

January 2022

CLINKER



BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

Established May 18, 1985

PRESIDENT ELECT'S MESSAGE

FABA's new leader shares plan for future

First, thank you for your trust in this stewardship. It is truly a privilege to work with each of you as together we "Teach and Preserve" the noble art of blacksmithing. Together it is our job to Carry the Torch – Pass the Flame

I may be the newest member of the board, but I'd be remiss if I did not welcome the returning board members on the team – Lisa Ann Conner, our temporary President returning as our VP; Mark Stone, our new Past President; Tia Kitchen, who remains our secretary; and Ron Childers and Trez Cole, will continue to be our trustees in the west and southwest respectively. I should also introduce Christopher Sandlin who has replaced me as the Far West Regional Coordinator.

Last month I did promise to give you a bit of my background, so let me summarize 65 years in a single paragraph. I retired from the USAF in 2001 following a 22-year career as a fighter pilot flying both the A-10 and the F-16. Then in 2013, I retired again having worked as a business developer, software designer, and network manager for Northrup Grumman. I then failed retirement by starting my own business, called Traditions Workshop, where we offer restoration and repair services.

Blacksmithing is an integral part of my current business but craftsmanship is something I've practiced since I started building houses with my father at age 12. Therefore it was an easy transition for me to create a business that touches on so many disciplines – fine woodwork, metal/wood lathe work, stained glass, fiberglass, CAD/CAM, welding, CNC carving ... all skills that I hope will help me as I work with you to grow our fine organization.

Finally, and most importantly, I have a wonderful bride, Anna, who has traveled the world with me for 33 years. Anna is an herbalist, seamstress and artist. Together we have three children, Jennifer, Christopher and Jessica; the last two are now third-generation blacksmiths, as their grandfather on Anna's side was also a smith.

So what vector shall we steer this organization? I have

been on the phone to several members, and although I haven't spoken to everyone, I get the drift that we do have a few priorities.

First we need to maintain financial viability. That means protecting our 501c3 status; growing a membership that will integrate all Florida blacksmiths; and securing grants systematically from public and private sources.

Second, we need to continue to promote the education of the community. Although that includes the general public, we also want to specifically improve ourselves by providing an exemplar of safe, flexible and effective procedures that promote skill development using our journeyman standards.

Our annual conference is already making strides to promote education through creativity by throwing down the gauntlet with the early announcement of challenges for an exchange gift and for regional cooperative projects that will be featured in the auction. Our continually improving website and Clinker Breaker publication are working together to establish FABA as the premier clearinghouse for information and knowledge resources tailored to blacksmiths in Florida.

Add to this our social media presence, and we have established a gateway for blacksmith collaborations that will increase membership and conference attendance – our best opportunities for blacksmith education.

I strongly encourage you to join in the creation of original blacksmith-oriented media content for use in these tools.

Finally we need to continue to support our professional blacksmith sector. These people are the backbone of our organization. They provide the bulk of our instructor cadre at conference, they are demonstrators at regional meetings and are critical in developing relationships and promoting partnerships with entities, such as museums, that feature blacksmithing in historical and cultural contexts.

We have a big job ahead of us to meet these priorities, but we have a strong heritage to stand upon and many willing people that love the craft. I look forward to working with you to confront the challenge!

May God grant you a very Happy and Prosperous New Year!!



David Sandlin

INTERIM PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thanks for fostering the next generation

Hello, Blacksmithing Friends and Family! One last brief missive as I prepare to hand over the Presidential “reins” of your organization to David Sandlin, and to resume being your Vice President.

As so many of us did during the pandemic shutdowns, I made the attempt to winnow through my (very large) collection of craft books and magazines. But, of course, that means one must read them through to verify whether or not you can actually bear to part with said publications.

A column in an old (1983) issue of CRAFTS, a London-based magazine affiliated with the Crafts Council, gave me a bit of a jolt: a letter to the Editor rambled on (and on) on the subject of artisans and craftspeople jealously guarding their “secrets”, particularly their materials, and their methods of work, and thus, not “properly” teaching



Lisa Anne Conner

or preparing the next generation of artists.

