

Maturango News

Maturango Museum:

Preserve, interpret and develop an appreciation for the natural and cultural history of the Northern Mojave Desert.

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

10 am – 5 pm every day. 760.375.6900 www.maturango.org

Death Valley Tourist Center Northern Mojave Visitor Center

Wildflower screensaver and many books available in the gift shop.

Museum Director's Notes

By Debbie Benson, Director

The greening of the Indian Wells Valley has begun! The mourning doves are building nests wherever they can and the critters are active. Please enjoy the beauty but be aware; some of our most concerning reptiles are almost invisible this time of year.

Southern California has had a good dose of rain in late winter and early Spring. This should bring a beautiful season of various wildflowers throughout the canyons and valleys. It's a great chance to take some photos and build some memories.

On a personal note, I would like to thank each person who has offered my family and I their concern and caring on the sudden passing of Dick. He leaves a legacy of his art, his kindness and his stories. One of his favorite stories was part of his demonstrations of throwing large pots for children. When the pot was thrown, he would ask the group if they were ready for "the Grand Finale!" When they were all excited, he would take a bite out of the rim of the pot and throw away the bit piece. On one event, the children wanted to bite the pot too. The teacher basically said they could. The first tentative bites elicited a cry of "but Mr. Benson! It's dirt!" He just laughed and said, "Uh, yes. What did you think it was?" Every one of those children bit that one pot. Each bite becoming a moment of pride. He loved it, the grand finale! In his honor, we are working towards putting up a shade structure in the Gladys Merrick Garden so that children and those wishing to gather can enjoy a bit of shade in the Summer.



Wildflower Exhibit Friday, April 5 – Sunday, April 7

The wildflowers are out and we expect a good variety for the Wildflower Exhibit; the Coso Room will be full of color and fragrance! Admission is \$2.00. Exhibit hosts will be present to help guide guests and answer questions. A few artists from the Desert Artists' League will be there painting and drawing.

California Native Plant Society's (CNPS) Nick Jensen will speak at the exhibit on April 6 at 2pm. His presentation, "A Botanist Comes Full-Circle: From Studying to Defending California's Tejon Ranch, California's Largest Private Landholding," will delight as magically as do the flowers.

Nick is the Southern California Conservation Analyst for CNPS. Nick earned his BS degree in Environmental Horticulture at UC Davis, and recently completed his PhD in botany at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden (RSABG)/Claremont Graduate University. As a graduate student Nick produced the first Flora of Tejon Ranch and studied evolutionary patterns in perennial *Streptanthus* (jewelflowers).

During the month of April, the Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert will be showcasing local photographers who have taken either wildflower or landscape photos for this exhibit.

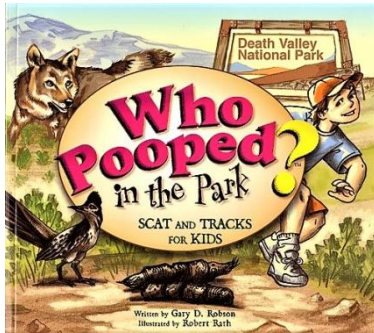
The Wildflower Exhibit weekend has many enjoyable flower related activities for you.

Joy Gonzalez: “California Scapes”

Joy Gonzalez has always been an artist at heart, though she worked for many years as a computer programmer. Her parents encouraged her creative endeavors as she explored sewing, crafts, painting and drawing.

She paints in oils and pastels, depending on the weather and her mood. She loves to paint small landscape studies on location and then returns to the studio to enlarge the studies.

Joy’s artwork will be at the museum until May 6.



Children’s Hour: “Wild Critters - Their Tracks and Signs – Clues Animals Leave Behind”

Friday, April 26, 10:30 am.

The land around us has so many stories to tell. At this Children’s Hour, young children will learn about 'Wild Critters - Their Tracks and Signs.' In addition to “Who Pooped in the Park? Scat and Tracks for Kids” and other read-aloud books, action songs, a craft and guided hands-on exhibits, there will be a special *Search and Find Tracks* activity in the Museum’s Garden.

