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**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**December 9 Saturday**

WRABA Christmas party, noon. Burton Church Basement. Bring a dish to share and items for the gift exchange, auction and election of officers.

**January 13**

Hammer-In at JF Martz, Randy Barker hosting, Sebring, Ohio

**February 10**

Hammer-In at Village Blacksmith

**March 10**

Hammer-In at Bob Park’s

**April 14**

Hammer-In at Burton

**May 12**

Hammer-In at Brad Weber’s

**June 27-30**

ABANA Conference,

# WRABA

Western Reserve Artist Blacksmith Association



*James Hyde demonstrates fabrication of a braided lamp. It is composed of strands of textured round stock, tack welded to start and then torch work to bend and braid. See page 7.*



## President



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## Editor:

### *[www.wraba.com](http://www.wraba.com)*

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Board meetings are held quarterly or as need requires.

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.

### ***A note from the editor:***

This will be the last of the "quarterly" issues of the newsletter. Starting next year they will be bimonthly. In this way WRABA hopes to better communicate and keep its membership informed.

Newsletter deadline for the next issue will be December 20. Send me articles, drawings, ideas. If you drew it—I can make it pretty. If I can't use it this issue, it will go in a future issue.

# WRABA Events

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501 North 21st (Johnson Road)  
Sebring Ohio 44672  
Host member: Randy Barker

## February 10

Hammer-In at Village Blacksmith  
11193 Taylor May Road  
Chagrin Falls, Ohio 44023  
Host Member: Ken Roby  
440-543-4977

## March 10

Hammer-In at Bob Park's  
135 North Broadway Street  
Sugar Creek, Ohio 44681  
Host member: Bob Parks

## April 14

Hammer-In Demonstration at Burton  
Century Village  
Hosted by WRABA board members

## May 12

Hammer-In at Brad Weber's  
88250 Mill Hill Road  
Bowerston Ohio 44695

## June 27-30,

ABANA Conference,

## Open Forge Winter Schedule

This is one of the main reasons to join WRABA. If you need to use a forge, help or advice with a project, or just want to learn—come to one of the open forges

### Monday Open Forge

At Jotunheim Forge,  
Jason Nass hosting.  
4101 Brooklyn Ave.,  
Cleveland, OH 44109.  
Go to the garage in back.  
Contact Jason at 216-609-9250 for  
more information.

### Tuesday Open Forge

At Maple Leaf Forge,  
Ralph Neumeister hosting.  
17231 Messenger Road,  
Burton, OH 44021.  
Contact Ralph at 440-552-9560 for  
more information.

### Thursday Open Forge

At Steel Tree Workshop,  
Gary Barnhart hosting.  
1961 State Route 534,  
Southington, OH 44470.  
Contact Gary at 330-898-8171 for  
more information.

These are informal forge sessions intended to introduce people to blacksmithing, give new members a regular place and time to spend at the anvil, and to socialize.

You don't have to be a member to attend an open forge but you may want to join soon after! We recommend you wear all cotton clothing and leather shoes. Synthetics tend to melt if something hot hits it, which in turn sticks to 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 need be.

## Etiquette at Our Meetings

The open forge is a great place to gather, make friends and learn the craft. It is also for those who do not always have access to such facilities. So when you do show up, please contribute to cover the cost of coal, grinding belts and maintenance. Also, please put back any tools you got out. If it's close to closing time, lend a hand with clean-up.

For our hammer-ins, remember to bring a pot luck dish, Drinks or snacks to share at lunchtime. Dinnerware and napkins are needed as well. Also bring something for Iron-in-the-hat. This can be something you made, tools, supplies or other desirables the membership would like to bid on or buy tickets for. The money raised helps keep the club running.



