



Affiliate Letter November 2007

11/28/2007

The new Board and Officers of ABANA send their greetings. The 2008 Board met at the National Ornamental Metal Museum in Memphis on November 15 through 17, 2007. Many thanks are due to Jim Wallace of the NOMM for his excellent hospitality. We have a lot of work to do this year and we have the talents and energy to get it done.

ABANA has a new slate of Officers for 2008. Chris Winterstien is our new President. Dorothy Stiegler and Rome Hutchings are First and Second Vice Presidents respectively. Will Hightower is the new Treasurer and Eric Ryser continues as Secretary. The board has several new members as you have seen in the last Anvil's Ring. And we are always looking for help.

Your Affiliate Liaison Board Member is Paul Boulay, yours truly. I was appointed to fill the board seat of Dave Mudge who resigned after many years of service to ABANA and the Affiliate Liaison position. Dave will be sorely missed.

For over 30 years ABANA has been the center and the glue that propelled the re-emergence of blacksmithing as a vital craft and medium of expression. Over time the local groups became stronger and in many cases produce publications and conferences that are at least as compelling for many of their members as those of the national organization. However, affiliates come in all shapes and sizes. And the resources that ABANA makes available will vary considerably as well. ABANA's scholarship and grants programs are in place to assist individuals and affiliate groups in achieving educational objectives.

The attached note from Mark Aspery explains his view of the continuing value of ABANA to the craft. We will be focusing attention on the areas that Mark points out as of particular value to affiliates. (Note to newsletter editors: This was published the California Blacksmith Magazine Nov./Dec. 2007. Both the CBA Editor and Mark Aspery have given their gracious permission to reprint this content.)

Chris will make a President's letter available shortly with many more details on the board meeting and ABANA's plans as well as analysis of several issues from the recent past. In case you are wondering, the Board voted unanimously in support of the 2010 and future conferences.

ABANA is looking for the assistance of our affiliates to attract new members. Several of the board members including Chris Winterstein and Dorothy Stiegler are donating their services as demonstrators; some off-board blacksmiths including Dan Nauman are participating as well. Affiliates (or groups of affiliates meeting together) who have 15-20 new or returning paid-up ABANA members can take part. Chris is the lead demonstrator on this program. He will donate a full day of demonstrating at a weekend event anyplace within half a day's drive of his current locations in Pennsylvania or North Carolina. Full details and availability dates on application. Affiliates may offer to raffle off these demonstrator's services as private tutors as well.

ABANA is actively looking for ways to serve its members better. To that end we have created a membership survey to better understand the characteristics and needs of our members - this includes affiliate members who are not currently ABANA members. This is ready today as an Internet survey instrument. To take the survey, use this link with your web browser:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=tY9bZ9u_2f5IIPBVLMO41k7w_3d_3d

We will also make the survey available as a paper document that can be mailed back to the ABANA central office. The survey will also be printed in the ABANA publications in order to cover those that don't have convenient Internet access. (Note to newsletter editors: the survey is available as a word file that you can insert in your publication if you desire.)

I welcome your feedback and look forward to working with all ABANA affiliates.

Best Regards,
Paul Boulay
ABANA Affiliate Relations Board Member