



Maturango News

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

Museum Director’s Notes

Debbie Benson, Museum Director

For it is in giving that we receive... St Francis of Assisi

This time of year is surrounded by thoughts of giving. The quote by St. Francis always brings to my mind the thought of just how it feels to give the tangible and the intangible. Giving may not always be an elaborate or planned event but can so easily make a difference in how one feels towards others and themselves. While there is much in the nostalgia of holidays in the past, I find that some simple gifts hold a very real place in today. The most basic being the gift of time: for others but also for yourself. In the push to make arrangements and creating your holiday events to not only make time, but also take time to breathe in the beauty of a winter sunset over the Sierras. To look up into the clear blue of a sky unwashed by heat to see a crescent moon. These are just a few of the many reasons to step outside and give yourself the energy of the visible expanse we enjoy in the Indian Wells Valley. If you take others out to enjoy it, it becomes the gift of time that is often remembered by all.

Greet the sun each morning and enjoy the time with family and friends during this Winter Holiday and thank you for your care. Be Well!



Friday December 2nd, 6 - 9pm

Grown-Up Shopping Night

The Museum gift store will be open extended hours for holiday shopping.

Enjoy light refreshments, an alcoholic beverage, and door prizes.

While we do love kids, this is a night for you.

Natural History News

By Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator

There are two new displays in the main gallery. The bird cabinet now hosts a White Pelican, a Coot, a Cedar Waxwing and a Bohemian Waxwing. Pelicans, while not a common visitor to the valley, do fly over during their migrations. Huge strings of these large birds fly over quietly as they either head to breeding grounds in the north, or to winter grounds in the Gulf of Mexico. In flight one might think of our winter residents the Snow Geese. But the pelican flies at a higher altitude, and is quiet, while the geese fly lower and are continuously ‘honking’.



Note the coot’s feet, this is not a duck or even in the same family. The feet are lobed, not webbed. This bird can swim and walk nimbly on land. They are also found in our local ponds.

The “Tracks” display is in the Discovery area. Tracks mark the passing of something, either an animal, person, or a machine. Stop in to see the variety of tracks we find in the desert.

Quilt Exhibit – “Desert Wonderland”

November 5 – December 31, 2022

The Hi Desert Quilt Guild members range in age from 6 years to 96+ years; they are artists as well as quilters, beginners as well as accomplished quilters. They contribute to non-profit organizations with



quilts, Christmas stockings, and pillow cases. The guild members continue to learn new techniques through speakers and workshops from quilters around the world. New members are always welcome. We meet the first Thursday of each month (except July) at 6:30 pm at the USO Building. Come join the fun!



Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

All the docents were excited to see some new specimens that just came in from our taxidermist. We received a kit fox and new roadrunner. Our old roadrunner looks quite tattered as it has many road miles to show for its frequent visits to classrooms for many years. The kit fox will add to our canine collection that previously consisted of two coyotes and a beautiful grey fox. It is good for students to be able to compare and contrast these various desert canines.

In October the docents presented 6 bat programs, a Children’s Hour, a petroglyph program, and a program on the history of Ridgecrest and local mining. In November we have already given two rock programs and a presentation on Native Americans. Bob and Sue Parker, Penny LePome and Don Crouse taught many visitors about petroglyphs as well as how to use the atlatl to throw darts as part of the Petroglyph Festival. Bob and Don said that many were quite successful at hitting the hay bale! Barbara Bane, our archaeology curator, came over on Sunday to give more information about the petroglyphs.

Cathy Heseman presented art lessons to 135 students in Trona. She taught them about the art element “line” and had them follow up with art projects. Thank you, Cathy, for your giant contribution as a Maturango Museum docent!

We docents are just getting back in the groove. We are very mindful of the various viruses, colds and flu that seem to be on the upswing with winter approaching. So our time in classrooms is still limited. We have also limited Children’s Hour attendees just to be on the safe side. If you are interested in bringing your child to our holiday Children’s Hour on Dec 9, please be sure to sign up. You can call the Museum at 760-371-5669 to reserve a spot starting on Nov. 21.

Docents plan to have a holiday craft for our second Saturday on Dec. 10. Also Elaine Wiley, Debbie Benson, and the docents invite you to celebrate the winter solstice on Dec. 21 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM with a craft and cookies. Should be fun!

The docents are always interested in recruiting new people. We like to share our fun in the joy of learning. Please give me a call at the Museum if you are interested in learning about the docent program or becoming a member of the Docents of the Maturango Museum!

Donations in November 2022

Donations

Dan and Brenda Burnett
Bob and Alice Campbell
Gilbert and Dori Cornell
Oscar Felsen
Shirley Fisher
E. Norman and Suzanne
George
Paula and Michael Herr
Jeffrey Ihnen
Frank and Joyce Markarian
Robert Neaman
James Nichols

Roy and Lorraine Randolph
Patricia Wharton
Ken Whetzel

In Memory of Peg Howes
Jamie and Drew Corbin

Archaeology Curation
Danny Tyree, Jr.

Art Gallery
Joy Gonzalez
Cynthia McCormick

Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

Taxidermy Fund
Elizabeth Swallow

New Members

Annette DeMay
Don and Becca Duckworth
Thomas O'Donnell

New Lifetime Members

Sue and Chuck Johnson

“In My Backyard” – photographs by Michael Walsten

The animals photographed in Michael Walsten’s yard are now on exhibit in the Argus Room for you to view. The animals include the Antelope ground squirrel, California quail, local and migratory birds, insects and reptiles. Information about the different animals are posted next to the high quality, detailed close-up photographs by Michael Walsten.



