

February 2022

CLINKER



BREAKER

Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

Established May 18, 1985

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Welcome winter weather leads to cool projects

I was reading about my friend up north and how his family was dealing with “Winter Doldrums.” Trapped inside and not doing much sounds like a recipe to go stir-crazy.

I did spend a few years up in the far north and I'm so glad I no longer have to don my parka just to walk to the car. Shoveling snow was something I was only too happy to leave behind when we moved to Florida over 20 years ago. In fact I really enjoy winter now, as it gives me relief from the heat and plenty of opportunities to light the forge fires without turning myself into a puddle. Following several of our members on Facebook indicates that others are also taking advantage of the cooler weather to crank out some great projects. Your pictures and work is truly inspirational. Please keep posting.

I noted that our treasurer, Doug Hayes, and daughter Sami distinguished themselves at the ABANA “Iron to Art” festival in November. An honorable mention with a picture in the Anvil's Ring for their work as instructors. Plus they are on the docket to teach again at ABANA's biennial conference this year. That conference will be held May 11-15, 2022 be on the grounds of the North Texas Fair & Rodeo, in Denton, which is north of Fort Worth and Dallas. If you want to go, the address is 2217 N. Carroll Blvd., Denton, Texas 76201. Register early because the ticket prices go up significantly after April 6.

On January 29, Iron Osprey Forge is hosting a Veterans' Open House and I'm planning to attend. Not because I, too, am a veteran, but because Doug is working for a good cause and I want to help out. Doug's work with veterans has inspired other members of FABA, and I noted that NE Regional Coordinator Heinrich Hole recently called out on Facebook looking for some assistance in organizing a similar event in his area. Contact him if you can lend a hand.

Peter Hill in the SE and Christopher Sandlin in the Far West are continuing to promote activities to train members in the Journeyman standards. In short, the cooler weather is giving everyone a lot of opportunities to get work done.



My hat is off to all our regional coordinators who make it their purpose every month to create events and promote the noble art of Blacksmithing.

**Please Note:** Tony Fenn in the SW just announced that due to the very high number of COVID cases in his area they are postponing the FABA SW meeting in Dade City until the end of February. Check their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674](https://www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674) for updates.

Teaching is only part of our mission, the second part is to preserve. The more I read and research our organization, the more I find out about our collective efforts over the last three decades to help museums and culture centers. Florida has 500+ museums, at least 22 are pioneer exhibits and 3 specifically call out blacksmith as part of their operation. I'm familiar with our work at Mission San Luis, Barberville Pioneer Settlement, Crowley Museum and Nature Center, and Panhandle Pioneer Settlement in Blountstown; but I'm still becoming more aware of how much we have done to help local preservation efforts. If you have a local museum that has benefitted from our efforts, I'd like to know about it; drop me a note. I'd like to update our relationships with museums we have been benefactors to.

Finally, with all the activity going on in our shops, I'd be remiss if I didn't publish at least one safety note. This one is easy! Pick up. It is so inviting to just keep going when you get in the groove and allow things to just pile up in the corner or get left “out of the way” with the promise to put it away later. That attitude has cost me a lot of time looking for lost parts and tools, but fortunately has not cost me time out of the shop as I recover from a tripping hazard – however I've heard the stories. I don't want to become one of those statistics and I really don't want to hear about one of our members becoming an object lesson for the necessity of regular shop maintenance. Simple enough, your Mom probably doesn't clean your shop for you so you need to do it.

Reminder, board meeting at the end of this month, Tuesday, January 25, 7:30 pm EST (6:30 pm CST).

Hope your anvil rings true throughout the year.

— David Sandlin, FABA President

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## FABA Announcement

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Past President and FABA Founding Father Clyde Payton has donated the pictured drawing of his main anvil to the Blacksmith Museum at the Panhandle Pioneer Settlement in Blountstown, FL.

The drawing was done by his son, Lee Payton, as a gift to Clyde dated 1986. Clyde stated the anvil is a William Foster from the late 1700's. The William Foster is the first London Pattern anvil made and has both Pritchel and Hardy holes. The anvils were formed using water-powered hammers using wrought iron faggots and welded together and built up. The anvils had mouse holes for tongs to be used to hold the anvil while forming and shaping.



