



NEWSLETTER

May 2009 Volume 2 Issue 5

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Blacksmith Interview: By Vince Nakovics

I discovered Paula and Larry Jensen's site online and found there to be an abundance of skill flowing from every page, and that was before I realized it was a for real blacksmith site! The work they do is very inspirational and well worth taking the time to take a look.

Paula & Larry Jensen

Earth Eagle Forge

Guthrie, MN

www.eartheagleforge.com

The Beginning: Larry's first experience was when he was a child. "I remember watching the neighborhood blacksmith Fred Bunes pounding out plow shears." My (Paula) first experience was watching Larry as a hobby blacksmith in our garage. Then trying it and feeling awkward and clumsy thinking, "I can't do this!"

The Calling: Larry still works his 'day job' as a mechanic/millwright at a local oriented strand board (O.S.B.) plant. But he works with me when I'm in need of help in the shop. Because of his experience, all designs/jobs that we get are discussed on the best possible procedure to accomplish the tasks at hand.

Paula: It hadn't occurred to me that I would be a full time blacksmith. Being a full time artist has always been my goal. It was Larry's prompting and his willingness to teach me the metal working craft (the man has patience!!) that finally convinced me that this was the route to take. Thankfully by practicing this craft, my scrap pile gets smaller every year.

Larry has worked in fab shops and repair shops most of his adult life. He attended vocational school for welding after high school in 1964. Larry has been interested in blacksmithing for about as long as he's worked with metal.

The fine arts have been my (Paula) interest. I've sketched and painted all of my life. I attended some college for fine arts. This is where Larry and I met. Painting and such takes a back seat to the blacksmithing at this point, but I still try to keep doing it. I am an artist who uses blacksmithing methods to produce my art.

Traditional vs. modern: Both Larry and I feel that learning the 'traditional methods' of blacksmithing is important. This is where most of the understanding takes place for metal forming. Modern methods are a way of speeding things up economically as far as running a business. We don't believe that quality should ever be compromised and that whichever method produces the best results is what should be used. Quality first, economics second.

The Tools: Larry: "My favorite tool(s) is which ever tool produces the results that I'm looking for or at least trying to achieve." The anvil that we both use on a regular basis is about 150lbs. Works great for everything we've produced up to this point.

Paula: "My favorite hand held hammer is a Swede hammer. Not sure how heavy it is; I'm guessing 2lbs. But mostly I use a power hammer. (50lb little giant) I'm like Larry, whatever tool produces the look I want, that's the tool I'll use.

Starting Out & What you get out: Larry: "Any smith starting out would do well to master the few basic procedures; drawing out, upsetting, tapering, hammer control etc., having said that, the Smith can then spend the rest of their lives exploring the possibilities that metals hold. The more skills and knowledge that a smith

acquires the easier it is to understand how different designs can be accomplished. It is the combining of the use of different techniques that gives the smith the 'keys' that open the unlimited potential of blacksmithing."

"Blacksmithing affords the smith input at all levels of his work, from conception to consumer."

Paula: "Patience!! Don't give up!! When you've accomplished a well made piece and you feel really good about it; remember, you can do better. It is important to look back on every project with a certain amount of pride, but to always re-evaluate what could have been done differently that would have made the piece better. Then file it in your memory bank for the next project."

"Satisfaction on all levels, it is pure joy to see a design manifest into a three dimensional object. A real pleasure to see clients faces when their commissioned piece is presented to them. That is when it truly is 'pay-day'.



Timber Bands
& Anchors



Wind swept
Tree Fireplace
Tools



Pot Rack

Paula bringing life
to a leaf





Fence &



Gate

Vase

Adam Thoroughgood House: On April 18th Mike Lambiase, Tom Herendeen and myself (Vince Nakovics) met and conducted a one day demonstration here. We had beautiful weather and what appeared to be a fairly good crowd. Mike and Tom did most of the crowd control, whilst I toiled at the forge. Hahaha. Not really, it turned out to be a slow day and since none of us had basically ever done this demo, we enjoyed the learning curve. We did manage to sell a few items regardless of our outback location. Our location was due to a misunderstanding between us and ATH. We would have done much better had we been up front closer to the action of the day. That's where I am told we have been located in the past and we usually do fairly well at this event. Oh well. We three had a nice day under a great tree providing us ample shade and an occasional visitor for us to chat with. There is always next time! Practice! Practice! Hahaha.

Darnedest Thing: Me and a friend of mine got together the other day to make some gum tree leaves for the Australian Tree Project. I have some tent stakes that have been around for about 3 years now, most of the time in my shed, sometimes outside for one reason or another. Not a drop of rust on them. I even touched them against a magnet that I have on my anvil. Well now these stakes work like butter at a nice orange heat, give off a fine stream of sparks on a grinder, they even look like stainless steel. Well as you can guess they aren't. My friend happen to have a pocket magnet and tested it out on them and lo and behold! Sticks! Hold! We had to pry that magnet off the stake! So here I am wondering what the heck is going on, all this time I was sure they were stainless. I have not have the pleasure of this experience up to this point that one half of a magnet would lose it's magnetism. One side of the magnet works just like it did when I put it on my anvil, say only 4 years ago. The other side has zilch, nada, no magnetism what so ever. Anybody else ever have that happen to them. I guess I have lived a sheltered life at least to me it was the Darnedest Thing!

Illinois Blacksmith Hammer In Info:

This is to inform you of two events that will take place in Pontiac Ill. The first is the annual IVBA Conference. This will be held June 12th-14th 2009. This year, since the URMBC is to be held July 17th -19th, The demonstrators will be IVBA members. Demonstrations will include fielding questions on blacksmithing techniques. John Lovin and Augie Schmidtt will conduct this demonstration. Gary Jameson will cover art principles as they apply to blacksmithing and Clifton Ralph and Steve Parker will give tips and techniques on the power hammer. More information may be found on the IVBA website www.illinoisblacksmiths.org .

