

Our Prez Sez

from HABA President

Russell Parrish



If you have looked at the website in the last couple of years you will have noticed that the Prez as been very quiet. There has been many interesting things happening in HABA and I will make an attempt to bring y'all up to date.

Also, I would like to tell you a little about myself in the process. We have some interesting meeting coming up in 2009 and I hope all of you can get to some of them. Please feel free to bring visitors along and I hope to meet each of you throughout the year.

Blacksmith Shop

I liked the bellows operated by rope. A hand or a foot pedal - I don't remember. But that blowing and blazing of fire! And a piece of iron in the fire, held there by tongs, red, softened, ready for the anvil, beaten with a hammer, bent into a horseshoe, thrown in a bucket of water, sizzle, steam. And horse hitched to be shod, tossing their manes; and grass by the river, plowshares, sledge runners, harrows waiting for repair. At the entrance, my bare feet on the dirt floor. Here, gusts of heat; at my back, white clouds, I stare and stare. It seems I was called for this: To glorify things just because they are.

-Czeslaw Milosz-

Translated by the author and Robert Hass.

A LITTLE ABOUT ME

I have been involved in HABA for the last four years and I have learned that you can go from member to president in a very short time if you are interested. I joined HABA because my son was interested (pictured) and have hooked since.

I really do not know that much about metal and the working of metal



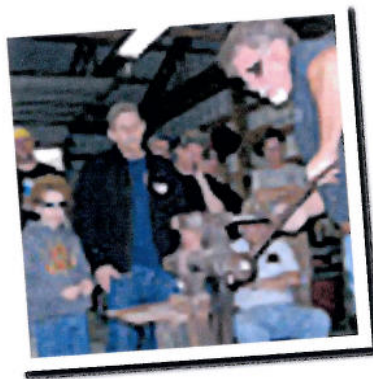
but I have been enjoying learning the process.

I work in insurance loss control and underwriting and I enjoy learning how businesses function, which brought me to the Board of Directors. Not long after I was elected to Vice President and then President and I believe that HABA is a fantastic organization.

2008 A BRIEF REVIEW

We started out the year at Cowboy's with the Annual Knife Workshop in January. This year was camp axes from leaf springs. Thanks again Cowboy for a great demo.

In February say HABA at Components making bowls for the Empty Bowls Initiative. Dave Koenig conducted the demo and several fine pieces were presented for auction.



March was busy with HABA at Barrington Farms during Texas Independence, LAMA's Conference "Banging on the Bayou" and a monthly meeting. This meeting was Tong Making at Bucksnot Forge with Tee Hines. I miss this one and now I wish I hadn't. Some very fine tongs were made at that

meeting. And finally in March was the Balcones Bluebonnet Workshop.

April found us once again in Oldenburg for the the Spring Blacksmith's Round-Up, where the training progression was featured. Also in April a couple of members were demonstrating at the Magnolia Depot Day.

Guido Schnidler showed us how to forge stainless steel at Tudor Forge in May. Dave Koenig also demonstrated copper leaf forging and coloring by quenching.

Pot Racks were on our anvils in June with Tee Hines demonstrating at Bucksnot Forge. I really felt like I was starting to figure it out that day.

In July HABA members tried their hand at making nails for the barn at Kleb Farm. I would like to personally thank Fred Collins for letting us use the barn for our meeting.

In August several of HABA's members had pieces on show at the Pearl Fincher Museum of Fine Arts during their Metal Worked exhibit. We once again were out at Kleb Nature Center at a chain maille demonstration in the air conditioned conference room. It was a great hit and we are going to get a fancy sign out of the deal.

September was literally a blow out for HABA when hurricane IKE hit our region. We had to cancel a demonstration at Armand Bayou and the Fall Forge Fest at Oldenberg. Bob Alexander was going to demonstrate. The good thing is we were able to reschedule his demonstration for 2009. Dave Koenig, Bob Hensley and Richard Boswell were on hand to demonstrate at the Blacksmith Family Day at The Pearl.

In October HABA had the chance to provide demonstrations at the Bayou City Arts Festival-Downtown. We probably had several hundred people stop by our tents. More talking was done than forging. Several members went to Barrington Farm and put on two days of demonstrations making materials for the farm.

HABA was at Armand Bayou Nature Center during the Martyn Farm Festival. The "Holiday Meeting" was held at Tudor Forge by Dave Koenig. Holiday Ribbons were the focus but several other pieces were made to celebrate the holidays.



HABA SPONSORS

I would like to thank our donors and sponsors that was supported us in 2008. Please visit them on the HABA website at www.habairon.org.

THE YEAR TO COME

Another exciting year is upon us and the scheduled meetings promise to be very informative and down right fun. The annual knife workshop has already taken place along with the HABA auction.

A couple of highlights of the months to come is a forge welding workshop and an iron making demonstration/experiment. Bob Alexander is re-scheduled to demonstrate during the Blacksmith Round-Up in April. I hope that everyone can make as many of the meetings as possible and I look forward to seeing you there.

On another note I would like to ask the membership to step forward and assist in the management of this fine organization. This organization has been establish and managed by many fine people but it needs you to step up and carry it on into the future. Serving as and advisory board member is rewarding. The advisory board is normally were replacements for retiring board members are chosen from and you would be a great help in keeping a fine tradition going.

There are other projects that we need help with as well. If anyone would be available to organize and manage the newsletter, that would be great. If there is any interest in these tasks, then let myself or a board member know.

In closing, keep those anvils ringing and the fires hot. Remember that this is your organization and the President and the Board of Directors appreciate any input that you might have.



Russell Parrish, President