

Photo by Jim Roberts



## The Nugget

North Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



### Notes from the President's Desk....Sept. 2017

Welcome back! After a summer filled with vacations, travels, and lots of other fun activities, it's time to gear up and get back into our fall line-up of NMGMS events. The first upcoming event will be the September meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> at the Tupelo library from 1 to 3p.m. Mark this on your calendar, and be sure to be there, as Mike Schuchs has put together a fun "hands-on" program for all ages to enjoy. In October, we'll start off our field trip schedule with a trip out to the Blue Springs crab site. Hopefully after all of the recent rains, there will be lots of new material uncovered.

Speaking of field trips, I would like to take this opportunity to say "Thank You" to Robert Langford for his time, efforts and expertise in doing the fossil id station at Twenty Mile Creek over the summer months. Through his efforts, collectors have gained more knowledge about the fossils that are being found at this site, and, as the number of "likes" on our NMGMS FB page shows, the creek and club have gained some recognition. Thank you, Robert!

There are two events coming up in October that NMGMS will participate in. One will be the Robins Street Art Festival in Tupelo on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. The club will be setting up a booth, and volunteers will be selling hand crafted jewelry items made by fellow members. The next event will be the Oren Dunn City Museum's Dogtrot Rockabilly Festival on Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>. NMGMS will man the sandbox dig as an event at this festival. We still need a couple of club members to volunteer to run this activity that day at the museum. The sand and box are already at the museum, and the sieves, shovels etc., are at our Link Centre workshop room. If you are willing to help, contact me at [therockhoundlady@yahoo.com](mailto:therockhoundlady@yahoo.com)

Don't forget our annual club picnic on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Our club picnic is always a fun event for everyone and a great opportunity to spend time with fellow rockhounds after our summer hiatus. This year, we are changing the name to "Rocktoberfest" and Krista Williamson has acquired a big banner for us. Thank you, Pepsi! We are hoping to increase attendance and awareness, so pass the word along. If you have any ideas on how we can make this event better, please let us know. Also, the picnic/rock swap is your chance to swap out your extras for something different! There will be some of the Tannehill Show material available too, so be sure and come by to see what treasures you can find to add to your collections.

As always, I'm looking forward to getting back into the "swing" of NMGMS activities, not to mention my rock hammer!  
Nancy Roberts

## Mark Your Calendar! NMGMS September Meeting

The next regular NMGMS meeting will be Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017 from 1 to 3pm at the Lee County Library in Tupelo. Program by Mike Schuchs: "Gravel, how we get it, and what we find at different locales, like the Mississippi or Tombigbee Rivers". Should be quite informative, so bring your most interesting or unusual gravel finds for a "show and tell" display.

Refreshments will be courtesy of Mike Schuchs and Jennifer Eubank.

**\*\*SFMS Raffle:** Please bring all sold ticket stubs, monies received, and any unsold tickets to the Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. We have to return all tickets and monies to the federation by October 1<sup>st</sup>. There are still some unsold tickets available and Nikki will have them at the meeting. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Prizes can be viewed on the SFMS website or in the Lodestar.

### Other Upcoming NMGMS Events:

October 14, 2017: NMGMS field trip to the Blue Springs crab site. (See pg 3 for details)

October 28, 2017: NMGMS Picnic and Rock Swap from noon until 4 at Ballard Park in Tupelo (see pg 3)

November 18, 2017: NMGMS November meeting from 1 to 3 at the Tupelo library. Program: Working with Polymer Clay, a "hands on" activity.

December 9, 2017: NMGMS annual Christmas party and luncheon from 11 to 3 at the Tupelo library.

### Other Upcoming Events:

October 7, 2017: Robins Street Art Stroll (previously Mimosas and Masterpieces) from 10am to 2pm in Tupelo on Robins St. NMGMS will be setting up as a vendor, and selling hand crafted jewelry items made by our members. Money raised will go to our lapidary workshop.

October 21, 2017: Oren Dunn City Museum Dogtrot Rockabilly Festival. NMGMS will set up the club's sandbox rock and fossil dig as an event at this festival. Several club members will be needed to setup and man this activity.

### Show Dates:

#### October 13, 14, & 15, 2017

HGMS Huntsville, AL show

50th Annual Gem, Jewelry, & Mineral Show    Huntsville Gem & Mineral Society -  
Huntsville, AL    Fri: 10AM to 6 PM;    Sat: 10 AM to 6 PM; Sun: Noon to 5 PM  
Jaycees Community Building - 2180 Airport Rd.    Huntsville, AL

#### November 10 - 12, 2017

The 28th Magnolia State Gem, Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Show

The Mississippi Gulf Coast Gem & Mineral Society    [http://www.mgcmgs.org/gem\\_show.html](http://www.mgcmgs.org/gem_show.html)

Fri. November 10, 10- 6pm    Sat. November 11, 10 - 6pm    Sun. November 12, 10 - 5pm.

