

August, 2006

*Published six times
yearly by Southern
Ohio Forge & Anvil*

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Quad State '06 Ready to Go

The SOFA Board of Directors has set the 2006 Quad State Conference program. The August meeting of the American Bladesmith Society is set and promises to be the premier knife show in Ohio.



Ed Huelsman pounds out parts for an ox yoke at our July 2006 meeting. More inside

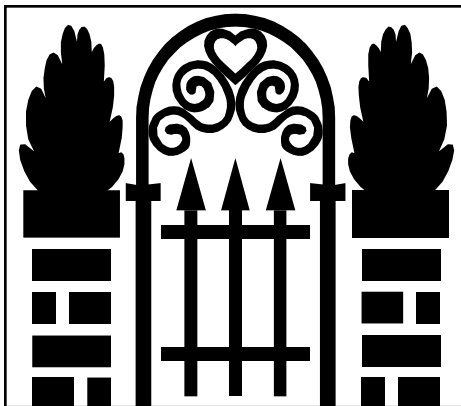
Quad State 2006

Editor's Corner

Jeff Morrison, Editor, SOFA Sounds

My God! Is it ever hot out! Be careful out in the shop or at your job if you work out in the heat. Drink all the water you can hold. Take a few more breaks than you normally do to let your body catch up so you don't become too worn out or dehydrated. My crews here in Newark usually go through 10 gallons a day of ice water. They fill up their 5 gallon Igloo Cooler once in the morning and once in the afternoon. They tell me that water is the only thing to drink when it is hot and you are working hard outside.

I have noticed that our selection of items at our monthly iron in the hat drawing has been rather skimpy as of late. We need to get busy and make some stuff to put in the hat. Even



some simple forge tools or an item you made and use in your shop could be reproduced and given away. A trade item or a decent forging hammer or a pair of tongs would be great. Things like that would sell more tickets and the result would be more money to

put towards this newsletter. If this sounds like an advertisement, it is! The printer we work with can make it look a lot better but it takes money. That's what the iron in the hat is for. *Your* newsletter!

Just like always, I need material to put in here. I have had a good response so far for material and I want you members to keep it up. We have some talented writers and I want to share your work with others! See you at the next meeting.

The Sofa Organization

Southern Ohio Forge & Anvil (SOFA) is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, enhancing and protecting the art of Blacksmithing. We are a chapter of the Artists Blacksmiths Association of North America.

SOFA is governed by a seven member Board of Directors that meets once a month in conjunction with the monthly club meeting.

Unless otherwise noted, the monthly club meetings are held on the first Saturday of every month starting at 1:00 pm. The clubhouse is located near the North entrance of the Miami Co. Fairgrounds in Troy, Ohio.

Dues are \$10.00 per year and includes 6 issues of the SOFA Sounds newsletter and access to club

forging facilities.

Members are encouraged to bring guests and anyone with an interest in the forging of metal and the tooling to make items out of steel will find our meetings most interesting. It must be understood by all that blacksmithing and the tools and methodologies involved with its practice can be dangerous and basic safety rules apply at all SOFA functions. Eye and ear protection must be worn when viewing or participating in blacksmithing.

Articles of interest may be sent to Jeff Morrison, 17483 St Rt 161, Plain City, OH 43064. (614) 873-1888, Jeff43064@peoplepc.com. All photos will be returned to the sender if requested. You can also bring them to the monthly meetings!

