Pennsylvania Artist-Blacksmiths' Association

Pennsylvania Artist-Blacksmith's Association

Dedicated to the preservation, sharing and expansion of the Artist-Blacksmith's skills

**July 2025** 

Next Meeting Date: Saturday, August 2

# Blacksmith Day at Old Dry Road Farm, Wernersville, PA

PABA will have its 12th annual Blacksmith Day the first Saturday in August. Volunteers are needed to make the day a success. We'll need help supervising the public as they try their hand at forging, or lend a hand in the kids area and show them how iron and clay are forged similarly. *If you are able, please come early and help with setup!* Contact Will Smith with any questions. After all day helping with the public and participating in the forging contest; we'll still need help at the end to get everything loaded and the site cleaned up. Please hang around and help. Public hours are 9AM - 4PM.

Tailgating and Public Sales near the barn in the designated area. \$20 table vendor fee for public sales payable to Old Dry Road Farm. - **Food Vendor for breakfast and lunch!** Iron in the hat in the barn.

Please contact PABA VP William Smith, 717-480-7686, wsmithpa@aol.com - if you have any questions or would like to offer help.

## Iron Master of the Day item: A Metal Toy

**The forging contest will be:** Drive a rail road spike through another railroad spike" in a limited amount of time. Only hammer and tongs are allowed for tools. (More contest info on the next page.)

This is a great day to show off blacksmithing to the public. Bring your friends!

Old Dry Road Farm is located west of Reading near Blue Marsh Lake **202 Highland Road, Wernersville, PA**.

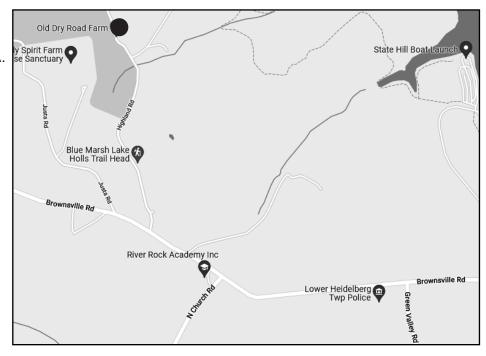
From the East (Reading)
Follow US-422 W (W Penn Ave)

- -Turn right onto Green Valley Rd
- -Turn left onto Brownsville Rd Look for Yellow Old Dry Rd Farm Sign and the PABA Anvil
- Turn right onto Highland Rd

#### From the West

Follow US-422 E

- -Turn left onto Bernville Rd
- -Turn right onto Brownsville Rd Look for Yellow Old Dry Rd Farm Sign and the PABA Anvil
- -Turn left onto Highland Rd



## **PABA Contacts**

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## -- Editor's Note --

We had two articles from members for this edition! Thanks Rick and Andrew for sending me those. I'm always hunting for more and anyone can feel free to share.

I spoke with Steve Gensheimer about some tool and supply company ideas he wanted to share. I decided I would turn those into a larger article for the September Striker.

- The Pennsylvania Striker is published bimonthly by the Pennsylvania Artist Blacksmith Association, Inc. (PABA), an affiliate of the Artist Blacksmith Association of North America (ABANA). Unless otherwise noted all text content is by the editor and all artwork is by Mark Smith.

Membership is open to anyone interested in blacksmithing. Dues are \$25 per calendar year. Contact a board member for an application.

- PABA makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained herein but assumes no liability in case of error or changing conditions. Any business relations or other activities undertaken as a result of information contained herein or arising therefore are the responsibility of the parties involved and not the Pennsylvania Artist- Blacksmith's Association, Inc.

### **Committee Leaders**

**Iron in the Hat Chairperson** - Gary Rhoads *HELPER NEEDED* 

Equipment & Maintenance - NEEDED

Publication Contact - Keith Eckman

Safety Equipment - Herb Moyer

ABANA Affiliate Contact - Doug Learn

Library - John Kauffman & Martin Reynolds

Event Hosting - Paul Huf

Facebook Monitor - Luke Shultz

PABA is in need of several positions.

Please let one of the board know if
you are interested in helping.

## **Additional Blacksmith Day Info**

- Contest "Drive a rail road spike through another railroad spike" in a limited amount of time. Only hammer and tongs are allowed for tools. Bonus points for putting some artistic flair also. Note: There is barely enough time to do both so contestants must be very careful how much time they spend on the artistic flair. The Drunken Smithy said they would donate 26 brand new spikes for the contest.
- Our Event Host, Paul Huf, will be bringing a few boxes of Dukin' coffee, donuts and water bottles. Luke Shultz has lined up the food truck again and this year and they have added pizza to the menu!
- Kids area Mary Myers and Annette Gray have offered to run the kids area. They could use some extra copper sheet scrap if anyone has some to spare.

