

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

September is coming with its own sense of time passages! The children are truly back doing their lessons and we are getting ready for an Equinox, 2nd (Free) Saturday, the Open Studio Tour and planning for some field trips and our Annual Fundraising Dinner Auction. These are always fun events to share knowledge and FUNdraise for the museum.

Please join us and possibly donate to the Dinner/Auction or volunteer to help. The newsletter is filled with information about our plans! Read it all! Hope you can come by and see the historic farm equipment and enjoy the shade in our garden.

We are all aware that this year is hot and dry. Please use caution, no fires and always have drinking water. Check for fires when travelling and think good thoughts for all of those fighting so many fires.

Take care!



Annual Museum Dinner / Auction

Saturday October 25, 6pm

Kerr-McGee

Tickets will go on sale Sep 1.

Maturango.org

Donations needed by October 6.
Items for gift baskets, activity ideas (workshops, field trips, house rental, catered meal or dessert...) and other cool stuff...

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).

The map to the studios is free - please go to the museum (open 10 – 5 Monday - Saturday, Sunday noon – 4pm) or send an e-mail to Andrea at gallery@maturango.org requesting one.



Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

Shirley Crouse and Ingrid Carroll provided an informative, fun program for August second Saturday. Participants viewed several desert animal specimens with notes that described how each animal protects itself when our Mojave Desert temperatures rise. Participants then decorated sun visors and took home a small bottle of water. Second Saturdays are always free admittance and activities for adults and children.

Our next Free Second Saturday will feature Mike and Linda Thompson on the topic of flintknapping. Mike is an accomplished flintknapper who will show some of the wonderful points he has made. Then participants will make points (arrowheads) from Sculpey polymer clay and attach them to small shafts and decorate the shafts.



At High Desert Haven, Cam Alden and Carol Dezellem provided a collage art project for residents. The Maturango Museum docents try to present programs every month for residents.



Our docents, who provide Children's Hour each month, will meet on Aug. 26 to plan the program for Sept. 12. The group always has fun as they select a theme and sort through children's picture books to choose their favorites. Charlotte Goodson always provides the selections from which to pick!

If you would like to participate in our docent activities, please call the Museum at 760-375-6900 and ask for Nora, the Education Coordinator. Or you can attend our first meeting on Sept. 9 at 10am in the Coso Room. Don't miss the fun, comradery, and good food!

Recent Donations

Dan and Brenda Burnett

Jack and Diane Murray

Warren's Automotive

Patricia Wharton

Ken Whetzel

Building Fund

Robert Westbrook

Education

Jean Beisler

Kathi Peverini

Gladys Merrick Butterfly

Garden

Oasis Garden Club

In Honor of Janet Westbrook

Susan Hueber

In Memory of Cheryl

McDonald

Leroy Corlett

Jessica David

Robert and Carol Dezellem

Mary Lundstrom

Naomi Norris

Chris and Charylene Peterson

Matching Funds Drive

Debbie Benson

Debbie Breitenstein and

Tom Roseman

Daniel and Brenda Burnett

Jacki Burnett

Patrick Childers

Diane Foucher

Betty Kobler

Leslie Layfield

Nora and Richard Nuckles

Andrea Pelch

Nancy Porter

Carol and Thomas Sakai

Nancy Saxton

Jim and Deanna Stewart

Don and Linda Waldron

Peter Woodman and

Susan Moore

New Members

Mike and Betty Aley

Jerry and Sandy Bradley

Debbie Breitenstein and

Tom Roseman

Deborah Corlett

Cindy and Greg Cote

Juanita Dalpiaz

Anna Fitzgerald

Merrie Giles

Kara McDonald

Joel Reed

Jean Robbins

Mike and Karen Sanford

Renee Sloane

Don and Linda Waldron

New Premium Members

Scott Miller

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. Many hikers also start in Washington and travel south to Mexico.



