



January/April

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WRABA

Western Reserve Artist Blacksmith Association

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

June 25th - June 26th WRABA
conference with Lisa Geertsen



Don Pfaff awards our illustrious president Gary Barnhart the distinction of WRABA "Blacksmith of the Year". His tireless organization and direction of the club along with his devotion to promoting and teaching the craft is greatly appreciated by the membership. Many thanks and congratulations!

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The Western Reserve Artist Blacksmith Association (WRABA) is a non-profit, educational organization, an affiliate of the Artist Blacksmith Association Of North America (ABANA).

We are dedicated to preserving and promoting the art and craft of hand forging iron. WRABA, our group of blacksmiths meet monthly to share information and techniques at the smithy of one of its' members or at Century Village in Burton, Ohio.

www.wraba.com

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Deadline for articles to be put in the newsletter: March 15, June 15, Sept. 15, Dec. 15th (these dates are in the month prior to the issue that is supposed to come out on the 1st)

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Fundraising

Bob Temple
Art Wolfe

Special Events

Bob Temple
Roy Troutman

Hammer-Ins

Bill Fisher

Tips & Tricks

By submission from anyone the editor sees fit to um, edit. This issue it's from Gary Barnhart.

President's Letter:

A word from our "fearless leader".



2015 was a busy year. We had great participation at all our events, so a big thanks to all. One exception was the Raccoon County Music Festival, so think about being at that one.

Our Christmas party was a big hit, The American Society of Metals facility was just what the doctor ordered. There was lots of good food (thanks to all who brought something.) The VIP raffle was well received as some good stuff was bagged by lucky guys and gals. The gift exchange went well, but plan for next year, so bring a gift for either a guy or a gal and hopefully handmade! A tour of ASM was given by Nichol and what a place. Founded by blacksmiths in 1913, and now advancing metallurgy on the international level, we are part of their summer materials camp teaching students the art of blacksmithing. So a big thanks to Leslie Taylor, Jeane Deatherage, and to Nichol Campana who gave up her Saturday for us. Let me know if you would like to return there again for 2016.

The open forge program continues to outgrow our ability to host it. We had approximately 900 attendees last year, some of those came every week, but usually more people than anvils at most locations. So come out and help pass on your skills to the next generation.

2016 Conference, if you haven't heard, Lisa Geertsen, an artist from Seattle will be our presenter. Lisa is in the thick of the Seattle arts scene sharing a large building with a mixed group of artists, allowing for collaboration on projects by just walking across the hall. We will also be in the Bond building so RAIN should not be an issue. Lisa was last in the area 4-5 years ago presenting at SOFA, so plan to attend a great demo.

Watch for "Geometry Gems by Perfesser G" in the newsletter and also our hammer-ins. These will be tips on using geometry to solve problems in blacksmithing.

We try to schedule our events on the second Saturday of the month. The best way to check on dates is through our web site or on Facebook. This also is the medium for us to inform you on changes and cancellation.

Upcoming events

June 25th - June 26th WRABA conference with Lisa Geertsen of Seattle, Washington

May your coal burn clean, your hammer hit true, and your customers pay on time!

Gary

WRABA Events

Open Forge Summer Every Tuesday 5 to 9 PM

at Burton Century Village

This is one of the main reasons to join WRABA. If you need a forge to use, help or advice with a project, or just to learn something—come to one of the open forges all summer long from **5:00 pm to 9:00 pm** at the Burton Century Village, Ohio 44021

These are informal forge sessions intended to introduce people to blacksmithing, give new members and those without a permanent shop a regular place and time to spend at the anvil, and also an opportunity to socialize.

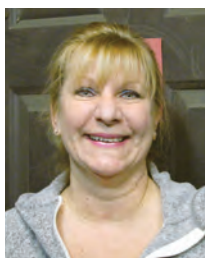
You don't have to be a member to attend an open forge but you will want to join soon after! We highly recommend you wear all cotton clothing, and leather shoes.

Synthetic tends to melt if something hot hits it, and this could in turn stick to your skin. Bring safety glasses if you have them. A leather glove for your non-dominant hand would be good also. You want to be able to remove it quickly and easily if necessary.



Our forge at Burton Century Village.

This from our new secretary: “Bernd and I are tying the knot later this month... so, you can change my name from Pam Turkoc to Pam Schonrank for future newsletters.” She is also handling the store and if you are interested in sweatshirts, T-shirts, anvils, etc., contact her with any questions or purchases at bpschonrank@aol.com



Hammer-in Schedule

Check www.wraba.com for details.

May 14 Brad Weber

June 24-26 WRABA Con.