New Works by our Members



Copper Vase

By

Charlie Staley

*Knife from nail gun
nails*

By

Ed Rhoades



Trivet

By

Steve Roth

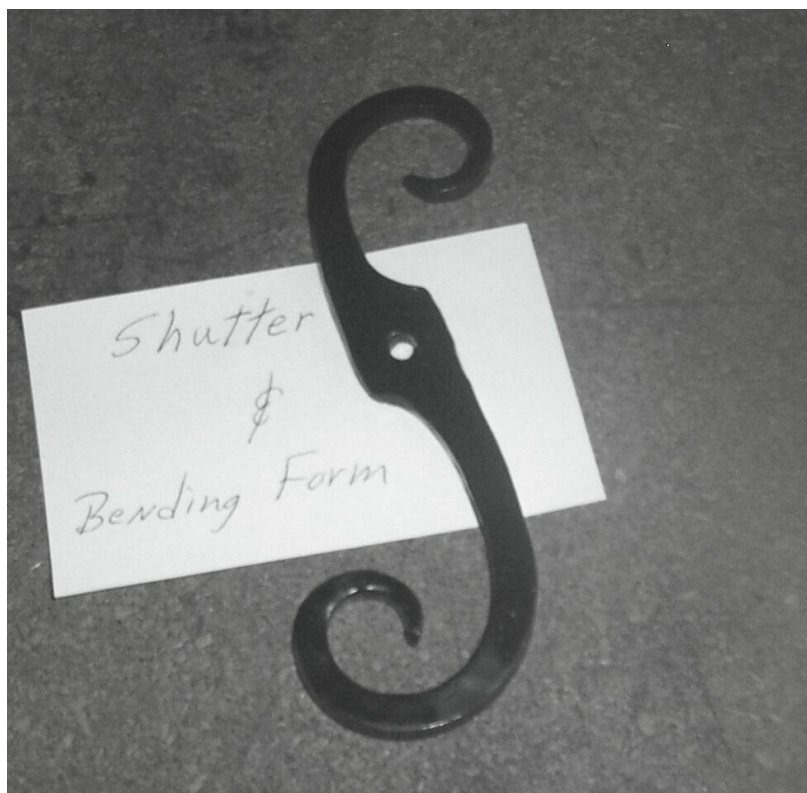


New Works by our Members

Old Ox Yoke

*Brought in
By*

Ed Huelsman



Shutter Dog

July Demonstration Ed Huelsman, Ox Yokes



Ed Huelsman gave a fine presentation about oxen and the hardware it takes to hitch them up to work. Someone asked what an ox was and Ed explained that any cow can become an ox if it is trained to be a beast of burden. The way an ox is hitched positions it to push the wagon using its whole body instead of the way a horse is hitched which causes it to use only its hind legs. Ed made a bow pin which is used to hold the wooden bow to the yoke.

What makes an oxen hitch different is the tongue of the wagon slips through the ring on the bottom of the yoke and is shown in the photo at the right. A chain is then attached to another ring in the yoke (not pictured) that is also attached to the wagon. In this manner, the oxen can work together to push the wagon and with the tongue in the ring, steer it as well. Ed explained that oxen were typically used to move heavy wagons over rough terrain. They were much slower than horses but were more powerful thus the heavier work was left to them. Ed's demonstration was very enlightening and we thank him sharing his knowledge with us.



Homemade Charcoal, Ron Gross

I burned a pile of brush the other day and it made three buckets of charcoal. It doesn't take much effort to make charcoal, it just happens when wood burns. When the flames have subsided and the brush pile has collapsed to a pile of hot ashes, you have charcoal (with some ashes). However, this charcoal will continue to slowly burn away as long as air is available. If you want to save the charcoal, put it in a metal container and put a lid on it. I use an old 5 gallon metal bucket. I also use an old barbecue grill with the vents closed. The bucket will be hot at first, but will cool down in a few hours. If it stays hot, there is air leaking in. This is a common problem when it is windy.

If you are wondering, "Why bother?"; my answer is, "I don't know!". I like charcoal for small jobs. It lights easily, there's no smoke and no clinkers. I also like it for starting coal fires because it reduces the start-up smoke.

Dealing With the Public, Jeff Morrison

As most of you know, I have been a public servant all my life. I have worked with public utilities, consulting firms, I have done technical assistance and have trained others to be water and wastewater operators. The one thing that has been constant in my career is that I have always had to deal with all kinds of people. If you are into doing blacksmithing at craft shows, fairs, rendezvous and the like, you will talk blacksmithing to people who will know nothing about it, those who think they know all about it, those who know a little, and those who know a lot. You will answer the question, "what are you doing (making)" at least 1000 times in the course of a weekend. Even though you have answered it 1000 times, the next person who asks doesn't know that. If a lady comes in with small kids, talk to all of them because the kids are always fascinated with what you are doing and the mom just might be inter-

ested in buying something you brought to sell and will be more inclined to do so if you treat them with kindness. How many times have you heard, "Hell, honey, I can make one of those at home!" Bite your lip and smile. If "honey" wears the pants in the family, she will buy something even if Bubba can make it at home because she knows he never will so be patient! Put things in simple terms when you explain a procedure, if the person seems to understand quickly, get a little more technical so they don't feel talked down to. If someone says that blacksmiths only make horseshoes, point out to them that long ago, blacksmiths made most everything that was metal from dinner forks to nails and hinges and yes, "horseshoes"! Word always gets around about the friendly blacksmith and I assure you that friendly will be invited back and old mean and grouchy will not.

Upcoming Events

Quad State Blacksmith Roundup
September 22-24, 2006
Miami County Fairgrounds
Troy, Ohio

October 7-9 2006
Peters Valley Craft Center
Third Annual Early Iron Smelt
[Www.petersvalley.org](http://www.petersvalley.org)

Books for sale:

A Blacksmith's Craft
George Dixon

Charleston Ironwork
Charles N. Bayless

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**See note below*

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NAME _____

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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ANNUAL DUES ARE \$10.00 PER YEAR

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO SOFA AND SEND TO:

SOFA
P.O. Box 24308
Huber Heights, OH 45424-0308

It was decided at the July, 2003 meeting that all dues will be payable in October regardless of when your membership is normally due. This is an effort to ease the burden on the book keeping. Some people will get an extra few months of membership, some will not. Most of our memberships have been gotten at Quad State and it was the easiest month to standardize dues payment. Please see any Board Member for additional information.

THOSE INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP IN

ABANA

MAY WRITE OR CALL:

LeAnn Mitchell, Executive Secretary

P.O. Box 816

Farmington, GA 30638

(706) 310-1030

(706) 769-7147 FAX

abana@abana.org

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