



Blacksmiths of Central Texas

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THE PREZ SAYS:

Happy 2008!

At this time each year, we usually reflect on the past and resolve to change something in the future. Looking at the past, Balcones Forge had a great year, and looking ahead, it will be another one. If you were at the last meeting of 2007, you know how much we learned, how much participation there was, and how much fun we had. Let's do it again and again! With your help, we can.

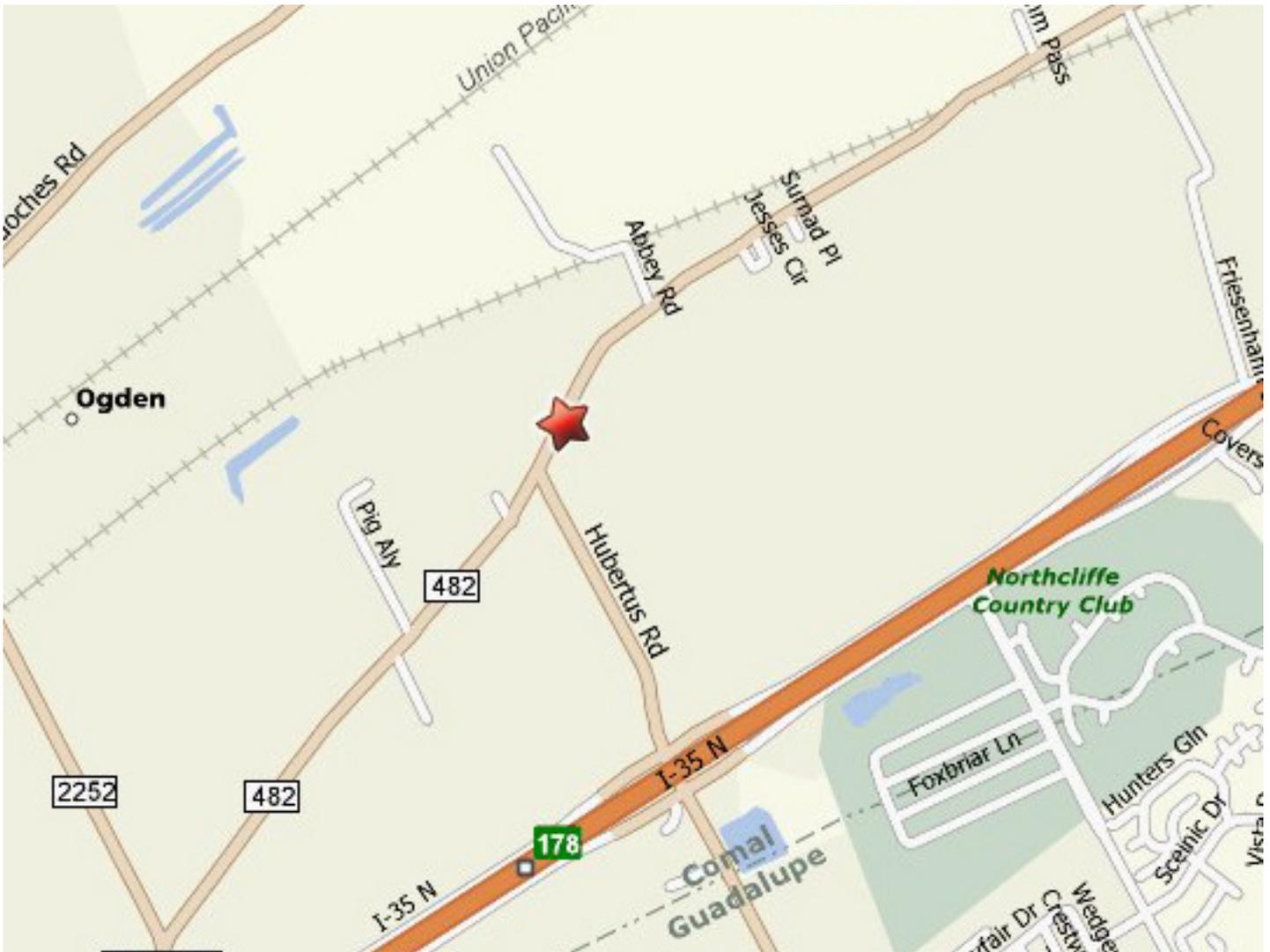
So, I will leave you with one somewhat interesting thought for this New Year: When Mozart was my age, he'd been dead 20 years.

Meet you around the forge,

Rudy

DUES ARE DUE! If you havent paid for 2008, see inside for details of where to send your dues.

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG



MEETING INFO

This month's meeting will take place at the Hollis Wooldridge's shop in New Braunfels. The address is 7469 FM 482. Yes indeed that is a map just above this text! If you still get lost his phone number is 210-609-5105.