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### 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](http://www.blacksmithing.org); our conference Facebook Page at [www.facebook.com/groups/2849587158637631](https://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**



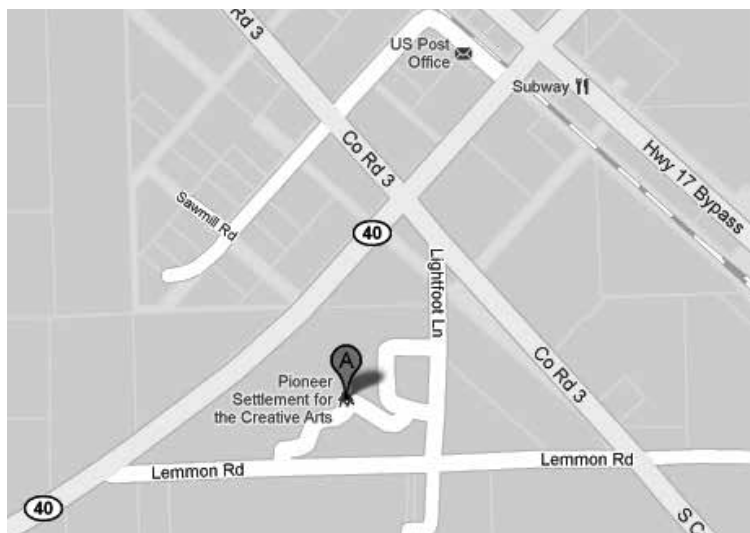
## Central NE Region Meeting, Feb. 5

Good morning, friends. We in the Central NE will be meeting next at the Pioneer Settlement in Barberville starting about 9 a.m. on Feb. 5th. The focus of this meeting is going to be about the region's future.

There are several plans in the making to improve the region so we can have more activities at each meeting. Make sure you go to this meeting in particular, because it's the best time to voice your opinion about our future. If you want to see something happen, then get on out here and make it so. I'm very open to new ideas and the bettering of old ones.

The meeting itself will be a simple open forges style so that you guys can get some work done on your personal projects. We will resume having proper demonstrations shortly, but for now I do not have a demo lined up for the meeting. Maybe one of you guys would like to show us about what you're working on or maybe just something you think is really cool. Nobody brings higher, more positive energy to a meeting than someone who just can't wait to show us what they've been learning about.

One of the new activities being discussed is a table that we can do show and tell on. So bring your stuff out and let's see all the cool projects our regions members are working on. Heck, even if you've just seen a picture of something cool, then bring that so we can all discuss it and maybe even make it the next demo. Let's get some more stuff happening!



I've been receiving quite a lot of positive feed back on the veterans activities I've been attempting to launch, so we can expect to see some new action there, too. Oh man, I can hardly wait for this next meeting and all the brain storming that's about to lead us into an even brighter future. CYA THERE!!!!

— Heinrich Hole, Central NE Coordinator

## SW Region Meeting, Feb. 26

**Please note that due to the very high number of Covid cases, the SW meeting on January 22 is canceled and has been rescheduled for February.**

The SW meeting will be held on Saturday, Feb. 26, 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 FABA SW page for news and updates at [www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674](http://www.facebook.com/groups/228279738123674).

Looking forward to a great meeting in February!

— Tony Fenn, SW Region Coordinator

## Regional Reports

### NW Region Meeting, Feb. 12

Hello everyone, and greetings from the Northwest region. Our February meeting will be held at Mike Bettinger's welding shop. The address is 3340 Garber Road, Tallahassee FL 32303. The meeting will be held on the 12th of February, starting at 9 a.m.

We're not going to have a demonstrator for the meeting, but plenty of open forges to use, so come prepared to do some blacksmithing, and we will put on a show.

If you have a project you want to work on or show the group, please come prepared to do so.

If you just want to get some blacksmithing in, come prepared to work and I'll have a selection of projects to choose from.

Mike's crew will cook something delicious on the grill and we should bring sides and desserts to go along with it.

We're going to have a Iron in the Hat raffle as usual, so please bring something to donate.

If your donation is something you have made yourself, I

will be giving out free tickets for them and to anyone who takes pictures and gets them in the Clinker Breaker!

We always have a great meeting at Mike's shop and I'm hoping to see you there.