# President's Letter



Well winter is on the way, the year is almost gone and WRABA had a lot of fun events, and most were well attended. If you attended you know what fun was there, if not hope you make it next time. Remember the holiday party on December 9th at noon in the church basement at Century Village. If you can lend a hand on setup please contact me at 440-552-9560 or at mlforge@ce-bridge.net. Remember to bring a gift (hand made if possible) for the exchange if you want to participate. We will have beer, wine and soft drinks, along with chicken, please bring a dish to share. Elections will be at the Christmas party, so please attend. If you are interested in running for an officer position or board position contact Grant Michener at 440-321-6345. We often have the same officers as no one seems to want to run, some of us are getting tired, so step up. If you see something that will make things better we will try to make things happen.

It has recently been brought to the board's attention that no newsletters have been sent in the last year, we knew we had some problems but didn't know that it was so widespread. This will be handled with the issue that you are reading this in, an announcement will be made on mass email that newsletter is posted on website, but ***all members will be mailed a copy***. This was causing the mailing problem, we are very sorry that this has been going on so long. Come to the holiday party and we will make it up to you in fun had. We will also be resuming every other month printing of the newsletter.

On a good note we are having a January hammer in at Randy Barker's again, and will be announcing the belt grinder class for this spring. I and all the Board and Officers wish you all a Merry Christmas and A better New Year.

Happy Hammering, Ralph

# Club Project

Hello Ralph:

Bill Fisher, Ralph Neumeister and Randy Barker have been conspiring to work out basic design concepts for a belt grinder project. To date we have several options on motors, variable speed drives, wheels, frame configurations and accessories, but so far no firm design or hard cost estimate.

This is definitely not a beginner's project. Not everyone will be interested, has the necessary fabrication skills or can afford to participate in this project.

Based on [Bill's] communications, we have 5 members confirmed as interested thus far: Neumeister, Fisher, Joe Moravec, Jeff Hau and Randy Barker.

The more we get confirmed and money committed, the lower will be the component purchase cost. Contact Bill Fisher, Ralph Neumeister or Randy Barker if you are interested. The final design should be chosen in time for a public announcement at Randy Barker's Hammer-In January 2018.



*Dave Custer puts an edge on a chisel using the club's grinder. Said grinder will be housed for use at Jason Nass' as he hosts winter open forge on Monday evenings.*

# The Picnic Demo

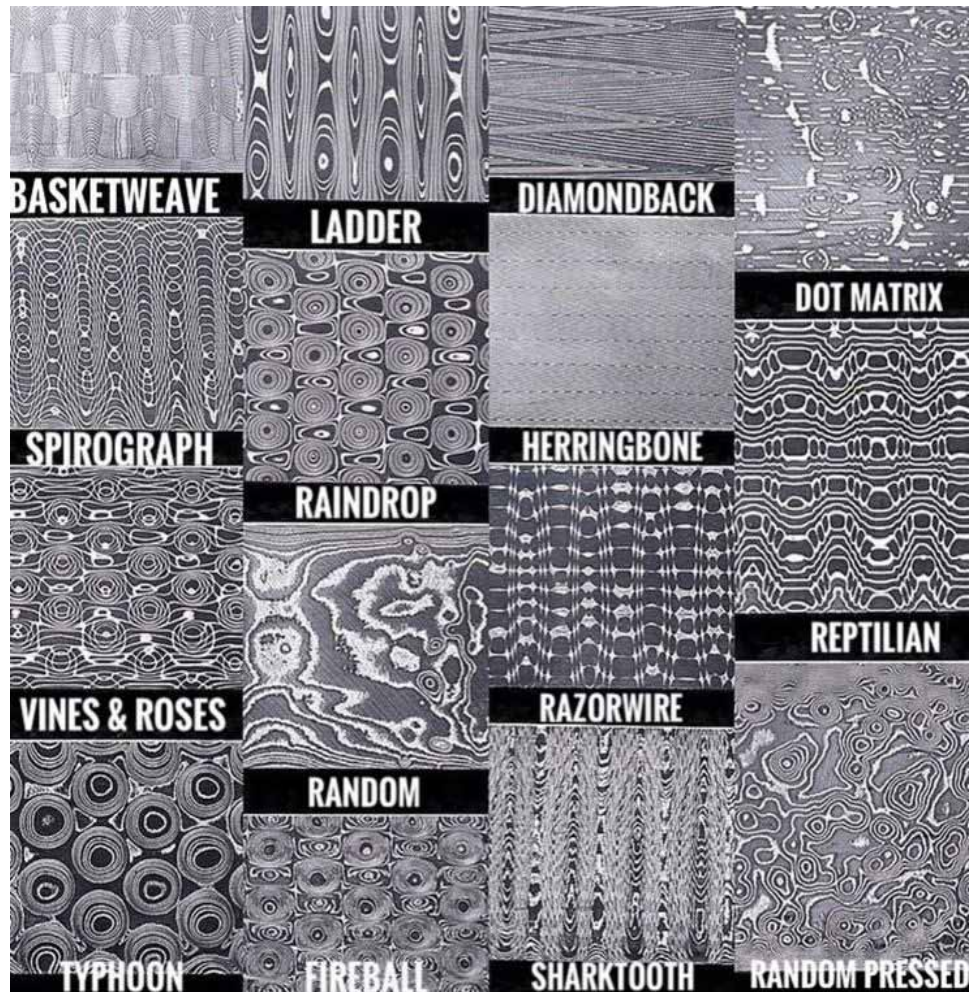
August 2017 Demonstration Presented By Jason Nass