Our meetings are scheduled to begin at 9:30 am and this meeting will be on our usual date of the last Saturday of the month. For those without a calendar handy that is the 26th.

For the trade item our host has asked that we all make a cross to honor the two members we lost this year, Jim Galish and Charles Stolte.

The agenda for the meeting is a closely guarded secret (OK they just didn't tell me) but what better way to start the year than to visit with your blacksmithing friends.

See you in New Braunfels.

I wonder if there is any German food nearby?

DUES ARE DUE!

Balcones Forge runs on a fiscal year that coincides with the calendar year so everyone's 2007 dues expired on December 31st. Dues are still the bargain-basement price of only \$15.

If you want to ONLY pay your 2008 dues, please send the \$15 dollars to our Secretary, Tom Lupton at 110 Reveille Road, Austin, TX 78746.

If you want to pay your dues AND register for the fantastic Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Workshop then fill out the form on the last page of the newsletter and send in your check to Rudy. His info is on the form.

So you don't forget; send before midnight tomorrow!!!!!!!!!! Anybody else remember those commercials?

If you need to join or renew your ABANA membership there is a form in this edition. ABANA membership is not required but it is a great resource.

WE ARE ONLINE

Want to view this newsletter in living color? Go to

www.BalconesForge.org

and check out the Newsletter section.

ORDER YOURS NOW!

Balcones Forge Hooded Sweatshirts - Order Yours Now

We have decided to order hooded sweatshirts with the oh-so-popular Balcones Forge logo on them. They will be \$30 each and come will come in black,, navy, or dark green. Because these are more expensive than the t-shirts, we will be

taking orders prior to purchase. So, if you would like one of these swanky body-warmers...please e-mail Sue Murray, current t-shirt custodian, at suraiyam@earthlink.net or ask me to put you down for one at the next meeting. We would like to have orders by the February meeting so we can get the sweatshirts ordered while it's still a little cool out. Please let me know the number you want, the color(s) and the size(s). We don't need your money until they come in. We also have more t-shirts, caps and some women's tank tops on the way, so...look for them soon.

Sue - T-shirt Custodian

LITTLE GIANTS FOR SALE

25 pound, fresh rebuild, didn't need babbit, new spring. New 110/220 volt motor, new paint job. Two sets of new dies.\$3,495.00. 50 pound, fresh paint and spring and dies. New 1.5 HP motor. Found like this in perfect condition. 100 Pounder. Paint, spring, dies. 3 PH motor, brake and spring guard. A great machine! \$6,595.00. 250 Pounder. This is a huge trip hammer! I believe I'm the third owner. The 7.5 3 ph motor was rattling, so I had it overhauled. It didn't need wiring, but all of the bearings were changed out for new ones. Runs really great now, \$8,995.00. You're welcome to see these hammers at any time, but please let me know first if you're coming to Uvalde. I'll give you directions and all. I have a forklift and can load all but the 250. However there's a place across the street from me that has a huge crane and will do the job for really cheap prices. He's very careful. These hammers are ready to work.

Contact me at rhrocker@hilconet.com, or 830-278-1832 (work) or -1990 (home).

Robert Hensarling, 4326 East Main, Uvalde, Texas 78801

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SECRETARY'S REPORT

The December meeting took place on Saturday, December, 29th in Buda, Texas at Roy Bellows new shop on Cedar Street. Buda is 17 miles south of downtown Austin in Hays County and was originally a railroad depot community named Du Pre established on land donated by Cornilia Trimble in 1881. The name was later changed to Buda which possibly comes from the Spanish word for widow: viuda. It is speculated that this name refers to two widows who were employed as cooks at the Carlington Hotel there in the 1880's.

To open the meeting the anvil was rung by each of us to honor the memory of Charlie Stolte who passed away December 10th in Taylor, Texas. His funeral was on the 12th of December and twelve members were able to attend. Nationally famous in the blacksmith community for his beautiful roses and lifelike hummingbirds, Charlie shared his vision of blacksmithing with anyone and everyone who asked and with many who didn't think to ask, but who were nevertheless grateful for his help and wisdom. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him.

There were 36 attendees at the meeting where the focus was on the trade item, a letter(s) of the alphabet, of which nine members contributed. Roy tried spelling something with all of the letters and I think "Rue (sp) of Rabbit" was the best we could come up with. Several of the offerings were of multiple letters rather than a single one. Somehow Rudy Billings traded for an RB, Roy Bellows traded for a BF (Bellows Forge) and I (Tom) came up with a T, go figure. A hawk had landed in the tree just above our heads as we were drawing numbers for the trade item we would receive so I guess that was an omen, or something.

