

# 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](http://www.maturango.org)

Death Valley Tourist Center Northern Mojave Visitor Center



## Museum Director's Notes

*Debbie Benson*

Traveling for the holidays brings those we care for closer for a time. One of the greatest gifts being the discovery of new adventures. The directions sometimes being as simple as, turn left at the sign and drive until you find peace. The drive itself becomes part of the discovery. Coming home gives that sense of familiar return and the thought of places one could give a visitor. Directions to exploration, experiences filled with amazement and perhaps unexpected peace.

Our best to you during this final month of 2023. Thank you all for your care. On to a New Year!

## “Sidewinder, Simply the Best Heat-Seeking Missile Ever” Video

**Thursday, December 7, 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 from 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”, and “Combustion Hazards and Small Scale Testing”. All the lectures were videotaped. All the lectures were approved for public release.

For our December 7 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. As always, admission, popcorn and sodas are free. Donations sincerely appreciated. Seating is limited, doors open at 6:15pm.



## Children's Hour “The Snow Tree”

**Friday, December 8, 10:30 – 11:30am**

Join the Storytelling Docents for a story and a special activity geared towards young children and their parents. The children will hear a tale of friendship, sharing, and appreciation of nature's beauty and then enjoy repeating the animals' actions by decorating a special snow tree.

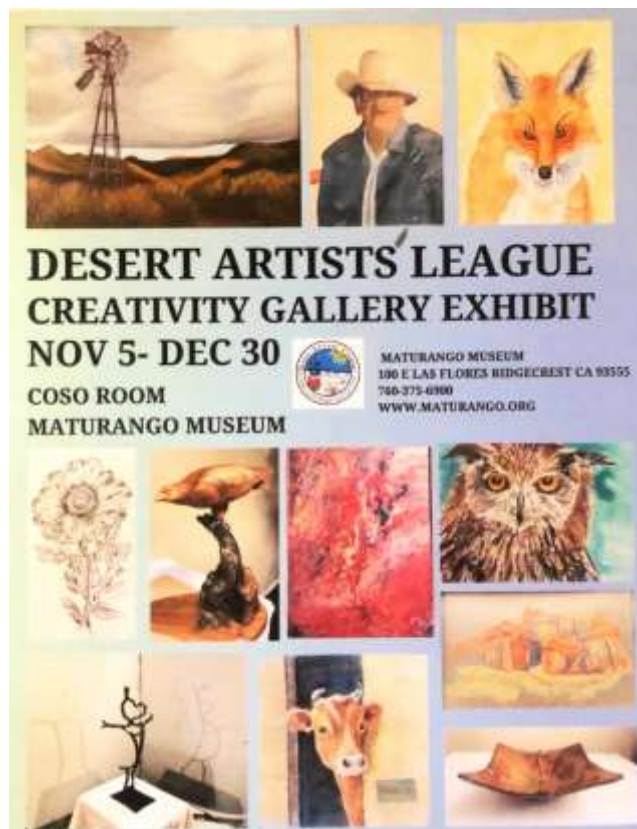
## **Desert Artists' League "Creativity" Gallery Exhibit November 4 – Dec 30, 2023**

The "Creativity" Exhibit will feature artwork from 22 artists. Various subjects in watercolor, oil, pastel, acrylic, metal, wood, and ceramics. The Opening Reception is free and open to the public.

The Desert Artists' League (DAL) was founded in 1957 by a group of artist friends. We are a talented group of people who work in a variety of media: watercolor, acrylic, oil, encaustic, ceramics, pastel, mixed media and fiber arts. We love to share camaraderie, enthusiasm, tips and techniques.

General meetings are held on the first Monday of the month (unless it falls on a holiday, then we meet on the second Monday) from September through May. Currently we meet at the Church of the Nazarene 571 N. Norma St. Ridgecrest at 6:30PM. Meetings are open to anyone interested in art, whether making art or simply enjoying art. Guests are welcome. There is no charge to attend the first time, afterward we ask guests to pay \$5.00.

See the DAL website at [desertartistsleague.org/](http://desertartistsleague.org/) for more information.



Hoffman, Bill McEwan, Bill Ward and Clarita Woodworth. In addition to the curated artwork on display, is the Desert Artists' League 2022 Summer Project consisting of individual paintings that, when assembled, create a complete image titled "Desert Solitude".