Christmas party

The December 12 WRABA Christmas party at ASM International Headquarters was a success. Three dozen or so people attended and brought plenty to give and to share.



WRABA Conference 2016

JUNE 2016
24-26

- ➔ Each day starts at 9:00 am
- ➔ Lunch will be provided.
- ➔ Primitive camping available.
- ➔ Evening campfire Saturday.
- ➔ Auction Saturday evening - bring an item to auction
- ➔ Tailgate sales welcome.



WRABA CONFERENCE

Featuring Lisa Geertsen

Lisa Geertsen is an artist blacksmith in Seattle, WA. She owns and operates Firelight Forge, in Seattle's Georgetown neighborhood. Firelight Forge operates solely on custom commissions ranging from architectural work to sculpture. **Sorry, Friday's hands-on day is sold out.**

Cost:

Pre-registration:

Saturday \$25, Sunday \$20

At the door:

Saturday \$30, Sunday \$25

To register, send check made out to WRABA to

Dave Aubuchon

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Register online at www.wraba.com

WWW.WRABA.COM • INFO@WRABA.COM • [FACEBOOK.COM/WRABA.NEO](https://www.facebook.com/wraba.neo)



From the editor: I really look forward to this year's WRABA Conference featuring Lisa Geersten. I took the time to check out her web site and borrowed these samples of her work, next to the above flyer promoting

the event. She makes some very cool stuff! An outstanding talent.

Now if you would like to see her work shop, I found a link that allows you to see her studio in 360°. Here it is:

<http://www.bohonus.com/vr/vrs2265>.

Chuck Hughes in January

By Ralph Bacon and Bill Fisher

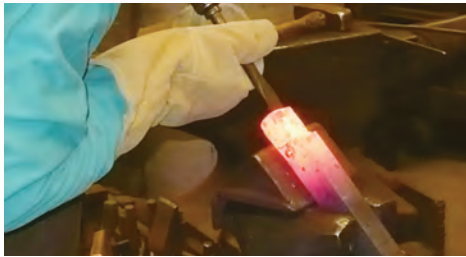


Chuck Hughes has a beautiful workshop northeast of Youngstown, Ohio called "C & C Ironworks. Blacksmith, artistic ironwork, fabrication, welding; gates, railing & restorations". He also makes decorative heads on the ends of tools and whimsical sculptures.

For his demo, Chuck used a couple pieces of one-inch square stock welded onto a length of rod and brought to heat in his gas forge. He used the power hammer to draw out and for basic shaping. After another heat it got secured in the vise for air hammer work. This process was repeated with different chisel bits, gradually building up the nose, recessing the eye sockets, and refining texture details such as scales, feathers or fur. The way he adds texture gives his work its distinctive character.

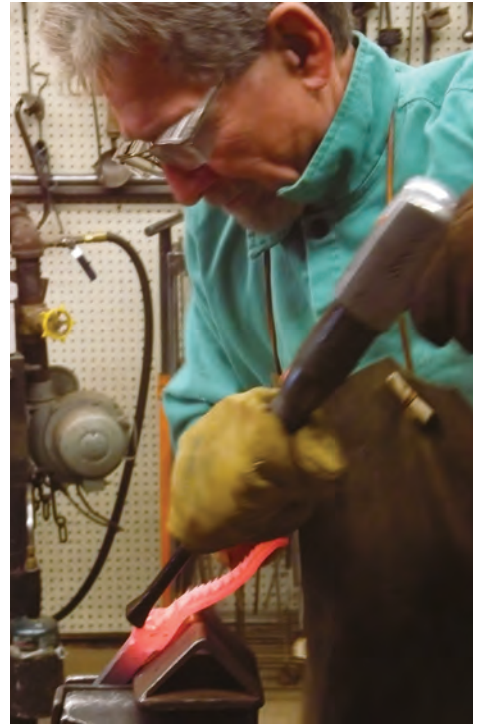
Chuck did a great job explaining his creative design process and how he manipulates iron allowing the animal shapes to "make an appearance and develop themselves". He begins without a plan in mind, rather lets

