at 2 PM  
 Contacts: Mike Kelley  
 Charles Gruell (765) 513-5390

## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop

The Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmith Shop was opened at 6:15 am by John Cummins, Jim Watts, and Kevin Walsh. John waited until he was sure the coffee pot arrived around 7:30 to start the forge fire. Bill Kendrick was our first demonstrator. He began by making a Holiday Ornament Hanger as featured in *The FORGE FIRE*. Fine work, if I do say so myself. Carson Harral decided to make one for himself. Meanwhile, Kenny Dettmer forge welded a piece of hay rake to make a fire striker for flint. Carson decided to make a "S" hook from 1/4" sq. and twist it to go with the ones he made last meeting. He then made a second ornament hanger just to practice his skills at the anvil. We winterized the shop, cleaned up, put up and said good-bye to the Vernon shop until next year. Our next meeting will be a joint venture with the State IBA meeting at the forge of Chaz Kaiser at Batesville. Its a pitch-in so bring something.

January meeting will be at my house (Paul Bray, 139 South Park Drive, Seymour. Food furnished.) February meeting will be at Kevin Walsh and Pam Triplett. 6717 Tunnel Mill Rd., Charlestown. This is a pitch-in also. Anyone who has tasted Pam's cooking would not want to miss this. March is to be at Jim and Mary Lou Watts, 1813 S. County Rd. 175W, Versailles. Maps and other details are pending.

Have a safe Holiday and tell those you love that you do. Time is short. Paul Bray

### "Doc" Ramseyer Blacksmith Shop

November 17 had forge going 1:30

Larry Whitesell came in with a hasp shaped in a way it was felt would work good for locking the doors on the log house giving a better appearance for the doors. We left Mike Kelley a phone message to get his feeling about the style and function. Next Larry started working on a horse shoe. This turned into a heart. He is making steak turners out of railroad spikes for the guys working in the Tipton Co. highway department. JJ made up a case with what he needs for making the porcelain items, as well as explaining the processes needed.

December 15

We had a fantastic day for the 3rd week in December. I had some simple projects I got busy on. There was a hammer I had picked up in iron in the hat at an IBA meeting that was very close in shape and style to one I already have (bent up and badly abused). Thus this gave me information as to what both of them should look like. Then from an old tool catalog I found them to be upholsterer's hammers. The catalog also showed a carpet hammer having a claw. The claw was the piece missing on mine. I made one to replace what was missing on mine. The screw for the bench vise I have been restoring was too hard to make threads in. I heated stock to temperature that stock lost magnetism. I then left the stock in the fire while the fire died to normalize. When later I threaded the stock I had no problems.

Larry and JJ came by before the day was over. So no matter how great the day is for blacksmithing when the Colts and Bears are playing football the blacksmithing loses.

To a Happy Healthy New Year! Sincerely Charles Gruell



## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths

The Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths met on December 1, 2012. We had another really great day, the weather was nice and we had about 27 people in attendance. Once again we had some ladies here this time, 5 in all. We had some teaching and mentoring going on which is not uncommon at our meetings. The Byers were back and were learning and working. There were 4 forges in operation and were kept busy all day long. Athan Lamson and Garrett Pickett were working on knives with some help from William Pratt and Aaron Baker. Aaron was also working on something Damascus. Chuck Kryder was making an anvil tool to bend rod. Dakota Smith was working on a stainless billet.



Alan

Brazzell was making a cross Fleur-de-lis. Jim Staley was making a pair of tongs. We had fun as usual with iron in the hat and the food was great as usual. I have included a picture of Jerry Robinette posing for the camera doing what he does best. (Sorry Jerry I couldn't resist) It was another good day of visiting, storytelling, eating and work, which is how it should be. Thanks to all of you who attend and bring food to share we couldn't do this without all of you. You are all great and we appreciate every one of our members and attendees. And as I always say, "If you have too many irons in the fire, don't lose your temper."





## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### The Southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers



### Kentucky Blacksmith's Association "Call for Revitalization"

Matthew and Karine Maynard would like to host a meeting to discuss the revitalization of the Kentucky Blacksmith's Association (KBA) from 1 to 3 pm, Saturday the 26th of January at Maynard Studios. Maynard Studios is located at 1986 Fox Creek Rd, Lawrenceburg, KY 40342. (Business only, no forge required).

If you have any questions, please contact Karine Maynard at (502) 604-3000 or at <http://www.maynardstudios.com/>.

