

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

"Kindness is the connection that links us all together and strengthens the bonds within our communities, neighborhoods, and families." Rosalynn Carter

As we leap into 2024 there is that moment of silence when we remember the generosity shown to us. The kindnesses that have helped us through to this day. We open our calendars to see this next year of days. We will fill them with the activities of living with those around us. This year gives us that extra day to fill with care for our family and friends and for ourselves. It may be a walk in the beautiful outdoors or possibly volunteering for something you believe in. It brings up the thought of how to spend that extra 24 hours in 2024. It's very possible it could be more fun than you think!

Thank you to each person who volunteers for and helps the Museum in any way possible. As a local non-profit who is not supported by any governmental entity, you are the ones to make a difference not only to the Museum but to our community of neighbors.

Happy New Year! Be well, be safe and take care. Our best to you all!

Status of Current Museum Improvement Projects

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of our members and donors, the museum has received funding that enables us to improve our visitor's experience and the efficiency of our operations. Our goal is to ensure that the museum remains an enriching asset to the citizens of Ridgecrest and the surrounding area while at the same time being efficient and conscientious of our members' donations.

Here is a brief summary of some recent and ongoing projects:

- Our security system was upgraded with the addition of external cameras, motion-sensing lighting, and increased data storage capacity.
- A contract for the installation of our solar power system was awarded. System plans were created and forwarded to Kern County for approval. Perimeter fencing along with power and instrumentation conduits between the museum building and the solar field were installed.
- Mini split air conditioning units were installed in the annex building by volunteers. These new units will replace the old inefficient units and will save a significant amount of energy over the life of the system.
- The children's discovery area was improved by replacing the shelves and specimen baskets.
- Updating of the paleontology exhibit is currently underway, with a new backdrop installed, a support platform fabricated, and an acrylic display case sent out for bid.

Frances Nichols' Retrospective Art Legacy Gallery Exhibit

January 6 – March 31, 2024

Opening Reception Sunday January 14, 2 – 4pm



The artwork in this exhibit will include many subjects from around the world painted over a lifetime of experience. The art will be for sale but mostly this will be an experience to view a body of work from a very lovely lady with outstanding talent. The paintings are made in watercolor, pastels and oils – some framed, some not.



Frances Nichols passed away a few years ago and left an abundant amount of artwork. Her family has been gracious to share her artwork with us. The spirit of this exhibit is to spread Fran's Art Legacy to people who like and appreciate her work.

For her 2020 exhibit at the museum, Frances said, "My passion is landscape. I try to etch a memory of a place, beginning with an idea of the finished piece, but leaving myself open to the work evolving. I work



in plein-air on site or from my own photos in the tradition of the early California Impressionists. Realistic representation is balanced with Impressionistic play of light and color on the landscape. For me, the landscape is a prism where the time of day can transform the light moving through it into constantly changing color.



My subject matter is the Indian Wells Valley, Owens Valley, Antelope Valley, and the Eastern Sierras, ranging from desert washes, mountain canyons, to the explosion of spring color in the desert.

This exhibit includes works in pastel, oil, watercolor and gouache. As the song says, 'Love the one you're with!'

I enjoy working in all media and my favorite is the one I'm using that day. I do love the immediacy of pastel with its instant color and layering, and the drama



underpaintings can bring, but I also like the richness of oil and the fresh luminosity of watercolor."



Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

Wow! The Docent League of the Maturango Museum is impressive! We presented programs to over 330 people this month. One program that was particularly fun was presenting a tour, short lesson, and a craft to make reindeer ornaments. As we were preparing the materials for the reindeer ornaments we began to talk about antlers and horns. What a wonderful lesson to present to the children who were visiting. Sherry Brubaker brought out deer antlers that were covered with velvet. We had a deer skull with the antlers that no longer were covered with velvet. We also took out the big horn sheep skull to show horns. We emphasized to the children that members of the deer family have antlers that they shed every year but bovines and sheep have horns which remain on the animals for their entire lives. Sherry also informed us that both male and female reindeer have antlers.

We will be making plans for our second Saturday in January and the Children's Hour team is making plans for the next Children's Hour on Jan. 19. All the docents are excited to present programs in the new year!

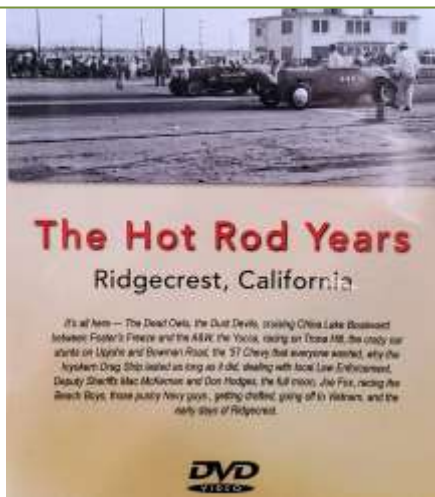
You are invited to join a group of people who love to share the wonders of our desert with adults and children! Please call me, Nora, at the Maturango Museum if you would like to work with the Docent League.

Children's Hour

Children's Hour is set to begin the New Year on Flex Friday January 19, 2024, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. The Children's Hour Group is enthusiastically looking forward to welcoming young children plus older siblings to the first of our free Winter programs. Families are encouraged to consult the Maturango Museum website www.maturango.org in early January for all of the monthly dates and program themes. More information about this January's program also will be available in The News Review and The Daily Independent newspapers.



