

ROCKY FORGE NEWS

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NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting of the Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild will be at Ted Stout's, September 13th, at 9:00 A.M. Bring items for the iron in the hat. (We have one of the best iron-in-the-hat drawings around.) The agenda will be another day of open forge work to sharpen our skills and make whatever you want. Some of you may make items for the October Fest that Jim Keith has arranged for us to be involved. Items we make will be sold for the building fund. Lunch at the September meeting will be a pitch-in so bring some food. These always seem to work the best and we eat very well.

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR REMAINDER OF 2003

September 13 @ Stout's

October 4 @ Shane & Karen Stegmeier's

(Note date change is 1st Saturday)

This meeting will be with a group of Medieval Blacksmiths so it should prove to be a lot of fun. (See back page.)

November 8 @ Dan and Margie Michael's

(This will also be a feast.)

December 13 @ Stout's

LAST MEETING REPORT

The last meeting was well attended with 18 members and guests present. Please welcome a new member Dale Houmes, from Illinois. Dale is interested in getting started and I am sure we can lead him in the right direction. Hope to see you at future meetings Dale. Also, we were pleased to have Ray and Tina Phelps visit our meeting. They are from the Greenwood area, which is south of Indianapolis. Over the years these two have done

a lot to promote blacksmithing. Ray has a very nice shop setup with lots of room for hammer-ins and they have even been host to several conferences. They were very upbeat and complimentary to our group. Hope to see them again.

We had a great time with open forges doing whatever we wanted, until it rained. The sprinkles were strong enough about 2:30 to shut us down. We still had several hours of fun.

You guys should be proud of our Iron-in-the-hat, it brought in \$87. I'll say it again, "We have one of the best iron-in-the-hat drawings around."

As usual the food everyone brought in was also very good and yes we tend to eat more than we

OCTOBER FEST NEAR ZIONSVILLE

An October Fest will be held October 18-19th near Zionsville and will feature craftsman and other vendors, including food vendors. Jim Keith has made arrangements for the Rocky Forge group to participate and sell blacksmith made items at this show. It sounds like there will be a lot people there willing to buy our kind of products. Gene Hollingsworth, Dick Fontaine and Ted Stout met to discuss what items we could easily make and sell at the show. A list of about 20 items was developed and should possibly be condensed further. Anyone interested in helping make these items step up to the plate at our next meeting. This could be a major fund raiser for us so we need all the help we can get. Maybe we can make some of the items at the next meeting and try to develop jigs, plans and whatever else we may need to get the job done. Also, anyone interested in working the show please let Jim or Ted know so that we can be sure of having the times covered.

INDIANA STATE FAIR NEEDS BLACKSMITHS

I blacksmithed at the Indiana State Fair many years ago and had a great time. The current "blacksmith" never lights the fire nor pounds any metal. Because he does sell a lot of his "merchandise" the fair group does not want to replace him. However, they would like to have a real blacksmith working at the forge and anvil. I have been approached several times over the past 3 years to help them out. Now is the time and with blacksmiths from the "Rocky Forge" I think we can man such a shop for 12 days. If we could do it the first year to learn the ropes and the people involved, then open it up to satellite groups within the state, it would be a great accomplishment for the Rocky Forge group. I will need a small forum to represent our group and meet with the "Pioneer Village" administrators to help work out the details and design a blacksmith shop that they will build. This could be a lot of fun, but a long haul for 12 days of volunteer effort.

ROCKY FORGE BLACKSMITH SHOP

A group consisting of Dick Fontaine, David Childress, Dan Michael, Jim Keith and Ted Stout met to hammer out some of the design parameters of a new blacksmith shop. The shop will be located somewhere on the Illiana Steam and Power Show grounds.

With the outline from that meeting I met with and FBI Buildings agent to see what kind of cost they would offer. There are numerous possibilities in terms of builders and we should check with others. If you know of a reputable builder let me know.

Basically, the building will be 54' wide by 72' deep and 20 some feet tall with a loft in the center.

BUILDING YOUR OWN FLATTER

Last week I took a 2 1/2 # cross pean hammer, a newer one like you can buy at garage sales for less than \$1.00. About 1" of the pean was cut off and the edges where it was cut were ground out some so I could weld a 3" square piece of 1" thick plate to the hammer head. A tack weld

was made so the head could be aligned with the piece of plate. Then several beads of weld were laid down to fill in the cavity and enough that I could use the angle grinder to smooth out the welds and leave a nice curvature between the head and the square piece of plate. A few places had to be further welded and ground out before moving to a 120 final grind. The final grind left the tool with a nice polished look. I have used this tool several times already and it works great. About an \$80 tool that is priceless to me. Give it a try. You don't need a 1" thick plate, I just happen to have it. Anything from 1/2" up to 1" would be fine.

FOR SALE

Peter Wright anvil, 280# great condition, \$330, 572-2467.

4" Post Vise \$80 572-2467

ODDS AND ENDS OF INFORMATION

1. An excellent step by step description, with photographs, for making the Poz Tongs that Charlie Helton gave us a class on can be found on the internet at http://www.blacksmith.com/tong_article.htm. (No period at the end.)
2. Old cold chisels and punches can be bought at yard sales, auctions, flea markets, junk shops etc. These are great for grinding or forging to different shapes and used to make patterns in hot steel for decoration. Another good use is to lay a piece of sheet metal over a piece of hard tar or a chunk of lead. Draw the outline of a pattern on the metal with a magic marker and use the reshaped punches to make the form of the outline. Round punches for eyes, rounded chisel shape for veins in leaves, etc.
3. Copper sulfate solution will give your iron object a nice copper oxide patina.
4. Salt dissolved in vinegar will give iron a nice brown oxide color. Just brush it on.
5. Caution! Caution! Please do not use motor oil to quench your hot items. The fumes are very toxic. Use vegetable oil instead, it even works better than motor oil. Most small restaurants will gladly give you what you need, they have to pay for disposal. Please do not use motor oil!!!