

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

Death Valley Tourist Center Northern Mojave Visitor Center

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## Museum Director's Notes

*By Debbie Benson, Director*

June is an energizing time for the Maturango Museum. From June 1 to July 15 we will be having our Matching Funds Drive. This is a great time to donate and double your impact!

We are also reminding our friends and neighbors how important and beneficial it is to be a member of the Museum. As a local non-profit, the work that we do benefits our community and our visitors. Have you come by to see us lately? Please stop by to see the work we've been doing; each month on 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, the admission is free and we often have activities for children. This is posted on our sign and on the events calendar on the website.

We were glad to welcome our new volunteers. They are the reason we can carry on our programs and outreach. A big thank you to all of our volunteers and everyone who supports them!  
Take care and keep water nearby!



## Summer Mirage Sale (yard sale)

Friday June 6 and Saturday June 7, 7am – 12 noon

Please bring your donations to the museum beginning May 12.

## Matching Fund and Membership Drive

You can double the impact of your donation during the period from 1 June to 15 July. Generous donors have pledged \$25,000 to match donations given to the Museum's operating fund during that time.

Our matching drive last year raised over \$52,000. Without that addition to the operating fund the Museum would have closed the year way in the red and would have had to consider curtailing its programs this year.

Please donate now to double the impact of your donation. See the Museum's website

[www.maturango.org](http://www.maturango.org) or scan the QR code to be taken to the donation page.



## Father's Day Sale in the Gift Store

Saturday June 14 – Sunday June 15

**20% discount on all merchandise (except, blankets, books, and pens)**



**Jacques Canot: “Desert Sensations –  
in Memory of Midge”  
Exhibit in the Coso Room through June 23**

Jacques spent 35 years in Tahiti (French Polynesia) as a sound engineer and has worked in the musical world almost all of his life. When he arrived in Ridgecrest in 2015 he started to work with wood. Jacques comments that “wood is amazing, the touch, the scent... and then a few years later I tried acrylic painting and loved it. And then a year ago I started to work with resin, by itself or with wood. I don't like to stay in one style. With any medium, I like to experiment, sometimes the result is surprising.”



**Docent Doings**

*By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator*

The docents will be offering programs at the Ridgecrest Library on June 10 and June 12. The June 10 program is "Dissecting Owl Pellets" from 2:30 to 3:30 and the June 12 program is "Skulls and Skins" from 1:30 to 2:30.

Rosie, the docent's pet rosy boa passed away in April. Rosie was our ambassador snake. Every time Rosy went out to visit it was loved by nearly everyone! Even those people with a reluctance to be near a snake usually succumbed and decided to touch its back. “Oh, it's not slimy,” many would say! Rosie was a beautiful snake with distinct rose gold stripes on its back. A rosy boa is a desert species that is usually mild-mannered and easy to hold and share with everyone. Many of us enjoyed the opportunity to “snake sit.” As the docents became familiar with handling Rosy it became difficult for me to hog that opportunity. Rosy would travel in a pink pillowcase inside a canvas tote. Children would always be excited to see that pillowcase come out in the classroom! Children could then observe its scales which are different on the top from those on the belly. They could observe it move, sniff the air for food with its tongue, and seek dark, secure spaces. Although we knew Rosie would not bite, we still kept people from touching her head. Rosie was about 20 years old and has been with the docents about as long as I have been a docent! We will truly miss her.

Glenn Harris, a docent and former BLM resource specialist, will present a program on Insects for our **Free Saturday on June 14** from 11am – 2pm. We will have a fun project building insects from different size Styrofoam balls.

Docents take some time off in the summer but may offer something special. Watch our website for details. We are always open to bringing in new people to the docent ranks; if interested, please call Nora at the Museum, 760-375-6900.

**Summer Solstice Event – Saturday June 21, 10 am to noon**

The museum will provide a suncatcher craft and an educational model of the sun and Earth to view. As an additional bonus, the China Lake Astronomical Society may bring their solar scopes for people to view the sun.

The summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere marks the beginning of summer and is the longest day and shortest night of the year. On this day, the number of hours of daylight is at its maximum, while the number of hours of night is at its minimum. In the Southern Hemisphere, the solstice marks the shortest day of the year and the longest night. It's important to note that the summer solstice is not just a day but an exact moment in time that falls upon that day. At the exact moment that the Northern Hemisphere is most tilted toward the Sun, the Northern Hemisphere experiences its summer solstice. It is the Earth's tilt that causes winter and summer. The exact moment of the 2025 solstice is June 20 at 7:41 pm.

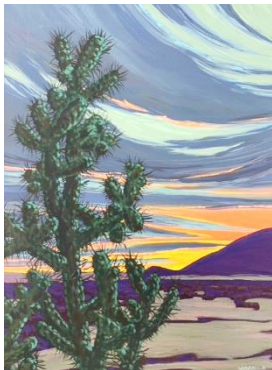


## Historical video screening “Hidden Ridgecrest 3” Sunday June 22, 2pm

Mark Pahuta’s latest video presents little-known facts, anecdotes and rumors about Ridgecrest, China Lake and the surrounding area. For instance:

- Do you know why there is a metal Joshua Tree on the west side of Highway 395 just South of the road to Grapevine Canyon?
- Did you know that starting on August 6, 1945, 29 year-old Paul Tibbets needed Secret Service protection every day of his life until the day he died?
- Did you know that the Desert Empire Fair was recently close to bankruptcy and that 2 things saved it?
- Do you know where “The Atomic” was located and whatever happened to it?
- Did you know that the biggest Circus in the world (Ringling Bros./Barnum and Bailey) came to Ridgecrest once in the 1950s and set up their big tents along Inyokern Road on the base side of the fence?

Well-known local long-time residents who have either taken part in these events or have studied and researched them such as Bill Kirkpatrick, Doug Lueck, Skip Gorman, Dr. Bill Ferguson, Tex Whitson, and others will be in the video to tell their stories. Producers of the video, Mark Pahuta and John Daly will be present to provide cogent comments and to answer any questions. The video runs about one hour. As usual, admission is free, but seating is limited.



### Warner Graves’ Art Exhibit: “Other Worlds” Opening Reception Saturday June 28, 2-4 pm

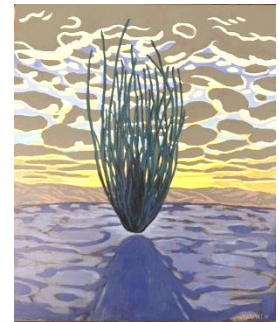
*“The landscapes here have always been a source of  
inspiration for me,  
my work reflects a deep connection to place and history.”  
Warner*

Warner Graves is an artist known for his contemporary take on the rugged beauty of the California desert. Using bold color, broad brush strokes, line and texture and reacting to intuitive impulses, the work unfolds as an exploration of the natural world and its lore. From a vintage stone cabin in Snow Creek, (a small secluded village at the foot of Mt. San Jacinto), Warner creates paintings of simplified and stylized forms to convey the monumentality and spiritual awe of the surrounding desert wilderness. The work is strongly rooted to the various locations in and around the arid regions of California and reflects interest ranging from historic travel posters, the natural sciences, hiking, and getting lost in the desert.



The playful use of color is a direct reference to the Canadian Group of Seven. Local early 20th century artist Agnes Pelton and her associated Taos School of Transcendental Art continues to be a source of inspiration. With the current series Warner hopes the viewer finds the beauty in the depiction of the desert environment but is also challenged to see the natural world not as a static form but as a living entity, imbued with vitality and flux.

This fantastic exhibit will be in the Coso Room through August 24.



**Natural History**  
*By Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator*

Well everybody, summer is just about here and the heat is coming as well.

Keep an eye out for snakes, friendly and not so friendly. Avoid the ones that buzz. Give the snake a chance to get away, they don't want to mess with you any more than you with them. Remember that all snakes help keep the rodent populations down.

Be aware that heat KILLS. NEVER leave a pet or child in a car! Ninety degrees outside can soar to well over 130 in no time inside the car. That temperature is fatal. Rule of thumb, if it's hot for you it's too hot for your pet and child.

