

March 2021

CLINKER



BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

Established May 18, 1985

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FABA website, other changes coming

Geez! It's March already and lots of changes are forthcoming.

As Spring brings changes in the weather and foliage, changes are also happening for FABA too.

Our website is going through major changes and bringing us up to date in the wild wild world of web for a more secure, and pleasant experience expanding its functionality with new areas to explore.

Please be patient as things are changed over and brought up to date. The wait will be worth it.

We are changing our membership software as well and getting that integrated with our website for use to join/renew memberships and for conference registration, etc. If you experience any hiccups in renewing your membership, let us know and we will make sure and get it corrected. We are hoping these changes will prevent issues from arising in the future.

Jessica Sandlin is working hard for us and I am looking forward to seeing it back online.

As most of you know by now, the SBA conference has been postponed until its regularly scheduled time in 2023.



Mark Stone

FABA will still be the conference hosts, and the demonstrators have already confirmed for the new dates of May 18-20, 2023.

The conference project, a rocking bench with two individual rocking chairs and side tables will still be the project.

The conference is the only source of income for the SBA and we decided we cannot afford to have a down year or worse, have to cancel it after putting a few thousand dollars out beforehand.

Speaking of conferences, we have had someone step forward to take on our Program Chair position. Erin Harlow has experience planning events and Doug Hayes is familiar with her work. We are excited to have her aboard and look forward to working with her planning our 2021 conference. Thank you, Erin!

I hope everyone has a great March. Enjoy your monthly meetings and thank your Regional Coordinators. They work hard putting together our monthly meetings.

Stay well, stay safe and keep your forges glowing and your hammers pounding!

Mark Stone

Calendar of Events

The calendar includes events of interest to the blacksmithing community. The regions have no boundaries – everyone is welcome everywhere. Come to more than one if you can.

We hold regular meetings in each region on the following Saturdays of each month: NE-1st, NW-2nd, SE-3rd, Far West and SW-4th. The actual dates vary, so check the schedule noted in the regional reports.

Our meetings are informal gatherings around the forge. Prospective members are always welcome. Come for all or any part of a meeting, bring your tools or just watch.

Most meetings run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and you'll want to bring a bag lunch if not otherwise noted. If you have any questions about meetings or events, please contact the Regional Coordinators:

Central Northeast Region	Heinrich Hole	386-848-6982	heinrich.faba@gmail.com
North Northeast Region	vacant	for questions, please email	djhayes29@hotmail.com
Northwest Region	John Pfund	850-528-3280	johnwpfund@aol.com
Southeast Region	Peter Hill	651-635-6022	blazeblades561@gmail.com
Southwest Region	Antony Fenn	617-320-4781	antony.fenn@gmail.com
Far West Region	Dave Sandlin	850-974-1548	traditionsworkshopinc@gmail.com

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association (FABA)

is a not-for-profit organization chartered with the State of Florida and is dedicated to promoting and expanding the horizons of architectural, artistic and practical blacksmithing while preserving the rich heritage of this craft. FABA Officers and members assume no responsibility or liability for injuries or damage caused as a result of the use of any information, materials, design, techniques, etc. contained in this newsletter, our website, <http://www.blacksmithing.org>, our Facebook Page or provided at meetings or demonstrations.

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Table of Contents

- 1 President's Message**
- 2 Calendar of Events**
- 2 Regional Coordinators**
- 3-8 Regional Reports**
- 9 Beginner Blacksmith Series**
- 10-11 Member Spotlights**
- 12 FABA Officers/
Membership Application**

Central NE Region Meeting, March 6

Greeting from the Central NE, where 26 people signed into the Feb. 6 meeting.

It is a time of transition and growth for our region. It saddens my soul to think of the many senior smiths that used to attend and guide our monthly meetings that will never again be there to lend us their advice and support.

I do, however, remember their love for the craft and their endless enthusiasm to help those just finding interest in the craft all the way up to those trying to work damascus blades. It is with that attitude and desire to spread the craft that I have led our region into its current state.

We have been experiencing steady growth in our attendance and especially in our hands-on participation. It thrills me to no end that I can announce in the CB that our region had every single forge going with a fire, and many people getting to work on some hot iron at our February meeting.

