



The Nugget

North Mississippi Gem & Mineral Society Newsletter



Photo by Jim Roberts

Notes from the President's Desk....April 2016

I can hear the wheels turning and the blades humming! I have tried to get down to the NMGMS "lapidary workshop" room at the Link Center, at least once a week lately, and things are really starting to shape up over there. Mike Schuchs managed to get some heavy duty roof paint on the counter tops and now he is diligently working on the large slab saw. Mike also, just about, has a 6 inch trim saw ready to go. The new blades for it came in, so that saw should be "online" soon. We may also have one of the 10 inch saws running in time for the April 16th workshop. Thanks to some donations and our March silent auction, we now have some mineral oil for these saws!

Jim Roberts helped me tack some plastic sheeting behind the counters, to help keep splatters off of the walls, and we placed canvas drop cloths underneath the counters, to help protect the carpeting that's in the room. Makes the place look rather "industrial", but will be very functional in the long run, not to mention saving us some headaches down the road.

Ann and John Byzet, as well as, Cheryle Langford and Nikki Kenney, have been helping to get the workshop in order, too, by supplying a coffee pot, towels, dish pan, soaps, cups, coffee, creamer, sugar, trash bags and a variety of other small necessities. John even donated 10 really nice padded folding chairs! Cheryle is planning on making some curtains for the windows, too. Won't we look nice! The workshop now has a metal roller cart, complete with tiles, metal pan with lava stones and a soldering board for our torch station. Stainless quench bowls and two small crock pots for pickle are also on hand. Some new tools, like riveting hammers and steel bench blocks, have been added to our club's tool chest, so we should be in great shape for our mixed metals classes. I can't wait to get started; how about you?

Four of the grinding arbors, that we received from Huntsville, have been placed on one of the 8 foot counters, so eventually 4 members will be able to work on grinding and sanding stones at the same time. We just need a few more motors to drive those arbors and then to get the water cooling system set up. There are also two polishing laps; one is pretty much ready to go, but the other one needs a motor and a few other pieces. Of course, this is just the tip of the iceberg; we'll need sanding belts, leather and polishing compounds, more oil for the saws, dop sticks and wax, as well as, something to heat these with, and eventually, some new grinding wheels and saw blades. But, we're getting there!

We have had several "mini" workshops in the room, too. A few members gathered to make more wire wrapped bangle bracelets to sell at our Geology Fest and to go over the fold forming techniques that will be covered in our April 16th class. Thus, slowly we are making headway and starting to make use of the Link Center room that NMGMS is renting. I think this will be a fantastic addition to our organization and a great calling card for attracting new members. I'm excited! Nancy Roberts

Mark Your Calendar! April 16th Fold Forming Class



Photo by N Roberts

NMGMS will be having a copper fold forming class from 10a.m. until 4p.m. at the Link Center in Tupelo on Saturday, April 16, upstairs in the conference room. You will learn how to fold your metal sheet to make interesting and unique patterns while you create a cuff bracelet and a pair of earrings. It's really a fun project and the results will amaze you! The class is limited to 12 students, so sign up early. The \$25 class fee includes all materials, tools and the use of the torches. Please bring a brown bag lunch. There is a refrigerator and microwave oven available. Email therockhoundlady@yahoo.com, if you plan to attend. There are 9 students signed up for this class.

April 16, 2016 Slab Saw Safety and Operation Workshop

NMGMS member, Mike Schuchs will be conducting a slab saw safety and operation workshop at 10a.m. at the Link Center in Tupelo on Saturday April 16th, in room#136 for those members interested. Bring a piece of rough, if you would like. Be sure the rough material isn't too small or too large to be clamped into the saw's rock vise (5" x 6 1/2" capacity vise). The trim saw may also be in operation, so bring a cabochon drawn out on a slab that you already have and would like to trim. We have a box of slabs that you can "play" with, if you don't have any of your own. **Bring a pair of safety glasses!!**

The workshop is limited to **8** students, so sign up early. Please bring a brown bag lunch. There is a refrigerator and microwave oven available. Email therockhoundlady@yahoo.com or mike.schuchs@syntronmh.com if you plan to attend.

April 23 and 24th MAGS Gem and Mineral Show

NMGMS will be participating in the MAGS rock and gem show as an exhibitor. Members are welcome to come out and help man the exhibit table, as well as see the show. We'll be selling cookies again, too! Hope you can make it.

