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March 2015

# 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)

9:30 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 Ron Gill  
317-374-8323 for details

## IBA MEETING SCHEDULE

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

Mar 21 2015	<b>BUSINESS MEETING</b> <b>DOC RAMSEYER SHOP</b>
Apr 18 2015	<b>TBD</b>
May 16 2015	<b>TBD</b>
June 5-7 2015	<b>IBA CONFERENCE</b>



<u>INDEX</u>
PGS 3-7 SATELLITE NEWS
PG 8 FORGING TIPS
PG 9 VARIOUS NEWS ITEMS
PG 10 DIVIDERS AND CLASSES
PG 11 MORE FORGING TIPS

#### Dates to Remember

- March 21  
IBA Business Meeting
- June 5-7  
IBA Conference
- July 17-19  
UMRBC (Pontiac)

## Editors Message

I will start by admitting to several errors in last months Forge Fire.

- First, the Business Meeting will be on Saturday March 21. The back page of the February edition incorrectly listed the date as the 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Second, Jeff Reinhardt is the candidate running for the Board of Directors position. In a typical moment of mental weakness I typed in a different first name. Corrected ballots are available on the IBA website and correct paper ballots will be available at the Business Meeting. If you have already mailed your ballot, I believe all votes cast for Reinhardt will be credited to Jeff.

If you have candidates for Rookie of the Year or Blacksmith of the Year, please contact Charlie Helton (email: heltoncs@frontier.com or phone: 812-591-3119). Application guidelines are available at the IBA website and in the last two issues of the Forge Fire.

In the middle of page 9 is link to a South Bend TV news item featuring Bill Conyers and Jamie DePriest. It is an excellent report on Bill mentoring college students. I encourage you to take a look.

This edition contains several tips and small articles of interest. On page 8 I have drawn from my own experiences with respect to forging flat stock back to square and working with pipe or tubing. If you have any added comments on these topics feel free to share them.

In the January Forge Fire, I briefly mentioned the Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild has requested financial support from the IBA for their new building. The topic was discussed in the December board meeting and tabled for further discussion at this months annual business meeting. Historically the IBA has limited monetary expenditures to operating expenses and tool acquisitions. This would be the first expenditure for a permanent structure. If you have strong feelings about this subject, I encourage you to attend the business meeting. If you are unable to attend, please share your thoughts with one or more board members.

Hope to see you at the business meeting on March 21.

## 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 Hoopengarner (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

### **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 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

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

The Jennings County Historical Society Blacksmiths met at the forge of Bill Kendrick at Hayden, IN. Charlie Helton started off by making a square punch from a 1/2" allen wrench to make a nail header. John Wendel began making the nail header with the assistance of Charlie Helton and Kenny Dettmer. These two items is the start of our box, intended for the conference. John Cummins made sure this header would work by making a few nails as a test. (Rumor has it that Bill may have just lost an allen wrench.) Jack Newcomb and Jake Lewis worked on crosses for a while. John Cummins made a "weeping heart" from 1/4" rod in honor of St. Valentine's Day. March meeting is to be at the forge of Kevin Welsh, 25619 Gill Rd., Nabb IN, 47147. Bring a friend, something for iron-in-the-hat and pitch in.

A special note: This marks the beginning of our 16th year as a satellite of the IBA. Many thanks to all who have worked so hard to make this an exceptional experience. Paul Moffit and men like him are the reason we keep the spirit of the art alive. We should be back to Vernon in April for those who were wanting to know.

## **IBA Conference**

### **Group Project Theme: Garden bench or seat.**

## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths

The Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths met on March 7th, 2015. The sun was out and it was a beautiful day. We had about 30 people in attendance.

Jeff Reinhardt demonstrated how to make a wizard spike. He was visiting from the Southern Indiana Meteorite Mashers. We were pleased to see him.



Aaron Baker is working on making a fluxing spoon. He is always so willing to help everyone.



Brian Dessauer made a point.. His first blacksmith project. Also he made his first s hook. He is hooked. He will be back next month.



Jerry Robinette made a really nice cross to raffle off next month. Be sure to buy a ticket!

We had a wonderful meal. Thanks to all that came and shared their food and lives with us. Don't forget we are having an April 4th meeting at Elnora. Hope to see you there.



## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths

The Bunkum Valley Metalsmiths met on February 7, 2015. It was a beautiful sunny day for blacksmiths. We have around 41 people in attendance. We had some great ham and beans and fried potatoes and many deserts to mention. The power hammer was really getting some use.



