

# 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

## Museum Director's Notes

*By Debbie Benson, Director*

July is a time to enjoy the local area! After celebrating Midsummer, the desert is drying and heat is a reality. We hear constant reminders to use care with anything involving fire and sun exposure. This includes you and your pet! That quick run across the street or sand with no protection can burn!

We have so many things to celebrate at the Museum! We are in the midst of our Matching Donation fund drive as well as encouraging new membership. We are all overwhelmed by the support being shown by our members. Members keeping the lights on makes a difference!

Everyone can make a difference. We make a difference in the culture of Ridgecrest and we welcome those who want to contribute not only to the Maturango Museum but to Ridgecrest and its neighbors. If you have some time to donate, come see us. We are all better as a community that helps each other and shares time together

We are enjoying our monthly events. 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday continues to be a great opportunity for families to come to the Museum with no entrance fee. The Docents continue to be the best source of fun information for the kids! Keep an eye on our events calendar for some fun activities.

We have started a new campaign for our Fundraising Bricks; buy your own piece of history. Have a great July, please be safe as you explore our desert and respect its wildlife, and Be Well!



## Buy a Brick is Back!... Missed it last time? Now's Your Chance.

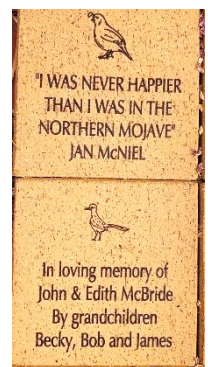
The funding provided by the sale of the bricks will be used to further beautify and maintain our desert gardens at the Maturango Museum. The bricks themselves will be installed along the new pathway and to enhance the area near the shade structures.

The QR code takes you directly to Fundraising Brick's Maturango Museum online ordering. On this webpage you will find a quick video, the printable flyer with mail in order form.

This Brick Campaign ends on December 31, 2025

Thanks!

<https://maturango.org/fundraising-bricks/>



## **Kern Plateau Meadows Field Trip with Anne Dumas**

### **Saturday July 19**

Let's head to the high country! Join the Maturango Museum on a tour of several meadows on the Kern Plateau.

The Kern Plateau is a relatively flat area between 7,500 and 8,500 feet in elevation. There are about 30 meadows with streams and rich soil abundant with plants and flowers. Some years, there are lots of frogs! It will be fun to explore in the cool mountain air. The meadows we could visit include: Troy, Powell, Granite Knob, Paloma, Bonita and Osa.

Meet at the museum at 7am. You will be required to sign a liability waiver. Great trip for kids and leashed well-behaved dogs.

Buy tickets on the museum website [maturango.org/events](http://maturango.org/events) The cost is \$35 for museum members (\$60 for 2 members), \$45 nonmembers (\$80 for 2). Kids under 18 are free.

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.

Carpooling is encouraged, but not required. For those driving, be sure your vehicle is in good repair and that it has a full tank of gas. We will be driving approximately 200 miles round trip on our day long adventure. We will return to the museum in the evening. (Or you could drive up and over Sherman Pass and head home through Kernville.)

Be sure to bring a picnic lunch and plenty of water. Once we pass the Kennedy Meadows General Store, there is no place to buy food or drinks. Also, if you like, bring a folding chair, a rain jacket, hiking poles, bug spray, hat and sunscreen.

### **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 "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 directed to the donation page.



### **Pizza Art**

**Saturday July 26, noon – 2pm**

We will make our own pizza art and learn about nutrition, too.

This workshop is for kids and adults. Ages 5-12 must be accompanied by an adult.

You'll start with a blank mini pizza crust and add various vegetables and sauces; then we'll cook the pizzas and enjoy eating them or take home.

Our visiting guest will be Tera Moorehead, a certified nutritionist, to explain the nutritional value of the ingredients.

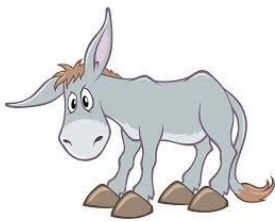
All of the food items will be provided – generous donations will be greeted with delight!



