

Billets & Blades

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE NORTH CAROLINA CUSTOM KNIFEMAKERS GUILD

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- The next **North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild** meeting date: **October 20, 2018** at **Low Warner Park**
- New Tee shirts are in come and get a couple



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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION AND OUR GUILD

Billets and Blades is the official publication of the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild. It is compiled and published in four annual issues, with two additional special publication dates possible each year.

The North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild was formed to meet the needs of the growing body of custom knife makers in the southeastern United States. The purpose of this newsletter is to serve as a medium of exchange for the members of the NCCKG.

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Knife making and related endeavors are inherently dangerous crafts or occupations. The material contained in this newsletter is for information only and is not intended for private instruction. Therefore, the North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild and its Officers and Editor specifically disclaim any and all responsibility for damage or injury that may occur as a result of the use of any information that is contained in this newsletter.

Advertising Policy:

The NCCKG accepts no paid advertising as a matter of policy. From time to time, advertisements may appear that are deemed by the officers to be in the best interest of the Guild. Space for advertisements is offered free to Guild members who wish to promote a service or offer specific items for sale. The officers and editor reserve the right to edit advertisements for brevity.

Members, please submit ads to the one of the board of directors listed on the following page.

FROM THE EDITOR

If you are a new member, please make sure that we have your correct email and physical mailing addresses. You may send this information to us via email.

If you are currently receiving *Billets and Blades* but are no longer interested in receiving it please let us know.

If you know of someone who may be interested in becoming a member, please let a board member know and we'll be happy to mail a copy of the current newsletter to that person.

Existing members, please check the website to verify that we have your correct information. Especially your correct email address so you may be contacted should the need arise. We are always in need of pictures, articles and ideas on how to make the website and newsletter better. Please contact a board member with any suggestions.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Letter from the President. July 2018

Well, it's been quite a last month.

I hope everyone fared well threw the hurricane. To all our members to the east and on the coast our thoughts and prayers are with you.

We do have a man down. Joel Sandifer, was injured while doing clean-up after the hurricane. Joel fell and severed the tendon that connects the quadriceps to the knee cap on both knees. As of this 9/19 he is scheduled for surgery on Friday the 21st. He will be in a straight leg cast on both legs for 6 weeks then in physical therapy for 6 weeks. Please drop him a line and let him know we are thinking of him. Joel is a great guy and a former member of the board. So get well soon "Little Feller".

The October meeting will be our annual "Cook Out" and get together. Please bring your spouse and kids. It's a chance to just socialize and get to know the other members. Good food and good friends. Also if you have any knife related items for sale. Feel free to bring those and a table and sell some stuff. The Guild will have some items for sale, stabilized wood at a price you will not beat anywhere. You need to be a paid member to take advantage of this offer. So bring lots of cash.

Darrin is getting the guild set up to accept credit and debit cards. But we are not sure it will be up and running by the time of the meeting.

Which brings up another subject. Guild Membership dues are renewable in October ... So time to pay those dues.

We still need articles for the newsletter and people to do demos at the meetings. The guild pays \$25.00 per article. Just 2 will pay your dues for the year.

Andy Sharpe
President, NCKMG

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Barry Clodfelter

Equipment for sale

The guild recently received a very generous donation of handle material, equipment and various other knifemaking related items. There will be a bin of stabilize handle material for sale at the next meeting and as well as a small buffer and a Jet drum sander. All of the proceeds will go directly to the guild. Andy and I will go into more details about the donation at the meeting and cover as much as we can about how it came about and what the Guild was asked to do with it. Over the next year or so I will bring a big box of handle material so if you miss this meeting there will be others to get really good handle material at a very good price.

Please contact Barry Clodfelter at barry@clodfelterknives.com and let me know if you are interested in the buffer or drum sander. First one to contact me will have the first chance to buy it. Both are excellent condition.

Buffer \$175

Sander \$400



The Dilemmas of Knife Making.

Having been a knife maker for many years. I have seen many changes in the knife world. The sheer number of makers in the last few years has exploded. We were a scattered few not so long ago. Then younger people discovered they could make things with their hands. Older people who retired needed something to do. Now we have TV shows and every other person is a knife maker. Some will continue with the craft and excel, others who do shabby work will soon fall by the wayside.

For those who stick with it? You will see numerous changes as time goes by. One of those changes is pricing with knives, and materials. Here in which lies the dilemma. So, you've paid your dues, put in the years and hard work and have built a customer base and demand for your work. You are taking orders for two or three years in the future. How do you price materials you are not going to buy for another 18 months. How do you compensate for the unknown? Example, the export ban on Sambar stag. Stag I could have bought for \$40.00 six years ago now demands a hundred dollar bill. Curley Koa, a really nice stabilized handle block (exhibition grade). Once \$50.00 now over a \$100.00, in only a couple of years. Things like elephant ivory, once easy to get are now taboo. Mammoth and Fossil Walrus though readily available change price without notice. Now most recent on the list is Ebony and African Blackwood also Rosewood.

The best way to compensate for these changing prices is to purchase the materials when the order is made. That would be the perfect way to do it. But life is not perfect and you can't run to Wally World and buy a piece of stag or a block of Koa wood.

