

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



Museum Director's Notes

Debbie Benson

July is finding its way quickly into reality! One can't help enjoying the Spring but the desert is drying and heat is a reality. A constant reminder to use care with anything involving fire as we do have many dried grasses and plants. They were beautiful when green but are now of concern.

We have so many things to celebrate at the Museum! We are in the midst of our Matching Donation fund drive as well as encouraging membership. Our volunteers and staff are working hard to insure we make it through the financial climate we are all adjusting to. We are all overwhelmed by the support being shown by our members, most especially Bea & Lloyd Smith who are insuring we find our way into solar for power generation. This is a big project that we saw 3 years in the future but is now a certainty within the year. Members keeping the lights on makes a difference!

Everyone can make a difference. We make a difference in the culture of Ridgecrest and we welcome those who want to contribute not only to the Maturango Museum but to Ridgecrest and its neighbors. If you have some time to donate, come see us. We are all better as a community that helps each other and shares time together. As we celebrate the 4th anniversary of our earthquake sequence it is a reminder that we are all, quite truly, in this together.

We are enjoying our monthly events. Second Saturday continues to be a great opportunity for families to come to the Museum. The Docents continue to be the best source of fun information for the kids! We are also enjoying the monthly 3rd Thursday video programs put together by Mark Pahuta and Barb Bane. They are also informative and fun. We hope to see you there.

Have a great July, please be safe as you explore our desert and respect its wildlife, and Be Well!



“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 61 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’).

Along with the Maturango Museum’s fundraising pursuits, the museum is also encouraging new memberships. Membership is an important and vital component for the museum by providing financial support and volunteers to help with daily operations and special events. We ask you, as members, to reach out to others to join the Maturango Museum. Below is what the Maturango Museum offers you and your family.

Attractions at the Maturango Museum

- Unique gift store
- Monthly free Saturday activity
- Exhibit of local animals, paleontology, minerals and Native American items
- Multiple exhibit rooms featuring local and visiting artists, photography, and other exhibits of interest
- Local publications
- Docent led museum tours
- Field trips to local areas of interest
- Monthly Children’s Hour for preschool children (during the school year)
- Art and craft workshops
- Lectures and presentations
- Video nights
- Musical performances
- Room rentals
- Annual Wildflower Exhibit
- Docent programs at schools
- Partnership with local organizations such as the California Turtle and Tortoise Club (CTTC) and the China Lake Astronomy Club (CLAS)
- Local attraction information and maps
- Death Valley tourist information and maps
- Gladys Merrick garden featuring plants from the high desert and low desert
- Picnic tables and shade structure
- Labyrinth
- Human sundial
- Solar system path
- Tortoise enclosure

Needle Felting Workshop

Sunday July 16, 2 - 4pm.

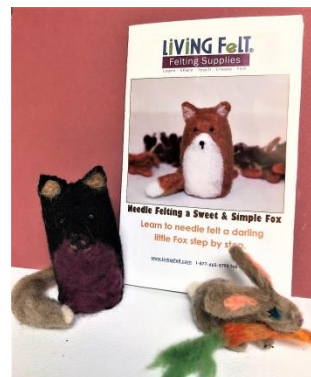
Cost \$40

Sign up in museum store or call 760-375-6900 by Sunday July 9.

Needle Felting is the “process of separating, tangling, and relocking animal fibers like sheep’s wool, and can either be achieved through a wet technique or a dry technique, which is typically done with a needle. When needle felting, the crafter uses a special barbed tool to repeatedly stab into the wool, pulling the fiber into itself and ultimately creating a firm shape. Once this felted piece of wool is created, you can add more felted shapes or pieces of wool to form a sculpture.

We’ll start with making the **fox kit** that will be included in the cost of the workshop. We’ll also see other ideas so you can continue with your new skill.

Contact Andrea gallery@maturango.org for more information.



Patrick Crabb's Art Exhibit "Archaeoclay - Glyphs From the Earth"
June 3 - August 19, 2023

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.

