

# Saltfork Craftsmen Artist-Blacksmith Association

January 2021



**Fireplace Set by Mandell Greteman**

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## Editor's Notes:

2020 started out with so much promise! So many great events planned for the year. So much fun to be had! And with such a nice friendly looking round, even number, what could possibly go wrong??

I usually don't give much weight to arbitrary calendar dates but I think 2020 might be a good time to make an exception. I think I am ready to see this one go. (But it is dangerous thinking to wish time away so I will just say I hope 2021 goes more smoothly overall!)

All joking aside, I am sure there have been untold numbers of lessons learned, improved ways of working, etc. All due to the adversities of 2020. At least maybe we have a renewed appreciation for social contact.

Thanks to all of you who have been sending in photos of your projects and thanks to all of the ABANA affiliates who share content with each other. Without those contributions, there would not have been much on these pages this year for sure.

So, "Welcome" 2021. Let's see what you got!

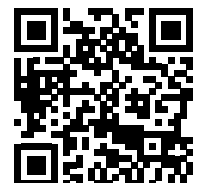
Happy New Year!

*-Russell Bartling, Editor*

The Saltfork Craftsmen Artist-Blacksmith Association, a non-profit organization. Our purposes are the sharing of knowledge, education and to promote a more general appreciation of the fine craftsmanship everywhere. We are a chapter of the Artist-Blacksmith Association of North America.

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Visit our Saltfork Craftsmen Website:  
[www.saltforkcraftsmen.org](http://www.saltforkcraftsmen.org)



## President's Notes:

Hello everyone. By the time you all read this we will be starting a new year. I truly hope everyone is doing well. I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and that we all have a good new year to come in 2021.

I hope we get to start getting together again. I miss seeing everyone. We might have to make up story's to tell for the year of 2020 when we get together again.

I have been blacksmithing some and cleaning up the shop. It's not nearly as much fun blacksmithing when there isn't someone there to give you a hard time.

Some of the smiths have been texting me photos of some of their projects. I have really enjoyed looking at them. I am trying to learn how to text back. I am not very good at it, but I can pick along and I might miss a letter once and while. I hope people know what I'm trying to say. My big fingers don't always hit where I think they should. I just need to read something before sending it.

Don't let your anvils get rusty.

Happy New Year!

Thanks, - Mandell



## All Regional Meetings are Free to Attend and are Always Open to Any Member or Guest...

New to Saltfork or just want to check out Blacksmithing but don't know where to start? These meetings are a great place for new members or guests who just want to see what it is all about to come network with like-minded people. If you want some pointers on how to get started, there is always someone happy to help get you started hammering. And guests are always welcomed.

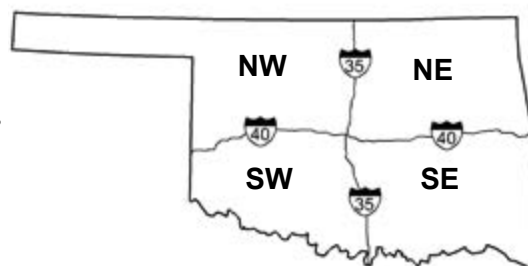
Want to host a meeting? The meeting hosting form can be found on the last page along with membership application form. If you want to host a meeting in any area, please fill out one of the host forms on the website under the calendar section or in the newsletter and e-mail the information or mail the hard copy form in as soon as possible. If you mail a form, please call or e-mail to verify that it is received. E-mail is the most convenient for me, but you can also phone in the information if you prefer. The sooner the meeting is scheduled, the more time there is to get the word out to potential attendees. -Russell Bartling 918-633-0234 or [rbartling@ionet.net](mailto:rbartling@ionet.net)

## What's My Region?

The four main regions are currently defined within the state by being separated by I35 and I40. (For example, the NW region is anything north of I40 and west of I35.)

All meetings are encouraged. These boundary definitions and regional meeting dates are a suggested framework to facilitate orderly meeting scheduling, planning and promotion with a minimum of overlaps and a maximum exposure to the greatest number of members. Not all meetings fit precisely within a rigid boundary definition and members in an area may want to hold meetings on a date that doesn't match their physical region or at a location other than their own region. This may be especially true in the center of state for areas that are close to the I35 and I40 boundary crossing. Special events such as shows, fairs, etc. may also dictate adjustments to the meeting dates within a region.

SCABA Regions



The regions are meant to be a simplification and clarification to the regional boundaries rather than a rigid restriction to any meeting scenario. ***Saltfork members all belong to one club.*** Regional boundaries are not intended to imply division within the club, but are intended to help spread distribution and promote monthly meetings.

## Safety

Blacksmithing can be an inherently dangerous exercise. There is no substitute for personal responsibility and common sense and no list of safety rules can adequately cover every situation. Every person who attends a meeting, demonstration or event sponsored by the Saltfork Craftsmen Artist Blacksmith Association (SCABA) or its members does so at their own risk and assumes all responsibility for their own safety needs. The SCABA organization, its officers, members, demonstrators, volunteers and guests disclaim any responsibility for any damages, injuries, or destruction of property resulting from the use of any information or methods published or distributed by SCABA or demonstrated at workshops, meetings, conferences or other events. SCABA recommends proper attire and safety gear and standard shop safety procedures appropriate for blacksmithing and shop work during any event where blacksmithing and other related methods are involved. Safety attire includes, but is not limited to, appropriate clothing, eyewear, hearing protection, gloves, and face shields when appropriate. It is every individual's responsibility to provide for their own safety, to determine what safety gear is appropriate for each situation and to provide, maintain and use that gear as appropriate for each individual situation.

## **2020 SCABA COVID CONFERENCE**

We do not have a cash flow like we usually do after a conference. I would like to propose that we have a silent auction and/or a live auction online to increase our cash flow. The board members have voted affirmative to have one. Therefore, we are asking for donations to auction off. Ordinarily we would have asked for donations for our conference. If you could let me or a board member know what you would be willing to donate, as soon as we have enough donations, we will organize the auction(s). Thank you for caring about our organization.

Carol Doner,  
State SCABA Secretary

## **2021 Workshop Schedule**

**Currently no workshops are scheduled.**

**The Board of Directors and the Workshop Coordinator are always looking for feedback from members on what workshops you would like to see from fundamentals to advanced. Please let them know! If there is group interest in a specific workshop topic, they will work hard to try to make it happen.**

**Have an idea for a workshop or class?** If you have an idea for a workshop that you would like to attend (or teach), please let the workshop coordinator know so that details for time and place can be worked out.

**Mandell Greteman is the SCABA Workshop Coordinator.  
Contact Mandell at 580-515-1292.**

## **Coronavirus Safety Concerns/Event Cancellations:**

With recent developments concerning COVID19, a large number of blacksmithing related events have been canceled for safety reasons. It will be more important than ever to stay posted with websites, social media, etc. and to double check before assuming events will be held.

**-Russell Bartling, Editor**

# 2021 REGIONAL MEETING SCHEDULE

NE Region (1st Sat)	SE Region (2nd Sat)	SW Region (3rd Sat)	NW Region (4th Sat)
Jan 2nd (Open)	Jan 9th (Open)	Jan 16th (Open)	Jan 23rd (Open)
Feb 6th (Open)	Feb 13th (Open)	Feb 20th (Open)	Feb 27th (Open)
Mar 6th (Open)	Mar 13th (Open)	Mar 20th (Open)	Mar 27th (Open)
Apr 3rd (Open)	Apr 10th (Open)	Apr 17th (SCABA Picnic-Tentative)	Apr 24th (Open)
May 1st (Open)	May 8th (Open)	May 15th (Ricky Vardell-Tentative)	May 22nd (Open)
Jun 5th (Open)	Jun 12th (Open)	Jun 19th (Open)	Jun 26th (Open)
Jul 3rd (Open)	Jul 10th (Open)	Jul 17th (Open)	Jul 24th (Open)
Aug 7th (Open)	Aug 14th (Open)	Aug 21st (Open)	Aug 28th (Open)
Sep 4th (Open)	Sep 11th (Open)	Sep 18th (Open)	Sep 25th (Ron LehenBauer as Host - Don Garner as Contact Person-Tentative)
Oct 2nd (Open)	Oct 9th (Conference Setup Tentative)	Oct 16th (Conference Weekend Tentative)	Oct 23rd (Open)
Nov 6th (Open)	Nov 13th (Open)	Nov 20th (Open)	Nov 27th (Open)
Dec 4th (Open)	Dec 11th (Open)	Dec 18th (Open)	Dec 25th (Christmas Day)

## 2021 Fifth Saturdays:

January 30th (Open)  
 May 29 (Open)  
 July 31st (Open)  
 October 30th (Open)

## January 2021

NE Regional Meeting January 2nd: Open.

SE Regional Meeting January 9th: Open.

SW Regional Meeting January 16th: Open.

NW Regional Meeting January 23rd: Open.

## February 2021

NE Regional Meeting February 6th: Open.

SE Regional Meeting February 13th: Open.