Kyle Malone has made a cool looking axe. We welcome Joe and Pam Reeves this meeting. He brought his new forge. (He is using his grandpa's forge and anvil.) Pam makes a wonderful sugar cream pie!



Jim Malone raffled off an axe that he had made.



Jerry Robinette had the lucky number.

Well thanks to all that came and shared food and their lives with us. See you next month.

(Editors note: The February Forge Fire went to press early in order to get the Board of Directors ballot out as early as possible. This report was received shortly after last month's edition went to print.)

### Rural Smiths of Mid-America

The March meeting of the RSMA was held on Saturday March 7th at the shop of Ray Phelps. Everyone was happy that Tina opened up Ray's shop to us to have meetings there again. We had 43 people show up, and we got 3 new members. Very good job.

We got a good start on the garden bench. Hope we can get it done in time. We are still working on the tool box project.

The April meeting will be held at the Blacksmith shop in Johnson Co. We will be working on getting the building finished. There will be a list of who will bring tools to work with in the next RSMA newsletter. We would like to get the building finished before the tractor show in June.

Thank You  
Ron

### IBA Conference: Individual Do At Home Contest

The contest is to make tongs.

Rules: The work is to be done by a single blacksmith with up to one helper/striker.  
The helper/striker will be listed as such.  
The piece will be judged on looks and function.

## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### One-Armed Blacksmith Shop

The One-Armed Blacksmith Shop held its normal first-Saturday meeting on March 7th at its smithy located on the grounds of the Bartholomew County Historical Society's Henry Breeding farm. Members Jim Jesse, John McDaniel, Tim Metz, and Charlie Shaw were in attendance. We were happy to have guests Joseph Streigel, Jason Striegel and Matt Roberts.

The first item of business was re-installation of lighting fixtures that had been removed during installation of the new smithy ceiling panels. Thanks to Andy Higginbotham for his donation of enough galvanized metal roofing panels to sheath the entire ceiling.

Once lighting was restored, a forge fire was started and our guests were provided the opportunity to work on basic smithing skills.

As time for the noon meal rolled around, the forge fire served to warm Jim's home-made bread, John's corn-bread, and Charlie's desert pastries. Tim provided the main dish --- "last-minute chili". Once lunch had settled, the forge fire once again found use as Jim demonstrated his technique for forge welding a nice knife blank from a 12" piece of cable provided by Charlie.

L to R: Charlie, Tim, and Jim install ceiling panels.

There will be no April meeting due to conflict with Easter weekend.

The next work session will focus on addition of an attic access ladder and closing of the attic access opening – which should wrap up the smithy ceiling project.

John McDaniel - OABS Reporter  
(Photos by J. McDaniel)

L to R: Matt, Joseph, Jason observe Jim's cable welding.



## IBA Satellite Groups and News (continued)

### **One-Armed Blacksmith Shop**

The One-Armed Blacksmith Shop held its normal first-Saturday meeting on February 7th at its smithy located on the grounds of the Bartholomew County Historical Society's Henry Breeding farm. Members Jim Jesse, John McDaniel, Tim Metz, and Charlie Shaw were in attendance.

A forge fire was started but its primary purpose for the day was warming cornbread that Jim Jesse and John McDaniel provided as a side to Tim Metz's pot-o'-stew. Charlie Shaw has been designated official bringer-of-brownies!

The smithy ceiling project received a major boost in the form of Andy Higginbotham's donation of enough galvanized metal roofing panels to sheath the entire ceiling. In preparation for installation of the sheathing, interfering equipment was relocated and existing overhead lights were removed.

A hearty lunch of stew and cornbread was topped off by plenty of brownies for everyone. After a short rest to let lunch settle.....and to allow time for swapping of tales...first liar didn't stand a chance!... work on the ceiling resumed.



L to R: Shaw, Metz, James cutting ceiling panels.



L to R: Metz, James, Shaw – Job well done!

By 4:00 p.m., the ceiling installation was wrapped up, tools were returned to their cases, and the smithy was swept. John McDaniel won the "Loudest Cordless Drill" contest!

Next month's work session will focus on reinstalling the light fixtures and addition of an attic access ladder.

John McDaniel - OABS Reporter

(Photos by J. McDaniel)

(Editors note: The February Forge Fire went to press early in order to get the Board of Directors ballot out as early as possible. This report was received shortly after last months edition went to print.)

## Some Forging Tips

Through the winter months, I worked on several projects that taught me some valuable lessons. I thought you might like to benefit from my mistakes.

### 1. Remove potential Hot or Cold Shuts:

While forging some heavy truck leaf springs (approximately 3" x 3/4" sections), I noticed the outer edges worked thicker than the middle. As I worked the material a crease formed in the center as shown in this picture.