Roy showed us some nice work horses made out of angle iron and told us about the pair of 4' X 8' doors for his shop on which he records information, time lines, chronologies and theology relevant to his grand picture of the world, or Shield of Achilles, a physical depiction of the world as it exists. The only thing I have on the door to my shop is a

note to be sure to remember to turn out the lights. It's painfully obvious that some of us operate on a higher plane than others. He says he writes or draws on metal with welders chalk and then goes over it with Liquitex acrylic gesso to make it permanent. Other suggestions for methods of marking patterns on metal were the use of silver pencils, pattern transfer paper and carbon paper.

There was a lengthy discussion on how branding irons are made with emphasis on beveling the contact edges and being sure to avoid having cross joints that connect (cut a gap in one letter where it crosses another). A well made branding iron is an artistic expression of good engineering and imagination and can be decorative well as practical. Several members contributed information about rules and regulations applying to brands as well as the practical aspects of making them. One of the things you may not have considered about branding irons is how to "call" them, or rather, how they are identified. Roy informed us that brands are described as to lettering and location on the animal, named left to right, top to bottom, out to in, "combined" if they come together at the bottom and "connected" if the characters touch. A backwards letter in a brand is called "reverse". Brands are registered at county clerks offices, so if you want to make one to ID your herd of cattle or horses be sure to contact them first. You probably wouldn't want to brand your goats, but a lot of people brand their steaks, just goes to show you how high the price of beef is nowadays, and besides, you don't want those suckers wandering off.

Our president, Rudy Billings, showed us his nifty portable tri-pod-post-vice which works quite well being very stable and sturdy even when you apply heavy pressure while clamping something. The stand supporting the vice folds up similar to an umbrella.

Terry Ross gave a presentation on how to use Google SketchUp to produce a drawing of a work piece on the computer and said that he will soon be teaching a one day class on the process to students at Austin Community College on Riverside Drive in Austin. He also showed us a very nice

panel he had made which was inspired by a section of a screen made by Albert Pailey, and described how he had made a circle incorporated in the panel out of a length of " square bar.

Once again there was no Iron-in-the-hat auction; I guess we're saving stuff up for the Bluebonnet Demo in March.

There were several announcements about up and coming events:

HABA (Houston Area Blacksmith Association) is having a knife making workshop in January, a vessel workshop in February in Houston and the meeting in Oldenberg in April. Go to habairon.org for details on the web.

Centaur Forge has arranged to collect new baseball caps to be donated to kids in MD Anderson Cancer Hospital, so if you can, give one to Jerry Achterberg and he will get it to Centaur Forge. Hats with sports and race car logos are popular with the kids. Any kid appropriate hat will be appreciated.

Balcones Forge member Lee Lanford has his Water Jet business up and running. You can contact him at 1-512-731-6414 or by e-mail at hotmetalworks@gmail.com.

The January, 2008 meeting will be at Hollis Wooldridge's shop.

The Bluebonnet Workshop hosted by Balcones Forge will be in March, at Larry Crawford's shop in Marble Falls, Texas with Christopher Thomson as the demonstrator. You can see his work at www.ctiron.com/.

The May meeting of Balcones Forge will take place on May 12 at the Pioneer Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas. It's a bit earlier than normally in the month for our meeting and somewhat of an early announcement, so be sure to confirm the date before showing up.

The July meeting will be at John Crouchet's forge

outside of Marble Falls.

We adjourned for lunch to the Railroad Barbecue just off of I35 in Kyle where about 20 of us enjoyed a meal together and wondered: "what are the taste challenged eating at the Salt Lick?"

Tom Lupton
Balcones Forge Secretary

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2008

So, which month would you like to host a meeting? Come on, show off the hard work you put into building your shop, or all the fantastic equipment you have. Besides, it's a great reason to clean up the place -- you just might find that tool you've been missing. Contact Vice President, Jerry Achterberg (treefarm@swbell.net). We have most of next year open at this time, so get your spot early.

DON'T SLEEP IN YOUR CAR

Bluebonnet Time is a Busy Time so get your lodging reservations taken care of soon for the Bluebonnet Workshop. Sleeping in your car is no fun!

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

You know -- that library book you checked out back in September?

Return those books, tapes and CDs so we can all be as smart as you.

The Library is an amazing resource that is FREE to paid members. However the deal is that you return the book or video at the next meeting. The very next meeting, not the next one you attend!

If you can't attend then send it back with a friend or mail it in but please return materials on time. You really don't want us to print your name and make fun of your organizational skills; do you?

You know who you are!

Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Workshop

featuring

CHRISTOPHER THOMSON

March 29-30, 2008

Marble Falls, Texas



BALCONES FORGE is pleased to bring award-winning artist-blacksmith **Christopher Thomson** to Texas for its annual two-day demonstration. Christopher was one of Francis Whitaker's early students in the '60s.