By John Klingler

The WRABA summer picnic began with demonstrator Jason Nass from Jotunheim Forge in Cleveland Ohio. Jason demonstrated the making of a Damascus billet that could be forged into a knife blade or other object. In general, welded Damascus consists of two or more different steel types, which differ with respect to their carbon content and/or other alloy elements.

In this case Jason used 21 layers of 15N20 and SAE1085. 15N20 is a nickel alloy steel with carbon content similar to that of SAE1085 which simplifies welding these materials together. In this case the 1085 is on the outside of the billet. First, all layers must be free of any mill scale, so grind clean with grinding discs. At the center of one end, draw a tack weld, on the other end weld a steel handle. Next, the billet was heated to a bright orange, then brushed and fluxed with borax. After the 2nd heat the billet was “tack” welded under the flat dies of 50 # Little Giant.

This was done two more times to ensure that all layers are fully welded. The arc welds were then ground off and the billet drawn out to about 14” long by 3/4” thick. Forge the edges also to maintain the width of 1 1/2”. Next the billet was divided into thirds and two hot cuts were made; one on each side, three quarters of the way through. Grind off any scale and flux inside surfaces before folding. Reheat billets and flux sides before welding. Weld, then draw out. Billet now has 63 layers. The billet was again heated to forging temperatures and drawn out to finished size.



The above image was found online and shows some Damascus steel patterns, including the type that Jason Nass demonstrated. There are dozens more varieties one can make.

Jason then used a surface manipulation technique that will create a “ladder pattern” to the finished piece. A side grinder was used to cut offset notches on the sides of the billet. It’s important to make notches no more than 1/3 of the thickness of the billet; otherwise a thin blank will result. After grinding, the billet was forged flat again. To check the pattern of the blank, it was then submerged in a tank made from PVC pipe filled with a solution of water and ferric chloride.

Jason recommended using this large Damascus pattern on a larger knife blade. He also showed us a very nice example of a blank that was manipulated by notching and drilling, which will show a ladder and rain drop pattern with 225 layers.

Thanks to Jason for a very interesting demonstration. Also check out his web site: Hammer and Thistle Trading Company.



# November Hammer-In

Story by Ralph Bacon

Photos by Ralph Bacon & Bill Fisher (as noted)

Through some sort of scheduling snafu, this event got moved from Canton to Sebring, Ohio. No big deal, we blacksmiths tend to be a resilient and resourceful bunch.

Once we got settled in with coffee and donuts, Roy Troutman prepared the stage for a tong making demonstration. He started with a single piece of stock 3/8" x 1" x 18" and began shaping the jaws, making good use of all parts of the anvil. He stressed the



importance of keeping the metal neat & flat, using a flatter (and a helper) often. When done refining the shape, he used a hole punch for the hole centered in the boss. Once the handles were drawn out to match, he used a rasp on hot metal to take off edges inside the bosses and corners. Then he made the second piece to match the first.

