



**This month's cover knife is by Joel Sandifer,  
our featured knifemaker.**

See page 6 to get to know Joel and learn about his knifemaking.

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**\*\*\*\*\*IMPORTANT NOTE!!!\*\*\*\*\***

If you are currently receiving Billets and Blades but are no longer interested in being a member of the NC Knife Guild, please let us know. You may contact Rebecca Dresser (see contact list to the right) to have your name removed from the mailing list. Thank you. Also, if you know of someone who may be interested in becoming a member, please let Tim or Rebecca know and we'll be happy to mail a copy of the current newsletter to that person.

**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 issues annually 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. This purpose of this newsletter is to serve as a medium of exchange for the members of the NCKKG.

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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 editors 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 NCKKG 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 either the president or the editor at the addresses shown at right.

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## A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

*By Tim Scholl*

Fall is on the way and it's a welcome change from the heat. I just returned from the Professional Knifemakers Show in Denver where I got to spend a few days with my brother and sister-in-law. I had forgotten what it was like to walk outside in the morning to 53 degrees and no humidity... ahhhh! Can't wait for next year.

Looks like we have another great meeting coming up in October. This is a two day meeting and one not to be missed. Pop will not be there, but if you need anything from him, place an order with him and Travis Daniel will bring it with him. We will be having a cookout after the Saturday meeting at a park just down the road from the school. This is for members and their families, so round everyone up and come on out. **PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU ARE GOING TO ATTEND AND HOW MANY**, so we can plan on the amount of food to buy. Also let me know your preference: hamburgers and hot dogs or chicken. Some fixings

will be provided but feel free to bring a covered dish. Again **PLEASE** e-mail me or call me (and please note my new email address on page 2). If you play an instrument, whether it's guitar, banjo, harmonica, tuba, acoustic or electric (there is power hookup there), please bring it! We will have a jam session for the enjoyment of all at our cook-out.

The knife that I made at the last meeting will be given away in separate Iron In The Hat raffle. Tickets will be \$5.00 with all proceeds going to the Guild, of course. Sunday will be a round table discussion and hands-on session. If you have anything you would like to work on, have any questions about how to do something, or would like to know how someone else does this or that, this is the day not to miss. We have a wealth of knowledge in our Guild; all you have to do is ask and ye shall receive! I look forward to seeing everyone in Troy.

# UPCOMING GUILD MEETING

## SATURDAY & SUNDAY, October 22 & 23

Montgomery Community College in Troy, NC

### SATURDAY EVENTS WILL INCLUDE

Board of Directors Meeting at 8:00 with General Guild Meeting at 9:00  
Various Demos

Evening Cookout and Jam Session

**Please call or email Tim Scholl with # of party in your group  
so we can be sure to have enough food for everyone. (See Tim's letter above.)  
Covered dishes are welcome!**

### SUNDAY EVENTS INCLUDE

Hand-on Work in the Shop  
Sharing of Information and Round-Table Discussion  
As always, family and friends are welcome.

Please note that we always need members to lead demos. No matter how simple you think something is, it may be new or different to someone else. If you have a demo you would like to do or see done, please contact Andy Sharpe.

**DON'T FORGET ...  
YOUR MEMBER DUES  
are due by October 31.**

If they are not paid by the end of December,  
there will be a \$10 late fee charged.  
Please pay on time and stay up to date  
with all our Guild news!

### CONTACT FOR EXOTIC LEATHER...

Loy Cuellar at 915-590-0088 or [lcuellar@hardtkeinc.com](mailto:lcuellar@hardtkeinc.com)

Here is a partial list...

shark \$12.50 per ft average size 7-8 ft  
ostrich \$17.50 per ft average size 16 ft  
stingray \$32.50 each 10-12 inches wide  
crocodile \$85.00 each  
snake skins are also available  
All above come in a variety of colors.



## Board of Director's Minutes from the July Meeting

Submitted by Tommy Johnson, Secretary

1. It was decided that any board member late for a board meeting will be fined \$5.00.
2. A \$10.00 late fee will be added to dues paid after December. Dues are late after October.
3. We discussed the newsletter with Rebecca Dresser.
4. The October meeting will be Oct. 22 & 23 with a cookout after Saturday's meeting.
5. Elections will be returned to the April meeting. All offices except the President will be up for election.

