



# Blacksmiths of Central Texas

December 2009

**MEETING DATE IS DECEMBER 12**  
**START TIME IS 9:30am**



## Officers

**President**

**Vice-President**

**Treasurer**

**Secretary**

**Editor, Vince Herod**  
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The Zilker Blacksmith Shop

Zilker Botanical Garden,  
Austin, Texas

Located in Zilker Park just south of Town Lake and east of MoPac (Loop 1), Zilker Botanical Garden is easy to reach from both MoPac and I-35.

Driving directions:

**FROM MOPAC (LOOP 1):**

Take the exit for FM 2244 / Rollingwood, following the signs for Zilker Park. Watch for the dark green Zilker Botanical Garden signs. The garden is on the left at 2220 Barton Springs Drive.

**FROM INTERSTATE 35:**

Take the Riverside Drive exit and go west. At Barton Springs Drive, turn left and follow it along until you reach Zilker Botanical Garden on your right, just past Stratford Drive.

## Trade Item

Since we are meeting in a garden,  
create something found in a garden.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

November's meeting, held in historic Rockdale's new blacksmith shop near their beautifully restored train station, was well attended and very interesting.

Rockdale, Texas at the intersection of Texas highways 79 and 77 in Milam County was, according to the Rockdale Chamber of Commerce, named by Mrs. B. F. Ackerman for a rock, 12 feet high and 20 feet in diameter, which was near the road from Rockdale to Cameron. The town was incorporated in 1878, four years after the Great Northern Railroad laid track from Hearne, north of Rockdale, to Austin going through Rockdale. Lignite coal, found by state geologists in 1867 proved to be a real boon to the area and by 1914, 7000 rail cars of coal per week were being shipped out of Rockdale. Coal as an export from the area was mostly replaced by oil and gas production by the 1940's. By the 1950's the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA) had discovered how to use lignite as a source of power to melt aluminum and mining of coal recommenced, revitalizing the area.

The human history in the area started many years before with Indian habitation evidenced 10,000 years ago, and Spanish occupation of the area in the 1600's. The El Camino Real de los Tejas National Trail, known to Indians, Pioneers and Explorers alike, lies just to the south of Rockdale.

Prior to the start of the meeting, Rudy Billings fired up the forge and Gary Evensen discussed with Harvey Wise the repairs needed to the power hammer. A determination was made that one of the parts was just slap-a\*\* worn out, a useful technical term which should come in handy for all of us to use in many future repair situations.

Ex-President Sue Murray, in the absence of an elected presidential personage opened the meeting

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with a discussion of future meeting locations and announced again that tickets for the ABANA tool raffle were still available for only \$1.00.

Sue was the only demonstrator at the meeting, showing us how to make a very nice forged flower by splitting with a chisel a rather thick (3/16th inch ?) square piece of steel about 3 inches to the side into four equal parts forming the petals. The splitting did not continue to the middle of the flower, rather it stopped just short of a hole drifted in the middle to accommodate a 1/4" tenon forged on the end of a 3/8ths" round bar which formed the stem of the flower. The four petals were forged to give them some depth and definition and the stem was riveted to the flower. It is a very nice design and anyone who has not seen it should make an opportunity to do so.

After Sue's demonstration, the forge and anvils were declared open to anyone who desired to use them to make something.

Some of us took a tour of the nearby train passenger car and station museum; after which, we enjoyed a barbecue lunch at a restaurant North of town.

Tom Lupton,  
Interim Secretary  
Balcones Forge

## A NEW VIDEO

After learning that the Johnny Stout DVD "The Fine Art of Hollow Grinding" was missing from the Balcones Forge library, Johnny not only donated another copy, he also donated a VHS tape on making a folding knife -- "Building a Liner Lock Folder". Thanks Johnny for your generosity. Great meeting at your place in October!

## **EDITOR'S SOAPBOX**

In October new Board positions were elected and yet Balcones Forge still does not have a new slate of Officers. This seems to me to be a sad state of affairs.

It is no secret that a handful of members have done, and will likely continue to do, the majority of the heavy lifting for the organization. Burn out is a serious issue; ask any of your past Presidents. If the membership has no opinion of what needs to happen then so be it but I do not think this is the case. Speak up!!! What do you want out of the group? What will YOU do to help further those goals? What do you want in this newsletter? What will YOU contribute? The position is EDITOR not WRITER.

We are all busy; that's life. Find time to do your part or this great group will begin to fade away. I believe that would a very bad thing indeed.

The ABANA 2010 conference will be held at the AgriCenter International in Memphis, Tennessee. Opening ceremonies will be on Wednesday, June 2, 2010. Thursday through Saturday will be full days of forging demo's and excitement ABANA style.

