

## President's Message, Posted on ABANA.ORG January, 2010

Fellow members your ABANA Board of Directors hope that you have enjoyed a joyful, peace filled holiday season; all of us are hoping for a more prosperous new year. The annual Board of Directors meeting is behind us now and we have come away with renewing our resolve to continue making improvements for the benefit of the membership and the Blacksmithing community as a whole.

Here are a few highlights of our efforts during 2009:

- Attended the American Craft Council annual Conference to network with other craft/art based organizations.
- Expanded the number of vendors participating in the "Members Only Discount Program".
- Continued into the second year of the Medical, Vision and Dental insurance program for our members.
- Created and put in place a new award called the "ABANA Blacksmith Heritage Award" to recognize those individuals and organizations that do the important work in "service to the community by increasing the public knowledge and awareness of blacksmithing."
- Secured a conference site that fits the feedback from our member survey, including camping & hot showers.
- Planned and budgeted for "ABANA's Greatest Hits", the 2010 conference with a truly educational focus, with great workshops, seminars and round table discussions.
- Made a continuous effort to improve our publications. Put in place a single point of contact email address [publications@abana.org](mailto:publications@abana.org) that goes to several board members and the editors of the Anvil's Ring and the Hammer's Blow so that the board is more involved in the article submission process.
- Published the association past financials to the ABANA website and here in the pages of the Anvil's Ring.
- Closed the association books in the "black", making this the second such occurrence in the last ten years.

Looking forward into the future, here are a few highlights of our focus for 2010:

- The 2010 conference, "ABANA's Greatest Hits", opening Wednesday, June 2nd and running through Saturday June the 5th is our primary goal for the year.
- Continue the work started by the Insurance Committee to get "Shop" insurance and look at what ABANA can do in the area of event insurance for the Affiliate Regional Conferences. Several Affiliates are having difficulty getting event coverage and/or are faced with huge increases in their premiums.
- Continue to make improvements to our publications, appealing to the diversity of our membership.
- Our relationship with the ABANA Affiliate organizations has improved in 2009 and we will continue to work on making improvements for the benefit of all.
- Plan, develop and implement a series of awards to recognize the works of the membership in their preferred area of interest. For example, Art & Sculptural forged works, Architectural forged works, Furniture/Interior forged works and perhaps an overall award of People's Choice. The program might have three levels in each category, such as "Gold", "Silver" and "Bronze", with the same idea applied to the People's Choice award.
- Begin the planning of the 2012 conference to be held in Rapid City, South Dakota and select a site for the 2014 conference.
- Complete the work started in 2009 to revise and update our conference procedures manual, compiling all the data, documents, policies and notes into a single source location easily accessible by future conference committees.
- Complete the work started in 2009 to revise and update the Association policy and procedure manual, with a focus on the Board of Directors, Central Office operations and our Scholarship and Grants Program.

In closing, please feel free to contact any board member with concerns, questions, and suggestions. We have our ears on and we are listening.

For Love of the Craft,  
Rome H. Hutchings, ABANA President (2010)