I left the crease and figured it would eventually close as I continued to forge.

The crease did narrow to a fine line, but never closed.

As I approached my desired dimension of 5/8 round for a pritchel tool, I noticed the fine line had progressed to a crack completely through the material.

**Lessons Learned:** Less aggressive forging with attention to maintain a common thickness across the width of the stock can minimize the creation of shuts. If a crease appears, a grinder can be used to remove the potential shut.



### 2. Forging pipe or tubing:

Forging a cant hook for rolling logs. This required tapering the 2" pipe business end to join to a 1" pipe handle.

Safety is paramount when working with tubing. Here are some commonly communicated safety tips:

- Never forge coated or galvanized tube or pipe. The fumes are toxic.
- Plug the end of the tube with a rag and/or tape to limit heat conduction from gases flowing through the tube
- Exercise extreme caution when quenching. Sudden steam formation can blow out the end of the tube causing severe burns. Do not rely on the rag or tape plug to contain the steam.
- Larger tube diameters may carry hot coals from the forge, which can create a fire hazard.

Forging tips:

- Relatively thin wall sections can crush or collapse.
- Heat evenly to avoid soft and hard spots
- Strike easily when tapering to avoid crushing
- Rotate more often than solid stock to maintain round or square cross section
- V-blocks add another contact point, reducing tendency to crush round material
- Use a piece of round rod as a mandrel when twisting square tube. It will lessen tendency for flats to collapse to center
- Use point of horn or anvil bick to flare the end
- Guillotine tools are very useful when isolating material for diameter transitions.

## Anvil Wanted

I am looking for a double horn anvil with side-shelf and upsetting block. My primary interest is in an anvil with crisp edges that weighs about 350 pounds. If you have one for sale or know of someone who has one for sale, please call Michael Wollowski at 812-223-3000. Thank you.

## Blacksmith Aprons

My name is James Patton and I have a new line of blacksmithing aprons called FORGE-APRONS that can be Custom-Sized longer, larger or smaller, Personalized with your name or Customized with your own logo. For your reference, I have attached photos of the Original and Lap design.

Let the FORGE be with you!  
Sincerely,

James Patton

[www.FORGE-APRONS.com](http://www.FORGE-APRONS.com)  
(575) 313-4650



## Bill Conyers in the news.

See news report about Bill Conyers sharing blacksmithing skills with local students.

<http://www.wsbt.com/news/local/our-michiana-blacksmith/31455502>

## Forge Welding Class at Conner Prairie

**March 21 (Saturday)**

9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

\$130, \$120 members

Minimum 5, Maximum 10

Instructor: Nathan Allen

The basics of forge welding in a coal forge will be covered. Fire control and fluxes, chain link welding, bunch welding, and lap welding will be covered. Previous blacksmithing experience preferred. All tools and materials provided. Ages 16+

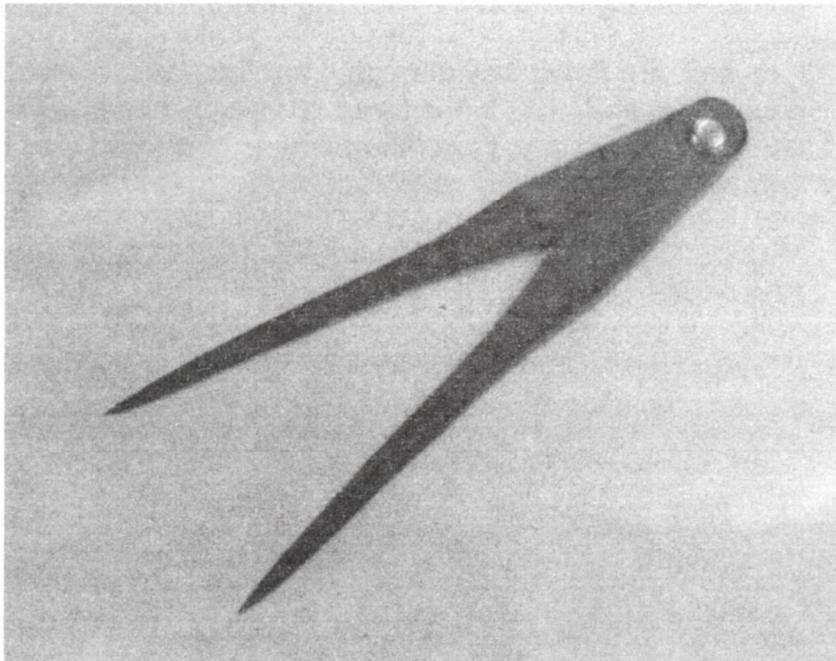
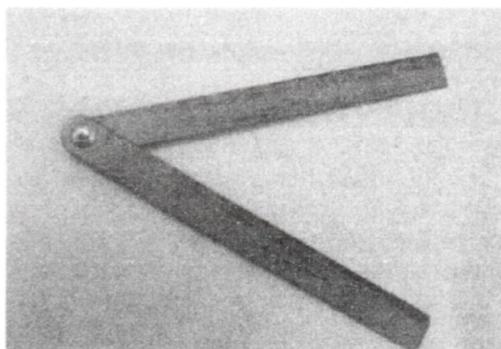
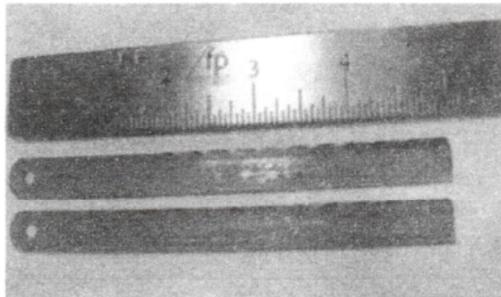
Contact Guest Services at 317-776-6000 to register

