

January 2026

CLINKER



BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

Established May 18, 1985

Happy Holidays from FABA



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	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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Thank you for the year!

Thanksgiving has just passed, Christmas is on the horizon, and I am filled with thoughts of the events that have happened over this past year.

First of all, I want to say I am very thankful for all the volunteers that make this organization so strong. It's not just the conference, it's the monthly meetings where demonstrations and projects are shown off and techniques and projects are taught. Reading the monthly reports makes me envious that I cannot attend more events.

I want to call your attention to our scholarship program. It's mid month and the scholarship closes out at the end of the month. I'd sure like to see a couple people apply.

I was the recipient of an ABANA scholarship and got to take advantage of that just this past weekend. I attended a Viking axe-making workshop with Jordan Borstelmann! My son Christopher also attended the workshop with me.

Over the years I've tried my hand at a lot of different projects, but never tried to make an ax until last Saturday. I can honestly say that my first attempt was a disaster. Fortunately, we had Sunday to recover, so my second attempt looked a lot better, although my forged weld did not stick the way I wanted it to. Still, I'm happy with the progress.

I would like to think that personal progress is why we have a scholarship program. We want to see you grow in skills and start taking the lead to teach the rest of us how to get better. Taking a class gives you insights that you cannot get from reading a book or from watching YouTube.

Prior to my class, I had read Jordan's book, which is



David Sandlin
FABA President



an excellent document and you can find it on Amazon at <https://a.co/d/1qE5yP0>. I had also taken time to watch a couple of YouTube videos. Books can tell you how to do things, and a YouTube video can show you how to do something, but neither of these are good substitutes for actual hands-on instruction.

With an instructor, you get the why. Why did you have to do this step before the next step? Why did you have to use a certain type of tongs? Why is this type of steel selected over another type of steel? ... and the list goes on.

If you do apply for a scholarship, remember we have several great instructors in our own community, and you do not have to travel far to learn something new.

BUDGET: This is also the last call for input to the FABA budget for 2026. Is there something that you would like to see us do next year? Or maybe there's some equipment that we should be focused on. Either way please let me know.

THANKS! Because I was in Gainesville. I had the chance to go to FEVER Forge and attend Leslie Tharp's open forge event. We did a team project where we made a very large nail and also had an opportunity to do some individual projects making crane and other bird ornaments to be hung in the Christmas tree. I want to thank Leslie for putting together such a wonderful evening event.



GET PUBLISHED! So how do you get published? Actually it is very simple: In August, I sent a note to the publisher of my local magazine, "Emerald Coast," and surprisingly enough they decided to do an article about my business. It is published at: emeraldcoastmagazine.com/restoring-tradition/

I'm sure there is a magazine similar to this in your local area and if not, there's always newspaper. People find Blacksmithing fascinating, and all you have to do is tell them you're active and that you're willing to have them come in and do a story. And next thing you know...

Until I see you again I hope and pray your anvil rings through throughout the new year.

— David Sandlin, President

President's Message



Although I did get a lot of the touch marks at the last conference, I'm very sure that I did not get them all. Plus, I'm sorry I missed the name for one of those touch marks, if it's yours, please let me know.

TOUCHMARKS: Those of you that were at FABACON 25 may recall that I had put together a board and started collecting touch marks. You don't have to have a brass token to send me your touch mark. You can punch your mark on steel or copper, just be sure to include your name and the name of your forge if applicable.

Regional Reports

Far West Meeting Schedule

Far West will return to meet at Traditions Workshop the fourth Saturday of January (Jan. 24th) and the third Saturday of February (Feb. 21st). Both meetings will start at 9 AM. We will be focusing on FABA Journeyman standards or parts of the ABANA National Curriculum as the year progresses.

The Far West chapter has not have a meeting since our last forging competition, everyone's just a little tuckered out and Christmas is on the horizon.

However, we have been planning our events for the next couple of months. Our next meeting will open the forges at Traditions Workshop on January 24 starting at 9 AM.

After set up, there will be a demonstration on collaring your work and then open forge time to follow. Bring your projects!

Also bring your ideas for the group competition project. It is not too early to get started on our piece that is supposed to have both balance and motion. We will work at the forges until we either get too hot, too cold, or too hungry. The last contingency is probably not gonna happen because Traditions Workshop will be providing all beef hotdogs and chili for lunch.

Our February meeting will be on Feb. 21st, again at Traditions Workshop. This is usually the coldest meeting for the year, so it's always nice to be able to go into the workshop and retreat from the temperatures.