SW Regional Meeting February 20th: Open.

NW Regional Meeting February 27th: Open.

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## Around the State...

**NW Region December Meeting:** No meeting was held.

**NE Region December Meeting:** No Meeting was held.

**SE Region December Meeting:** No Meeting was held.

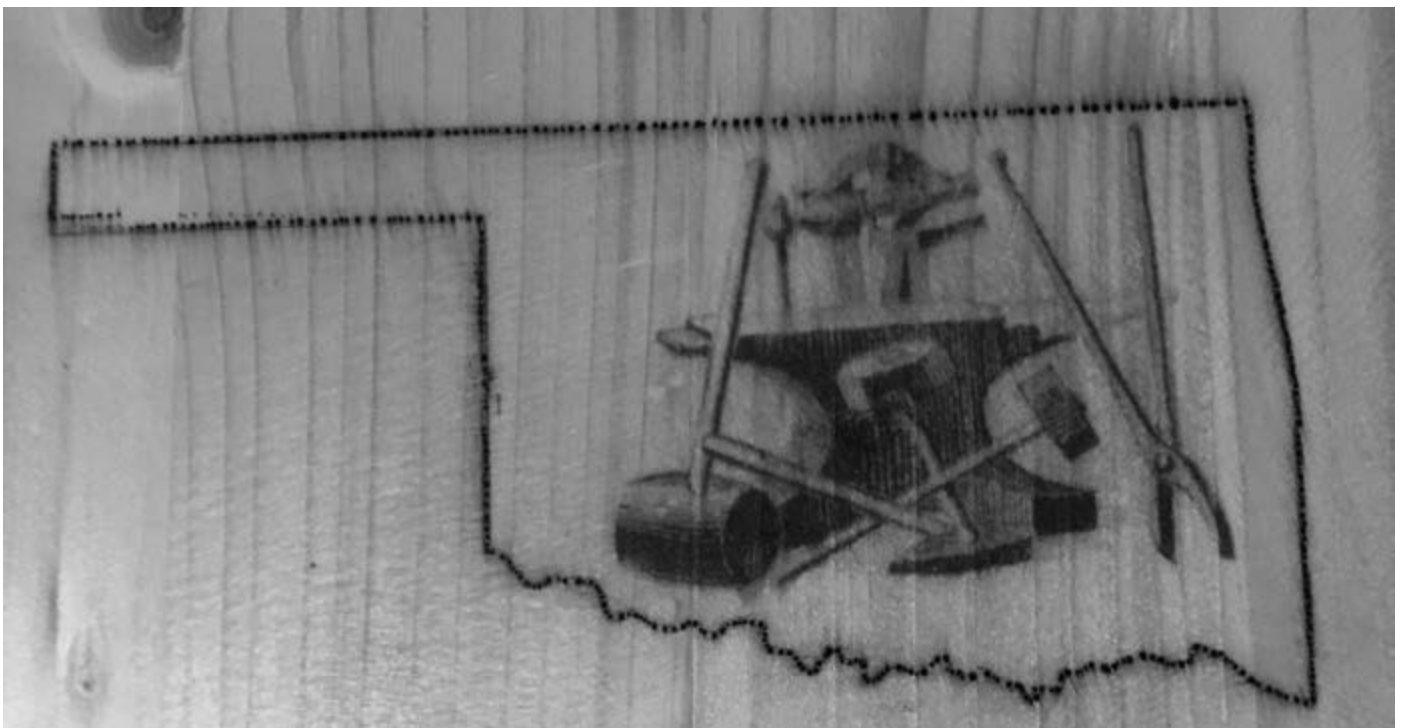
**SW Region November Meeting:** No Meeting was held.

## 2020 Conference Toolbox

Since the 2020 Conference was canceled, Bill Corey modified the graphics on the toolbox. The current plan is to offer tickets for a drawing at the spring picnic. Stay tuned for details!







# Member Gallery

## Gazebo Lantern By Gerald Brostek

I created this lantern to be hung from the center finial ball of my gazebo. It measures about 40" tall. - Gerald Brostek

*(See the Original Gazebo Photos in the October and December 2020 Newsletters. - Editor)*





# Member Gallery (Continued)

## Oak Leaves by Gerald Brostek

These oak leaves with acorns can be used as candle holders, candy dish, or for earrings, rings, table center pieces and such. One is made from 3/16" steel plate and one from 14 gage sheet. The acorns were forged using a 5/8" acorn die. They measure about 8"x12."





## Member Gallery (Continued)



# Member Gallery (Continued)

## Garden Cart by Gerald Franklin

Gerald says this cart is one of his “Covid projects.” The plants are succulents and can’t take the cold weather. The cart makes it easier to move to the garage at night.



# Member Gallery (Continued)

## Fireplace Set by Mandell Greteman



# Member Gallery (Continued)

Some recent work by Rory Kirk





# Member Gallery (Continued)

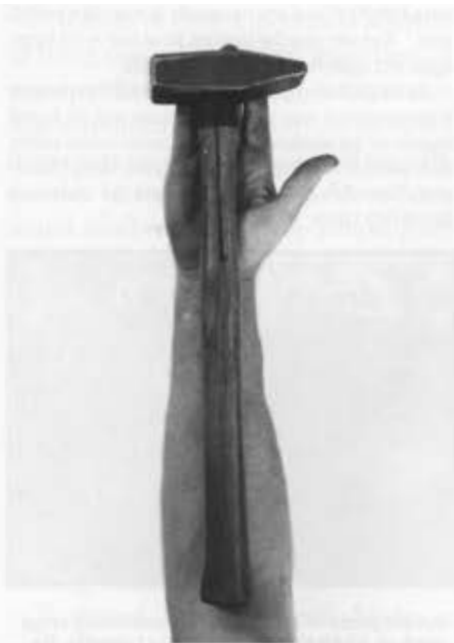
More recent work by Rory Kirk



# Member Gallery (Continued)

**Monte Smith Visiting Rory's Shop in December to  
Work on Flint Strikers.  
(Hey it's almost like a meeting!)**





The late Francis Whitaker's method of fitting handle length to the smith.

## An Ergonomic Hammer Handle

BY JOHN DITTMEIER

This hammer handle absorbs the shock of the blow rather than making the hand, wrist and arm absorb it. The handle flexes via a saw kerf in the upper third of the hammer handle. There are significant health benefits by not stressing one's joints, ligaments and tendons.

Forty years ago, but less so today, the norm for a hammer was one with an elongated cross-peen head and a long handle.

The late Francis Whitaker—teacher *par excellence*—recommended a measure for length: From the crook of one's elbow to the tip of one's fingers, as shown in the photograph.



It was Beau Hickory of Arizona who introduced the saw kerf, during his famous demonstration at the ABANA 1980 Conference in Santa Cruz, California. He admitted that the flexing handle kept his hands smooth "to an embarrassing degree."

### Handle Components

Aside from the wood itself, other split handle elements are:

1. An auto gasket sheet through the head to prevent the kerf from closing when heading the handle.
2. A small drilled hole at the base of the kerf.
3. The soaking of the wood handle beneath the head in linseed oil for one week.
4. A deep hole in the bottom third of the handle, to be filled with linseed oil and plugged with a wood dowel.

### Endorsements

Knifemaker Wayne Goddard (1939-2018) described the handle in his book, *The Wonder of Knifemaking*; (2000 edition, Krause Publications).

I made my favorite hammer with a shock-absorbing handle, as per Bo Hickory's instructions that appeared in several blacksmith association newsletters.

I'm bothered by nerve damage, carpal tunnel syndrome and arthritis. I wouldn't have believed the difference it made until I worked back and forth between the shock absorbing handle and a solid one.

Discovering this type of handle made longer hours of forging possible. The difference is amazing and I'll nev-

er use anything else for heavy work. It is just the thing to help my worn out wrist and elbow.

I can't prove it, but the modified hammer with the springy handle seems to move more metal with a given blow. Several old-timers have told me that a handle with spring in it would give a harder blow and I believe it now.

The shock-absorbing handle is sensitive enough that when working on an anvil that is not secured to the anvil base, the rebound of the work/anvil can be felt with the hammer! Almost everyone who has used one of the hammers that I have modified has taken the time to modify their heavy hammers (two pounds, plus) the same way.

Master blade smith Ed Caffrey produces the split handle for his angle peen hammers: He wrote in an e-mail the following:

Wayne [Goddard] showed me the split handle... but only the split part, years ago. ...That was way before he wrote the [year 2000] book and honestly, I had no idea, beyond Wayne, where it had originated. I have been using it ever since.

Here are the attributes that I have found it offers:

1. I simply do not break hammer handles when they are split. Prior to using the split handles, I would routinely break solid hammer handles.
2. The split in the handle offers a level of shock absorption.... meaning that during heavy use sessions, my hammer arm doesn't come out aching like it would with a solid hammer handle, and "tennis elbow" is a thing of the past.
3. The split in the handle offers a level of flex when using the hammer. What I have found is that it provides a "snap" right at the end of swing/blow. In my opinion this gives the hammer more "punch" ... it makes a two pound hammer strike with the force of a three pound hammer. In other words, it allows me to get more work done, with less effort.

