

July 2025

CLINKER



BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

Established May 18, 1985

FABA's Ruby Anniversary

Calling All Alumni!

Dearest FABA Friends and Family,

I am asking each of you to please reach out to a past member, or a current member that perhaps has not been around for a while, or even to that "Living Legend" lurking somewhere in Florida – or, did they move out of state?! – and invite them to our 40th Anniversary Conference!

FABACON 40 will be Oct. 10–12, 2025, at the Best Western Gateway Grand, in north Gainesville, FL. We will not only have our usual classes and demonstrations, but some special surprises and Homecoming celebrations.

Your Ruby Anniversary Team has been hard at work, and the website is taking shape; please be patient as we are awaiting some final contracts. Our plan is to go "live" immediately after the upcoming Board Meeting on July 15.

Jordan Thomas has been diligently contacting folks; and with Kirk Sullins' and Ben Thompson's assistance, he has been redesigning the field set-up to continue to improve our class offerings.

To that end, if YOU usually teach a class for us at Conference, or if you are just waiting to be asked, please contact Jordan as soon as possible! We have rearranged the Saturday schedule a bit, based on your recommendations and suggestions, to allow more time for lunch and the Iron In The Hat Raffle, and maybe even to allow for enough time to wash up before the evening's activities.

Mark Stone and I are still looking for some Family Program offerings, or as some have suggested, Blacksmith Adjacent Classes. Specifically, we're planning leather working,



various handles, bull whips, and repurposing silver flatware into jewelry.

One more Action Item: It is time for someone to come onboard to prepare to take over as your Program Chair! Yes, I will continue to serve through next year; however, I would love to start working with a deputy (or 2?) who is interested in taking over.

Thanks again to all of you who have reached out and have been working hard "behind the scenes" on so many of the aspects of the 40th Year Conference!

— Lisa Anne Conner, Program Chair

Regional Events & Information

FABA has eight regions, and regular meetings are held in each region on the following Saturdays of each month: 1st Saturday—Central NE / 2nd Saturday—NW / 3rd Saturday—SE, Greater Orlando & Gainesville / 4th Saturday—Far West & SW.

The NNE meetings will be the 2nd or 3rd Saturdays (depending on the month).

The regions have no boundaries — everyone is welcome everywhere. Come to more than one if you can!

The dates may vary, so check the schedule noted in the Regional Reports or on Facebook, or contact the Regional Coordinator.

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 events, please check the region's Facebook page or contact the Regional Coordinators:



Greater Orlando Region	John Hare	802-373-1190	legacy.john.hare@gmail.com
Gainesville Region	Jordan Borstelmann	352-727-8260	crookedpathforge@gmail.com
Central Northeast Region	Heinrich Hole	386-848-6982	heinrich.faba@gmail.com
North Northeast Region	Doug Hayes	910-330-7601	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	Christopher Sandlin	850-865-9596	Chris@traditionsworkshop.com

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association (FABA) is a nonprofit organization chartered with the state of Florida that 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, www.blacksmithing.org; our Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/FloridaBlacksmiths; any of our regional Facebook pages; or provided at meetings or demonstrations.

Contributions to FABA are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. FABA publishes the Florida Clinker Breaker monthly and FABA membership includes a subscription. We solicit correspondence and unpaid articles on any subjects related to FABA's purposes. Send to editor@blacksmithing.org. Materials submitted must be your own work, and citations of others must be clearly identified. By submitting materials, you are allowing FABA to edit, print and post them to FABA's website. ABANA Chapter newsletters may reprint non-copyrighted material, if it is credited to the author and this newsletter. You need the publisher's permission to reprint copyrighted material unless otherwise noted.

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Volunteer Opportunities Abound

FABA has existed for the last 40 years because of you! Your volunteer efforts have kept this 501(c)3 educational nonprofit alive and relevant. Let's not let the fire go out on our watch.

As we move forward to our next conference we are (as always) looking for help. No, it is not too early to think about how you can help with the conference in Gainesville, October 10, 11 and 12. The sign-up form has been posted to our website at blacksmithing.org.

We know we will need teachers, people to set up and tear down, someone to run to the store to get something we forgot, someone to arrange for ice/water to be delivered/distributed ... well the list goes on...

Please sign up using the website, and don't forget to tell us your shirt size.

