

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

Open Monday – Saturday 10 am – 5 pm, Sunday Noon – 4pm 760.375.6900 www.maturango.org

Death Valley Tourist Center Northern Mojave Visitor Center

“Our Summer Appeal” is a “Matching Donation Drive” This Year

In 1962, the Maturango Museum came to life because of volunteers and contributors like you. Volunteers and contributors like you enable the museum to continue enriching the quality of life here in the Indian Wells Valley area and performing its mission, for the past 62 years.

During those 62 years the museum has enjoyed many good years and suffered through some unfortunate ones. This year the museum expects to operate at a loss as we work to recover from COVID-related economic stresses and our ability to conduct petroglyph tours due to restrictions.

The Maturango Museum is a non-profit organization; we are not funded by any city, county, state or federal monies. The museum relies on donations from people like you. This has been true since the inception of the Maturango Museum in 1962. Our history shows what people can do when the community works together with enthusiastic volunteers. With your support, we can continue to be an important educational and tourism asset for our community.

You can help us during our first annual “Matching Donation Drive” June 21 - August 21, 2023. Generous benefactors have donated \$10,000 to the matching fund pot allowing you to double your donation during these two months! Thermometers on the museum sign and on a banner in the annex will register the rise in donations. Help us reach our goal of \$20,000. With your support, we can make it happen.

You will be receiving the donation form in the mail. You can also go to www.maturango.org and use the **DONATE TODAY** button on the home page (please specify ‘Summer Appeal’).

Night at the Museum

Saturday June 3, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Join the Maturango curators for an informative and interesting evening. The museum has many objects in curation including taxidermied animals, archaeological artifacts, local natural history items, local history memorabilia and art objects that are not usually seen by the public. Many of these items will be displayed with a curator nearby to explain and show off this wonderful collection. Bring the kids for sure!

Patrick Crabb’s Art Exhibit “Archaeoclay - Glyphs of the Earth”

June 3 - August 19, 2023

Opening Reception same time.

The images on my ceramic plates are my reflections of rock art inspired by rock glyphs (pictographs and petroglyphs) and cultural influences from archaeological-anthropological experiences over 20+ years of international travel. The bowl images were inspired by the Mimbres Culture of the Southwest.

www.patrickshiacrabb.com



Eastern Sierra Museums Field Trip

Friday June 9

Join us for a day long field trip to Eastern Sierra museums. Our trip will include a morning visit to the Eastern California Museum in Independence (<https://www.inyocounty.us/residents/things-to-do/eastern-california-museum>); bring-your-own-picnic lunch by the creek on their shady grounds.



After lunch we'll go to the Museum of Western Film History in Lone Pine (<https://museumofwesternfilmhistory.org/>), the go-to place for the many movies filmed in the dramatic Alabama Hills and Eastern Sierra.

Meet at the Eastern California Museum, limit 20 participants, all mobility accessible. Tickets must be purchased in advance; \$35 Maturango members, \$45 nonmembers; includes admission to Western Film Museum. Purchase tickets: in the Museum store, 760-375-6900, or online at shop.maturango.org



Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

Wow! We have had so much fun while giving tours of the Museum to over 200 students from some of our local elementary and preschool children. The children's eyes light up and their voices shout excitedly to exclaim about the "huge" lizard they have just spotted as they tour the garden. The "huge" lizard is usually a desert iguana who has obviously been eating well this spring. The children marvel while walking (we hope) in the labyrinth and love to run down the entire solar system located far out in the north yard near the tortoise habitat. Then they are very fortunate to see tortoises in their enclosure when Mr. Bob points them out. This is just part of the thrill for the students when they visit the Museum. BECAUSE then there is the inside of the Museum with its fantastic animal specimens and other displays. We docents have so much fun with these tours because the students just bubble with excitement. It is contagious.

Charlotte Goodson and the Children's Hour team gave their last Children's Hour until September. It was also wonderful. The students had I Spy booklets (designed by Elaine Wiley) to color after they searched for the various animals and plants in the garden. They also had a chance to paint ceramic medallions decorated with flowers (made by Debbie Benson).

Free Saturday activity focused on Reptiles. We had several tortoises brought by Bob and Sue Parker and Rosy, our pet rosy boa came to visit. The culminating craft was to create a snake from a paper plate complete with shiny eyes, a beautiful pattern on its body, and a rattle made from a piece of a straw and rice. Terry McGuire designed and prepared the project.

Free Saturday June 9, 11am – 2pm will focus on rocks and minerals. Glenn Harris, our very knowledgeable geologist, will bring his outstanding collection and we will have a craft activity.

Yard Sale Friday June 23 and Saturday June 24, 7am – noon.