## PHOTOS FROM THE JULY MEETING (photos by Tommy McNabb and Rebecca Dresser)



The July meeting was well attended by our members and also several visitors. It included the business meeting, Iron in the Hat, and a talk by a representative from the Sandvik Corporation about the latest steel products available from them, a vine pattern file demo by Joel Sandifer, and a two-hour forged knife demo by Tim Scholl, Bill Bisher, and John Hege.



Joel's file work demo



An up-close look at Joel's file work. Looks great!



Tommy explains the rules.

## TWO-HOUR FORGED KNIFE DEMO

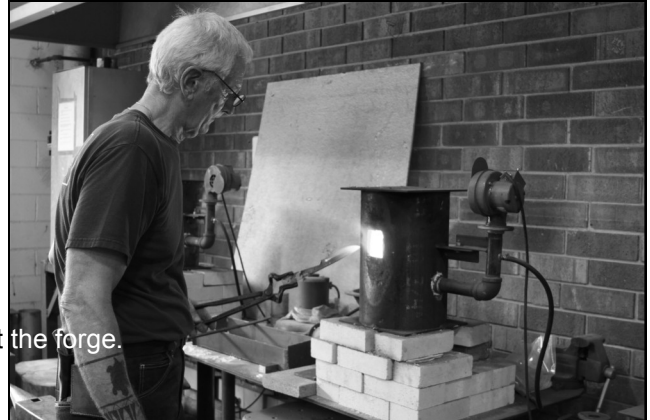
By  
Tim Scholl  
Bill Bisher  
John Hege



John at the forge.



Tim at the forge.



Bill at the forge.



Tim doing a little tempering.



Bill and Tim hard at work  
as Andy looks on.



Is it sharp,  
Murphy?

John at the grinder.



Three  
finished  
knives.  
From left...  
Tim's knife,  
Bill's knife,  
John's knife.  
Tim's will  
be part of the  
Iron in the  
Hat at the  
October  
meeting.



## Meet Joel Sandifer

I first heard about the NCKG at a gun show in Fayetteville, NC in 2009. I was walking around looking at all the guns and particularly at the knives. I had been messing around with making knives for about 4 years at that point. I ran into Tommy Johnson; he had a booth set up at the show. I started asking questions, told him I was making a few knives, and he invited me to a meeting. I attended a meeting in October of that year and joined in November of 2009. I had no idea there was anything like a knife guild and was very happy at how willing the people were to help.

My interest in making knives began when I was a teenager, and my dad was my influence. My dad, who was an ironworker and a great welder, made a skinning knife with a hickory handle for me, from an old saw blade, I believe; he cut it out with a grinder and tempered it with a torch. It was sharp and still is. It was a working knife that was not pretty, but it served a purpose. I still have that old knife and I have left it just as he made it.

Several years before joining the Guild, I was doing some woodcarving while I was an Assistant Scout Master for Troop 531 in Randleman, NC. I realized I needed some different carving knives, and I remembered that my dad had made that knife for me. I pulled it out and studied it. I thought that maybe I could make me some carving knives. The good ones were fairly expensive and the cheap ones would not hold an edge. That was the beginning of my knifemaking journey. I began looking up how to attach a handle, and where to buy pin material, what kind of steel, etc. I made a few carving knives and gave a couple away. Then I came across these knives that all I had to do was put a handle on. So I started putting handles on some kit knives and then making

sheaths for them. I gave some of those away and sold some others. I learned the most about fit and finish while doing that. I was like a sponge, soaking up as much information as I could. I was on the computer, reading, asking questions and looking at the amazing knives. Then I got a wild idea to make a knife totally from the beginning. The first knife I ever made was a skinning knife. I made it for my father that year for Fathers day. I bought a piece of 0-1 and went for it. My dad loved it, and I was hooked big time.

