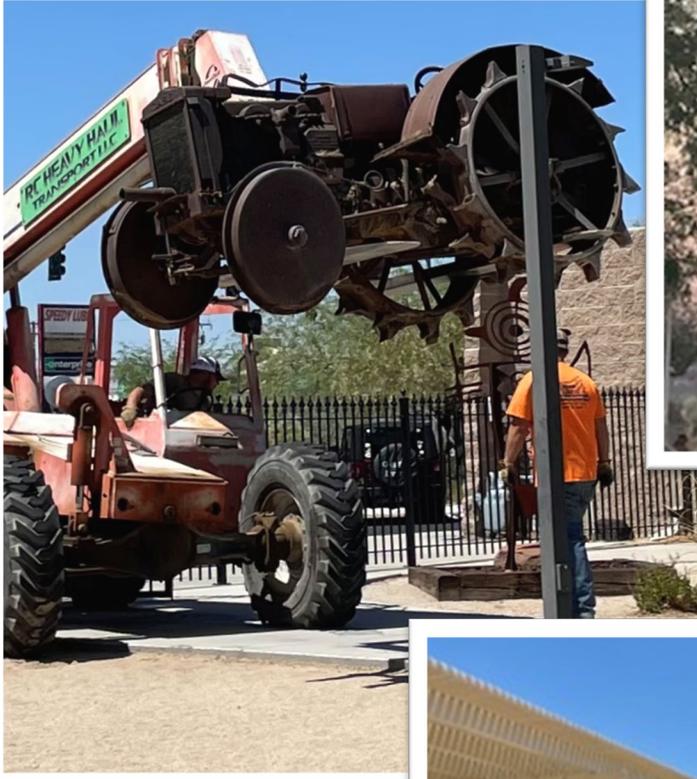


MATURANGO MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT 2025





“The mission of the Maturango museum is to preserve, interpret and develop an appreciation for the natural and cultural history of the Northern Mojave Desert through research and education in the natural and physical sciences and to promote the arts”

(Adopted by the board of Trustees, December 17, 2012)

Board of Trustees 2025

Bob McGowan, President
Patty Wharton, Vice President
Diane Foucher, Secretary
Jann Philpott, Treasurer
Dan Burnett
Peggy Chun
Dorie Cornell
Howard McCauley
Alisha Mondragon

Museum Staff

Deborah Benson, Executive Director
Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA Curator, Archaeology
Sherry Brubaker, Curator, Natural History, Museum Assistant
Elaine Wiley, Curator, History
Maureen Goff, Gift Shop Manager/ Buyer
Heidi Farmer, Finance
Barbara Ingle, Membership and Museum Assistant
Leslie Layfield, Finance
Addie Reyes, Website
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator and Museum Assistant
Andrea Pelch Gallery Coordinator Business Membership and Newsletter
Nick Rogers, Museum Assistant
Linda Saholt, Membership and Museum Assistant

Front Cover:

Historic equipment relocation – owned by Dick Lewis

The complex movement of the Case tractor by Rosser Inc. We are very grateful to Rosser Inc. for donating their time and equipment.

Photo with tractor: The Rosser Crew and Museum volunteers: Gary, Peter, Elaine & BJ.

Table of Contents

Board President's Message Bob McGowan

Treasurer's Report Jann Philpott

Calendar Year 2025

 Statement of Financial Position [unaudited]

 Income Statement (all funds combined)

 Income Statement (by asset type)

Executive Director's Report Deborah Benson

Curator's Reports

 Archaeology Barbara Bane

 History Elaine Wiley

 Natural History Sherry Brubaker

Staff Reports

 Gift Shop Maureen Goff

 Education Nora Nuckles

 Art Gallery Andrea Pelch

 Volunteer Linda Saholt & Barbara Ingle

 Membership Linda Saholt & Barbara Ingle

Committees, Events & Photos

 Wildflower Exhibit Elaine Wiley

 Galleries Elaine, Sherry and Andrea

 Gardens & Grounds Bev Hill

 Strategic Planning Report

 Benefactors 2015-2025

2025 President's Message

As I reflect on the past year, I am pleased to share that 2025 was another year of meaningful progress and achievement for the Maturango Museum. Thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, staff, and supporters, the museum continues to thrive as an educational and cultural resource for our community and visitors from around the world.

