



Notes from the Forge Master

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for the well wishes. I'm still not totally recovered, but am gaining steps everyday. Also, thanks to all of you who participated in the Illiana "Christmas in the Village". From what I hear the whole event was a big success and the blacksmith shop was a key part of the program. Carol and I really regret not being there. That's the first time we missed it since the first one.

Gene Hollingsworth made arrangements for the donation of an antique drill press for the shop. It will need some repair, but once mended it will be a nice addition. Dan Michael, Eric Smith and Charles Kemble drove a lot of miles to pick it up and deliver it to the shop. Come warmer weather we will tackle the restoration. Thanks Gene and the crew who picked it up.

Rocky Forge normally does not meet in December due to the "Christmas in the Village" and everyone is so busy.

However, several members have suggested the shop be open for an open forge, no meeting, just get together and pound hot metal.

So Dan Michael will open the shop December 14th for an open forge time. Bring your own food and maybe someone might pick up some doughnuts. Have fun and be safe.

Hopefully, I can make an appearance by then.

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Recent highlights

We had our November meeting with a fond farewell to Dominick Andrisani. Thank you, Dominick, for your many years of fellowship, service, and guidance. It has been a pleasure to have spent time with you over the years. You have been an inspiration, friend, and mentor, and we all appreciate it.

Several members fired up forges yesterday. Some practicing skills, others getting a start to the Christmas season. Some of the more experienced craftsmen were passing on skills and knowledge to those less experienced. Gene Hollingsworth donated a sheet metal brake. It is a Harbor Freight brand, with some enhancements. Gene has modified it to work much better and it will have a prominent place in our soon to be sheet metal area of the shop. Maybe we can take a deep dive into what he did to it and document for future generations. Gene is so good at pointing out the modifications, then explaining why he did it. More to come in future editions.

Upcoming Events

December IBA meeting at Don Reitzel's Shop
12/14

December RFBG Open Forge
12/14/24 9-3

January RFBG Meeting
1/11/25 9-3

Christmas in the Village

We had a good turnout of Blacksmiths for the annual Christmas in the village. Thank you to all that were there working or just showed up to support. We had great crowds on Saturday with people milling about. Those in attendance were Dominick Andrisani, Eric Smith, Matt Havens, Dave and Caleb Dillman, Justin Prather, Michael Ferrell, Bobby, and Dan Michael. If I missed someone, please let me know.

Projects for Illiana

We've got a couple of requests for improvements and/or tools for the Illiana group. Tom Swanson has a need for a long-handled scoop to be used to clean out the water shut off pit. The squirrels have filled the pit with hickory nuts and gravel making it very hard to actuate the valve. Another project is to provide some fencing for the Quonset building to protect a new display. Let's put our heads together and help our neighbors.