Over 300 Tables of Rocks, Fossils, Minerals, Gems, Jewelry and Beads

Memphis Mineral, Fossil and Jewelry Show

Sat. April 23, 9-6 • Sun. April 24, 10-5 Agricenter, 7777 Walnut Grove, Memphis TN
Adults -\$5, (2 day pass \$8), 12 & under - \$2, Scouts in Uniform- Free

Grand Door Prize, Exhibits & Demonstrations, Kids Area

www.theearthwideopen.com • info@theearthwideopen.com • 901-274-7706

NMGMS Field Trips:

April 30, 2016 Twenty Mile Creek field trip and Rockheads' cookout

Put on your water shoes, grab your sieves and buckets and let's get out there for those shark teeth and have a splash of a good time too!

On **Saturday April 30, 2016**, the NMGMS Rockheads will sponsor a field trip to the famous Frankstown "Shark Tooth" site (the W. M. Browning Cretaceous Fossil Park), which is located on Twenty Mile Creek in Prentiss County, Mississippi. We will meet at the Site at **10:00 a.m.** Parking is on the eastern side of US Highway 45 in the flat grassy area, just off of the side road and includes under the bridge. We will be sifting through the creek's sand and gravel for shark teeth and other small Cretaceous fossils. Be prepared to get wet and take precautions to limit sun exposure! You will be down in the creek, so you need to be able to go down the bank and get in the water. There is a somewhat steep, sandy path leading down the bank on both sides of the bridge, so wear shoes that can get wet and a walking stick is a good idea. Bring a screening device, like a colander, sieve, or homemade screen made out of hardware cloth and a wooden frame, or fiber screening put into a large plastic embroidery hoop. Also, you will need a small garden trowel or scoop, plus small plastic jars with tight fitting lids, ziploc bags or pill bottles, to use as storage containers for the fossils. There are no facilities here. Be sure to bring plenty of drinking water, a hat, sunscreen, a towel, and dry cloths to change into. This is a wild site, so watch for poison ivy on the banks and snakes at all times. You will find many different kinds of teeth here, shark, ray, bony fish, Mosasaurs, and crocodile; also some vertebrae, turtle bone, scoots, petrified wood and lots more. Many of the teeth are good sized, but most are very small, so be sure to check out anything that is black and shiny!

This will be lots of fun for all ages. If you plan to go on this field trip, please notify:

Nancy Roberts, therockhoundlady@yahoo.com 731-689-5336, or Robert Langford at rlangford@cobbenv.com or thechainmailman@yahoo.com

Lunch: The Rockheads will be cooking hot dogs. There will also be chips, cookies and lemonade, all for the small fee of \$2. What a deal! Please bring your own chair. So come on out to support our Rockheads and have a great time too!

Additionally: Robert Langford will kick off his 20-Mile Creek Summer 2016 Program and NMGMS will be joined by the Boy Scouts from New Albany, who will be working on their Geology Merit badge that day. The identification station will be set up on top of the creek bank. Robert will have fossil identification books, fossil labels, and will assist you in identifying and logging your best finds.

NMGMS Field Trips: cont'd

The Alabama Paleontological Society has invited NMGMS to join them on **Saturday May 7, 2016** for a field trip to one of the Alabama coal mines. We will be collecting Pennsylvanian (coal age) plant fossils (such as lycopods, calamites, seed ferns and cordaites). This field trip will be to an active surface coal mine, so there is an age restriction of 18 years and older. You must be a NMGMS member to attend. Watch your emails for time and meeting place, or contact Nancy Roberts for more information: therockhoundlady@yahoo.com, 731-689-5336.

Union Chapel Mine/Steven C. Minkin Paleozoic Footprint Site

On **Saturday, May 14, 2016**, NMGMS will have a field trip to the Union Chapel site near Jasper, AL. This is the "famous" trackway site and is open to all ages. We will be collecting Pennsylvanian fossils, both plant and trace fossils. Be sure to pack sunscreen, insect spray, hats, gloves, safety glasses when doing any hammering on rocks, rock hammer, small chisel or flat-end screwdrivers to open slabs, boxes or cardboard flats, newspapers, paper towels and aluminum foil (specimens should be layered between paper; they scratch easily), lunch and plenty of water. Watch your emails for time and meeting place, or contact Nancy Roberts for more information: therockhoundlady@yahoo.com, 731-689-5336.