Reason number one alone is enough for me to utilize split handles on my hammers: The other reasons are just icing on the cake and make my life easier at the forge. I put split handles on all the Angle Peen and "Double Draw"

Reason number one alone is enough for me to utilize split handles on my hammers: The other reasons are just icing on the cake and make my life easier at the forge. I put split handles on all the Angle Peen and "Double Draw"

Continued on page 26...



The more participants at a group blacksmithing experience, the more safety variables. Work areas need enough space for safety. Forges are normally shared by multiple learners. Each needs clear access to anvils, tools and stable vise stands. Wise policies reduce accidents and liability costs.

## ***Blacksmithing Group Safety***

### **Precautions We Take with Youthful Learners**

BY HENRY DAVIS

PHOTOS: NATHAN ROE

[WWW.WOLFPRAIRIE.ORG](http://WWW.WOLFPRAIRIE.ORG)

Over the last several years a great void has been created between the value of hands-on technical art skills and scientific "book knowledge." With our educational system no longer teaching basic mechanical skills, combined with a litigation prone environment, it is almost impossible for kids today to learn blacksmithing on a large scale.

However, I believe blacksmithing can be done very safely if a few protocols are followed.

For eight years, I've had the privilege of coordinating a team that has introduced almost 10,000 participants—largely young people—to the joys of blacksmithing. We're not just doing a demo for them, we're allowing them to experience doing the demo for themselves. As the old saying goes: "Tell me and I forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I learn."

I am not a world class blacksmith. Instead, I'm more of a safety nerd and a blacksmithing evangelist who enjoys restoring equipment. I've also been called a blacksmithing bookmobile. We show up with the equipment and expertise for others to experience blacksmithing.

The purpose of this article is to pro-

pose a few best practices for introducing blacksmithing to large groups and youths ages 10 to 18 in particular. I also want to solicit reader input as to other items to consider.

I don't have a permanent location. My setup is portable and we travel to the schools, camps or groups where we work. So some of my observations reflect the need to be portable.

#### **Basic Precautions**

Sometimes referred to as "common sense," basic precautions go a long way to promote safety and reduce liability, so I'd like to start with those:

- Safety glasses: If you are within 20 feet of a forge, you should be wearing safety glasses. If someone is inside your shop or within



Before any group smithing work starts, clear safety rules are laid down.



your visibly marked safety perimeter, glasses are required.

- Ear plugs, ear muffs or other forms of hearing protection: Tinnitus is painful. All participants need to wear hearing protection.

The next several items are related to the black or gray oxidation scale that forms on hot metals. As most of us can testify, it flies. And it's not really particular as to where it lands. Bad burns and even garment combustion have resulted.

In our courses, we require the following:

- Natural fiber clothing, such as leather, tight-woven cotton etc.: Avoid synthetics, as they can and do "flash"—even some of those that claim to be treated—and this can cause significant burns.
- Closed toe shoes: Flip flops, crocks, or sandals are NOT allowed at our presentations. Scale is hot. Plus, even a small item can hurt when dropped from anvil height.



**Unforeseen things do happen:** Well considered safety modifications show a jury you actively sought group safety—this keeps accidents "accidental" in their minds, instead of negligent. (Henry Davis photo)



**As days shorten and darkness comes early, good lighting gets more essential. Extending legs on forges makes them less tippy; low profile bends, less "trippy." (See photo, below left.)**

#### What About...?

- **Shorts, kilts, Capri pants, etc:** Again, scale is hot. Many of us choose to wear these items, particularly in the warmer climates. However, kids must do as we say, not as we do, as there is a safety risk.
- **Long Sleeves:** I know of some who require participants to wear long sleeve shirts, because they have had burns when people were twisting their projects in the vise. Years ago, I was taught that if you have them twist their projects "to the side"—horizontal to the ground, instead of "up" (vertical)—it eliminates this concern. Yes, you frequently have to use the vise jaws or a wooden mallet to straighten the piece. However, the "ounce of prevention" allows the participants to be more comfortable.
- **Aprons without pockets:** Scale is hot. When it falls into a pocket, it's hard to get out.
- **Cuffs on pants, rolled-up sleeves, wrist openings on**

**gloves:** We have the same issues as with apron pockets.

- If doing a larger group, it is helpful to have the instructors in one color apron and the participants in another.

Another benefit of aprons we've found is that parents appreciate the kids not getting their clothes as dirty!

#### Other Precautions

There are less obvious precautions. Some may choose to disagree with me, but I want to at least introduce these precautions and explain why I recommend them.

#### Gloves

When working on a solid fuel forge (i.e. coal) I do not allow gloves.

I realize that at first glance, this flies in face of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines that "gloves be available." But the requirement is that they be available, not that they be used.

There are some exceptions: Due to the radiant heat when working on a gas forge, I use a Kevlar glove on my tong

hand.

One of the groups I worked with in my early blacksmith teaching days (when we did use gloves) included a very helpful young man: Every time something fell, he would pick it up! The third time he tried, we did not get there fast enough and he started screaming: The gloves give people a false sense of protection and I find that that results in more burns.

### Ice Water Bucket

Burns should be plunged immediately into ice water and held there until the



**"Pigtail" type posts with a boundary rope work surprisingly better at establishing a barrier to hold back spectators than more solid, hurdle-type fences: People tend to lean on the latter, sometimes bursting through—to their potential hurt and your liability and replacement costs.**

hand begins to numb. Once a burn occurs, it continues to damage the skin until the heat is removed, usually by being absorbed into—and also burning—the surrounding flesh. If we can cool the initial burn area quickly enough, it will limit the severity of the

burn. Many times, once the epidermis replaces itself, there will be no scar.

### Your Fault?

Liability cannot be eliminated, but it can be reduced.

Your goal must be to document that you took more than reasonable precautions.

In most states, if a person got hurt when a minor (and his parents didn't sue) that person has the right to sue you—usually within six months after turning 18. And if they claim that the injury contributed to a later injury, it can be hard to disprove you were to blame.

### Steel

Use only new, mild steel. Steel gets expensive. Yet I don't use any scrap steel when introducing kids to smithing work. Yes, I know: "I can put the metal in muriatic acid, and if it does not bubble it's safe."

But if the kid later develops zinc poisoning *from whatever cause*, how are you going to prove that it was not from you?

### Equipment

My attorney recommended that I only use **COMMERCIALLY MADE**, non-repaired equipment (except to replace components). When I asked why, he explained it this way:

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, Mr. Davis is a neat guy. Look at all the kids he has helped! But Mr. Davis is a stingy bastard! He wanted the kudos for helping the kids. But he ran short on funds. Safety was not a priority. So instead of spending the money to replace this piece, he cut corners. He choose to put what amounted to a "band-aid" on it. And **THAT** is why little Susy got hurt!"

I once heard that if the opposing attorney can get the jury to believe that you were cutting corners to save money, it can increase the settlement up to eightfold! But if you can document that you took more than reasonable precautions, you will be able to prevent many lawyers from even taking the friv-

olous cases. Even in a serious issue, it'll help keep the liability within reasonable norms.

When I got my first liability policy for allowing "10 year olds and up" to participate, I understood that forges, tongs and hammers needed to be commercially made and in good repair.

It has been expensive, but if I had had a serious injury, it could have been much worse.

The legal concept here is that if you are using a commercially made tool (i.e. made by someone who carries liability insurance) you are spreading the liability around.

Since I cannot find the replacement parts I need, I have chosen to learn the basics of pattern making.

Last year we had 25 pans cast for the Champion 147. And 19 of them are currently in use in our teaching fleet.

Here again, the principle of sharing the liability comes in: Although I had the pattern made, I paid to have a commercial foundry cast the parts.

This liability principle applies to home-built tools—or as eager attorneys might put it, "Dr. Frankenstein equipment"—as well. While many are perfectly safe for you to use at home, it gives the opposing attorney ammunition in the case of a lawsuit.

However, there are several exceptions to this rule:

- **Anvil Stands:** Within reason, these can be homemade. Years ago, I heard an OSHA consultant point out that for "ergonomic safety," anvil stands need to be adjustable. Here are plans for the ones we've started to use. In practice, they tend to be adjusted when set up and not during a class.
- **Anvils:** Personally most of what I use is railroad track ASO's (Anvil shaped objects). Yes, they are homemade, however they are an industry standard, and so after consulting with others I use them. They do need to be fastened down, and in the past, I used metal duct tape to secure

- **Safety retrofitting:** All of our forges are pre-WWII Champion portable forges, with the majority of them being the champion 147 (22-inch diameter) three-legged agricultural forges. The blowers were designed to go clockwise, and if you have a shorter par-

## Hammers

Dorothy Steigler introduced me to the 1½-pound Nordic Forge rounding hammer, sold by Centaur Forge. It's light enough that we can teach proper hammer control and yet still move the metal.