Looking ahead a little, our March meeting will be held at Juan Holbrook's shop in Gainesville and our April meeting at Craig Hines's shop. One more thing is, I'm trying to get a system of open forges going on the other three Saturdays when we don't have a meeting. Same time, 9 a.m. to noon or so, only without the meal or raffle. The location will vary according to the situation, but mostly be held at places where we are already having meetings, with some new places added in, too.

As I write this forecast, we haven't had our January meeting at Roger Bell's yet, but I hope to talk about it at the meeting and start our new open forges on the first Saturday of February at Roger's place. Gratefully enjoying the cooler weather!

— **John Pfund, NW Region 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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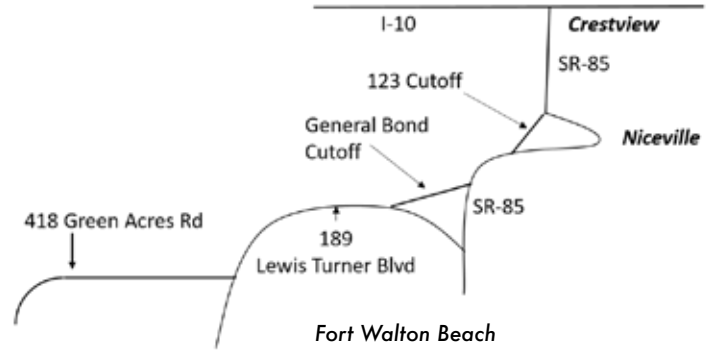
Interested in being a FABA sponsor or expanding your sponsor listing? Please contact FABA treasurer Doug Hayes at [djhayes29@hotmail.com](mailto:djhayes29@hotmail.com) and include your business name, tag line, and point of contact information for use in the Clinker Breaker and online.

## Far West Regional Report

The second week in January, we taught a one week intensive blacksmithing course to a group of students from Rocky Bayou Christian School for their Janterm internship. — **Christopher Sandlin, Far West Coordinator**

Some of the projects accomplished with the RBCS students: a BBQ fork that came out a bit short, a seahorse, and a dragon.





## 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.

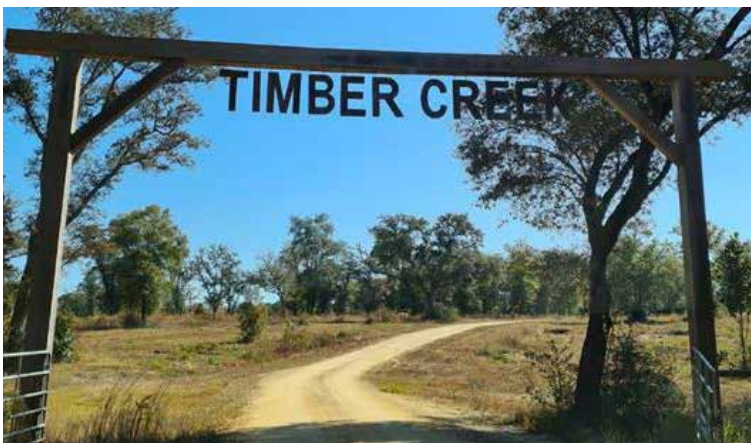
Our March 26th Meeting (9AM-3PM) will be at John Butler’s farm. We are planning to conduct this meeting as a “make and take” class – turning a Railroad Spike into a knife. Class cost will be \$110 with lunch from Sonny’s BBQ included. Class size will be limited to 12 people. There will also be one open 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 Navarre. 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.

— **Christopher Sandlin, Far West Coordinator**



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# Journeyman's Notebook

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By David Sandlin

*One learns by doing a thing; for though you think you know it, you have no certainty until you try. – Sophocles*

A job's not done until it is finished! Finishing is not one of the journeyman standards but I think everyone appreciates a finished piece much more than an unfinished one.

Not to get too far ahead of myself, traditional iron work is usually finished using traditional techniques; bee's wax, linseed oil, or some combination of the two. We will cover that in more detail later. However, there is a step before finishing that requires attention; removing the scale.

