

Maturango Museum 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

By Debbie Benson, Director

We got to love one another... Todd Rundgren

Summer lasted too long and winter is pushing in quickly. As the Solstice approaches with its shortest day we have the chilly mornings of December when night comes too quickly. We celebrate it all at the Museum.

We celebrate our volunteers and our friends who have travelled with us and given us their time, energies and skills. This is what makes the Maturango Museum function as each brings their own thoughts and skills. Thank You.

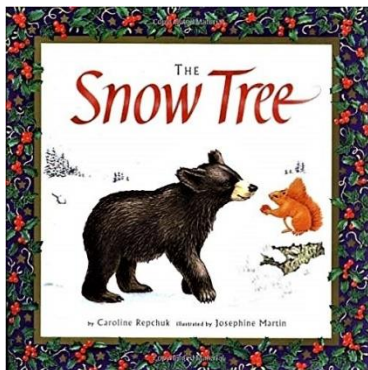
We also celebrate each child who comes to the Museum and brings their awe and joy as they see something new and amazing, do a craft project, hear a story or run through the Labyrinth. You inspire us.

Thank you all and know we welcome you each time you stop by to see what we have going on at the Museum!

Children's Hour: "Snowy Winter for a Young Bear"

Friday, December 6, 10:30 to 11:30 am

Children's Hour at the Maturango Museum will celebrate a snowy winter for a young bear on Flex Friday December 6, 2024, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. The much-loved story, "The Snow Tree" by Caroline Repchuk will be shared with pre-school aged children and their families (younger and older siblings are welcomed, too). They will hear a tale of friendship, sharing, and appreciation of nature's beauty and then enjoy repeating the story-animals' actions by decorating a special 'snow tree'! This activity of Children's Hour has become an annual tradition and is looked forward to by those who have



participated in the past and viewed with wonder by younger newcomers.

In keeping with the winter season a second story may add to the children's *sense of snow*. Imagination stimulating actions, singing to the ringing of bells, and a fun craft will round out what is certain to be a good time had by all.

As always, the Children's Hour Story Group delights in offering this free monthly, September – May, program in the hopes of fostering a love of books and the desert where we live. Up-close or guided hands-on experiences with mounted animals and other artifacts will be provided from the docent collection.

The spring schedule of Children's Hour will be available on-line in early January, Maturango.org and Facebook . We also, encourage families of all ages to participate in the Second Saturday free program on December 7, 2024.

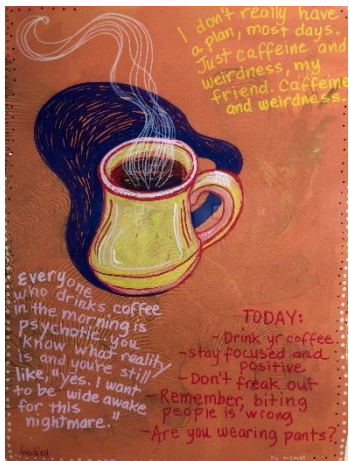
**Joint Art Exhibit - Lori Michelin: "Desert Miscellany" and Jael Hoffman: "States of Being"
November 2 – January 31, 2025**

Meet the Artists Reception Friday December 6, 4 – 6 pm

Lori Michelin



I first came to the Eastern Sierra to camp when I was 5 months old! Since then, this area has been a big part of my life - many, many years of living first in Mammoth, then Tom's Place. Scattered here and there were other wonderful living places: San Francisco, Reno, Orange County, France, and Sonoma County. All good places for a variety of reasons. It's always important to get some perspective. I have a BA in French and got to live in France for two years - wonderful. Much later, in my mid-40s, I got an MFA in printmaking from CSULB -



received in 2005, after commuting to Long Beach from Tom's Place for five years! Printmaking is my love - it's the BEST: labor-intensive, meditative, and surprising. Drawing is also a BIG LOVE. I am interested in the creatures that we share this area with, sometimes these creatures need to be dressed in haute couture; they are always important and need to be revered and adored. They come in peace. Let's welcome them. Lori

Jael Hoffmann



I mainly work in metal sculpture, soldered jewelry, and block print. A collection of my larger work is displayed at the Olancho Sculpture Garden in Olancho, CA. Many of my pieces reflect psychological states of being that arise from unresolved inner tensions or the process of change that follows their acceptance. As I have learned, embracing oneself despite adverse narratives offers a refuge from dysfunctional repetition, thereby making space for ways of joyous engagement.