Additionally, I've found that many participants need to be taught how to hold and swing a hammer. We're not tin smithing and you can't effectively move the steel by tapping at it. I've seen "roundhouse" hammer-bounces that could dislocate a thumb.

## Tongs

Make sure that when they're holding the stock you're working with, the kids can get a good grip on the end. If not, you may need to heat the handles up and bend the ends a little closer so that they can get their hands around them.

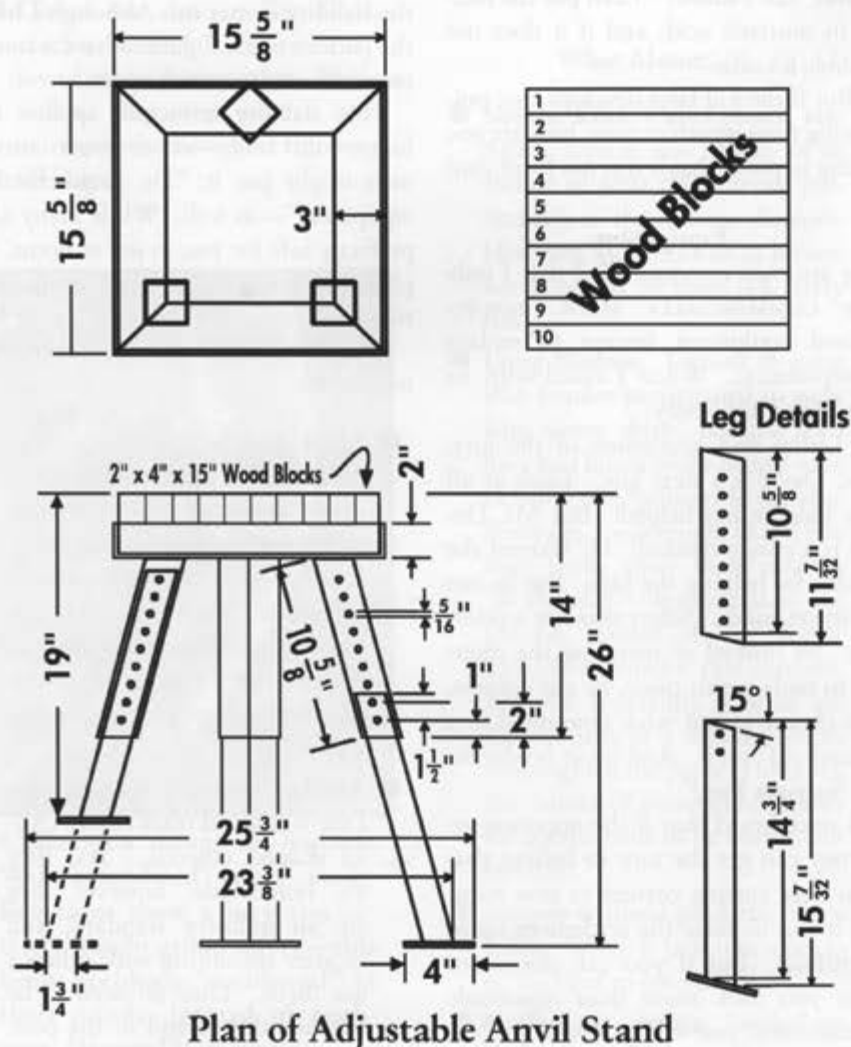
### Other Safety Considerations

Ample spacing between work stations is vital to safety. Recently, I visited a shop that made me shudder. It was small and cramped, yet it worked for smith who used it. Since we usually set up out-of-doors, I try to keep—at minimum—10 feet between equipment.

For me, I've found I like ONE forge per FOUR students and two anvils. That way I can keep one person on each anvil and the other two heating their steel on the forge. Still, if we're teaching anything above a Friedrich Cross and a S-Hook, I think a smaller group of participants might work better.

### Additional Concerns

- **Tents:** Fire retardant fabric.
- **Smoke:** How will you accommodate asthma kids, or deal with OSHA compliance here? Portable forge hoods may be one way: Venturi side draft plans are

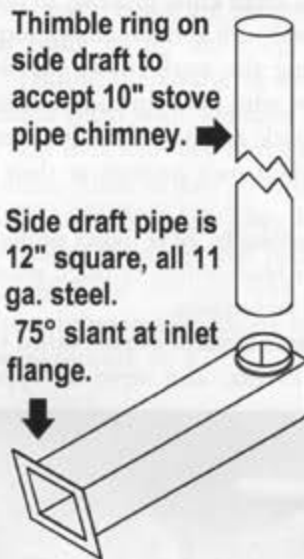






Wise leadership, appropriately sized tools, proper attire and safety-wear all help participants focus on their tasks more than their fears in working hot metal.

available at the ABANA.org web site. I'm working on making a portable side draft hood, something like this:



#### Liability & Insurance

Most event-hosting groups carry *event liability insurance*. Before we were able to find our own coverage (coverage we could afford) we had a line in our contract that required the sponsoring organization to name us as "covered insured" on their policy for the duration of the event. The \$75 to \$100 it usually

cost in lost revenue provided peace of mind.

Additionally, when we were presenting our teaching event as a gift, our homeowner's umbrella policy provided coverage. However, when we started asking our participants to cover the event's expenses, it was no longer covered by the homeowner's insurance.

#### Note to Readers & Acknowledgments

This article is not intended to be the last word. In addition to sharing experience with ABANA members, it's an appeal to the membership for input: So send your ideas; tell me why you disagree with mine.

My goal is to start a discussion, with the hope we can develop a written set of safety guidelines for people to adhere to.

In addition to those guidelines or standards, I'd like to develop an outline for a standardized safety talk for people who are experiencing blacksmithing for the first time.

Setting and having a minimum acceptable standard will allow more of us to enable more people to experience the thrill of making something on a coal fired forge.

While I was the one to write this article, blacksmithing is not learned in a vacuum. There are many who've shared and taught me most, if not all, of these items. So I want to recognize Ted Guimond, Dorothy Steigler, Bill Conyers, Ernie Stevens, and the core of instructors I've worked with: My daughters Lillian & Marlyce Davis, Dusty Miller, Phil Potter, Nathan Roe, Steve Eisele, Dennis Kuemin. Without their help and input I could not have written this.

We are now working on making the patterns to make the complete Champion 242 and 147 forges, blower, tuyere and pan. Currently we have it in Solid Works and are planning on either printing or machining the patterns, so we can cast the parts to the original specs.

Our organization can be contacted at WolfPrairieArts@gmail.com, or via our website, WolfPrairie.Org.✂



Please send your ideas, disagreements, comments and suggestions to Henry Davis at WolfPrairieArts@gmail.com and to the ABANA education committee, which is working on safety standards: education@abana.org.



## Photographing Your Work

Mark Asprey, Springfield

*Editor's Note: Under Mark's leadership, CBA has started a new series of online video classes and workshops. Mark has put together these two articles to guide future presenters for these workshops.*

First the disclaimer – I'm not a photographer by any stretch of the imagination, but I do take photographs.

I work in Black and White (Grayscale) when I produce the 'how-to' steps for my articles or books, but I photograph in color and convert the image in my software.

I feel that the B&W format is less busy, making it easier to point out the important take-aways from the shot.

I use SLR cameras –older NIKON models, a D40X and a D3000. I have a 16 to 85mm Zoom lens with a 3.5F aperture. I'm sure that newer cell phones and tablets will work fine, but that's not what I have or use.

### *On the camera:*

- ☒ The camera is given 'Speed Priority'. I try not to shoot slower than 1/80<sup>th</sup> second. Shooting faster shortens my depth of field – the things that are in-focus. Shooting slower risks camera shake, as my camera is hand-held.
- ☒ I like the automatic focus on the camera, as the camera's eyes are much better than mine are these days. ...and, I can operate the camera with one hand, leaving the other spare to help in holding tools for out-of-position shots.

### *The photo booth:*

- ☒ The booth is made up of a base and backdrop, both made from plywood. The sides are left open for lighting purposes.
- ☒ Chromakey is very important. If you have ever watched how action movies etc. were filmed, with the actor in a trapeze harness turning summersault's in front of a lime green or blue background – that colored background is a chromakey.
  - I prefer lime green, and I buy it as a paint from Home Depot – as a Flat or Matt finish.
  - The base and backdrop of my booth are both painted lime green. The lime green turns into a perfect neutral gray when I convert my color photograph into grayscale.
  - Why not just shoot in the B&W format on the camera – It's sometimes not quite that easy. The way that a lot of cameras get B&W shots is to drain color photographs of all the color saturation – but they are still an RGB (Red, Green + Blue) or CYMK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black) files.
  - For a Zoom or the like tutorial, I doubt that we would care, but professional printers care – so I shoot in color and change the file in my editing software to grayscale.