Any extra hands to show or voices to explain things to the public are helpful

## PABA CALENDAR 2025

October 11- Williams Grove, Mechanicsburg, PA Iron Master of the Day Item:

A Flower

December 13 - Gallery, Paradise, PA Iron Master of the Day Item: Holiday Item

## **Furnace Town Historic Site - Artisan Day**

Saturday, August 9, 2025 10:00 AM 2:00 PM 3816 Old Furnace Rd, Snow Hill, MD

Experience History in Action!

Step back in time and watch history come alive at Furnace Town's Artisan Days!

Explore the Past:

Watch blacksmiths forge iron with fire and hammer. Discover the art of weaving and spinning. See broom makers craft functional works of art. Learn about historic woodworking techniques.

## Third Annual Nol Putnam Memorial Blacksmithing Hammer-in

Friday, September 5 - 12pm - 5pm Saturday, September 6 - 8am - 5pm 12697 Mountain Valley Road Broadway, Virginia 22815 www.alexanderbrothers.com FREE 2 DAY EVENT NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Forging Demonstration, Iron-in-the-hat, raffle, auction, tailgating, food, camping available.

\*Forging Competition\* Colonial-style Spatula made within the year 2025

(all contest entries will be raffled off)
Special Guest: Jennifer Petrila (Jennifer is a full time Equine Podiatrist residing in Massachusetts.
With nearly 50 years of experience behind the anvil. She specializes in Colonial Hardware.
Embracing her love of teaching, Jennifer has demonstrated multiple times at Blacksmithing events and ABANA conferences including their 50th anniversary conference.

Sponsored by: Alexander Brothers LLC, Virginia Institute of Blacksmith, Blacksmith Supply, Shenandoah Valley Blacksmithing Guild, Your Donations!

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

The 5th Cambria Iron Conference & Iron Street Invitational at The Center for Metal Arts, 106 Iron Street, Johnstown, PA. September 20, 2025

This year's featured artist will be Jake James, who was the inaugural featured artist. Jake, the students for the Octagon Collaborative Sculpture Workshop and the Octagon Support Team will use the 3000# Chambersburg and/or the 4000# Niles Bement hammers in making the sculptural elements of this years design. I have attended the previous four conferences and the skill of the Octagon Team and the equipment use has improved each year, making this a unique experience for not only the participants but also the attendees.

In addition, the second Iron Street Invitational will be held in the CMA classroom during the Octagon work. Teams of two smiths will be provided a piece of material, access to a coal forge, class tooling and an anvil to create a piece from the same piece of starting stock. The pieces will then be judged on categories such as craft quality, attention to detail, creativity, and more.

There will be an opening reception on 19 September for the from Core to Surface juried art exhibition that runs in conjunction with the Cambria Iron Conference.

Please follow CMA at centerformetalarts.org, @centerformetalarts and 814.418.0419 for information on registration.

https://centerformetalarts.org/events/conference/

## **SOFA Quadstate Roundup**

Miami County Fairgrounds 650 N County Road 25A, Troy, OH September 26, 2025 - September 28, 2025 sofablacksmiths.org

## Annual Blacksmithing Weekend at Fenimore Farm and Country Village

(formerly The Farmers' Museum) Cooperstown, NY

September 27th -28th from 10am- 5pm.
The weekend will include demonstrations by the museum's resident smiths as well as visiting smiths throughout the museum grounds. There will also be themed exhibits, activities, and much more!

The museum is currently looking for demonstrators for this event. If you are interested in participating as a demonstrator or a vendor, please contact Patrick MacGregor (p.macgregor@fenimorefarm.org).

## PABA at Rough & Tumble

PABA held its June meeting at Rough & Tumble in Kinzer, PA. This is the first time our group has had an official meeting there in about 20 years. The day was a little damp... But then what weekend hasn't been this year. There where several forges fired up and we had a smaller turnout of members but everyone had a chance to work on projects or just trying out techniques.



Jonathan Greenley worked on a ax head, getting some advice and help from Doug Learn and Brad Gray.







Zach Baker, with a bit of help from a few PABA members, worked on a project using one of R&T's coal forges and their Little Giant power hammer.



We had three great sounding bells for our Iron Master of the Day. Stan Newcomer was our winner!