That reminded me to say thanks, once again, to each and every one of you who have so generously taught me something over the years!

To those of you I have not yet had the opportunity to learn from or to teach something, let's get together! (I can always bring brownies...)

Wishing You and Yours a Happy and Healthy New Year, Lisa Anne!



— Lisa Anne Conner, Interim President

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 conference Facebook Page at www.facebook.com/groups/2849587158637631; any of our regional Facebook pages; or provided at meetings or demonstrations.

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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	Christopher Sandlin	850-865-9596	kitwards@aol.com



North NE Hammer-In, Jan. 29

The NNE region is still looking for a regional coordinator. The region is kicking off the new year with a Veterans Open House hammer-in on January 29th at [Iron Osprey Forge, 102 Marshall Circle, St. Augustine.](#)

This event is open to all, but with an emphasis on recognizing the service our veterans and active duty military have provided to us.

There will be demonstrations, snacks, lunch and opportunities for folks to hit some hot iron throughout the day. We hope to see you!

– Doug Hayes, FABA Treasurer



NW Region Report

The Northwest Region had our December meeting at the residence of Mary Ellen Anderson in Monticello.

Over 30 people signed in, a great improvement over the 10 or so in November and the couple of meetings we skipped this year.

Everyone brought lots of great side dishes and desserts to go with the pulled pork sandwiches Keiran made for us. It was a feast!

It was great to see the turnout, catch up with old friends and make new ones too. Lots of donations for the Iron in the Hat raffle, too.

Mark Stone demonstrated making crosses, and I got to demonstrate making a heart shaped hook and half of a lizard, with Craig Hines matching me every step of the way.

A big Thank You to everyone who showed up for the meeting, and especially Mary Ellen for hosting us and to those who helped run the meeting so I could get a chance to Blacksmith, too! It was great!

— John Pfund, NW Region Coordinator



NW Region Meeting, Jan. 15

Hello everyone, and greetings from the Northwest Region. Our January meeting will be held at Roger Bell's house on the 15th.

This is the third Saturday of January, and usually we hold it on the second, but Roger will be busy hunting on that day, so the 15th it is. The address is 7685 Deepwood Trail, Tallahassee, FL 32317.

Between now and then, Roger is going to build a small old-time blacksmith shop close to his regular one. We'll use the new old-time shop for a demonstration and his regular one for "open forges." If you have a project you want to work on or demonstrate for us, bring it with you for the meeting.

My beloved wife, Suzy, is going to cook a pot of chili for the main dish, so please bring sides and desserts to go with it. Billy Christie is bringing water, ice and tea.

Roger is cleaning out his shop for the meeting and is going to have a big pile of old metal, free to help yourself from. Feel free to bring tailgate items to sell, and don't forget to bring something for the Iron in the Hat raffle. I'm still giving out free raffle tickets for handmade items. Hope to see you there!

— John Pfund, NW Region Coordinator



SW Region Report

We had a very productive meeting at our new FABAs SW home at the Crowley Museum blacksmith forge. Several smiths demonstrated some of their skills required for the Journeyman certification. Tapers, twists, scrolls and square corners were produced at a furious rate and the quality of the work was high. It was great to see the progress our fellow smiths have made in this craft. Thank you to Francis Trez Cole for his patient guidance and for signing off on everyone's demoed work and thank you to all members who turned out. — **Tony Fenn, SW Region Coordinator**

SW Region Meeting, Jan. 22

The SW meeting will be held on Saturday, Jan. 22, 2022, at the blacksmith's forge at the Pioneer Village Museum, which is north of downtown Dade City, Florida, adjacent to the Little Everglades Ranch. The meeting will start at 10 am.

The Museum is dedicated to educating, promoting, fostering, and encouraging public interest in Florida life and history from pioneer times until 1945.

To accomplish its mission, the Museum Association acquires, collects, preserves, restores, exhibits, interprets, researches and publicizes items of historical significance, aimed at depicting pioneer life in Florida through an organized community effort.