“But it’s a Dry HEAT”

Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator

We all know how hot the desert gets in the summer. Now for a little perspective... Did you know that the desert around the Dead Sea is often in the high 120s°F to low 130s°F every summer for months? Like Death Valley, 90 miles to the east of us, also gets that hot. Here in Indian Wells Valley we don’t always get that hot for that long. This summer alone we’ve barely hit 110°F. Unusual for us but who’s going to complain? Palm Springs has nearly reached 120°F but not the usual long stretches like last summer. Imagine playing golf in that heat? That’s why golf courses in the Palm Springs area have ballpark-type lights so folks can play at night.

Night-time also allows the air to cool; this is desirable for sleeping and allowing the body to recover from the day’s heat. When the air doesn’t cool, and we all run our A/Cs, a whole new set of issues arise like power usage, environmental damage, and animal behavior changes.

I usually experience ants in my home when the heat increases. They’re coming in to find food, water, and of course, cool air. Don’t despair! Cooler days and nights are coming; then we’ll complain about the cold. Remember this heat in December. Then we can talk about the deserts of Greenland and Antarctica.

Celebration of the September Equinox

Saturday September 20, 10 am - noon

Create a Junk Journal (collage) Card

The September equinox is approaching! The word 'equinox' comes from the Latin words 'aequus,' meaning equal, and 'nox,' meaning night. Therefore, 'equinox' translates to 'equal night' in Latin, symbolizing the nearly equal length of day and night. This marks the transition from longer summer days to shorter winter days for us in the Northern Hemisphere. Days from now until the winter solstice grow shorter each day, and the nights grow longer. The winter solstice marks a turning point where the days begin to grow longer and the nights shorter.

At the Maturango Museum, we enjoy celebrating the four times each year when the Earth and sun experience a special relationship: the equinoxes and solstices. This connection helps us stay in tune with the changing seasons.



Join us as we create celestial greeting cards in the style of “Junk Journaling”. A Junk Journal card is a handmade creation that uses various papers, pockets, and tags to craft an engaging greeting card with spaces to tuck in a handmade note or greeting. Arrive by 10am to give yourself plenty of time to explore the different options available for your card-making experience.

As a bonus, the China Lake Astronomical Society may bring their solar scopes for visitors to view the sun safely. Members' participation depends on their schedule and the weather.

Maturango Museum Field Trip to Devil's Punchbowl Natural Area

Saturday, October 18, 10:30am – 2:30pm

Nestled in the San Gabriel Mountains, this stunning geological wonder offers a unique opportunity to explore dramatic rock formations, vibrant desert landscapes, and the dynamic forces that shaped this region.

Our adventure begins at 10:30 am at the Devil's Punchbowl Nature Center near Pearblossom, Southern California. We'll enjoy a presentation on the geology and history of the Punchbowl at the scenic View Point. Learn about the tectonic forces and erosion that created the Punchbowl's iconic tilted sandstone layers and rugged canyons.

Following the presentation, we'll embark on a guided one-mile loop hike into the Punchbowl canyon, offering breathtaking views of the striking rock formations and surrounding desert and mountain terrain. The trail features moderate inclines and rocky paths, so sturdy hiking shoes and perhaps walking sticks are recommended.

We'll wrap up the day by 2:30 pm, leaving time to enjoy the scenic beauty of the area or relax at the Nature Center.

What to Bring:

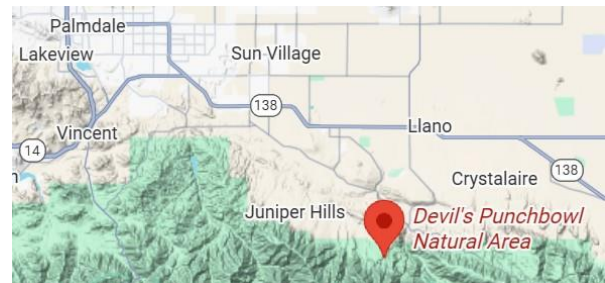
- Comfortable hiking shoes
- Water bottle (at least 1 liter)
- Sunscreen and hat
- Light layers for cool mornings and warm afternoons
- Snacks for the trail

This family-friendly trip is perfect for geology enthusiasts, hikers, and anyone eager to discover the natural beauty of the Devil's Punchbowl. Don't miss this chance to explore one of Southern California's most remarkable landscapes!