Alabama Gold Camp

NMGMS field trip to the Alabama Gold Camp has been scheduled for Memorial Day Weekend, **May 28 and 29**. All junior members (Rockheads) are especially urged to attend, since this will fulfill part of the requirements for the "Gold Panning and Prospecting" FRA badge. There is plenty of information on the camp's website: <http://www.alabamagoldcamp.com/home>. If you plan on staying in one of the cabins or a campsite, reservations must be made at least a week in advance. I talked to the manager and she suggested, since Memorial Weekend may be a popular time, you should make reservations as soon as possible. The nearest motel is in Lineville, but it has terrible reviews. There are plenty of motels east and south of Birmingham, but would involve a longer drive to the camp. Nancy and I plan to drive over Friday the 27th with our pop-up camper and stay in their campground.

This should be a fun trip for everyone; check out their Facebook page for lots of reviews, pictures, and videos. Jim Roberts

Meeting Program Reviews:



March Birthday Meeting

The March 19, 2016 NMGMS meeting was our 15th birthday! Members brought in various items for "show and tell", and we had our annual Brown Bag auction. Lots of wonderful goodies were discovered when the bags were opened. Some interesting specimens and stunning lapidary works were displayed and, of course, we enjoyed a marvelous feast and birthday cake.



Photos by Nancy Roberts

Mt. Ida Arkansas Field Trip Reviews:



Photo by Nancy Roberts

Our 1st Trip: Red Dirt, Cool Crystals and a Barking Chief! By Christy Paul

It was a cool, misty morning, as we all met at the motel to start out on our crystal digging excursion. Anticipation was thick in the air, as trucks were loaded and others finished breakfast. My family was new to this type of adventure, so we were excited, but with unknown expectations. Finally, our caravan for the day set off to a mine in the mountainous area of Mt. Ida, Arkansas. Our boys were dislodged from their normal iPad head stance, to view with amazement, the beautiful scenery of mountains flowing with clear creeks and streams. Suddenly laughter filled the car, as the statement that it looked like “sasquatch” country was made, and we had to refrain from the enormous temptation of leaving the caravan of trucks to stop and make a “squatch” call. We reached our destination for the day and everyone began to adorn the attire and tools that make all geologists at least “appear” to be official. My family, not wanting to be left out or left behind, began to copycat and put ours on as well. The boots and other tools that we brought, hopefully, would be good choices, as we scanned the crowd of fellow diggers. Gleaming through the trees was a small amount of light, which highlighted the slope of crystals that were on the path to our dig site. The crystals brought about chatter among the seasoned members of the group, commenting, that if the path looked this good, it was going to be a good day to dig.

Everyone made their way down the steep descent of the hill, stopping along the way to retrieve the easy, clean finds of the pathway. Even Steven, who took on the task of keeping up with our barking puppy Chief, found it interesting to admire the glistening crystals, as we walked the path. The mine owner had already begun his safety, boundary, and welcome speech, as the first part of the group made it down the hill, and by this time, the excitement in the air was so thick, that as I caught the tail end of his informational lecture, he sounded to me like the teacher in the Charlie Brown cartoons.

The hill began to look like a mound of busy ants, as everyone made their way, and tried their best, to adhere to the “four foot” rule of not treading on the sacred hunting ground of others. Since this was our first time with the group, and I hadn’t really paid attention to where I should be, I picked a spot at the bottom of the hill, so hopefully, “greenhorn” didn’t seep into the minds of the experienced members. Not knowing what to keep, or what not to keep, everything that sparkled went into the bucket or Italian leather bag, for closer inspection when we got home, where the real task of red clay cleanup would surely occur, all on its own. The hill digging was peaceful, with great comradery among members, which made the day relaxed, fun, and memorable. I was having so much fun, that the day quickly passed into the afternoon hours. I sat for a while, acting as though I was digging, but actually, I was enjoying the time made with new friendships, the laughter of children, and the excitement of others, as the owner opened a private mine area for our group to enjoy for a short time. Almost immediately, the sun came out from behind the clouds, and millions of sparkles in the red dirt began to shine, as though it was a field of intricately cut diamonds. It was one of those too few moments that practically takes your breath away in admiration of Creation. I have always heard the old saying “You never know what you’ve got till it’s gone.”, but with crystal mining, you don’t know what you’ve got till you get it home! Thank you to everyone who made the day, and the entire trip, a wonderful memory for our family!

