



Maturango News

Death Valley Tourist Center • Northern Mojave Visitor Center

100 E. Las Flores Ave. • Ridgecrest, CA 93555

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www.maturango.org

Museum Director's Notes

By Debbie Benson, Director

On March 6, the Museum was full of our greatest treasure, our members. We were so proud and pleased to have so many people come and see what we are doing at their Museum. Trying to fit into our Sylvia Winslow Gallery made it clear to all why we had been working so hard for so long to expand. My thanks go out to all of the people who made it all happen, especially Lynnette Wilson and Cathy Douglas for sharing their gifts of music, Sandy Rogers for his fascinating monorail presentation, Leslie Layfield, Sue Gilbert and Dianne Dilley for making sure the food was there to share and each of our volunteers who cleaned and worked so hard to make sure we were cleaned up and ready for company. They are a pretty amazing team! Our tech crew also made sure we could see the new screen and projection system as well as hear a little music. Mary and the store staff had the Gift Shop looking great. It was wonderful!

What could be better than that? On March 12, at 1p.m. our final inspection was signed off! We can now occupy the New North Gallery, the Docent room and the workroom. Our expansion, while not absolutely finished, can be used for events! Our Wildflower Exhibit on April 10, 11 & 12 will have plenty of space with a prep room for putting together the specimen bottles and a gallery to show them in! We can hold concerts, like the one Mark Moore is planning with one of my favorite people ever, Bud Sewell. Keep checking the website for updates on that! We are also looking forward to more seating for our lectures and other events. We have some great lectures lining up in April so keep an eye on our calendar of events on the website. www.maturango.org.

Are we completely done? Not yet! There is still so much to do, but passing inspection was a major hurdle that was due to the effort of so many. The first phase of the building was led by Thom Boggs and these last two phases were led by Dan Burnett. The hard working and diligent people that have helped to make this all happen have the gratitude not only of the Museum, but also the entire community that the Maturango Museum serves. The Building Committee and the contractors are still here working on many details. We welcome donations for many items: tables, chairs, the new herbarium case and docent shelving. Every day brings more positive reasons to be a part of the Museum!



"Sheepskate" image based on Milt Burford's sketch.

Spring Petroglyph Tour Dates

All April dates are full. A few remaining spots in May and June. See www.maturango.org for the available dates, the museum's application, the Navy Security form, and the Navy's appropriate/inappropriate footwear chart.

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

About this time of year some of us have strange experiences. This morning Bev Hill went out to her car and was shocked by the appearance of a coyote staring at her from inside the car. This morning Andrea Pelch was startled by the same coyote sitting in Bev's car at the museum. I have had many similar experiences with coyote or bobcat sitting in my car in the garage in the morning! Well, after the first shock, we suddenly remember that we packed the coyote or bobcat specimen the day before to be ready for our Sand Canyon in the classroom lessons. Takes a few seconds to remember! As we travel with coyote and bobcat we surprise other motorists also.



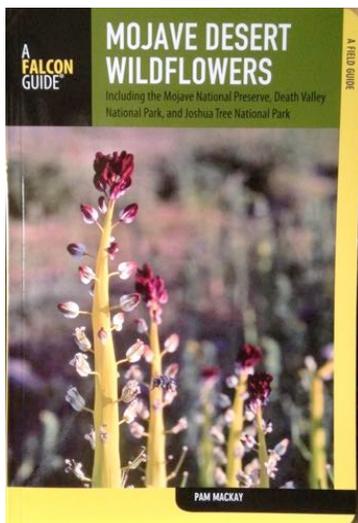
The joys of being a docent are never-ending! Just try moving Violet, the turkey vulture specimen, or sharing juvenile tortoises or Rosy, our live pet rosy boa! We will visit all the 4th grade classrooms to present Sand Canyon Alive, share the animal specimens, and discuss the food chain. Bob Parker and Dan Burnett will teach the Birds and Binoculars sessions. All this takes place in the classroom before students go on the field trip to Sand Canyon as part of the Sand Canyon Environmental Education Program (SEEP). We work closely with BLM's Peggy Jacobson, SEEP Coordinator.