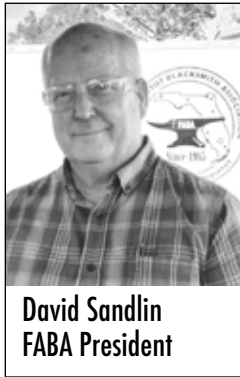
By the way, maybe there is something we should be doing but haven't thought of. If you have a suggestion and can show us how to implement it; that too is appreciated. Send your thoughts, recommendations and suggestions to our program chair, Lisa Anne Conner (Vicepres@blacksmithing.org), or to me (President@blacksmithing.org) and I will get them to the person who needs to know.

Volunteer opportunities abound at more than the annual conference. Every meeting your regional coordinator runs requires effort. Maybe you can be a local demonstrator, or someone to set up lunch, or organize Iron in the Hat ... again the list goes on.

Another place where we can use a hand is in promotion and advertising. I know from my business that a "thumbs up" is good, but comments are much better. If you can take time to comment on a regional or statewide blacksmith page, mention FABA and a local or statewide meeting; these engagements go a long way toward awakening community awareness and increasing participation in our noble craft.

I'd also like to ask you to consider working on the FABA board. This month (July), we are making our annual call of nominations. YES, you can nominate yourself.

If you are interested in a position on the board but want to know more about it, please call the incumbent. You might even want to work with them for a while to see if that job is really for you.



David Sandlin
FABA President

Quick Links

We're excited to celebrate 40 years of blacksmithing. This year's conference is a celebration of all that we've accomplished together! Thanks to our members we've all be able to keep the fires burning. If you want to help or sponsor this year click the buttons below.

VOLUNTEER

However, our incumbents often continue to serve simply because no one steps up to take over. So please consider volunteering for one of these important positions.

If you are worried about "stepping on toes," again I ask you to call and see if it is their plan to serve another term.

In 2025, we have the following positions to be elected with service from Jan. 1, 2026, until Dec. 31, 2028: President (yes, I plan to run), Vice President (Lisa Anne is pulling double duty as she is also our program chair! Please consider working with her for this conference so you would be ready to take over next year.), Secretary, SW Trustee and NW Trustee.

Volunteering will help you feel connected to those you are helping in the community, and I can't think of a better community to connect with.

WORKING WITH TIRE IRONS

Tire irons can make great tools. The steel is of high enough carbon content to make tough bending tools and it can be hardened well in oil or water to make good struck tools (punches, chasing tools, chisels) or left annealed for hot work.

I haven't figured out what to do with the socket end yet, but there is potential there for something (suggestions?).

They are plentiful at yard sales, flea markets, garages, along the road, etc., and can often be had for free. I got a bunch of them from my local sunbelt rental store. Give this steel a try.

Hope and pray your anvil rings true throughout the year.

— **David Sandlin, President**

Far West Meeting Report

It was a clear but blustery day at Timber Creek Distillery. Our hosts had done everything to promote our event only to realize that we were holding the hammer in on Memorial day weekend. Being that we are right on the Gulf of America most everyone with free time would be out on a boat instead of visiting their distillery, eating stone oven pizza and watching blacksmiths practice traditional arts. Still we did get a few people, maybe 20 (including the staff) who came to watch and even to participate. Christopher was demonstrating repousse' and chasing while the rest of the membership was pursuing their own projects, in addition to putting their mark on our regional team project.

Oh, the blustery day? Well just about late lunch time there was enough wind to pick the tent up and flip it over. Stuff was scattered everywhere and that pretty much ended all remaining activity for the day. Time to head to the beach!



Far West Meeting Schedule

Our next Far West meeting is next weekend, June 28, at Traditions Workshop (418 Green Acres Rd., Fort Walton Beach, FL.)

The July meeting will be held at John Butler's Farm, 4112 Bell Lane, Milton, FL on July 26. We'll start at 9 a.m. and quit when it gets too hot, but not before lunch. If you only attend our furthest west meetings, this is your last opportunity to contribute to our regional project because our August 23rd and September 27th meetings will both be held at Traditions Workshop due to logistical reasons. All meetings start at 9 a.m. We hope to be assembling our group project and to be working on our gift exchange projects – "something that opens." There will also be some demonstrations on techniques for the Journeyman standards program.

During the September meeting, we will also be pre-packing the trailer in anticipation of FABA CON 25, our 40th anniversary get-together. Hope to see everyone at the Best Western Gateway Grand on Oct. 10-12, 2025.