Jackson County Fairgrounds, 2902 Shortcut Rd., Pascagoula, MS

Photo by Nancy Roberts



## Up Coming NMGMS Field Trip:

The next field trip for NMGMS will be to the Blue Springs crab site in Union County MS on Saturday Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>. Meet at the site at 9a.m.

Along with collecting fossil crabs, you will find turtle and mosasaur bone, shark teeth and vertebrae, mollusks and bi-valves of all kinds, spiny lobsters, small corals, bryozoans and some nautiloids. This site is an Upper Cretaceous Coon Creek deposit.

[Watch your email for directions.](#)

For more information contact Nancy Roberts: [therockhoundlady@yahoo.com](mailto:therockhoundlady@yahoo.com)

Photo by Nancy Roberts



## NMGMS Picnic & Rock Swap "Rocktober Fest"

8th Annual Rock Swap Picnic **October 28, 2017** at the large pavilion in Ballard Park , West Main Street/Highway 6, Tupelo, MS

We would like to invite all rock hounds from the surrounding areas to join our members for a day of great fun, trading and fellowship. Invite your family and friends too! There is no charge to attend or to set up and trade. The picnic is located in a large covered pavilion (on the west side of the lake) with many picnic tables. There is room to park and tailgate, so bring whatever you'd like to swap and trade with fellow rockhounds, or just come by to join the picnic, look around, bid in the auction, and visit. The Swap is from **1p.m. until 5 p.m.** (Set up to begin at 12:30p.m.) We will be having a club auction, as well as other donated items for sale (donated items are most welcome!). Lots of newly donated items will be included. NMGMS will have hot dogs, kielbasa, sausage or brats too, chips and drinks. **Members are asked to bring a dessert and folding chairs. The fishing game will be on hand for the kids! This is right before Halloween, so don your best rockhounding "outfit" and join in the fun!**



Photo by Nancy Roberts

## Bead Soup: A place to talk "shop"! By Nikki Kenney



Painters tape makes a great addition to your jewelry making supplies. Being designed to hold well, but not leave a sticky residue when removed, makes it excellent for holding wire bundles together when wrapping or wire weaving. It also works well for holding several pieces of metal together when riveting or punching holes. Use painters tape to hold your metal on the bench block when stamping or texturing, or as a guide for keeping your lettering straight when stamping. It can also be used to protect your wire from tool marks by wrapping the ends of your pliers with the tape. (Photo by Nancy Roberts)

There are many wonderful and helpful tips available on the Internet for those of us who make jewelry, and the above information was gleaned from Wirejewelry.com's "Daily Wire Jewelry Tip" dated Aug. 16, 2017. By subscribing to the various newsletters for jewelry makers, you are given access to many video and written tutorials, as well as useful tips on many aspects of the art. I found this one particularly inspiring, as I keep a roll of painters tape in my jewelry making supplies. WireJewelry.com provides handy tips daily that can be downloaded as PDFs and saved on your computer, or printed out. Interweave.com also has several newsletters to which you can subscribe, and one of my favorites is "Jewelry Making Daily", where you can find projects, as well as tutorials. I subscribe to several, and have an extensive digital library at my fingertips. Enjoy!

## Safety: Work safely so you can do it again By Mike Schuchs

Photo by Mike Schuchs



**I saw it first; then I polish it.**

In lapidary work, few things are as satisfying as sawing a rock into little slices to see what is inside. Is it a dud, is it a treasure, does that look like Elvis, or is that Jimmy Hoffa? You never know until you cut the rock. We are very lucky to have a lab, and to have been given equipment to do just that. There are a few things that we should remember that will make our cuts safe and plentiful. (Ed. note: pictured saw and new rolling cart should be in the workshop soon.)

**Know the mineral.**

For the most part, anything you find in the gravel here in the southeast is going to be suitable for cutting. If you buy something online, at a swap meet, or from someone's collection, make sure you get a positive id. You don't want to leave a toxic or radioactive sludge in the saw or make someone sick.

**Know the hardness.**

Again, our gravels and most rocks will top out with a Mohs 7, and our saws are set for that. We can cut small pieces of corundum, but this shortens the saw life too much to make this a practice. Our saw speed, feed rate, and coolant, are set up for Mohs 7 rocks like petrified wood, agates, and banded cherts.