My life passion is working in clay. This material is the reason "I rise with the sun", working creatively for nearly 50 years. Clay is my material to express in countless ways, leading my hands/heart/mind thru life. Archaeology and



anthropology have been my guideposts. I look to ancient cultures and their histories to guide me in the present and onward into the future. Their mysteries have plagued my mind for decades. And now, I am attempting to make personal reflections from their influences. The images are not site specific. My technical approach is gestural in its imagery along with its construction.



www.patrickshiacrabb.com

"The Adventures of an Oral Historian in an Empty Land" Video

Thursday July 20, 6:30 pm

Dennis Casebier will present his techniques on conducting oral histories.

Free attendance – Limited seating – 1 ½ hours – Free popcorn and sodas – Donations gladly accepted.

Dennis visited Trona back in 2007 to give this lecture to a joint meeting of our own Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert and the Searles Valley Historical Society. At the time of this presentation, Dennis was retired from the navy at Norco California for close to 20 years. He was the founder of Friends of Mojave Road and the founder of the Mojave Desert Historical and Cultural Association, and probably the most prolific writer on California Desert History at the time. In this presentation, he talks about how to do oral histories and said that it was "the most rewarding thing he had ever done and wished that he would have started it earlier." He has talked to about a thousand desert old-timers over the last 50 years or so, and along with these interviews he has accumulated over 50,000 photographs.

He emphasizes that conducting oral histories is an art form and everybody does it differently. He gives specific techniques that have worked for him such as why he doesn't recommend doing group interviews, why the interviewer should know more about the subject than the interviewee knows, and why it's important to define the "sphere of influence." By doing so, each interview subject typically leads to at least two other potential subjects. After explaining specific techniques that have worked for him, Dennis talks about many of the fascinating interviews he has conducted over the years.

The talk is introduced by Russ Kaldenberg, head Archaeologist of China Lake at the time. Elizabeth Babcock, local historian, book writer and designer, will be here to comment on Dennis' observations. Liz has been involved in many local history projects and has conducted over one hundred interviews herself.

The video was produced by Mark Pahuta.

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

Over 400 people have visited the Museum in June as of this date. Thirty six students and their teachers visited from Immanuel Christian School on June 14th. Then about 350-400 people visited the Museum on June 10, our free Second Saturday in collaboration with our neighbors The China Lake Museum. Glenn Harris set up a wonderful display on rocks and minerals. Glenn arranges his collection of rocks to tell a story about geologic time. His collection is amazing and his knowledge is so impressive; Glenn really rocks! The docents provided a mosaic rock craft on the same day. We appreciate that Maureen provided us with some beautiful, small colored stones.

Bob Parker and Sue Parker, Ingrid Carroll, Susan Moore, and I presented a reptile program to about 100 visitors at the Ridgecrest Library. The highlights, of course, were the live tortoises and Rosy, our rosy boa! We promised attendees that we would have Rosy available to see again on a Second Saturday or another date at the Museum.

The Kern Arts Council has obtained a grant for providing presentations from indigenous artists. We will have some programs held here at the Museum during 2023-2024. Please watch our newsletter, website, electronic sign, and Facebook page for more information as it becomes available.

Having students and their parents on field trips to the Museum gives us the opportunity to teach the young people on ways to respect the wildlife in our garden. We always emphasize that the lizards, squirrels, birds, and rabbits make their homes in the Museum gardens. We teach them to watch the wildlife but not chase them or try to catch them. We also teach them to keep out of the rock-bordered plant areas and stay off the water feature, its rocks, and the rocks around the three big-horned sheep "petroglyphs." Mr. Bob teaches them about the tortoises in the tortoise enclosure.

Something really cute happened after one of our docent tours last week. A young girl and her grandmother came to the Museum with a small sand bucket filled with willow blossoms! The granddaughter had asked to come to the Museum to feed the tortoises. She knew Mr. Bob told the children that the tortoises love willow blossoms. We went out to the tortoise enclosure, put the blossoms in the enclosure, and watched as both tortoises came out to hungrily devour the sweet blossoms! We were also able to leave a few blossoms for a hungry little iguana. It ate them! We appreciate that the young girl and her mother checked in with us in the office before deciding to feed the tortoises.

