October 2026

CLINKER BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

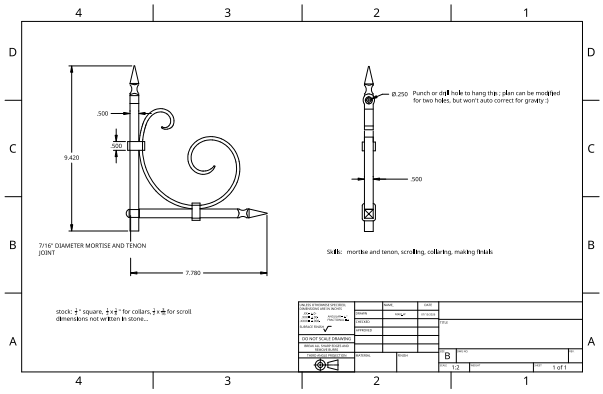
Established May 18, 1985

FABA CON COMPETITION

This year, the Friday Night Competition at FABA will be extra special. I was asked to work with Nicole Horenstein in order to come up with a contest in Honor of Juan Holbrook.

It struck us that the usual format of 20min rounds that force our competitors to work quickly, under difficult conditions, would not be the best way to represent Juan's work. So instead we are holding a single competition with teams of two people, all skill levels welcome.

Competitors will have 90 minutes to complete a joinery project based on Juan's work. Nicole has provided the design shared below: a bracket for hanging flower pots and such.



All tools and materials needed will be provided, but competitors are welcome to use their own. Nicole will be demonstrating the process of making the bracket after lunch on Friday at the BBB tent. I highly recommend that you attend. The goal is to judge primarily on the quality of the finished piece.

The prizes for the winners will be significant, and will include the jigs and tools that Nicole made, along with some other stuff I pilfer from the donations.

Looking forward to seeing you all there!

— Jordan Borstelmann

Our annual Conference is only a month away! You can pre-order your gear (hats, T-shirts and coal) by Sept. 24 at blacksmithing.org/category/all-products.

My thanks go to those who have already volunteered. For you newer folks, we always need helping hands not only during the event (refilling gas cans, hauling trash, stocking the coolers, helping Greg in the Gallery, assisting with setting up the Memorial & the Auction…so many things!), but we certainly need extra help on Thursday for setting up, and on Sunday, for tearing it all down, doing inventory, and loading the trailers.

Huge thanks, as always, to Jordan Thomas, not only for all he does ahead of time with wrangling teachers and assistants, materials lists and gear, but for directing our load-in and set up. I understand that he will have a very competent second-in-command this year in William Thorton. And thanks to Heather, not only for her usual role with the tool inventory, but also for stepping up even more this year to help assist Kirk Sullens with his quartermaster duties.

If you are able to join us for the conference, please keep an eye on the weather. Obviously, it has been an incredibly hot and humid year so far. Please bring whatever hydration-replenishing drinks you prefer, or additives for your water to keep your electrolytes and sodium/potassium levels up. We will have the usual coolers and water bottles; as always, bring extra cases of water to donate and we will reward you with Iron In The Hat Raffle tickets!

Speaking of Iron in The Hat, thanks again to the Pfunds for overseeing that portion of our conference. It is quite a challenge every year to sort and consolidate all those *interesting* donated things!

As I write this, we are still looking for a Program Coordinator for next year's Conference. Please consider stepping up! I welcome anyone who wants to shadow me at this year's event to get a better idea of the scope of the process. I can hardly wait to see you all – SOON!

— Lisa Anne Conner, Program Coordinator

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 & Greater Orlando / 3rd Saturday–SE & 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	William Thornton	386-916-6117	knifegsx@yahoo.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	TBA	TBA	TBA
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.

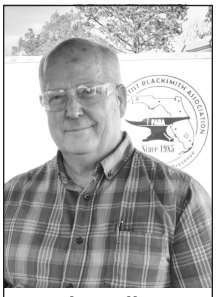
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Spread the news about FABACon

This is it! The largest blacksmith training conference in the southeast. The mission of FABA is summarized on our logo: "We teach – We preserve." Teaching and training up new folks in the art and craft of working hot steel and other metals is how we accomplish our mission. That is why we have so much focus on our annual conference and our regional meetings. Teaching is preserving.



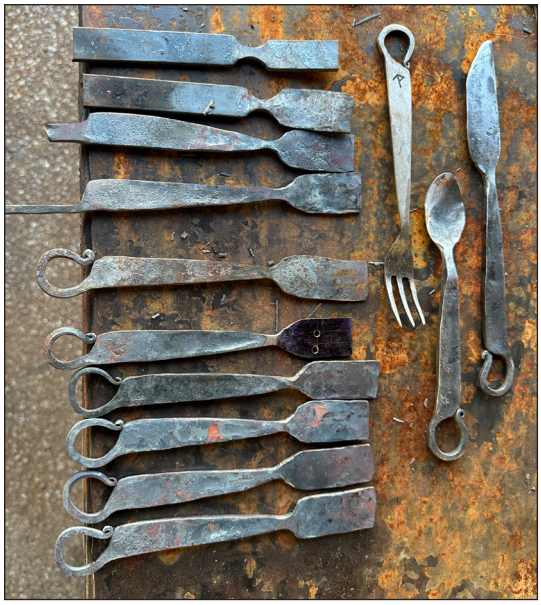
David Sandlin
FABA President

In this issue of Clinker Breaker, look for more information about our annual conference. Your team has been working hard all year to bring you this opportunity. Let us all make the most of it.