When exploring out in the desert and forests in the mountains, tracks or other signs that animals have left behind can often be seen. Different foot prints (tracks) show what kind of animal has been there earlier. Sometimes other clues (signs) are found, such as bits of left-over food like nut shells or small bones. Different kinds of animals can also be identified from their scat (poop). Tracks and signs are like stories of what animals were doing when passing that way.

The Children’s Hour at the Maturango Museum invites young children and their families to an entertaining and educational experience that takes place monthly, September – May.

The final program, “Beautiful Butterflies - So Loved by plants and people” is scheduled for Friday, May 17, 10:30 am.

Free Field trips with Janet Westbrook during the Annual Wildflower Show weekend.

1/2 day trips to pretty places Saturday April 6 and Sunday April 7.



Meet at the Museum at 10 am. One of the days we’ll go explore the Aqueduct Road from Walker Pass to at least Indian Wells Canyon (maybe to Short Canyon if time). The foothills have received a whole lot more precipitation, even snow, than has our valley, so there will be things in bloom up there. The views of the Indian Wells Valley are worth the trip, too – we can still see 100+ year-old wagon roads that crossed to Mountain Springs Canyon and Trona. Both annuals and perennials will put on a show!

Bring water, snacks, hat, dress for weather. The road is graded dirt, no issues that need a 4x4 – any healthy car can do this, and we’ll be going slowly enough that there won’t be any dust. It’s always pretty, and always different every time one drives that road! We’ll explore different places on each day – wherever the flowers are best. About 50 miles driving; about 3 hrs.

Lectures about our Local Petroglyphs

Our Archaeology Curator, Alexander (Sandy) Rogers, will present special lectures about our local petroglyphs; some history, some scientific data and some current opinions. This information should enhance the experience for tour participants in the canyon.

These lectures are free and open to the public; April 6, May 18, and June 1. The lecture begins at 7 pm and lasts about an hour.



“Wagon Roads to Space Ships” – Field Trip with Janet Westbrook.

Walker Basin, Tehachapi Loop, windmills, and Mojave, in search of foothill flowers and lovely scenery with 2 centuries of history.

Saturday April 20

Meet at the Museum at 8 am for an all-day journey in your wagon.

We'll venture over Walker Pass and the South Fork Valley to Isabella town and Bodfish - up the hill on the old stage road to Havilah, Kern County's first County Seat during the gold rush at Keysville and Havilah, (part 1 lunch, pit stop), over the hill into the lovely Walker Basin. We'll loop the Rankin Ranch and visit the old Rankin Cemetery and dude ranch; down "Lions Grade" to Caliente, the main stage and wagon road to Keysville/LA. Up Hwy 58 to Keene; (part 2 lunch, pie?) up "old road" to the famous "Tehachapi railroad loop" overlook and wait for trains; to the back side of Tehachapi; across to the roads that go through the windmills and down Oak Creek Canyon and huge windmills eventually to Mojave where the space plane is being built. Could have dinner in Mojave or zoom back to Ridgecrest.



Lots of history -- gold mines, trains, wagon roads, cowboys, cemeteries, wind energy and space planes. Great well-kept secret close to home!

\$25 members (\$40 for 2 adult members), \$30 nonmembers (\$50 for 2 adults). Family members encouraged (especially well-behaved dogs and kids). Bring lunch, snacks, water, chair and layered clothing. More details when you sign up – I need your email and phone, please.

See www.maturango.org/field-trips/ for more information and to purchase tickets on-line.

Natural History News

By Sherry Brubaker

I'm looking for taxidermy sponsors again. I brought this up with the taxidermist and I have a price list that she put together. Right now she has the following critters which she has invoiced as indicated; white pelican \$1500, two burrowing owls at \$1000 each, a skunk \$600, an Antelope ground squirrel \$525, a quail \$500, and a Canada Goose \$700, a few humming birds about \$600-1000 depending on pose, six Owls, barn and long-eared, \$1400-2000 depending on the pose, and a couple of ducks \$575-900 depending on species and pose. We usually opt for simple display bases and presentation.