We will explore mortise and tenon joints as a demonstration project. During this meeting, we also hope to sketch up our plan for the group competition project. Once again, meeting starts at 9 AM and goes until we're too tired to keep going. Traditions Workshop is located at 418 Green acres Rd., Fort Walton Beach FL

Our March meeting will be at John Butler's family farm, and this is our traditional fundraising event. We will have 12 slots for the Viking era knife class. We will need several

members to volunteer their time as safety observers.

This event is often attended by non-FABA members and it is a great opportunity for us to encourage them to join the organization. Thank you again to John Butler for hosting this event.

Our April meeting will be on April 26th at a location to be announced. Usually, this is an event held out in the community, and we are looking for a local sponsor. Sponsorship entails nothing more than providing us a place to set up.

Remember that our gift exchange item this year something that spins. There will be a demonstration on how to make a corkscrew, but I hope you have some other ideas on things that spin and you can make them during the session.

Our event on May 24 will occur at Timber Creek distillery. Set-up starts at 9 AM, and we will be focused on yet another one of the journeyman standards. These are always a good meetings because Timber Creek distillery is a great host and they have a fantastic pizza oven. They also encourage us to bring items that we wish to leave with them to sell for us. This is the first meeting that we plan to seriously start construction on our competition project for FABACON 26.

June 27 location is still to be determined, but this is the Saturday after Midsomer, so you can expect us to demonstrate a project inspired by that Scandinavian holiday. July 25 and August 22 are too far for us to give you a reasonable forecast.

September 26 will be at Traditions Workshop, and we will be packing the trailer in anticipation of the conference sometime in October. November will find us back at Timber Creek distillery for our annual competition once again. We don't have a hard date for this yet, but November 7th looks like a good candidate.

Sounds like Far West will have a great year at the Forge and a number of wonderful learning opportunities.

— **David Sandlin, FABA President**



Central NE Meeting, Jan. 3

We had a small yet productive meeting in December, where we made small items for the settlement.

Our next meeting will be held at Barberville Pioneer Settlement on January 3rd from 9am until 3pm. We will have open forges and continue to discuss our plans for the New Year. As always, lunch will be provided. Hope to see you there!



Please check the FABA NE Facebook page for more info at facebook.com/groups/381431599058683/, or contact William Thornton at knifegsx@yahoo.com.

— William Thornton, Central NE Coordinator

Greater Orlando Meeting, Jan. 10

I apologize for the cancellation of last month's meeting. I have had to procure a new vehicle unexpectedly but on the plus side I can now tow the trailer.

Our next meeting will be on the second Saturday in January (January 10th) at our usual spot: Underground Metal Works.

Open forges, we will have a potluck style lunch. I will bring sandwich stuff.

I look forward to seeing you there!

Meeting date: January 10th, 9AM-1PM

Location: Underground MetalWorks, 660 W Kennedy Blvd., Suite A, Orlando, FL 32810

For information, contact John Hare at 802-373-1190 or legacy.john.hare@gmail.com.

— John Hare, Orlando Coordinator

Gainesville Region Report

For more info on Gainesville region meetings, shoot me an email at crookedpathforge@gmail.com.

— Jordan Borstelmann, 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
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Michael Oliver - Turn and Burn Metalworks - Lakeland, FL
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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.

SAVE THE DATE

Induction Forge Workshop and Seminar
March 21-22, 8am to 5pm Sat & Sun
Fever Metal Art Center, Gainesville, FL

The Induction Forge Workshop and Seminar is hosted as a collaboration between Fever Metal Art Center (Leslie Tharp's shop) and the Florida Artist Blacksmith Association (FABA) NE Regions.

Special guests Scott Kretschmer and Evan Blackstock from the Rocky Mountain Smiths will lead two workshops and afternoon seminars focused on the benefits of Induction Forging technology. They will demonstrate the use of induction forging technology as well as lead two morning workshops focused on setting up and modifying the equipment for safety and coil building.

There will be hands-on opportunities for registrants in the afternoon as space and equipment availability allows. Registration cost is \$15 for FABA Members (\$20 for Non-members) for the seminars. Morning workshops are an additional \$25 each day (\$45 to attend both days, limited to 8 participants, each day).

Registration payments will be taken on site during the event (cash/card options will be available), advance RSVP is required. We will be posting more on registration in the future but for now if you would like to RSVP, please email Ben Thompson at thompsoncrafted@gmail.com.