In addition to this growth we've been experiencing, Albert Rasch has recently been adding his energy to our region and has already made substantial improvements to our online presence.

With his new ideas and willingness to help out, I do believe we will be able to expect exciting new growth in our region's activities. Thank you, Albert, for all you've been doing for FABA.

I also want to thank Jesse Allan once again for helping out with our demonstration. Sadly I had a pinched nerve in my shoulder and was unable to work my hammer arm to do the demo. Thank you sir for coming through in a *pinch*.

The next meeting will be on March 6th @ 9 a.m. at the Barberville [Pioneer Settlement, 1776 Lightfoot Lane, Barberville.](#)

We will be working on Bolt Jaw tongs for grabbing 1/2" bar stock. Some of the FABA conference supplies need to be restocked, so I think this is a perfect opportunity for our region to step up and fill the need.

The March meeting is going to be run class style as I teach us how to make tongs. It is my hope that 5 or more people will take up the call to learn and produce a pair to help out.

This meeting might rightfully be thought of as a free class for anyone willing to participate and donate their days effort to the organization. Few things make people take pride in what we do and want to further support our efforts than to



Albert Rasch with Heather Havilah and Heinrich Hole at Kirk Sullens' shop to practice tong-making.

have personally helped to produce the tools we work with. Be sure to look to the Northeast FABA facebook page for a full description of the meetings agenda.

Also, its that time of year again. March 27th will be the shop maintenance day at the settlement. It is the fourth Saturday of the month. We have rusty forge trays that need some welding repairs, and we've got airways that need to be cleaned out or replaced.

There will be all manner of work to do. One project in particular involves restoring proper function to the settlement's wheel wright shop chimney.

If any of you have knowledge on that particular subject, then your presence would be especially welcome. Bring gloves, as a lot of the work is a bit messy.

If you happen to have extra oil appropriate for blowers, then that would be appreciated. Light power tools such as battery angle grinders and drills with wire wheels would also be helpful.

There will also be some general clean-up and organization of the shop going on, so even if you don't have shop skills, your time and effort will still be valued if you show up to help out.

Thank you in advance for your time and energy. There will be food and drinks provided to all that help out.

— Heinrich Hole, Central NE Coordinator

Far West Region Report

If our first meeting for 2021 is any indicator we are off to a great year! Eighteen members and guests attended our event hosted by Traditions Workshop. One guest even went home and brought his daughter back so she could participate in our activities.

After the team got everything set up the membership conducted a short business meeting where members signed up for parts of a project that we intend to present at the next state wide conference in October. Next we had a short group discussion about making tenons using an available spring swedge. Afterwards everyone launched into their own projects while John Pfund elected to turn our discussion into a practical exercise for those who were interested in developing this essential journeyman skill.



Membership meeting in progress



Chris dropped by to do some business with the workshop. When he found out that FABA was hosting an open house he went home to get his daughter Trinity so they both could experience blacksmithing first-hand. We expect to see them back in the coming months.



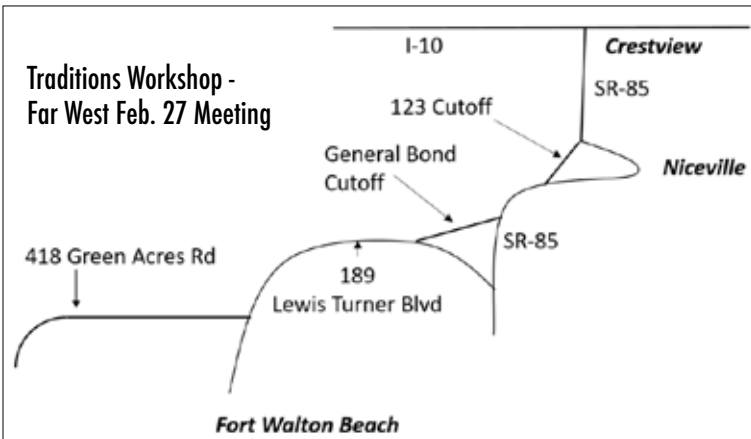
Jennifer Hay trying out Christopher Mallet's anvil.



John Pfund and Chris Cauthen both drove over from Tallahassee to join the fun. After John performed a hands-on demonstration of mortice and tenon, he cooked the lunch provided by Traditions Workshop. Chris demonstrated weaving steel back through a series of holes that he had punched in the bar, but he didn't let us get a picture!