*Photo from Mark's Article "ABANA 2020 Conference Competition #1," California Blacksmith May/June 2019*

# Photographing - Mark Aspery

## *Holding the tools:*

- ☒ I use impact grips (for lighting) – two per ‘arm’ – on my two ‘arms’. One grip acts as the elbow or shoulder, and the other as the wrist. And, I use two arms. One for the tongs or hand tools, and the other for the hammer.
  - I have a block of wood to the side of the booth with 15 or so holes drilled in it. I can move the placement of the arms to match the anvil position and natural position of the smith as needed.
  - I use ‘Cold-Rolled’ 5/8-inch and 1/2-inch diameter bars for the ‘bones’ of the arms – cold rolled as it is smoother and true to dimension over hot rolled, and slides through the grips easier.
- ☒ I have a dedicated hammer for my photographs. The handle is drilled to accept the 1/2-inch diameter bar, which is glued in. Hose clamps would also serve to clamp the round bar to the handle, but after changing hammer position a few times, you’ll see the attraction of the un-encumbered and smooth handle.
- ☒ The tong or tool arm has a pair of Vise-Grips welded to the 1/2-inch rod.
- ☒ I also have a variety of bricks, blocks and small spacers to rest the tongs on when I need to. These are stacked to the correct height and rest on the base of the booth, by the side of the anvil. Some short off-cuts of small section angle iron are also useful to have laying around.
- ☒ Magnets – the rare-earth type – great for propping up things that want to topple over on the anvil – I use 1/4-inch and 1/2-inch diameter – but endeavor to keep them well away from the camera!

## *The anvil:*

- ☒ The top and rolled edges of my anvil are painted in a light primer gray. My tools are painted in a darker primer gray for two reasons:
  - One, you can see the tool contrast with the top of the anvil in photographs where the two overlap.
  - Two, it more closely matches the steel piece being photographed, and therefore evens out the exposure extremes.
- ☒ I often must turn the anvil to get the desired camera or lighting position. Having something like a furniture dolly under your anvil goes a long way in making this an easier process for your back.

## *The vise:*

- ☒ Again, painted primer gray.
- ☒ The vise is held in a tripod bolted to the leg. This allows me to turn the vise as needed to get the shot.

## An Ergonomic Hammer Handle ...Continued from page 19:

This article is reprinted with permission courtesy of “The Hammer’s Blow”,  
A Journal of the Artist-Blacksmith’s Association of  
North America - Summer 2020

hammers I produce and everyone has nothing but praise for them.

What I find interesting is that most clients, who purchase one of my hammers with the split handle, very often tell me that after using the split handled hammer, it feels “odd” using a hammer with a solid handle. And they often install split handles on all their other hammers.



Blade smith Ed Caffrey's angle-peen hammers on split handles.

# Videoing Your Work

Mark Aspery, Springville

For my YouTube and Zoom videos, I use a pair of older model Canon Vixia R62 Camcorders. I like this camcorder for six distinct reasons:

- 1) It will accept an external mic feed
- 2) It has a manual focus setting
- 3) There is a 'Spotlight' setting in the video mode
- 4) It will accept a Neutral Density (ND) filter on the lens – 43mm thread
- 5) They're cheap when purchased used
- 6) It will shoot at a 60P rate



Filming hot work is like filming into a bright light. You can expose for the bright bulb and have a black background, or you can expose for the background and have the bulb look like a white blur. I try to level out the playing field somewhat and bring both extremes a little closer together.

## *On the camera:*

- ☒ Set the camcorder to 'Spotlight' mode – The hot steel is like a spot-lit singer: a bright object with a dark background, so why not treat it as such.
- ☒ Put a 'Neutral Density' (ND) filter on your camera lens or phone. This is rather akin to sunglasses for the camera. It will darken the light coming from the hot steel. I generally use NDx2 or NDx4 – or a variable ND filter. For a phone, there are clip-on versions that work very well.
- ☒ You may need an adaptor to go from your camcorders screw-in filter size up to the available filter size. My camcorder has a 43 mm screw thread, and I can find filters to match that thread. Some camcorders require an adaptor (for example 37 to 43mm). I also place a clear filter on the camera to protect the lens and other more costly filters from damage from sparks, scale, etc.
- ☒ Set the focus to manual. Auto focus gets very confused when you are zoomed in to the work and a hammer keeps coming in and out of the frame.
- ☒ Set the 'White Balance' on your camera. Consult your owner's manual on how to do this. It is well worth doing as it sets the camera up to read colors accurately when recording.
- ☒ Film quality set to 60P – the 'P' means that there are 60 full photographs per second. An 'I' rating means the photos are interlaced, with part of the photograph this frame and the remainder next frame. That makes for poor still frames (freeze frame) from your video.

## *In the forge:*

- ☒ Flood the filmed area with light. You cannot overexpose the hot steel, but you can better illuminate the (now darker with the ND filter) background. Doing so brings the background exposure levels closer to that

## ***Videoing - Mark Aspery***

of the hot material.

- ☒ I use daylight LED work-lights from Home Depot. These are daylight rated 6500K and come with a tripod for \$99.00. Of course, you get what you pay for... I use two lights, one near the heel and one near the bick.
- ☒ These lights can be used for your still photography as well. You have to tweak them a little to make them face downward, but nothing too major is required.
- ☒ Make sure that any background is not going to distract the viewer from the video content. Clean the shop.

### *Sound:*

- ☒ I have an external mic for my videos (AGK sports set – PT45 body pack, ST45 stationary receiver and a C544L headset mic), but I don't think that is always necessary, especially with the camera on your phone or tablet.
- ☒ Don't compete with tools and equipment for attention, such as your power hammer or gas forge.
- ☒ Keep any descriptive dialogue separate from the work and turn the sound down on the forging sections when editing (-25db). If you are going to narrate the footage on a Zoom (or like) tutorial, then don't bother narrating when filming.

### *Frame the video:*

- ☒ Get close to your work if that is what the video is about. Zoom out if you want to show a body position, technique or piece of equipment. Panoramas of someone forging in the distant background isn't going to help support your effort very much.
- ☒ Zooming in and out excessively can be distracting.
- ☒ I film from the bick-end predominantly, with the camera set up just above anvil height and slightly forward of the off-side edge. I find that this position shows the angle of the work in relation to the anvil, and the hammer angle. I change position as required by the project or technique being used – say drifting over the pritchel hole.

### *Editing:*

- ☒ Give the film a title and credits.
- ☒ Don't use fancy transitions from one clip to the next – teddy bears somersaulting across the screen to bring in a new clip can be a bit distracting.
- ☒ I use an Apple/I-Mac computer with ADOBE Premiere Elements (\$100.00) video-editing software package. Other editing software sometimes comes with a camcorders, or is available online.

### *Tripod for the camera.*

- ☒ I strongly encourage you to use a tripod when filming. There are adapters available to hold cell phones to the tripod – well worth the \$10.00 or so that they cost. A heavy tripod doesn't bounce as much as a light one when someone is forging. Extend the legs for height rather than the center pole from the pan head. The center pole can vibrate when someone is forging at the anvil.

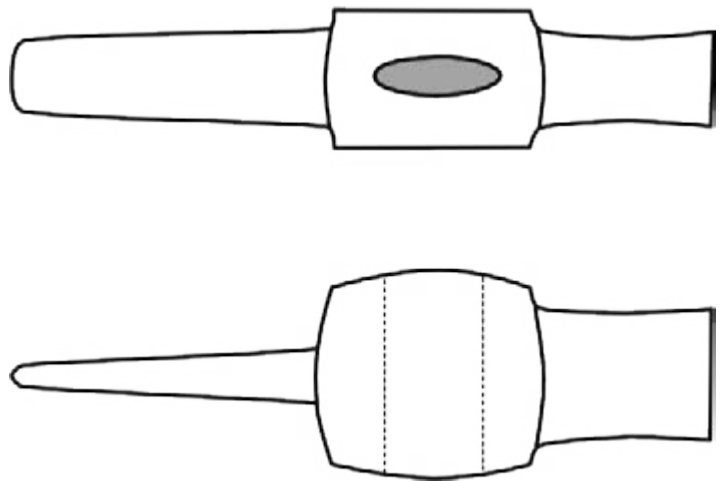
*This article is reprinted with permission from the California Blacksmith Association Online newsletter Nov-Dec 2020.*

## Hammer Eye Punch John Williams, Elk Grove Wayne's World 2018

*Editor's Note: this is the first in a series of articles based on demonstrations from John. This is intended to be a report on and guide to his demo, rather than a complete recipe.*

*When making this, note that John used a good strong striker to efficiently forge this.*

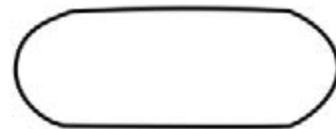
Stock: 3" of 1 1/8" diameter 4140



### Punch/Drift the Eye

First, flatten the round stock.

Make it narrow enough so that it will fit in the hardy hole. This will let the cheeks flare into the hole without needing special tooling or a special bolster.