Fun things in the gift shop.





Field Trip to Kernville

Saturday February 10, 2024

Join Maturango Museum for a day long field trip to historic Kernville. Our trip will include a morning visit to the Kern Valley Museum with a guided tour and visit to their new archive, time for touring in “downtown” Kernville, and tasty lunch on the scenic back deck at Kern River Brewery.

Our sister museum in Kernville, the Kern Valley Museum, preserves the history of the Southern Sierra, with extensive collections and exhibits on gold mining, Native American prehistory, local movie making, ranching, Edison Power, gems and minerals, gun collection, and historical maps. Run by the Kern River Valley Historical Society, their mission is to “educate all generations about our past as well as present... through the extraordinary and proud history of local Native Americans, the resilient gold miners, hardy loggers and pioneering ranchers, with colorful places such as Keysville, Onyx, Johnsondale, Whiskey Flat, and Kernville”. Our museum tour will also include a look at the museum’s comprehensive new archive building across the street from the museum.

There will be time after our museum visit for sight-seeing and shopping in the interesting downtown stores or a visit to beautiful Riverside Park on the banks of the Kern two blocks away from the museum before regrouping for lunch at the nearby Kern River Brewing. If the weather is good, we can enjoy lunch on their new deck or comfortable dining inside. Their selection of locally brewed beer is excellent when paired with a variety of tasty pub foods like burgers, pulled pork, tacos, and appetizers. Vegetarian options are equally tasty!



Your online ticket purchase (\$35 members, \$45 non-members) includes a donation to Kern Valley Museum. Brewery lunch is a la carte and not included in ticket price; lunch rsvp requested for brewery reservation.

Meet at Kern Valley Museum in Kernville at 10am; suitable for all mobility levels, limit 15 participants. Tickets available online at the Maturango Museum: maturango.org/event/kernville-field-trip/ Ticket refunds available only in case of museum cancellation due to weather/road conditions. Questions? Maturango Gift Shop 760-375-6900.



High Desert Music Teachers Association’s Annual Museum Concert Saturday, January 27, 7 pm and Sunday, January 28, 2 pm.

Featuring music dating all the way back to Hildegard von Bingen, the title for this year's concert is “Music Across the Ages”. Music includes works by W.A. Mozart, Franz Schubert, Emilia Guigliani-Gugliemi, Frederic Chopin and Clara Schumann. Tickets available online www.maturango.org/events Adults - \$20, kids under 12 - \$5.

Recent Donations

Donations

Heidi and Scott Allen
Mary Atkinson
Ken and Alice Atwood
Kenneth and Leilani Banks
Pam and Charles Barnes
Margaret Breeden
John Bretney
David and Jo Burdick
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Eleanor Winnemore

In Honor of

Dr. David Whitley's

Coso Studies

Russell Kaldenberg

In Memory of Philip Rogers

Pat and Terry Rogers

Art Gallery

Helen Baker
Joann Barbee—in Memory of
Howard Derrickson
Matthew Anderson

Building Fund

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Robert Westbrook

Curation

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Exhibits and Storage

Carolyn Lynch

Endowment Fund

Heidi and Scott Allen

Glider Exhibit

Nick Panzer

Mammoth Tusk Display

Dorie and Gilbert Cornell

New Members

Helen Burnett
Steve Dickson
Alexandria and Jere Geiger
Linda and Larry Morrison
Kathleen O'Donnell
Sharie Ortega
Susie and Kem Park
Sergio Ramirez
Sally Valiton
Michael Walker
Tyler and Levi White
Rebecca Walkman

New Premium Members

Nate Fisher and Bri Meyer
Rebecca and Alexander
McCourt

The Paleolithic Display

Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator

Thank You to the folks that helped put up the large mural for the new display. Other items will be arriving soon.



“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 20th 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.



Pizza Factory and Beanster’s Espresso Fundraiser

All day, Wednesday, January 10.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum

You must mention this fundraiser when ordering.



**Holiday Gift Giving is Easy with a Gift Certificate
from the Maturango Museum**

**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
Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA, Archaeology Curator
Elaine Wiley, History Curator
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator
Cheryl McDonald, Webmistress
Judie Foust, Finance Manager
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator,
Newsletter Editor
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator
Linda Saholt, Membership, Donations
Leslie Layfield, Accounting Bookkeeper
Nora Nuckles, Museum Assistant
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant

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Warren's Automotive



Upcoming and Ongoing Exhibits and Events

- Children's Hour: Friday, January 12, 10:30 – 11:30am.
- Free Saturday: Flex Friday, January 19, 11am – 2pm. Activities being planned...
- Frances Nichols' Art Legacy Gallery Exhibit: January 6 – March 31, 2024
 - Opening Reception: Sunday, January 14, 2 – 4pm
- HD Music Teacher's Concert: Saturday, January 27, 7 pm and Sunday January 28, 2 pm.
- Kernville Field Trip: Saturday, February 10, 2024

The museum will be closed on New Year's Day, Monday, January 1.

Maturango Museum
100 E Las Flores
Ridgecrest, CA 93555



January 2024 Newsletter