

# TONOPAH HISTORIC MINING PARK NEWS

With the new Blacksmithing facility at the TONOPAH HISTORIC MINING PARK there is an opportunity for possible blacksmithing classes. Most western states are offering blacksmithing classes at various levels. Classes run for two to four days, are very popular and a good way to share some important history. Class fees will go to promote the art of blacksmithing and to secure a class teacher. All interested in such classes should contact the TONOPAH HISTORIC MINING PARK office at 775-482-9274. Please leave your name, e-mail address and contact information. The park will respond when blacksmithing classes are available. For more information check out our website at <http://www.tonopahhistoricminingpark.com>.



## Scout enriches Mining Park

By B.L. Mc Laughlin, Times-Bonanza and Goldfield News

May 22, 2008



As fascinating as it already was, the TONOPAH HISTORIC MINING PARK in Tonopah, Nevada has become even more so, thanks to Tonopah High School junior Conrad Baker's Eagle Scout project. Baker's project, a working blacksmith forge, is one of the first displays to add a new dimension to the park – living history. Think Colonial Williamsburg, Nevada style.



The forge was made from an antique forge, refurbished with quarter-inch steel welded inside the rusted original pan. The high- cranked blower, that brings oxygen to the coal-and-coke-fired fire in the forge, was cleaned and oiled, and almost runs on its own. A refurbished antique hood and anvil complete the project. To make the blacksmith shop functional, a few more modern touches have been added – wheel rims supporting the anvil, a 50-gallon drum to hold water for cooling, and a small metal cooling

table. The last, explained Baker, is necessary because throwing forged implements directly into the water “makes them very hard, but brittle.” Slower cooling helps them retain more flexibility, making them stronger.

Baker’s blacksmithing project is the second-to-last requirement that must be met for him to become an Eagle Scout. Only a board of review remains. He and his father, “Stretch” Baker have been discussing the project, he reported, “Since I was a Webelo” – seven years ago.



Eagle Scout projects are considered leadership projects and do not require the work be done by a single individual – only that others involved work under his

direction. Baker did most of the metal

work in restoring the forge by himself, using a plasma cutter and welding equipment. Attaching the blower required two people. His father helped with that. Setting up the blacksmith shop in the Mizpah Mine area at the mining park required a little more help. Corrugated metal had to be attached to the wall behind the forge.

The metal hood had to be mounted to the wall above it. And the heavy “smithing” equipment needed to be transported and set in place. For this, he was assisted by fellow Scouts Dustin Chastain and Phillip Farris and adult volunteers Scoutmaster Emmett Chastain, Matt Roberts, Keith Beall and “Stretch” Baker. Park member “Dunk” Dunkerley, who himself has a “living

history” projects in the making, was on hand to record the proceedings. In addition





to providing a chance for the public to see history in action, the new blacksmith shop at Tonopah Historic Mining Park will provide new capabilities for the park itself. Repairs to equipment there often require specialized parts that are no longer available.

Some equipment was originally made with hand-forged parts, and only a blacksmith can efficiently replace or repair those parts. The blacksmith shop at TONOPAH HISTORIC MINING PARK will be open to the public on special occasions.