More information on the UMRBC conference may be found at www.umrbc.org . The UMRBC is an event sponsored by the Indiana Blacksmiths Association, Upper Midwest Blacksmith Association, and Illinois Valley Blacksmith Association. Each of these clubs will sponsor a top quality demonstrator.

As is customary with blacksmithing events tailgating is welcome.

If it is possible for you to disseminate this information to your members I would be appreciative. You are all welcome and I can assure you of a good time of learning and fellowship.

Thank You for you time and effort

Tom Schertz

IVBA President

April's Meeting: Tom Herendeen (VP) filled in for Travis Covington (P) as he was unable to attend. On a sad note long time member Tony Pirrone's wife Marie Francis passed away recently and the Guild made a donation to a charity in her name. Adam Thoroughgood House (ATH) Demo went fairly well. Items that were selling during that event were crosses and steak turners (the RR spike type). Since we know that crosses sell it would be appreciated if someone would donate some more cross blanks of any size for future demos. Thanks in advance.

The Elizabeth City, NC, Heritage Days event scheduled for May has been moved to August 2nd & 3rd, and will be on the big parking lot near the center of town. It will be a little hotter then so bring plenty of water and maybe Vince Parrish will bring his fan to help cool the day. Francis Land House demos, of which we have four remaining, we could use some plant stakes, cheese slicers and bottle openers as well as all the other previously discussed items. There was a discussion about classes and about those members who have a particular talent or two.

It was bantered about maybe holding several one day classes or even half day classes to allow more members with a talent to hold one. The cost of these classes, if any, will be based on the skill being taught. For openers there was a request for a show of hands of the eighteen members present, who might be interested in taking a broom making class with Mike Keeney. About nine put up their hands. Rusty Heeley has also offered up his leather working class, this class is pricey, but that's because of the basic kit you will need. If you are interested in any of these classes send Tom Herendeen or Tim Edney an email, or give them a call. June will be our traditional Summer Family Day, and of course it is on Father's day so make something your dad or someone else's might like for Iron in the Hat! There is a demo at ATH in June and items with Father's in mind would be good to have on hand.

Pete Ciula is downsizing his shop for a while and has some stuff to sell off, give him a call and see if he has something you need or can use.

Steve LaPaugh went over the accounts and all are in order. If you need more details email Steve for a spread sheet. All in all it was a very productive meeting and everyone in attendance had a good time. Last and Not least Anne Roche was presented with her Beginner Blacksmith Certificate by our Training Coordinator Tim Edney, Well Done Anne!



Tom Herendeen



Mike Lambiase,
Anne Roche
work while Jon
and Tim look on.



Anne Roche recipient of Beginner Blacksmith Certificate

Chili Pepper: Tim Edney's chili pepper made the meeting hot! He started with a 6" long, 3/4" black pipe (galvanized pipe can give you Metal Fume Fever and death can result). Taper the end just like with a piece of steel – round to square – square to round. Hit it nice and easy at first and then you can hit it harder as the size of it decreases. Take the other end and neck it down in a guillotine, spring swage or other method that works for you. A really good Blacksmith would do it on the side of his anvil with his peen. Anyway neck it down to fit a 3/8" rod that will serve at the stem. The stem can be upset on end, grooved to allow the neck of the pepper to lock it in or you can leave it as is and just taper it on the outside end and forge weld it when you do your final necking of the pepper. I got ahead here. Heat up the swaged end and cut the edges so you have four or five leaves, enough to make them fold over easily. Now you can weld your stem in. Remember that you have to watch your leaves so as not to burn them up. Take your time! Take your Time! Take Your Time! Swage in your stem and then curl the stem and pepper end to your liking. If you want before you swage your stem you can fuller, vein or embellish your leaves at that time. Baroque wax gives a nice color and finish to the pepper.

Give it a try. There are lots of sources for detailed instructions for the Chili Pepper, one is the 2004 TBG Tip and Techniques disc that Tim Edney put together for us. There's a lot of good How to do on it. See Joe Gentile to purchase a copy.



Tim to the left and
Tim to the right...



Tim cutting
leaves

Tim's Hot Chili
Pepper!



Editor's Note: Well I want to start off Steve LaPaugh for his photos and Vince Parrish for a really neat Photo Slide Show that I don't have the computer power to incorporate into my newsletters, until I update it. (That won't be for about 2 years as this one is only 3 years old now). Hopefully Travis has had time to upload it onto the website for everyone to enjoy. Speaking of the website, remember to check it for update to the demo schedule. From what Tom Herendeen tells me we have several demos that are not listed on the website yet, but should be shortly. If you can't wait call Tom or Vince Parrish for more details. We have a fairly busy season this year and hope to see many of you at the demos, even if you can't stay for the entire event, come out and enjoy part of it with your fellow metalphiles (Is that word, I'm too lazy to look it up today. hahaha.) So there's the scope of the month of April. Hope you enjoyed this month's issue. See ya that the forge. Vince Nakovcs.

Tidewater Blacksmiths Guild Mission Statement

“The Tidewater Blacksmiths Guild is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the craft of Blacksmithing and to increasing the public awareness of the history of Blacksmithing while at the same time demonstrating that in this world, things hand made still exist and remain objects of art”

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Tidewater Blacksmiths Guild meets every third Sunday of the month. Location of the meeting is posted on our website: <http://www.tidewaterblacksmiths.com> .

Demonstration Schedule: See website or contact Tom Herendeen or Vince Parrish for details.

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