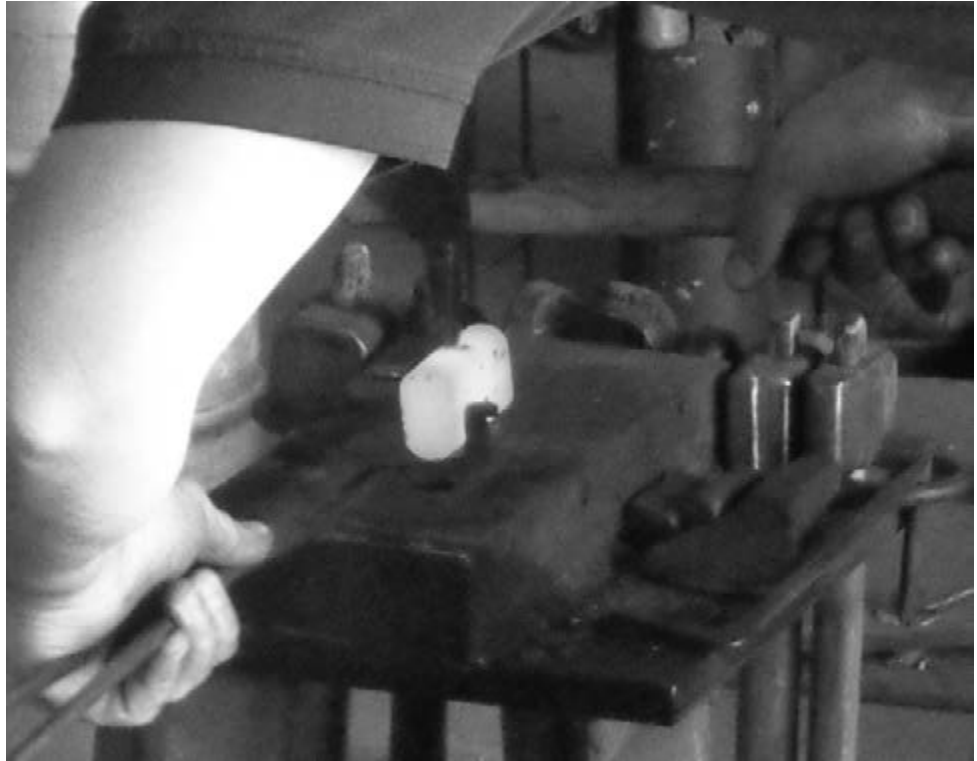
## **Hammer Eye Punch**

Using a machinist's square and a scribe, mark the locations for the punched eye hole.

Then use your round punch to make an initial impression. Take your time to get the punches aligned - punch both sides, and rotate from end-to-end.

Note: if the two sides are uneven, the long end becomes the struck end — the struck end is what wears.

Work carefully to get a well-aligned hole punched all the way through.



*John is using fairly small tongs for this size stock.  
He said that these are 5160: do not quench!*

### **Working With a Striker**



First, it is important to properly address the anvil:  
your shoulder should be inline with the centerline of the anvil  
your right foot back  
the arm and tongs are square to the left side of the anvil

Then when you're lined up and ready for the strike, move your head and torso to the side.

## **Hammer Eye Punch**



Once punched, drive the drift in to bring the eye to desired dimension.

Draw the cheeks down to their original thickness.

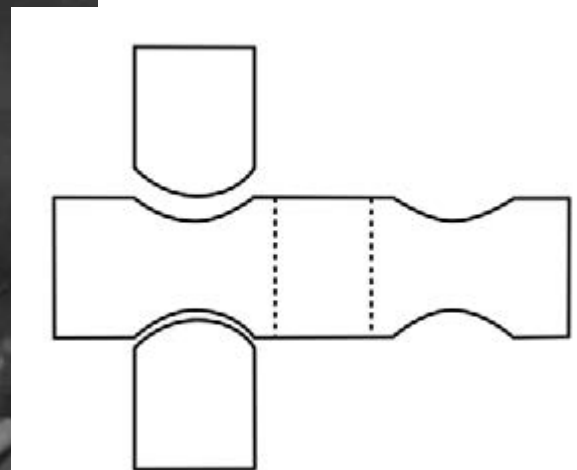
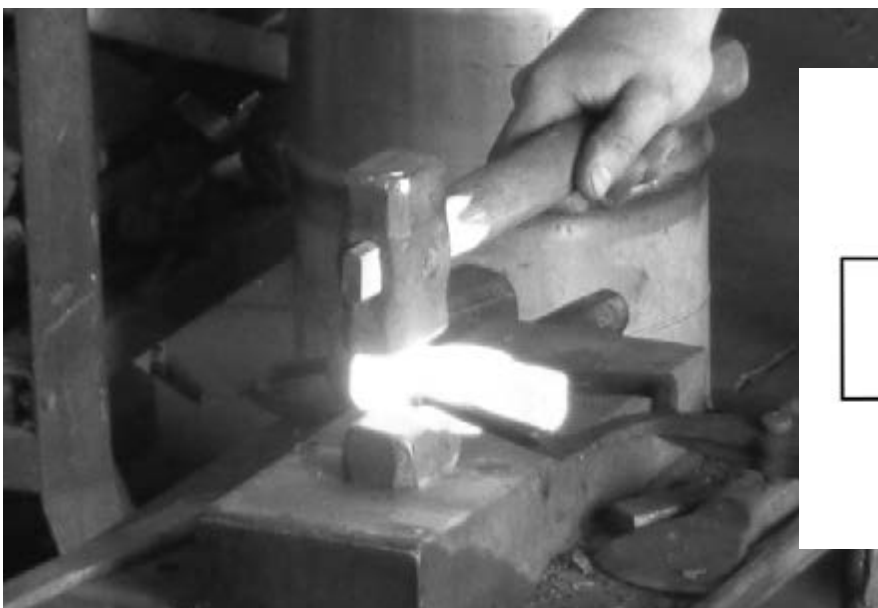
### **Set the Cheeks**

Drive the drift in to use as a mandrel.

With a side set, mark the locations for the cheeks.

Then with large top and bottom fullers (and a striker) make two fullered lines on the side of the stock.

Reset the drift if necessary. If it gets stuck, loosen by hitting on the cheeks (use a flatter under the hammer).



# **Hammer Eye Punch**

## **Working End (Punch)**

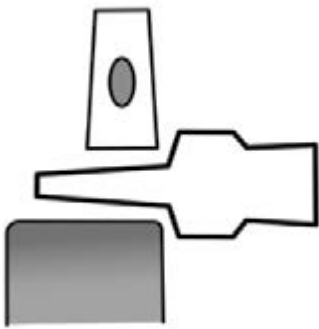
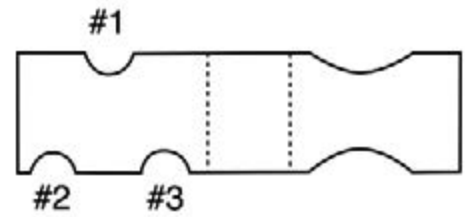
To draw out the working end, use a fuller to make marks, then draw and smooth with a flatter. You will sorta make a wiggle with 3 fuller marks, then flatten and draw out that wiggle.

The order of fullering is important: use the sequence shown in the drawing at right.

Then use a flatter to draw out the punch.

Correct any off-axis of the eye. Use a side set if necessary, and a flatter on the high side.

Draw the punch end out to the desired dimensions. Work to octagon, then round corners.



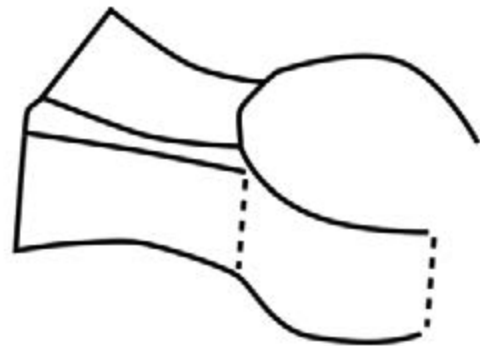
To establish the shoulders, use a set hammer of the same width as the stock.

Chamfer all corners - and pay careful attention to evening up the shoulders and also the chamfers.

## **Struck End**

Similarly to the working end, establish the shoulders using a set hammer of the same width as the stock. Chamfer all corners - and pay careful attention to evening up the shoulders and the chamfers.

A nice touch is to make the struck end slightly concave. Accomplish this with a broad top and bottom fuller pair.



## **Completion**

Keep hammering down into black color to planish the faces of the punch.

Add touchmark and handle, you're ready to go!