You can do your part by attracting more participants to our noble craft. Please take a few minutes to post on your favorite social media channel(s)/ groups the link to our web page about the conference (www.blacksmithing.org/fabacon) or to the event on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/share/1F4oDruzP4/). I've spent several hours posting to every blacksmith page I'm a member of, but I lack connections in the knife maker's community and could use your help getting the word out.

Syllabus Development

I have been working on my story board for the Fork/Knife/Spoon class that I will be teaching at conference.



As part of this effort, over the summer, I have been in communications with Torbjörn Åhman and Lars-Goran to help fine tune this class.

Torbjörn gave me the inspiration for the handle design. I'd looked at making the implements out of pieces out of round stock, but Torbjörn pointed out that flat stock could achieve the desired results more quickly without having to forge weld or spend time drawing out the handles. We will be using 3⁄16" x ¾" stock. I looked at using ¼" x ¾" stock, but the results were too heavy.

Although ⅛" x ¾" stock resulted in a nice set, I feel that 3⁄16" thick will be more forgiving.

Torbjörn also recommended making use of power tooling to ensure we can at least get the fork and knife done in the 4-hour time limit. The purist in me wanted to use all hand tooling, but it was pointed out that even the Vikings had strikers and assistants to help with tasks and make the work go faster.

Therefore, our assistant will be General Electric. For this effort, you will have access to a band saw, two drill presses, two sets of sanders/grinders/wire wheels and a power hammer. Still, achieving all three dining implements in 4 hours will be a challenge. Success will be two items with a stretch goal of all three.

Lars-Goran recommended using a wire brush on a drill to clean the bowl of the spoon, but also pointed out that it would be a whole lot easier to brush the scale off the spoon and keep the work clean prior to shaping the bowl. Don't hammer scale into your work!

Once I've finished the story board for the Fork/Knife/ Spoon class, I'll return to compiling my notes for the torch class. Thankfully John Pfund and Jack Fortenberry will be helping with that class, and they both have a wealth of experience as professional welders.

James Worm has also offered to help with the Sunday class if his schedule permits. James has been on my case for years to take up Oxy-Propane for heating, cutting and brazing. We will have the rig for doing Oxy-Propane, and I should be up to speed for safely using the system. But having James there to coach will be a big blessing.

Healing Tools for Warriors

It has been my privilege to work with the Wounded Warrior Foundation and now with Healing Tools for Warriors. If you have an opportunity to work with your local chapter of any of these, or any other veteran support organizations, take the time to do so. They will have fun, and so will you!

Every time I've worked with them, I find the members to be very grateful for having an opportunity to learn and create something. Art therapy offers significant benefits for mental health, including the reduction of anxiety, depression and trauma symptoms. It provides a safe outlet for emotional expression, leading to improved overall emotional well-being. Add to that the "cool" factor of creating with hot

steel, and you have a winning combination.



Our Sunday morning session was supposed to last only two hours, but no one wanted to leave the forges even though we'd been called for lunch three times. The project we taught was a simple dining pick out of ¼"x ¼" square stock, combining tapers with twists and a small hook.

In spite of several people having physical limitations, everyone completed the project, and some folks even made two projects. Success for others is very rewarding.

Bottle opener class with Lars-Goran

Lars-Goran and I meet almost every summer at his 100+ year old forge, Konstsmed, which is part of the Eco-Museum. We trade ideas, and he usually demonstrates the current project he is working on. This time, he was getting ready for an annual harvest festival where he sells his ware every August. After we'd discussed ideas to improve the fork/knife/spoon project, Lars proceeded to make a couple of bottle openers. Couple as in "two in 45 minutes"!

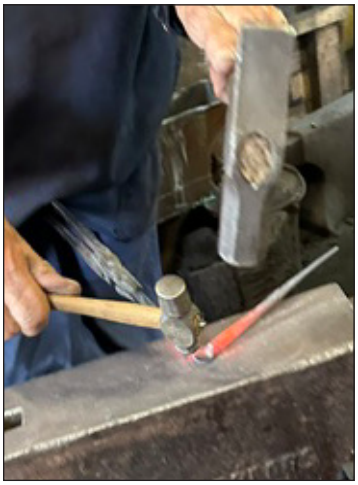


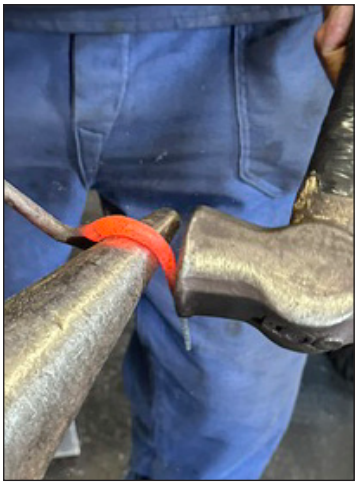


The steps are "simple," but his execution is superb. Working with 5⁄16" round stock, draw a long taper of approximately 4 inches. The length of the taper is what makes this bottle opener stand out from the crowd.



Then, 5 inches from this point, make a square corner. Use the ball on a small ball peen hammer (that has had the face annealed) to draw out a tab from this square corner.