Throughout the year, our docents reached over 4000 people through classroom field trips and on-site educational programs. They extended the museum's reach beyond our walls by bringing engaging presentations into local assisted living centers and local classrooms on topics such as desert reptiles and mammals, regional geology, and Native cultures. In addition to these outreach efforts, the museum welcomed more than 10,000 local, national, and international visitors who came to explore our exhibits and learn about the region's rich history. Altogether, in 2025, the museum served more than 15,000 visitors through its educational programs, outreach initiatives, and on-site experiences.

We also made significant investments in our facilities and grounds. Several large artifacts were returned to the museum after many years in off-site storage, allowing us to enhance our outdoor displays and better showcase the richness of our collections. Volunteers completed a major upgrade to the Archaeology exhibit area, and we now look forward to our archaeologist populating the display with items that tell the remarkable prehistoric story of this area.

Another exciting initiative underway is the creation of a Pollinator Garden, which will feature native plants that support desert pollinators. This garden is expected to be completed in early 2026 and will provide an engaging outdoor learning experience for visitors.

Collaboration has also been a key focus this year. Working closely with our neighbors at the China Lake Museum Foundation, we completed an ADA-compliant walkway connecting the two museums. This improvement allows visitors to move easily between both sites and reflects our shared commitment to accessibility and an enhanced visitor experience. We continue to seek opportunities to collaborate on future projects that benefit both organizations and our community.

Thanks to many generous donations, we completed the security fencing project along China Lake Boulevard in early spring. This final phase enclosed the museum grounds and has already resulted in a noticeable reduction in unwanted activity and windblown debris. Our dedicated volunteers continue to care for the property, meeting monthly on "Flex Fridays" to maintain and beautify the grounds—often hauling away a full dump trailer of weeds and trimmings each month.

Inside the museum, we hosted several successful art exhibits highlighting the talents of local and regional artists, as well as a wide range of guest speakers who shared insights on topics such as the hidden history of Ridgecrest and the heritage of local Indigenous tribes.

None of this would be possible without the generous support of our members and donors. Financial contributions are essential not only for special projects but also for sustaining daily operations, including utilities, insurance, and staff salaries. Our members' and donors' support makes a real and lasting difference in the museum's ability to serve the community.

Our volunteers and docents who donated time and enthusiasm are truly the lifeblood of the Maturango Museum. Their passion for our mission is evident in everything they do, and we are deeply grateful for their commitment. Our staff's professionalism, creativity, and tireless efforts ensure that the museum remains vibrant, welcoming, and educational for all who visit.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I am excited by the opportunities before us. We will continue to expand our educational outreach, strengthen community engagement, and enhance the visitor experience. Thanks to our members, the Maturango Museum will remain a place of learning, inspiration, and connection for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Robert (Bob) McGowan
President, Board of Trustees
Maturango Museum

Treasurer's Statement 2025 Annual Report

We are so incredibly fortunate to have so many wonderful members and volunteers at the museum. We have been given the opportunity to support the museum in many ways. To update what has been needing to be replaced to keep it viable and show good stewardship. Many thanks for those who have been active in doing the work for repairs and the replacements

I want to thank Heidi and Leslie for keeping the books for us. It continues to be a large effort

We ended 2025 with a net balance of \$163,099 which will help us in the first several months of 2026, when we are normally slow.

We are looking forward to new opportunities in different areas of the museum, both inside and in our garden displays.

We continue to be appreciative of the support you give us every year. Thanks to everyone for your part in a successful year!

Jann Philpott
Board Treasurer

Maturango Museum
2025 Income Statement (all funds combined) Comparison
in dollars