My latest exploration has been attaching glass to metal via the stained-glass method. This allows me to play with light and color to expand on the traditional expressions of metal.





Winter Solstice Event
Sunday
, December 22, 11am - 2pm

The winter solstice is just around the corner and the Maturango Museum is having a "Winter Solstice" event.

This day marks the beginning of winter and is the shortest day of the year. After December 21, the days start to become longer and the nights shorter. We will provide a craft and cookies. Come say "Hello Winter"!

Premiere Screening of "Hidden Ridgecrest" Video
Sunday, December 15, 2pm

Produced by Mark Pahuta and John Daly, "Hidden Ridgecrest" is a new video approximately one hour long that reveals little-known facts about our town. For instance, do you know why there is a giant "V" on the ground in the Johannesburg Cemetery and what it means? Did you know that there was a community pool here long before Pinny Pool; and it still exists? Or why Eaton Street went away? What the oldest building in town is? Important facts such as these, and many more will be told and revealed in the video by well-known, local long-time residents and other famous people such as Pat Farris, Tex Whitson, Skip Gorman, John Di Pol, and Walter Schirra.

The video is a fascinating look into our past that answers many questions that we may have all had about Ridgecrest and the Indian Wells Valley but were either too afraid or too embarrassed to find the answers to. For instance, do you know who Norma Street was named after? Or why the old Ridgecrest Theater had a bridge on its roof? All of these mysteries and more will be answered by various experts.

As usual, admittance is free, but seating is limited. Producers of the video, Mark Pahuta and John Daly will be on hand to answer questions.

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

In October the docents presented programs to about 500 people. We were out and about in many classrooms with our bat specimens. The bat program is always fun to give. Bob Parker usually brings his computer to teach about echolocation. He can play bat sounds from the different kinds of bats. The sounds have been adjusted to a different frequency; otherwise, they would be inaudible to the human ear. By the end of our program most students have decided that bats are good and not creatures to be feared! We do let them know that vampire bats are very small and live in central and South America. We also presented our bat program to the residents of High Desert Haven

We took many animals to the Faller School Science Night where we met approximately 200 children and their parents. We sat at different tables in the school library where we shared birds, reptiles, pelts, and even the big horned sheep skull. Terry McGuire helped people to understand the difference between horns and antlers!

At our **Free Saturday** on December 14 we invite children and adults to come and paint coyote gourds! Winter themes and holidays will be fun subjects to paint.

The Maturango Museum Docent League is already enjoying a busy, fun season with children and adults. You are invited to join a group of people who love to share the wonders of our desert. We are definitely in need of more docents! Our next docent meeting is on Dec. 3 at 10:00 AM at the Museum. Please call me, Nora, at the Maturango Museum if you would like to work with the Docent League. You are sure to have fun, learning experiences!

Recent Donations

Donations

Anonymous
Dan and Brenda Burnett
Douglas and Dottie Cowan
Jeanette Davis
Jenny McLaughlin
Judith Ward
Patricia Wharton
Ken Whetzel

Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

New Members

Lauranna Daniels
Carol and Bob Dezellem
Teresa Lee family
Melissa and Duane Parkinson
Nadine Steichen

New Premium Members

Susan McEwan

Fundraising Bricks



Great Holiday Gift Idea!
Buy a Brick in Someone's Honor

The funds will be used to further beautify and maintain our desert gardens at the museum. The bricks will be installed along the new path to the curation building and around the shade structure. On this website page you will find a quick video and the printable flyer with mail-in order form.

www.fundraisingbrick.com/online-orders/maturango/

Campaign Ends Dec 15



Tax Tip - Reduce the taxes paid on an IRA minimum distribution

Would you like to reduce the taxes you pay on your IRA's Required Minimum Distribution? You should consider giving a Qualified Charitable Distribution to the Maturango Museum.

The Internal Revenue Service has reminded Individual Retirement Account (IRA) owners age 70½ or over that they can transfer up to \$100,000 to an IRS qualified public charity or private foundation, tax-free each year. These transfers, known as Qualified Charitable Distributions or QCDs, offer eligible older Americans a great way to easily give to charity before the end of the year. And, the donation of a QCDs count toward the IRA owner's Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for the year.