Burt Golub, who is hosting the meeting, is asking all attending to consider, before the meeting, to make and donate a decorative nail or spike to the Nail Tree at the forge. The Pioneer Village is

an educational experience for visitors and highlighting the talents of modern blacksmiths is one way we do it.

Local blacksmith Robert Graber will be demonstrating at the meeting. We will also make time to discuss and advise on any aspects of any Journeyman skills you may be working on.

SW member Gary EagleDad Kemp is generously going to smoke a Boston Butt and provide Pulled Pork and Buns for the gathering. Please bring some sides or drinks, which will complement Gary's cooking. Also search through your scrap pile or unused tools and bring something for Iron in the Hat.

Please check the FABAs SW page for news and updates at www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674.

Looking forward to a great meeting!

— **Tony Fenn, SW Region Coordinator**



Journeyman's Notebook

By David Sandlin

I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand. – Confucius

Guillotine tools are great things to have in the shop, especially for the smith who has to work alone. For those of you who've never seen one, a guillotine tool is simply a frame that holds a bar of tooling that slides up and down. Jerry Hoffman's *Smithing Magician* is a good example. But at \$150 for the frame and another \$70-\$90 per set of dies, buying one is a bit pricy [see [Smithing Magician \(blacksmithsupply.com\)](http://blacksmithsupply.com)].

Of course you can make one, and there are several plans on the Internet.

For example, I drew this in sketch up (right).

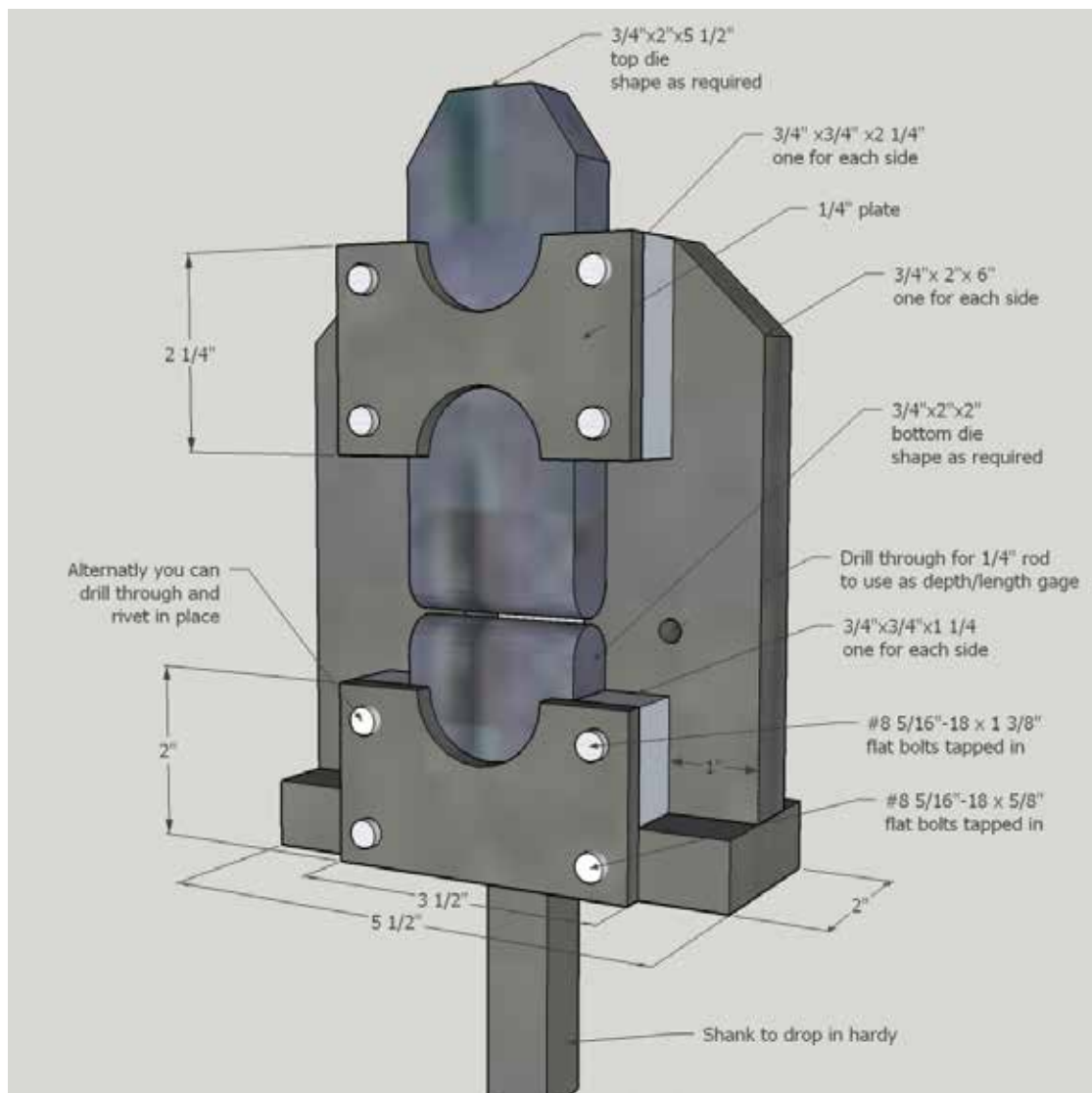
However the level of complexity and the time required for the build might put you off. Perhaps welding and rivets are better than bolts?

