

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

Every time we find the words to express thanks and gratitude to the people who support us in our mission, we are again overwhelmed by generosity. In our Matching Funds Appeal we are pleased to let you all know that, combined, the funding was over \$34,000. We did not even imagine we could reach our goal and it is only through you that this could happen. This keeps the doors open, the lights on and our programs intact for the children, families and visitors to our community. Many thanks from all of us!

We would like to welcome our new Members, Life Members and Business Members. We appreciate all of our members and your continued care and support every day. You make this Museum possible. We have a few events upcoming that we hope you may enjoy!

We do hope to see many of you at our Dinner Auction. There will be some fun, great food and marvelous company!

When you come to see us at the Museum, enjoy the Museum that you are a part of!

**Maturango Museum
Annual Auction and Dinner 2023
Saturday, September 30 Kerr-McGee Center
Doors open at 5:00 p.m.**

Email info@maturango.org www.maturango.org

Make a difference... and have a great time doing it. We need you.

The museum has a long history of providing education and enrichment to the community. The museum is recovering from the financial situations many non-profits are facing since Covid-19. Significant increases in the minimum wage, fluctuations in funding as well as increased utility payments and the costs of maintaining the stewardship of the Museum have a continuing impact on our budget.

The Maturango Museum is a non-profit organization not funded by any city, county, state or federal monies. The museum relies on 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 cultural asset for our community. You can make it happen!

The Board of Directors, staff and volunteers of the Maturango Museum, many of whom are your friends and neighbors, are asking you to step up, make a difference...and have fun!

Tickets are \$60 per person or \$100 for 2 people.
They are available in the museum gift shop or online at maturango.org

Your generous tax deductible contributions are a great way to promote your business and help the museum too! All proceeds go to operational expenses that allow this special community institution to continue protecting, supporting and sharing our regional heritage.

We are accepting donations of all kinds for the auction. Big or small, every donation helps. Smaller items (like gift cards) can be combined with other items to create a unique auction item. We make some pretty fantastic gift baskets!

Your donation is tax deductible.

Deadline for donations (so we can prepare the auction catalog) is Friday, September 22.

If you would like to donate something for the auction or you have any questions about becoming a sponsor or attending the 2023 Annual Auction and Dinner please contact Debbie Benson (debbie@maturango.org) or Julie Stephens (julie@maturango.org) 760-375-6900



A few of the items that will be available at the auction.

Sponsorship Opportunities

☐ Shaman \$1,200

Dinner tickets and reserved table for 8, 2 bottles of wine, 100 raffle tickets, ½ page ad in the event program, mentioned in all of our event advertising, and a one year Museum Membership for your non-member table guests.

☐ Mountain Lion \$600

4 dinner tickets, reserved seating, 50 raffle tickets, ¼ page ad in the event program and mentioned in all of our event advertising.

☐ Big Horn \$300

2 dinner tickets, 25 raffle tickets, your business card ad in the program.

☐ Road Runner \$100

Business card ad in the event program.

Do you know all the ways the museum made a difference in the last year?

- Maturango docents presented programs to adults and children throughout the year with special events and the popular Free 2nd Saturday!
 - When our guests visit our museum, most patronize other Ridgecrest businesses and services.
 - We were pleased to host field trips for members and visitors.
 - We displayed 8 different art shows in our galleries and held the Open Studio Tour for local artists.
 - We hosted the popular and informational Wildflower Exhibit
 - We provide free information to travelers heading to Death Valley, and other local and regional attractions.
 - The Maturango Museum is an ASTC museum; use your museum membership card for free admission to participating museums. We also partner with other California museums, which recognize our membership and in turn promote our museum to their members and guests.

If you are 70 ½ years old or older, and have an IRA, **you may be able to make a donation to the Maturango Museum and not be taxed on the distribution.** The IRS allows a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) to be given directly to an eligible charity.

The QCD can count toward all or part of the required minimum distribution (RMD). For information on this please go to the IRS websites below. There are rules on how the distribution needs to be made so you will also want to contact your financial institution.