Saturday will conclude with a pay as you go Memphis BBQ banquet and the conference auction.

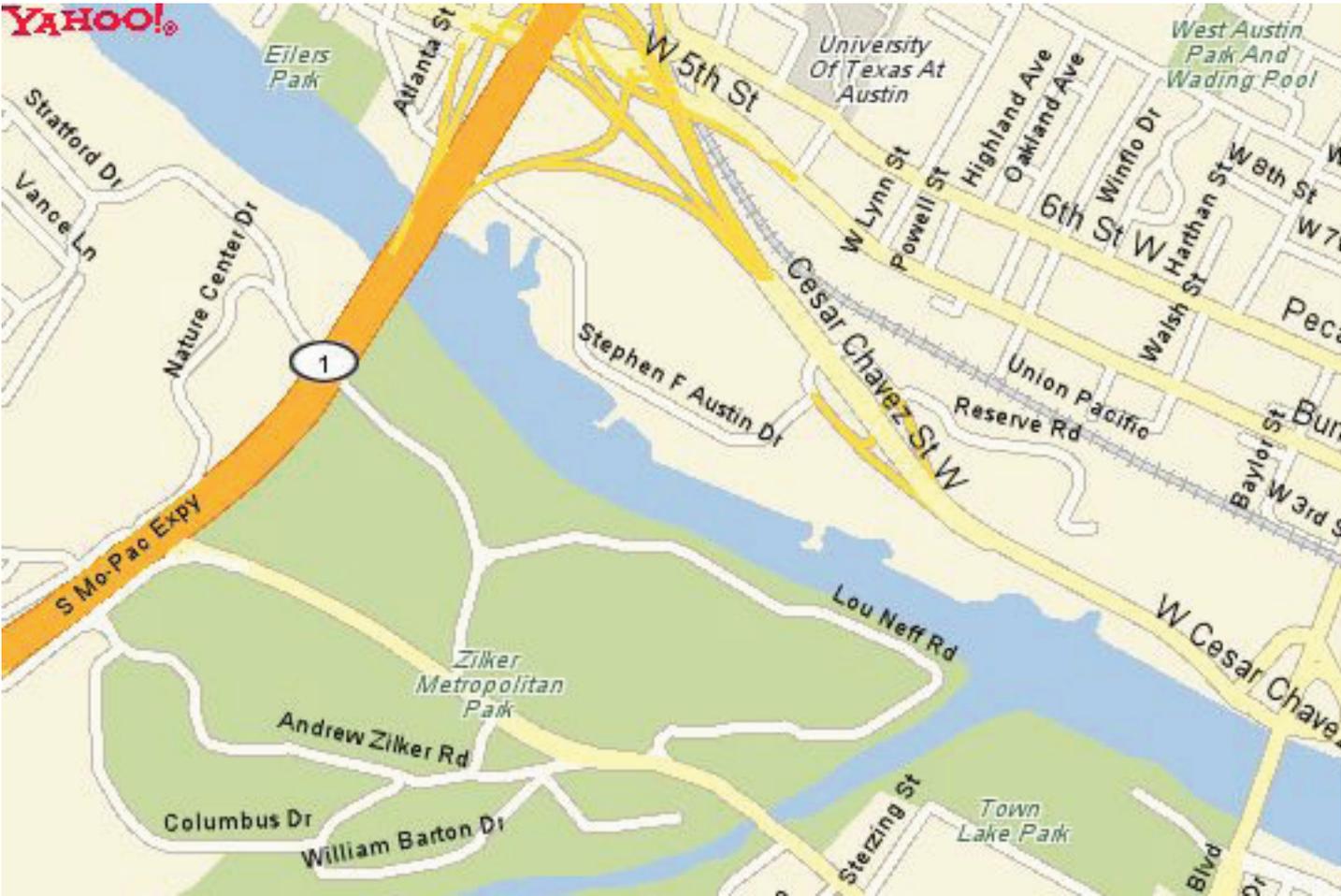
The theme of the conference is to be "ABANA's Greatest Hits" in keeping with Memphis' musical heritage. The ticket price will turn the clock back at least 8 years...

The site is within a few miles of thousands of reasonably priced hotel rooms. Camping and RV hook-ups and hot showers will be available on site. Stay tuned for additional announcements.

Combine your trip to the ABANA conference with some Memphis sightseeing! Visit <http://www.memphistravel.com> for some ideas on Memphis Area Attractions.

AgriCenter International is located at 7777 Walnut Grove Road, from I-240, on the east side of Memphis, take Exit 13 and drive east on Walnut Grove Road approximately 4.2 miles to Farm Road and turn south, go .1 mile.

YAHOO!



Return Service Requested

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