

Rocky Forge News

Volume 18, Issue 11 – November, 2019

Next Meeting, Nov. 9 At Ted's Shop

The next meeting of the Rocky Forge Blacksmith Guild will be held November 9th at Ted's shop, located at 8525 West 700 South, West Point, IN, 47992. We start by having doughnuts and coffee around 8:30AM with a meeting at 9:00. This will be an open forge meeting and some work on the propane forge project. After purchasing a high temperature pyrometer, a lot of time has been spent evaluating various burners at 5, 10, 15 and 20 psi propane. Also, some trials with different conditions for a gas forge are being tested. A summary to date will be given at the meeting.

We have coke available to the members for a minimal cost. It is a clean fuel and should be mixed with your coal.

Volunteers will be needed at the Illiana Show grounds for blacksmithing demonstrations during the "Christmas in the Village" on December 6th and 7th. The blacksmith shop will need to be decorated for this event. In the past we have had a good time forging at night. This is a good event that involves a lot of people working various stations throughout the show grounds. It is free to the public and a very popular event with people coming from miles around to see the decorations and lights at the show grounds. Local school choirs provide carolers singing and roving the grounds.

Danny Thayer made a beautiful knife and donated to the group for raffle. We sold tickets at events over the last four months. At our last meeting more tickets were sold and the winning ticket was drawn. After several tries the winner was contacted and came to my shop to claim his



prize. Needless to say, he was very pleased with his winnings and just kept feeling it. He bought the ticket at the Illiana Show and is a relative of one of our Illiana members.

I want to reemphasize that Illiana Antique Power Association is our host when we work at the blacksmith shop on the show grounds. Rocky Forge and Illiana have a legal agreement called "a memorandum of understanding" between the two organizations. Everyone in the blacksmith group should become members of the Illiana and attend their meetings. They meet in the new clubhouse every 3rd Monday of the Month, except during the winter months. If you participate in the Christmas in the Village, that would be a good time to join.

We will have an "Iron in the Hat" drawing so bring whatever metal you can. I am cleaning up several storage areas and believe me there will be a good iron in the hat. Also, bring your bucket of tools

Carol will not be at the meeting Saturday, but she is making a pot of chili, so the rest of you will need to kick in with food for the meal. I'm sure you will all come through.

Looking forward to seeing all of you on Saturday.

Ted and Carol

Dates to Remember

November 9: Rocky Forge Meeting at Ted's.

December 6-7: Christmas in the Village, Illiana Show Ground, Rainsville, IN

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

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Propane Forge Safety

Working with propane requires some safety precautions.

- If you smell gas (propane), shut down and find the leak. Propane is heavier than air and will accumulate near the floor and form a volume of explosive gas.
- Vent the forge if it is used indoors. These units produce large volumes of carbon monoxide and all care should be taken to keep a flow of fresh air in the shop when it is running.
- Protect all lines and hoses from accidental damage while working.
- Operate the forge only when you are in the room, there are no safety features and it requires that you be present while it is running.
- Have a fire extinguisher handy.
- Check for gas leaks with soapy water. Use tape thread to reduce leaks in joints. Any hoses with leaks should be immediately replaced.
- Staring at the inside of a lit forge can cause permanent eye damage - there is a lot of IR radiation being generated. If you need to look into the forge often, acquire safety glasses which protect your eyes from IR radiation.

Lighting the Forge

- Turn the valve on the burner to the OFF position.
- Open the gas tank valve. The hose should be charged with propane now.
- Place a piece of crushed up newspaper in the forge. Light the paper with matches. Alternatively, light a portable propane torch and insert the torch so the flame is under the forge burner.
- Stand to the side and gently turn ON the burner valve.

Turning the forge off

- Turn OFF the burner valve.
- Turn OFF the gas tank valve.
- Turn ON the burner valve to release the gas in the pipe then turn OFF the burner valve.