I don't really have a favorite knife... I have many! My favorite store-bought knife is a Cool Steel Trail Master Bowie. My wife bought that for me in 1989 for our one-year anniversary. I carried that knife everywhere. It was on my load bearing equipment when I was jumping out of perfectly good aircraft as a member of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion of the 504<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment at Ft. Bragg. When I was in Iraq during Desert Storm, I carried it everywhere I went. I still love that knife! Another favorite knife in my collection is a G.W. Schrade "Presto" switchblade; the blade is marked Jan. 30, 1940. I found that knife when I was in high school in the back of a junked out old car. It still worked then. Other favorite knives include the Bowie knife I made for my Father; a Bowie knife I made from an old Ferrier's rasp with a stag handle; a neck knife I made for my daughter out of ATS-34 with black and white ebony handle; and the military style tactical knife from 0-1 with a green canvas Micarta handle which I made for my son who was completing Basic Military Training. As far as a favorite maker, there are way too many to name. I like a lot of different people's work, and I try to learn from every one I see.

To this point, I have done mostly stock removal. I have made one knife that was forged. I am still learning. With every Guild meeting my knowledge is expanded more and more. Watching the forging has really sparked my interest to see if I could do it. I don't have a particular style or preference. I have done tactical knives, skinners, hunters, and neck knives to large bowies, and each one is a challenge. I have done two small folders. I still carry the first one I ever made, and I have designed a liner lock folder for a future project.

I have not found a favorite steel yet. I do like ATS34, 5160, L6, and 0-1. Those are the ones I have used the most.

My favorite part of making the knife is looking at the face of the person I hand it to when it's done. That makes it worth it every time. Each knife is a lesson and a marker of just how far I have come. I look back at some of my earlier knives and think, "Man, that looks bad!" but it makes me appreciate all the guys at the Guild who have taken time to give me advice and encouragement to help me get better.

Depending on the steel I use, all of my work is done in my shop. I do send out my ATS34 for heat-treating. I built a small forge from an old Freon bottle using Kaowool and I made the burner from pipe material. I got the plans from the Zoeller forge website. I am currently working on a larger forge to accommodate larger pieces. I do all my own leatherwork. I buy my leather from Zack White Leather in Ramseur, NC. I stitch them all by hand; it takes time, but I like it.

I try to spend a few hours every day in the shop after work. Sometimes it doesn't work out that way. Most of my shop time is on the weekends and on days off.

Describing my shop set up is very easy. I moved last year and have been building a new shop. Since I started doing woodworking in high school, the majority of my tools are just that. I have a bandsaw that I can use to cut handle material, a large 6x48 sander that helps to flatten my handle material, and a 2x24 sander that helps get scratches out of a blade. As far as metalworking, I have a drill press and most recently a small metal cutting bandsaw. I have a lot of files, a bench vise, my dad's old anvil made from a piece of railroad track, several blacksmith hammers, and lots of patience. Most everything I do is by hand. I have drilled holes to shape it and cut it out with a hacksaw, but now I will be using the bandsaw. I use files to make the blades and lots of sandpaper and sweat to get all the scratches out. I look at it this way: when I get to the place where I am ready to invest in a grinder I will appreciate it a lot more.

I always look forward to the Guild meetings. I always come away with something, either some great knowledge or something cool from the Iron in the Hat. I really appreciate all the effort put in to run the Guild and the knife classes. It gives guys like me a chance to learn from guys with a lot of experience.

## VINE PATTERN FILE WORK

By Joel Sandifer

Joel gave a very interesting and thorough demo on vine pattern file work at our July meeting, and he was good enough to write up this article for us as well. Many thanks to Joel for the contribution he has made!

The decision to enhance the back of the knife or the handle is a tricky one. There is always the possibility of messing it up to the point that you will add to your collection of your own knives. Andy Sharpe once told me "mistakes are just design opportunities." However, some mistakes just can't be fixed. So make a good decision and practice on something you don't mind throwing away. I like using maple because it's hard and makes for good practice. Also I was fortunate to have a good bit of it left over after building some cabinets.