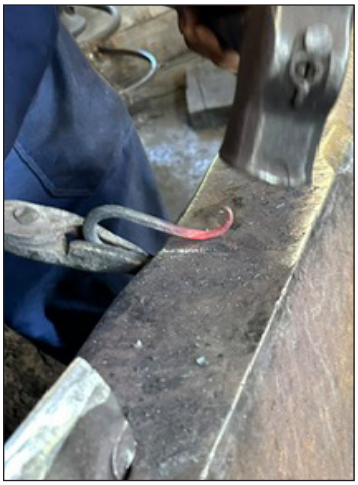








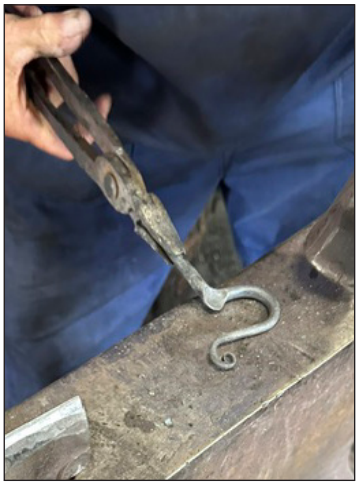
Cut the hook free of the parent stock about 3 inches back from this tab.

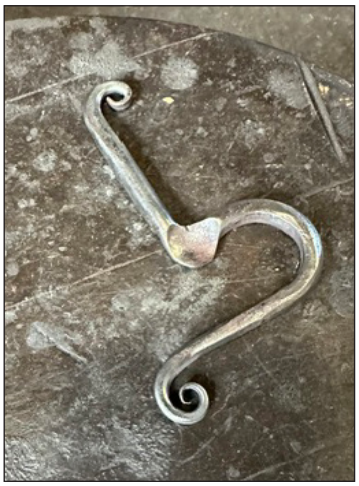
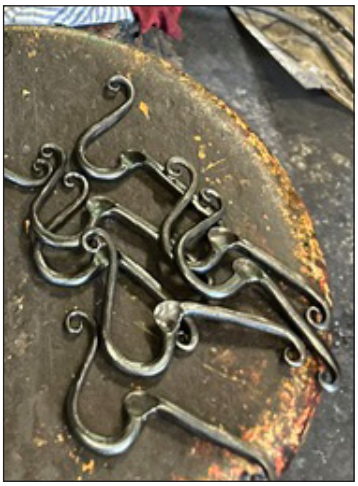




Next work over the horn to craft a 1-inch diameter half circle on the long taper side. Now start making a most delicate scroll on the long taper using the anvil's side, horn and even a hot cut as a scrolling surface.

Switch sides, draw a second long taper on the part that will become the handle, and scroll that as well. Clean up with a wire wheel.

Lars gave me one of the two he made in this session so I would have a model. When I got home, I was able to make one of my own in about an hour, but I still don't have the delicate touch on the tapers that Lars has. Just need more practice. I'll have one or two if you desire to copy this at the open forges during conference.

That said, I'm looking forward to meeting everyone in October!

— David Sandlin, President

FABA CON CHALLENGES

REGIONAL CHALLENGE

Theme: Balance and Motion (with literal motion)

Rules: Three or more members must contribute to the piece.

Judged on: adherence to the theme; techniques used; quality of work; number of contributors

Winners receive bragging rights and get to choose the 2027 conference theme!

EXCHANGE ITEM

Theme: Something that Whirls, Twirls or Spins

How it works: Bring a pre-made item to the conference that represents the theme. At the banquet, each person who brought something draws a name and gets to take home the piece that person made.

SCRAP BUCKET CHARITY CHALLENGE

How it works: Pay a small donation at the registration desk to pilfer the scrap bucket for your piece of metal. Make anything you want from that metal!

Rules: Only scrap from the bucket can be used; must be completed and in the hotel lobby front desk before noon on Sunday, Oct. 18th.

Judging: Hotel staff picks their favorite.

GALLERY PEOPLE'S CHOICE

How it works: Bring an item to place in the gallery. Gallery visitors "vote" on their favorite throughout the conference. Make sure you get your piece their on Friday so more people can see it!

First stop, Registration (20x20 tent)	Be sure to visit Iron in the Hat (20x20 tent), drawing starts at high noon, Saturday, October 17
Demonstrator Steve Schwarzer A Master Bladesmith since 1981, Steve Schwarzer has over 20 awards for his blades, his excellence and innovation, and his service to the community. In the '70's Steve started on the edge and now stays on the cutting edge. He pioneered many of the common Damascus techniques seen today. One of my favorite quotes by Steve is; "Fantasy is always correct" which is why he often uses fantastic creatures carved into the handles of his work.	Demonstrator Joe Davis Joe Davis, does very high-end custom work requiring traditional joinery; accomplishing projects like fireplace screens and architectural metal work. He has been running "Old School Crafts" for 25 years, often working with his two boys at his forge and foundry. His projects make use of multiple materials like copper, bronze stainless steel and, of course, iron.
FABA demonstration team led by Tony Fenn. The team project is creating a blacksmith angel. Stop by to check out the action!	Open forges are available to finish projects started in one of our classes.
Teaching the Basics tent Fri AM Basic 1 start here for your first time forging Fri PM Basic 2 Learn joining steel with rivets Sat AM Basic 1 start here for your first time forging Sat PM Basic 2 Learn joining steel with rivets Sun AM Forge Welding	Teaching advanced basics tent Fri AM Forge Welding Fri PM Tongs Sat AM ulu/herb chopper with Matt Shoemaker Sat PM Heat Treat – small knife blade forging and heat treating with Jordan Borstelmann Sun AM Tongs
Advanced projects tent sponsored by Benchmark Abrasives (AKA the torch tent) Fri AM Forge Welding Fri PM Friction Folders with Leroi Price Sat AM Coffee Scoop with Christopher Sandlin Sat PM TBD Sun AM Gas welding workshop with David Sandlin	Advanced projects tent sponsored by Traditions Workshop Fri AM Forge Utensils with David Sandlin Fri PM Hair Pins with Dawn Fortenberry Sat AM ABANA level 1 Flux spoon with Rusty Osborn Sat PM Hammer Dressing/Ergonomics - Doug Hayes Sun AM Russian Rose with Kirk Sullens