Thank you to all the members that helped and demonstrated at the meeting. A very big THANK YOU to PABA/R&T members John Sturgis and Russ Jenkins for helping make this meeting a success and Gary Rhoads for running our Iron in the Hat. (Note: if you want to get more involved, Gary does need assistance.)



Behind the shop PABA had its forges open for anyone to use. Josh Nyemscek and Brad Gray spent some time working on projects.



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## **Garden Flower Stake**

Searching for a gift project for a garden club I came across videos by Swedish blacksmith Torbjorn Ahman and UK blacksmith Joshua De Lisle. Six years ago each had produced a YouTube "how to" on forging an Iris flower. Links to those are here:

https://youtu.be/dQ3tj9e2fDQ?si=25mVaXa10MFsq0Qg

And here: https://youtu.be/TngCn750w7g?si=90KDU6bw4u-h5OJB



I decided on De Lisle's design as a garden stake so online ordered the pattern with DXF and DWG files for CNC. There is link in video description if interested in purchasing. I think \$5 US currently.

I initially needed 30 templates and don't own CNC equipment or handheld plasma cutter so sent files to a local shop. Warning! Be sure to tell shop the files are in metric format or a tech may call asking, "Do you realize how many feet across these are?"

The material I used: 1/8" sheet for cutouts, stake 3/8 round x 42 inches, leaf flat 1/8 x 1 x 17 inches. This differs from De Lisle. He used 5/16 × 27.5 inches for stake and  $1/8 \times 3/4 \times 13 3/4$  for leaf. For me the slightly larger material looked more balanced with the mass of the Iris.

The tooling pictured is what I used. The diverging "V" swage was made to fit my anvil and is copied from

the first chapter of Mark Aspery - The Skills of the Blacksmith, volume 2. It was useful in shaping the

petals. However, Aspery states in his book this tool will not work on leaves



that are doubled back on themselves. This was true in working the petals. To get around that I clamped the hammer used to peen the petals in the vice and used the peen as a swage to work both petal sides if needed. When peening and shaping the large petals you will have to keep track of which go up vs down. Otherwise you forge the Ninja Mutant Corsage. In deciding how wide you want the base of the large petals be aware if you go too wide the smaller petals won't fit between the larger. Live Vicariously! Don't do what I did. I did the heat shrink wrap of leaf to stem as done in De Lisle's video, but later brazed as well for insured strength.

My thought on the 42 inch garden stake length was that it would give the gardener more flexibility in landscape placement and playing with heights. For in ground depth stability, I'm glad I went with that length as feedback showed the gardeners had imagination. The Iris has been used to hold rain gauges, candles, garden party drinks.

Blacksmithing is hobby for me. I still get asked to make the Iris. If you're involved with the craft circuit you might consider this an add-on.

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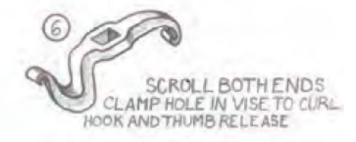
## **Adjustable Tong Clip**

By Nate Pressel a MABA member



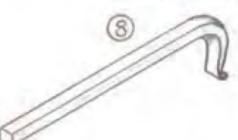
TAPER END & 14" LONG CUT OFF & 1" FROM HOLE







PART 2: TAPER 4" SQUARE TO 14" CUT TOTAL LENGTH TO 5-6"

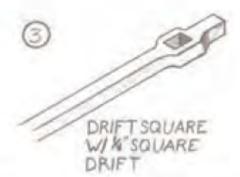


SCROLL END AND BEND I"OVER PAST 90", FILE FIT HOLE, ASSEMBLE, PEEN END AND CURVE OF PART 2.

NATE PRESSEL 08







### The Flower, porro faber ferrarius flos, or St. Clements's flower

## is said to spring from fallen tears shed by repentant blacksmiths.

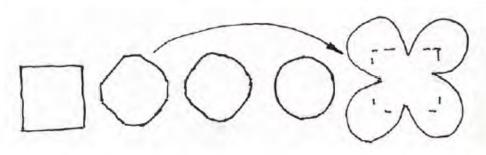
But you can create your own with a non-plated lag bolt.

