

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

“Where there is love there is life.” Mahatma Gandhi

As we follow the Earth’s cycles we find concerns and hopes in the activity of the weather and the lack of rains and our flowers and plants in the Spring. At the Museum, we are setting up contingency plans for some of our Spring activities. It will be informative, educational and fun!

Thank you to our members and supporters who are there for and with us as we carry on our mission in the Indian Wells Valley and our protection and stewardship of the Maturango. Your support makes it possible. Coming out to help on some of our projects is a fantastic way to meet other people with similar interests. For more information about these projects or to sign up on “a list”, please send an email to info@maturango.org. We have some projects coming up that may interest you and may be a reason to get that new drill or hammer!

My best to you all and please be well!

Children's Hour: Guide Dogs for the Blind - Ridgecrest Puppies Training Friday January 31, 10:30 – 11:30am

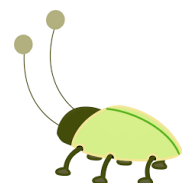
The Children's Hour Docent Group is very excited to once again bring the Guide Dogs for the Blind - Ridgecrest Puppy Raisers to the Maturango Museum. There will be several puppies with their people and a few ambassador dogs. In small groups, the children will have the opportunity to ask questions and learn about puppy grooming, such as teeth brushing and bathing, and important rules about food and water.



The Puppy Raisers are aware of how much people want to pet the dogs; always ask for permission from the Owner/Raiser. A story and craft with take-home pictures to color will round out the program. A 'browsing' selection of books about 'Service Dogs,' many of which may be found in our local library, can provide further knowledge and possibly stimulate more interest.

We are very appreciative of the Ridgecrest Guide Dogs for the Blind Puppy Raising Group coming to share this program with the children of our Valley.

Children’s Hour – Insects and Birds Friday February 21, 10:30 - 11:30 am.



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 for all of the monthly dates and program themes.

Debbie Abshear - 'Evoking Emotions: A Visual Exploration'
February 1, 2025- April 8, 2025
Art Gallery Opening Reception: Saturday February 1, 2-4pm
Artists' Presentation: 3pm



Debbie says “I work mainly in watercolor on 100% cotton paper. I start my paintings by strategically applying water to the paper then introducing watercolor and inks into the wet surface. Then using gravity, pipettes, brushes and sometimes branches and twigs, the journey begins.

I love to carefully observe the mingling of the water, paints and ink traveling and creating the soft and hard edges which help define the shapes and focal areas. My paintings are full of movement, and the viewer can almost follow the path that the paint traveled.



I became inspired to create the work that I do by accepting a challenge to paint differently. I had been a traditional landscape artist for many years and was becoming bored with my own work. I painted every Friday with a wonderful artist in her 90s who wanted me to expand my art practice. She encouraged me to paint larger, more expressive, abstract paintings...

I wanted to explore color, design, and paint to my feelings and emotions but was terrified to change what I already knew and that I was comfortable with.

I wanted to become excited again about creating paintings and shortly became obsessed with experimenting with all the different ways of applying paint to paper so I gave it a try and am so thrilled with the journey that I have been on.

The outcome of this exploration has been creating a body of work filled with color, texture, life changing energy and excitement for me as an artist. Look carefully, I believe you will **feel** something while observing my work which is very important to me.”

sabshear@att.net

Make an Old-fashioned Valentine Card Workshop for Adults
Sunday February 9, 2-4pm



Remember the good 'ole days when you made your own Valentine cards to give to your friends?... think doilies and ribbons and lace. And glue.

We'll also try the fun method of paper card pop-ups.

All materials will be provided.

Of course, you can bring your own materials, too.

\$5 suggested donation.

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

The docents gave 7 programs in December to about 200 people. Three of the programs were given in the Museum. The docents also provided some hands-on craft activities in the Discovery Area. This month there is a snowman activity.



Making and testing model gliders is the planned activity for **Free Second Saturday, February 8**. We initially did this activity in the fall to compliment the outstanding Soaring exhibit in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery. We have additional models to build and test fly! Visitors and docents alike had a fun time so don't miss Feb. 8 from 11am – 2pm.

Terry McGuire and Fran Kelty have been training on using the Beth Armogida Planetarium. Mike Herr has donated time to help them learn to use the planetarium. Sherry Brubaker has already trained to use it but we need to have several people available to present it. We have two more planetarium programs to give this month.

Terry McGuire presented a video, "Sunstruck," to about fifteen 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Congratulations to Terry for successfully flying solo on this presentation!

