

HABA HABA

# THE HABA LETTER

The Newsletter of the Houston Area Blacksmith's Association Inc.

To Preserve and Promote the Art and Craft  
of Blacksmithing Through Education.

HABA Web Site: [www.habairon.org](http://www.habairon.org)

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## FEBRUARY 21 MEETING:

ANIMAL HEADS WITH BILL EPPS AT C&S FORGE. DOBBIN, TEXAS

## MARCH 20 MEETING:

URBAN BLACKSMITHING WITH MARK FINSTAD AT HIS HOME,  
HOUSTON, TEXAS

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## THE HABA LETTER CONTENTS

Renewal Notice - 2.  
From the Prez - 2.  
Animal Heads- 4.

Urban Gates- 5  
Notices - 6.  
THE FINE PRINT - 9.

# THE HABA LETTER

February-March, 2004

## Notice to 2002/2003 HABA Members

It is time to renew your HABA membership. HABA has changed its membership year from June through May to January through December, so it is time to renew your membership if you haven't already. (Some of you did a 18 month renewal last year, so check your records.)

Please renew your membership by sending \$20 to our new treasurer, Kathy Porter, 1925 Anchor Way, Dickenson, TX 77539.

## WORDS FROM THE PREZ

**HABA Prez Sez**  
February 01, 2004

As a weekend blacksmith I am fairly new to the hammer and anvil compared to many of you, so I want to start off by thanking all of you for making this educational environment possible in the Greater Houston Area. Last year we saw a growth in membership of about 50% and I am hopeful to see this trend continue. We are a young and growing organization. I was not expecting to serve in this job so soon and was quite happy talking to you as your webmaster which I will continue doing. That is a fun job because we have an active membership to talk to and about the activities available. I am pleased that our web usage this month averaged 112 visits per day at [www.habairon.org](http://www.habairon.org). With your help and support this volunteer job as your President will continue to be a joy to do.

Outgoing President Les Cook really did a super job for us, following in Dave Koenig's boot steps, and leading us through a memorable year. Les continues on our Board of Directors which welcomes Lee Oates, Cathy Porter, and Tim Bailey to the table. Contact any of us and tell what you like and want as a HABA Member. We listen carefully to serve you. You are important to us and we want to see value returned to you.

A basic theme we will try to pursue this year is "Back to Basics" featuring hands on workshops and not just entertainment. We want to provide the opportunity for experienced smiths to learn more and the novice to comfortably light that fire and move that metal around.

Last month was very busy and February will continue with a full agenda. We have jumbo thank-yous for Lee and Judy Oates for hosting a great knife making workshop. When it rains it pours and we were fortunate to have a window to a fine day. These events don't happen by themselves and we had a lot of help and support from the membership. Some of the nearly 70 attendees almost had tears in their eyes that the day had to end. The list of help is lengthy and I want to especially thank Members Robert and Della Scott for the great food service, and Tom Lundquist for conducting our successful fund raising auction. They are also from the East Texas Blacksmith Alliance. Many others also traveled a long way, from neighbors LAMA and Balcones forge groups. And lastly, thank you donors for filling the auction table, and bidders for emptying it.

# THE HABA LETTER

*February-March, 2004*

We were reminded and invited to attend the Regional meetings coming up. See the message on our front web page for links to more information. I hope to attend both the Feb 28 Balcones Forge weekend with Lorelei Sims at Marble Falls, and "Banging on the Bayou" LAMA Conference in Lafayette on March 13.

A good suggestion was made that we consider a bus load of local and regional members to attend the July ABANA Conference in Richmond, KY that Dave Koenig is working so hard on. Les said he has looked into bus trips before and he and I volunteered to look into this possibility. Any other thoughts on this?

Next up for us is our first ever Art Show which will run Feb 11 to March 7 at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft downtown. See the special web page we have for this. Frank Walters created a beautiful poster for us, and Dave Koenig is doing all of the run around and collecting submission paper and stuff to display. I am really enjoying this opportunity and hope you will come down for the Opening on Feb 15 and the demos March 6. In fact, I got so inspired by this event I made a web page for my forge, created a touchmark design, made some new pieces special for the show, and borrowed back all the stuff I made and gave the wife and daughter for submission candidates. What a hoot for me to tell my friends that I'm an artist (maybe)!

A benefit of the Art Show will be an opportunity to add to our on-line Gallery, which has been updated recently by Member Rick Barter. Please send us more photos to update or include here.

And that's not all for the month! Feb 21 and 22 will feature North Texas Blacksmith Bill Epps in making animal heads and tools at Charley Heathcocks' shop in Dobbin, at no extra cost to you. Another special feature of this workshop: Bill is bringing his No. 5 Fly Press to work with also! We will have a limited number of metal supply kits available for sale with 18" long bars of various size for the critters we will make. Bring your own if you prefer. And bring your forge and tools because Bill is ready to work our tails off making these pieces. See the special web page for more info.