Christopher Mallet setting up for the next phase of his project, making a washer for his post vice, under the studious eye of Brendyn Hay.



Our team hard at work on their individual projects.

Far West Region Events

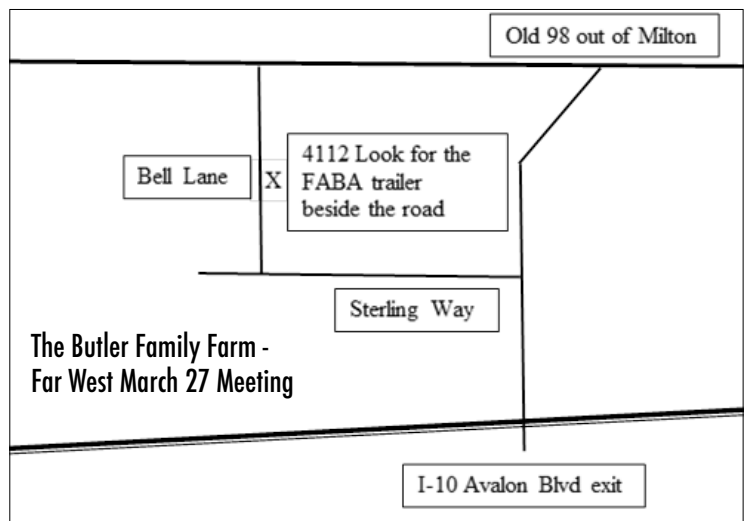
Far West's February 27 meeting will continue our focus on the Journeyman standards with a discussion followed by a demonstration on setting rivets and collars. The meeting will be held on the 27th, 9am-2pm at Traditions Workshop, 418 Green Acres Rd., Fort Walton Beach, FL 32547.

Far West March meeting will be held at [Butler's Family Farm](#) in Milton, FL, and is intended to be a fundraiser with a "make and take" class on medieval knife making that will be open to the public.

April meeting will also be held at John Butler's Family Farm with topic to be announced.



— David Sandlin, Far West Coordinator



SW Region Report

There is no planned in-person meeting for the SW Region at the end of the month. I'm looking for anyone in the SW region who has a project or demo that they can do online in the coming weeks. Feel free to contact me via email at antony.fenn@gmail.com or private message me via Facebook.

I encourage you to go to the [FABA SW Facebook page](#) for the any meeting announcements and to find recorded video from past meetings.

In the meantime, SW members have been busy working in their own shops on creative projects this month. Check them out below!

— **Tony Fenn, SW Regional Coordinator**



Tony Fenn had the privilege to spend some time working with artist Lawrence Voytek who taught him how to cast aluminum and bronze in sand using the 'Lost Foam Process'. Lawrence was Director of Projects for Robert Rauschenberg for 26 years, and helped Robert fabricate and realize many of his sculptures. Tony first used his 3D scanner and CNC router to make this self-portrait piece in foam, before burying it in sand and then casting in bronze.

Regional Reports



Robert Graber - has made a wonderful sculptural mailbox piece so that members can easily recognize his home when we next get together for a meeting at his workshop.



Marcus Wise - has again been making some spectacular knives. He finished up this San mai hunter with G10 scales and brass pins for a knife collector that just wanted something "different". Also tune into the history channel on Wednesday February 17, 2021 at 9pm eastern time to see Marcus compete against 3 other bladesmiths in Forged in Fire!

NW Region Report

Hello everyone and greetings from the Northwest Region. Our February meeting was held at Juan Holbrook's in Gainesville. It was a rainy day, and I'm sorry to report that only 5 people attended.

Juan gave us a demonstration of making a wall hanging hook from a railroad spike using a coal forge, power hammer, treadle Hammer, etc. When finished, he asked for suggestions of what else to do, and Jerry Wolfe suggested trying to make male and female figurines from the railroad spikes as he was working on a wedding present that could use them.

We spent the rest of the morning working on them with some success. You never know how something like this will turn out until it's finished. Jerry took what we made home with him and will let us know how the present eventually turns out.

We didn't have enough people for a raffle so when we got hungry we stopped for lunch. Juan served us vegetable soup, pizza and fresh fruit.

