

April 2025

CLINKER



BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

Established May 18, 1985

Getting Creative in the NW Region



At the NW Region meeting in March, Roger Bell demonstrated making a tomahawk from a ferrier's rasp, with a little help from Craig Hines (above) with the forge welding. Chris Cauthen (left) demonstrated making a miniature pair of tongs to be used as a soapstone holder. **Page 8**

The Elephant In The Room



The Southwest Region made a herd of elephants during their February meeting. **Page 4**

**FANNING
THE
FLAMES**

Art
Knowledge
Technique
Resources
Education
Skill



**2025
CONFERENCE**

SOUTHERN BLACKSMITH ASSOCIATION

May 15-17, 2025 Madison, Georgia

SBA Conference

Registration is open for the SBA in Madison, Ga., at the Lions Club Fairgrounds May 15 through May 17, 2025. Learn more, **page 5**

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 / 3rd Saturday—SE, Greater Orlando & 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	Heinrich Hole	386-848-6982	heinrich.faba@gmail.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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FABA's Demonstration Policy

The requests come in every spring and fall: "Would you come do a blacksmith demonstration at our event?" Of course, we want to get the word out to our community about the history and art of this most honorable craft; to teach and preserve is our mission. If the request is made to you personally, that is no problem, your business is your business and FABA is not involved. We appreciate if you provide a plug for FABA and mention that a person can join by going to www.blacksmithing.org. Person to person contacts have consistently proven to be our best venue to grow the organization.

However, we sometimes get requests directly to our FABA website/Facebook page. If given enough lead time – at least a month – I try to farm these out to the closest blacksmith that I know. Unfortunately, about 2/3 of our membership have chosen not to list a physical address with us, so if I don't call on you, that might be the reason. (Hint! Hint! Help us update our membership roster!) By the way, Ormand Beach Celtic Festival on April 12-13 is looking for a demonstrator.

Where this can get a bit messy is if the requesting party requires liability coverage. First of all, if you are running your own blacksmith business, you need your own liability insurance. I also strongly encourage you to organize your blacksmith business separate from your person by registering with www.sunbiz.org as an LLC or S-Corp. Yes, there are annual fees and paperwork involved, but you need that layer of legal protection if anything ever goes wrong. Frankly, if you are promoting your business, selling your products at a community event and just mentioning "oh, by the way FABA is a great organization," it is not fair to ask our membership to underwrite your liability.

Okay, so you still want to demonstrate and you won't be selling your products at the event (you can have your products out to use as examples to talk about the craft – just not selling them at the event). If the event sponsor still requires a certificate of liability, and since you would be there solely as a FABA demonstrator, we can cover you. Contact me or our treasurer, Dawn Fortenberry (treasurer@blacksmithing.org), to request a certificate of insurance be sent to the event hosting organization.

HOWEVER, the board has requested we be very careful about sending certificates of insurance. Expect to be asked a number of questions about your demonstration experience before we will take any action with our insurance agent. Generally, we look for demonstrators who have taught/

demonstrated at a FABA event or at FABACON.

If invited to demonstrate for FABA at a community event, good safety practices are essential. A barrier, like a rope or chain, between you and the audience is more than a good idea, it is required! I've had people try to sit in the grass right in front of my anvil. I've also had people walk around behind me and literally stick their face into the forge. Even though that is a self-correcting activity, I really don't appreciate them practicing social Darwinism during my demonstration.

I set up with a 10x10 pop-up tent and then set the safety barrier at least another 3 feet beyond the boundary of my tent. To prevent surprise visits, I've learned to bring an apprentice who can manage the forge while I'm talking to the crowd. Also, keep the demonstration projects small and quick. Most folks don't want to stand in the sun watching you work for longer than 5 minutes. I discourage forge welding as a demonstration to the general public because of the sparks.

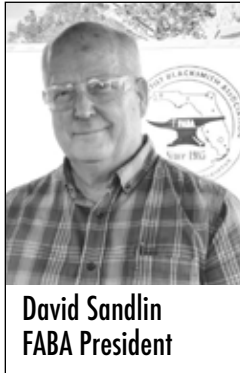
Talk to the crowd, tell them what you are doing, tell them about the history of the craft and mention FABA frequently. If they express an interest, send them to our web site, www.blacksmithing.org. Prominently displaying our QR code is also helpful.

By the way, if the hosting organization offers you a stipend, the money is yours to cover the expenses of steel, fuel, transportation and maybe even lunch.

I welcome your questions and thoughts on this policy. For the record, when I demonstrate at Ren Faires, pioneer days and other public events, I use my own business liability insurance.

Hope and pray your anvil rings true throughout the year. Also, hope to see you soon, maybe at SBA in May?

— **David Sandlin, President**



Correction: Last month I published Dr. Jim Hrisoulas' email address incorrectly. His correct address is: jhrisoulas@aol.com.