Indoors: Saturday family classes on embroidery and drafting a blacksmithing shirt, plus an open discussion and lessons learned using an induction forge with Ben Thompson and Leslie Tharp in the gallery. Sunday morning class with Shiloh Thomas: embroidery on card stock.

Sign up for the conference, banquet and classes now! **blacksmithing.org/fabacon**

In Search of: FABA Program Chair

As you know, this will be my last year as Program Chair. Please consider stepping up and volunteering.

Contact me if you are even thinking about it, and let's talk! Call Lisa Anne at 813-505-8041 or email GryfnSCA@gmail.com.)

— Lisa Anne Conner, Program Coordinator

FABACon Hotel Reservations

FABACon 2026 is returning to the Best Western Gateway Grand in Gainesville on Oct. 16-18. Hotel reservations are open now. Use this link to book at the discounted rate of $129 a night.

https://www.bestwestern.com/en_US/book/hotel-rooms.10281.html?groupId=X95RX3D5

FABA's rate is a significant discount. Don't delay! Book your hotel room now.

Far West Meeting Report

Yikes!!! September 12th was the last meeting for the whole team to work on our project. We met at Traditions Workshop and started before 9 a.m. Much steel was drawn out; the plasma cutter was hot-cutting most of the morning, and at the end of the day we still needed to rivet and weld pieces together. We are out of slack time and need to get this DONE or risk eating humble pie. Individuals are welcome to continue to visit the workshop as personal time permits to finish our team project, "something with motion and balance," on a grand scale.



Far West Meeting Schedule

All FAR WEST meetings start at 0900 with set up followed by a short business meeting and a demonstration using the either the FABA Journeyman standards or the ABANA level 1 curriculum. Lunch is always available, sponsored by Traditions Workshop. Meetings end when we get to hot, to cold, to tired or it gets to dark.

Cutting things close to the wire, we will have our next meeting on October 10th to pack the trailer for FABA CON 2026.

After conference, we will relax a bit and hold a lessons-learned after-action meeting on October 31th. At that time, we will also unpack and re-pack the trailer for our last meeting in 2026.

Once again, on November 7th, we are going back to Timber Creek for our annual regional forging competition (6451 Lake Ella Rd, Crestview, FL 32539). The competition project this time around will be forging a bottle holder/display worthy of a Timber Creek bottle of whiskey. You will have only 5 hours to produce your creation. Various sizes of steel bar and round stock will be provided or you can bring your own materials. However, you must register to participate in this competition! Unlike previous years, due to the fact that this is an innovative/artistic project, we need to limit the number of participants to 8. Realize, there will be only limited coaching/teaching during this competition (collegial support and striker team efforts are still encouraged). Hope to see you there for some whiskey, pizza and an opportunity to win braggin' rights for another year.



After our Christmas break, we plan to reengage at Traditions Workshop for our meetings on January 23 and February 13, two meetings just in time to forge something for Valentine's Day. We plan to demonstrate the "Russian Rose."

Traditions Workshop is located at 418 Green Acres Rd., Fort Walton Beach, FL.

Additionally, if you are interested in a little forging activity in late February to early March, join us for a Viking at the Scout camp or at the Pensacola Renaissance Festival. Call us at the workshop if you want in on these events.

On March 27th, we will once again be holding our fundraising knife class at John Butler's Family Farm. This year will be something different, a friction folder out of a horse shoe and a file. Stick with us and see what happens.

— David Sandlin, FABA President

NW Region Meeting Schedule

Hello everyone, and greetings from the Northwest Region. We skipped having a monthly meeting in September. I'm writing this report and forcast on the day we would have met.

It's been nice taking a break on one of the hot months and we're ready to get busy in October! The first Saturday in October is the start of Aunt Louise's Farm fall season.

Starting October 3rd, we will have our equipment set up for the next 7 weeks. Aunt Louise's Farm is located at 8101 Waukeenah Hwy., Monticello, FL 32344. They are open from 10am to 6pm on Saturdays and 2pm to 6pm on Sundays.

On October 10th and November 14th, we will have our monthly meetings there. Our meetings will start at 9am even though they don't open until 10am. The entire fall season at ALF is a continuous "Open Forges" for us, with the equipment staying set up, whether we use it or not! It's in a small fenced-in area in the shade of a big oak tree.