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/seniors-can-reduce-their-tax-burden-by-donating-to-charity-through-their-ira>

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/reminder-to-ira-owners-age-70-and-a-half-or-over-qualified-charitable-distributions-are-great-op>

“Sidewinder, Simply the Best Heat-Seeking Missile Ever” Video Wednesday, September 13, 6:30 pm

In September, 2004, The Technical Library on the base started a monthly lecture series called “Have I Got a Story for You!” The series ran for close to 30 months. The lectures were given by scientists and engineers on the base. Each lecture was of a topic of historical interest such as “Solving the Mystery of the Roseville Bomb Train,” “Remembering the 9/11 Attack on the Pentagon from Someone Who Was There”, “Combustion Hazards and Small Scale Testing,” to name just three of the lectures. All the lectures were videotaped. All the lectures were Approved for Public Release.

For our September 13th video we will be showing the 21st lecture of that series, “Sidewinder, Simply the Best Heat-Seeking Missile Ever” presented by Dr. Bob Smith. Bob who is now retired and is currently heavily involved in the China Lake Museum next door to us, will be present to talk about that lecture and update any information that he gave back in 2006.

The video will be screened in the Coso Room at the Maturango Museum on Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 6:30pm. (Note: this screening is on Wednesday, not our usual Thursday). As always, admission, popcorn and sodas are free. Donations sincerely appreciated. Seating is limited, doors open at 6:15pm.



“Our” Autumn Equinox Event Saturday, September 23, 10 am to noon

The Maturango Museum is celebrating our autumn equinox on Saturday, September 23, 2023 from 10am to noon. We will have a sun/earth/moon model to view and crafts to do. The China Lake Astronomical Society will set up their solar telescopes to view the sun.

A solar equinox is a moment in time when the sun appears directly above the equator rather than north or south of the equator. On the day of the equinox, the Sun appears to rise "due east" and set "due west." Also, on this day, daylight and night are almost equal in length in most time zones in the world.

The autumn equinox is the moment in time when the Sun crosses the celestial equator from the north to the south. For us in the northern hemisphere, this moment in time marks the beginning of fall. The September equinox is also called the autumnal equinox for the northern hemisphere. For those in the southern hemisphere, the equinox marks the vernal or spring equinox and the beginning of spring. The actual time for the September equinox in Ridgecrest is Fri. September 22, 2023 at 11:49pm.



Open Studio Tour 2023

Artists' Gallery Exhibit August 26 – Oct 31
Opening Reception Saturday September 23, 4 – 6pm

The Open Studio Tour is a wonderful way to meet many of our local artists and see the amazing array of talent that we have in our community. The exhibit will be in the Coso Room with examples of artwork from each of the 20 participating artists. Come in to see the variety of items and get a heads-up on what to expect at the various open studios during the tour weekend.

Tour Weekend Saturday October 21 & Sunday 22

20 artists and craftspeople in Ridgecrest and Inyokern open their studios, or set up their displays in different venues so visitors can meet the artists, see their studios and purchase artwork.

During the tour weekend of October 21 and 22, the studios and venues will be open 10am – 4pm each day. The free map for the studio locations will be available in early October at the museum or e-mail galleries@maturango.org requesting the map and to get more information. The museum is open daily, 10am - 5 pm.

Museum Members Appreciation Rock Art Event and Lecture **Sunday September 17, 4 – 6pm**

To celebrate you and our successful membership drive, members are invited to a celebration at the Maturango Museum for a **lecture** by renowned archeologist and rock art scholar, Dr. David S. Whitley, speaking on “45 Years in the Cosos, and Still Alive to Talk About It”. A **reception** to meet Dr. Whitley will be held at 4pm; light snacks and beverages will be served.

Dr. Whitley first worked in the Coso Range in 1978. He received his PhD in Anthropology from UCLA on rock art in 1982. His research has focused on the Coso region (largest concentration of engravings and oldest motifs in North America), South African rock art, European Paleolithic cave art, and the origins of art and belief. Dr. Whitley has authored over 100 scholarly books and publications on rock art theory and study, as well as popular guidebooks on rock art in Southern California and elsewhere.