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
Income			
Store Sales	103,908	110,272	(6,364)
Less: Cost of Sales	<u>(47,770)</u>	<u>(53,454)</u>	<u>5,685</u>
Store Sales NET	56,138	56,817	(679)
Gallery Sales	19,187	28,875	(9,688)
Less: Cost of Sales	<u>(9,386)</u>	<u>(19,391)</u>	<u>10,005</u>
Gallery Sales NET	9,801	9,484	316
Fundraising	125,191	130,281	(5,090)
Less: Cost of Sales	<u>(9,679)</u>	<u>(7,760)</u>	<u>(1,919)</u>
Fundraising NET	115,511	122,521	(7,009)
Events	7,065	6,480	586
Less: Cost of Sales	<u>(1,835)</u>	<u>(3,469)</u>	<u>1,634</u>
Events NET	5,230	3,010	2,220
Admissions	10,247	9,981	266
Contributions	186,159	108,118	78,041
Memberships	48,860	35,005	13,855
Other Income	124,747	52,643	72,104
In Kind Donations	-	897	(897)
Total Income	<u>556,694</u>	<u>398,477</u>	<u>158,217</u>
Expenses			
Advertising & Promotion	13,756	14,155	(399)
Merchant Fees	9,911	10,515	(604)
Facilities	46,663	47,247	(584)
Insurance	11,559	11,795	(236)
Newsletter-Printing & Postage			-
Payroll Expenses	188,692	173,516	15,175
Professional Services	24,015	12,208	11,807
Rent	4,043	3,758	285
Supplies & Equipment	30,429	17,602	12,827
Travel	1,699	1,462	237
Other Expenses	4,936	3,057	1,879
Total Expense	<u>335,703</u>	<u>295,316</u>	<u>40,387</u>
Net Income / (Loss)	220,991	103,161	117,831
Depreciation	<u>(57,892)</u>	<u>(33,781)</u>	<u>(24,111)</u>
Total Net Income / (Loss)	<u>163,099</u>	<u>69,380</u>	<u>93,719</u>

The above data is summarized for ease of reporting. Details are available for review in the Museum offices.

Maturango Museum
2025 Statement of Financial Position
in dollars

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash on Hand	57,612	40,955	16,657
Savings	257,767	183,470	74,297
Investments	541,281	562,866	(21,585)
Total Cash and in Banks	<u>856,660</u>	<u>787,291</u>	<u>69,369</u>
Receivables	5,123	11,548	(6,425)
Inventory	58,264	57,122	1,142
Prepaid Expenses	7,076	26,630	(19,554)
Total Other Current Assets	<u>70,463</u>	<u>95,300</u>	<u>(24,837)</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>927,123</u>	<u>882,591</u>	<u>44,532</u>
Fixed Assets			
Building	867,519	1,585,692	(718,173)
Building Improvements	429,760	18,825	410,935
Equipment and Displays	397,589	404,239	(6,650)
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(1,136,507)	(1,113,159)	(23,348)
Total	<u>558,361</u>	<u>895,597</u>	<u>(337,236.45)</u>
Work In Process	137,164	133,636	3,528
Total Net Fixed Assets	<u>695,525</u>	<u>1,029,233</u>	<u>(333,710)</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>1,622,648</u></u>	<u><u>1,911,824</u></u>	<u><u>(289,178)</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY			
Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	6,092	11,266	(5,174)
Payroll	13,256	9,989	3,267
Sales Taxes	1,797	1,861	(63)
Other Liabilities	5,512	5,540	(28)
Deferred Revenue	-	8,324	(8,324)
Total Current Liabilities	<u>26,657</u>	<u>36,979</u>	<u>(10,322)</u>
Equity			
Unrestricted	1,009,578	1,082,648	(73,070)
Temp Restricted - Building	184,480	184,480	-
Temp Restricted - Other	72,452	278,236	(205,784)
Endowment	329,481	329,481	-
Total Equity	<u>1,595,991</u>	<u>1,874,845</u>	<u>(278,855)</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>1,622,648</u></u>	<u><u>1,911,824</u></u>	<u><u>(289,178)</u></u>

The above data is summarized for ease of reporting. Details are available for review in the Museum offices.

Maturango Museum 2025 Income Statement (by Asset Type)