There are many different patterns and styles for file work and you just have to pick what you like and go for it. The one I chose is the vine. I liked it the first time I saw it and was determined to figure out how to do it. I learned a whole lot trying to figure it out. The first thing was to invest in some good chainsaw files, because you will use them to make the half circle I will talk about later. Second, get some good needle files. I went through several sets of needle files from Harbor Freight and finally found a good set from Lowes for around \$16.00. Third, you need a good ruler. I found a good one again at Lowes, made by General Tools. It has tiny holes every 1/32 of an inch on one side and has the same for every millimeter on the other. It works perfectly to make marks using a carbide scribe. (See illustration #1.) The fourth thing to get is a good set of glasses, at least for me. I found a lighted magnifying glass works great too. The last thing and probably the most important thing is **be patient!** You'll need tons and tons of patience! Don't get frustrated, take your time, get up and walk around some, have a cup of whatever works for you. You can't rush this too much. There are a couple of shortcuts, but they are minor ones and may not help save much time.

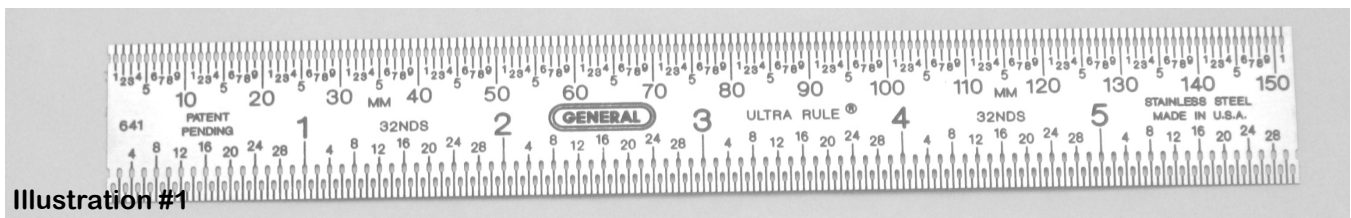
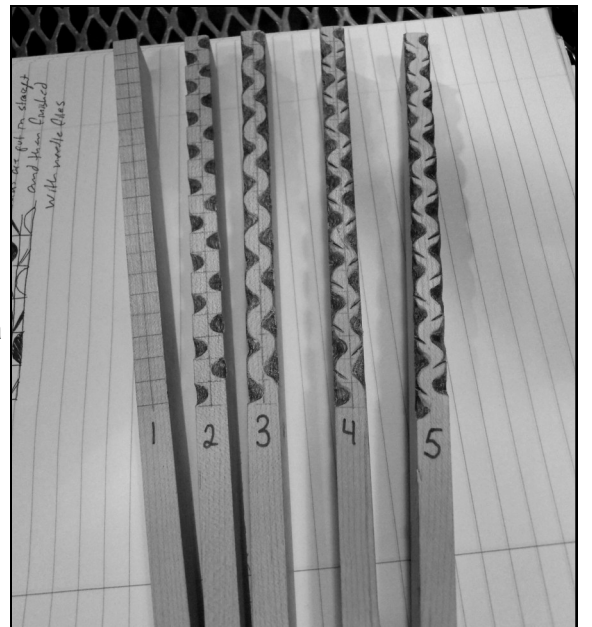


Illustration #1

When I start, I make sure I know where the guard is going to be so I don't interfere with the seating of it. I take a blue marker and color the entire length of the area I plan to file. Use something to mark a centerline; there are many different ways to do this. I have a set of digital calipers and they work fine for me. I use my ruler with the holes in it and begin laying out my grid pattern. The spacing is up to you and is decided by how close or how spread out you want your thorns to be. On a knife that is say 1/8 inch, you could use an 1/8 inch spacing. That can be very tedious being that small, or you can spread it out to 3/8 and make the vine thinner. This is where practicing a different size grid comes in handy. On Illustration #2, I included the layout for the semicircles that will be cut with the chainsaw file. It is basically skipping every other one on each side. These will be cut at about a 45-degree angle to the blade. If you cut too deep, it will distort your vine, but if that is what you want then go for it. Oh yeah, the shortcut! You can use a Dremel tool with a round carbide bit to cut your half circles as long as you have a steady hand. (Cont. Page 8)