This **free** event is for **Museum Members only** so be sure your membership is current or join now to have the opportunity to attend. Seating will be first come first serve and space is limited. Members may also attend on-line via Zoom. **RSVP** is required - call the museum at 760-375-6900 to reserve your in-person attendance or to obtain the Zoom link.

Thank You to our generous Gallery Sponsors for catering this reception.

Your Membership Matters, Thank You!

We're so grateful for your support, helping our team of curators and docents create extraordinary experiences that allow *everyone* to learn about the natural and cultural history of the Northern Mojave Desert. Because of you, in 2023 we continued to provide our community with history, science, culture and art education that is informative, engaging, and fun!

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

The next Free Saturday is September 9. The theme will be “Birds”; hosting the event will be the museum docents, our Natural History Curator, Sherry Burbank, and members of the local Audubon Society.

A great time to visit the tortoises is when they are being fed; Thursday and Saturday at 9am.

What a busy summer the docents have had. We have hosted several tours for children. Our summer Free second Saturdays usually have had 60-80 visitors each month. The docents will help with activities for the Equinox celebration on Sept. 23 from 10am – noon; Debbie Benson has made the last in the series of 4 sun medallions to paint this year. The China Lake Astronomical Society will be out in front of the Museum with their solar scopes.

The docent officers and I are making plans for an exciting year with presentations in the classrooms. Our first docent meeting of the year is Tuesday, September 5. Request forms for docent programs are already posted on the Museum website. Charlotte Goodson and Sue Parker are organizing many materials from Children’s Hour to prepare for next year. The entire Children’s Hour team will choose the themes for the fall Children’s Hour presentations. Keep watch on our website, our electronic sign, and Facebook for information about future Children’s Hour presentations.

Glenn Harris made a wonderful display for our August Free second Saturday featuring bugs. His grandchildren helped to make wonderful kits to make insects and the docents helped. Sherry Brubaker, our Natural History Curator, provided a second insect craft.



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. Or join us for our first meeting of the year on Sept.5, 10am at the Museum.

Children’s Hour Begins the Fall Season

We are excited to welcome young children to the first program of the new season; Flex Friday, September 15, 10:30 to 11:30. The children and their families will be greeted by puppet *Wiley Coyote*, a very interesting character, *he says!* The children will learn about coyotes through stories, songs and poems that recognize their “wiggle’ need. Parents, if inclined, are also pressed into action with much movement amid laughter occurring. The natural history of coyotes is a highlight of this and every program that may include slides and mounted exhibits. The morning concludes with two activities: exploring the Discovery Table with its many exhibits related to the program’s theme and all questions encouraged; and, last but not least, letting creativity be expressed in a craft plus pictures to color.

Children’s Hour is a free monthly volunteer program following the school year calendar. It is generally held on Flex Fridays. The upcoming fall program dates are September 15, October 13, November 10, and Dec. 8.



Maturango Returns to Little Lake for October Archeology Month!

Barbara Bane, Archeology Curator

To celebrate the deep archeological heritage of our region, Maturango Museum is hosting **two special weekends of tours**, **October 6-7 and October 13-14**, on the Little Lake Ranch, a duck club located in Rose Valley. The ranch is on the edge of the Coso Volcanic Field, a series of small lakes at the ranch, created by the ancient Owens River, have enabled human

occupation of the site for over 12,000 years. The cultural imprint of this desert oasis includes prehistoric and historic rock art, caves, and the lush lakeside village site of Pagunda. Normally closed to the public, this is a rare chance to see these cultural sites, courtesy of the Little Lake Duck Club members.

Our lecturer and tour guide for both weekends will be Dr. David Whitley, renowned archeologist and rock art scholar whose research has focused on the Coso region (largest concentration of engravings and oldest motifs in North America), South African rock art, European Paleolithic cave art, and the origins of art and belief. Dr. Whitley has authored over 100 scholarly books and publications on rock art theory and study, as well as popular guidebooks on rock art in Southern California and elsewhere.