Our October meeting on Oct. 10th is the second weekend of their fall season and only one week before our conference. We'll have Uncle Bob's pulled pork sandwiches for lunch, and Billy will bring water and tea. We should bring sides and desserts to go along with it. Open Forges is the theme at ALF, but if anyone wants to demonstrate something, come prepared and we'll be glad to have you do it. We haven't had a Iron in the Hat raffle in a few months,



John and Chris at Aunt Louise's Farm in 2026

so I'm planning for one at this meeting. We're still giving free tickets for donations that you have made yourself, and I will try to bring some of the stuff I've been collecting. Admission is always free for us at ALF, and they give us treats while we're volunteering!

I will forcast the November 14th meeting in the November CB, so that's all for now. ALF and the Conference, I hope to see you there!

— John Pfund, NW Region Coordinator

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

STEEL SPONSORS

Greg Hagen - Holland Anvils - Holland, MI
John Elliot - Blacksmith Supply - Chester, VA
Michael Oliver - Turn and Burn Metalworks - Lakeland, FL
Mission San Luis - Tallahassee, FL
Danny Cornwell - Panama City Beach, FL

IRON SPONSORS

Scott Brown - Medieval Smith - Land O' Lakes, FL
Jordan Borstelmann - Crooked Path Forge - Gainesville, FL
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.

Central NE Meeting, Oct. 3

We had a great meeting in September with a good turnout, where we worked on the group project.



Our next meeting will be held on Saturday, October 3rd, from 9 am to 4 pm at Barberville Pioneer Settlement, where we will put the finishing touches on our group project. This will be the last meeting before conference. As always, lunch will be provided. Hope to see you there!

Please check the FABA NE Facebook page: facebook.com/groups/381431599058683/ or email William at knifegsx@yahoo.com.

— William Thornton, Central NE Region Coordinator

SE Region Meeting Report



We had a small group in September. Everyone thought it was going to rain and they might melt. A surprise guest (Lisa Anne Conner) stopped by for the day. It was her first time at the Farm, and we worked on exchange projects.

The Southeast Region usually meets on the third Saturday, but there is no meeting in October because of conference. Looking forward to seeing everyone. Safe travels.

Get more info at: www.facebook.com/groups/603288803747002

— Gary Becker, SE Region member

Gainesville Meeting, Nov. 21

The Gainesville Region had no meeting in September, and October will be at the FABA Conference.

Our next meeting will be Nov. 21 at Jacob Underhill's shop in Starke. The address is 6112 NW CR 233, Starke, FL. The meeting will largely be open forges. Bring your own lunch if you like. The meeting starts at 9 a.m.

For information and to confirm meetings, contact Jordan Borstelmann at crookedpathforge@gmail.com.

— Jordan Borstelmann, Gainesville Coordinator



Orlando Report and Meeting, Nov. 14





The Greater Orlando Chapter met at Daryl Bean's beautiful ranch, where we started with a shop tour and then she demonstrated some of her techniques based off Bill Epp's DVDs.

Sarah, a traveling smith was also in attendance and demonstrated some of her fork crickets and fairy swords, the ladder being made from duplex nails and was quick demo for kids with short attention spans. The group was a mix of FABA smiths and 4H/farrier folks.

Greater Orlando will be taking October off as our weekend falls on the Conference weekend (which I hope you are all attending!).



Our next meeting at the regular Underground Metal Works will be on November 14th. For information and meeting dates, contact John Hare at 802-373-1190 or legacy.john.hare@gmail.com.

— John Hare, Orlando Region Coordinator







Colonial Axe Class with Chris Maybury

By Ben Thompson

In February, as part of our proposal for the Jerry Grice Scholarship, my son Sebastian and I were fortunate enough to take a Colonial Axe Class with Chris Maybury (maybury millandforge.com) held at Doug Hayes' shop, Iron Osprey Forge and Designs (iron-osprey-designs.com).

After studying historic wrapped eye axes with Elmer Roush, Chris developed a punched eye monobody Colonial belt axe. Chris shared examples from his library of hard-to-find historic axe reference material from that period.

He mentioned in his class that in addition to Elmer and his personal historical research, some of the techniques he currently uses in the Colonial Belt Axe, he picked up working with Bart Dellinger. Chris provided step by step instruction through demonstration and reference material.

The class offered many unique learning opportunities from stock selection, tooling, heat treatment, handle construction, fit up and patination.





1. Prep your Material: Starting with a piece of 4140 (3/4" x 1-1/4" x 4-1/4"). From one end mark ¾ from the end and then 1" from that line (or 1-3/4" from the end). Drill three equally spaced 1/3" holes within the 1" space.



Chris Pro Tip: Chisel the center line between these holes to use as a guide for your punch.

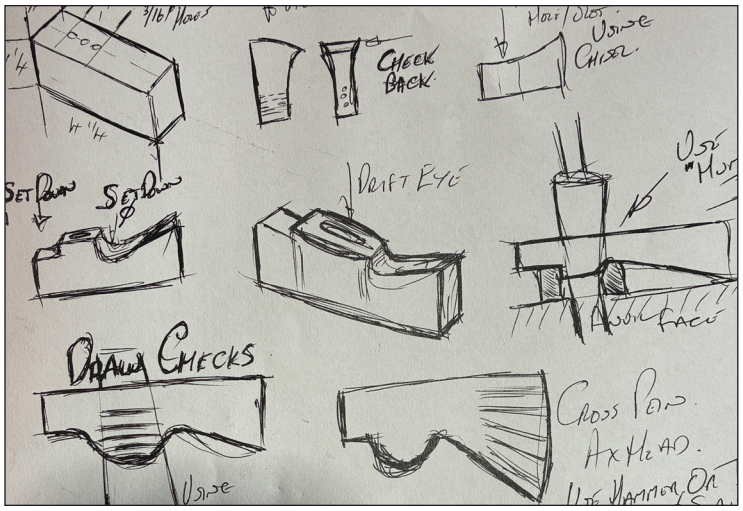
2. Upset the "blade end": Isolate your heat on what will become the blade end and with the poll end on the anvil face, upset the blade end. Check back the width to the original material thickness of roughly ¾".