Since then, he has established a successful business, creating all manner of furniture, home furnishings, architectural works, and sculpture. Discover how Christopher creates such beautiful ironwork.

The Balcones Workshop will be held March 29-30. That means **Bluebonnet Time** here in the **Texas Hill Country!** Plan to ride some of our scenic country back roads and enjoy the finest display of wildflowers in America! We are located right in the middle of Texas' best bluebonnet area!

The Balcones Forge Workshop will present a wonderful dinner on Saturday night, catered by our friends at **The Jamin' House**, the finest restaurant in Marble Falls.

Dinner will be followed by our famous annual **Balcones Auction!** Buy yourself a new (or old) blacksmithing hammer, maybe a forge or anvil, some smithing books, or maybe Christopher's latest creation! We will finish Saturday night with a slide presentation by Christopher, featuring his beautiful ironwork.

Times: Saturday: 9:00–Noon – Morning Demo
Noon–1:00 – Lunch: Drinks provided; bring a sack lunch or there are numerous places to eat nearby
1:00–5:00 – Afternoon Demo
6:00 – Tasty catered dinner, only \$15
7:15 – If you do not attend the dinner, please join us at this time for the Old Time Auction and Christopher's slide presentation

Sunday: 9:00–1:00 – Demo

Our host is Larry Crawford at his Hammerfest Forge, 2401 Commerce St. Directions: **From Burnet on Hwy 281**, State Street will be the second traffic light once you enter Marble Falls. You will turn left (East) onto State Street. **From San Antonio or South Austin**, when on Hwy 281 start counting traffic lights once you cross the Colorado River into town. State Street will be the eighth traffic light and you will turn right (East) onto State Street. **From North Austin - Ranch Road 1431**, you will turn right (North) onto Hwy 281. State Street will be the third traffic light once you are on Hwy 281. You will turn right (East) onto State Street. **Everybody:** Go one block to the end of State Street. Turn left and go twenty feet. Turn right into Larry's driveway. Lost? Call John Crouchet for directions at 830-798-3710. Web map: maps.citysearch.com/map/view/10195073

For more info contact:

Rudy Billings, 512-461-7375 or Rudy@RedHotIronWorks.com

John Crouchet, 830-798-3710 or John@TexasWroughtIron.com

Jerry Achterberg 210-661-3293 or treefarm@swbell.net

Hotel Accommodations:

Hampton Inn on the Lake, 704 First St., 830-798-1895

Ramada Limited, 1206 Hwy 281, 830-693-5731

Best Western, 1403 Hwy 281, 830-693-5122, 800-528-1234

Hill Country Inn, 1101 Hwy 281, 830-693-3637

W W W . B A L C O N E S F O R G E . O R G



ABANA

CD GIFT OFFER NEW & RENEWAL MEMBERSHIPS

WWW.BALCONESFORGE.ORG

(Gift Membership given to) Name: _____

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<input type="radio"/> \$100—Contributory Membership	Phone:

Card Number				Expiration Date
				CWS

Mailing information: ABANA, PO Box 3425, Knoxville, TN, 37927-3425 USA (Please pay by Check, Money Order or Credit Card)
 This offer is valid on mail in ABANA Membership offering only. The Gift Membership will include *The Hammer's Blow* 26 back issue CD

Balcones Forge Bluebonnet Workshop

featuring **Christopher Thomson - March 29-30**

Please print clearly

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Yes, I prefer the electronic version of the newsletter. (You will be notified by email when the latest newsletter has been posted.)

Current Member \$45 _____
\$50 at the door

2008 Membership if unpaid . \$15 _____

Non-member..... \$60 _____

Yes, I wish to become a BF member

Saturday Evening Meal... \$15 _____

Total _____

Please register by March 15.

Make check payable to **Balcones Forge.**

Send to Rudy Billings,

1906 Rampart Circle, Austin, TX 78727

PLEASE READ AND COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING RELEASE FORM: FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND DATED BY EACH MEMBER, GUEST AND PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF ANY MINOR IN ATTENDANCE.

In consideration of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association providing demonstrators and making these demonstrations available and granting permission to enter the area of said demonstration, I, individually and as parent or guardian of the minor child attending such demonstration, hereby waive all claims for damage and/or loss to my person or property, or the person or property of such minor child, which may be caused by an act, or failure to act of the Balcones Forge Blacksmith Association, its officers, directors, agents or employees and the hosts and demonstrators. I understand that there are inherent dangers in blacksmithing and I assume all risk of all dangerous conditions in and about such demonstration and waive any and all specific notice of the existence of such conditions. By signing this waiver, I acknowledge that I have read and understand this waiver.

X

Date

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