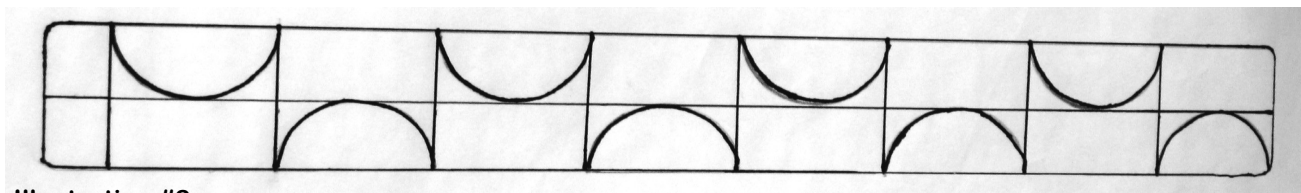
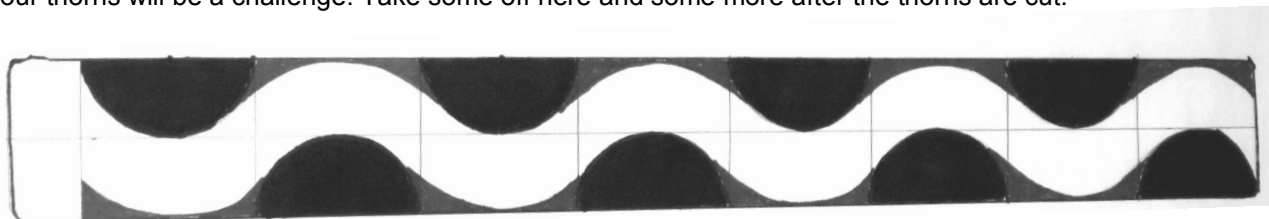


Illustration #2

**VINE PATTERN** (continued from page 7)

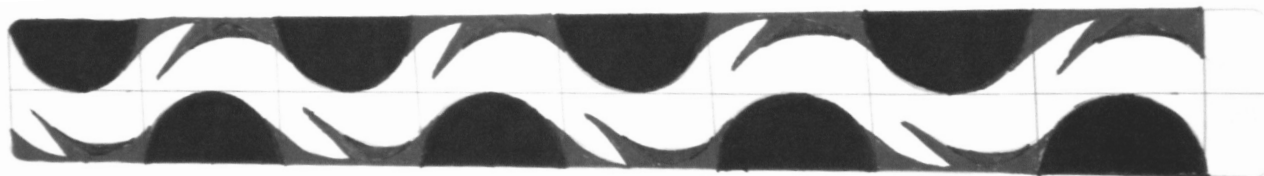
Once those are cut, you have to widen them out a little and round the in-between areas to make the pattern almost snake like. (See illustration #3.) This is one point where you can decide how thick you want your vine to be. Some people like them real thin, again that is up to you and the look you are going for. Don't take off too much at this point or making your thorns will be a challenge. Take some off here and some more after the thorns are cut.

**Illustration #3**

When you are at this point you will start cutting your thorns with a triangle file with sharp corners. Remember to start small; you can always take off more, but you can't put any back. Sometimes it helps to draw the line where you want your thorn cut. If you cut too shallow you have a thin thorn and too deep almost cuts through the vine. Do a little, then stop, and look to see if the placement is where you want it. These thorns are only cut half as deep as the half circles. Look at drawing #4 and hopefully you will see what I am talking about. I always aim for the center of the vine. If your triangle file is too blunt, your thorns will not be as sharp.

**Illustration #4**

Once the thorns are cut and you are happy with them, you can start smoothing out the vine. Here is where you can change the thorn a little and smooth out the vine to make it more flowing (illustration #5). At this point, your patience will really be tested. You will look and look at each piece of that vine and make slight changes until you are happy with it.

**Illustration #5**

That's it for making it, now for finishing it. The file cuttings you did will require a piece of round rod close to the size of the chainsaw file. Wrap the sandpaper around that and begin sanding. You may have to improvise something to clean out the thorns. Now it's off to heat treat. If you do a vine pattern on the handle, use black dye in your epoxy to provide contrast to your work and makes it stand out. That's it. I would like to see some of your work at the meeting in October.





**REMAINING KNIFE CLASSES FOR 2011**

Classes in knifemaking are held at Montgomery Community College.

To sign up for a course, go directly to the school's website...