3. Punch the hole: Using the slot chisel, punch the hole for the axe eye. Punch evenly from one side then the







other flipping the material as necessary. This method will generate a bit of a "rag" on the inside the hole that should be forged into the side walls of the eye during drifting.

Chris Pro Tip: These slot chisels and drifts can be made from "San Angelo Bar" that is available at Home Depot.



4. Create Set Downs: With the blade inverted so what will become the "top" of the axe head is on the face of the anvil create a set down for the poll and blade. On the poll end, using a set hammer, create a square set down. On the blade side of the eye using a top fuller create a rounded set down which will start to define the angle of the blade.

Chris Pro Tip: How deep should these set downs be? A common refrain in Chris' class, to this type of question was "It's your axe. You decide." The truth in this is, that many of us make similar tools but what distinguishes one from the other is the decisions such as this, that become the hallmarks of that particular maker. Play around, make many more, and you'll find the answer.



5. Drift the Eye: Using an axe eye drift (in Chris' case a Holland Anvil, cast drift) and beginning on the "underside" of the axe head (top of axe head on the anvil surface) start widening the eye hole (drifting the eye). The punch Chris designed is short and wide therefore setting up the eye hole to accept the axe eye drift.

The punched hole should be just big enough to fit the start of the drift. You will do this at first on the anvil face but once the drift begins to emerge from the other side, you move over the hardie.





6. Continue Drifting using the "Hump" Tools: Once the eye is well established from the "underside" of the axe head, the top you will flip the axe head and use "Hump" Tools to continue drifting over the hardie hole. You can work squared up the to the hardie hole sides or at an angle over the hole depending on how far your drive extends. The goal is to not get the drift stuck in the hardie hole but hammering



it too far, so keep an eye on that. You may need to repeat this process, flipping the axe head multiple times, before the drifting is complete. At each stage you can also keep the axe head on the drift / mandrel and work the cheeks / lugs.



Chris Pro Tip: The "Hump" Tools are incredibly helpful here and are versatile since if you make 4 of them (two sets) you can stack them too. Each set includes a flat top and a round top tool. I made mine out of some scrap 4140 that I had: ¾" x 1-1/2" x 3".

7. Draw the Cheeks/Lugs: Once your eye is drifted to your liking you will begin to draw out the cheeks/lugs using a cross peen, a striker and top fuller, etc… At this point you are working on the face of the anvil and using the drift as a mandrel to hammer against. The goal is to draw the cheeks out enough to create a swell at the bottom of the axe head. Historically this gives more contact against the handle making the head / handle connection stronger. How far should you draw the cheeks? It's your axe!





8. Form the Blade: Using the cross peen of your hammer or a striker and fullering top tool, spread the blade end of the axe head to thin the blade end and realize the traditional axe shape. At this point you will be working on the face of your anvil primarily but making sure to keep the drifted eye off of the anvil as to not crush the eye. Knee tongs / Pickup tongs of some sort of tong that can securely grab inside the eye of the poll end are helpful. At this point, your axe is "Rough Forged" and you should move to the finishing stage.



9. Finishing: At this stage, check for symmetry on the top view and make sure the side view profile is to your liking. You can file or grind to shape depending on your standard process. You should also examine the inside of the eye and look for any jagged rag material and eliminate sharp edges in preparation for handling.



Chris Pro Tip: At this point you can really spend some time doing "white work" filing on your axe head to add detail and decoration or just clean up the lines. During the class we were taught to use a boiling bleach solution to age the axes surface.



The second day of the class was focused on finishing the axe heads but primarily on woodworking tips for handle making and finishing. Chris shared as much detail and tips on the woodworking as the tooling and forging side. I would strongly encourage anyone interested in learning more to seek an opportunity to learn directly from Chris. Among the many take aways from this class was reinforcing the notion that "quality takes time". Much of the finishing was done by hand even though we had machinery available. Purposefully slowing down the process to deliver the highest quality outcome was something I took away and have tried to adopt in my work.

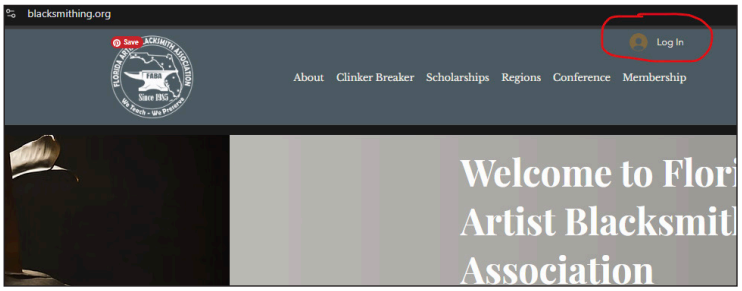
Sebastian and I are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to attend the class as Jerry Grice Scholarship recipients. I would encourage all FABA members who meet the eligibility criteria to consider applying to this and other scholarships. I will create a small setup in the gallery at the FABA Conference and would be happy to answer questions. Thank you!