If you are like me and do not have a surplus of cash. Something few makers have. You have to plan and get materials as needed. Handle materials like micarta and G10 are industrial and can easily be ordered by mail, no sweat. Natural materials like wood and stag must be seen and felt. Those I purchase once a year at The Blade Show. The other way is to find suppliers you know and trust. Suppliers who guarantee their product, and the quality. These, you will form a relation with over time. Let's face it, nothing looks as good in real life as it does on E-Bay.

This is my personal way of dealing with price increases. If an order is a year out for example I add 25% to the cost of handle material. At 18 months out I add 40%. I do this mainly on natural materials. On Ivory I have the customer pay for it when the order is placed and for high end woods like Koa and Desert Ironwood I inform the customer that the price of the knife may vary as much as \$50 to \$100 depending on material cost. I have been doing this for some time and have had no customer complaints.

Each maker will figure out a way to deal with rising material cost. It is up to you to find a way that doesn't leave you making a \$400 knife that has a \$200 piece of handle material on it. This is just my thoughts and how I handle the dilemma. Remember, you need to make a profit. Sanding belts and new equipment don't often come free.

Hammer on my friends
Andy Sharpe

2018 Montgomery Community College Knifemaking Schedule

Advanced forging and blacksmithing with Bill Bisher

9/4—11/20 Tuesdays 5:30-9:30P

Cost \$226.60

MCC welcomes Bill Bisher back to teach another semester-long class exploring knife forging, tools for blacksmithing, shop set-up and more. The class will include the finishing of blades, handle materials, grinding etc. This is an advanced forging and blacksmithing class. At least one other knifemaking class is required.

Intro to Bladesmithing with Gabe Mabry

9/5—11/28 Wednesdays 4-8P

Cost \$226.60

This is a beginner knife forging class, but advanced students are welcome. The focus of this class will be on how to achieve a high-performance, forged blade. Learn a variety of techniques that will enable you to forge, heat treat, and grind a blade, including all steps in between.

Fixed Blade Knives With Ed Vanhoy

9/13—9/15 8A-6P

Cost: \$201.60

A class that introduces first-time knife makers to the processes of completing a finished knife blade. The student will start with an understanding of knife anatomy, types of steel, basic layout design, basic heat treating, and basic knife finish. Students will complete one finished knife blade.

Tanto Knives With Daniel Pica

9/28—9/30 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$201.60

A beginner-level course on the history, design, grinding and sharpening this multi-bevel design. Students will work hands-on with the goal of completing one Tanto knife of their own by the end of the three-day course.

Basic Blacksmithing and Forging With Liam Hoffman

10/5—10/6 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$146.60

Learn the fundamentals of blacksmithing with popular NC blacksmith and knifemaker Liam Hoffman in this beginner-level course. Focus on proper hammer technique and control, ergonomics, essential and luxury tools, and the techniques needed to make any project in your forge.

Stock Removal Basics With the Jones Brothers

10/25—10/27 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$201.60

Beginner and advanced students are welcome to this basic knife class using the stock removal method. Learn the basics of profiling, grinding, heat treating, handle constructing, and finishing. Class includes materials for one knife.

Leather Sheaths for Knives With Travis Daniels

11/8 6-9 PM

11/9—11/10 8 AM-6 PM

Cost: \$201.60

Learn the basics of leatherworking for creating knife sheaths. Bring your own knives and make sheaths for them.

Knife Sharpening 101 With the Jones Brothers**11/17 8am-6pm****Cost: \$80**

Bring your own knives to learn the basics of manual sharpening of knife blades. Will cover both plain and serrated edges, and discuss the tools and options for sharpening at home.

Christmas Knife Class With Ed Vanhoy**11/29—12/2 8am-6pm****Cost: \$201.60**

Students will start with raw metal and leather and construct a full knife and sheath. Topics will include the functions of knife forms and anatomy of sheaths and fixed blade knives. The finished knife will make a great Christmas gift for someone, or for you.

What a great line up of classes for the fall of 2018! This list will be updated as more are announced.

Contact Montgomery CC for additional class information or to register for a class.

UPCOMING 2018 GUILD MEETINGS

Saturday January 27th, 2018

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday April 28st, 2018

Location: Montgomery Community College

Elections to be held for VP and a director.

Saturday July 21st, 2018

Location: Montgomery Community College

Saturday October 20th, 2018

Location: Lowe Warner Park

Dues are due in October!

Events Include:

Board Meeting begins at 8:30am, to be followed by our General Business Meeting & Iron in the Hat

Demos:

Will be determined and published on the website prior to the meeting.

Blade Show — June 1-3, 2018

Contact Murphy Ragsdale for table information and volunteer to help!

If you are not a juried member and wish to become one bring at least three knives for the leadership team to review.

The **North Carolina Custom Knifemakers Guild** was founded in June of 1992. Our goals are to:

- Promote the craft of custom knife making
- Seek to constantly improve the craftsmanship of its members
- Provide an educational resource to anyone interested in the craft
- To encourage new makers and provide a forum for their training

Through public knife making and forging demonstrations by a group or individual members, we try to display the craft and to educate the public. It is our intent to raise the general awareness of custom made knives and the people who create them. That is why there is no cost to attend one of our meetings, and we welcome anyone with an interest in knife making.

Our quarterly meetings are organized around speakers and various demonstrations of activities important to our craft. These speakers and demonstrations are from our members or experts in the field who come as our guests. As a training resource, our Guild is prepared to present any aspect of our craft to organizations that feel it would be beneficial and informative.