	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Temp Restricted - Building</u>	<u>Temp Restricted - Other</u>	<u>Endowment</u>	<u>Total</u>
Income					
Store Sales	103,908				103,908
Less: Cost of Sales	(47,770)				(47,770)
Gallery Sales	19,187				19,187
Less: Cost of Sales	(9,386)				(9,386)
Fundraising	114,066	7,125	4,000		125,191
Less: Cost of Sales	(7,868)	(1,811)			(9,679)
Events	7,065				7,065
Less: Cost of Sales	(1,835)				(1,835)
Admissions	10,247				10,247
Contributions	117,095	8,200	60,865		186,159
Memberships	48,860				48,860
Other Income	34,276	3,413	30,978	56,081	124,747
In Kind Donations	-				-
Total Income	<u>387,844</u>	<u>16,927</u>	<u>95,843</u>	<u>56,081</u>	<u>556,694</u>
Expenses					
Advertising & Promotion	13,756				13,756
Merchant Fees	9,849	62			9,911
Facilities	37,058	8,548	1,056		46,663
Insurance	11,559				11,559
Newsletter-Printing & Postage	-				-
Payroll Expenses	176,703		11,989		188,692
Professional Services	23,015		1,000		24,015
Rent (Storage)	4,043				4,043
Supplies & Equipment	15,150		15,279		30,429
Travel	1,699				1,699
Other Expenses	4,195		741		4,936
Total Expense	<u>297,027</u>	<u>8,611</u>	<u>30,065</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>335,703</u>
Total Profit / (Loss)	<u>90,817</u>	<u>8,316</u>	<u>65,777</u>	<u>56,081</u>	<u>220,991</u>
Depreciation	(57,892)				(57,892)
Assets released from Restrictions	136,853	(128,495)	(8,358)	-	(0)
Total Net Income / (Loss)	<u>169,778</u>	<u>(120,179)</u>	<u>57,419</u>	<u>56,081</u>	<u>163,099</u>

The above data is summarized for ease of reporting. Details are available for review in the Museum offices.

Director's Report 2025
Deborah Benson Museum Director

A Year of Progress, Resilience, and Community

The year unfolded as a steady blend of creativity, infrastructure improvements, community engagement, and thoughtful adaptation to change. From the start, there was a clear sense of moving forward—even amid broader national uncertainty. Fortunately, limited reliance on federal funding offered some reassurance, allowing focus to remain on local priorities and growth.

Early in the year, the Museum spaces were energized by hosted art exhibitions, steady sales, concerts, lectures, and educational programming. The Coso Room quickly proved itself as a flexible gathering space, hosting performances, leadership events, guide dog programs, and artist receptions. Throughout the year, it became a hub for connection—welcoming everything from The High Desert Music Teachers Concert, the Economic Outlook Conference reception to our volunteer celebrations and creative workshops. It was the perfect venue for our End of Year Volunteer Luncheon!

A major accomplishment of the year was the completion and activation of the solar project funded by Bea & Lloyd Smith and installed by Sidewinder Solar. From installing protective equipment and navigating inspections to securing final approvals and billing coordination, the process required persistence and collaboration. By spring, the Solar Array was officially launched, celebrated with a ribbon cutting that symbolized both environmental responsibility and long-term operational savings. Ongoing efforts ensured compliance, monitoring, and understanding of evolving solar policies affecting nonprofits.

Facility improvements completed by the Museum's team of volunteers, continued alongside the solar work. New iron fencing enhanced the grounds and offer more security. Accessibility upgrades progressed, the Renewable Energy Display, funded by Virginia and Alfred Harrell Foundation was completed, acrylic cases were installed for the archaeology display, metal signage by Skip Gorman was added to the building exterior, sidewalks were poured, and gardens received regular care from dedicated volunteers. Wildlife sightings—from burrowing owls to roadrunners—offered reminders of the Museum's connection to its desert environment, while plans advanced for a Pollinator and Butterfly Garden in collaboration with the Oasis Garden Club to further enrich the outdoor experience.

Community partnerships deepened throughout the year. The Museum collaborated with local schools, service organizations, garden clubs, artists, historians, and regional groups. Premium memberships were processed for local homeschool families, club affiliations expanded, and learning opportunities were explored. Outreach efforts included a booth at the Economic Outlook Conference, being a part of Leadership Ridgecrest and participation in the Reconnection Festival with the introduction of a "Memory Booth," inviting visitors to connect with local history. A collaborative sidewalk was installed between the Maturango Museum and the China Lake Museum Foundation to encourage visitors to share the experience of both museums.

Governance and organizational systems also saw meaningful progress. Annual elections were successfully conducted using a mix of online and mailed ballots, leading to strong participation and the installation of new Board members. Financial processes were strengthened through training, reporting improvements, and continued learning around grants, cloud-based accounting, and donor platforms. Staff and volunteers adapted to new tools such as online forms and databases, laying groundwork for more efficient operations moving forward.

The year brought moments of reflection and loss. Memorials honored cherished friends and supporters whose impact on the Museum will long be remembered. Staff transitions to new locations required flexibility and teamwork, with colleagues stepping into new roles to ensure continuity in memberships, donations, curation, and store operations. Despite these challenges, the spirit of cooperation remained strong.