SW Region Region

We had a great open forge meeting on Saturday, Nov 22nd, at Wade Chappell's new workshop in Sarasota, with 10 people attending. We set up two coal forges from the FABA trailer and also had Wade's gas forge going.

Some of our members worked on their Journeyman requirements, such as Scott Teele, who did an excellent demo, for Trez's signoff, of how to make a 90 degree corner on a round bar while keeping all of the profile rounded.

I ran new member Jim Frankavilla through basic blacksmithing and he produced a good hook with a twist. Other members worked on their own projects with some guidance by myself and Trez Cole.

Thank you to all who attended.

SW Region Schedule

There will not be a SW FABA meeting in December because of the holidays. I'll let you all know a date and location for January as soon as I have something arranged.

Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for a meeting announcement in mid January 2026 at www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674, or contact antony.fenn@gmail.com.

Have a restful Christmas and a Happy New Year!

— **Tony Fenn, SW Region Coordinator**



SE Region Meeting Schedule

The Southeast met in November with projects being completed. We are pushing members to work on their Journeyman requirements. Junk was made into a large cleaver. Overall, more people are showing interest in FABA. Happy Holidays to all!

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.

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

— **Gary Becker, SE Region member**



NW Region Report

The Northwest Region had our December meeting at the home of Marcia and Craig Hines. We had about 35 people sign in.

Craig demonstrated making a snake from a farrier's rasp. He did it fairly quickly and passed off the hammer to Jeff Mohr. Jeff barely used the hammer, before shifting to the power hammer in making his snake from a farrier's rasp. I think I heard Jeff say that he could be a power hammer salesman. He kind of is, he made it look so easy.

In the meantime, Craig started helping Joe Wade dig into a huge bonfire that had been burning all night. They dug a small ditch in the middle of the bonfire with a small backhoe. Then they jumped into the ditch and started digging out aluminum foil wrapped turkeys! Turns out they were buried under the huge fire all night.

Craig and Joe looked like archeologists working in a forest fire. It was a spectacle! I was worried about getting them out of the dirt safely, but they were moist and tender, without a single grain of sand. The turkeys were delicious!

Others brought sides and desserts to provide a wonderful Christmas dinner type meal. It was a great way to end another year in the Northwest region.

— John Pfund, NW Region Coordinator

NW Region Meeting, Jan. 10

Our January meeting will be held at Bettinger's welding shop. The address is 3340 Garber Rd. Tallahassee FL 32303.

Ken Weldon has initiated an effort to make tongs for the Monday evening "Open Forges" at Jim Labolitos. Ken says Jim is getting good attendance from new Smiths but they are woefully short of decent tongs.

For the meeting, we going to have demonstrations for making several kinds of tongs and a kind of assembly line set up to produce tongs to donate to Jim and for anyone else who wants to take a pair home.

For the meal Mike's grilling crew is going to make their famous chicken and we're going to bring sides and desserts to go along. We had a nice collection of items donated to the raffle in December, let's continue with that and try to bring your favorite tongs to show off and discuss.

Motto for the meeting, "We all need tongs, let's go ahead and make some!"

— John Pfund, NW Region Coordinator



Regional Reports



North NE Region Meeting, Jan. 10

The next meeting will be at Iron Osprey Forge January 10th (preceded by a FABA open forge night on Thursday, Jan. 8th). That will focus on the regional project outline and general skills associated with the FABA journeyman requirements.

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



North NE Region Report

The North Northeast region had a great meeting in December at Iron Osprey Forge. We had a handful of FABA regulars, a relatively new FABA member, Brently Cuthbertson, and were happy to welcome our traveling smith, Chris Maybury, who made his way to St. Augustine for the day.

Simple holiday ornaments were on the calendar, and a couple of designs and ideas were displayed and made, but most folks worked on more substantial projects (drifts, mandrels, damascus billets) and the press and tire hammer had a good workout. We threw in a little shop tool tutoring and a bit of welding and then tackled lunch - which wasn't exactly centered around a couple of platters of Christmas cookies or LeRoi Price's super chocolate brownies - but they were the best part of the brunch.

We had several folks stop by to check us out: a mom and 10-year-old son who want to get started in the craft (he made a couple of nail swords and left with a quick tree ornament) and a couple of other folks, who also enjoyed the brunch.

We discussed the upcoming year with a few specific items to be put on the schedule: Forged Skulls by Ben Thompson, a foundry/casting demo/workshop by Blaise Morrell (sometime in the spring), possibly a chasing/re-pousse class to name a few.