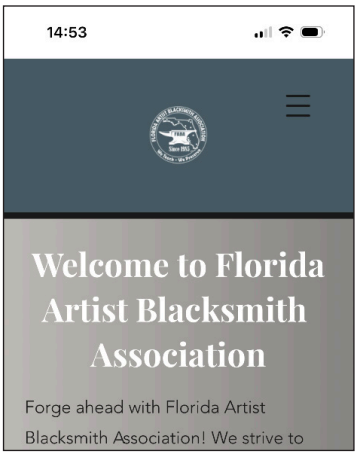
How To Login to your FABA Account

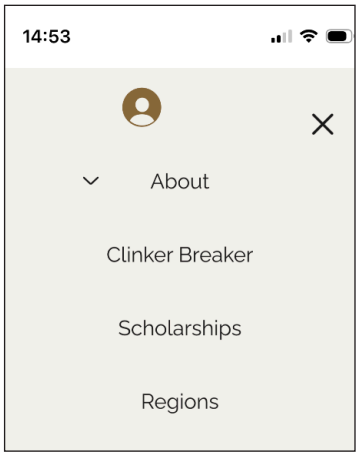
As we all begrudgingly move towards the digital age in an attempt to help keep this magnificent ancient art alive, there are a few fun website things to know. Most FABA members who signed up for a membership online have a FABA website account. This is great because it allows you to see all your membership information, billing information, your purchases, your classes you sign up for at conference, and when your membership expires.

However, I realize that you all might find a how to guide on logging into your account helpful. So here you go:

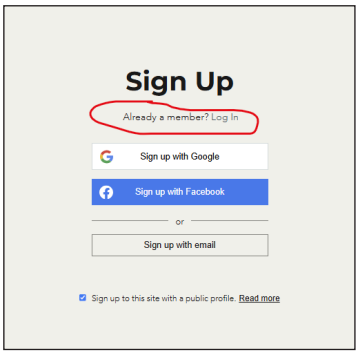
Step 1: Head to the website and click the login button. If you are on the mobile version of the site, click the three lines on the upper right side of the screen then select the login icon, which is the circle with a person in it.

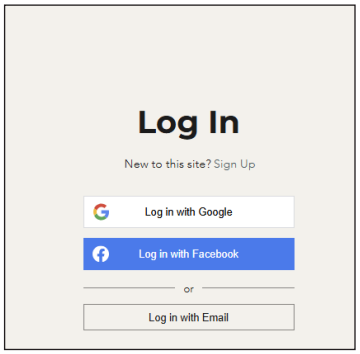




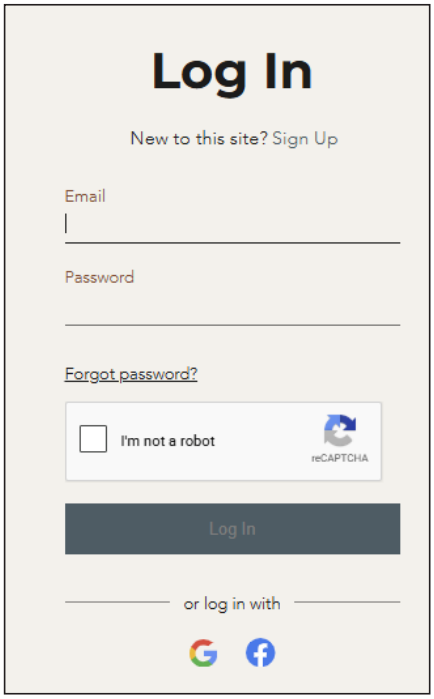


Step 2: After clicking the sign in button you'll actually see the signup page first. Here you'll need to select the link in the text that says 'Already a member? Log In' (Click on the text 'Log In')





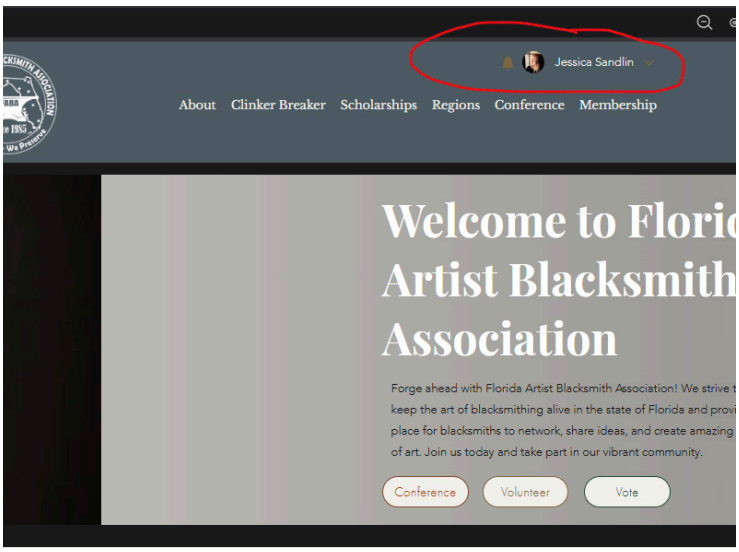
Step 3: The site is set up so you can login in with a Google or Facebook account, but the best method is to log in with your email. However, if you signed up by using your Google or Facebook account, you will always have to use the same login method. The verification checkbox is there because even we are not immune to the relentless barrage of bots on the internet, and that checkbox blocks a lot of spam and attacks.