Do your Springtime house and garden freshening by donating your unneeded treasures.
Please bring items to the Museum beginning June 1.

donate

“Artistic Water-Wise Landscape” Exhibit

May 15 – October 31 in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery

Reception: Wednesday June 14, 5 - 6pm

STONE TILE & STUCCO



Many Ridgecrest residents landscape their yards to minimize outdoor water use and increase the curb appeal of their home. Residents accomplish this by avoiding the use of grass and creatively increasing the amount of “dryscape” (dryscape being yard surface area requiring no water). This exhibit provides examples of landscapes in Ridgecrest that are both attractive and that significantly reduce water usage. Many different dryscape techniques can be incorporated to make an attractive landscaped yard. These techniques include the use of walkways, patios, driveways, raised planters, retaining walls, borders, yard art, rock, gravel, hardpack and accents. This exhibit is partially supported by the Arts Council of Kern.

“Out of the Past” Exhibit

May 1 – October 31

The Argus Gallery is graced with beautiful black and white photographs from Ridgecrest’s past including businesses and scenes from 1911 to 1951 that showcase the early days when Ridgecrest was just a start-up community.

These photographs are a fun way to see what Ridgecrest was like when the town began to grow with new stores, restaurants and various entertainments for the newly hired China Lake employees and their families. The enjoyment of this exhibit is to see what movies were played at the Ridgecrest Theater and figure out the make and model of cars in the photos, and possibly recognize the buildings that are still around today.

Mark Pahuta, a professional photographer who has a love for old photos, is the instigator behind this exhibit. Mark chose, printed, matted, and framed the photos in this exhibit.



Summer Solstice Event Wednesday June 21, 10am to noon

Join us to celebrate the first day of Summer with craft activities, see a sun/earth model, view the sun through solar scopes and enjoy the treats from the visiting Shaved Ice Shack.

Recent Donations

Donations

Kristin Berry
Dan and Brenda Burnett
Leroy Corlett
Naomi Norris
Jim and Deanna Stewart
Patricia Wharton
Ken Whetzel

Art Gallery, in Memory of Pat
Kleinschmidt
Helen Baker

Building Fund
Robert Westbrook

New Members

Nancy Kohlmann
Josh and Abby Nazeck
Lindsey Stephens family
Caroline and Steve Walker

“The Story of the Sagebrush Short Line Railroad”

Video of George Pruitt’s Railroad by Mark Pahuta

Thursday June 15, 6:30 pm

“...and the big kids love it, too!”

The story of the Sagebrush Short Line is more than a story of train and track. It’s a story of an ad hoc family of aficionados and volunteers, of machinists and engineers neophyte hobbyists and even some “real” railroad veterans and their families too.

It’s a very personal story told by people who dreamed up and designed and machined and assembled and laid track, dug holes, planted poles, and shoveled coal to bring the Sagebrush Short Line to life. It’s a for-real working railroad with genuine steam engines (coal and gas-burners), and diesels and electrics, that haul more than their makers around the track.

Way out in the Mojave Desert in George’s backyard the Sagebrush Short Line’s ever-evolving bi-directional layout boasts better than a mile of track with switches and trestles and sidings, a turntable and steaming bays, a scaled down town, a working water tower, and a couple of man-made mountains.

We get decked out for Christmas with characters and castles and music and more than 30,000 lights during our event to host volunteers’ families and guests, (over 3,000 one year not long ago) for a ride around the track to delight every kid, no matter what size.

The Sagebrush Short Line isn’t a big kid’s toy train set. It’s big, but it’s not a toy. . . and it’s much more than a hobby and it’s much more than a club. It’s all right here: the people, the parts, the innovation, and some spectacular photography.

Ravens

By Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator

The Common Raven, a member of the Corvid family along with crows and jays, is the large black bird with the raspy voice found here in the valley. Normally these birds keep to themselves and avoid interaction with humans, however when given the chance these highly intelligent birds will take the opportunity to interact at a higher level. The adult birds will teach younger birds to get into garbage, a partially open bin is an open invitation to investigate the contents. Pet food left out, is also an opportunity to dine. Orchards are also a source of food as the fruit ripens. Easy access to food enables these birds to easily reproduce; a female raven can lay 3 to 7 eggs and potentially raise two sets of chicks.

Large numbers of ravens become pests, making a mess of trash and eating food that is not good for them. Ravens will learn where food is available and will make the rounds in search of things to eat. Large numbers of ravens can wipe out a hatch of tortoise eggs. The tortoise does not reproduce as quickly as a raven so any loss of tortoise hatchlings is a detriment to the longevity of the species.