If birds and mammals aren't your interest, how about a reptile? The lady who does this work actually makes models; prices vary from \$60 to \$350, depending on size and pose.

If you would like to sponsor a critter already being processed or a future one I would love to hear from you. Please call me at the museum 760-375-6900 or e-mail to sherry@maturango.org

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator and Docent Extraordinaire

Following the great fun of making Mardi Gras masks here at the Museum, Fawn Martinez has planned art classes for summer. Registration for the summer classes will be through the city of Ridgecrest. The classes will take place here at the Museum.

Art Classes with Fawn Martinez:

We'll focus on an artist each week and you'll create your own art. All Students will learn about a different artist each week (2 days each week). Fee will be per week.

Appropriate for ages 3-8; 10:30 am- noon; \$30 per week (2 days)

Limited to 15 children with a minimum of 8 children.

Session 1: June 4 and June 6, Vincent Van Gogh

Session 2: June 18 and June 20, Henri Matisse

Session 3: July 16 and July 18, Yayoi Kusama

Session 4: July 23 and July 25, Andy Warhol

Session 5: Aug. 6 and 8: Artist, Jackson Pollock



Donations and New Members

Donations

Ron Atkins
Craig Bansmer
Thom Boggs
Dennis Burge – in memory of
Ken Pringle
Dan and Brenda Burnett
Donna and Troy Ingle
Dr. and Mrs. Edward Jayne
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Rockwell
– in memory of Todd Rhone
Kevin Seymour
Betsy Swallow
Nancy Vetter
Jessica Weston
Pat Wharton

Docents

Kerncrest Audubon Society
Mojave Senior Citizens, Inc.

In Memory of Dick Benson

Peter and Elaine Wiley
Andrew Benson- Interns
Tom Benson
Yvonne Portillo and Family
Mark Vanbuskirk

Shade Structure – in memory of Dick Benson

Anonymous (1)
Beth and Frank Armogida
Ron Atkins
Barbara Auld
Bruce and Ann Auld
Elizabeth Babcock
Ken and Nani Banks
Skip and Jan Bennett
Glenda Blackshaw
Thom Boggs
Jerry and Sandy Bradley
Daniel and Brenda Burnett
Dianne Dilley
Shirley Fisher
Tom and Toko Foggia
Gerald and Elaine Jones
Howard and Wanda Laire
Leslie and Alan Layfield
Mary Lundstrom
Patricia Moore
Charlotte Ostermann
Sue and Bob Parker
Darrel and Martha Rodgers
Larry Sawyer
Peter and Elaine Wiley

Student Anthropology Program

Cycling 74 –
in memory of Dick Benson
Sarah King
Sandy and Fran Rogers –
in memory of Dick Benson
Fran Van Valkenburgh and
family – in memory of
Ed Van Valkenburgh

Building Fund

Dan Burnett
Robert Westbrook

Taxidermy Fund

Libby Vincent

New Members

Sandra Gamble
Merrie Giles
Lana A. Githens
Bill and Estelle Mathers
Amber Moffitt
Eric and Diana Parker
Ilona Yenny

Annual “Mirage Sale” Donations Needed

Yep, we’re gonna’ have another yard sale Friday, May 3 and Saturday, May 4 from 7 am - 3 pm each day.
Bring your lovely “not needed anymore” items to the museum.

Archaeological Happenings Around the Museum

For the past four years we have enjoyed having interns working here at the museum on archaeological collections. The interns are college students, mostly from Cerro Coso Community College or CSU Bakersfield, who spend several weeks during the summer analyzing and cataloging our archaeological collections. The task involves examining the artifacts in a collection, comparing each to a classification taxonomy, measuring and weighing, entering data into an electronic database, and placing the artifact into archival packaging with an appropriate tag. The interns get the benefit of hands-on work with actual artifacts, and we get the benefit of cataloged collections. The stipend for the interns has been provided by the generosity of museum members. Currently one student, Levi Bayer, is working on a big collection from the Bishop area. We expect to have three more interns this summer.