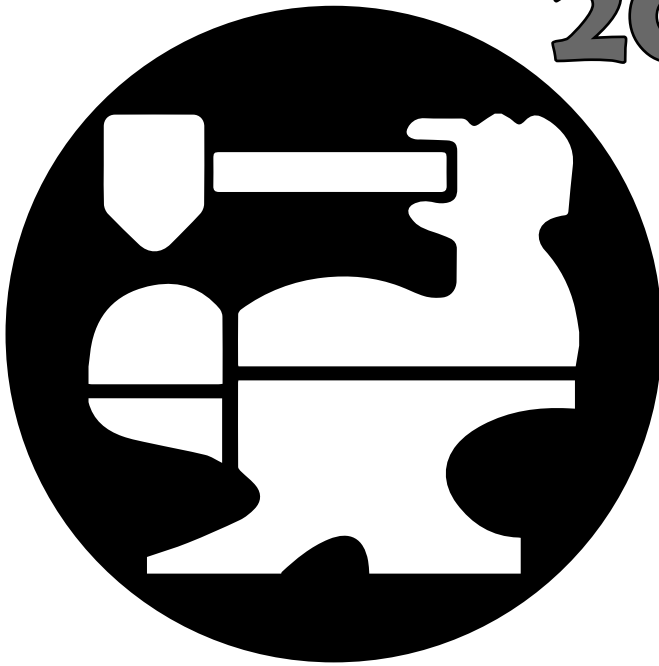
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REGISTRATION WILL OPEN SOON - SAVE THE DATE!

# CBA SPRING CONFERENCE

## 2021



**April 16 - 18, 2021**  
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**For questions or to volunteer to help, email: [agseblacksmiths@gmail.com](mailto:agseblacksmiths@gmail.com)**

# 2020 SCABA T-Shirts

For a LIMITED time, new 2020 SCABA T-Shirts are available. These were planned to be the Conference T-Shirts (an annual tradition) but since the conference is canceled, the design has been modified to acknowledge the reason for the cancellation. (And it infers how most people feel about COVID-19!)



## Gildan Adult Heavy Cotton™ 5.3 oz. Pocket T-Shirt

	S	M	L	XL	2XL	3XL
BODY LENGTH	28	29	30	31	32	33
BODY WIDTH	18	20	22	24	26	28
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### Fabric

- 5.3 oz., 100% cotton
- Safety Pink, Safety Green, Neon Green, Graphite Heather and
- Heather Radiant Orchid are 50/50 Cotton/Polyester

*Available Colors: View the Newsletter Online to See the Sample Colors Available*



Graphite Heather



Heliconia



Irish Green



Orange



Red



Royal



Safety Green



Sapphire



Sport Grey



*Remember When Choosing Your Colors: The Printing is Black and White so Lighter Colors Will Have the Best Visibility.*



**Example: Sapphire**



**Example: Graphite Heather**

## T-Shirt Order Form

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone (Best Number to Contact) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Size	Color	Quantity	Price Each	Sub-Total

**Shipping: \$2:50 for first shirt plus \$0.25 for each additional shirt:**

<b>T-Shirt Price:</b>	
Small to 3X:	\$15 Each
4X to 6X:	\$20 Each

**Total:**


Mail this form with payment to:

*Teresa Gabrish  
322 Washington  
Blanchard, OK 73010*

# Where is YOUR Part of the Saltfork Gate Project?



This is a community project that is open to all Saltfork members. The project is a four-foot-high by sixteen-foot-long gate to be displayed outside at the Route 66 Blacksmith Shop Museum at Elk City.

## Secure your place in Saltfork History FOREVER!\*

*\*(This statement has not been verified by God, Mother Nature, Father Time, Current Scientific Understanding of Metal Oxidation, or the Elk City Museum Management. But probably for a long, long time at least. - Editor)*

Participating members will be given a steel ring that can be filled with any (family appropriate) forged work that will fit in the ring and be permanently attached to it.

Mandell Greteman is coordinating the project and will provide the standardized rings. All of the rings will be provided to ensure they are a standardized size. Once the projects are returned, Mandell will weld them into the gate to be displayed at the museum.

You can submit multiple entries if you would like. If the gate fills up and we have extra entries, we can do additional gates.

***Your Facebook post will most likely be forgotten in two days but daily visitors from around the world will see your gate project for years at the Elk City Museum. Don't forget your touchmark!***

Contact Mandell if you have any additional questions or to find out where to obtain one of the project rings: **Mandell Greteman 580-515-1292.**

# SCABA Shop and Swap



Your one-stop-shop for  
Quick and Rapid Tongs,  
blacksmithing tooling,  
accessories, apparel, and  
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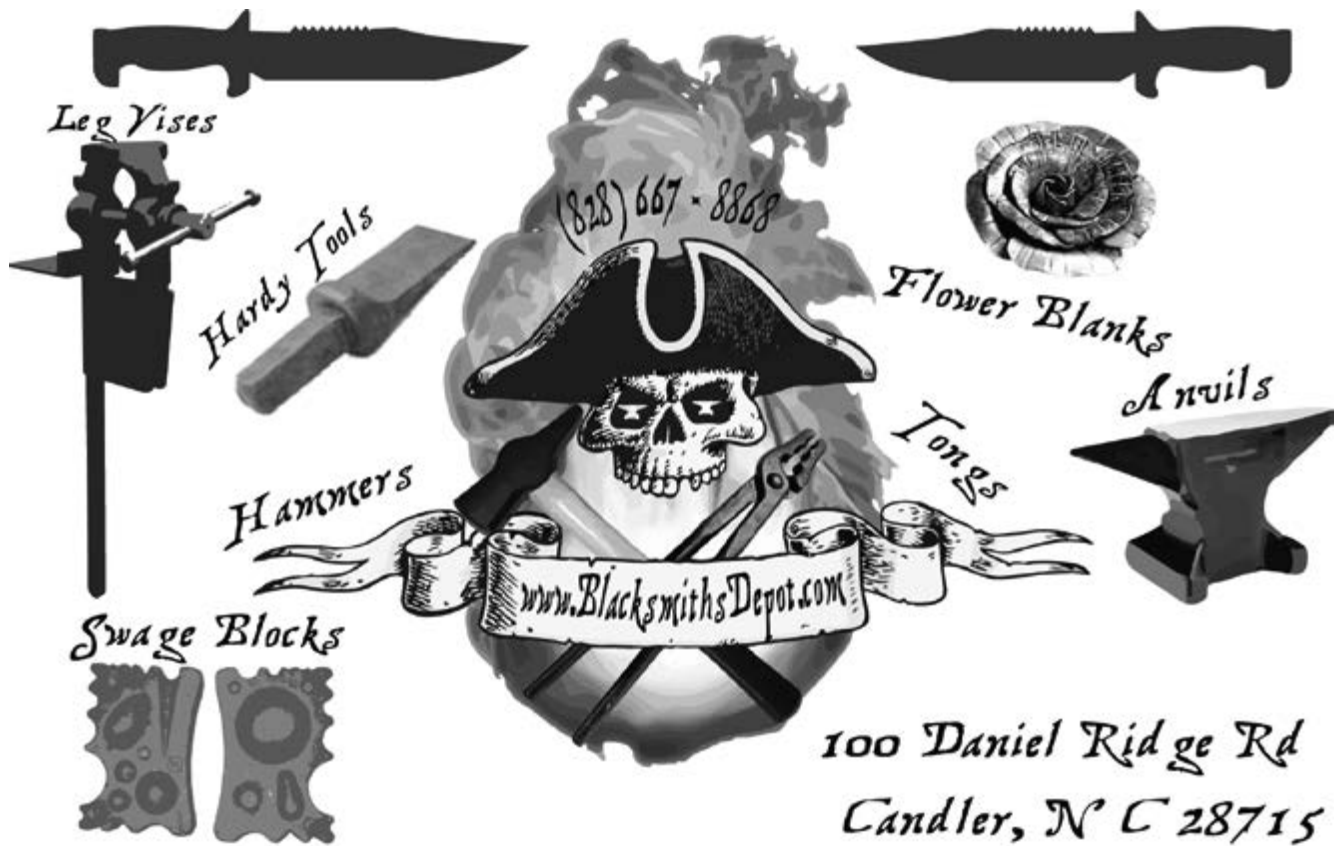


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# SCABA Shop and Swap



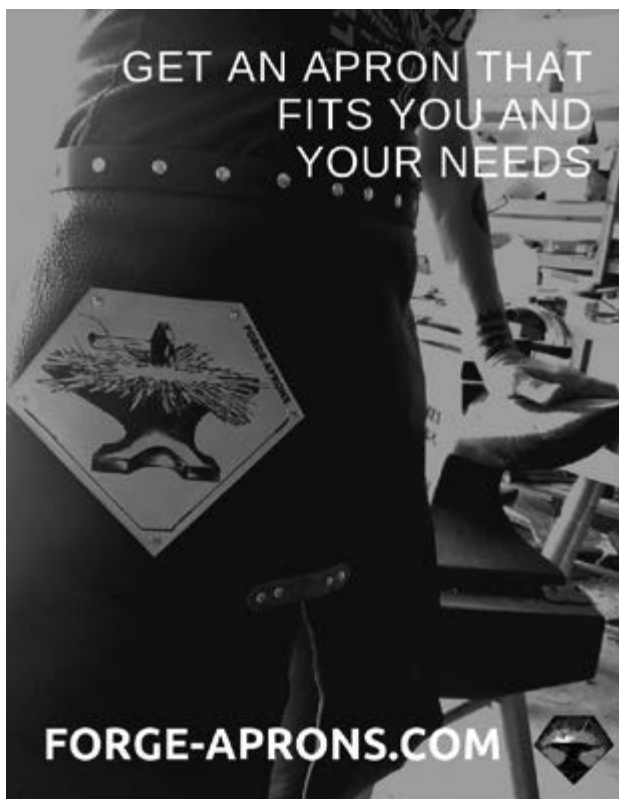
## For Sale: 15 Lb Tire Hammers:

\$1,200 for everything from the base plate up. Two rounding dies included as standard. Has 1/2 HP 115V Motor. Contact: David Barfield - 580-595-1476



# SCABA Shop and Swap

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# SCABA Shop and Swap



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Thank you to our Conference Vendors who graciously donated items for the Conference Auctions!