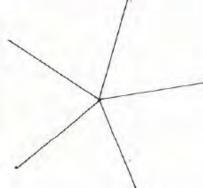
(I have used vinegar to eat the plating off objects in the past But it is messy and takes time)

You will need to make a bolster with a hole a little larger than the size of the lag diameter for the best results. (you can use the pritchel hole but if it is too large, much of the head will sink through and reduce the amount of material for your flower) If you countersink the hole in the bolster, you will form the calyx as you begin to draw the head of the bolt into a disk. After blunting the corners,



draw first with a cross or straight peen and then a ball peen for the 4 petal flower shown here. If a more elaborate bloom is your goal, draw





to a round disk and use your imagination. Note the bolster on the anvil over the hardy hole. If you do fine detail at this point you risk breakage

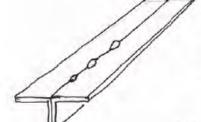
the leaf. A better way is to use the angle iron rivet heading tool you made to fit your vise after the leaf has been formed. Draw the stem down to the appropriate size, double over.

Many flowers are 5 petal so to the

the appropriate size, double over.

Many flowers are 5 petal so to the right is a 73 deg. pattern for you to use.





If your flower is not coming out right, reassess whether or not you are truly repentant! Fred Mikkelsen New England Blacksmiths



## A short explanation of how I coat my ironwork

I recently had to go modify some work we delivered about four years ago. The area where it is installed is very complicated and the rails and gates were finally installed last month. We were not called on to do the installation because the area (NYC) is a union protected area, and my shop isn't set up to manage union labor. The direct result was that our work got pretty beat up. It's inevitable when we install to have a few scratches, but when installed by others, there is almost always a LOT of chips, scratches and all-around damage. Pual Huf and I were chatting about coating and how i was going to fix things on site and he suggested I write up a short explanation. So here goes.

I almost exclusively use Butchers wax, applied hot for all interior work. When it goes outside, the best method I have found is a two-part wet paint system. Specifically, Sherwin-Williams Macropoxy 646 primer coat and Acrolon 218 Urethane top coat. These are both two-part paints that require a bit more care than you might be used to, but the benefit is substantial. For one, they cure faster and harder than other paints. The curing also is not as dependent on atmospheric conditions. These are industrial paints but fairly easy to find. Even here in Clearfield, my local Sherwin-Williams store had them in stock. You will need to handle them carefully and use stronger solvents for cleaning. I use a simple air sprayer (\$40 on Amazon) that requires a decent sized compressor to maintain consistent pressure. Cleaning these paints out of your sprayer will also require a thorough teardown as well.

I have strayed away from powder coat as it really has trouble getting into the cracks and crevices so common in decorative ironwork. Pre-catalyzed (one part) paints are also not on my good paint list. They tend to take a long time to cure as they are relying on evaporation. O'Rourke paints out of England make Vinylast and Aqualast paints (available through www.archirondesign.com) are the best option if you need to keep things simple. The Aqualast is waterborne and cleans up with soap and water. Just know it isn't as tough as the Vinylast. And that isn't anywhere near the two-part Sherwin Williams coatings. Without question sandblast your material before you paint. Most towns have a company that does "rust repair". Those guys are the cheapest option for blasting but I have used everyone from that scruffy guy in a dilapidated garage sandblasting in his back lot to a major company with cranes and auto blast systems. Regardless they all need to take of the mill scale and give you a nice tooth to hold the paint.

Last but not least, whoever paints has to really take pride in their work. Without exception, in my experience, a good painter makes your work look good. A bad painter makes your good work look terrible. This job I referenced above was a classic example. My painter of 20 years retired and the company I found was big, did industrial work, and knew the paint systems I was using. Sadly, they didn't really take pride in their work. This work for a very important client in NYC has rust weep all over. This is bound to happen on any ironwork that is forged since there are always joints that paint has trouble getting into. But every joint has orange residue from the oxidation dripping out. A good painter really takes the time to work paint in those joints and between that, the multiple layers, and a high quality paint, your metalwork should be safe for many years.

As for that weeping problem, our solution is simple, a bit of linseed oil. The oil takes a long time to cure and, in this case, its a good thing. It will penetrate into those joints before it sets up. It has decent longevity and can be reapplied as many times as it takes without affecting the look of the paint. I have found it to be extremely useful and I could write a whole article on linseed oil alone.

There is a lot more to say on this topic, but I hope this short summation of my favored coatings is helpful to you in your war against rust.