Meanwhile all of our programs are popular. The monthly Children's Hour draws a full crowd! We will be happy to use the larger gallery/lecture center. Art programs go out weekly. Come to the museum and view some of the children's art in the Discovery Area. We also have many requests for tours in the spring. Of course, the Beth Armogida Planetarium is always a hit!

We are busy getting ready to move into the new docent room. Plans have been made for shelving but donations are needed. Next step is to plan the spacing of the shelves to accommodate our wide variety of specimens and other materials. Thank you if you are able to donate a little towards our shelving. Call me if you have any questions.

We are offering summer classes through the city for children from pre-fourth grade through pre-sixth grade. The classes will be held here but advertised through the city. The classes will be held in June. The classes will be: Critters from the Inside Out (4 mornings); Astronomy (2 mornings); Kitchen Chemistry (3 mornings). Watch for more information available in the next newsletter.

Please join us at our next docent meeting at 8:45 AM on Tuesday, April 7, in the museum gallery.



In the Museum Gift Shop

Mojave Desert Wildflowers is the ultimate field guide to wildflowers, trees, and shrubs of the ecoregion that extends from California to Arizona, Nevada, and Utah and includes Death Valley National Park, Mojave National Preserve, and Joshua Tree National Park. Packed with vivid color photos and informative text, this valuable reference will help you identify and appreciate the unique and varied flora of this desert ecosystem.

This easy-to-use-guide features: a tough, water-resistant cover and extra-durable binding, made to withstand vigorous field use; detailed descriptions and color photos of more than 300 plants; an introduction to the habitats and ecology of the Mojave Desert; a glossary of botanical terms; a primer on plant characteristics.

And many more wildflower books... T-shirts, hats and scarves, too.



Annual Wildflower Exhibit, April 10 – 12, 2015

Friday through Sunday – 10 am to 5 pm

by Charlotte Goodson, Wildflower Coordinator Team Volunteer

The museum's Wildflower Exhibit is in its 37th year. It features wildflowers which are gathered locally from elevations ranging from the desert floor to the foothills. The exhibit will be in the Museum's new gallery! (Drum roll, please.) With all that space, the wildflowers will have ample room to show to best advantage.

Spring is bustin' out all over with wildflowers blooming at least to mid-elevation range in our surrounding canyons, the Rademacher Hills, and well, everywhere. Wandering in the hills is rewarded with slope after slope covered with Goldfields, large patches of purple Phacelias, and myriad other species from the tiniest belly flowers to robust shrubs. The plants not yet in flower are showing every promise of putting their best petals forward in time for the Wildflower Exhibit. On Saturday afternoon at 2:30 Naomi Fraga, PHD botanist with Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, will present "Wild About Monkeyflowers - and Other Local Wildflowers". Naomi, a past presenter of her then Master's program on wildflowers in the Owens Peak drainage, will assuredly once again delight the audience with beautiful photos and fascinating information.

The Desert Artists' League will add to visitors' enjoyment by demonstrating wildflower sketching/painting 'in situ' and displaying their work during the exhibit.

Microscopes will be available to view the amazing intricacies of the plant world.

Free for Maturango Museum members; \$2 admission for visiting adults; free for 18 years and younger.



Frances Nichols : "Seasons of Color in the Eastern Sierras and Desert Valleys"

Opening Reception : Friday, 27 March, 7 pm

Frances will give a short presentation at 7:30 pm on how she develops a work and artists who have influenced her. Her art is based on the tradition of the early California Impressionist plein-air painters. The works are in pastel with a watercolor underpainting, watercolor and oils, done on site or from my photos.