Their contributions helped to support SCABA. Please consider patronizing these vendors to return the favor!



## Reeder Products Inc.

3201 Skylane Drive, Suite 114  
Carrollton, Texas 75006 United States  
(469) 257-1000

## Bill Davis Forge Welded Tomahawk DVD

This DVD is now available to members for a minimal cost (cost of DVD's is minimal to cover reproduction and shipping if applicable.) Contact the SCABA Librarian, Don Garner, if you would like to get a copy of this DVD.

Don Garner: 580-302-1845

(Call or Text. If you get voice mail, Please leave a message.)



## For Sale:

### Tire Hammer Plans by Clay Spencer

Send a check or money order for \$30 US to Clay Spencer, 73 Penniston Pvt. Drive, Somerville, AL 35670-7013. Or send \$32 US to Paypal.Me/ClaySpencer. E-mail me at clay@otelco.net. PDFs will be e-mailed outside US. Phone 256-558-3658

### Beverly shear blades sharpened

Remove your blades and send in USPS small flat rate box with check for \$41 US to 73 Penniston Pvt. Drive, Somerville, AL 35670-7103.

**For Sale:** I have numerous old tools and collectible items of various kinds including blacksmith related tools and equipment. Too many tools to list them all. Inventory is always changing. Contact: Craig Guy (SCABA Member), Piedmont, OK  
Cell Phone: 405-630-7769 (Call or Text )



# SCABA Shop and Swap

## SCABA Library DVD's Available:

This is a partial list of the DVD titles available to members from the SCABA Library. Contact the Librarian (Don Garner) if you would like to obtain a copy of any listed title or if you have questions on any other titles that may be available. Additional titles are listed on the website. DVD's are available for a very minimal cost to offset the blank disc and cases or sleeves. Shipping cost applies if you need these delivered by mail.

- Robb Gunter Basic Blacksmithing parts 1,2,3 and the controlled hand forging series
- Clay Spencer SCABA conf.2013 pts. 1,2 and 3
- Jerry Darnell 18th century lighting, door latches and hinges
- Brent Baily SCABA conf. 2011
- Mark Aspery SCABA conf. 2011
- Robb Gunter SCABA conf. 1998
- Robb, Brad and Chad Gunter 2009 joinery, forging, repousse, scrollwork, etc.
- Bill Bastas SCABA 2002 pts. 1 - 6
- Jim Keith SCABA conf.2007
- Power hammer forging with Clifton Ralph pts. 1 - 5
- Doug Merkel SCABA 2001
- Bob Alexander SCABA 2008
- A. Finn SCABA 2008
- Bob Patrick SCABA 2004
- Gordon Williams SCABA 2010
- Daryl Nelson SCABA 2010
- Jim and Kathleen Poor SCABA 2001
- Ed and Brian Brazeal SCABA 2006
- Ray Kirk Knives SCABA 2002
- Frank Turley SCABA 1997
- Frank Turley SCABA 2003
- Bill Epps SCABA 2003
- M. Hamburger SCABA 2007

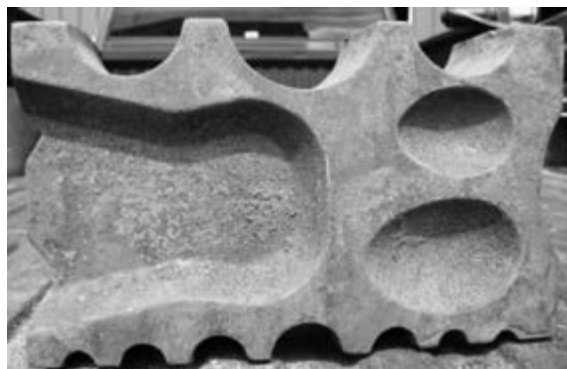
Librarian: Don Garner 580-302-1845 (Cell)  
Call or Text. If you get voice mail, please leave a message.

## **Have an Item for Sale? Item Wanted?**

If you have any items that are appropriate for Blacksmiths that you would like to list in the Shop and Swap section (or items you are looking for), please send me your description, contact info, and any photos that you have.

## **SCABA Swage Blocks**

\$200.00 plus shipping.  
(Same price to members and non-members.)



## **SCABA Floor Cones**

\$200.00 plus shipping.

(Same price to members and non-members.)

To order swage blocks or cones, contact our distributor:

**Nolan Walker at  
Nature Farms Farrier  
Supply in Norman,  
OK.**

**405-307-8031**



# SCABA Shop and Swap

## Club Coal:

Saltfork Craftsmen has coal for sale. Coal is in 1-2" size pieces. The coal is \$140.00/ton or .07 /pound to members.

**No sales to non-members.**

**NW Region coal pile located in Douglas, OK.** If you make arrangements well in advance, Tom Nelson can load your truck or trailer with his skid steer loader for a fee of \$10 to be paid directly to Tom. Tom has moved his skid steer and must now haul the loader to the coal pile to load you out, hence the \$10 charge. You may opt to load your own coal without using Tom's loader. The coal can be weighed out at the Douglas Coop Elevator scales. Contact Tom Nelson (580-862-7691) to make arrangements to pick up a load. Do not call Tom after 9 PM!! Bring your own containers and shovels. Payment for the coal (\$.07 per pound) should be made directly to the Saltfork Treasurer.

### **NW Region Coal Pile in Thomas:**

Don Garner now has a new pile of club coal available for sales to SCABA members. The shop is at 23713 E 860 Rd in Thomas, OK. (One mile west, then one mile north of Thomas.) Contact Don at 580-302-1845 (Cell Phone) to arrange details for purchases.

### **NE Region coal location:**

\*\*\*\*NOTICE\*\*\*\*

*Charlie McGee is no longer hosting the coal pile in the NE region. If you would be interested in hosting a location in NE, let one of the SCABA Board members know.*

**S/C region coal location:** Club coal is now available at Norman at Byron Doner's place. Call Byron to make arrangements to come by and get coal.

## SCABA T-Shirts!

2018 Saltfork Collector T-shirts are available with the 2018 Conference Logo. \$5.00 (plus shipping if applicable.) Contact Josh Perkins to check sizes and quantities that are still available.



Legacy SCABA T-shirts and long sleeve denim shirts are also available on clearance while supplies last. T-Shirts are \$5.00 and Denim Shirts are \$10.00. (Plus shipping if applicable.) Contact Josh Perkins to check sizes and quantities that are still available.

If you would like to purchase shirts, contact Josh Perkins (918) 269-3523.



## Have an Item for Sale? Item Wanted?

If you have any items that are appropriate for Blacksmiths that you would like to list in the Shop and Swap section (or items you are looking for), please send me your description, contact info, and any photos that you have.



## SCABA Membership Application

For Annual Membership

(Please Print Clearly!)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

New Member \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Married? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone (Best Number to Contact) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

ABANA Member? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

I have enclosed \$30.00 for dues for one year membership from the date of acceptance.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to: Saltfork Craftsmen, 6520 Alameda, Norman, OK 73026**

Note: Registration online by Paypal OR credit card is available from the website.

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

You do NOT need a Paypal account to use your credit card and registration/renewal is immediate.



## Saltfork Regional Meeting Hosting Form

Region: \_\_\_\_\_ NE \_\_\_\_\_ SE \_\_\_\_\_ SW \_\_\_\_\_ NW

Date: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Host Phone (Best Number to Contact) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Host e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Trade Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Lunch Provided: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Please provide detailed directions and/or a map to meeting location if possible. Meetings are scheduled on a first come basis.

**Return to: Saltfork Craftsmen Regional Meeting Coordinator, Russell Bartling**

70 N 160th W Ave

Sand Springs, OK 74063

You can also send the information in an e-mail or text or fill out the online form available on the website in the top banner of the Calendar Tab: [www.saltforkcraftsmen.org/Calendar.shtm](http://www.saltforkcraftsmen.org/Calendar.shtm)

Saltfork Craftsmen Artist Blacksmith Assoc. Inc.  
6520 Alameda  
Norman, OK. 73026

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