On each pre-tour Friday night, Maturango will host a rock art lecture for tour participants by Dr. Whitley: *Why Are There a Million Petroglyphs in the Coso Range? An Introduction to and Update on Coso Rock Art Research.*

Each Saturday tour at Little Lake Ranch will include visits to the groundbreaking Stahl archeological site and cave paintings of Atlatl Cliff, the lakeside village site of Pagunda, and petroglyphs of the southern lake cliffs. Bring-your-own picnic for the tour. The terrain is variable and rocky; hiking shoes and good weather are recommended for best site viewing.

Tickets for the October 6-7 and October 13-14 tour weekends go on sale September 12 noon. The trip slots will fill quickly and you must be a Maturango Museum member to participate, so be sure to renew your

membership or join up before the sale date! **Trip price is \$200 per person** and includes an exclusive Friday night lecture at the museum by Dr. Whitley, a day-long Saturday tour of the Little Lake Ranch sites, and round trip transportation from Ridgecrest to the Ranch (no private vehicles/no member discounts this trip).

Tickets and memberships may be **purchased online** at Maturango online store <https://maturango.org/shop-online/> Call the museum 760-375-690 with questions.



“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.



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

Natural History Update

By Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator

I mentioned in a previous newsletter that collections are large part of a museum that the public does not see (only parts are on display). To be added to our collections, items must be accessioned; this is done by a committee who agree that the items are to be added. The item must have relevance to the area, historical value (if warranted), and educational value; for example, in the case of Natural History, a dead bird is donated to the museum - if the bird is from the local area and can be useful for education purposes it is kept. The bird then goes to the taxidermist, is returned, and now officially added to the collection by accession and given an ID number. The bird is put on display, or into storage for display rotation.

Visit us to see the birds that were recently accessioned and are now part of the collection.

Recent Donations

Donations

Dan and Brenda Burnett
Jack and Diane Murray
Lisa Tobin
Patricia Wharton
Ken Whetzel

In Memory of Jeff Hargrove

Ridgecrest Family Dentistry

In Memory of Cap't. Doug Cook

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Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

Mammoth Tusk Display Case

Dorie and Gilbert Cornell

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Gary Staab
Jim and Deanna Stewart
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New Business Members

Earth Landscaping –
Peter Brown
Michael's Certified Air –
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New Lifetime Members

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New Premium Members

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Ken Whetzel

In Honor of Dan Burnett

Debbie Benson

In Honor of

Eleanor Winnemore
Sharon Davis

In Memory of Robert Berry

Patricia Brown

In Memory of

Edward Winnemore
Sharon Davis

Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

Gardens/Grounds

Marianne Kistler and
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Bruce McClung and Jerry
DeFilipps
Denise O'Connell
Alan and Jerri Stratton
Stuart and Susie Witt

New Premium Members

Peter and Renee Lesniak
Sarah Moylan

Maturango Museum of the IWW

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

Open Mon - Sat

10 am – 5 pm,

Sunday noon – 4pm

(except major holidays)

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

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Elaine Wiley, Publications
Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning

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| Oasis Garden Club | |
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Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser

All day, Wednesday, September 13.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum

You must mention this fundraiser when ordering.

**BEANSTER'S
ESPRESSO**

Upcoming and Ongoing Exhibits and Events

- Free Saturday: Sep 9, 11am – 2pm. “Birds...!”
- “Sidewinder” Video: Wednesday, Sep 13, 6:30pm.
- Children” Hour: Friday, Sep 15, 10:30 – 11:30. “Coyotes...!”
- Members Appreciation Event and Lecture: Sunday September 17, 4 – 6pm
- Autumn Equinox Event: Saturday Sep 23, 10am – noon.
- Open Studio Tour 2023: Artists’ Gallery Exhibit August 26 – Oct 31
- OST Opening Reception Saturday September 23, 4 – 6pm
- Annual Dinner and Auction, Saturday, Sep 30, Kerr-McGee, doors open at 5pm
- ~~Little Lake Tours: October 6-7 and October 13-14~~
- “Out of the Past” exhibit; ongoing through Oct 31.
- “Artistic Water-Wise Landscape” Exhibit ongoing through Oct 31

Maturango Museum
100 E Las Flores
Ridgecrest CA 93555



September 2023
Newsletter

What's going on



at the Maturango Museum...