Continued on page 10



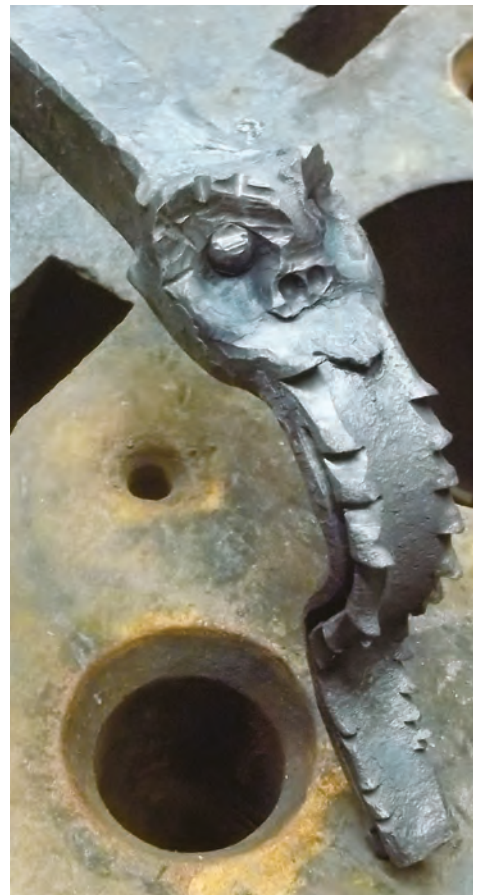
Top: The gas forge. Middle: Starting the snout.

Above: Drawing out the snout with the power hammer. Below: Selecting the right tool.



Above: Working on the eyes.

Below: The finished critter.



Ken Roby in February



We had our usual cast of characters sitting around one of Ken's latest creations, a railing featuring many large repoussé leaves. (Above right) Ken is demonstrating how easy it is to forge out pipe. Pipe was used to bring the weight down especially when large diameters are involved. Even some pipe was smashed oval to give the appearance of a larger size, approaching 2". (Middle right) An air over hydraulic press was used to create the relief. A very tough rubber pad was used to allow the material to deform. (Center) Ken was explaining the evolution of forming the leaves; hammer over wood, air chisel, fly press with the air/hyd press winning out. Saying how it could be done in a minute or so, a challenge was made, and 36 seconds later the leaf was finished. (Bottom right) The press and rubber pad even helped with flattening the then very dished leaves which needed to be just slightly flattened to fit the railings.



Bob Parks in March

Story & photos by Jennifer Horn

WRABA March Membership Meeting
The Sugarcreek Blacksmith Shop,
host Mr. Bob Parks



Consistently for many years, Bob Parks has hosted the Western Reserve Artist Blacksmith Association meeting at his shop the second weekend in March. Bob's Sugarcreek Blacksmith Shop is a great shop, and also in the great location of downtown Sugarcreek, Ohio, next to the Worlds Largest Cuckoo Clock. It was a beautiful day which allowed for the large overhead shop door to be open and plenty of space for the large crowd that attended. Coffee began at 9:00 to start the meeting.

Gary Barnhart welcomed everyone and started off the demonstrations with a few drafting tips. Using large paper, pencil, trammels, string, and pins, Gary demonstrated how to create consistent ovals with good proportions. Then he proceeded to operate the video camera that projected the forging demonstration by Mr. Bob Parks onto a large screen for everyone to get excellent view of the anvil and forging.

Bob has an interest in forging animal heads and has become very good at it. It takes some practice to build animal heads from steel. Building animal heads that look the same is

even more difficult. Consistency is the trick and also the lesson Bob demonstrated while he forged 3 Ram heads to become the handles of a fire tool set. There are many different ways to forge a Rams head. Bob's method seemed uncomplicated to build yet the finished product offers a complicated look that is very pleasing to the eye as well as very comfortable for the hand to hold.

Bob cut three pieces of 3/8 inch stock 12 inches long, marking the center. After placing all three pieces in the fire at the same time, he began drawing the heated end to a nice long even taper coming to a point. He measured the growth in the steel from the center mark noting the length to be 8 3/4 inches and proceeded to draw the second and third piece to the very same length. Then, he proceeded to draw out the opposite end of each piece with the same amount of growth in each piece so all six tapers were consistent with each other. Then, partial cutting the steel at the center mark with a hardy cut made it easy for him to bend each length in half, folded onto it self. He completed all three, one after the other. These are the ram's horns.

The next step was to forge weld the horn piece to the length of bar to become a tool. Bob heated the end of a piece of 1/2 inch square. These pieces were long enough to eventually become a poker, shovel, and broom. He also heated one of his horn pieces where it had been folded in half. He prepared them with welding flux, and jumped them together under his graceful hammer swings, one lying on top of the other. He commented on how the seam of the weld at the end of the bar would now serve as the mouth for the Ram and did not try to erase the forge seam at that spot. The seams at the



edges were forged away using some of the mass from the horns to blend the seam between the two pieces. While there was heat from the welding he continued to forge the face of the Ram. Using the round side of his hammer he created depressions on