What else is new you ask? We are creating a special Student web page with a BSA flavor to start with to help them with their Metalworking Merit Badge. Please check it out and contribute articles and stories those Students will find useful.

Thanks, and send me your feedback.

Ready to Roll,

Richard Boswell

## **FEBRUARY 21 MEETING: FORGING A HEAD WITH BILL EPPS, C&S FORGE**

Animal heads have been a favorite of blacksmiths for centuries, and they are found in many applications such as architectural, jewelry, knife pommels, and canes. They can be large or small, realistic, humorous, or fantasy creations. In all cases they are art and it takes skill and practice to render the metal alive.

Charles and Sharon Heathcock will host the meeting at one of HABA's favorite shops,

# THE HABA LETTER

February-March, 2004

and you will enjoy the drive out to visit them.

## *When & Where :*

C&S Forge in **Dobbin**, directions provided below.

### **Saturday, February 21**

Here is the Agenda:

**8:00 Sign In and Set Up :**

**9:00 HABA Meeting**

**9:30 Begin Demo**

**Noon Lunch Break :** taco soup will be available there for \$3.00

**Noon Thirty Iron in Hat**

**1:00 Participants will continue to make heads**

**5:00 Pack and Clean Up**

### **What to Bring**

Bring safety glasses with side shields. This is a requirement!

Bring your forge and tools if you have them.

If you do not have a forge and tools, please come anyway. There will be plenty of room at some forge during the workshop and someone to lend you a hand if you need it.

*You do not have to be a member to attend our meetings! Bring a Guest!*

Bring your Membership Dues if you want to work at a forge and are not a current Member !

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### ***Iron In The Hat***

Please take a look around and see what you can donate to this fund-raiser.

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### ***Directions to C&S Forge***

From the North side of Houston, go North on Interstate 45 to Conroe. At Conroe go West on state highway 105 about 20 miles. You will go by Lake Conroe and the town of Montgomery. About five miles West of Montgomery you will come to the town of Dobbin. There is not much to see in Dobbin so you need to pay attention about now.

There will be a caution light. Slow down and continue through the caution light on 105. You will be making a left hand turn. Continue up the hill past the caution light to Mount Mariah Road. Turn left on Mount Mariah and go south. C&S Forge will be at the second drive on your left.

From the West Side of Houston, go Northwest on state highway 249 (which turns into FM 1774) through Tomball, Decker Prairie and Pinehurst to Magnolia. FM 1774 will "T" into FM 1488 in downtown Magnolia. Go right at the 'T' across the tracks and

# THE HABA LETTER

February-March, 2004

turn immediately to the left and continue Northwest on 1774.

Continue Northwest on 1774 two miles or so to FM1486. Turn right on FM 1486 and go North about twelve miles to 105. Turn left on 105 and go towards the top of the hill. Make a left turn on Mount Mariah Road. The C&S Forge will be at the second drive on the left.

See our web page [Forging A Head](#) for more information

## **March 20: Urban Gates and Art: Mark Finstad**

HABA member Mark Finstad is hosting us Saturday morning at his shop in town, and will tell us about the gate he has made for his home and how he does his blacksmithing work without disturbing his urban neighbors. Like many of our members Mark has a real job to take care of and squeezes in some excellent blacksmithing in between. Located near the museum district in town, he has built his shop in the backyard of a craftman style home, with a self contained mobile forge table. Mark will explain how he made his work exhibited in the HABA HCCC show, the items recently seen at the HABA Auction, and his nice gate for the driveway.

### **Agenda:**

8 am - Sign in and Visit with coffee  
9 am - HABA Meeting  
9:30 am - Demo begins  
Noon - Meeting adjourns

**Where:** 4309 Greeley Houston 77006 (4 blocks east of Montrose on Richmond, then one block south of Richmond on Greeley)

### **Lunch in the area**

If you can stay around in town for the afternoon here are some ideas to consider:

1 pm tour the sculpture garden at Glassel School of Art  
2 pm tour the MFAH exhibit at Audrey Jones Beck Building MFAH  
Three Centuries of Tradition : Renaissance of Custom Gun Making in America  
(tickets may be required)

In the event of a rainy morning, please come anyway. We will not be able to meet at Mark's home but there is plenty to see in the area. Here are a few examples:

- A. Visit the Emporium, Houston's Largest Resource for Residential and Commercial Architectural Antiques located at 1800 Westheimer.
- B. Visit Farfetched an antique store of old ironwork located at 777 Our Lane Circle.
- C. Visit Adkins Architectural Antiques and Treasures located at 3515 Fannin.

If the skies clear in the afternoon we will meet back at Mark's place for the afternoon session.

# THE HABA LETTER

February-March, 2004

## NOTICES

### HABA SHOW AT THE HOUSTON CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY CRAFT OPENING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 1-3 P.M

HABA has the honor of being the first of the guilds associated with the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft to have its own show. It will run from February 11 into March, with a formal opening on Sunday afternoon at 4848 Main Street, Houston (just a block south of Highway 59). HABA members will be demonstrating in the HCCC parking lot March 6, 2004, from 10 :00 AM to 2:00 PM, weather permitting.