Andrew Molinaro

## **Member Offered Blacksmithing Classes**

**Allen Schaeffer • Furnace Creek Forge • Beginner Blacksmithing Classes •** Learn the basics one on one 484.651.9402 • www.FurnaceCreekForge.com

**Dave Fisher • Blacksmith Classes •** Fisher Forge • 572 Saint Michaels Rd. Hamburg, PA 19526 610-504-8060 • fforge@early.com - *Classes w/Dave Fisher through the Hamburg Area Arts Alliance* 610-562-3106 hamburgarts@verizon.net - \$190 (4 classes)

**Derick Kemper • Damselfly Forge •** Phone - 410-937-4244 • Email - Damselflyforge@gmail.com https://www.damselflyforge.com/blacksmith-classes

**Drunken Smithy •** Blacksmithing Classes • 2236 Lebanon Valley Mall • Lebanon, Pennsylvania 17042 (717) 833-4105 • forge@drunkensmithy.com

Martha Moore Westbrook • Jewelry & Metalsmithing Classes • caersidi@earthlink.net • 610-730-6216 Goggleworks Center for the Arts, Reading PA: www.goggleworks.org
The Baum School of Art, Allentown, PA: www.baumschool.org

## Regional Blacksmithing Classes

Adirondack Folk School - www.adirondackfolkschool.org • P.O. Box 2 • Lake Luzerne • NY 12846 • 518-696-2400

**Appalachian Center for Craft -** 1560 Craft Center Drive • Smithville, TN 37166 • 931-372-3051 or 615-597-6801 www.tntech.edu/craftcenter/workshops/

Augusta Heritage Center - augustaartsandculture.org • 100 Campus Drive • Elkins, WV 26241 • 304-637-1287

**Blacksmith Guild of Central Maryland -** *Carroll County Farm Museum* • Westminster, MD • 410-386-3881 or Karen - ksjones@carrollcountymd.gov • https://www.bgcmonline.org/classes

**Bryn Athyn College -** www.brynathyn.edu/department/building-arts • 2945 College Drive • Bryn Athyn, PA 19009 267-502-6000 • jkline@brynathyn.edu

Cedar Lakes - http://www.cedarlakes.com/craft-workshops/ • HC 88, Box 21 • Ripley, WV 25271 • 304-372-7873

Center for Metal Arts - www.centerformetalarts.com • 106 Iron St • Johnstown, PA 15906 • 814.418.0409

Clifton Forge School of the Arts - www.cfsota.org • 518 Church Street • Clifton Forge, VA 24422 • 540-862-7275

Floyd Center for the Arts - www.floydartcenter.org • 220 Parkway Lane, South • Floyd, VA. 24091 • 540-745-2784

**John C. Campbell Folk School -** www.folkschool.org • 1 Folk School Rd • Brasstown, North Carolina 28902 1.800.FOLK.SCH (365.5724)

**Ms Caitlin's School** - 26 West All Saints St. - Frederick, MD 21701 - www.mscaitlinsschool.com 301-246-2248 - to schedule an appointment - Info@mscaitlinsschool.com

**National Ornamental Metal Museum** - www.metalmuseum.org • 374 Metal Museum Drive • Memphis, TN 38106 901-774-6380 or 1-877-881-2326 • info@metalmuseum.org

**New England School of Metalwork -** www.newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com • 7 Albiston Way • Auburn, Maine 04210 207-777-6211 Toll Free 888-753-7502 • dglaser@newenglandschoolofmetalwork.com

Peters Valley Craft Center - www.petersvalley.org • 19 Kuhn Road • Layton, NJ 07851 • 973-948-5200

Randy McDaniel, Classes, author of "A Blacksmithing Primer" • 1044 Spielman Road, Berkeley Springs, WV 25411 rams4g@msn.com - www.blacksmithschoolwv.com

Rochester ARC + Flame Center - www.rocafc.com • 125 Fed Ex Way • Rochester, NY 14624 • 585-349-7110

**Touchstone Center for Crafts** - 1049 Wharton Furnace Rd • Farmington, PA 15437 • 724-329-1370 or 800-721-0177 www.touchstonecrafts.org/workshops • info@touchstonecrafts.org *50th Year Special Events!* 

Virginia Institute of Blacksmithing - 200 West Twelfth St. • Waynesboro, VA 22980 • 434-960-9718 • www.vablacksmithing.org

## **CLASSIFIEDS**

**Eggerling Damascus -** Specializing in Mosaic Blade & Bolster Material Robert Eggerling 610-682-6836 - www.eggerlingdamascus.com

Andrew Reist - Oak Lawn Blacksmith Shop - Lancaster, Pennsylvania

717-925-9310 - oaklawnblacksmith@gmail.com - Anvils, Swage blocks and other Blacksmith tools. https://www.etsy.com/shop/OakLawnBlacksmithUS or https://www.facebook.com/OakLawnBlacksmith/