### Looking for an Anvil

Les Hoover is looking to buy an anvil, preferably 180 lb or larger. If you have an anvil for sale contact Les at phone: 270-836-7449 or email [les@lbhinc.com](mailto:les@lbhinc.com)

## Pick-up Tongs

Michael Wollowski  
wollowski@rose-hulman.edu

The tongs you see in figure 1 are designed to pick up pieces accidentally dropped on the floor. Despite my best intentions and some kick-ass tongs I purchased and built over the years, there are times when a piece just slips. The tongs I have do a very good job at holding stock, but to pick up materials from the floor, they do not do that well. Many times, I find myself doing acrobatics picking up a hot piece of steel off the floor.



Figure 1: The modified tongs.



Figure 2: Off-Center brand V-bit tongs

After a good amount of trial and error, I decided to modify some tongs I already had. I rather much like the Off-Center brand V-bit tongs (see Figure 2). They are light-weight tongs with an additional V-notch to hold pieces perpendicular to the bits. These tongs do a fine job handling materials and they are somewhat of a workhorse in my shop. However, they are not made to pick-up stock off the floor.

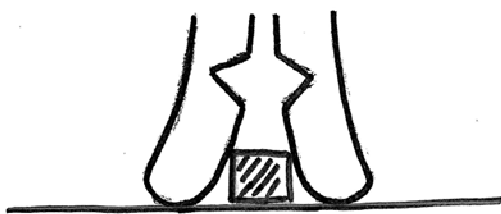


Figure 3: Stock V-bit tongs grab poorly

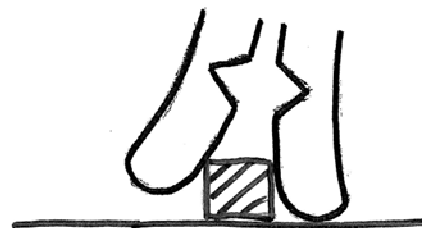


Figure 4: When tilted, the tongs will lift

Consider figures 3 and 4. In those figures, the shapes of the bits are exaggerated to make a point. In figure 3, notice that a square piece would be held at its top-edges. Any slight wiggle and the piece you are holding will drop to the floor again. Trying to pick up flat stock or round stock is nearly impossible. Furthermore, if you were to tilt the tongs a little bit, as shown in figure 4, one bit will lift naturally. However, due to the straight end of the bits, both bits will be further lifted off the floor. This makes it almost impossible to pick up anything.

As it turns out, the solution to both of these problems is very straightforward and easy to accomplish. Consider figures 5 and 6. In order to avoid that the tongs lift off the ground when tilting them, simply grind the bit ends to about a 75 degree angle. To ensure that a piece is securely held, extend the lower portion of the V to the end

of the bits so that the bit ends come to a fairly sharp point.

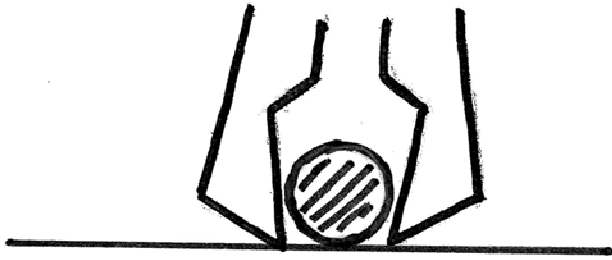


Figure 5: Points partially enclose the piece

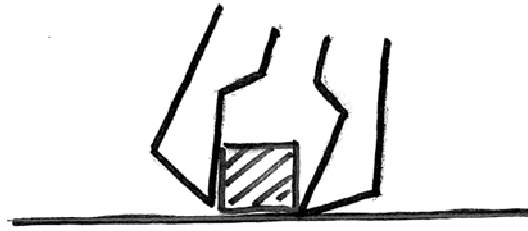


Figure 6: Tilting will not lift tongs

As shown in figure 5, the bit ends will partially enclose the lower portion of round stock, thereby holding it very securely. When it comes to square or flat stock, if your ground is uneven or more likely, if the piece is not entirely straight, you will again be able to grab the piece in a manner where the bits will partially enclose the lower portion. If the piece and your floor are flat, then the force exerted by the points will hold square and flat pieces fairly securely. Alternatively, when tilting the tongs, the bit on the ground may just slide underneath the piece.

## Penetrating Oils

Machinist's Workshop MagT recently published some information on various penetrating oils that I found very interesting. Some of you might appreciate this. The magazine reports they tested penetrates for break out torque on rusted nuts. They are below, as forwarded by an ex-student and professional machinist. They arranged a subjective test of all the popular penetrates with the control being the torque required to remove the nut from a "scientifically rusted" environment.