Bill Epps offers a variation on the guillotine tool that is much simpler to build. It can be made from regular old mild steel, but that would not last as long as a good lawn mower blade or leaf spring.

If you do use mild steel be sure your work is at least red HOT and then keep a spray bottle of water handy to spritz the tool between uses.

Below are two variations of the Bill Epps Style guillotine tool.

Having the top bar a bit long (bottom left picture) allows you to lift the top with your hammer as you put the work in with the other hand.



Far West Region Report

We started setting up at 9 a.m., but our meeting at Timber Creek Distillery in December really got started at 10 a.m., when Cam, the owner of Timber Creek Distillery, started us off on the Loggerhead challenge.

Rules were simple: By 3 p.m., make a tool to heat a drink, that won't burn your hand when using it to heat said drink, and make it look good enough that Cam would be willing to stick it in his drink. The prize on the table was a bottle of Timber Creek dark rum.

We had 9 competitors (all members) plus three visitors at the forges. Two of our visitors tried their hand at making nails (coached by the FABA webmaster, Jessica Sandlin) and one ambitious young lady made a BBQ fork for her dad's birthday (coached by Far West Regional Coordinator Christopher Sandlin).

FABA President Elect David Sandlin coached six junior smiths through the process of making mini swords. "Mr. Mallet" kept the crowd entertained with his near constant patter and 80's tunes. I should note that everyone mentioned so far was also making loggerheads for the competition. Great job multitasking!

As the final hour was closing in we were collectively using the power hammer, grinders and sanders, plus the fans on three forges; drawing enough power to pop the breaker four times! This really added to the pucker factor as everyone was "almost done", trying to add finishing touches and details that might help them win the prize. You might



recall that Timber Creek is "off grid", using solar to power their operation, so popping a breaker was a little more of an issue than normal.

At 3 p.m. on the button, Aaron, the other owner of the distillery, called "TIME!" and instructed every contestant to place their entry on the fire table where Cam would judge the results. Cam then made a very thorough effort, examining each entry and commenting on what he liked and why he liked the item. He then narrowed the field to three finalists and called in his partner (Aaron) to help with the final selection. The work of three smiths (Christopher, David and Mr. Mallet) now hung in the balance. The contestants waited with bated breath to see who would be the ultimate winner.

The field was then narrowed to two (David and Mr. Mallet) – and the

winner of a Timber Creek bottle of rum was Christopher Mallet! (aka Mr. Mallet).