We are not planning another meeting in October but we do plan to meet for our now-annual forging competition held at Timber Creek on November 8th. The competition is early this year because we plan to be off Viking the next two weekends in November, and then there is Thanksgiving and Christmas.



January 24, 2026 and February 28, 2026 meetings will be held at Traditions Workshop – however, probably not at the current location. We hope to have the BIG barn built on Christopher's property by then, so look for a new address as things progress.

For any meeting where we do not have a specific project or objective expect us to cover the FABA journeyman standards or parts of the ABANA National Curriculum as the year progresses.

— David and Christopher Sandlin, Far West

North NE Meeting Report

NNE Region had some fun playing with shapes. We took some samples of work from Facebook as inspiration and played with various punches, tapers and methods of scrolling. We learned a lot, and William Thornton was voted prettiest flowers for his brass brushed blossoms.

North NE Meeting, July 19

Our July meeting is tentatively set for July 19th, but stay tuned as it may be postponed due to outside events. There will not be a FABA Thursday in July. We do plan on an August meeting on Aug 9th.

Please check our FABA NE Facebook page for more info at facebook.com/groups/381431599058683/, or contact djhayes29@hotmail.com. Thank you!

— Doug Hayes, NNE Region Coordinator



SW Region Meeting Report

We only had five of us at the May meeting at my workshop. That was not surprising given that the summer heat and humidity is now with us. Nevertheless we made good progress on the cross project we are making for the 2025 conference.

We all worked together to put a twist in the one inch square bar which is the main upright, and forged a tulip shape at the top end.

Thank you to all who attended and who contributed to lunch.



SW Region Meeting, June 28

The SW meeting on Saturday June 28th will start at 10am, and we will be back to Crowley Museum and Nature Center just east of Sarasota.

At this meeting we will keep moving our cross project along for the 2025 conference. Trez will demonstrate making a large decorative rivet, which will hold our cross pieces together.

Please bring safety eye wear and dress appropriately. Also, please bring something for Iron in the Hat, and a food or drink item to share.

Crowley Museum and Nature Center
www.crowleyfl.org, 941-322-1000

Address: 16405 Myakka Road, Sarasota, FL 34240

DIRECTIONS

From the south or west: Take Fruitville Road (exit #210 off I-75) and drive 10 miles to the dead end. Turn right on Myakka Road. Go 3 miles, Crowley is on your left. If you travel over the bridge to the north entrance of Myakka State Park, you missed us by a mile.

From the north: Take I-75 to FL-70, exit #217B, travel to Verna Road. Turn right and travel south for about 6 miles to the Crowley entrance on your left.

From the east: Take FL-70 to Verna Road. Turn left. Travel about 6 miles to Crowley entrance on your left.

Please check our FABA SW Facebook page for more info at www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674, or contact antony.fenn@gmail.com. Thank you!

— **Tony Fenn, SW Region Coordinator**





Future Smiths

This is my second year of the Pioneer Camp Blacksmith Experience at Pioneer Settlement, St Petersburg, FL. Up to 45 campers per week get the opportunity to step into a replica of a 1850s village blacksmith shop and forge hot iron. There is some history and a poem as well. Every camper takes home a hand forged item that they made.

— Jay Dugan,
Blacksmith,
Ram Forge

MAKING A HORSESHOE NAIL INTO A CROSS

I've typically seen a split cross made by cutting a square bar from both ends. The cuts are made 90 degrees to each other coming from opposite ends of the bar. I offer this technique as a different approach, requiring only one cut.