Mt. Ida Arkansas Field Trip Reviews: Cont'd



On Sunday, we all went to Miller Mountain for quartz crystals and found a lot of good specimens, plus a few "thunder eggs" were found. I even found a piece of petrified wood! When we came off of the mountain, we were pelted by a 15 minute hail storm and because it cooled down so quickly, we encountered a very dense fog that was like a scary movie. When we got back to the motel room, we didn't have power, so we pooled our food, and everyone came to our room, because it was a little bigger. We had a good "mix and match" meal; it was fun!

Dana Armstrong

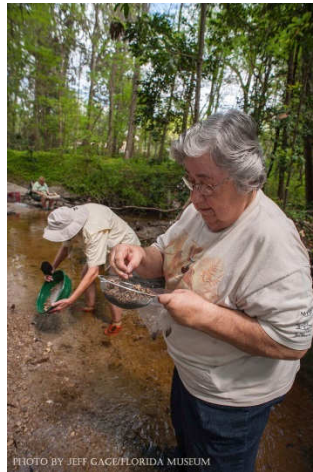


Photos by Nancy Roberts (editor: I think NMGMS members like getting in the mud!!)

Club News: The 2016 Paleo Blitz

On March 18-20th, three NMGMS members participated in the first Paleo Blitz held at the University of Florida in Gainesville, FL. This Paleo Blitz was a paleontological survey conducted by citizen scientists and was intended to train amateur paleontologists in the entire collection process. From field collection and documentation, to the museum curatorial work, the entire process was covered. After filing applications for this event, NMGMS members Joy Rushing, Dave Hanes and Robert Langford were chosen. Congratulations!

Photos by Jeff Gage of the Florida Museum

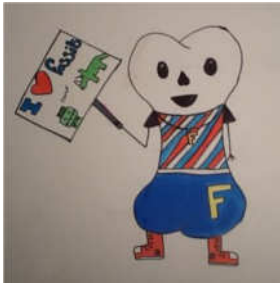


ICC Preschool Dino Talk

On March 2, 2016, NMGMS members Dave Hanes, Rebecca Vallarian, Nancy Roberts and Jim Roberts spent an enjoyable hour with the ICC 4 year old preschool class at the campus in Fulton, MS. The class had been studying dinosaurs and at the request of their teacher, Ms Brea Jimenez, NMGMS was asked to do a program for them. We covered the hadrosaur dinosaur, fossils found in north east Mississippi and how fossil impressions are made. Needless to say, it was very educational for us all and the class was wonderful. The children were very inquisitive, well behaved, eager to learn and such a delight for us to share what we had brought with them. Nancy Roberts



Photos by Jim Roberts



Rockheads:

April 2016



Mascot by Remy Collins

Rockhead Officers:

President

Konrad Armstrong

Vice President

James Carr

Secretary

Marion Carr

www.amfed.org/fra/fra_badge.htm

Adult Youth Advisor: Jim Roberts

latergator2003@yahoo.com

My Science Fair Project by Konrad Armstrong

Photo by Nancy Roberts



For my science project this year, I made a hydrogen gas generator. It works off a reaction between hydrochloric acid and aluminum. With my project I won third place at my school. I won first place at regionals, (editor: Kudos Konrad!) and I was able to go to state. It has been my best project yet, but I will not be continuing it next year.

Another Top Notch Project!



Photo by Nancy Roberts

Matthew Lambert's science fair project, which is based on a study of the fish otoliths that he has collected at the Blue Springs "crab site", placed 5th in the state's 2016 science fair competition in Oxford, Mississippi. Way to go Matthew!



SFMS Federation News

The following Southeast Federation workshop classes are scheduled at William Holland Lapidary School for the week of June 5th through June 11th:

Beading, Becky Patellis	Cabochons, Dave Bergquist	Casting, Bill Harr
Chainmaille, Kathy Morris	Faceting, Tom Mitchell	Gem Trees, Jerri Heer
Mineral ID, Scott Forward	Opals, Carl Talbott	Polymer Clay, Sandra Davis
Silver II- SW Silver, Nancy English		Wire I, Sandy Bergquist
Wire II-Wire Weaving & Wire Wrap Filigree, Jan Stephens		

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



For more information about classes at the William Holland School of Lapidary Arts, the teachers, and any class kit fees, check out the William Holland Website: <http://www.lapidaryschool.org/>

For a listing of upcoming shows in the southeast, check out <http://www.amfed.org/sfms/club-shows-456.html>

More Upcoming NMGMS Events:

The next regular NMGMS meeting will be on Saturday May 21, 2016 from 1 to 3p.m. at the Lee County Library in Tupelo. The program will be “Making a Copper Celtic Torque”, given by NMGMS member Robert Langford. Bring your needle nose or chain nose pliers and have some fun while you learn to make this exotic piece.