"My paintings investigate the local scenery of the high desert and the eastern Sierra mountains. I like to explore lighting effects and the changes they create.

For me the landscape is a prism where the time of day can transform the light moving through it into constantly changing color.

After thirty-four years of instructing and motivating high school students in the arts, I am enjoying retirement and pursuing my own painting while exploring Indian Wells Valley, the high desert, and the Sierras. Trips in the local canyons, camping, and off-roading have provided landscape subject matter that constantly changes with the seasons.

I was the recipient of the 2014 ALVA Award from the Desert Valleys Federal Credit Union, am a member of The Desert Artists' League, and have been part of the Manzanar Workshop and Exhibition, an annual plein-air paintout held at the site of Manzanar, for several years."

It's Field Trip Time with Janet Westbrook

The flowers are blooming, days are longer, and the weather is mostly nice, so I have a bunch of trips scheduled and hope you can join me! Note that we're doing a slight price break for 2 Museum family members, \$50 instead of \$60.

All of these are "long days" - you may want to do dinner on the way home. There will be some short dirt roads on each, but nothing a regular street car can't handle. We can carpool. You could leave at any point if you need to. Contact me if you have any questions or concerns... 760-375-8371 Buy tickets any time at shop.maturango.org or at the store (open 10-5 every day). More details about filed trips at www.maturango.org

Around Owens Lake and Southern Owens Valley

Saturday, April 4 - Around Owens Lake adventure, starting with the high aqueduct roads out of Little Lake for amazing views down at that little oasis. Then to Olancha and Cartago, to explore the historical places when the lake had water in it - the mining and paddlewheel steamers on the lake, charcoal, etc. We'll work our way to Lone Pine and have a picnic lunch at Portagee Joe campground after taking the scenic route through the Alabama Hills. Then visit a couple of cemeteries in Lone Pine (there are 4!), cross the now-flowing Owens River (LORP project), take the route of the Carson & Colorado NG Railroad down past the Dolomite Mine and see where it ends in Keeler. On the way there, talk about the Salt Tram and petroglyphs on marble at the old lake level. From Keeler, we'll head down the east side of Owens Lake and talk about what LADWP is doing down there to prevent dust, once and for always. A quick stop at Dirty Socks springs - always nice birding and great views. A day of flowers, history, water pipes and rivers, railroads, mines, etc. all just an hour from home, but we'll be there all day! So much to look at! Some dirt road driving on the north side of the lake. Any vehicle can do it.

Wildflower Show at the Museum

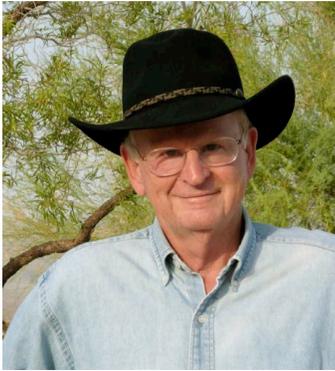
Saturday and Sunday, April 11-12 - Wildflower Show at the Museum; for those who wish, I can lead car caravans to the best flower places in our valley - meet at the Museum at 10:15 both Sat. and Sun. We'll be out till about noon. Good dirt roads.

Walker Basin to Windmills

Saturday, April 18 - One of my favorite loops! We go to Bodfish, looking for poppies on the way to Isabella puddle, then pick up the old stage road and take it over hill and dale (now paved, but still narrow and windy). We'll stop at Havilah, Kern Co.'s first County Seat and Courthouse. Then into the lovely Walker Basin, hoping for a great wildflower show! We'll circle the famous Rankin Ranch, then head over the hills on the stage road down the Lion's Grade to Caliente - these hills always have great wildflower displays! At Caliente we pick up the train tracks which go over the Tehachapi Loop - we'll go to Keene for a pie stop, then go on the old road to the Loop overlook. It's a kick to see the long freights go over themselves on the loop! Then to the backroads of Tehachapi and down Oak Creek Canyon past the forests of windmills and down to Mojave. It's a long day, but oh so much history and hopefully great flowers!! No dirt roads, all paved, but not straight....