## Docent Doings

*By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator*

Visitors enjoy observing our tortoises at the Museum tortoise enclosure. All of the tortoises in the enclosure are pets. For their protection, no wild tortoises can be removed from their habitat. Recently, we acquired 2 tortoises from Judy Breitenstein who passed away earlier this year. She had them for a long time. During the yard sale, a young girl ran up to Maureen to tell her that one of the tortoises was on its back. She was rightfully very worried about the tortoise. Sometimes they can flip themselves back over and sometimes they can't. It is dangerous for a tortoise not to be able to move out of the heat into a cooler place. Thank goodness the girl alerted us. I opened the tortoise enclosure gate and let the child go in and turn the tortoise back over. We are so grateful that the girl (see photo) was so observant and saved the tortoise! We thank her!



Another way to help our local wildlife has been brought to our attention. Several of the wild burros are getting hit and killed on the roads. Inyo County and the Bureau of Land Management began a campaign to inform the public about the problem. Some people stop to feed the wild burros. Therefore, the burros start to associate cars with food and will go out into the roadway. Please remember and remind others not to feed the wild burros. Instead go out to the BLM Wild Horse and Burro Facility just off of Ridgecrest Blvd., bring a big bunch of carrots, and feed all these wonderful animals. You will not have even one carrot to bring home!

The Museum thanks Glenn Harris for a wonderful free Saturday program on insects. He made 55 insect kits for visitors!

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. Please give Nora a call at the Museum, 760-375-6900.

## Maturango Museum “Call to Artists” for the Open Studio Tour 2025

The Maturango Museum is now accepting applications (due by August 17) from local artists for the **Maturango Museum’s Open Studio Tour 2025**. Artists open their studios for the 2-day event so guests can visit and purchase artwork. The tour will be Saturday and Sunday, September 27 & 28, 10 am – 4 pm each day. Each artist will also have a sample of their artwork displayed in the 2-month Open Studio Tour Exhibit (August 31 – Oct 27) at the Museum and be a part of the Artists’ Opening Reception (Sunday September 14, 2-4pm).

For information and applications please go to the museum (open 10 – 5 Monday - Saturday, Sunday noon – 4pm) or send an e-mail to Andrea [gallery@maturango.org](mailto:gallery@maturango.org) requesting Open Studio Tour information.

We have changed the application fee and commission procedures from last year(s). Please be sure to read the new procedures for 2025. The application fee is \$100 for museum members and \$140 for non-members, the commission for art in the gallery exhibit remains at 40% but there will be no commission for sales in your studios.



## Warner Graves' Art Exhibit: "Other Worlds"

*"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.

A great article about Warner written in 2018. <https://www.californiadesertart.com/the-golden-age-of-warner-graves-back-to-the-canyons/> His website is [warnergraves.net](http://warnergraves.net)

### Recent Donations

#### Donations

Dan and Brenda Burnett  
James and Barbara Herriman  
Sarah Jayne  
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Bob Westbrook  
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#### In Honor of Renee Sloan

Misha and Keith Hash

#### Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

#### Docent Programs

Balas Montessori

#### Matching Funds Drive

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Frank Armogida  
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#### New Members

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Jean Johanboeke  
Carol Lair  
Cynthia McCormick  
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Caroline Woods

#### New Business Members

Alisha Mondragon/  
Hyla Nursery LLC  
Stacie Wheeler/  
Reliant Mobile Live Scan  
and Notary



## Pacific Crest Trail Photo Exhibit April 21 – September 21

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. Or 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.



### 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

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  
Addie Reyes, Website  
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant  
Barbara Ingle, Museum Assistant

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Bob Westbrook, Strategic Planning  
Bev Hill, Gardens

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WACOM  
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## Upcoming and Ongoing Events

- Free Second Saturday: July 12, 11am – 2pm
- Kern Plateau Meadows Field Trip: Saturday July 19
- Pizza Art “workshop”: Saturday July 26, noon – 2pm
- Warner Graves’ Art Exhibit through August 24
- Pacific Crest Trail Photo Exhibit: April 21 – September 21

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July 2025 Newsletter



Original watercolor artwork  
by Carol Dezellem. She is  
one of our excellent docents.