SW Region Meeting Report



We had a great turnout of 15 people for our February meeting. James Hawse led us through the making of a herd of elephant heads. It was a bit crowded in my new workshop, but we managed to safely work around each other.

We all had a good potluck lunch, thanks

to everyone who brought food and drinks.

— **Tony Fenn, SW Region Coordinator**



SW Region March Meeting

The Southwest March meeting will be on Saturday, March 29th, starting at 9:30am, at Heritage Village, Largo, near St Petersburg FL.

We are calling it “The Hardwood Charcoal Challenge.” This is just like homestead blacksmiths did in this area 150 years ago.

Can you forge steel with hardwood charcoal? We will find out, using traditional tools and methods and hardwood charcoal to create something unique.

Participants will receive a 12" bar to work with. There will be a prize for the best and most creative piece. Extra points if you can achieve a forge weld! Lunch will be provided.

Please RSVP to Jay Dugan: ramforgeworks@gmail.com so we can get an idea of numbers.

Bring something for Iron in the Hat. I'll bring all the donations I've collected at the last several meetings.

Heritage Pioneer Village is at 11909 125th Street, Largo, FL 33774. The forge is a pole barn about 30 feet long. The 3 forges are under the roof and there's plenty of seating, picnic tables, bathrooms and a big parking lot.

Please check our FABA SW Facebook page for more info at www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674, or contact antony.fenn@gmail.com. Thank you!

— **Tony Fenn, SW Region Coordinator**



Regional Reports

SE Region Meeting April 19

The Southeast Region had a great turnout for the March meeting. Donovan made his first knife. One new visitor came and is rejoining FABA. Journeymen projects were worked on, and some completed.

The SE Region meets every third Saturday of the month at The Farm, 1566 S. Military Trail, West Palm Beach, FL.

The next meeting is April 19.

The Farm is located off Military Trail; just turn at the pole painted red, white and blue, and follow your GPS or Google maps. It should get you there!

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

— Gary Becker, member



Central NE Volunteers Needed

There will be no regional meeting in April. Instead we need volunteers to help demonstrate for the spring frolic at the settlement. Please contact me here or in text if you're interested. Volunteers will be provided a free lunch.

Our next regularly scheduled meeting will be the first Saturday in May.

— Heinrich Hole, Central NE Coordinator

Greater Orlando Meeting, April 19

There was no March meeting for the region. The next meeting is on the third Saturday of April! Everyone is welcome!

April 19th, 9 AM
UnderGround Metal Works
660 W Kennedy Blvd Suite A
Orlando, FL 32810 FL.

For more information and to confirm meetings, contact John Hare at 802-373-1190 or legacy.john.hare@gmail.com.

— John Hare, Orlando Regional Coordinator

SBA Conference 2025

The biennial SBA Conference is quickly approaching. The conference will be held again in Madison, Ga., at the Lions Club Fairgrounds May 15 through May 17, 2025.

The Alabama Forge Council, AFC, is heading up the conference this go-round, and the conference theme is Fanning the Flames.

The main demonstrators are Mark Ling and Butch Sheely. Each of the seven chapters will also have someone from their chapter demonstrating for a three-hour block starting Thursday afternoon and running until noon on Saturday. Dr. Jordan Thomas will be demonstrating for FABA.

A Thursday evening Meet n Greet is planned, plus a Friday evening seafood buffet with the auction to follow.

We will be having another blacksmithing competition to get the adrenalin pumping, with the winner(s) getting bragging rights for two years and a cash prize.

FABA is in charge of gate security again, and we will need volunteers. Let me know if you are interested (markham62@comcast.net).

For more information, check out the SBA webpage (<https://sbaconference.org/>) where you will find the dem-



onstrators' bios, schedule of events, and registration and accommodation information.

— Mark Stone, FABA Past President

Gainesville Meeting Report

Need more info on the Gainesville Region? Shoot me an email at crookedpathforge@gmail.com.

— **Jordan Borstelmann, Coordinator**

Far West Meeting Report

Craig Hines will demonstrate the ABANA National Curriculum Level I gate latch at the Far West meeting in February.

Far West Meeting Schedule

Location of our April 26th membership drive is still to be determined, as are our meetings for May 24th and June 28th. Expect us to cover the FABA journeyman standards and parts of the ABANA National Curriculum as the year progresses.

— **David and Christopher Sandlin**



News from ABANA
Artist-Blacksmith's Association of North America

TONG TUESDAY

Enter to Win!

Enter for a chance to win a pair of tongs at abana.org/tongtuesday by midnight (ET), April 6, 2025!

Winner announced Tuesday, April 8, 2025



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS



SUBMIT NOW!

We're looking for pieces to include in a national traveling exhibition through 2026 to bring the work of blacksmiths and metal artists into the public eye.