Three of our former interns have presented papers at the Society for California Archaeology annual meeting last year. Kirsten Carroll presented on her work with bifaces from the Ayers Rock site in southern Inyo County, Emma Dauplaise spoke on the collection from the Bishop area, and Kara Jones gave a paper on prehistoric antelope traps in the Mono Lake region. We are very proud of their accomplishments.

Also, a local archaeologist is performing an analysis of some of the artifacts in our collection. Ms. Tyna Hill, an archaeologist with Epsilon Systems, is analyzing incised stone artifacts in our collection for her MA thesis. These artifacts are of interest because David Hurst Thomas, PhD, curator of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, has recently published a paper linking certain incised stones with the cosmology of the Shoshonean peoples of the Great Basin. Tyna has identified at least one specimen in our collection that fits Thomas’s category - and there may be more

Maturango Museum of the IWV

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

Open every day (except major holidays)

10 am - 5 pm

Staff

Debbie Benson, Museum Director
Maureen Goff, Store Manager/Buyer
Sandy Rogers, Archaeology Curator
Elaine Wiley, History Curator
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator
Julie Stephens, Finance Manager
Fran Van Valkenburgh, Membership
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator
Joann Barbee, Assistant Bookkeeper
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator
Linda Saholt, Petroglyph Tour Coord.
Sam Stephens, Museum Assistant
Sue Gilbert, Museum Assistant
Deanna Stewart, Museum Assistant
Nora Nuckles, Museum Assistant
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant
Andrea Pelch, Newsletter Editor

Committee Chairpersons

Dan Burnett, Building
Fran Rogers, Concerts
Bev Hill, Docent League
Sandy Rogers, Lectures
Elaine Wiley, Publications
Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning
Mike Brown, Webmaster

Board of Trustees

Jerry Bradley – President
Bev Hill – Vice President
Camille Anderson – Treasurer
Dianne Dilley – Secretary
Ron Atkins
Sue Parker
Libby Vincent
Tom Perkins
Tom Zulkoski

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District
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The Swap Sheet
TJ Frisbee Bicycles, Inc.
TOSS
WACOM
Warren's Automotive



Regularly Scheduled Meetings

- China Lake Astronomical Society: 1st Monday of each month, 7 pm
- Kerncrest Audubon Society: 3rd Thursday bi-monthly [Jan, Mar, May, Sep, Nov, not July], 7 pm
- Docent League: 1st Tuesday of each month, 8:45 a.m., everyone welcome
- California Turtle and Tortoise Club: 2nd Monday of each month, 7 pm
- Museum Board of Trustees: 3rd Monday of each month, 7 pm

Calendar

- Free Day Saturday, April 13
- Field Trips with Janet Westbrook
 - “Wagon Roads to Space Ships” – Saturday April 20
 - “In Search of Wonderful Flowers” – April 5, 6, 20, May 4
- Petroglyph Lecture by Sandy Rogers – Saturday April 6, 7 pm
- Annual Wildflower Exhibit: Friday April 5 – Sunday April 7, 10 am - 5 pm each day
- Nick Jensen will speak at the exhibit April 6, 2 pm
- Children’s Hour: “Tracks and Signs of Critters” – Friday, April 26, 10:30 am

Spring Petroglyph Tour Season is here!

Dates are online at www.maturango.org Application forms are now live; you may submit your application entirely online, in person, or by U.S. mail.
Our world-famous Coso Petroglyphs are still waiting for you!



Pizza Factory and Beanster’s Espresso Fundraiser

All day, Thursday, April 18.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum.

BEANSTER'S
ESPRESSO

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