NMGMS Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: March 19, 2016

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the North Mississippi Gem and Mineral Society was held on Saturday, March 19, 2016 from 12:35 to 1:00pm @ the Lee County Library in Tupelo. The meeting was called to order by the president of the club, Nancy Roberts.

Members Present: Nancy Roberts, Nikki Kenney, Belinda Loyd, John Byzet and Mike Schuchs. The motion was made to approve the February board meeting minutes as written. Motion Carried.

Discussion: In last month's meeting, John Byzet agreed to obtain a quote covering the contents. The minimum amount is approximately \$500 per year. SFMS insurance will be renewed by the end of March to cover field trips and events held outside the Link Center. The federation insurance will also cover the liability on the Link Center workroom. The Board agreed a sign will be placed on the door stating "**MEMBERS ONLY – DO NOT OPERATE EQUIPMENT UNLESS AUTHORIZED**".

There was discussion in regards to setting up a once a week training with Mike Soroczak to meet the criteria as a "qualified equipment operator". Board member, Mike Schuchs, will be holding a mini equipment safety workshop at the Link Center on April 16th.

The decision before the board was: "Should the club picnic be moved to the Rockwell Center on the 21st of May or wait until fall to reserve the pavilion?" The board agreed to reserve the pavilion for the 3rd Saturday in October.

The next business for discussion was whether to sign another 6 month lease on the room at the Link Center. It was noted the rental fee would be at \$285 per month. It was suggested to negotiate the same rental arrangement as previous months and bring back to the Board for review.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 12:55pm.

Belinda Loyd, Secretary NMGMS

NMGMS 2016 Officers:

President/Field Trip Chair:

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NMGMS Meeting Minutes

Date: March 19, 2016

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was given by Nancy Roberts and Justin Hobart.

Introduce guests and new members...Derek Markley and daughter Abbey; Julian Riley.

The Feb. 2016 meeting minutes were approved as printed in the February 2016 Nugget.

Treasurer's Report: Closing Balance as of 3/19/16 \$3219.07

Review of Committees:

Field Trips: Our next NMGMS field trip will be to the Twenty Mile Creek shark tooth site on Hwy 45 on Saturday April 30th. Members participating are to meet at the creek at 10am. The Rockheads will be having their hotdog cookout on site that afternoon. NMGMS has been invited to join the Alabama Paleontology Society (APS) on a planned coal mine trip on May 7th. Details will be coming, so watch your emails. APS goes out to the Union Chapel Trackway site on the second Sat. of the month and this is a site for kids. It is near Jasper, AL and state owned.

Publicity: (John Byzet) The newspaper and TV station covered the setting up of our museum displays. Save any articles for the yearbook. Continue to hand out the posters about the Geology Fest on April 9th at the Oren Dunn City Museum. Members inquired if radio ads have been purchased. Mr. Byzet will check on the cost.

Membership: (Ann Byzet) Our total membership count, so far, for 2016 is 97 members.

Hospitality: Refreshments: There is no meeting scheduled for April, since we are hosting the Geology Fest at the museum. Need two volunteers for May 21st: Mike Schuchs & Nancy Roberts. Monetary donations to help out with the refreshments are welcome!

Website: (John Byzet) The NMGMS updated constitution and bylaws is on the website; www.nmgms.org. Also, check out our club's FB page, it has been getting some traffic!

Newsletter: (Nancy Roberts) The deadline for newsletter submissions is the **second Friday** of the month. Email submissions for The Nugget to: therockhoundlady@yahoo.com. Reviews on attending a field trip, workshop, or other club event, are welcomed. We're starting a new year, so let's have some good articles and reviews that we can send into the 2016 bulletin competition! Members were asked to write a Mt. Ida trip review.