Special events punctuated the calendar: The Annual Wildflower Exhibit, our strategy session, the Fundraising Dinner Auction, docent programs, art tours, history presentations, and seasonal celebrations. The annual Auction, in particular, demanded enormous collective effort—from cataloging items to securing licenses—and ultimately showcased the power of teamwork. Working with Charlie White and his software and Terry Mitchell inputting all of the desserts and items to be auctioned by James Bell set off a night to remember! My most sincere Thanks to everyone involved! Our Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon closed the year on a high note, bringing together more than sixty supporters to share food, stories, gratitude and a few Door Prizes.

By year's end, the Museum stood on firmer footing: energized by new exhibits, strengthened by partnerships, and supported by a committed staff and volunteer base. While challenges persist and change remains constant, the year demonstrated resilience, creativity, and an unwavering dedication to serving the community.

Above all, this was a year defined by people—artists, educators, volunteers, donors, staff, and visitors—whose combined efforts continue to shape the Museum's future.

Thank you All and Be Well!

Archeology Curator Report 2025

Collections

We received one new collection in 2025, a large collection from the Caltrans Olancho Cartago 395 Expansion Project. We finished repackaging and cataloging the very large (99,000+ artifacts) BLM PCT collection we received under federal contract, completed by contract due date of September 2025. We also received an unexpected delivery of artifacts (10 cubic feet) from the Dr. E.L. Davis China Lake Maturango collection that had been missing for two decades. These will be returned to NAWS.

Deaccessions

This was an active year in terms of returning or repatriating some of our older donated collections removed illegally from public lands. We are grateful that these collections will return to their original lands and to the descendants who cherish them.

- One portion of the Ron Henry collection (~3000+ artifacts) was deaccessioned to Inyo National Forest.
- The Tübatulabal Tribe of the Kern River Valley agreed to take the large collection of donated, but unaccessioned, ground stones that once sat on the Maturango grounds. These groundstones (mortars) had been stored since 2024 federal regulations prohibited our exhibition of the stones.
- The Tejon Tribe requested formal repatriation of a small collection of donated artifacts removed from culturally sensitive sites on private lands in the Kern River Valley and Central Valley.
- LADWP accepted a sensitive collection from Tinemaha Reservoir area and will repatriate it to Paiute Tribes.

Curation Agreements

We signed nine agreements for future curation in 2025. There are now only two federally recognized curation facilities still accepting collections in the state: Maturango and San Bernardino County Museum. With the new NAGPRA regulations in 2024, most institutions, particularly state funded facilities, have dropped out of the curation business.

Cataloging status

The archeological collection includes over 250,000 cataloged artifacts in 230 accessioned collections, with 11 collections yet to be delivered. The museum assigns accession numbers several years before collections are actually delivered by contractors and cataloged by the museum. This is due to the long lag time – years - between archeological project start time and final artifact analysis/reporting. Very large or staged projects may take years to fully analyze and complete for final curation. With the exception of large groundstone and large historic artifacts, all cataloged artifacts in our facility are in archival packaging.

The BLM made little forward progress in 2025 on Maturango collections due for repatriation to Tribes under federal NAGPRA rules: Hunter Canyon, Ayers Rock, Last Chance Canyon, PCT, Cane Brake. BLM is the lead agency for all these actions and the museum is limited by law for outreach to Tribes in cases where collections came from federal lands. I will continue to push

for forward action on these matters with the BLM, but we are hampered by turnover in the CA State BLM office and staff shortages in the BLM District offices. Federal hiring freezes and budget cuts have resulted in gaping position vacancies in BLM and Forest Service local district offices as well as state level offices.

New Cultural Exhibit

Volunteers continued fabricating replica artifacts for the new lithic display case. These included lithic artifacts by flintknapper Mike Thompson and 3D scanned plastic modeling artifacts by Jerry Bradley and son.



Bradley and Bradley 3D airbrushed replicas of steatite arrow straighteners. Photo approximately half size.

Interns/Curations Technicians

Archeologist Nadia Mohsen continues to do excellent work in cataloging our new large collections as well as assisting with design of the new cultural exhibit cases.

Outreach

- Archeology Curation assembled a display case of regional Native American food plants for the Ridgecrest Public Library in February.
- I gave a talk on the National Register of Historic Places to the BLM Public Lands Roundtable.
- In May, the American Rock Art Research Association held their annual meeting in Visalia CA and I assisted with their guided field trips to the Rocky Hill petroglyph site in Exeter CA.
- Curation also hosted a tour of our lab for Maturango donors in September.

Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA
Archeological Curator

Annual Report for 2025

Natural History Curator Sherry Brubaker

This was an interesting year.

A trip to LA for taxidermy items was postponed due to fires. The trip was made a month or so later. The reptile taxidermist came through. We now have a tortoise, scorpion, and a horned lizard.

Some non-accessioned bird skulls were taken up to Bishop to be used in an educational program in their Audubon group.

The mineral case was emptied to another case which is now in the vestibule. The old case is now in the Argus room for displays there. The vestibule now has the mining display.

Inventory was updated to include new acquisitions. There was also an accession meeting to put these new acquisitions into curation. The flying birds, in the gallery, went through the freezer (get rid of possible bugs) and a cleaning. After this process a more efficient freezer was purchased. The eagle will fit better now. Lots of dryer sheets and moth balls have been deployed to stop further mouse activity.

Attended the ASTC (Association of Science & Technology Centers) in San Francisco. Learned a good deal about inclusion of youngsters, pre-school and elementary, in the museum experience. The hands-on discovery will be included in our new discovery area. The WACOM funds we received will be used to help with this revision.



New tortoise, scorpion, and horned lizard models.

Annual Report for 2025 – History Curation

Elaine Wiley, History Curator

Curation

Throughout the year, volunteers Dorie Cornell, Renee Lesniak, Deanna Stewart, and I worked together on several projects. Natural History Curator Sherry Brubaker often joined us. We inventoried donated collections from Dick Lewis, Hank Schuette, and other donations. The Hank Schuette collection was especially challenging. This extensive project involved reviewing and cataloging numerous envelopes of historic photographs, many containing valuable handwritten notes. All information was entered into a detailed spreadsheet to make the collection accessible for future research.



Early in the year, the 150 *Rocketeer* newspapers scanned by the Public Affairs Office at the Naval Air Weapons Station were returned to the museum. The volunteers and I returned the newspapers to curation and carefully verified that curated newspaper boxes matched our database records.

In preparation for accessioning collections, volunteers and I dedicated many hours to measuring, labeling, packaging, and organizing items to ensure proper archival standards were maintained. They also assisted with displaying items for accession meetings. These accession meetings allow board members and others to review and approve items for permanent storage. 47 historic items were presented at the first accession meeting on October 14, and 84 at the second meeting on December 8.

Research Requests

Six people requested information and/or photographs. Each request involved searching the history database, computer files, and newspaper clipping archives. Research topics included:

- Sacatar Trail, Kennedy Meadows, and Scodie Meadow
- Roberta Starry – 1916 – 1978; lived in Garlock, Ca. and wrote *Gold Gamble*
- The wall clock in the El Paso Room
- Rademacher Hills history, including mining
- Locating two historic photographs requested by Heather Todd (Eastern California Museum)
- Photographs of Robert Crum of Crum Dairies requested by Mark Pahuta

Visiting Researcher:

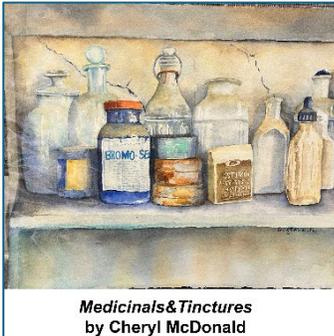
Karen Swope visited in May 2025 to research Coso Hot Springs, Tennessee Springs, Little Petroglyph Canyon, and Blackwater Wells.

Donations to the Historical Curation Collection

During the year, the museum received more than 17 donated collections, many containing multiple items. Tasks related to these donations included scanning documents, transcribing handwritten materials, and researching items using online resources and internal historical files.

Annual Report for 2025 – History Curation Elaine Wiley, History Curator

Notable donated items included:



- Artwork by Don McCauley, Cheryl McDonald, Betty Meng, Marina Camphausen, Donnie Woods, and Elva Younkin; landscape photographs; an onyx vase; resin sculptures; and pottery
- Books, maps, purple bottles, Coso water bottles, aerial photographs, documents, and newspapers
- Windmill parts, a mine safety sign, and a large metal map of the Whitney Portals to Mt. Whitney Marathon race
- Documents from the Inyokern Land and Water Company

Historic equipment relocation – owned by Dick Lewis

One of the most visible and complex undertakings of the year was the relocation of historic farm and mining equipment from the Desert Empire Fairgrounds to the museum grounds.