I want to thank Juan for hosting us and Jerry and Craig Hines for making the drive and showing up!

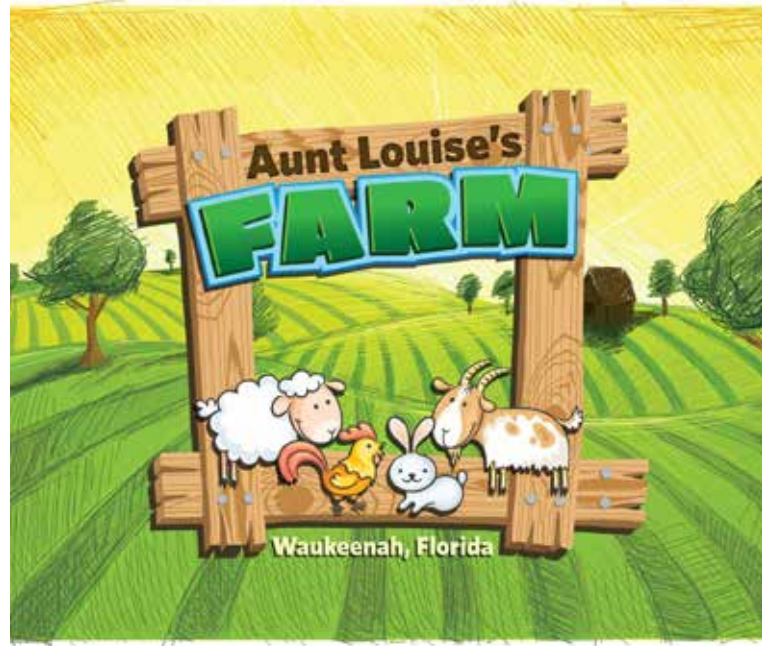
I was wondering how many people attended the meeting last February at Juan's and when I tried to look it up in old Clinker Breakers I couldn't find any mention of it. Sorry about that, Juan! And Nicole! I remember that she helped with the demonstration last year.

Anyway, Suzy and I really enjoyed the meeting as we made a weekend adventure out of it, but I didn't get any pictures.

This might be a good time to put out a suggestion and a request to our members: when you attend a meeting, consider taking a few pictures and writing something about your experience there. This kind of input is very enriching to our newsletter and a way for members to contribute to the welfare of our group.

I thank you in advance!

— **John Pfund, NW Coordinator**



NW Region Meeting, March 13

The Northwest Region will have our March meeting at Mike Bettinger's Welding Shop. It is located at [3340 Garber Road, Tallahassee, FL 32303](#).

The meeting will be held on March 13th and starts at 9 a.m. Daniel Schul will be demonstrating making a Hammer and we will have "Open Forges" for anyone who wants to participate!

Jerry Vermillion from WMW Welding Supply is going to bring out some Welding equipment to show us.

Mike's crew will be cooking chicken for us on the grill, and we should bring sides and desserts. Don't forget to bring something for the Iron in the Hat raffle. I'm still giving 7 free tickets for your handmade items. I hope to see you there!

Planning a little farther ahead, our April meeting will be held at [Aunt Louise's Farm, 8101 Waukeelah Hwy, Monticello, FL 32344](#). This Saturday (April 10th) will start their 6 weekend spring season of full day Saturdays and half day Sundays, when they are open to the public and we are invited to come out and provide a Blacksmithing presence.

After the meeting on Saturday, we will leave our equipment set up for the rest of their season, and any of our members who want to can come out, practice your craft, talk to the people and offer your wares for sale.

Aunt Louise's Farm is not asking for a part of the sales and is offering us a free lunch, too.

— **John Pfund, NW Coordinator**

Starting with Nothing

Or, I want to make a sword, what do I do?

Welcome to the first installment of “**Starting with Nothing**,” where we will literally start with next to nothing! With grit, perseverance, and a bit of luck, we hope to build out a properly outfitted shop, with all the tools and gear necessary to do good blacksmithing work!

I'll be right there with you starting with next to nothing as well, and every month adding to my skills and toolbox. There are going to be a lot of skill building exercises along the way too. From tapering any size bar to specified dimensions, we will travel all the way to forge welding. We are going to try to keep things in an orderly fashion, where one skill leads to the next. But remember, it will be a never-ending exploration of our skills and metalworking! Some of you will be stronger in seeing form and line, others in one mechanical process or another; together we can share what we learn and help others see with our eyes.