Buy tickets on the museum website 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.

Howard McCauley will send out an update and details to those who've registered a couple of days before the trip.



Historic Equipment at the Maturango Museum

We recently received old farming and mining equipment from the Desert Empire Fairgrounds. Previously, this equipment was stored in a fenced area located east of the Model Railroad building, where the Eastern Sierra Railroad Society has its model trains set up.

The equipment is part of Dick Lewis' estate. He came to the Indian Wells Valley in 1936 at the age of 14 to live with Tiny and Earl Standard, early settlers in this area. He purchased the Homestead Restaurant in 1975, where he served delicious meals and a bit of local history complemented by various historic items adorning the walls.





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

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

This Brick Campaign ends on December 31, 2025. Thanks!

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



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

Committee Chairpersons

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

Board of Trustees

Robert McGowan – President
Patty Wharton – Vice-president
Diane Foucher - Secretary
Jann Philpott - Treasurer
Dan Burnett
Peggy Chun
Alisha Mondragon
Howard McCauley
Dorie Cornell



Businesses and Organizations Supporters • Contributors • Sponsors

AltaOne Federal Credit Union
Ashley Furniture HomeStore
Beanster's Espresso
Boulder Creek RV Resort
Clarion Inn
Earth Landscaping
Eastern Sierra Custom Framing
Epsilon Systems Solutions, Inc.
Oasis at Death Valley
Gary Charlon State Farm
Heritage Inn & Suites
Hampton Inn & Suites
High Desert Haven
Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert
IWV Self Storage
Law Offices of Phyllis M. Hix
McDonald's Restaurant
Meith Operational Solutions
Michael's Certified Air
New Directions Technologies, Inc.
Oasis Garden Club
The Car Wash
The Pizza Factory
Red Rock Books
Ridgecrest Area Convention
and Visitors Bureau
Saalex Corp.
St. Ann Catholic School
Searles Valley Minerals
Sierra Sands Unified School District
Sinclair Legal Counsel
Sinclair Tax Service
SpringHill Suites by Marriott
Stafford's Pest Control
The Swap Sheet
TJ Frisbee Bicycles, Inc
T&T Alignment, Inc.
Vaughn Realty
WACOM
Warren's Automotive

Travel Presentation: Peru's Upper Amazon Sunday October 5, 2pm

Alice and Ken Atwood will present a talk on their trip to the Upper Amazon. In February 2025 they explored the 2 major rivers, Marañon and Ucayali, that make up the Amazon River confluence.

The Pacaya-Samiria Preserve is a National Park comprised of over 5 million acres. It is a biodiverse rain forest that is home to a wide variety of animals and plants. The presentation will include photos of some of the animals including Pink Dolphin, Saki Monkey and Pigmy Marmoset.

Upcoming and Ongoing Events

- Children's Hour: Friday September 12, 10:30 – 11:30 am
- Free Second Saturday: September 13, 11am - 2pm, make arrowheads and arrows
- Open Studio Artist's Group Exhibit Opening Reception: Sunday Sept 14, 2-4pm.
- Open Studio Tour weekend September 27 and 28, 10am – 4pm each day.
- Celebration of the September Equinox: Saturday September 20, 10 am - noon
- Pacific Crest Trail Photo Exhibit: April 21 – September 21
- Travel Presentation: Peru's Upper Amazon: Sunday October 5, 2pm
- Field Trip to Devil's Punchbowl: Saturday October 18

Archaeology Day on Saturday November 8 in Borrego Springs: "Honoring the People".

Presentations and displays by local indigenous basket artist Eva Salazar, Kumeyaay Storytelling, traditional games and plant medicines by Ami Admire, Payómkawichum.

Guided tours of the Begole Archaeology Research Lab

Fields trips Saturday afternoon, Nov 8 and Sunday Nov 9

See www.anzaborregoarchaeo.org/archday2025/

Maturango Museum
100 E Las Flores
Ridgecrest CA 93555
www.maturango.org

September 2025 Newsletter