Please help the tortoises and keep Ridgecrest clean of trash and save on pet food. Don’t leave pet food out and securely close trash lids at home and business.

Please do not intentionally feed ravens - congregated birds leave their own mess that neighbors don’t like and can potentially spread parasites.

Wrap-up for the 2023 Wildflower Exhibit

For three days - March 31 through April 2 – tables covered with wildflowers lined the walls of the Coso Room. This 3-day event allowed the public to easily view wildflowers that grow in the Indian Wells Valley and surrounding canyons. One could take a hand-lens to look closely at the wildflowers or simply smell the different fragrances from different plants.

Both annuals (plants growing for only one season) and perennials (plants that exist for many growing seasons) were collected to give people a sense of what grows in this area.

The wildflowers were grouped according to the family they belong to – making it easier to see the differences between the families as well as the similarities (and differences) between the plants belonging to the same family. Grasses, rushes, and trees are also represented.



The wildflowers are collected by volunteers with the proper Bureau of Land Management permit and on public land. Each group of volunteers is assigned a location to collect with specific rules on what can or cannot be collected. Collection of an area for the Wildflower Exhibit typically takes one day though some teams choose to collect multiple days in their area. Collecting one day a year only gives a small glimpse of what grows in that area throughout the year. Not all the plants grow and flower at the same time. Some, such as the Yellow Throats (*Phacelia fremontii*) are early bloomers and were flowering at the beginning of February. As the Yellow Throats fade away, other plants, such as the Desert Dandelion (*Malicothrix glabrata*) start taking over. This year, the Desert Dandelions did not start blooming until the 3rd week of April and are now growing in mass, giving the desert the pale-yellow color you see when driving on Highway 178 or 14. Some annuals are late bloomers and are rarely collected during the collection period since these plants do not bloom until May or June.

This year, the months of January, February and March were cooler and wetter than normal allowing the plants to grow bigger and fuller. One could say that spring came later this year. The plants collected this year were very fresh and young and kept looking good throughout the 3-day event. Many years, the plants start to fade toward the end of the Wildflower Exhibit.

In conjunction with the Wildflower Exhibit, the Maturango Museum hosted two speakers. Nina House gave a presentation on her vascular floristic study on the Manter and Salmon Creek Watersheds in Southern Sierra Nevada, Tulare County. Her study area included 51 square mile section of the Kern Plateau including 25 square miles of the Domeland Wilderness. Glenn Harris gave a presentation on how the floristic landscape has changed through time and how plants have migrated since the last ice age.

Artists from the Desert Artists' League also participated by drawing and painting flowers seen in the exhibit. Thank You Artists.

**Thank You to all of the volunteers that made this event
an enjoyable success.**

Maturango Museum of the IWV

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

Open every day (except major holidays)

10 am – 5 pm

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Maureen Goff, Store Manager/Buyer
Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA, Archaeology
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Elaine Wiley, History Curator
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator
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WACOM
Warren's Automotive



Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser

All day, Wednesday June 14.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum

You must mention this fundraiser when ordering.



Upcoming Events

- Night at the Museum Saturday June 3, 5:30 – 7pm
- Opening Reception for “Archaeoclay - Glyphs of the Earth”
Sat June 3 5:30pm
- Free Saturday rocks and minerals June 9, 11am – 2pm;
- East Side Museums Field Trip: June 9
- Reception for Landscape Exhibit Wed June 14, 5 – 6pm
- Sagebrush Short Line Railroad Video: Thursday June 15, 6:30pm
- Summer Solstice Event June 21, 10am - noon
- “Out of the Past” exhibit; May 1 – Oct 31.
- “Artistic Water-Wise Landscape” Exhibit May 15 – Oct 31



How do you like our new electronic sign?

Want to post a brief appropriate message for an event or personal endearment?
Come in to the museum store for details. We suggest a donation to support our programs.
Please contact Debbie (debbie@maturango.org) or Julie (julie@maturango.org)

Maturango Museum “Call to Artists” for the Open Studio Tour 2023



The Maturango Museum is now accepting applications (due by July 10) from local artists for the Maturango Museum’s Open Studio Tour 2023. Artists open their studios for the 2-day event so guests can visit and purchase artwork. The tour will be Saturday and Sunday, October 21 & 22, 10 am – 4 pm each day. Each artist will also have their artwork displayed in the 2-month Open Studio Tour Exhibit (Sep 2 – Oct 29) at the Museum and be a part of the Artists’ Reception on Saturday September 2.

For information and applications please go to the museum (open 10 – 5 every day, Sunday noon – 4pm) or send an e-mail to Andrea gallery@maturango.org requesting Open Studio Tour information. Application fee is \$35 for museum members and \$50 for non-members.