The house finch, one of the species in the exhibit, is a common bird in this area that has an interesting history. This colorful finch is native to the southwest United States. But in 1940, pet shop owners in New York, who illegally owned house finches, released them to avoid prosecution. These adaptable birds survived and began to colonize the New York suburbs. By 1990, the finches advanced halfway across the continent to meet their western kin. Today, these birds are seen in cities, suburbs and farms as well as their original southwestern habitat of desert, chaparral, oak savanna, riparian areas and open coniferous forests.

This exhibit showcases many detailed views of animals such as the dragonfly, iguana lizard, and hummingbirds. Reprints of these photographs are available to order in the museum’s gift shop.

Valley Night Skies – Twilight to Twilight in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery

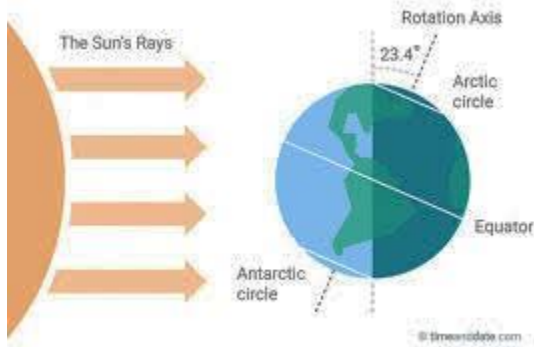
The uplifting, colorful and mesmerizing photographs of sunsets, sunrises and night views are currently on display in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery. The room lights are low to give the effect of twilight; so come sit for a spell in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery and absorb the beauty of the photos.

These photographs, taken by Bruce Heydlauff, are accompanied by Skip Gorman’s metal animal silhouettes that add a touch of whimsy to the exhibit. Reprints of these photographs are available in multiple sizes; order in the gift shop.



Winter Solstice Event December 21 from 1 pm – 3 pm

Join us at the Maturango Museum for a celebration of the shortest day of the year. The days will be getting longer after December 21. We will have information available about the winter solstice, ceramic suns to paint and cookies.

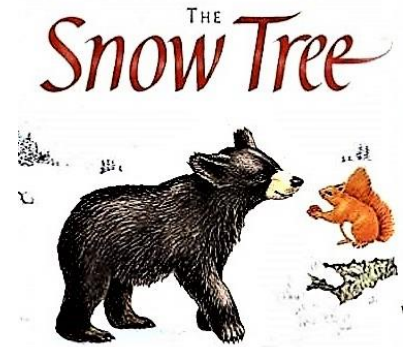


A solstice occurs twice a year, December 21 marks the shortest of the year and June 21 is the longest day. It's when the sun appears to reach either its highest or lowest point in the sky. The winter solstice marks the beginning of winter in the Northern Hemisphere when the sun is directly above the Tropic of Capricorn (at latitude 23.5 degrees S). The summer solstice occurs around June 21st and marks the beginning of summer in the Northern Hemisphere when the sun is directly above the Tropic of Cancer (23.5 degrees N).

The word solstice is derived from two Latin words *sol*, meaning *sun*, and *sistere*, meaning *to stand still*. Ancient astronomers came to know the day as one where the sun appeared to stand still.

Children's Hour

The Children's Hour Docents are excited about celebrating a snowy winter for a little bear with young children and their families on Flex Friday, December 9. The children will hear a tale of friendship, sharing beautiful gifts from nature and then participate in decorating a special 'snowy' tree like the animals in the story. This activity has become a tradition at Children's Hour and is looked forward to by those who enjoyed it in the past and viewed with wonder by newcomers. Imagination stimulating actions, singing to the ringing of hand-held bells, viewing and learning about exhibits on the Discovery Table, and a craft will round out what is sure to be a joyous morning.



The Maturango Museum and its enthusiastic Docents offer Children's Hour monthly programs free in the hopes of fostering a love of books and appreciation of the desert and nearby mountains. Pre-registration is required by calling the Museum at 760-375-7900. Information about the January 2023 program will be available on the Museum's website, maturango.org, in late December.



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
Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA, Archaeology
Curator
Elaine Wiley, History Curator
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator
Julie Stephens, Finance Manager
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator,
Newsletter Editor
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator
Linda Saholt, Petroglyph Tour Coord.,
Membership, Donations
Leslie Layfield, Accounting Bookkeeper
Kelly Goff, Museum Assistant
Deanna Stewart, Museum Assistant
Nora Nuckles, Museum Assistant
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant
Jacque Ahlin, Curation Tech

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Elaine Wiley, Publications
Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning

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contributions to
Maturango Museum.
We'll all smile...

Upcoming Events

- Quilt Guild Exhibit: Coso Room Nov. 5 – Dec. 31
- Grown-Up Shopping Night: Friday December 2nd, 6 - 9pm
- Free Saturday: Dec. 10, 1 – 3pm, holiday craft
- Celebrate Winter Solstice on Dec. 21 from 1 – 3pm with a craft and cookies



Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser

All day Wednesday December 7

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum –
please mention this fundraiser when ordering.



Museum Gift Certificates are available in the gift shop.

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