Exotic Feline Breeding Compound

Saturday, April 25, Twilight visit to the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound in Rosemond. WHAT? If you like cats, LOTS of cats, over 70 of 'em, come visit the EFBC with me on one of their special night open houses. The facility is open 10-4 daily except Wed., has nice shade and walkways to visit a great number of cats - fishing cats (yes they do!), black leopards, cougars, tigers, etc. Twice a year they open up the entire facility in the evening when the cats are actually more active! And they give the big cats "enrichment objects" - usually a box to tear apart, a watermelon, fish for the fishing cats, etc. It's a fund-raiser for them, there will be hamburgers and hotdogs for purchase, their store has all things cat - it's a fun thing to do! The special admission price is included in your ticket, and we get to get in first when the gates open at 5 p.m. Bring cameras for great cat photos! See their webpage for a list of what cats they currently have, and a kitten report - last year the Sand cats and Black-footed cats had kittens about this time. They just got 3 snow leopards! <http://www.cathouse-fcc.org/genInfo.html>, <http://www.cathouse-fcc.org/pdfs/Fall14.pdf>

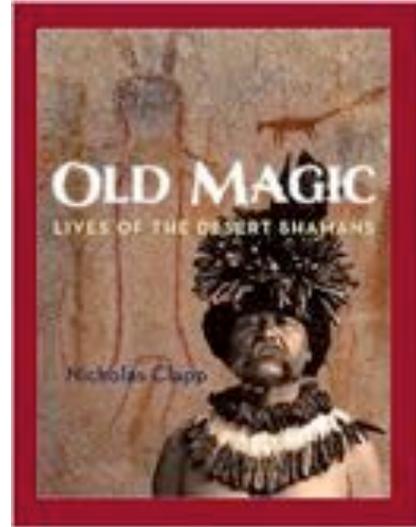


Nick Clapp

Two Lectures in April !

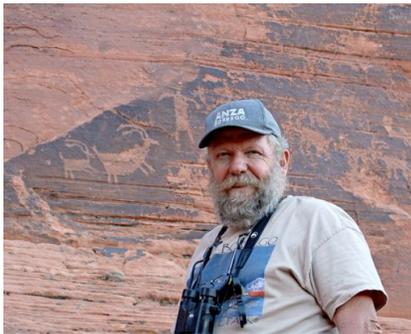
The Maturango Museum is honored to present two lectures in April, both on desert topics.

The first lecture is *Old Magic: Lives of the Desert Shamans*, by Nick Clapp, who will speak on Thursday, April 23, at 7:30 pm. His lecture will explore native shamanism, a little-known aspect of American Indian life and lore. He has also written a book on the same subject, which is for sale



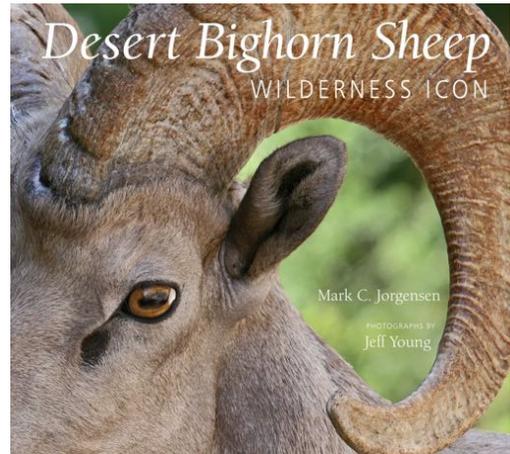
at the Maturango Museum store. The book is illustrated with rare images of shamans and their rock art and captures a glimpse of their daily life and world. The lecture will include a book-signing.