The Docent League of the Maturango Museum is seeking new volunteers! Please join us at our Tuesday Feb.4 meeting at 10am to discover what we do. You can also call me, Nora, at the Maturango Museum for information. We have a lot of fun!

Searles Valley Historical Society Museums Field Trip

Saturday February 15

Most of these museums are "appointment only" but we're in luck; we've made the arrangements to visit each of them. We'll be visiting the Fire Museum, History House, Trona Railway Museum and Caboose, Archives, and the Old Guest House Museum. Docents will be on-hand at each location to guide us through their rich history and their exhibits. Want to peruse at your own pace? You can do that as well during the time we are at each area.

Our journey will start at the Maturango Museum and we'll drive over to Trona through Poison Canyon. By the way, did you know that the "real name" of Poison Canyon is Salt Wells Canyon? I didn't but I learned that on my first trip to the Searles Valley Museums.

We'll make a brief stop at the Trona Pinnacles turn-off to view two monuments; John Searles' Freight Wagon Route Monument and the Epsom Salts Monorail Monument. (If you want to learn more about the Epsom Salts Monorail, the museum has a great book on this subject as well as a great display in the Museum.)



From there we'll continue to the Fire Museum. Inside this museum are two antique fire engines, a 1924 Stutz and a 1938 Ahren-Fox. Displays in the Fire Museum include 20 photographs of major fires in Argus, Borosolvay, and Trona, and other fire memorabilia.

We'll then make a quick stop at the Trona rest stop to take care of business and proceed to the History House, Caboose, and Railway Museum.

The History House is one of the oldest residential houses in Trona (built around 1920) and is a treasure trove of items from yesteryear. The Trona Railway Museum displays artifacts from the Trona Railway and the Caboose will be open to those able to navigate the steep stairs to get in and out.



We will then return to the Trona rest stop to eat lunch. There are several covered areas with picnic tables so bring a lunch. The kiosk there at the rest stop was a joint project of the BLM Ridgecrest Office and the Searles Valley Historical Society. There are 16 panels at the kiosk that have information about the local area, local mining, local history, sightseeing and recreational opportunities, and desert safety. If you prefer to eat at one of the local restaurants in Trona, we'll have a "meet time" at our final stop.

In the event of inclement weather, we'll head over to the archives and have lunch there. We will ensure there is time to visit the archives, whether we eat lunch there or at the rest stop.



After lunch we'll head to our final stop, the Old Guest House Museum. This building was built around 1917 and is one of the oldest buildings in Searles Valley. Originally it was built as four apartments and was remodeled as a guest house with twelve rooms for visitors to Trona. The twelve rooms show events in Searles Valley from the early mining days to current plant ownership. Since this is our final stop, once you have finished viewing all the cool "stuff", you can head back, we just ask that you let the

Leader of the Field Trip know you are leaving.

9am: meet at the Maturango Museum for check-in. Participants will be required to sign a liability waiver. Car caravan will be organized and for those that want to carpool, we'll figure it out there.

The cost is \$25 for museum members (\$40 for 2 members), \$30 nonmembers (\$50 for 2).

Pets are not allowed. Sign up at www.maturango.org/events or come to the museum gift store.

Be sure you have enough gas (less than 100 miles round trip), car and tires in good running order.

Usual dress code for field trips applies: hat, sunscreen, comfortable walking shoes, layered clothing, water, camera (although some of the buildings ask no photographs). It is better to have these items and not need them, than need them and not have them.

Bring a picnic lunch to eat at the Trona Rest Stop or in the Archives in the case of inclement weather.

Cancellation Policy: If the Museum cancels your trip, you will be given a full refund or you may transfer the money to a different trip. No cash refunds will be given if you cancel.



Recent Donations

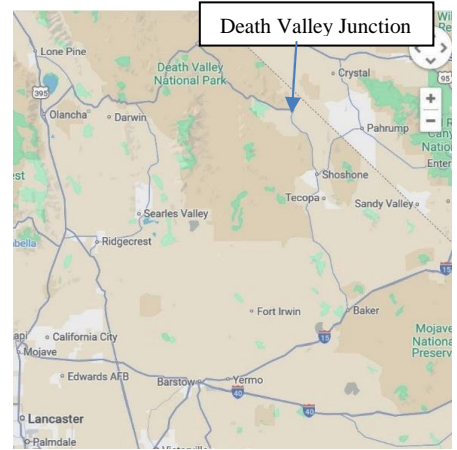
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Marvin Wendt