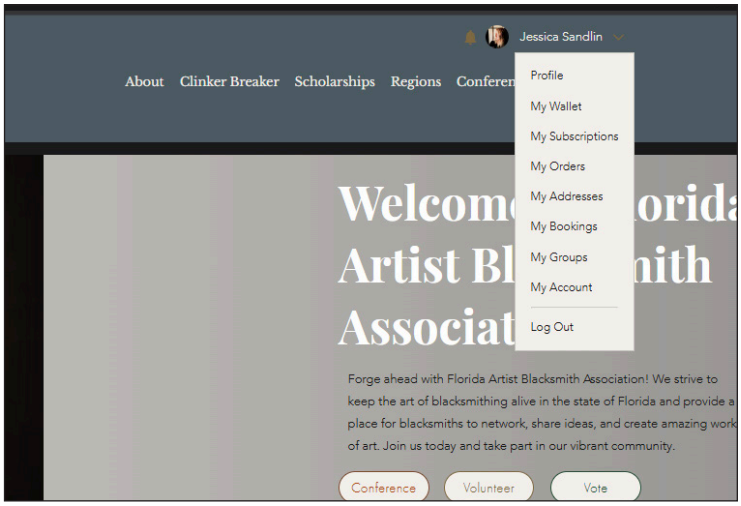


Hit the log in button once you've put in your email, password, and checked the box.

Now what if you don't remember your password? Fear not we have an automatic password recovery system set up! You can click on "Forgot Password" and run through the steps. It will send you an email to recover the password. If you don't see it, check your spam folder and add the website (blacksmithing.org) to your safe senders email list.

Step 4: Yay, you're logged in and will be redirected back to the homepage. You'll see your name at the top of the screen now. (Continue to Step 5 for a site tour.)





Step 5: When you click on your name you'll see a new drop down menu. Here is a quick rundown of what they mean:

Profile: Your name and description, fully optional. You never need to touch this section if you don't want to. This information is only for you to update contact information with us, like a new phone, name or email.

My Wallet: What card or payment method is on file for your membership. Also can be used for conference tickets, classes, and t-shirt orders.

My Subscription/My Membership: Tells you your current membership status. If it is a one-time purchase, auto renewing, or if there was an error with your membership.

My Orders: Where your conference ticket order lives. Also, if you've ever ordered a T-shirt, coal, or anything else from the FABA shop it will show up here.

My Addresses: Your address, only important if you want to receive the printed Clinker Breaker.

My Bookings: Where all your conference classes are located.

My Groups: Ignore this for now… it will be used in the future.

My Account: How you update your login information, like email and password.

Keep in mind when purchasing conference tickets, signing up for classes, renewing membership, voting and so on, it is best to be logged into your account. Actually for voting, you have to be logged into your account with an active membership (or mail your ballot to Tia).

That is how to log into your account! I am sure there will be questions. Please email them to **webmaster@blacksmithing.org**.



VOTE IS OPEN IN FABA ELECTIONS

The FABA 2026 ballot is set, with candidates running for reelection for four posts, and an important-post-to-be-filled also on the ballot. Visit www.blacksmithing.org/elections to cast your vote in FABA's 2026 elections! Or email your vote to Tia Kitchen at secretary@blacksmithing.org.

- Treasurer: Dawn Fortenberry
- Editor: Jennifer Jhon
- Program Chairperson: _____
- SE Trustee: Steve Silvers
- NE Trustee: Ben Thompson

Demonstrators Wanted

I have had a great time blacksmithing in Florida and attending two of our phenomenal conferences. Alas, I'm moving across the country to Washington State.

For the past few years, I have demonstrated at the Lake Wales Pioneer Days. This fall they will need someone new. The event is Saturday and Sunday October 24-25.

Please contact Bart Delcamp: bartdelcamp@gmail.com.

I also just learned that Zolfo Springs has Pioneer Days this fall on November 6-7 and they are looking for a blacksmith. Visit www.floridapioneerfestival.com.

— Paul Wiedorn

Jerry Grice Scholarship deadline Dec. 31

This scholarship was established to honor the memory of Jerry Grice, 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 Jerry Grice 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 Dec. 31, 2026.

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 $1,000 may be split evenly among multiple candidates if deemed so by the FABA Board of Directors.

FABA Veterans Scholarship

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). 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 $150 upon completion of the course, whichever is less. (For example, if the course(s) cost $200, 80% of that is $160, so the awardee would receive $150; if the course(s) cost is $175 then the awardee would receive $140.) Formula for determining award: Registration fee(s) $_____ X 0.80 = _____ TOTAL (awardee would receive $150 or less of total course registration costs).

3. The coursework must be considered to be directly related to blacksmithing (not welding/fabrication). The FABA Scholarship Committee reserves the right to determine which coursework is appropriate during the review process.

Get full scholarship and application information at www.blacksmithing.org/scholarships

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David Sandlin, President
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Valparaiso, FL 32580

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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 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 Fortenberry
1078A Four Forks Rd.
Elizabeth City, NC 27909

NAME _____

FAMILY MEMBERS _____

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