After years in storage, four large pieces—a locally built drill rig, a Case tractor, a wooden wagon, and a rail cart—were successfully transported with the generous assistance of Rosser Inc. Watching the intricate maneuvering of heavy equipment over fences and obstacles was remarkable. These items are now thoughtfully placed around the museum property and in the curation building, where they can be preserved and interpreted appropriately.



Smaller artifacts were also transported earlier in the year and documented photographically. This project represents a significant step forward in preserving and showcasing our region's agricultural and mining heritage.

We are very grateful to Rosser Inc. for donating their time and equipment to move the large items.

Curation Building

The new 40' x 60' Curation Building was inspected and approved in summer 2024. Items from the east sea container were moved into the building in March 2025, followed by the large historic metal collection from Dick Lewis in April. Two wagons were also relocated into the building.

In December 2025, volunteers began framing the interior and installing oriented strand board (OSB) to protect insulation and provide wall space for hanging items. Interior wall construction was completed in January 2026.



Annual Report for 2025 – History Curation
Elaine Wiley, History Curator

Museum-related presentations and outreach

In addition to History Curator duties, I managed several volunteer projects and public programs. I organized two presentations and gave a presentation. Jim Nichols and Bob Westbrook presented "*Climbing Denali*," based on their 1967 expedition. Cindy Brickner, owner of the glider featured in the Soaring Exhibit in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery, gave a presentation on soaring in the eastern Sierra. I presented "*The History of the Wildflower Exhibit*" at the Annual Meeting on March 18. I also organized the equinox and solstice events and the Wildflower Exhibit, installed exhibits in the Sylvia Winslow Gallery and the Argus Room, and coordinated related publicity and logistics. Along with Maureen Goff and Nora Nuckles, I met with prospective volunteers.

I helped with various museum projects. I supported the Renewable Energy project by helping with the design, creating murals, and making photographic prints. I supported the new Archaeology by creating and assisting with the installation of the mural. For the upcoming remake of the Discovery area, I prepared early schematic drawings and participated in grant discussions for the improvement of the Discovery Area.

Retirement and Transition

In September, I notified the museum of my intention to retire at the end of 2025 after ten years as History Curator. It has been a privilege to steward these collections, learn from our community's stories, and work alongside such dedicated individuals. Terry McGuire has agreed to assume the role, and I will assist with the transition in 2026 while continuing to volunteer.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine M. Wiley
History Curator
Maturango Museum

Annual Board Report 2025

Maureen Poole-Goff Store Manager/Buyer

Overall Performance & Trends

The year followed predictable seasonal retail patterns. January slowed after the holidays, while Spring Break, Mother's Day weekend, Wildflower Exhibit promotions, and the Volunteer Luncheon generated strong traffic and sales. Foot traffic remained steady through summer and into fall, with notable boosts tied to events and group visits.

Books, children's toys, home décor, jewelry, and novelty gift items were consistent sellers. Several promotional strategies — including percentage discounts tied to events and holidays — proved effective in driving revenue.

Merchandise Highlights

Several product lines stood out:

- Mosaico Jewelry sold exceptionally well, requiring a large reorder early in the year and continuing strong sales after restocking.
- Women's apparel from Sabaku performed consistently, supported by the vendor's quick turnaround and no-minimum ordering.
- Tie-dye shirts from The Mountain added bold new offerings and sold well.
- Modgy Lanterns became a breakout item, frequently reordered due to strong customer response.
- Prairie Schooner bags, Masterpiece Puzzles, Woodstock Chimes, Wonderstone coasters, EcoWear hats, Daisy Chain jewelry, and turquoise/silver pieces from MaryAnn Morris all contributed positively.
- Spirit Jersey T-shirts launched successfully and quickly gained popularity.

Holiday stocking stuffers, including soaps and lip balm sets from Honey House Naturals and Huckleberry People chocolate bars, sold particularly well due to attractive price points and impulse placement at the cash wrap.

New merchandise sourced from the Las Vegas Market and the Las Vegas Souvenir and Resort Show continues arriving and shows strong early performance.