Roy fitted the two tongs halves together with a rivet to check the fit, working the tongs open and closed. He made some adjustments and once satisfied, hammered the rivet to mate the tongs halves together.

The final major step was to cut into the insides of the tongs at the tips to create a V-shaped cross section. A bit of fussing and cleanup finished the tongs.

James Hyde provided the second demo for the day with his braided lamp project.

James had previously textures a quantity of 1/4" round stock with a "bark" pattern. He placed a couple pieces in the vise, then torch welded



*Top left: Roy punches a hole in the boss with James Hyde. Left: Roy starts the second tong while the first cools on the floor. Top: Roy splits the jaws with Don Pfaff. Above: Roy works the tongs back and forth after fitting them together. Right: The tongs cool off and await fitting while we all break for lunch.*







a couple more to make two pair of parallel rods at 90°. He also added lamp rod in the center. Once he had it started it was pure torch work, heating and bending in turn around the tube of lamp rod, bending and weaving back and forth (just like a cub scout zipper pull project).

James left enough overhang to create the legs at the bottom and ornamentation at the top.

Cool stuff, James! This process could be applied to making candlesticks, as well.

*Left: James Hyde torch welds to begin the process with help from Grant Michener. One leg is in the vise. Center left: The first bend in the "braiding" process. Bottom left: With the braiding completed, James works on the ornaments at the top of the lamp. Below: The finished lamp on the anvil next to James' texture swage tool. Using a spare hammer with similar texture makes short work of this task.*



# Rocky Mountain Smiths

-from the editor:

Here are some splendid tools that I find truly inspirational. Courtesy of the fine folks at FORGE FACTS ~ A Publication of the Rocky Mountain Smiths (Colorado). Check them out at [www.rockymountainsmiths.org](http://www.rockymountainsmiths.org)



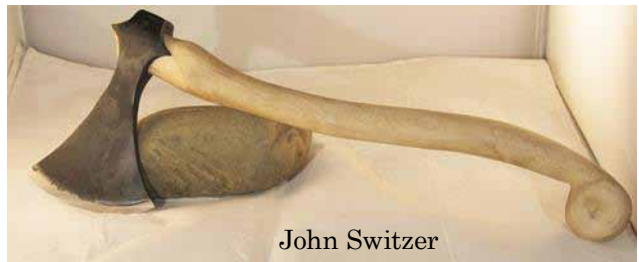
Stuart Shirley



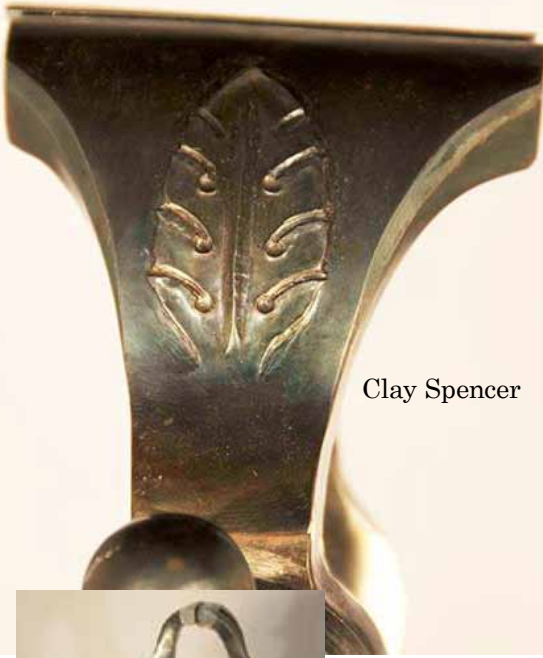
Stuart Shirley



John Switzer



John Switzer



Clay Spencer



Clay Spencer's hack saw. Details below.