Penetrating oil	Average torque load to loosen
No Oil used	516 pounds
WD-40	238 pounds
PB Blaster	214 pounds
Liquid Wrench	127 pounds
Kano Kroil	106 pounds
ATF*-Acetone mix	53 pounds

The ATF-Acetone mix is a "home brew" mix of 50 - 50 automatic transmission fluid and acetone. Note this "home brew" released bolts better than any commercial product in this one particular test.

Our local machinist group mixed up a batch and we all now use it with equally good results. Note also that "Liquid Wrench" is almost as good as "Kroil" for about 20% of the price.

Steve from Godwin-Singer says that ATF-Acetone mix is best, but you can also use ATF and lacquer thinner in a 50-50 mix. \*ATF=Automatic Transmission Fluid

Editors Note: The above information was supplied by Richard Metz



## Lining a Fire Pot

*by Daniel Kretchmar*

I got my clay out of several different holes in the ground at various reenactments. I have found that regular pure clay (no additives) will eventually crack, particularly if you are forge welding or getting a big fire going like we sometimes do for demos.

I have been making my own fire clay for a while now and it seems to work. I got the recipe from a book on how to make an adobe oven.



Take a lot of small dry irregular chunks of clay (1" diameter or smaller), the smaller the better and fire them in your forge (a gas forge works best for this). If you don't have a gas forge (which considering the thread, you likely don't), broken clay garden pots work too! The trick is to get clay that has been fired already.

Break it into tiny pieces. I put on my boots and crushed them on the concrete floor. It doesn't have to be powder, but it has to be smaller enough to stir. I also put fiber in mine for strength. I use natural rope fibers (manila/hemp/sisal/even grass clippings). I cut the rope into 1" pieces and separate the threads.

My recipe is:

- 2 cups wet clay
- 1 cup white sandbox sand
- 1 cup crushed fired clay
- 1 loose quart of fiber rope cuttings

I mix until it is uniform. I add enough water that a 1" ball of the mixture will deform slightly but stay together when being dropped from 4 feet off the ground. I then pack it just like Wes does using a hammer and a 2x4. I have several forges that have this lining that have lasted for years without any repair.

**Dan**

## **LEARN HOW TO MAKE YOUR LITTLE GIANT POWER HAMMER WORK HARDER THAN EVER!**

Please join us March 22-24, 2013 for our annual Little Giant Rebuilding Seminar!

This class was first taught by our good friend Fred Caylor of Zionsville, Indiana. We carry on his tradition of teaching people how to make Little Giants run well and hit hard.

This 2 ½ day class is a hands-on format. You will help transform a 25 LB Little Giant hammer from functional but sloppy condition into a well tuned, quiet, hard working hammer. Sid Suedmeier, owner of Little Giant, will share all his knowledge and experience gained from working with Fred and from 20+ years of repairing and rebuilding Little Giants.

An old style 25 LB Little Giant will be rebuilt during the class, and a new style machine will be on hand to demonstrate proper assembly and adjustment of both styles. All information applies to all sizes of Little Giants.

The class is held in our shop in historical Nebraska City, Nebraska. The city has a wide variety of cafes, outlets (including Pendleton Woolen Mills), antique and gift shops, orchards and museums. Friday night a tour of the Kregel Windmill Museum is open to all class participants. Learn more about this at [KregelWindmill-Museum.org](http://KregelWindmill-Museum.org).

## **IF YOU HAVE A LITTLE GIANT, THIS CLASS IS FOR YOU!**

No experience is required to attend this class. Past students have ranged from age 15 to 90, and from all walks of life. Anyone who wants to learn will benefit from this class. We approach the rebuilding process using tools that can be found in the average home workshop.

If you are in the market to buy a power hammer, this class will make you an educated shopper. If you already own a Little Giant, or any other brand of power hammer, this class will teach you how to get the best performance possible.

The class costs \$95, refundable up to 7 days prior to the class; advance registration is required. We limit the class to 25 participants. The class starts at 9 AM sharp on Friday, and usually ends by Saturday evening. The schedule runs Sunday until noon in case we encounter any exceptional problems in rebuilding, and to answer remaining questions. The last 2 years the class has filled up by the end of January.

When we receive your registration, we will send you a city map, along with travel and hotel information.

Airports are located in Omaha (45 miles north), Lincoln (50 miles west) and Kansas City (125 miles south).