Normally, distributions from a traditional IRA are taxable when received. With a QCD, however, these distributions become tax-free as long as they're paid directly from the IRA to an eligible charitable organization. QCDs must be made directly by the trustee of the IRA to the charity. An IRA distribution, such as an electronic payment made directly to the IRA owner, does not count as a QCD. Likewise, a check made payable to the IRA owner is not a QCD.

Please consult with your tax specialist for details.

SOARING - Flying High on the Power of Rising Air

As part of the soaring exhibit in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery, we are presenting a series of articles on local soaring enthusiasts. This month is on Bertha Ryan, an accomplished scientist and soarer.

Bertha Ryan (1928 – 2023)

Bertha Ryan worked at China Lake as an aerothermodynamicist and was a long-time resident of Ridgecrest. She was an integral part of the soaring community on the local, national, and international levels. From a young age, Bertha had a keen interest in airplanes. Her brother, a military pilot, organized her first airplane flight when she was 16 and she also received her



first flying instructions at that age. At 17, in 1945, she acquired her private license in a Piper J-3 Cub. Understanding that pursuing her passion for airplanes required mathematical knowledge, she enrolled in Emmanuel College in Boston after high school to study math. After graduating from Emmanuel in 1950, she continued her math studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

While at MIT Bertha joined the Aeronautical Engineering Society, after being captivated by a glider displayed on campus. This encounter sparked her love for gliding. Bertha obtained a Master of Science (MS) degree in aerodynamics.

Upon receiving her degree from MIT in 1955, Bertha joined the Douglas Aircraft Company in Santa Monica, where she conducted aerodynamic interference studies. During this period, she purchased and built a sailplane from a kit, a Schweizer Sgs 1-26A, #44. Bertha reflected on the day she first flew her self-built sailplane, stating, "I am not sure there are many days that exceed in the joy of accomplishment of the day you fly for the first time an aircraft you built yourself!"

In 1960, Bertha took a position with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration at Edwards Air Force Base, where she participated in a lifting body study to determine whether a blunt-shaped craft could be landed horizontally after returning from space. Flight tests and analytical and wind tunnel studies confirmed the concept's viability, providing Bertha with the satisfaction of contributing to a forerunner of the space shuttle.

In 1967, Bertha moved to China Lake to pursue her favorite interests, analytical and applied aerothermodynamics.

Throughout her life, Bertha was deeply involved with the Soaring Society of America (SSA). She served on the board, assisted in soaring competitions, and wrote newsletter articles. She received several SSA awards, including the Exceptional Service Award in 1967 and 1980, the Paul Schweizer Lifetime Service Award, and the FAI Pelagia Majewska Medal, making her the first American to receive this honor. Bertha was also the fourth woman to be inducted into the Soaring Hall of Fame. In 2010, she authored the book "Soaring Beyond the Clouds," detailing the story of Einar Enevoldson's life on the edge of flight.



**Maturango Museum
of the IWV**

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

Upcoming and Ongoing Exhibits and Events

- Meet the Artists **Reception**: Friday December 6, 4-6 pm
- Joint Art Exhibit - Lori Michelin: “Desert Miscellany” and Jael Hoffman: “States of Being”
November 2 – January 31, 2025
- Children’s Hour: “Snow Tree”; Friday, December 6, 10:30 to 11:30 am.
- Pizza Factory and Beanster’s Espresso Fundraiser: All day, Wednesday, December 11.
- Free Second: December 14, 11am- 2pm, craft activities - paint coyote gourds with Winter themes.
- “Hidden Ridgecrest” Video: Sunday, December 15, 2pm
- Winter Solstice Event: Sunday, December 22, 11am – 2pm
- Soaring Exhibit: now through February 2025



Pizza Factory and Beanster’s Espresso Fundraiser

All day, Wednesday, December 11.

20% of your purchase is donated to the Maturango Museum

You must mention this fundraiser when ordering.

BEANSTER'S
ESPRESSO

Maturango Museum
100 E Las Flores
Ridgecrest CA 93555

December 2024 Newsletter