Presently, we are feeding the tortoises on Thursday and Saturday at 9:00 AM. This is a great time to visit the tortoises!

The Docents of the Maturango Museum are always recruiting for new docents. Don't miss the opportunity to join us. Call Nora at the Maturango Museum if you want to give some time and have a lot of fun.

Free Saturday July 8, 11am – 2pm. Live reptiles including Rosy the boa and a few tortoises.

STONE TILE & STUCCO



"Artistic Water-Wise Landscape" Exhibit May 15 – October 31 in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery

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 playing 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.



Recent Donations

Donations

Scott and Heidi Allen
 Kenneth and Alice Atwood
 Lewis and Sharon Ballenger
 Pam and Charles Barnes
 Jerry and Sandy Bradley
 Milt and Jane Burford
 Dan and Brenda Burnett
 William Burns
 Deane Campbell
 Jim and Joann Carr
 Shujie Chen and Nicholas Carter
 Jay and Peggy Chun
 Don and Shirley Crouse
 Sally Franklin
 Larry and Ruth Gleason
 George and Eleanor Herr
 Roxie Klett
 Evelyn Knierim
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 Anthony and Barbara Rice
 Joanna Rindt
 Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Rogers
 Darrel and Martha Rodgers
 Carolyn Roseth
 Gary Staab
 Michael Vincent
 Ilona Yenny
 Patricia Wharton
 Ken Whetzel

In Memory of Bill Wight

Russ Kaldenberg and
 Judyth Reed

In Memory of Pat Kleinschmidt

Sheila Rockwell

Honorarium for Teresa Dillinger

Susan Dillinger

In Memory of Ruth Amster

Sue Hueber

Art Gallery

Robert Nichols, Jr.

Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

Docents / Educational

Troy and Donna Ingle

Special Projects

Francina van der Hoek

New Members

Zanya Biviano
 Renee Sloane
 Jessica Weston and
 Dorothy Saite

New Premium Members

Scott and Heidi Allen
 Christine Lyster

Taxidermy

By Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator

A new batch of taxidermied critters have returned to the museum; a coyote, a western tanager, a blue heron, and a Lewis's Woodpecker. I am asking for donations to help defray the cost of these wonderful mounts. There is also a new batch of critters sent to the taxidermist; an Eared grebe, White Crown



sparrows, a Northern Harrier, and a Merlin. Cost for all of the mounts range from \$650 to \$1600. The prices are based on size and pose. The pictured heron is \$1400. As always, I am very grateful for any donation to the taxidermy fund.

Taxidermy is a time intensive project. I've been told that the taxidermist will have several projects going at the same time so that while one is drying or curing the others can be attended to. What we see is the result of this work.

An interesting note; the taxidermist does not "stuff" the specimen. The skin (with feathers or fur) is tanned (cured) then put over a foam-like form to ensure the structure. Bills and beaks, teeth, legs, and eyes are then added. The last thing is placing the specimen on a base.

Maturango Museum of the IWW

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

Committee Chairpersons

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Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning

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Oasis Garden Club
PackWrap Business Center
The Pizza Factory
Heritage Inn & Suites
Ridgecrest Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
St. Ann Catholic School
Searles Valley Minerals
Sierra Sands Unified School District
SpringHill Suites by Marriott
The Swap Sheet
TJ Frisbee Bicycles, Inc.
WACOM
Warren's Automotive





Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser

All day, Wednesday July 12.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum

You must mention this fundraiser when ordering.



Upcoming and Ongoing Exhibits and Events

- Free Saturday July 8: Live reptiles, 11am – 2pm.
- Needle Felting Workshop: Sunday July 16, 2 – 4pm.
- “Oral Historian” Video: Thursday July 20, 6:30pm
- “Out of the Past” exhibit; ongoing through Oct 31.
- “Artistic Water-Wise Landscape” Exhibit ongoing through Oct 31
- Patrick Crabb Ceramics “Glyphs from the Earth” Exhibit ongoing through August 20.

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 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.

Applications due by July 10.

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.