Have a happy and safe holiday season and ring in the new year with something hot on the anvil.

— Doug Hayes, NNE Region Coordinator



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, 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.

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 \$150 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 reserves the right to determine which coursework is appropriate during the review process.
3. Awardees will be notified via email and USPS the status of their application approximately two weeks after the committee meets.

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

News from ABANA

Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America

2026 ABANA Conference Demonstrator *Zeevik Gottlieb*

Zeevik Gottlieb's sculptural work is focused on personal relationships, balance, and emotion as he draws on the world around him for inspiration. His work has been shown around the world, from galleries to public spaces.

For the conference, Zeevik will spend the three days forging a large piece (around 6-7 ft tall) that will be up for auction on the final day of the event.



More conference info →



The ABANA National Curriculum offers certification for both blacksmiths and blacksmith instructors. Certification can help you hone your skills, be a resource for your local smithing group, or gain an advantage in finding a job or teaching gig. Visit abana.org.

Call for Entries "Favorite Forgings of 2025"



Tipsy Table
by Frida Tranum Nielsen



Untitled
by Chris Unck

Submission deadline January 1, 2026

Images above are from prior exhibitions

Submit Your Work

What was your favorite project completed during 2025? Let's see it!

Submission Deadline:
January 1, 2026

<https://bit.ly/featuredforgings>

This is an online exhibition, so you're just submitting photos.

The Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting, and sharing technical skills and design excellence in the blacksmith community. We offer educational workshops, technical and art publications, grants, awards, conferences, and exhibitions honoring the metal and forging arts.

News from ABANA

Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America



Win this Book

Thanks to Schiffer Publishing, we're giving away two (2) copies of Contemporary Blacksmithing for Beginners by Joy Fire. Entries due Jan. 31, 2026. Membership not required.

Visit abana.org (scroll to bottom).



Follow ABANA here:



APPLY FOR AN ABANA GRANT

Next Application Cycle: January 2026

- \$250 Grant to attend a Blacksmithing Event
- \$500 Grant to attend a Blacksmithing Class or Degree Program

"On the Edge" Online Exhibition

On view at abana.org through Jan. 2026

Pair of Chef Knives by Jacob Weisæth

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Poinsettia

By Steve Alford

Poinsettias were always part of my family's Christmas season. Families in the church would order plants to line the church until the Sunday before the big day. Then all the ladies would take their plants home after church.

I made my poinsettia patterns from a fake poinsettia I found at Hobby Lobby or Michael's. From reading, I learned that the showy red parts that I always thought were flower petals are really leaves, also called "brachts". The real flowers are little tiny things. I didn't find anything that said there had to be any specific number of leaves, brachts, and flowers, so I decided 2 leaves, 4 large brachts, 4 small brachts, and 8 flowers looked right to me.

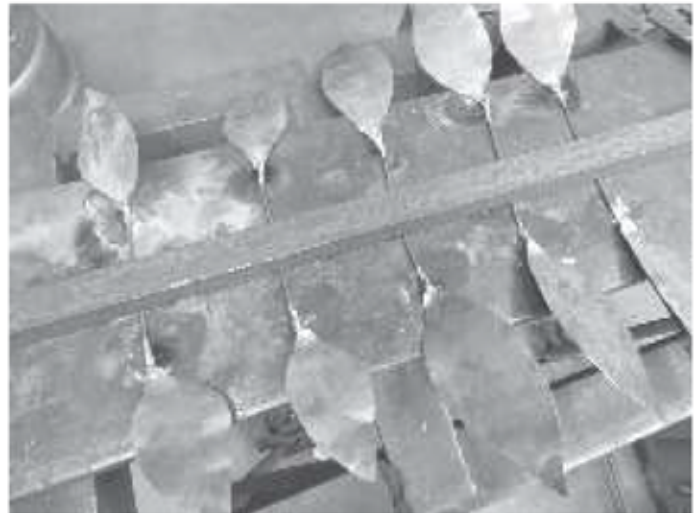
I forged the flowers from 1/4-inch steel round bar by necking all but the very ends down and drawing out to a bit under 3/16 diameter. I used a punch to texture the ends. The leaves were from 16-gauge steel and the brachts from roofing copper. I used 10-gauge wire for the copper stems and 1/4-inch round for the main stem. I cut out the sheet metal with snips. Feel free to experiment with different materials and patinas. I really thought of making the flowers from copper and using the torch to color them a deep red. Alas, I didn't have any thick enough copper wire.

