

Rocky Forge News

Volume 18, Issue 6 – June, 2019

Next Meeting, June 8 at Ted's Shop

Here it is June already, and still many farmers and gardeners do not have their crops planted! This spring has been difficult for many including the Rocky Forge group trying to have meetings where we can work outside. This month we had planned on doing work on our building at the Illiana Show grounds, but it looks like mother nature has other plans for us. We will meet at Ted's shop this coming Saturday at 8:30AM with coffee doughnuts, then a short meeting before the forges are fired.

Several members attended the Indiana Blacksmith Conference at Tipton over the weekend. The conference was well attended and it seems everyone had an enjoyable time. Sorry so many of you missed this conference because we had one of the country's best demonstrators: Mark Aspery, author of three books and a fourth on the way. The tailgating was pretty good and the gallery showcased the talent of our Indiana blacksmithing community. On Saturday night the auction of work by the demonstrators and club members presented some real opportunity to buy very well-done metal working tools and artistic pieces. The Iron-In-The-Hat drawing was totally different from past years giving you the chance at some nice blacksmithing tools, etc. Between the auction and Iron-In-The-Hat the IBA was able to add several thousand dollars to their treasury. Sorry so many of you missed this opportunity, but there will be another conference next year and maybe even better.

Recent attendance at our meetings has been over 50 members which puts a strain on the number of forging stations available and personal attention to help you develop skills. I have added several more coal forges and at least one more gas forge to help relieve that shortage.

For Saturday please bring items for Iron-In-The-

Hat and your tool bucket. The club will provide chicken and ham salad sandwiches so you can bring covered dishes that will complement the sandwiches. Remember the meals we have are always very good, but only if you contribute will they be that way.

Carol and I are looking forward to hosting you this Saturday and hope to see a good turnout for a fun day of smithing.

Ted and Carol Stout (765-491-2194)

Dates to Remember

June 8: Rocky Forge Meeting at Ted's.

June 15: Rural Smith of Mid-America Meeting, Johnson County Blacksmith Shop, IN

July 13: Rocky Forge Meeting, Illiana Showgrounds, Rainsville, IN

July 19-21: Illiana Show, Illiana Showgrounds, Rainsville, IN.

September 26-29: SOFA QuadState Meeting: Troy, Ohio.

October 5-6: Feast of the Hunters' Moon, West Lafayette, IN

October 11-12: UMRBC Pontiac Conference, Pontiac, IL.

June 3-6, 2020: ABANA Conference, Washington County Fairgrounds, Greenwich, NY (east of Saratoga Springs and north of Albany).



Mastering the Fundamentals of Blacksmithing, Leafwork, and Traditional Joinery (3 Vol. Set by Mark Aspery)

Available as separately from Amazon.com or at <https://bluemoonpress.org>

Mark Asbury Demonstrating at the 2019 IBA Conference



Mark forging a set of tongs. Notice that Mark is right handed and sets the heel of the anvil in front of his right hand. Many, but not all, smiths prefer this arrangement. He is also wearing eye protection and a leather apron. Mark prefers to smith without gloves on either hand. Some smiths wear a glove on their non-hammer hand because that hand gets beat up from holding the workpiece or tongs.



Mark is using a 24-inch folding brass farrier's ruler to measure an important dimension his workpiece. These rulers can be purchased at most farrier supply shops such as <http://www.americanfarriersupply.com/m5/760--fpd-folding-brass-ruler.html>



Here Mark is forging the part of the tong jaws that will hold the workpiece from the side. First, he isolates the material, and then he pushes it out. The final step involves lifting the material to form the side of the tong jaw, i.e. the part that keeps the workpiece from sliding around in the jaw.



Mark has a stance like Nathan Allen, the smith at Conner Prairie. Notice the brass ruler in his back pocket. If you haven't been to Conner Prairie in Fishers, IN, you should take your family there for a lovely afternoon in the 19th century. <https://www.connerprairie.org>



This beautiful piece that was displayed in the Gallery was made by Brad Weaver. Isn't it amazing that steel can be made to look like flowers!



John Bennett made the table and showed it in the Gallery. John is a very hard working and prolific blacksmith. He displayed many of his works in the gallery.