

ROCKY FORGE NEWS

Volume 2, Issue 8

August 2003

NEXT MEETING: August 9th., 9:00 at Stout's. This meeting will be open forge time for you to make or do whatever tickles your fancy. Instruction will be available to help you make a project. Bring your metal and project ideas. Also, I hope to have the 100# Little Giant set up doing some heavy forge work, like making anvil tools. Lunch will be ham-n-bean soup and whatever else you all bring for a pitch in lunch. This meeting will be for our fun, no pressure, no commitments, just for our fun. If you want bring your own forge, anvil and tools.
. Don't forget iron in the hat.
Note: After attending other blacksmithing meets throughout Indiana, the Rocky Forge group has one of the best iron-in-the-hat drawings available, lets keep it that way.
Hope to see all of you on the 9th.

ILLIANA STEAM AND POWER SHOW

Thanks for a great show.....
The Rocky Forge group should be proud of what we did during this show. You would need to travel a long way to find a working blacksmithing exhibition, such as ours. Except for a couple of large national shows, I would be willing to bet we have the best. At one time we had 10 or more blacksmiths working. You guys should be very proud of the show you put on. Most of the time a good crowd was gathered around the blacksmiths. You made some neat items for sale and some of them did sell.
The swage block sales swelled our coffers far more than any of us expected. We actually had to have a second printing of tickets. Thanks to Jim Keith, our champion seller, we made a lot toward a new building.

Jim had a good idea, he told people who were not interested in a swage block that if they won he would buy it for \$100. So in effect they were buying a chance to win \$100.
When it came time to draw the winning tickets Jennifer Hayden of Duggar, Indiana was the winner of the swage block. It went to a very deserving young lady. Jennifer is a director in the Indiana Blacksmiths and belongs to the Terre Haute satellite group. The block was delivered to her on Thursday after the show.
The afghan was won by Spring Milliken, friend of Donnie Bodine. Donnie owns the big steam tractor you see at the show.
Congratulations to both winners and our thanks to all those who sold tickets and to those who bought tickets to support the Rocky Forge group. My personal thanks to those who helped load equipment before the show and those who helped bring the equipment back to my house. I could not move all that iron myself. Actually, next year I am going to display a stamp collection.....

ITEMS FOR SALE BY THE GUILD

The guild has the following items available for sale to members.
-Coal for \$0.15 per pound (\$5.25 per bucket).
-1 red, medium, T-shirt for \$12.
-Three books "The Blacksmithing Study Guide" for \$15.00.
-Forshners Hoof-Pak to lubricate your hot cutting and drilling tools for \$3.00.
-50# bags of coke for \$7.00.
Note: we are getting very low on coal if someone would like to volunteer to make a run to Brazil it would be appreciated.

BLACKSMITHING TIPS

1. When hot drilling lubricate the drill frequently and cool the tool. Strike 2-3 blows then cool and rotate the tool with each blow. Rotation keeps the hole symmetrical and helps keep from sticking the tool in the hot metal (sometimes the tool actually welds to the metal).
2. To conserve heat start drawing out back from the end. For example, if you need a 3" tip drawn out on a 3/8" piece start back about 1" and work back, then work the last one inch. If done correctly you can demonstrate this idea by watching the heat leave the end and when the tip is finally hit you can see it turn red again. It is pretty cool to watch.
3. A rivet should stick through the hole 1 1/2 times the rivet diameter. That amount leaves a the right size to peen over and form a good riveting job.
4. If you are forging a thin item, like a shovel, do your forging in the middle first then form the sides.
5. Metallic art pencils mark well on steel and will leave a residue still visible after the fire. I am also told white out will survive the fire.
6. There are so many metals to learn about it is best to pick 2-3 high carbon steels and learn their characteristics, like how to forge and temper, before trying to learn more. Some good smiths only work with a limited number of steel types for most all their tool making needs.
7. Sticks of soapstone are very brittle and usually break into several pieces when used. To keep that from happening, try wrapping the stick with masking tape. As the stick is used peel back the tape or sharpen it like a pencil.
8. Never use your forging hammer to strike cold tools. Keep a separate hammer for this purpose. In other words only use your favorite hammer to strike hot iron, otherwise you will need to dress the striking surface periodically to keep from having nicks.
9. A hot piece of metal, such as rod or square stock can be made "dead" straight by clamping in the vise while hot. Repeat and rotate to get a good straightening. This works great if you are trying to straighten a piece of square stock you have just twisted. This method leaves no hammer marks.

10. Ladle cups or large spoon cups are best served when the handle is riveted to the outside.
11. To curve a small piece of metal lay it over the hardy hole and hit it with hammer until the right amount of curvature is created.
12. If you want to mount an iron item in a stone, drill a hole 2 times the diameter of the metal item using a hammer drill. Buy some lead wool and tamp it in around the post using a metal tamper and lightly pound the lead in until the hole is full. This is a good way to mount boot scrapes into a rock.
You can also mount the item by first preheating the hole with a red hot rod then pour molten lead around the post. This is very dangerous and a face shield must be worn. Sometimes the molten lead erupts out due to moisture in the stone. The other method is much safer.
13. If you are quenching hot metal in motor oil to temper it be very cautious. The fumes from oil quench contain some very toxic materials and should not be breathed.
A much safer alternative and probably even better as a quench is vegetable oil. New or used cooking oil makes for a safe quench. Used cooking oil can be found at local restaurants. Most of the time they are very glad to have it hauled away since they have to pay for disposal.
14. Most tool steels or high carbon steel are nearly impossible to cut with a hacksaw. The best way to cut these metals is with an abrasive blade, whether in a chop saw, angle grinder or table saw they work great for such cuts.
15. Burning a vegetable oil soaked, cotton rag on to a hot piece of your latest project will give the item a lasting black coating that is resistant to rust for a long time. Be careful because the hot oil on the rag can really cause burns. Use tongs or pliers the handle the rag.

ITEMS FOR SALE:

Pull type, 3-bottom plow, call 765-762-3422
Ask for Rhonda.

1948 Ferguson Tractor, Crawfordsville, 765-918-8328 ask for Marla (marla@wico.net).