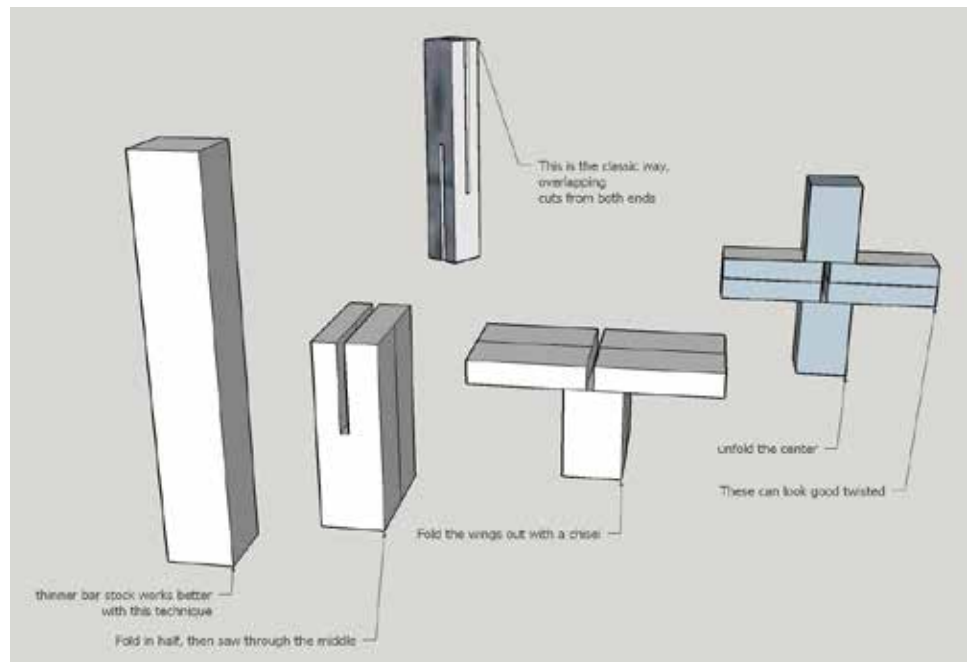
Since we are working small, I recommend using a propane torch to heat the nail and do all the bending. Any size nail can be used, but if you are trying this for the first time, the larger the better.

1. Heat the nail in the middle and bend it in half using a pair of needle-nose pliers.

2. Starting at the bend in the nail, cut down about 9/16 of an inch. It is very important to keep the cut as centered in the nail as possible. A smaller hacksaw and blades can make this task easier.

3. Heat well at the base of the cut and using a chisel, or similar tool, push in at the top of the cut and fold down the arms of the cross.

4. Heat the arms of the cross and unfold the nail.



5. Heat the end of the nail and roll it into a loop.

All done. Stainless-steel horseshoe nails make this a nice shiny piece of jewelry, but other stock can be used.

— David Sandlin, President

NW Region Meeting Report

The Northwest region had our June meeting at the residence of Shelley and Mark Mason. This is our first time having a meeting there, and it was a great success. We had a good turnout, with 30 people signed in. The Masons have a large, open space with lots of room for parking, sheltered areas for working and socializing.

We had a good participation with the blacksmithing, making things from RR spikes and horseshoes. We had a good participation in the raffle too. Several people donated handmade items, and Chris Cauthen donated 5 folding knife starter kits.



Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves and we are blessed with another great place to hold our meetings. Thank you, Shelley and Mark and everyone else who helps make our meetings a success.

NW Region Meeting, July 12

Our July meeting will be held at the "Homestead Barn." The date is July 12th and the address is 519 Whitehouse Rd. Monticello, Florida 32344. We've had several meetings here in the past and it's a great place for a meeting.

We're going to make homemade pizza for lunch. I'll bring the ingredients to make the dough, and pizza sauce and cheese, and we should bring our favorite toppings for the pizza and sides and desserts to go along with it. We're going to be making lots of small, personal-size pizzas, so be prepared to make your own.

For the blacksmithing entertainment, we're going to make some of the small folding knives we've been working on. Several people won starter kits in the last raffle, I hope some of them got worked on, and we will get to see the results. We'll have more of those starter kits and I'm asking for a few people to try to make a knife at the meeting.

I'll bring forges and anvils, Chris is going to bring a portable bandsaw. We can use a drill press and belt sander if anyone has a portable enough one to bring. Let me know if you have one to bring and don't forget to bring something for the raffle. All donations are appreciated, but your handmade items are the best!

Thank you in advance for your participation and I hope to see you there!

— **John Pfund, NW Region Coordinator**



Greater Orlando Meeting

Orlando generally meets on the 3rd Saturday of the month at UnderGround Metal Works, 660 W Kennedy Blvd Suite A, Orlando, FL 32810 FL. For more information and to confirm meetings, contact John Hare at 802-373-1190 or legacy.john.hare@gmail.com.

— **John Hare, Orlando Regional Coordinator**

FABA Announcements

New coal supply

Great news for folks using coal in North and North Central Florida. Sidney Lee Welding Supply (the folks from GA where we buy our conference coal) just bought out North FL Welding Supply in Lake City, FL, and will be selling pea and nut coal at that location. Same stuff as we've had in recent years. They are still changing the signage and until that is done, the web will still show N. FL Welding.