Submit your work at:
<https://bit.ly/2026exhibition>

North NE Region Meeting Report

The North NE meeting at Iron Osprey Forge had 10 folks attend. Six newcomers included 5 sculpture students from the University of North Florida.

The arts program there has one forge in need of repair, an anvil and a few tools, but they want to expand their equipment and blacksmithing-related skills.

Doug took the six new folks through an introductory class while Ben Thompson worked with the FABA folks on joinery techniques being considered for the regional competition.

The new students stayed til 4 pm, after experimenting with various techniques, and left with new letter openers and handouts with info on books and internet resources. Several also plan to return and to join FABA in the future.

The NNE region will also be expanding the St Augustine program by starting a "FABA Thursday" workshop. This will be an open forge opportunity at Iron Osprey Forge, 102 Marshall Circle, one Thursday evening each month. The shop will be open to FABA members to use the shop facilities to work on individual projects or FABA-related projects. Folks can arrive as early as 4 pm and the shop will close by 10 pm. This will only be open to FABA members.

For folks wanting to work on individual projects there is a recommended \$5 donation toward fuel. FABA-specific work is underwritten by Iron Osprey. The specific Thursday for each month will be posted on the FABA FB pages, in the CLinker Breaker and the website.

Additionally, Doug and Ben will be starting a program to assist folks wanting to work on their FABA journeyman requirements by helping track their progress toward completing items and providing opportunities for specific requirements.

NNE Region Meeting, April 19

Our next meeting will be April 19 at Iron Osprey Forge, 9am-3pm, at 102 Marshall Circle, St Augustine. The first FABA Thursday workshop is April 10.

— **Doug Hayes, NNE Region Coordinator**



NW Region Meeting Report

The Northwest region had our March meeting at the home of Ken and Linda Weldon on the 8th. It was a rainy day, but we still had over 20 people sign in. Ken has a pretty good-sized area in his shop and put up some temporary tarps to give us protection from the weather.

Roger Bell demonstrated making a tomahawk from a ferrier's rasp, with a little help from Craig Hines with the forge welding. Chris Cauthen demonstrated making a miniature pair of tongs to be used as a soapstone holder. This is something we've been doing lately, and it's a lot of fun, but harder than you would think. Imagine making a miniature pair of your favorite tongs, small enough to hold a piece of soapstone and fit in your pocket.

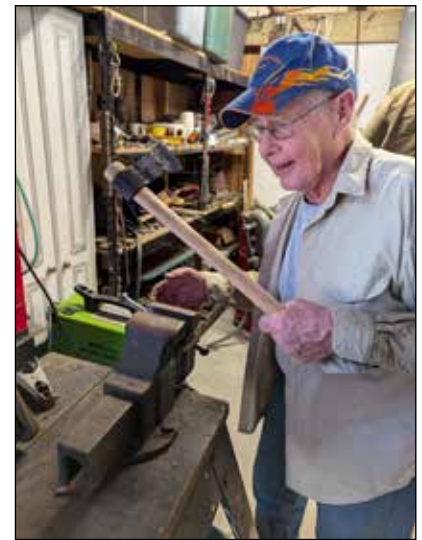
In the past, people who made charcoal were called colliers. I've noticed that in our club, about half of our members are bladesmiths, but only a small percentage make their own charcoal. I think only about 5 or 10 percent. I'm an enthusiastic collier, and I like to talk about it and make charcoal whenever I get the chance. We've got a huge supply of firewood at Ken's house and two semi-autonomous charcoal making devices, known as "Mister Charcoal Maker" Jr. and Sr. At the meeting, we only used Jr. and still made a few bags, even though we were working in the rain. If anyone wants to come and make some charcoal with us, get in touch with me and I'll meet you there. You can even have what we make to take home!

We had our raffle at 11:45 and lunch at noon. Both had lots to choose from. Thank you, Linda and Ken for hosting our meeting and everyone else who helps make it happen.

NW Region Meeting, April 12

Our April meeting will be held at the Panhandle Pioneer Settlement in Blountstown on April 12th. The address is 17869 NW Pioneer Settlement Road, Blountstown, FL 32424. On the Saturday of our meeting, the Settlement will be celebrating their annual "Folk Life Days" event, so there will be a lot more people around than we usually have at our meetings.

Chris Cauthen and Craig Hines will be demonstrating some of the things we teach in our classes on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays, and you can try some



of them on the open forges.

We're going to have the Iron in the Hat raffle as usual, so please remember to bring something to donate, but don't bring anything for lunch. We're going to eat from the food service provided at the event, we'll pay for it from the money from the raffle.

If you look up the settlement and event online, you will notice that they are having a Kids Day on the day before (Friday). I'll be there on that day, demonstrating, in case anyone would like to join me?

If you've never been to the Settlement, this is a great chance to come check it out. I hope to see you there!