Clay Spencer





# Conference Gallery



This page was all made by Monica Coyne. Her amazing joinery is simply marvelous.



Monica's iron dove tails—*together above and apart below.*

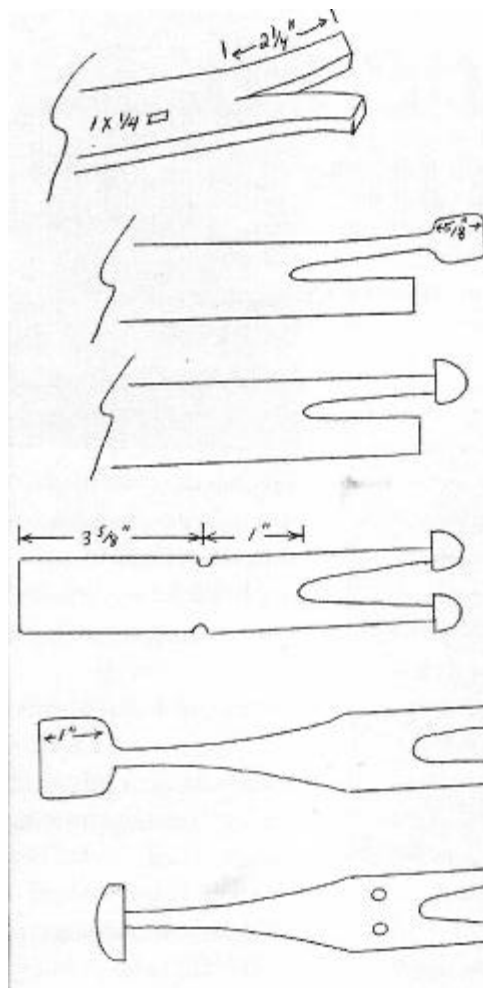
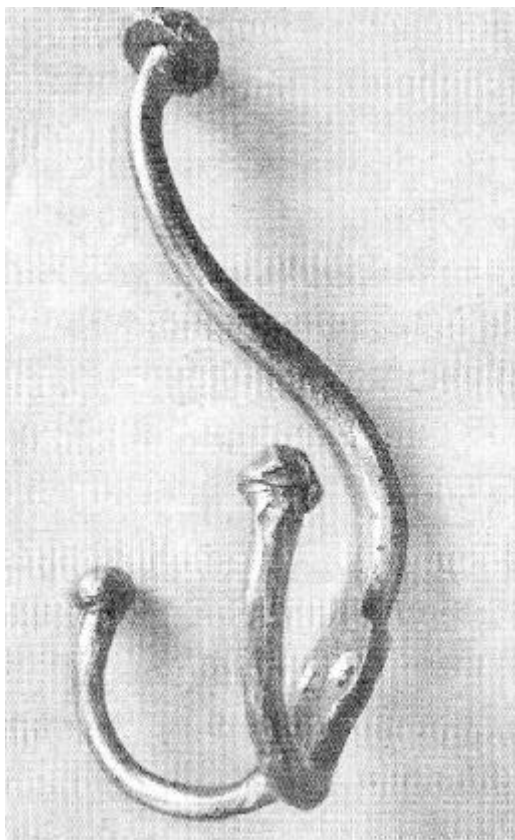
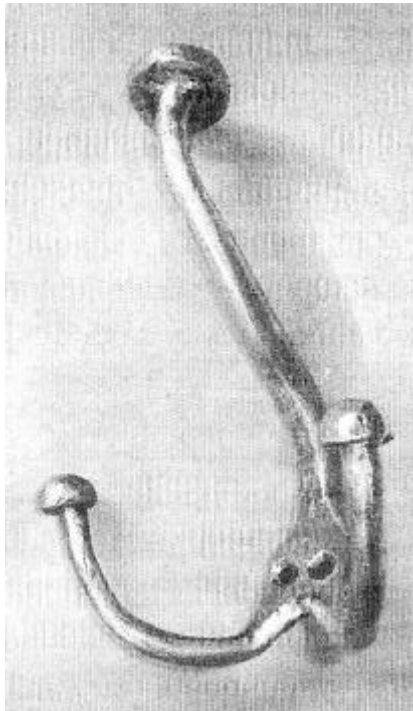


# Coat & Hat Hook

By Steve Anderson

Drawings, text and photos by Steve A MABA Member

Reprinted from The Upsetter, Newsletter of the Ivlichigan Artist Blacksmith's Association, July-August 2008



Split stock with a hot cut.