They do not show the location on the Sidney Lee site just yet but if you look up North Florida Welding in Lake City on Google, you get their link: <https://sidneylee.com>. To check on the coal or to order, call ahead.

Sidney Lee Welding Supply has the ability to get either pea or nut coal, but if you just drop by, you'll get what they have on hand. They plan to keep a pallet or so on premises for folks, but if you give them enough lead time, you can likely get your preference. For past conferences, we have used the blacksmith bituminous pea coal.

The coal comes in 50 lb sacks.

Here is the address and phone number:

Sidney Lee Welding Supply

Address: 1900 US-41, Lake City, FL 32055

Phone: (386) 752-7620

SE Region

The SE Region meets every third Saturday of the month at The Farm, 1566 S. Military Trail, West Palm Beach, FL. Just turn off Military at the pole painted red, white and blue, and follow your GPS or Google maps. It should get you there!

Get more info on the FABA SE Facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/603288803747002

— **Gary Becker, member**

Central NE Region Meeting

The Central NE Region usually meets the first Saturday of the month at the Pioneer Settlement, but the holiday may disrupt July plans.

Please check the FABA NE Facebook page for more info at facebook.com/groups/381431599058683/, or contact heinrich.faba@gmail.com. Thank you!

— **Heinrich Hole, Central NE Coordinator**

Gainesville Region Meeting

The Gainesville meeting is usually on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

Need more info on the Gainesville Region? Shoot me an email at crookedpathforge@gmail.com.

— **Jordan Borstelmann, Coordinator**

FABA Veterans Scholarship Fund Application

The FABA Veterans' Scholarship Fund was established to help veterans to experience the world of blacksmithing. The intent is to assist veterans to get started in the craft with an experienced teacher to provide a guiding hand at the start of the journey, maximizing their learning experience. As such, it is not intended for those with intermediate or advanced skills to hone their craft – rather to assist beginners to learn the basics or to advance to some intermediate skills. First priority will be given to first-time students or early beginner level classes, and then to intermediate level courses.

1. Recipients must be veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces (Navy, Air Force, Army, Marines, Coast Guard, Space Force).
 - a. Individuals must be able to provide proof of current service or honorable discharge with active duty ID or DD214.
2. Scholarship will reimburse 80% of a blacksmithing class/course(s) registration fee up to \$100 upon completion of the course, whichever is less. The coursework must be considered to be directly related to blacksmithing (not welding/fabrication). The FABA Scholarship Committee (defined in article 12 below) reserves the right to determine which coursework is appropriate during the review process.
3. The course instructor must be someone who regularly provides paid blacksmith instruction – in other words is recognized as a legitimate, accepted teacher. Classes at a recognized blacksmith conference (such as the FABA annual conference, The Southern Blacksmith Association biannual conference, SOFA, etc.) are acceptable and specifically at these events, 2 or more classes in one weekend could be stacked and counted as one 'course'. So for three (3) FABA intro courses at \$45 apiece, the total would be \$135; 80% of that would be \$108, so the award would be \$100.
4. Before awardee is reimbursed, he/she must provide some proof of completion (documentation of work produced, email from instructor and receipts from course costs). This scholarship is intended for course registration fees only, and does not cover materials or equipment unless those items are part of the course of instruction (i.e. a hammer making course). Students may apply for up to 2 courses per year, but not more than once per 6-month cycle and for no more than 3 courses in total.
5. The student must apply for the scholarship prior to the beginning of class (not retroactive). The committee will meet February 15 and August 15 each year to review applications (every 6 months). Up to three applications will be awarded every six months. Coursework does not have to fall within the cycle the student applies, if the application is submitted prior to the start of the course (for example, the student could plan 1 year ahead). The FABA Scholarship Committee will make that determination during the application process.
6. In any 6-month cycle, preference will be made for beginner classes, then intermediate skill classes as the primary purpose of this fund is to assist veterans to begin their blacksmithing journey. Applicants must be a FABA member to apply and while taking the class/course. Funds can be applied to the FABA annual conference courses, or to similar classes from other guilds or organizations, within the United States.
7. If anyone wishes to donate additional funds to this scholarship, they agree to abide by the rules above. In other words, future donors cannot modify or change the administration or award process for this scholarship. Any funds donated specifically to this fund will be considered encumbered for this purpose only.
8. Applicants must complete the application and submit their request via email to President@blacksmithing.org or through the electronic form on www.blacksmithing.org.