Concurrent with the Desert Artists' League (DAL) "Creativity" exhibit in the Coso Room, the Maturango Museum is showcasing artwork from previous and current DAL members. These pieces were donated to the Maturango Museum, then curated to become part of the museum's permanent collection. Seven paintings, three pottery items and two sculptures are on display. These previous and current members whose curated artwork is on display are Mary Adler, Ruth Amster, Maxine Booty, Martina Camphausen, Ida Svanhild Davis, Lois Hinman, Dolores

## **The Paleolithic Display**

*Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator*



The Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) display is under construction. The whole display is getting a face lift. The fossils that were on display will be joined by three new pieces that have been in curation storage. The large mural that was in the back is being replaced with a mural of a Sylvia Winslow painting.

This reconstruction will require new shelving, the mural (\$1000 as ordered), and an acrylic case to cover the whole thing. This is going to cost money. I am asking members and

non-members to consider donating to this reconstruction. Thank you for your generosity.

## **Docent Doings**

*By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator*

In the month of November docents have participated in some wonderful learning opportunities. Mike Thompson, an experienced flint knapper, was here at the Museum on the first Saturday and Sunday of November to share his points and tools and also his knowledge of rocks. Some visitors and staff had the opportunity to try knapping a point. "Jay from Darwin" was also here to share his vast knowledge of rocks and minerals and his own artwork; he always has some fun stories to share. In addition, the Arts Council of Kern sponsored Alan Salazar, a Chumash and Tataviam tribal elder, who told wonderful stories, shared his books and a great video. That same weekend Lori Myers of the Tlingit Tribe, brought kits for jewelry and taught visitors how to make earrings and bracelets. Don Crouse and Bob Parker taught visitors to throw a dart using the atlatl.

At our monthly meeting docents participated in training to learn how to present our Native American program to children in the schools and at the Museum. Of course, later in the month docents presented Native American programs to approximately 150 people in November. Another wonderful thing happened this month! Sherry Brubaker and Chuck Morgan, presented a film in the Beth Armogida Planetarium! Terry McGuire, Shirley Crouse, Bob and Sue Parker, and I helped to set up the Planetarium and keep everything organized. The film about the sun was shown to about 40 people on our Free Saturday in November and to approximately 40 people from Heartland School. This was our first use of the Beth Armogida Planetarium since we closed it down due to the pandemic.

Docents also gave a wonderful Children's Hour on mountain animals and the art docents are again presenting programs in the schools. The next Children's Hour is entitled "The Snow Tree" and is scheduled for Dec.8 at 10:30 am. December 9 is Free Saturday; join us for a special craft activity anytime between 11 am and 2 pm.

You are invited to join a group of people who love to share the wonders of our desert with adults and children! Please call me, Nora, at the Maturango Museum if you would like to work with the Docent League. You can also attend our December meeting on Dec. 5, Tuesday, at 10 am in the Coso Room of the Museum.



## Suggestions for Local Native American Venues

The petroglyph tours for which we have been justly famous have been temporarily on hold for quite a while now. The Coso Petroglyph site, known as the best petroglyph site for quantity and quality in the western hemisphere, is located within the boundaries of the Naval Air Warfare Center, China Lake, which is the size of Rhode Island. Tours are by prior arrangement with the Navy. At this time, we have no indication from the Navy when tours might resume.

Here are some alternate suggestions; other sites for learning about the First Californians...

Coming from the south on Highway 14, check out: Antelope Valley Indian Museum, Palmdale ([www.avim.parks.ca.gov](http://www.avim.parks.ca.gov), 661-946-6092). There is an amazing building built over a rock cliff, with stairs cut into the cliff face, which houses a former private Native American artifacts collection; and is now a state park. Gift shop, restrooms available.

Coming up Highway 14, you'll find Red Rock Canyon State Park (661-942-0662, [www.RedRockRRCIA.org](http://www.RedRockRRCIA.org)), a good place to spend the night. (Dry camping.) There is a nice interpretive center. Check to see if ranger talks and nature walks are scheduled while you're there. The interpretive center features a small gift shop and displays of Native culture and local fossils. You are now only a 30 minute drive away from Ridgecrest.

In Ridgecrest is the Maturango Museum, with the China Lake Museum right next door. (Features military history of Navy base and some of the weapons developed there.) Both have gift shops, restrooms, and outdoor displays. A block south on China Lake Blvd. is Petroglyph Park, with reproductions of rock art where you can get up close. Picnic areas, restrooms available.

Check in with us at the Maturango for more info on local points of interest--we have maps, brochures, etc. Outdoor areas include shaded picnic spots, botanical garden with walking trails, labyrinth, an historic bell, solar system model, human sundial, artistic sculptures based on petroglyphs, and a visitor's information kiosk.

