

# **A Program To Share Successful Affiliate Activities**

An ABANA service to The Affiliates

**The Guild of Metalsmiths** (Minnesota and Western Wisconsin) wishes to share this successful activity with all affiliates. For more information contact Pete Stanaitis, (715) 698-2895 or [spaco@baldwin-telecom.net](mailto:spaco@baldwin-telecom.net).

## **What is this successful activity.**

The Guild of Metalsmiths conducts a yearly Instructors' Workshop to train the instructors who teach our beginning workshops. The Instructors' Workshop is an all day Saturday event. All instructors are required to attend.

## **Why use this activity.**

The Instructors' Workshop (1) aids in the recruitment of instructors, (2) improves the quality of instruction and (3) makes all the beginning workshops consistent with one another.

Recruiting a sufficient number of instructors is often a problem because 12-15 instructors are needed to teach all three beginning workshops. If prospective instructors realize that they will receive support and training they will be more likely to volunteer for this position.

Training of teachers always improves instruction. This is especially true because many of our first year instructors are inexperienced in teaching blacksmithing workshops. Even persons with some experience can benefit from additional training.

Consistency between all the beginning workshops is necessary. This is achieved by having one curriculum and having all instructors agreeing to use only that curriculum.

## **Description of the successful activity.**

The persons registered in the Instructors' Workshop are being prepared to teach The Guild Of Metalsmiths Beginning Workshops. The Guild of Metalsmiths conducts three Beginning Workshops each year. Each workshop consists four all day Saturday sessions. The first three sessions are devoted to instruction and practice of the basic blacksmithing processes and during the fourth day the students make two or three items.

Throughout this article the persons enrolled in the Instructors' Workshop are referred to as *students* in the Instructors' Workshop and as *instructors* in the Beginning Blacksmithing Workshop. For clarity, from this point on they will be referred to as student/instructors (SI.)

The Guild of Metalsmiths has held the Instructors' Workshop annually since 1996. The content of the workshop changes every year as the needs of the SI's change and as the instructors of the Instructors' Workshop gain experience in conducting this workshop. At the conclusion of the workshop the SI's are asked to complete an evaluation form which the instructors of the Instructors' Workshop carefully consider and use in the planning of next year's workshop. The instructors also visit the Beginning Workshops to gain personal impressions on the instruction.

The following description of the curriculum contains that which has been taught over the past eight years; not everything is currently used. The workshops evolve over the years.

- ❖ A 33 page manual is given to each SI.
- ❖ During the beginning years considerable time was spent planning the curriculum of the Beginning Blacksmithing Classes. As the years went by we gradually decided upon what should be taught and how we should teach it. Currently, we spend little or no time changing the curriculum. However, we do need to emphasize the need to stick to the curriculum and for the SI's not to go off in different directions when teaching the Beginning Blacksmithing Classes.
- ❖ The SI's are given instruction on how to demonstrate a blacksmithing method. They then role-play giving a blacksmithing demonstration. (Role-playing is the most valuable part of this training!) The other SI's give feedback to the role-playing SI's with the emphasis on being supportive and positive.
- ❖ The SI's are given instructions on how to supervise students at the workstation. The instruction follows the same procedure as in "how to demonstrate," described above.
- ❖ We teach and role-play the Instructor-Coach Method. Since the newer SI's teaching the Beginning Blacksmithing Workshops are not highly experienced and able to smoothly teach independently, an SI coach is used for support. The SI coach follows along with the demonstration using a written guide giving prompts to the SI demonstrator when needed. This process must be role-played for the SI's to feel comfortable with it.
- ❖ How to give instruction and feed-back to a new blacksmith in the basic course is important. We instruct and role-play this process emphasizing facial expression, tone of voice, words that are used and to be generally supportive. This instruction has been given in a variety of ways over the years.
- ❖ Teamwork. Each year three teaching teams are formed and they begin the process of meeting together to plan their workshops. Remember, the three most important aspects of teaching a good workshop are preparation, preparation and preparation.
- ❖ Blacksmithing skills are not normally taught at this workshop. However, there have been a few times that the instructors have observed the need to give a short demonstration on a specific blacksmithing skill.
- ❖ The Certificate of Associate Instructor is presented to the first time SI's, Certificate of Instructor is presented to second year SI's, and a seal is affixed to the previous certificate of the "old timers".

### **How may you use this activity.**

Think about the workshops that your association has taught. Could they be improved with more preparation similar to that described in this article? Remember, there are many, many details not given in his article—you will have a good time discovering them for your self. Talk about it with the persons who teach blacksmithing workshops for your association. *Best of all, discuss this activity with your board of directors.*

# A Program To Share Successful Affiliate Activities

## An ABANA service to the affiliates

The **Michigan Artist-Blacksmiths Association** wishes to share this successful activity with all affiliates. Steve Alling, President, hopes you will find this information to be valuable. (Steve is at [allingjan@yahoo.com](mailto:allingjan@yahoo.com) for more information, mention ABANA in the subject line.)