Youth Members: (Jim Roberts) The Rockheads are planning a gold mining field trip to AL May 28th. ALABAMA GOLD CAMP, 1398 Co. Rd. 5, Lineville AL 36266 256-396-0389 (<http://www.alabamagoldcamp.com/>) Youth members will be hosting the 20 Mile Creek field trip and hotdog cookout on April 30th.

Historian: (Cheryle Langford) Start saving your 2016 memorabilia for the club yearbook. This would include any fliers or brochures from the events, museums or other points of interest that you attend. If you see any newspaper or magazine article featuring one of our club members, save those too, even if it is not anything club related.

Geology/Kids Day: (Roger Lambert, John Byzet and Robert Langford) Members will setup as much as possible on the museum grounds Friday April 8th. All members, who are working the fest on the April 9th, should be at the museum no later than 9am that morning.

Safety: (David Loyd) Mike Schuchs is doing safety write ups for the Nugget.

Old Business:

The display cases at the Oren Dunn Museum are setup; they will remain up until mid-May. A big "thank you" goes to everyone who came out to help with the setup, and also to those who loaned specimens for the cases. If you haven't completed loan forms, please do so ASAP.

For the geology day on April 9th, members were asked to bring something for the "hands-on" table. Ticket/info table (Ann and John Byzet), jewelry sales (Brenda Manning and Justin Hobart), the fluorescent room (Mike Schuchs and James Carr), fishing game (Jim Roberts and Brittani Lambert), sandbox dig (Konrad Armstrong and Dan Winfield), lapidary project (Cheryle Langford and Nikki Kenney), spin and win (Belinda Loyd and Matthew Lambert), and the hands on table (Robert Langford and David Loyd), hot dogs (Dana and Larry Armstrong, Debra Boone and Rebecca Vallarian)

NMGMS March 19, 2016 Meeting Minutes cont'd:

The Club has rented room #136 at the Link Center for 6 months. The workshop has three tables there now and Mr. Byzet has purchased 10 folding chairs with padded seats for the room. There is a metal cart that needs to be assembled. This will be used for the torch station and the counters need their top coat. The paint is already there. Mr. Schuchs volunteered to paint the counters. Several members donated funds to purchase a gallon of mineral oil at Tractor Supply for the big slab saw.

The Copper Fold Forming Workshop for the West Point Arts Council was cancelled, so we will be teaching it for NMGMS members on Saturday, April 16, 2016 at the Link Center in the conference room. Time: 10 to 4 Class fee: \$25. Bring a brown bag lunch! Class is limited to 12, so let us know if you plan to attend. Also, Mr. Schuchs will be hosting a trim saw safety class.

NMGMS will have an exhibit table at the MAGS show, April 23rd and 24th. Set up will Friday evening, the 22nd. The Armstrongs and Loyds volunteered to help man the exhibit table at the show.

Saturday, April 30th Robert Langford will be teaching the Boy Scout Geology merit badge for the New Albany scouts and the Rockheads will be hosting their Twenty Mile Creek field trip and hotdog cookout. Any member, who would like to meet at the crab site that morning to help the scouts with their collecting, is more than welcome. Roger Lambert and Justin Hobart volunteered to help out at the crab site on the 30th.

Is there any other old business? None at this time.

New Business:

The NMGMS SFMS 2016 insurance has been paid @ the rate of \$2 per member for a total of \$196. This will cover the liability for field trips, workshops and meetings.

The clubs 990-N 2015 tax form has been filed and waiting on notice of acceptance.

There was some confusion in regards to the Ballard Park pavilion being reserved for May 7th; somehow, the park booked the stage. Therefore, the club reserved the Rockwell Center for May 21st picnic.

Rockwell is a two-room facility with a small kitchen, located at 1199 Joyner Ave., Tupelo. It has tables and chairs for 100 people. There is an outside patio where we can set up a grill. It is behind Joyner School. The park and rec people will let us rent this building for the same price of \$50 and we can have it for all day. We do have the library booked for May 21st, so we could have a regular meeting and contact Robert Langford to do his copper Celtic torque program. Members were asked if they wanted to hold the picnic on May 21st at the Rockwell Center or wait until October and reserve the Ballard Park pavilion. Members unanimously agreed to have the annual picnic on the 3rd Saturday in October @ the Ballard Park pavilion.

Is there any other new business? No further business at this time.

Motion to Adjourn



Rainbow in Mt. Ida

Photo by Nancy Roberts