[LEWISBURG, WV] New River Community and Technical College will offer a six-week course in Decorative Iron Work taught by Jim Wells, an artist blacksmith whose interest arose from a love of working with wood, and evolved into a passion for iron. The course will start February 6 and meet every Saturday morning at 8 a.m. for six weeks.

Over the course of more than 20 years, Wells has owned several blacksmith shops ranging from a one-man operation to shops with five full-time workers. His current shop, where this course will be held, is located in the Lewisburg area.

The primary goal of this course is to have fun learning to do something decorative and artistic together as a group. Students will be introduced to the layout and function of tools in the blacksmith shop. The course will cover such topics as the history of decorative iron work, the forge, and basic iron working techniques. As students become proficient in all of these basic techniques, they will design and develop a material list for a project which they will complete and take home. These will include either a fireplace set, candelabra or candle chandelier. Students will study what it is that makes a piece of work high quality, and how to avoid pitfalls.

During the upcoming session, students will also have the chance to break in an innovative new forge, designed and built by Wells.
“Jim is great,” says former student Terri Shuck who has been helping Jim at the forge, “He’s so good. His work is incredible – the detail he does is incredible.”

This is a fabulous course for anyone wanting to learn a rewarding new hobby from a very old art form. Call (304) 647-6570, (304) 793-6101 or (304) 872-4520 for more information on this course. Class size is limited by the number of work stations available and pre-registration is required. If you would like to see examples of Well’s work, please visit his web site -


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