Spring Field Trip: Southern Amargosa Valley (Tecopa Valley) Friday evening February 28 - Sunday afternoon March 2

The Southern Amargosa Valley (also known as the Tecopa Valley) is a wonderful place to explore; full of history and natural wonders. It is located just East of the Southern end of Death Valley. We'll start our journey Friday night (February 28) in the little town of Tecopa with a social and brief overview of the weekend's activities. Exact time and location will be provided to registered participants as the date gets closer. On Saturday morning (March 1) we'll meet at the Shoshone Museum at 9 am in Shoshone where a staff member will greet us and walk us through the museum. We'll have time to explore the history of the area as curated by the museum's inside and outside displays before reconvening for a short ride (less than a mile) to Dublin Gulch.



Dublin Gulch contains the remnants of homes dug into the hillsides in the late 1800s. After some time to explore the Dublin Gulch area, we'll drive roughly 20 miles to the Tecopa Mines where we'll be met by the mine's owner who will give us a two-hour walking tour of part of the mine and discuss its history. From Tecopa Mines we'll drive to the China Date Ranch where we'll have the chance to enjoy one of their famous date shakes or some of their baked goods or dates and eat what will be a late picnic lunch (no host) at the picnic tables near the Amargosa River trailhead. After lunch

we'll take a hike down to the Amargosa River and discuss this amazing wild and scenic river that runs mostly underground. We'll return via a loop trail to the trailhead and our vehicles. Dinner and the rest of the evening is on your own. There are a few restaurants in Tecopa and one in Shoshone.

Sunday morning (March 2) at 8:45 am we'll meet for a tour at the famous Amargosa Opera House in Death Valley Junction where Marta Becket once dazzled audiences with her ballet performances.

For those who are interested in extending the tour a bit further, we'll travel up to Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge and take a short hike to see the famous Devil's Hole and gaze down from a caged catwalk onto the deep pond where a few hardy pupfish reside. We'll conclude our tour at the Ash Meadows Visitor Center where you can explore the center and take a walk on the catwalks to see the thermal springs and their resident pupfish.



For those interested in taking the tour, book accommodations as soon as possible. There are limited rooms available at the Amargosa Opera House in Death Valley Junction and the nearby Longstreet Hotel and Casino, in Shoshone at the Shoshone Inn, and a couple of hotels in Tecopa. Be aware that accommodations in Death Valley Junction, Shoshone, and Tecopa are a bit rustic. More modern accommodations and eating options can be found in Pahrump NV about 30 minutes from Shoshone.

The drive to the Tecopa mines is partially on a well graded dirt road with about a 1 mile section on an unimproved dirt road. A high-clearance vehicle is recommended for this last mile (a Subaru or similar should be fine). No 4WD required. Also, should you choose to travel through Death Valley to meet us, you will need to pay the park entrance fee not included in the tour cost.

The tour cost will be \$275 for members and \$350 for non-members and will include light snacks at Friday night's social (no host drinks), donation for the Shoshone museum, Tecopa Mine tour fee, and the Amargosa Opera House tour fee. Cancellations prior to the 7th of February will receive a 100% refund. Cancellations after the 7th but before the 21st will receive a 50% refund. Cancellations after the 21st will receive no refund.

Tickets are available at www.maturango.org/events or in the museum gift store.

**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)

Staff

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Nadia Mohsen, Curation Technician
Elaine Wiley, History Curator
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator,
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Upcoming and Ongoing Exhibits and Events

- Children's Hour: Ridgecrest Guide Dogs Puppies, Friday January 31, 10:30 – 11:30am
- Debbie Abshear Art Gallery Opening Reception: Saturday February 1, 2-4pm
 - Debbie Abshear Artist's Presentation during reception: 3pm
 - Debbie Abshear Gallery Exhibit - 'Evoking Emotions: A Visual Exploration' February 1 - April 8, 2025
- Free Second Saturday: February 8, 11am - 2pm, make and test fly bamboo and paper gliders
- Valentine Card Workshop for Adults: Sunday February 9, 2-4pm
- Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser: All day, Wednesday, February 12.
- Field Trip: Searles Valley Historical Society Museums: Saturday February 15
- Children's Hour: Insects and Birds, Friday February 21, 10:30 – 11:30a
- Soaring Exhibit: now through February 2025
- Field Trip: Southern Amargosa Valley: Friday February 28 - Sunday March 2



Pizza Factory and Beanster's Espresso Fundraiser

All day, Wednesday, February 12.

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

February 2025 Newsletter

Maturango
Museum
Ridgecrest,
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