**Coolant.**

People have experimented with a variety of coolants for their saws. Houses have been torched by rock enthusiast using kerosene and diesel; this works OK, up to the point where the fire starts. Water with additives is recommended for certain soft materials, Mohs 4-ish, but we will need to find some other way to cut this material. A very good choice for coolant is light mineral oil; this was selected for our saws in the lab. Remember, even though it is nontoxic, even though it is recommended for human consumption at times, it is a very strong laxative. Don't lick the rocks. There is a better version available, that we should consider in the future, because it is cheaper and orange flavored, but this will make it harder to not lick the rocks.

## Turning Gravel into Silicon by Gary Matthews

Melted silicon being poured into molds. Photos by Mississippi Silicon



Mississippi Silicon Plant



Gravel is commonly used on driveways and run over by riding lawnmowers, but did you know that common gravel can be turned into pure silicon? Silicon is the second most common element in the Earth's crust, but is rarely found in its pure form. Silicon is the primary element in gravel and many of the minerals that we enjoy collecting.

A manufacturing operation in Burnsville, Mississippi, takes gravel, coal, and wood chips, to produce almost pure silicon. Silicon is used in everything from paint, to cosmetics, to auto parts, to computer chips.

Mississippi Silicon began operations in 2015 on a 100 acre site on the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway. The \$200 million dollar plant is the first new silicon production plant to be built in the USA in over 40 years.

Ten percent of the silicon produced in the USA is produced at the Burnsville plant. The primary use of the silicon from this location is as an alloy in aluminum which is used to produce automotive and aerospace parts.

The silicon produced in Burnsville must be further refined in order to be turned into computer chips.

More information on Mississippi Silicon can be found at [www.missilicon.com](http://www.missilicon.com).

Once the silicon is poured into molds and cooled, it has an attractive metallic color.

Silicon sample and photo by Gary Matthews



## Lapidary Words: Test Your Knowledge! By Nancy Roberts



**Answers to June: Alloys and Argentium.**

Sheet metal photo from Wirejewelry.com

An alloy is a metal that is composed of two or more metallic elements. Fine silver, gold, and copper, which are not alloys, are widely used in making jewelry, but many lapidary artists also use alloys such as sterling silver, brass, nickel silver (German silver), and bronze. Not only are these metals less expensive than silver or gold, but they also lend themselves very well to "mixed metals" lapidary projects. Sterling silver is an alloy of silver and copper, brass is copper and zinc, bronze is copper and tin, and nickel silver is copper, nickel, and zinc.

Argentium silver is the "new kid on the block", so to speak, in the jewelry world. It is a patented alloy of silver, copper, and the metalloid germanium. It has a higher silver content, and is more tarnish and fire scale resistant than sterling silver. If you are interested in learning more about argentium and how to work with it, check out RioGrande at, <https://www.riogrande.com/search/go?w=working+with+argentium>

Coming up: **Facet** and **Freeform**; find out in the next issue.



Rockheads:

Mascot by Remy Collins

### Rockhead Officers:

**President,** Konrad Armstrong  
**Vice President,** James Carr  
**Secretary,** Marion Carr

## Next Rockhead Meeting: Sept. 16, 2017

The next Rockhead meeting will be on Saturday, Sept. 16th from 1 to 3p.m. at the Tupelo library. Rockheads will be participating in the "hands-on" gravel program. Please bring something from your collection to show. Should be fun!

## NMGMS Junior Rockhound of the Year Award

If you have been working toward earning the "Junior Rockhound of the Year" award, but have not yet completed all of the necessary requirements, don't worry, there's still time before the December meeting. Requirements for the NMGMS "Junior Rockhound of the Year" award are:

1. Be a member in good standing
2. Write an article or review for The Nugget
3. Give a short presentation or set up a "show and tell" display at one of the meetings.

If you still need to get an article or review published in the newsletter, please send it to [therockhoundlady@yahoo.com](mailto:therockhoundlady@yahoo.com). It doesn't need to be long or complicated.

If you need to do a display, bring one along to any of the next few meetings.



### Community Service:

NMGMS would like to thank Rockhead, Liam Langford, for his participation and assistance at the New Albany Fossil Road Show this past June, and also for helping Robert Langford with his Twenty Mile Creek fossil id station over the summer. Thank you, Liam, for sharing your time and interests with your community.