## **SUPPLIERS**

Reese's Coal- Blacksmithing Coal - 53 Church Road - Quarryville, PA 17566 - 717-786-3375 (please call for hours)

Elligson Trucking - Freeland, MD 21053 - Blacksmithing coal - 410-357-5720 - https://elligsontrucking.com/index.html

Martin's Ag Service - Blacksmith Coal - 717.354.4996 - 338 Grist Mill Rd, New Holland, Pa -

**Coopersburg Bagging** - 551 Springfield Street, Coopersburg, PA - 610.282.2376. Normally sells coal by the ton, but sometimes has less than ton lots in 50# bags.

Fisher Coal Co. - English Center, PA - 570-337-5764 - Blacksmith coal sales

Mellinger Elvin E.& Sons - Blacksmith Coal - 117 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603 - 717-464-3822

Reifsnyders Ag Center - 7180 Bernville Rd Bernville, PA - 610-488-0667 - Blacksmithing coal

Weaverland Valley Coal - 170 Ranks Church Rd, New Holland, PA 17557 - 717-4454488

Blacksmithing Books - Blue Moon Press - Blue Moon Rd, Huntingdon, PA 16652 - 866-627-6922 - www.bluemoonpress.org

Metalworking Books - The Astragal Press - 5 Cold Hill Road - Mendham, NJ 07945 - 973-543-3045 - www.AstragalPress.com

**HOLLAND ANVIL** - www.hollandanvil.com - Anvils, Swage Blocks, and Blacksmith Supplies

**Kayne & Son Custom Hardware, Inc. - Blacksmiths Depot** - 100 Daniel Ridge Rd. Candler NC 28715 - (828) 667-8868 - www.blacksmithsdepot.com

GTS Gas - Gas & Welding Supplies - gtsgas.com- locations all over PA and the country - 1-800-942-1148

KEEN Compressed Gas Co. - Welding supplies & equipment. - Wilmington, DE - 800-533-6427 - www.keengas.com

SAHD Metal Recycling & Sales - www.recycleyourmetal.com

1045 Lancaster Avenue, Columbia, PA 17512 - 717-684-8506 - dan@recycleyourmetal.com

Steel and Metal Liquidators LLC, - www.shopmetal.com - 407 Old Airport Rd. - New Castle, DE 19720 - 302-322-9960 & 1584 Bunting Street - Pottsville, PA 17901- 570-391-0141

**Rivets** - Various sizes and metals, also screws and other fasteners. R. J. Leahy Company, 1475 Yosemite Avenue, San Fransico, CA 94124 - www.rjleahy.com • Phone 1-800-514-4106

**Larry Zoeller** - Forge building info and Supplies. Phone: 502 439-0812 - Zoeller Forge, 7509 Geswein Rd., Lanesville, IN 47136 zman59@earthlink.net - http://zoellerforge.com

Custom Forge Aprons - FORGE-APRONS.com - (575) 313-4650 - 1373 S. Powell Dr., Kanab, UT 84741

Page Belting Company - 104 High Street - Boscawen, NH 03303 - www.pagebelting.com - leather belting and gaskets

**Brown Engineering Co.** - 2135 North 13th Street, Reading, PA 19604 - brownengco.com - 610-929-0909 - Distributer of mechanical parts, lubricants and supplies.

**Cattail Foundry** - 167 W. Cattail Road Gordonville, PA 17529 - Amish owned metal foundry. Produces castings from nearly any pattern or part you supply.



Thanks to the following for their contribution or assistance to the Striker.

Pul Huf Rick Cooper William Smith Andrew Molinaro

I apologize if anyone was missed, it was not my intention.

## www.paba-site.org



PABA-PA-Artist-Blacksmiths-Association

PABA Membership Application 2025 (Jan. 1 - Dec. 31) \$2
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Do you have any particular skills (welder, accountant, carpenter, doctor) that may be helpful to the group or membership?

Please circle your skill level... Beginner Intermediate Advanced Professional

## PayPal option - Pabapaypal@gmail.com

Make Checks payable to PABA. Send completed application and \$25 (one year) to: Lenka Votrubova - 1023 Old Penfield Rd, Clearfield, PA 16830

June-Dec. price \$10

PABA USE

Cash \_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_ PayPal \_\_\_\_

New Member \$25\_\_\_\_ New Member after June

**Renewal \$25** \_\_\_\_\_

2024