My first suggestion is a sketch/notebook, preferably bound; my current favorites is the Exceed 7 X 9.5 Dot Journal (\$6 - \$8). A mechanical pencil, a dust free eraser, a small French curve, and scale. I keep my art supplies in a cigar box; it keeps them in one place and relatively clean. You need to keep something close by to jot down notes, do simple math, draw stick-figure, or write haiku. You need to keep records and jot down ideas! You know you've forgotten plenty of great ideas...

Next, a set of clear safety glasses. I think all that can be said about the importance of protecting your eyes has been said. Do the right thing.

Here is a basic list of what we are going to put together this coming month:

- Forge
- Fuel
- Forced Air
- Hammer
- Anvil
- Steel to strike
- Safety Gear
- Water for Quench

Keep an eye on the FABA-NE pages as we discuss and amplify on each of these topics and get started on some basic tools. Future installments on **Clinker Breaker** will distill the lessons learned and prepare us for the next project or step.

I would like to take a moment if I may, to thank everyone who has encouraged me to pursue this project! All of you that have been sending me messages on the projects they would like to see made, we will be getting to many of those as they are great examples of many of the skills we are trying to develop. I have had a few inquiries about our Journeyman's program, and I will be researching that and have a better answer than present. I can assure you that we will certainly be refining our skills in those requirements as well!

Until next time!

Albert A Rasch

Note:

If you already have tools, a forge, anything related, do not worry! As I said, there will be a lot of skill building exercises. I am an amateur myself and will be building my skills and techniques as well. We will also be having guests on a very regular basis as well.

DO NOT MISS IT!



Figure A: Getting started with found materials.

Member Spotlight

Robert Graber FABA SW Region
US Army Ret. SFC MP Ironside Creations

Having spent most of his adult life in the US Army, Robert is now an artist blacksmith living in West Central Florida. His work is inspired by nature, Norse mythology, and organic forms.



Albert A Rasch FABA-NE Region
US Army Retired Tong and Hammer Smithy

Well know well known raconteur, world adventurer, and all-round nice guy, Albert is a five-year member of Florida Artist Blacksmith Association. Albert is best known for his hammer and tool dressing expertise, and the occasional Ko-Tosho tsuba. You will usually find him grinding and polishing while swapping stories with other adventurers at the monthly meetings.



Member Spotlight

Marcus Wise FABA-SW

Wise Forge and Farrier Service

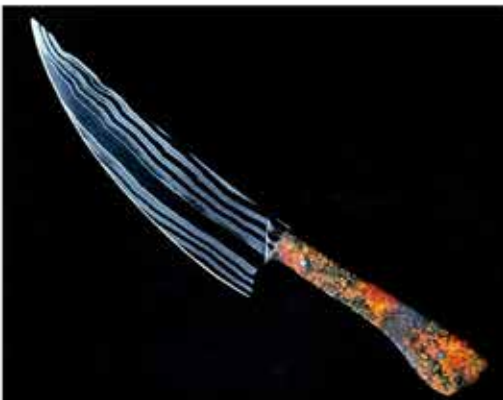
Marcus is a popular and respected farrier based in Myaka Florida. His ability with a hammer has landed him not only at the National Farrier's Competition, but also on "Forged in Fire" which will air on February 17,2021 at 9pm eastern time.



Jimmy Morrissey

Shamrock Knives Deltona Florida

Jimmy is one of our newest members, and one to keep an eye on. He has that ability to see form and line, and make aesteticly pleasing knives!



THE FLORIDA CLINKER BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

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March 2021

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FABA Membership Application: Membership begins when your application and \$30 membership fee is received. Membership is per family and lasts one year. Use your credit card to join or renew your FABA Membership via Paypal by going to blacksmithing.org/membership/join and clicking through the Paypal button. You do not need to have a Paypal account to use this feature. OR send the below application and your check to "FABA" for \$30 to:

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DATE _____ NEW _____ RENEWAL _____ I want B&W Newsletter by mail (quarterly) _____ OR Color Newsletter by Email _____

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