Make sure your animals have water; consider even putting water out for the wild ones. Be aware that some water dishes can be too deep for some birds and small rodents. Adding a rock, stick or pile of stones in the dish may help small animals get out of the dish.

As summer heat progresses and things dry up even more, wild animals will come looking for water. Putting a pan of water outside your fence will provide water and hopefully discourage unwanted critters from coming in the yard in search of water.

Even though we live in the desert we are not immune to wild fire. Unattended campfires, campfires not fully extinguished, fireworks, guns, and OHVs can potentially start a wild fire. Our grass and bushes burn just like trees, grass, and shrubs elsewhere.

**Recent Donations**

Donations

Peggy Breeden  
Dan and Brenda Burnett  
Byron and Amy Butler  
Ray and Minnie Miller  
Jann Philpott  
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Ken Whetzel

In Memory of

Cheryl McDonald  
Vicki Ardoin

In Memory of Margaret and

Howard Anderson  
Linda and Jim Bego

Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

New Members

John Auburn and Karen Usko  
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David Silverman

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Terri Middlemiss  
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Jean Winkler

New Premium Members

Richard Baker  
Katie and James Benadom  
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Theresa Zhen

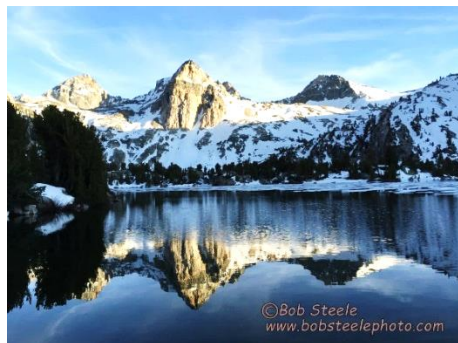
**Pacific Crest Trail Exhibit**  
**April 21 – September 21**

A photographic exhibit on the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT) is currently on display in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery. This 2,650-mile trail winds through some of the most inspiring and beautiful landscapes in the United States. It begins at the border of Mexico and leads backpackers through California, Oregon, and Washington, ending at the Canadian border. Some hikers choose to start in Washington and travel south to Mexico.





The PCT traverses nine mountain ranges, 25 national forests, seven national parks, and numerous wilderness areas. Exploring this untamed wilderness offers a unique opportunity to experience a diverse range of terrain, flora, fauna, and wildlife that characterize the western United States.



Renowned photographer Bob Steele captured the stunning beauty of the trail using an iPhone while hiking the PCT with his wife, Susan, in 2016. They spent 5 months and 11 days on the trail, taking time to photograph the scenery and indulge in Susan's passion for birdwatching.

This photographic exhibit presents only a small fraction of the breathtaking views found along the trail. We hope that it fosters an appreciation for the diversity of the PCT and leaves you in awe of its natural beauty.

### **Maturango Museum of the IWV**

100 E. Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555  
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Sunday noon – 4pm (except major holidays)

#### Staff

Debbie Benson, Museum Director  
Maureen Goff, Store Manager/Buyer  
Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA, Archaeology Curator  
Nadia Mohsen, Curation Technician  
Elaine Wiley, History Curator  
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator  
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator,  
Newsletter Editor  
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator,  
Museum Assistant  
Linda Saholt, Membership, Donations  
Leslie Layfield, Accounting Bookkeeper  
Heidi Farmer, Accounting  
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant  
Barbara Ingle, Museum Assistant

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Elaine Wiley, Publications  
Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning  
Bev Hill, Gardens

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Dorie Cornell



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Vaughn Realty  
WACOM  
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### **Upcoming and Ongoing Exhibits and Events**

- Free Second Saturday: Insects! Craft activities June 14, from 11am – 2pm
- Summer Solstice Event: Saturday June 21, 10am - noon
- Video: “Hidden Ridgecrest #3”: Sunday June 22, 2pm
- Warner Graves’ Art Exhibit Opening Reception: Saturday June 28, 2-4pm
- Jacques Canot’s Art Exhibit: “Desert Sensations - in Memory of Midge”, through June 23
- Pacific Crest Trail Photo Exhibit: April 21 – September 21

### **Summer Mirage Sale (yard sale)**

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