— John Pfund, NW Region Coordinator



Regional Reports



FABA Scholarships

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association Veterans Scholarship Fund Application

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 service/separation (DD 214 or an appropriate ID)
2. Scholarship will reimburse 80% of a blacksmithing class/course(s) registration fee up to \$100 upon completion of the course, whichever is less. (for example, if the course(s) cost \$135, 80% of that is \$108, so the awardee would receive \$100; if the course(s) cost is \$95 then the awardee would receive \$76). Formula for determining award:
$$\text{Registration fee(s)} \$ \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \times 0.80 = \underline{\hspace{2cm}} \text{TOTAL (awardee would receive \$100 or less of total course registration costs)}$$
3. The coursework must be considered to be directly related to blacksmithing (not welding/fabrication). The FABA Scholarship Committee (defined in article 12 below) reserves the right to determine which coursework is appropriate during the review process.
4. The course instructor must be someone who regularly provides paid blacksmith instruction – in other words is recognized as a legitimate, accepted teacher. Classes at a recognized blacksmith conference (such as the FABA annual conference, The Southern Blacksmith Association biannual conference, SOFA, etc.) are acceptable and specifically at these events, 2 or more classes in one weekend could be stacked and counted as one ‘course’. So, for three (3) FABA intro courses at \$45 apiece, the total would be \$135; 80% of that would be \$108, so the award would be \$100.
5. Before awardee is reimbursed, he/she must provide some proof of completion (documentation of work produced, email from instructor and receipts from course costs). This scholarship is intended for course registration fees only, and does not cover materials or equipment unless those items are part of the course of instruction (i.e. a hammer making course). Students may apply for up to 2 courses per year, but not more than once per six-month cycle and for no more than 3 courses in total.
6. The student must apply for the scholarship prior to the beginning of class (not retroactive). The committee will meet February 15 and August 15 each year to review applications (every 6 months). Up to three applications will be awarded every six months. Coursework does not have to fall within the cycle the student applies, if the application is submitted prior to the start of the course (for example, the student could plan 1 year ahead). The FABA Scholarship Committee (defined in article 12 below) will make that determination during the application process.
7. In any 6-month cycle, preference will be made for beginner classes, then intermediate skill classes as the primary purpose of this fund is to assist veterans to begin their blacksmithing journey.
8. Applicants must be a FABA member to apply and while taking the class/course.
9. Funds can be applied to the FABA annual conference courses, or to similar classes from other guilds or organizations, within the United States. See article 4, above.
10. If anyone wishes to donate additional funds to this scholarship, they agree to abide by the rules above. In other words, future donors cannot modify or change the administration or award process for this scholarship. Any funds donated specifically to this fund will be considered encumbered for this purpose only.
11. Applicants will complete the application and submit their request via email to (add email contact) or through the electronic form on www.blacksmithing.org.
12. The FABA Scholarship Committee is comprised of a three-member panel of FABA members. At least one member of the panel will have military experience (active duty or reserve) and two others will be FABA Board members. The President, Treasurer and Vice-President will appoint the members of the Veterans Scholarship committee. Members will serve a minimum one-year term but may be reappointed multiple times.
13. Awardees will be notified via email and USPS the status of their application approximately two weeks after the committee meets.

Contact Doug Hayes at djhayes29@hotmail.com or download an application at www.blacksmithing.org

Walt Anderson Scholarship deadline June 30

This scholarship was established to honor the memory of Walt Anderson, 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 Walt Anderson 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 Clunker 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 June 30, 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.

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

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John Elliot - Blacksmith Supply - Chester, VA
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IRON SPONSORS

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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.

THE FLORIDA CLINKER BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

David Sandlin, President
114 Choctaw Cove
Valparaiso, FL 32580



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April 2025

FABA Officers

President	David Sandlin	President@blacksmithing.org
Vice President	Lisa Anne Conner	Vicepres@blacksmithing.org
Treasurer	Dawn Fortenberry	Treasurer@blacksmithing.org
Secretary	Tia Kitchen	Secretary@blacksmithing.org
Past President	Mark Stone	markham62@comcast.net
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Trustee NE	Ben Thompson	thompsoncrafted@gmail.com
Trustee SE	Steve Silvers	SEtrustee@blacksmithing.org
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Editor	Jennifer Jhon	Editor@blacksmithing.org
Program Chair	Lisa Anne Conner	FABAprogramcoordinator@gmail.com
WebMaster	Jessica Sandlin	FABAwebmaster@gmail.com

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 Sandlin
114 Choctaw Cove
Valparaiso, FL 32580

NAME _____

FAMILY MEMBERS _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ CELL _____ EMAIL _____

DATE _____ NEW _____ RENEWAL _____ I want B&W Newsletter by mail (quarterly) _____ OR Color Newsletter by Email _____