\*Put vertically in the vise to clean up the end of the split.

Bend one leg up and one leg down. Forge leg to round, leaving 5/8" of mass on the end.

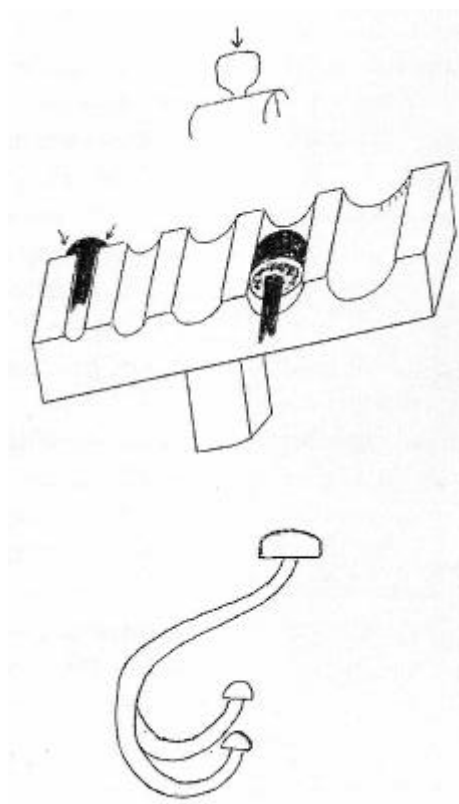
Forge the mass on the end to a domed ball (or ball shape) Repeat for the other leg.

Fuller 1" back from the split and cut off to length.

Forge tapered to round, leaving 1" mass on the end.

Forge mass to a domed dick or other desired shape. Drill and countersink or punch and bob 3/16" holes

To Form the ends:  
 Upset in vise  
 Round to a cylinder  
 Shape and center end  
 Shape and center end.



Bend bottom hooks first. They should be about 45 degrees from the wall and 90 degrees apart. The top hook should reach farther out.



continued from page 9

Andy Morris and Don Hanson's beaver traps. Stuart Shirley's blacksmith's helper (Second place in the People's Choice awards)



# Classifieds & Sponsors



Was at WRABA 2016 Conference, donated books for our auction and had a great variety of books for sale.

[www.bluemoonpress.org](http://www.bluemoonpress.org)



**BUCKEYE WELDER SALES**

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## WRABA.store

Items can be purchased at [WRABA.store@aol.com](mailto:WRABA.store@aol.com).

We have T-Shirts, zippered sweatshirts, long sleeve shirts, hats, anvils and much more.

## JD Abrasives

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Quality Abrasives & Supplies  
at Discount Prices

## WRABA Anvils

"WRABA" brass anvils are available.

They are 4" long and 2" tall.

Their cost is \$25.00

Get one at the next WRABA event.



•Single Burner Gas Forges with everything except propane bottle \$200 and up

•Gas Forge Burners \$65, \$75 & \$100 each depending on type

Other assorted blacksmith items, call for availability

Ralph Neumeister  
440-552-9560

WESTERN RESERVE ARTIST BLACKSMITH ASSOCIATION  
4425 OLD STATE ROAD  
WEST FARMINGTON OH 44491



Send To:

Forwarding Address requested postage guaranteed

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Bowerston Ohio 44695

### **June 27-30,**

ABANA Conference,

**Want to make a difference for the club? Then volunteer! We always need help setting up and tearing down for events, from hammer-ins to our yearly conference and our parties. OR, you should consider becoming an officer or a board member. The help and some new blood will surely be appreciated!**

-the current management...