Fossil Falls lies 30 minutes north of us, which does have a few glyphs but they're hard to find. As you go north on 395, just before Lone Pine is the Eastern Sierra Interagency Visitors Center. (760-876-7222.) I highly recommend a stop in there. Loads of great information, handouts for self-guided tours of Alabama Hills, etc.

The Lone Pine Film History Museum is also worth a stop (760-876-9909; [www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org](http://www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org)). Then on to Independence, and the Eastern California Museum (760-878-0258; [www.inyocounty.us/ecmuseum](http://www.inyocounty.us/ecmuseum)). Lovely collection of local Native basketry. Ask about their mile-long rabbit drive net, made of human hair! Nice to just walk around the grounds--they have moved old "ghost town" buildings and rusty antique equipment into their backyard; very pleasant to walk around.

Are you going to be in the Bishop area? You might enjoy looking up [www.easternsierranevada.com](http://www.easternsierranevada.com) and search for: Petroglyphs at Volcanic Tablelands.

Stop by either the White Mountain Ranger Station (351 Pacu Lane, Bishop) or the Bishop Visitor's Center ([www.bishopvisitor.com](http://www.bishopvisitor.com); 690 N. Main St, 760-873-8405, [Host@BishopVisitor.com](mailto:Host@BishopVisitor.com)) and ask for directions to Petroglyph Drive. Once you get there, you can drive up fairly close to the petroglyphs, then just a short walk. As with all petroglyph sites, please be respectful and do not touch the glyphs--the oils on your hands can degrade the rock over time. These places are of important cultural heritage to both Native Americans and visitors alike.



Also while you're in Bishop, check out the Paiute-Shoshone Cultural Center on Line Street--nice examples of local Native cultural items, including a full-sized wickiup. (760-873-8844.)

Take only photographs, leave only footprints.



## Recent Donations

### Donations

Joline Bell  
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## **“Glimpses Thru Time; Early 1900s”**

The exhibit in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery includes information on the construction of the Los Angeles Aqueduct from 1908 - 1913. The aqueduct construction attracted many workers to the eastern sierras. Once the Nevada and California Railroad (now the Southern Pacific) lines were established, Brown (Railroad Siding #18) became a construction camp for the Los Angeles Aqueduct and grew in population to between 2,000 and 3,000 people. A post office was established in 1909, and the town of Brown drew in business and homesteaders. The aqueduct workers left the area in 1913 after the completion of the aqueduct and the population dwindled to 50 in 1920.

Further north toward Little Lake are the Coso Hot Springs. Long before people of European descent came to the Indian Wells Valley, local Shoshonean tribes used the bubbling mud and highly mineralized waters of Coso Hot Springs for therapeutic purposes. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a health resort was flourishing there. In the 1920s the water was bottled and billed as the “finest in the world for arthritis, rheumatism, sinus, stomach ulcers, asthma, acute gastritis, and all kidney and liver ailments.” Today, the Coso Operating Company leases the land from the Navy and produces about 145 net megawatts of power using geothermal energy directed to Southern California Edison.

This current exhibit, “Glimpses Thru Time”, combines a small fraction from previous historical exhibits created by the museum’s former History Curator, Liz Babcock. Over Liz’s 13 years as History Curator, she created and displayed over 15 different historical exhibits for the Maturango Museum. For this current exhibit, we bring back the popular “Town of Brown” exhibit and add “Aqueduct”, “Coso Hot Springs” and “Early Indian Wells Valley” exhibits.



**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)

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Maureen Goff, Store Manager/Buyer  
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Elaine Wiley, History Curator  
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator  
Cheryl McDonald, Webmistress  
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Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator,  
Newsletter Editor  
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator  
Linda Saholt, Membership, Donations  
Leslie Layfield, Accounting Bookkeeper  
Monica Monsalud, Museum Assistant  
Nora Nuckles, Museum Assistant  
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**Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser**

All day, Wednesday, December 13.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum

You must mention this fundraiser when ordering.

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**Upcoming and Ongoing Exhibits and Events**

- Desert Artists' League "Creativity" Gallery Exhibit  
November 4 – Dec 30, 2023, Maturango Museum
- Sidewinder Lecture: Thursday, December 7, 6:30 pm
- Children's Hour: Friday, December 8, "The Snow Tree"
- Free Saturday: December 9, 11am – 2pm. Activities being planned...
- Winter Solstice Event: December 21, 10 am to noon

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December 2023 Newsletter