There are two types of scale we have to deal with. Mill scale and hammer scale. Mill scale is part of the steel when we purchase it. As hot rolled steel, and a lesser extent cold rolled steel, is put through the process the impurities that have been "cooked out" to the surface of the steel are literally rolled back into the steel forming a tough outer layer of oxide junk. Mill scale is an inconsistent covering, often hard, but at the same time very brittle. We frequently see mill scale when we pull the steel from the forge fire and start to hammer, the scale comes flying off scattering itself across our anvil, the floor and hopefully not into our boots! Hammer scale (my term) is when you hammer the scale back into the steel. This is why you should have a stiff wire brush, like a butcher block brush, handy and use it aggressively when you take the steel from the fire in order to get the scale off your work before you start hammering. Same goes for keeping the anvil clean, brush the scale off the anvil before you put your project down on the anvil and inadvertently hammer the junk back into your work. If you work clean throughout the process of forging and keep your heat to a neutral flame then scale will be a minimal problem when you are ready to finish.

So why is scale such a big issue? Well mill scale has no real connection with the underlying surface. The oxides are pressed into the lower layers of your steel with great force, but are not actually attached to it! Over time the mill scale will loosen and fail. When it fails it takes any protective coating applied to the metal with it. This is why it is important to remove the mill scale before working or coating the project. So if your projects rust too quickly or if you are having trouble with forge welds not sticking (as I do) you probably need to take a closer look at removing scale.

There are essentially four ways to get rid of scale: wait until it rusts off, flame clean the part, mechanically clean it with an abrasive, or use a chemical.

Waiting for rust to set in was once a common practice in the ship building industry, but has been largely replaced by the steel suppliers who can now deliver steel that has been "pickled and oiled." In other words, the steel mill takes additional processes to deliver clean steel to those industries that demand a better quality product.

Flame cleaning is the process most common to the blacksmith; get it hot and knock the scale off. As described above, using a stiff wire brush is a real boon to this process.



Butcher block brush, photo courtesy of Centaur Forge.

Mechanically cleaning ranges from sandblasting, to wire wheels to grinders and flap disks. Since you are kicking up a lot of dust you need to wear PPE appropriate for the job. Also, scale has a nasty habit of loading up most abrasive products so be prepared to go through a number of belts or disks. I've read where some types of abrasives are better than others but don't have definitive proof above the manufacturer's claims. Oh, and there is one other danger when mechanically cleaning, there is a real potential to reshape your project, which might, or might not, be a good thing. When I do mechanical cleaning, I generally stick to a wire wheel or wire cup brush.

Finally, let's look at chemically cleaning, also called pickling. With chemical cleaning, the mill scale layer is dissolved in an acid. I've seen a lot of YouTubers claim this is the easiest way to remove mill scale and somewhat agree as I have used the technique; but find it second to flame cleaning, mostly because I already have the steel in the fire.

It goes without saying that acid is dangerous! Proper PPE is essential. Muriatic acid is often recommended, however it is bad for your skin (gloves), eyes (goggles) and produces chlorine gas (respirator) as it works to remove scale in 10-15 minutes. You can get Klean-Strip "Green" Muriatic Acid from the big box stores (supposedly safer for the environment) and other versions of muriatic acid from any pool supply store. As an added safety precaution keep an open bag of baking soda at hand to quickly neutralize any spilled acid. Finally, remember AAA –Always Add Acid to water if you need to dilute the acid.

Phosphoric acid also works. You can find it on the same aisle in the big box stores and it's billed as "Metal Prep and Rust Inhibitor." I've used it with similar results as Muriatic acid but don't see enough difference in benefit to recommend one over the other, however the same Notes, Cautions and Warnings apply.

On the milder side there is oxalic acid (bee keepers and wood refinishers use the stuff) or my two favorites to use if time is not an issue: citric acid and/or white vinegar. Although these last two products are still acids, they are much less dangerous, the only downside being they take 12-24 hours to achieve similar results.

Once the acid has done its job, take the part from the acid bath and rinse it off with fresh running water. As you rinse the part, a good scrubbing with a green scotch bright pad will remove any remaining residue and scale. Do pay attention to where the runoff is going, even though muriatic acid is used to clean sidewalks and pool decks, it probably isn't good for the grass or flower beds.

Now, with the product cleaned up, you can apply a finish.



# THE FLORIDA CLINKER BREAKER

## Florida Artist Blacksmith Association

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## February 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](http://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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