### **What is this successful activity?**

MABA holds an annual “election of officers-Christmas party.” The highlights of this meeting are three fold: Election of officers, gift exchange, auction and breaking bread together.

### **Why use this activity?**

This annual meeting gives the opportunity to elect officers, thank the outgoing officers, raise money, enjoy a Christmas party, and most of all, to promote the growth of relationships between members.

### **Description of the successful activity.**

**When.** MABA holds this daytime meeting on a Saturday in early December. The meeting starts at noon and ends at 5:00 PM. The officers arrange for a hall with kitchen facilities.

**Family.** The member’s entire family is invited and encouraged to attend the meeting—this is important. This *family* activity makes for a pleasurable experience with MABA that leads to greater identification with MABA. All this results in the member participating more fully in MABA. The family participation is one of the most important parts of this meeting.

**Dinner.** The members and their family enjoy a meal together. There is something about breaking bread together that makes for a feeling of closeness with one another. It promotes a feeling of harmony and togetherness. Anyway, it’s just plain fun. MABA provides meat, coffee and pop, the rest of the dinner is potluck. How nice it is to enjoy the variety of food prepared by so many people. The dinner ranks in importance with the aspect of being a *family* activity.

**Gifts.** People participate in a gift exchange of a hand forged item. The publicity for the event needs to stress the giving of hand-forged items. The reason for this is that ill feelings have occasionally occurred when someone gave a hand forged item and received a purchased item. Upon delivering their item, the persons name is attached to the item and that person is given a number. At the time of the exchange, the numbers are drawn at random and the holder of that number chooses an item. This process needs to be monitored carefully so that things come out even at the end.

**Auction.** The auction is a money-raising event for MABA. They stress that while items do not need to be hand made, they should be worth auctioning. Suppliers are asked to donate items. A professional auctioneer is hired because a professional does a better job than an amateur. A blacksmith then needs to assist the auctioneer to describe the items, etc.

MABA will add a new twist to the auction this year. The auction will be open to the public so they may see the beautiful work. The reason for the open auction is to (1) educate the public about quality blacksmithing, (2) highlight the individuals work, and (3) raise more money for the club.

**Officers.** The officers for the coming year are elected. The out-going officers are recognized for their work and effort.

**Christmas.** The officers arrive early to place Christmas decorations around the room. These decorations usually consist of tablecloths, Christmas tableware and a small Christmas tree that is lightly decorated. These decorations add a spirit to the meeting that is confluent with the time of the year.

### **How may you use this activity?**

Read this description again. Think about how it might relate to your association. Is there a way that you might adapt this activity to one of your meetings? *Be sure to discuss this activity with your board of directors.*

Does MABA believe this activity to be successful? Despite the uncertainties of mid-winter Michigan weather, this is one of the best attended functions of the year.

## **A program To Share Successful Affiliate Activities** **An ABANA service to the affiliates**

**The Pittsburgh Area Artist-Blacksmiths Association** wishes to share this successful activity with all affiliates. Chris Holt, PAABA membership chairman, hopes you will find this information to be valuable. (Chris is at [paabasec@earthlink.net](mailto:paabasec@earthlink.net) for more information.)

### **What is this successful activity?**

PAABA gives a packet of information on blacksmithing subjects to all new members.

### **Why use this activity?**

New members typically have little or no experience in blacksmithing. They have little understanding of PAABA and other blacksmithing organizations or services. PAABA believes that this packet helps to bring new members “up to speed.” It also says that PAABA cares about its members. This promotes a feeling of goodwill in the new member. PAABA has found that this packet encourages the new member to become active in the organization.

### **Description of the successful activity.**

The packet is given to the new member at a meeting of PAABA at the time of sign-up—it is not mailed out because of the mailing expense. Each packet may contain slightly different items because some of the items are donated to PAABA in varying quantities. Certain items, such as the list of officers, are in all the packets.

### **Items that are placed in the packets are:**

1. List of the officers and their address, telephone number and e-mail address.
2. Calendar of PAABA events.
3. List of blacksmithing terms and their definitions.
4. Past issue of a PAABA newsletter.
5. The booklet, Six Part Design Series by PAABA member, Dan Piesik.
6. Catalogue from Kayne and Son Custom Hardware.
7. The current ABANA brochure with membership application form.
8. The current Touchstone class schedule.
9. Past issue of Anvil's Ring or Hammer's Blow.

### **How may you use this activity?**

Read this description again. Think about how it might relate to your association. What other types of information might you place in a packet for your new members? Adapt it to your association. *Be sure to discuss this activity with your board of directors.*