Nick Clapp is an award-winning documentary filmmaker and author who has studied, filmed, and written about the deserts of the world. As an author, his distinguished previous publications include *The Road to Ubar: Finding the Atlantis of the Sands* and *Sheba: Through the Desert in Search of the Legendary Queen*. His interest in the Queen of Sheba drew him to the story of the Queen of Sheba Mine in Death Valley and to its mining engineer, leading to his work, *Who Killed Chester Pray?* It was while researching for this book that Clapp discovered the many rare photographs of America's Last Frontier, which he edited and published in his book *Gold and Silver in the Mojave: Images of a Last Frontier*.



Mark Jorgenson

The second lecture will be *Desert Bighorn Sheep, a Desert Icon*, by Mark Jorgenson, at 3:00 on Sunday afternoon, April 26. . Mark has spent five decades studying and tracking desert bighorn sheep throughout their range. In his 36-year career in California State Parks, he has served as a state park



ranger, a resource ecologist, and as superintendent of Anza-Borrego State Park. He is currently a member of the technical staff of the Desert Bighorn Council, Inc., and is an advisor to the Bighorn Institute. His book will be on sale at the Museum store, and there will be an opportunity for book-signing.



We were saddened to hear that Katie Wash passed away in January at her home in Oregon. Katie served on the Board of Trustees at the Maturango Museum where she was instrumental in getting the Gladys Merrick garden built. She was the person who established the Sand Canyon Environmental Education Program (SEEP) now in its 20th year teaching local school children about nature and the environment. While here in Ridgecrest she worked with the California Desert Conservation Office. Those who knew Katie remember her as being always cheerful, energetic, and full of the joy of life.

April 2015 Donations

Donations

Anonymous – planetarium fund
Monte and Tina Frisbee
Alan and Sylvia Hugo
Vivian Vandevender
David and Elizabeth Watson

Building Fund

Floyd and Deannie Kinder
Pete and Renee Lesniak
Megan and Ian Rawson
Robert Westbrook
Geraldine H. Wisdom
Rachel Woodard

Art Gallery

D. M. Bruce – in memory of Wally Bruce
Judy Fair-Spaulling
Scott McEntee
Ray and Louise Wetzel

In Honor of Mrs. Eleanor Winnemore

Gail A. Wells

In Memory of Mary C. Stites

Michael Bailey
Hubert and Sondra Drake
William and Linda Duncan
Carissa Dunn

Eli Lilly and Co. Payroll Team
Laureen Garcia
Robert Horton
Jennifer Marler- garden fund
Richard and Jalene Martin
The Vralovich Family
Henry Zieman

In Memory of Russell Wise

Jim and Janet Green
Lisa and Chris Kane

Wildflower Exhibit

Kathy LaShure – for visiting
botanists/speakers

Docent Shelving Unit

Dan Burnett
Kathleen Dwyer
Dave Kurdeka
Nora Nuckles
Steve and Sharon Oldfield (correction)

New Members

Kathy Lo Curto
Gina and Barry Niesen
Ron and Glenda Rich
Karin Usko

Little Lake Ranch Field Trip

Join Sandy and Fran Rogers to visit Little Lake Ranch on Saturday, April 25.

Little Lake provides one of the few perennial water sources in an arid land, and the area was occupied for thousands of years. There is an early Archaic site (the Stahl Site) at the north end of the property, and a late prehistoric Shoshonean wintering village (*Pagunda*) west of the lake. The property offers an outstanding display of Native American rock art, both petroglyphs (carved or pecked figures) and pictographs (painted figures). Coso, Mojave Desert, and Kern River Valley styles are present. The land is private property, and we are honored to be allowed access for the trip.



We'll meet at the museum at 7:30 am, and depart by 8:00 am. Will be back at the museum by early afternoon. The cost is \$45 members, \$60 non-members. (Member price applies to members only, not to guests.) There is a limit of 20 people and the deadline for reservations is April 11. Tickets can be purchased at the museum gift shop or www.maturango.org.

