

April 2014 Northwest BOA Meeting

This month's meeting was in Gentry at the 'Tired Iron of the Ozarks' Antique Tractor show. I feel like I say this about every meeting, but I always look forward to going out to Gentry. They have a great shop for demonstrating, the tractor show is always fun, and there are plenty of tools for sale, which I always enjoy rummaging through.



Twenty-four members were present at Saturday's meeting. Bryan Parsons thanked us for coming out, and thanked Hardy for coming up on Friday, even though the usual group of local kids couldn't make it this time. Steven Williams joined BOA on Saturday, along with his parents Helen and Brian. Sam Stephens, a brand new member, made his first meeting with his wife. Sam is a graduate student at the University of Arkansas and his will be studying nursing. Sam was immediately hit up to write an article for the newsletter. Sam took a turn at the power hammer during the afternoon.

A big announcement was made in regards to the newsletter. Thanks to the work of Robert Fox, our newly appointed editor, and Dale Custer, we are going to be updating the newsletter to an electronic format. If you have provided your email address to BOA, we will be emailing you a newsletter starting with the May edition. This includes every family member, if you have provided us all of your email addresses. If you do not have an email address, you will continue to get a hard copy. If you want to continue to receive a hard copy and do not want a copy emailed to you, you will have to contact me by phone or email, and I will make sure you continue to receive it by mail. The purpose of this change is to save BOA the cost of having to produce the newsletter in a paper format, and save the cost of postage. Almost half of our annual membership fees go towards the publication and distribution of the newsletter, and by moving to an electronic version, we will be able to set aside funds for classes or equipment for the group, without increasing any costs to our members. We appreciate your patience as we transition! Dale brought a rough copy of the newsletter, and we are confident everyone will enjoy the new format, with color photos, lots of great articles, and a great layout overall. The content of the newsletter will be consistent with what we have always done, but it will be more polished, and we'll be able to archive past issues on our website - www.blacksmithsofarkansas.org. Do keep checking our website for future updates. We discussed the possibility of an online store sometime in the future as part of our website capabilities.

Other business included revisiting our rate structure for advertising in our monthly newsletter. We are still fine tuning the details, but we are considering a structure that is similar to Hammer's Blow, but at a lower cost due to our smaller membership. Thank you to all who came out!

Justin Jones - BOA President

April 2014 CAC BOA Meeting

The Central Arkansas Chapter of the Blacksmith Organization of Arkansas (CACBOA) met on Saturday, April 12, 2014 at the forge of Thurston Fox, in Mayflower, Arkansas.

The demonstration was a combination of “how to make a basket twist” and “how not to weld”. Fortunately only one of the pre-welded twisting blanks broke, and we had some spares. Everyone got a chance to try their hand at making a basket twist, and every single one turned out better than the demonstrator’s. To add insult to injury, at only his second meeting with us, Tim Huddleston turned out a perfect basket twist in just two heats - one for twisting and one for un-twisting, and the result didn’t need a single tweak with pliers at the end. Tim is no longer welcome at our forge! (just kidding - Tim has ninja welding skills, and I’m going to need some help making a coal forge soon. Tim is therefore my favorite member at the moment!) Tim’s son Layne also showed up all of us “seasoned” blacksmiths. After lunch, they turned their twists into a coal rake and a poker for their own coal forge. Great job!



Thanks also to Tim for taking these great pictures. Like I said - an artist. I do think there may be a problem with his camera, though. All of us look really wide. I think he may have had the macro lens on.

While eating lunch (chili, hamburgers and hotdogs provided by Jane Fox), we had a lively discussion of the chemistry of rust, the economics of repairing an anvil, and the physics of iron formation in the heart of a star. Come to CACBOA meetings and get a free education!

During the business meeting, we discussed with anticipation the upcoming Nathan Robertson hammer class, the recent changes to the BOA web page, and the possibility of having a long-term project dedicated toward walking us through the creation of the ABANA grill.

The trade item this month was “a gender-appropriate gift for your significant other”. We had a heart hook, three roses, and a snail. The snail was very nice, but it does beg the question whether we should have said “a species-appropriate gift...”

Our next meeting will be at the forge of Herman Ginger (who is not a dentist) in Pine Bluff. The trade item will be a pair of tongs. The demonstration will be on forge welding or whatever Herman needs help getting done in his shop...