## Quick Projects – Simple Divider

Gerald Franklin

Reprinted from Tuyere march/April 2015 edition,  
newsletter of Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association.

This divider is made from a worn out or broken hacksaw blade. It's a pretty straight forward process. Just trim two equal lengths of blade, rivet them together, and then grind to shape. The rivet needs to be snug enough to provide some resistance when setting the divider.



## Blacksmith Classes

Sculptor and blacksmith, Craig Kaviar, is opening his studio to teach classes in the art of blacksmithing! Please keep in mind that ABANA members get 10% off any class.

### **Forging Tongs with Danny Downs**

2-day weekend workshop

May 16 & 17

\$375, includes all materials

### **Beginner Blacksmithing Class**

5 consecutive Saturdays from 9 am-12pm

October 3 - 31

\$425, includes all materials.

### **Tool Making**

2- day weekend workshop

November 7 & 8

\$375, includes all materials



Contact: email: [kaviargallery@gmail.com](mailto:kaviargallery@gmail.com) Phone: 502-561-0377  
Website: [craigkaviarforge.com/blacksmith-classes](http://craigkaviarforge.com/blacksmith-classes)

## Quick Tips

Reprinted from Top if the Anvil Dec/Jan 2015 edition, newsletter of Bonneville Forge Council.

1. Use a knife sharpener like the one pictured to make chisels and punches. The steel is great for holding an edge; it's on par with files. These sharpeners can be found at thrift stores for a dollar or two. I found it easy to anneal the metal, forge it into the shape I wanted then harden the business end. From one sharpener you can make two or three tools.



2. Keep a pad of paper and clipboard near-by and make quick notes and sketches when prototyping. Unfortunately, I learned this the hard way. One weekend while making hinges I started by trying to develop the ornamental detail. After three tries I got what I wanted then proceeded to create the rest of the hinge. An hour and a half later I had a hinge I felt was good. I now needed to make 5 more. When I tried remembering what size piece I started with, how far from the end I fullered and at what angle I cut the point, etc. etc. I couldn't. So I made a second hinge and kept notes; it did not end up like the first. So now I needed to make a third hinge and adjust some of the dimensions. By now I had several hours into a project and half of that time was spent chasing my tail. What I learned was ALWAYS keep notes, ESPECIALLY when prototyping. Once I have what I want I transfer the final notes and dimensions to a permanent notebook that I can refer to at a later date.

3. When I punch holes I use a Pritchel Plate so my work piece does not flair out on the back side. What I found really helps is to scribe a cross hair over the hole on the Pritchel Plate. This aids in lining up the punch with the hole. It keeps the edge of the hole in the Pritchel Plate from getting buggered up and it keeps the punch from being damaged from hitting a solid surface and not the hole.





**The FORGE FIRE**  
Newsletter of the  
Indiana Blacksmithing Association, Inc.

**Farrel Wells** *Membership Secretary*  
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Dunkirk, IN 47336-8807

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## **March 21 Annual Business Meeting**

### **Kelly Farms / Doc Ramseyer**

6032 W 550 N Sharpsville, IN 46060

Located just west of US-31. Approximately 6 miles north of SR-28 (Tipton) or 3 miles south of SR-26 (Kokomo).

Please bring a dish to share