The FABA Scholarship Committee is comprised of a three-member panel of FABA members. At least one member of the panel will have military experience (active duty or reserve) and two others will be FABA Board members. The President, Treasurer and Vice-President will appoint the members of the Veterans Scholarship committee. Members will serve a minimum one-year term but may be reappointed multiple times.

Awardees will be notified via email and USPS the status of their application approximately two weeks after the committee meets.

Get more information at www.blacksmithing.org/scholarships

Walt Anderson Scholarship deadline June 30

This scholarship was established to honor the memory of Walt Anderson, one of our charter members. Its purpose is to further the craft of blacksmithing, and any FABA member who has been in good standing for at least one year qualifies to apply. The \$1,000 award may be divided evenly amongst multiple winners. If a single winner, the award is limited to the actual cost or \$1,000, whichever is lesser. It may be used for materials, tuition, lodging and transportation (paid at the rate of 43.2 cents per mile or the actual cost of public transportation, whichever is lesser).

A letter of application or a detailed email may be submitted provided the applicant answers the following questions:

1. What is your name, address and phone number?
2. How much experience in blacksmithing do you have?
3. How will this instruction help you with your blacksmithing craft?
4. What is the name of the school you wish to attend?
5. What is the name of the course and the name of the instructor teaching the class?

6. What costs will be incurred (tuition, lodging, transportation, etc.)?

Note: By accepting the Walt Anderson Scholarship, the applicant agrees to provide a demonstration of learned skills during a regular FABA meeting, and to write an article concerning the learning experience, including a “how-to” portion, for publication in the Clinker Breaker within 6 months of completing the class.

The next item is not required but strongly suggested: An item should be made with the new knowledge and offered for auction at the Annual Conference.

Completed letters of application or emails should be sent to John Butler, Chair, FABA Scholarship Committee, 777 Tyre Road, Havana, FL 32333 or jgbutler@sprintmail.com.

Deadline for receipt is June 30, 2025. Three finalists will be recommended to the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final, and the successful applicant(s) will be notified after the vote. The scholarship amount of \$1000 may be split evenly amongst multiple candidates if deemed so by the FABA Board of Directors.

Support our FABA business members

DAMASCUS SPONSORS

David Sandlin - Traditions Workshop - Ft. Walton Beach, FL
Jake Pytlik - Warehouse Services Inc. - Naples, FL
Doug Hayes - Iron Osprey Forge - St. Augustine, FL
Benchmark Abrasives - Flagstaff, AZ

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Rick Smith - Gainesville, FL
Nicole Horenstein - High Springs, FL
Mark Fillmore - Naples, FL
Cameron LaFrance - Micco, FL

Interested in being a FABA sponsor or expanding your sponsor listing? Contact FABA President David Sandlin at President@blacksmithing.org and include your business name, tag line, and contact information.

THE FLORIDA CLINKER BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

David Sandlin, President
114 Choctaw Cove
Valparaiso, FL 32580



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July 2025

FABA Officers

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Vice President	Lisa Anne Conner	Vicepres@blacksmithing.org
Treasurer	Dawn Fortenberry	Treasurer@blacksmithing.org
Secretary	Tia Kitchen	Secretary@blacksmithing.org
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Trustee NW	Craig Hines	whisperingpinesforge@gmail.com
Trustee NE	Ben Thompson	thompsoncrafted@gmail.com
Trustee SE	Steve Silvers	SEtrustee@blacksmithing.org
Trustee SW	Trez Cole	nokomisforge@hotmail.com
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Program Chair	Lisa Anne Conner	FABAprgramcoordinator@gmail.com
WebMaster	Jessica Sandlin	FABAwebmaster@gmail.com

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 WIX by going to www.blacksmithing.org and clicking the **JOIN FABA** button to access the Square payment system.

OR send the below application and your check to "FABA" for \$30 to FABA's temporary Membership Secretary at:

FABA Membership Secretary,
C/O Sandlin
114 Choctaw Cove
Valparaiso, FL 32580

NAME _____

FAMILY MEMBERS _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ CELL _____ EMAIL _____

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