Sept. 2017

[www.amfed.org/fra/fra\\_badge.htm](http://www.amfed.org/fra/fra_badge.htm)

**Adult Youth Advisor: Jim Roberts**  
 latergator2003@yahoo.com



## SFMS Federation News

Southeast Federation of Mineralogical Societies Annual Meeting on October 20-22, 2017 Sponsored by the Knoxville Gem and Mineral Society

### Events:

Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 10 am – 6 pm, Knoxville Gem Show, Kerbela Temple, 315 Mimosa Ave in Knoxville TN, 37920. Reservation required for admission vouchers. 3 pm – Tour of Jewelry TV, 9600 Parkside Dr., Knoxville, TN 37922, Reservations required. 7 pm – Cracker Barrel, JTV, 9600 Parkside Dr., Knoxville, TN 37922

Saturday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 10 am – 6 pm, Knoxville Gem Show, Kerbela Temple, 315 Mimosa Ave, Knoxville, TN, 37920 - Reservation required for admission vouchers 8:30 am – Registration, Delegate verification for Annual Meeting - JTV, 9600 Parkside Dr., Knoxville 9 am Annual Meeting - JTV, 9600 Parkside Dr., Knoxville 7:30 pm Annual Banquet - JTV, 9600 Parkside Dr., Knoxville – Reservations required - \$20 for meal. Checks made out to KGMS (Knoxville Gem and Mineral Society). Menu: Grilled boneless chicken breasts, coleslaw, roasted potatoes, green beans, yeast rolls w/butter, assorted cookies, sweet and unsweet tea, lemonade, water.

Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11 am – 5 pm, Knoxville Gem Show, Kerbela Temple, 315 Mimosa Ave in Knoxville TN. Reservation required for admission vouchers 9:30 am, Editors Breakfast - Kerbela Temple, 315 Mimosa Ave in Knoxville – Reservations required - \$7.00 for meal. Checks made out to KGMS (Knoxville Gem and Mineral Society). Menu: Coffee, eggs, sausage, bacon, sausage biscuits and gravy.

### Lodging:

Cedar Bluff Best Western, 420 N Peters Rd, Knoxville, TN, 37922 – 865-539-0058. Ask for SFMS Block. Cost: \$83/night until 9/19/2017. After 9/19/2017 price will be \$114.99-134.99 per night.

Cedar Bluff Holiday Inn, 9134 Executive Parkway Dr., Knoxville, TN 37923 – 865-693-1011. Ask for JTV Corporate Rate. \$99/night.

### September SFMS Workshop:

SFMS still has room for their September workshop at Wildacres. . We have a great group of instructors teaching in September. We would love to have record breaking attendance.

Thank you, Teresa Polly, SFMS President

Wildacres September Workshop, September 18-24, 2017 Tuition, \$370

Full descriptions of classes and instructors are on website. <http://sfmsworkshops.com/>

The SFMS Newsletter, the Lodestar, and the AFMS Newsletter are available for all members to read on line

**For Federation news, please check out these websites:**  
<http://www.amfed.org/>      <http://www.amfed.org/sfms/>





## Editor's Note:

Since our NMGMS junior members, the Rockheads, participate in the AFMS Future Rockhound of America badge program, I would like to offer Jim Brace-Thompson our heartfelt congratulations. Jim was awarded the 2017 AFMS Recognition Award, which was presented at the AFMS/CMS Annual Banquet last June in Ventura, CA. Besides being extremely active in the American and California Federations, as well as his home club in Ventura, Jim's biggest claim to fame is being Chair of the AFMS Junior Program since 2003. He constructed the AFMS program for juniors; updated the program every four years; and maintains a badge program called the Future Rockhounds of America Badge Program. The FRA program was instituted as a program that all clubs can use to teach various age groups in a myriad of subjects such as, geology; mineralogy; and gemology, just to name a few. Students receive a membership patch (3,946 to date) and activity badges, demonstrating their proficiency in a particular area (currently 20 total badges). Jim designed all of the badges, and to date, over 11,900 badges have been handed out. If a student masters all of the subjects, they are awarded an AFMS pin – a special mark of distinction (28 to date), and the best part is the program is free. Congratulations Jim on receiving the 2017 AFMS Recognition Award for your outstanding service to the Federation. NMGMS thanks you for your efforts.

## Club News: AFMS Bulletin Competition Winners!

The following results were published in the Sept. 2017, vol. 70 issue 8, of the AFMS newsletter.