No longer just for Christmas, the prototype is on year-round display in my mother's apartment!

Patterns for the leaves and brachts are on page 18. The finished piece is shown on the back cover.



Get started by cutting 4 small brachts and 4 large brachts from roofing copper (0.021 inches thick) and 2 leaves from 16-ga steel. Solder the brachts to copper stems and weld the leaves to 3/16 steel stems. Material sizes are just what I had on hand.



Bituminous Bits

November-December 2025



Vein and texture the leaves and bracts. I used a veining tool from Nahum Herson's repousse book.



Each pair of flowers started as 2 inches of 1/4 round. Neck down just inside the very ends, draw out the stem between the ends less than 3/16, then texture the ends with a punch.



Bundle the flowers together, then forge weld the flowers to a 1/4-inch main stem.



Weld leaf stems to the main stem. leaving room for bracts.



Wrap bract stems around main stem, solder, then bend and arrange everything so it looks nice.

Mistletoe and Holly

By Steve Alford

Most blacksmiths learn to forge a leaf early on. This project brings the need to make a whole bunch of leaves and two sizes of berries. Patterns are on page 18; the finished piece is on the back cover.

I couldn't find any really good mistletoe patterns among the fake flowers in the crafty stores, so my mistletoe and holly patterns came from reading and looking at pictures on line. I learned that the traditional Christmas holly goes by the Latin name *ilex aquifolium*. It has berries about 1/2-inch diameter and "irregular" leaves. I took that to mean they didn't have to be just exactly alike and after looking at a bunch of pictures I just drew them all kind of spiky and pointy. Also from a lot of pictures, six berries and four leaves seem to look about right.

The traditional Christmas mistletoe is a European variety, *viscum album*. It has 1/4-inch berries in pairs and thin oval leaves about 1-1/2 to 2 inches long. I wound up with 4 pairs of berries and 6 pairs of leaves. If I make another I'll add at least one pair of leaves! The real plant is a viny parasitic thing that wraps around other foliage... like the way this mistletoe is wrapping around the holly!

All the berries could be forged on the ends of round bars with hammer and anvil. I did a few that way before I decided to make dies to forge 1/4 and 1/2-inch balls using the treadle or power hammer. Once all the leaves and berries were made, this project became a forge welding exercise. I learned to appreciate the magic powers of Iron Mountain black label flux! After all the welding was done I bent everything around using a torch to apply heat just where I wanted each bend.

Here's hoping the mistletoe magic works!



Mistletoe berries and leaves forged from 1/4-inch round bar. Holly berries and leaves from 1/2-inch round bar. Holly leaf blanks forged 1-1/2 wide x 2-1/4 long, then cut to shape with a chisel and filed smooth. Fold stems and weld.



Bituminous Bits

November-December 2025



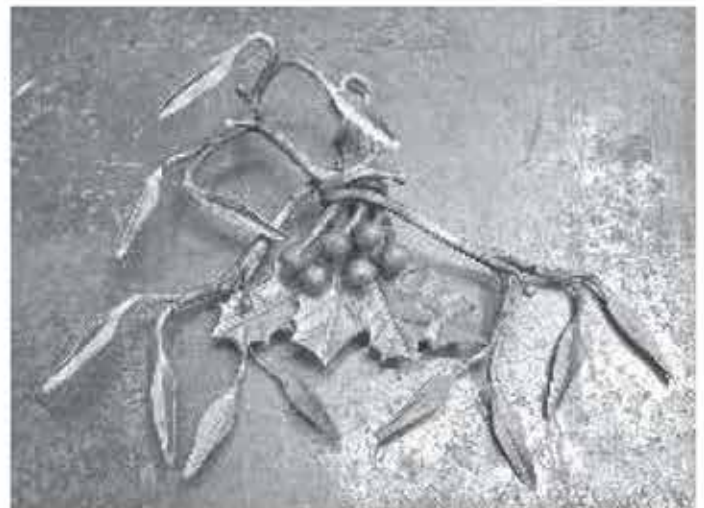
Left: Tack welds with a torch before forge welding. Mistletoe parts welded to 3/16 stems 5-1/2 long.

Above: Bundles of holly and mistletoe parts forge welded.