<http://www.montgomery.cc.nc.us/cenra.htm>

**Tomahawks – Tommy McNabb**

October 7 – 9, 2011; Cost \$295

A hands-on course in forging and finishing  
an early American tomahawk;

**Art of Mokume Gane – Phillip Jones**

October 27 - 30, 2011 ; Cost \$375

Learn the ancient Japanese technique of pattern fusing multiple  
copper-based metals for both knifemaking and jewelry.

**STOLEN KNIFE KITS...  
REWARD OFFERED**

Tim Britton, owner of Linville Knife and Tool Co.,  
Winston Salem, NC has notified us  
that they had a burglary on [August 28](#), 2011  
in which several boxes of knife kits were stolen.

Please contact Tim at 336-9232062 or  
[tim@timbritton.com](mailto:tim@timbritton.com)

if you see any Linville kits or knives  
in any quantity at flea markets or shows.

Our line can be seen at  
[www.linvilleknifeandtool.com](http://www.linvilleknifeandtool.com).

A \$1000 reward will be paid for info that leads  
to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators.

**HOW TO CHANGE YOUR OIL...****Oil Change Instructions for Women:**

1. Pull up to Jiffy Lube when your mileage reaches 3,000 miles since the last oil change.
2. Drink a cup of coffee while waiting.
3. 15 minutes later, scan debit card and leave, driving a properly maintained vehicle.

MONEY SPENT... Oil Change \$30.00; Coffee \$1.00; **Total \$31.00**

**Oil Change Instructions for Men:**

1. On Saturday, drive to auto parts store and buy a case of oil, filter, kitty litter, and hand cleaner.
2. Stop by beer store, buy a case, and drive home.
3. Open a beer and drink it.
4. Spend 30 minutes looking for jack stands.
5. In frustration, drink another beer.
6. Find stands under kid's pedal car. Jack up your truck.
7. Place drain pan under engine and look for 9/16 box end wrench. Give up and use crescent wrench instead.
8. Unscrew drain plug and let oil begin to drain.
9. Drop plug into pan of hot oil, splashing oil on yourself in process. Cuss.
10. Crawl out from under truck to wipe off hot oil from face and arms. Throw kitty litter on spilled oil.
11. Have another beer while watching oil drain.
12. Spend 30 minutes looking for oil filter wrench.
13. Give up, and crawl under truck with screwdriver. Hammer through oil filter and twist off.
14. Crawl out from under truck while splashing oil everywhere from holes.
15. Cleverly hide oil filter amongst trash to avoid environmental penalties.
16. Congratulate yourself for your efforts so far by having another beer.
17. Install new oil filter, making sure to apply a thin coat of oil to gasket surface.
18. Dump first quart of fresh oil into engine.
19. Remember drain plug from step 9 and discover that first quart of fresh oil is now on the floor.
20. Cuss, throw kitty litter to soak up oil, and drink a beer.
21. Crawl under truck to retrieve drain plug and get it back into place.
22. While tightening it with crescent wrench, scrape knuckles on frame, removing much skin. Cuss.
23. Crawl out from under truck, throw crescent wrench, and drink a beer.
24. Cuss for another five minutes when you discover dent in your truck from thrown wrench.
25. Drink another beer to ease frustration.
26. Clean up hands and bandage as needed to stop blood flow from scraped knuckles.
27. Dump in five more quarts of fresh oil and drink a couple beers while waiting.
28. Lower truck from jack stands.
29. Move truck back to apply more kitty litter to fresh oil spilled during any steps.
30. Test drive truck.
31. Get pulled over and arrested for driving under the influence. Truck is sent to impound lot.
32. Call loving wife to make the bail.
33. Twelve hours later, retrieve truck from impound lot.

MONEY SPENT... Parts \$50.00; Beer \$24.00; DUI \$2500.00; Bail \$1500.00 Impound Fee \$75.00. **Total: \$4,149.00**

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# NEWS TO NOTE

## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS...**

**TWO DAY Meeting at MCC... October 22 and 23  
with a cookout on Saturday night  
Details on Page 3**

**FEATURED ARTICLE: Vine Pattern File Work  
Pages 7-8**

**DUES ARE DUE  
by October 31**