Go to HCCC's web site for more information, [hccc@craftcenter.org](mailto:hccc@craftcenter.org).

Here's a letter from Dave Koenig:

HABA Board and Exhibitors,

All the work for the HABA Show at HCCC was delivered. Thanks to everyone. I cannot wait to see it all displayed.

MaryAnn Schindler and her mother are going to host the opening at HCCC next Sunday. Looks like we will have soda, nuts, salty snack and small candy bars.

I plan to demonstrate on Sunday the 15th and Saturday March 6 at HCCC. Anyone else want to put their hand up to demo? It would be nice to have at least one more. (We can only have a total of three....to be legal in the City of Houston without hiring a fire marshall to make sure we do not burn down the city.)

My thought is: If we have at least two demonstrators we can put tables between the two demo sites with more 'stuff' on them like completed work, tools, etc. We would need another person or two to look after the table and talk with people....pretty much like we did in July....except maybe more formal...i.e. more things to talk about.

I would like to do the same thing on March 6 when we will have families coming by for the monthly "Hands-On" weekend program. The 15th would be like a dry run.

It would be nice to have everyone here for the opening on the 15th but it's a long way to come for some people. I am really excited to see what happens at HABA's first show!!

FYI the main gallery show at HCCC is of wood carvings from China. The work is really something. Seems to me we could learn something about texture and apply it to our work.

Hope to see many of you next Sunday.

# THE HABA LETTER

February-March, 2004

Bring lots of friends!

Please let me know if you can demonstrate or are willing to talk with people at the tables.

Take Care,  
DAVE

## **Balcones Forge Workshop, Marble Falls**

The [2004 Balcones Forge Winter Workshop](#) is scheduled for February 28 and 29th, and [Blacksmith Lorelei Sims](#) is the featured demonstrator at the Marble Falls event.

## **LAMA's "Banging on the Bayou", Lafayette, LA**

LAMA's 2004 conference - "[Banging On the Bayou](#)" is set for Saturday and Sunday March 13 and 14, 2004 at the grounds of Beaver Park in Lafayette, LA. For More information, go to the [LAMA website](#) or contact [Jerry Baker](#), 337-232-7958 email [jbaker5175@earthlink.net](mailto:jbaker5175@earthlink.net), or [David Bernard](#), 337-837-8810, email [dba-architect@worldnet.att.net](mailto:dba-architect@worldnet.att.net).

## **Tom Clark Demo, Texarkana**

Tom Clark will be at Legrand and Sons Iron works in Texarakana, Tx. for the FOUR STATES IRON MUNCHERS monthly meeting on April 17 and 18 for a two-day demo. (<http://www.fourstatesironmunchers.com>)

The address is 612 S. Lelia St. One of the days Tom will demo on his brand of air hammers. Tom always travels with plenty of tongs and hammers to sell. Anyone who is intrested is invited to attend. This will run 8:00 until 4:00 both days!

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## **2004 ABANA Conference Richmond, Kentucky** **July 7-11, 2004**

The 2004 ABANA "Design and Build" Conference plans are coming along nicely, thanks to our hard-working volunteers and board committee chairpersons! Conference Chairperson Dave Koenig is continuously working hard to produce an informative and exciting conference filled with plenty of activities for the whole family!

# THE HABA LETTER

February-March, 2004

The conference is being held on the campus of [Eastern Kentucky University](#) (EKU), in Richmond, Kentucky. The Opening Ceremony, featuring our keynote speaker Melvin Rose of Melvin Rose Industries, will launch the five day event on Wednesday evening, July 7, 2004. [Albert Paley](#) will present a slide lecture at 8 p.m. that same evening in the brand-new 400 seat Student Center Auditorium. He will also present a second lecture Thursday evening, July 8, at 6:30 p.m. Also on that Thursday evening will be the formal opening of the Members' Galleries which will begin at 7:00 p.m. and end at 10 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday will be jam-packed with presentations by our [demonstrators](#), shows in our members' galleries, vendor and tailgating sales, auctions, Iron-in-the-Hat, and a general membership meeting. There will also be [craft classes](#) including metalwork, jewelry, appliqué, and stained glass, self defense and martial arts classes, computer-aided design classes, and [charter tours of the Bluegrass Region](#). Sunday morning after breakfast will be open for everyone to leisurely round up the troops and make their way back home.

The EKU conference site offers options for "[cold-tent camping](#)" or [RV parking](#), if you prefer it to the campus' dormitory-style lodging, and the area provides near-by campgrounds with [RV dump stations](#). And yes, your [pets](#) are welcome as per our simple guidelines! Please also see our list of [hotel accommodations](#) in Richmond and note that any persons with special needs in terms of ADA compliant accommodations can contact [Michele Devine](#) for assistance. The EKU food service schedule provides breakfast from 7:00-9:00a.m., lunch from 11:00-1:30p.m., and dinner from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

## THE FINE PRINT

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