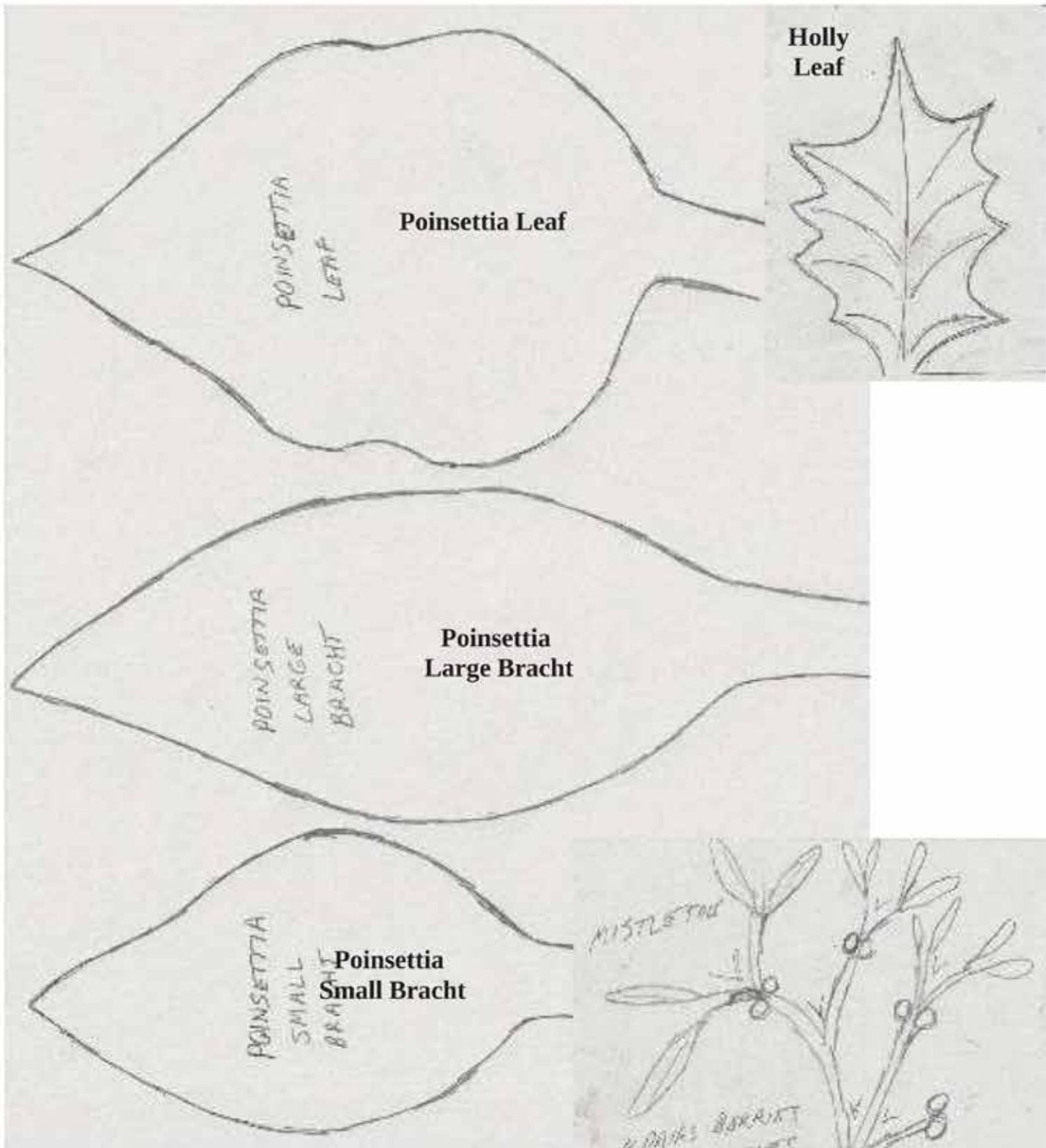
Below, right and left: Keep welding bundles into bigger bundles, tacking with a torch and then forge welding each time. Could probably wire bundles together for welding.



Below left: the final bundles of holly and mistletoe. Forge weld the stems together, then draw out the fat stem long and thin and form a hanging loop. Then carefully bend and arrange everything by heating with a torch. Be careful not to put too much pressure on the forge welds! When everything is to your liking, clean up with 80-grit paper and a maroon scotch brite pad, then finish with a couple coats of spray lacquer.



Poinsettia, Holly, and Mistletoe Leaf Patterns



Sketch showing how mistletoe leaves and berries go together

THE FLORIDA CLINKER BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

David Sandlin, President
114 Choctaw Cove
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,
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Valparaiso, FL 32580

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