### 2017 Bulletin Editor's Contest Results:

#### Small Bulletins:

10<sup>th</sup> place, "The Nugget", Nancy Roberts, editor, North Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society, Tupelo, MS, SFMS

#### Junior Articles under age 12:

5<sup>th</sup> place, "A Visit to the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History" Jake Carr, North Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society, Nancy Roberts, Editor - Tupelo, MS, SFMS

6<sup>th</sup> place, "Making Grab Bags", Marion Carr, North Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society, Nancy Roberts, Editor, Tupelo, MS, SFMS

Awards taken by other NMGMS members for their "home" club's newsletters:

#### New Editors:

2<sup>nd</sup> place, "Rocky Echoes", Rosina Echols, editor, Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society, Florence, MS, SFMS

#### Large Bulletins:

7<sup>th</sup> place, "MAGS Rockhound News", Matthew Lybanon, editor, Memphis Archaeological & Geological Society, Memphis, TN, SFMS

#### Adult Articles:

Honorable Mention, "Crystal Clear", Matthew Lybanon, Memphis Archaeological & Geological Society, Matthew Lybanon, Editor, Memphis, TN, SFMS

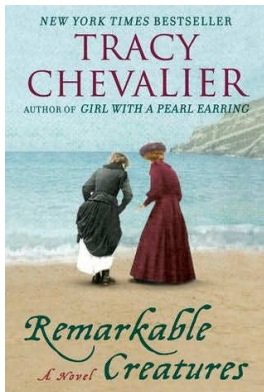
#### Written Features:

1<sup>st</sup> place, "Not Just a Fossil: Bryozoans Still Alive and Well in Mississippi", Beverly Pettigrew Kraft, Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society, Rosina Echols, Editor, Florence, MS, SFMS

Honorable Mention, "Junior Road Trip", Joy Rushing, Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society, Rosina Echols, Editor, Florence, MS, SFMS



## Book Review: by Nancy Roberts



### Remarkable Creatures by Tracy Chevalier, copyright, 2009

Have you ever wondered what it may have been like to be a fossil hunter in England early in the nineteenth century? A time when fossils were called “curies” (from curiosities), and most were collected by locals, who eked out a living by selling fossils to tourists or wealthy collectors. A time when many of the fossilized creatures were yet unidentified by the scientific community, and the idea of extinction was still a new concept. Imagine windswept beaches along the English coast; braving high tides, landslides, bitter winds, and the excitement of discovering a complete skeleton of a fossilized “monster”.

Tracy Chevalier brings to light the life and times of two English fossil hunters, Mary Anning and Elizabeth Philpot, whose passion for collecting led to some of the most important discoveries of the nineteenth century. Remarkable Creatures is a work of fiction, yet many of the people actually existed and some of the events did take place. I found Remarkable Creatures to have a Jane Austin flavor, and an enjoyable read for any avid fossil collector. It provided an interesting insight into the early days of geology and paleontology. It made me wish I could go back in time and collect along those fossil strewn beaches and cliffs.

Mary Anning’s ichthyosaur and plesiosaur fossils are on display at the Natural History Museum in London. Elizabeth Philpot was well known for her fossil fish collection. The Philpot fossil collection is at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History.

### Further reading:

Cadbury, Deborah, *The Dinosaur Hunters: A True Story of Scientific Rivalry and the Discovery of the Prehistoric World*, 2000 (UK); as *Terrible Lizard: The First Dinosaur Hunters and the Birth of a New Science*, 2001(US).

Conybeare, William, and Henry De La Beche, papers on the ichthyosaur and plesiosaur for the Geological Society, 1821, 1822, 1824, reprinted in *The Dinosaur Papers, 1676-1906*, edited by David B. Weishampel and Nadine M. White, 2004.

Draper, Jo, *Mary Anning’s Town: Lyme Regis*, 2004



**For information on “open to the public” fossil sites in the US, check out:**

<https://www.thoughtco.com/fossil-parks-for-hands-on-digging-1440567>

Photo from the website

Christopher Hopefitch/DigitalVision/Getty Images



NMGMS did not hold club meetings in June, July, or August, so there are no meeting minutes to report this month.

### **NMGMS 2017 Officers:**

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NMGMS meets the third Saturday of the month (except June, July and August) from 1 to 3p.m. at the Lee County Public Library in Tupelo, MS. Any changes will be posted on the website [www.nmgms.org](http://www.nmgms.org), or in *The Nugget*. Annual Dues: \$12, single and \$20 family.

The North Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society was established in 2001 as a non-profit organization dedicated to education and the collection of rocks, minerals, and fossils. NMGMS is affiliated with the American and Southeast Federations of Mineralogical Societies. Our organization promotes the educational, scientific, and recreational aspects of the hobby in the subjects of mineralogy, geology, paleontology, the lapidary arts, and other areas related to the earth sciences. Through our meeting programs, workshops, field trips and other club activities, we strive to increase the knowledge and skills of our members in these subjects. We not only share knowledge within our club, but we have participated in activities throughout the community.