both edges of the face on the same plane of the horns. This defined the eye sockets, the nose, and the bridge between them. He continued with the same consistent process for the second set of pieces, jump welding them together and forging the face. Then, he did it again with the last two pieces for the third head. I

liked how this process gave me the opportunity to see what he was doing, then watch it again the second time like an instant replay. The third time I watched I hoped would help me remember the steps until I got the opportunity to try it myself. I have often missed something in a demo and this demo gave me the chance to

see it more than once! I liked that! Taking another heat and fixing the head in the vice against a vice block to support the steel to be forged; Bob then used a punch to mark the nostrils. Forging the nostrils first takes advantage of the heat and you can achieve more flaring to the nostril. He defined the mouth utilizing the weld seam at the end of the bar to be the separation in the lips. Bob made nice even, defined, and deep marks. When marking the features of the eyes with a punch, it is important to be careful to make the eyes even.

The next step was to create the arch to the neck. Again, doing all three at the same time, one after the other would aid in his effort to consistently form the same curves. Bob cooled the head area so that he could hit it with his wooden hammer without damaging the work he had just completed as he bent the arch into the necks.

Bob continued to compare them to each other checking the consistency and making corrections as needed as he proceeded. Using his vice to hold the head, he twisted each side of the Rams horns. Bob suggested using a torch for heat would make this portion easier to accomplish evenly. He used water to help control



the heat and his twists. Bob twisted each horn outward from the top of the skull. Once twisted, he began at the farthest pointy end of the horn creating the circular scroll of the horn with scrolling tongs, following it around creating a larger radius as it got to the base of the horn, leaving a nice space as they wrapped around. He then completed the second horn to match the first.

Following his same process to the second and third Ram's head, he ended up with great consistency. Bob mentioned how it would be to your benefit to have enough time and energy to accomplish all the steps that you want to be consistent at the same time. He had many different Rams' heads to show which had been built at different times and although his system was the same, they had individual looks to them. Together as a set they would not be as attractive as three made together in an assembly line sequence. Bob is a very talented blacksmith who has the ability to teach and entertain keeping everyone's attention. He consistently hosts a very nice meeting full of surprises. If you missed this meeting, mark your calendar for next year, you won't regret it! Consistent with all great blacksmith gatherings, there was a wonderful table full of food to enjoy, another table full of "Iron in the Hat" items, and plenty of new friends and smiths to visit and share ideas and stories with. Thank you Mr. Bob Parks for all of your efforts to WRABA!



Chuck Hughes Gallery:



Photo Bill Fisher



Photo Bill Fisher



Photo Bill Fisher



the metal decide for him.

Said Bill Fisher, "I found the forging demo to be very interesting as Chuck incorporates precision air chisel shaping along with traditional power hammer techniques. He has a well equipped and well organized workshop".

It was great turnout with 26 total in attendance including 18 WRABA members and many new faces.

We had a wonderful lunch and a brief tour of the stained glass and stone landscaping business next door.

Iron in the hat drawing of 13 items yielded \$96.00.

Thanks to Chuck for a splendid event.



Bob Stilgenbauer Forge Liquidation

Due to health issues, long-time member Bob Stilgenbauer has decided to liquidate his forge and its contents which includes:

1 anvil

1 coal forge

1 gas forge

numerous tools and metal stock.

His wife Jane will be handling all transactions and they would like to make this inventory available in mid-summer around the time of Ky Green's Hammer-in (just 15 miles away). They would prefer that the items will be acquired by those who will put the tools to good use. All are expected to make fair offers.

Call Jane in July at 440-244-3929.
974 Osborn, Lorrain, Ohio.

WRABA now has an online shop at Zazzle.com/wrabashop, also linked on the web site. It currently has WRABA shirts, ball caps, mugs, and calendars of many various styles and colors so you can get exactly what you want with the WRABA logo.

Pictured: a WRABA calendar starting at \$20.95, full-color images featuring the anvils of our members.



BLUE MOON PRESS

Was at WRABA 2014 Conference
& donated books for our auction
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Tips & Tricks

It's Your Pick!

"Geometry Gems by Perfesser G"

Given a line (a) 17-17/64" long, divide into seven equal spaces (say for 6 holes). Draw a second line (b) whose length is the next largest multiple of seven (21") and is connected on one end. If the end points (c) opposite the connected ends are near vertical, it makes it easier.

Divide the 21" line by seven which yields 3". Mark the 21" line every 3". Place the edge of the long leg of a carpenter square on the (c) points. Using a straightedge against the other leg and not allowing it to move, slide the square along the straight edge to a 3" mark, at the time make a mark (d) on the line (a); repeat for other marks on (b). You now have the equal spacing on your original line.