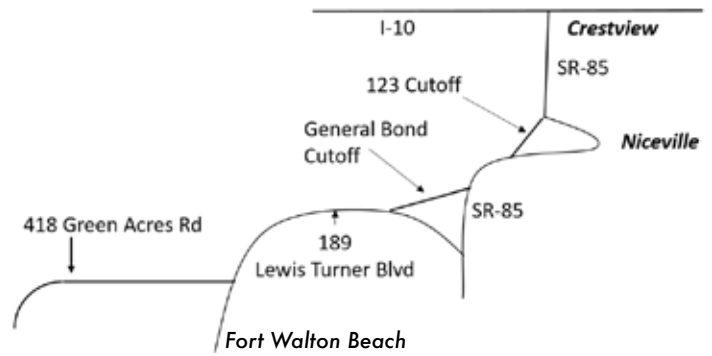
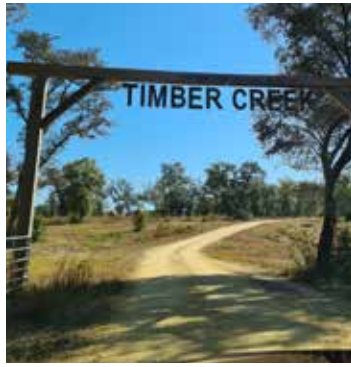
It should be noted that Mr. Mallet has now won the Timber Creek Competition two years in a row. Both times edging out David. But this is not the end of the story.

The Far West membership has agreed to return to Timber Creek next November. Will Mr. Mallet be able to hold onto his winning streak in 2022 and make this a turkey? Will David once again just miss the mark? Is there a dark horse out there who will instead take home the prize? Only time will tell!

Plan to join the Far West the third weekend in November, once again at Timber Creek in 2022.

**— David Sandlin,
FABA President Elect**

Regional Reports



FABA member Brian Byerley received a commission for this whale he created.

Christopher Sandlin taught a copper smithing class where the students not only forged steel and copper, but also got to tin their products. Tinning is done so the taste of copper is not transferred to the food.



Above, a student deburring before adding a rivet

Above right, applying Sal Ammoniac is part of the tinning process



Far West Meeting Schedule

Our next two meetings will be the fourth Saturday of January and February at Traditions Workshop (418 Green Acres Rd., Ft Walton Beach, FL), 9 AM to 2PM. The January 22nd meeting will focus on the Journeyman standard to “Swage a tenon by making the end of a square bar round using a swage.” As well as the task to “Make an assembly from at least two separate pieces using a Mortise and Tenon. We will have a spring swage and “monkey fist” available to accomplish these tasks. The February 26th meeting will focus on splitting where the demonstrated task will be to split a bar with a hot cut in the middle of a bar. In the far west we always have open forges following the demonstration so you can try your hand at the project for the day.

Our March 26th Meeting (9AM-3PM) will be at John Butler’s farm. We are planning to conduct this meeting as a “make and take” class – turning a Railroad Spike into a knife. Class cost will be \$110 with lunch from Sonny’s BBQ included. Class size will be limited to 12 people. There will also be one open forge for those not interested in the class. Proceeds from the class will go to support FABA.

The April 23rd meeting (9AM-3PM) will probably be held in the park at the foot of the Navarre Beach Bridge. I say probably because we are still working out the details, but if the stars all correctly align we will have Jordan Borstelmann visit the Far West and demonstrate how to make one of his trademark axes.

The May 28th meeting (9AM-3PM) will be back at [Timber Creek Distillery](#) with the task to make a sea creature for our contribution to the FABA Con 2022 auction. We don’t yet know how Cam and Arron might weigh in on this event, but you can count on great pizza from their stone oven and libations from the distillery (and maybe some axe throwing, too).

Expect us to meet at the Baker Block Museum sometime in the early summer, date TBD. Other summer monthly meetings are still up in the air. However, the October 22nd meeting will be back at Traditions Workshop to prep the trailer for the trip, the forges are already reserved on that day for finalizing your team contributions to the annual conference auction project “creatures”. That brings us up to conference and then our now annual pre-Thanksgiving pilgrimage to Timber Creek.

Central NE Region Report

Thank you, Kirk Sullens, for your demo for the Central NE Region on how to learn a new style of spear. We sure got a good lesson about the trials of learning a new weld while using difficult materials with challenging shapes.

