

May 2014 CAC BOA Meeting

Nine members of the Central Arkansas Chapter of the Blacksmith Organization of Arkansas (CACBOA) met on May 17th, 2014 at the forge of Herman Ginger, in Pine Bluff. Herman has a well-outfitted shop with every tool imaginable, from restored hit and miss engines to industrial milling machines. The other members of our chapter have figured this out, and save up difficult tasks to bring when Herman hosts. This month Tim Huddleston brought the jaw from a massive post vice he is restoring that had somehow been bent, and needed to be straightened in the hydraulic press. I brought a trailer hitch that had been bent which we heated in the rivet forge and straightened on the anvil. It was great to see Shane back, recovering from surgery, and Garrett, who graduated just last Thursday. We've missed you guys.



Herman asked Dale to hold a demonstration of forge welding, which went very well, except when Dale, sliced his hand wide open on a flying piece of metal when cutting off the completed weld from the rod for the next member to attempt a weld. I tried to get him to hold still for a picture, but others insisted he go take care of it and stop dripping blood on the anvil. Maybe we'll get Dale to author the "Safety First" article in the newsletter next month.

The most interesting thing about the forge welding was the tendency for the guy turning the blower crank to speed up when someone had pulled their bar out of the forge and was trying to weld. This happened with several different members at the crank. We decided it was an unconscious attempt to "help out" the welder, despite the fact that there was nothing in the firepot at the time. Interesting!

The trade item this month was a pair of tongs - one of the most ambitious projects we've taken on at our chapter. Four of us brought tongs. All of them looked very nice, although it is clear that some of us, myself included, need a demonstration on riveting at our next meeting.

Herman's wife Suzanne threw a wonderful spaghetti lunch, with garlic bread, salad, and homemade tollhouse cookie ice cream sandwiches. We like Suzanne. If she ever gets fed up with Herman, I think she could have her pick of the CACBOA crew.

In the business meeting, we discussed the Nathan Robertson hammer class that Dale and I attended. We also talked about some decisions the board has made about the newsletter (advertising, classifieds, etc.), and some of the feedback we've received.

Dale discussed a suggestion that Bob Patrick (NWAC BOA) has made to put together an all-BOA event to smelt our own iron from ore, using traditional methods. We would make charcoal and roast the ore beforehand (perhaps an event of their own), build a clay kiln, charge it, fire it up, keep it fed all day, and remove the bloom in the evening. It would be a very long day, but one which our

chapter eagerly looks forward to.

Dale also brought us up to speed on plans for another toolbox raffle and a possible all-BOA meeting in the fall. I think the toolbox can expect much more contributions from CACBOA this time around, as many of our members are progressing in skill very rapidly.

After lunch we finished up the repairs and the tong-riveting, and Herman, Tim, and Layne welded up a narrow twisting wrench for each of us from a stack of antique wrenches Herman had collected. The meeting is supposed to end at 3:00, but we were having such a great time, we didn't really start leaving until around 5:00. Thanks again to Herman and Suzanne!

May 2014 Northwest BOA Meeting

This month's meeting was at the shop of Ron Wells in Mt. Judea. If you've never been out to Ron's shop, it's quite a beautiful drive in from 65. I feel it is one of the nicest areas in the Ozarks, but I can't figure out how he manages to get out in snow and ice! Fortunately the weather was great, and we had an enjoyable meeting.



Unfortunately, only 8 members were present at Saturday's meeting. That's not a great turnout, but there are likely several causes. The perception of it being a long drive, when it's really not too far from Harrison, combined with having just had our April meeting, the hammer class, and Mother's Day falling this weekend, the odds were against us. We would like to have more members show up at Ron's in the future. The subject of trying to host regularly in different areas, not focusing in one place, came up during the business meeting. We visited the possibility of creating an annual calendar that designated the area we would meet that month, but the challenge to that is finding a host and getting a commitment. This has been an ongoing struggle for the past 6 months. We would prefer to publish meeting dates and locations two months in advance, but that has not been possible recently. If you've thought about hosting, but are concerned that you don't have the room or equipment, keep in mind that we have a BOA trailer that is fully equipped for demonstrating. We could meet in an open area or local park near your location, with owner permission.

Another piece of business that was discussed is our ad rate structure. We are planning to charge 50% of what similar publications charge, and see how successful that model is. We also discussed

how member classifieds might be handled, and there will be further discussion on that topic in the near future. Part of the reason we would like to sell ad space in the newsletter is to help cover the cost of printing newsletters. Due to printing in color, the 16-20 page length, and the higher cost of postage for the large size, the cost for the members that prefer a hard copy currently exceeds their annual dues. We've only ran two prints, but we will continue to research alternative printers. Selling some ad space would help alleviate these additional costs. We would like to have a few hard copies on hand at meetings to show visitors, new members, and potential advertisers.

Ron Wells gave us updates on the sandwich signs for both BOA chapters, and we hope to have those completed soon. We also discussed getting a vinyl sign for the trailer, and Sam Hibs agreed to assist us in printing the sign, as he is equipped to do so. Ron also requested that he be relieved of all t-shirt ordering related duties. Hopefully we will be set up for ordering t-shirts through our website in the near future.

Bob Lock expressed an interest in having a raffle at next month's meeting at Rusty Wheels. If you have an item you would like to raffle off for BOA, in addition to the railroad spike knife and sheath Bob donated, please bring it with you next month to Rusty Wheels. We would also like to start another toolbox raffle, and possibly set the end date for next spring, so please begin thinking about tools you could donate to the toolbox raffle. Last year's raffle was a great success and a fantastic assortment of tools for the winner.

Our final piece of business was a discussion of a fall conference between all 3 BOA chapters. We are still in the early planning phases, but we will hopefully have more information soon. If anyone has suggestions on demonstrators or central areas to host the event, please email me at president@blacksmithsofarkansas.org

Justin Jones

BOA President

May 2014 Northeast BOA Meeting

We had a good meeting. There were six in attendance. There were three members and three guests present. Everyone got on the forge and made a few things. The members are progressing nicely. It is a pleasure to see the progress in their forging and knowledge.