## **2013 REGISTRATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

### **PAYMENT**

Check enclosed  
Visa  
MasterCard  
Discover  
American Express  
Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **POWER HAMMER INFO**

Brand: \_\_\_\_\_  
Size: \_\_\_\_\_  
Serial Number: \_\_\_\_\_

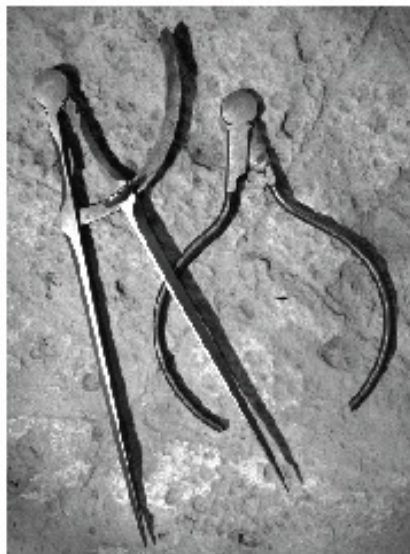
*Please call or email if you have any questions, or prefer to register by phone. You can reach us at 402.873.6603 or [lgiant@windstream.net](mailto:lgiant@windstream.net)  
Little Giant is located at 420 4<sup>th</sup> Corso, Nebraska City, NE 68410.*

# 31<sup>st</sup> Annual New Salem Hammer In

by Allen Ortery

The new year is here and that means soon it will be time for the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual New Salem Hammer In. The 2013 hammer in promises to be, as usual, a great way to start the new season. 2013's Hammer In will be held Saturday and Sunday, April 13th and 14th, starting at 10:00 AM each day. Of course we will have a tailgating area and a gallery area for you to show your recent work. Janet Lorange will again be offering an excellent buffet style lunch on both days.

The demonstrator for the upcoming event is Peter Ross. Peter Ross took his first blacksmith lesson at Stonybrook Museums, in 1970. After attending the Rhode Island School of Design he worked his way through various shops working as a blacksmith until he became the Master blacksmith at Colonial Williamsburg. Peter worked to promote the study of blacksmithing through historically accurate processes. He remained at the museum from 1979 to 2004. Peter has now begun pursuing his own venture of producing historic hardware reproductions in his own studio. Peter has demonstrated nationally at several ABANA conferences as well as most craft schools in the United States.



Calipers and dividers made by Peter Ross

At the Hammer In Peter will be making a set of dividers and some simple hearthware. We have no powerhammer or treadle-hammer at New Salem so he will be working the historic way - by using a striker.



Peter Ross holding a pair of calipers.

New Salem State Historic Site is 20 miles northwest of Springfield, IL on Route 97. The Hammer In is held in the maintenance building. There will be anvil signs along the way or you can contact me for a map. There is food & lodging near the demonstration area and New Salem State Historic Site has campsites available with or without electricity.

For more information email me at [bluestoneforge@gmail.com](mailto:bluestoneforge@gmail.com) or write to

Bluestone Forge  
ATTN: Hammer In  
P.O. Box 1077  
Galesburg, IL 61401

Registration Fee (before March 29, 2013): \$15/day

Late Registration or at the door: \$20/day

Saturday night dinner: \$5/person

Dinners available with pre-registration only

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Early Registration Fee (\$15/day) \_\_\_\_\_  
Late Registration Fee (\$20/day) \_\_\_\_\_  
# of meals @ \$5.00 each \_\_\_\_\_  
Total enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

❖ Make checks payable to New Salem Lincoln League ❖



## **The *FORGE FIRE***

Newsletter of the  
Indiana Blacksmithing Association,  
Inc.

**Bill Kendrick** *Newsletter Editor*

1280 N CR 900 W  
Seymour, IN 47274

First Class Mail

Address Correction Requested  
If Undeliverable return to sender  
With original address legible

### **Fall Creek Blacksmith Shop - January 21**

3380 W 650 N, MIDDLETOWN, IN 47356

SULFUR SPRINGS IS 3 MILES WEST OF IN. 3 ON US 36 AND APPROX. 12 MILES EAST OF PENDLETON ON US 36. GO NORTH AT THE FLASHING LIGHT (300W), TRAVEL NORTH FOR 1 1/2 MILES, TURN LEFT (WEST) ONTO 650 NORTH. JOHN'S HOUSE IS THE FIRST DRIVE.

CALL JOHN AT (765) 533-4153 IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.

LUNCH WILL BE AT THE IRON KETTLE IN SULFUR SPRINGS.

### **Kenny Dettmer's Shop**

February 18

15721 S 250W Columbus, IN

**From the North:** take I 65 S to Ogilville / Walesboro (exit 64) turn. right. Go to the 1st cross-roads (300 W). Turn left. Approx 1 mile to the "T". Turn left (600s). Go to 250W. Approx. 4 miles to a brick house on your left.

**From the South:** I 65N to Jonesville exit 55 turn. right, go to road 950 (in Jonesville). Turn left. Go to 250W turn. right. Kenny's house is approx 1/2 mile on your right .

Please bring a dish to share.