In the end, we did not get to see a completed spear, but that really wasn't the point. What we did get to see was a professional trying things out and learning how to modify the previous attempts to move on.

R&D is the most time-consuming and frustrating part of blacksmithing, as far as I'm concerned. Even the simple things that need to be learned take an immense amount of patience and a willingness to fail several times in the process.

Failure is not only an option, but it's even a good thing when you get the chance to learn from it. If you aren't failing, then you aren't trying anything hard or, some would say, even worth doing.

In order to progress, one must embrace the learning process and redefine the word failure to mean learning opportunity. It is only when we throw our hands up in the air declaring the task impossible that we truly have failed. So with that said, fail on my friends and go to territories so far unexplored by yourself and become a more complete individual.

– Heinrich Hole, Central NE Coordinator



Regional Reports

Central NE Region Meeting, Jan. 1

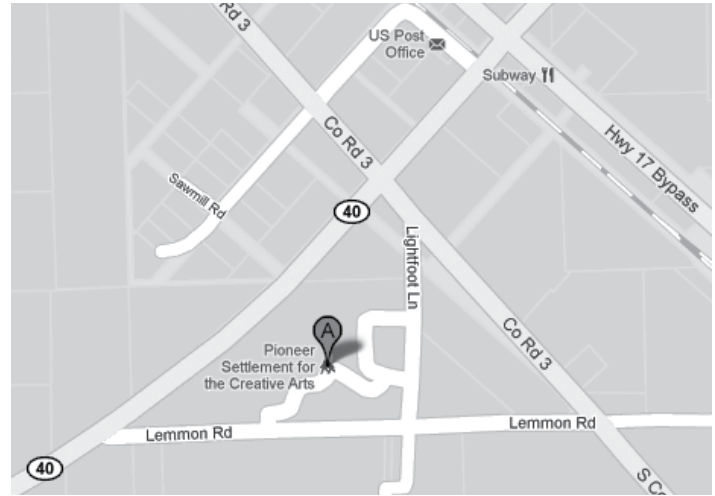
The January meeting of the Central NE Region will be held starting at 9 a.m. on Jan. 1st at the Barberville Pioneer Art Settlement. It will be a simple meeting, primarily focusing on open forges.

The settlement is going to be closed, so we will only have access through the blacksmiths gate on Lemmon Road. The main gate will be closed.

Take the time in January to come get your hands dirty while the weather is still forgiving of our heat-loving activities. Food will be potluck style. I have no way of knowing how many people will be interested in smithing on New Year's Day, so this meeting we will have those that chose to attend also bring food. But supplying food is not a requirement of joining!

Let's bring in the New Year by making some new stuff and letting our inner creativity out to play. Cya there!!!

— **Heinrich Hole, Central NE Coordinator**



FABA Announcements

A GOOD YEAR FOR A GOOD CAUSE

The Bearded Brotherhood of Blacksmiths Presents the 2022 NSFA (Not Safe for Anywhere) Scholarship Calendar.

Proceeds from the sales of these calendars go toward a scholarship fund to provide a new and hungry blacksmith the chance to further their learning. Learning this Craft is incredibly difficult, and we are hoping this scholarship will make it just a little easier for someone new to the trade.

These are real blacksmiths, real men and women, one false beard, and one cute lil Pup! The amount of courage and booze it took to make this happen was astounding.

Follow the link to purchase one for yourself! Send me an email if you'd like to purchase in bulk to sell at a retail location or special event.

— **Jordan Borstelmann, crookedpathforge@gmail.com**

GET YOURS TODAY

<http://crookedpathforge.org/products/bearded-brotherhood-of-blacksmiths-2022-charity-calendar>



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Interested in being a FABA sponsor or expanding your sponsor listing? Please contact FABA treasurer Doug Hayes at djhayes29@hotmail.com and include your business name, tag line, and point of contact information for use in the Clinker Breaker and online.

THE FLORIDA CLINKER BREAKER

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January 2022

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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 Square 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:

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