Maturango Museum of the IWV

100 E. Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555
Open every day (except major holidays)
from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Staff

Debbie Benson, Museum Director
Mary Lattig, Store Manager/Buyer
Sandy Rogers, Archaeology Curator
Elizabeth Babcock, History Curator
Maria Getusky, Natural History Curator
Julie Stephens, Chief Financial Officer
Fran Van Valkenburgh, Membership
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator
Joann Barbee, Assistant Bookkeeper
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator
Linda Saholt, Petroglyph Tour Coord.
Maureen Goff, Store Supervisor
Sue Gilbert, Museum Assistant
Nora Nuckles, Museum Assistant
Duane Rice, Museum Assistant
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant
Andrea Pelch, Newsletter Editor

Committee Chairpersons

Dan Burnett, Building
Fran Rogers, Concerts
Paula Herr, Docent League
Dan Burnett, Finance
Sandy Rogers, Lectures
Liz Babcock, Publications
Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning
Mike Brown and Janet Westbrook,
Webmasters
Mike Brown, Operational Fundraising

Board of Trustees

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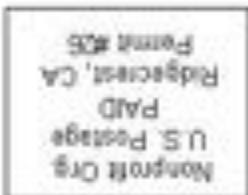
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Ashley Furniture HomeStore	New Directions Technologies, Inc.
Beansters Espresso	News Review
Best Western China Lake Inn	Oasis Garden Club
Boulder Creek RV Resort	PackWrap Business Center
Center Professional Pharmacy	The Pizza Factory
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DART	Ridgecrest Automotive
Daily Independent	Ridgecrest Moving & Storage/Atlas Van Lines
Desert Area Teachers Association	Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
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Epsilon Systems Solutions, Inc.	Searles Valley Minerals
Friends of Jawbone	ServiceMaster of the IWV
Furnace Creek Inn	Sierra Club, Owens Peak Group
Gary Charlon State Farm	Sierra Sands Unified School District
Grape Leaf Restaurant	SOI Motorhome Club
Hampton Inn & Suites	Southern Sierra Medical Clinic
Heritage Inn & Suites	SpringHill Suites by Marriott
High Desert Haven	The Swap Sheet
Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert	Tax Time Services
Hockett's Builders Supply	TJ Frisbee Bicycles, Inc.
Jacobs Naval System Group	TOSS
KPartners Hospitality Group	Union Bank
Kristy's Family Restaurant	WACOM
Law Offices of Phyllis M. Hix	Warren's Automotive
Liberty Self Storage	

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

- China Lake Astronomical Society: 1st Monday of every month, 7 pm
- China Lake Photographic Society: 1st Thursday of every month, 7 pm
- Kerncrest Audubon Society: 3rd Thursday bi-monthly [Jan, Mar, May, Sep, Nov, not July], 7 pm
- Docent League: 1st Tuesday of every month, 8:45 a.m., anyone welcome to attend

Calendar of Events

- Thursday, April 23, all day : Pizza Factory fundraiser
Fri., Sat. & Sun., April 10, 11 and 12 : Wildflower Exhibit Weekend
Sat, April 11, 2:30 pm : lecture "Wild About Monkeyflowers (and Other Local Wildflowers)" by Dr. Naomi Fraga
Saturday, April 18 : Walker Basin with Naturalist Janet Westbrook
Thursday, April 23, 7:30 pm : Lecture on Shamanism in the Desert by Nick Clapp
Friday, April 24, 10:30 – 11:30 am : Children's Hour
Saturday, April 25 : Little Lake Ranch (private property) with Sandy and Fran Rogers
Saturday, April 25 : Evening visit to Exotic Feline Breeding Compound in Rosemond with Janet Westbrook
Sunday, April 26, 3 pm : Lecture on Bighorn Sheep by Mark Jorgenson



Return Service Requested

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