Events & Promotions

Event-driven sales were significant contributors:

- Spring Break increased overall floor traffic, with books as the top seller.
- The Wildflower Exhibit promotion (25% off related merchandise) generated \$1,300 in a single day.
- Mother's Day weekend brought approximately \$3,000 in sales across three days.
- Father's Day (20% off promotion) drove solid traffic, with toys and jewelry outperforming traditional men's items.
- The Volunteer Luncheon, offering a 30% discount, resulted in \$2,400 in sales within a few hours.

The Sip & Scrap Holiday Junk Journal class was successfully introduced as a four-hour paid workshop. Participants completed handmade journals, and feedback was very positive, indicating potential for future classes.

The return of the Day Trippers tour bus group and increased inquiries about Petroglyph Tours also contributed to store visibility and traffic.

Operations & Facilities

Operational challenges were managed effectively:

- A restroom odor issue was resolved through drain flushing and updated signage.
- Internet outages were corrected after coordination with **Mediacom**, including addressing improper exterior wiring.
- A receipt printer malfunction was quickly resolved with vendor support.
- An online fraud attempt involving repeated small purchases was intercepted by staff vigilance, and a security patch was installed.
- Lost ticket stock required temporary creative solutions until replacements arrived.
- A jewelry case light was replaced, restoring display quality.

Room rentals increased, occasionally requiring back-to-back customized setups. The Facility Rental form is being revised for clarity, including a clearly stated “No Confetti” policy.

Volunteers & Staffing

Volunteer support remains critical to operations:

- Two new volunteers joined mid-year and are integrating well.
- Long-time volunteer Sue Hueber retired and relocated; her institutional knowledge and customer engagement are greatly missed.
- High school volunteer Izabel completed digitizing BLM information sheets, creating a valuable internal archive.

Volunteer engagement events, particularly the annual luncheon, continue to strengthen morale and participation.

External Factors

Tariffs introduced pricing uncertainty among vendors. Responses varied, including price increases, surcharge line items, and “wait-and-see” approaches. Inventory management required flexibility and attention to changing wholesale conditions.

A brief government shutdown occurred in October; while no clear long-term sales shift was identified, certain mid-month periods were notably busy.

Outlook

The store continues to perform well when supported by:

- Strategic event-based promotions
- Unique, well-curated merchandise
- Strong vendor relationships
- Active volunteer engagement

High-performing categories include jewelry, novelty gift items, lanterns, apparel, books, and impulse-priced consumables. Workshops and experiential programming show promise as additional revenue streams.

With continued attention to inventory agility, infrastructure reliability, and event-driven marketing, the store is well positioned for sustained performance in the coming year.

Annual Report for 2025

Submitted by Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator

The Docent League of the Maturango Museum delivered an impressive number of programs to a large audience in 2025. The docents gave a total of 172 programs, with 78 programs in the Museum and 94 as outreach. In 2024, we gave about 60 programs in the Museum and about 60 as outreach. Therefore, we have increased the number of programs given by about 50.

The docents reached about 4130 people, with 1700 in the Museum and 2430 through outreach programs. The docents reported about 1630 volunteer hours. Not all docents remember to turn in monthly volunteer forms or include all items such as meeting times, help with Mirage Sale, and travel/prep time for outreach programs. I estimate the total volunteer time to be over 2,000 hours.

The docents offer tours of the Museum and programs to adults and children in the Ridgecrest and Trona communities. We gave 3 programs at the Ridgecrest Public Library and monthly programs to the residents of High Desert Haven. Docents supported the Walk for Autism again this year. We offered Free Saturday activities every month except August and Children's Hour programs once per month September through May.

The Free Saturdays usually involve at least 5 hours for each docent helping, as well as additional time to invent and prepare the activity. The Children's Hour team meets several times each month to plan and prepare. Both activities usually include crafts. We supported the activities that Elaine Wiley designed for the eclipse, solstice, and equinox. We brought our Desert Alive animals or the Planetarium to several Science Nights at the schools. Usually, over a hundred parents and children attend these events.

We had many fun activities during the year. A highlight was making arrowheads and attaching them to small shafts. Mike and Linda Thompson brought the materials and pre-prepared much of them. Debbie Benson and Andrea Pelch provided toaster ovens.

This Fall, we partnered with Pierce Arts Academy to present the full series of art element lessons to the 4th, 5th, and 6th graders there. The Museum will host the children's art from Pierce Arts Academy in May, 2026. This Fall, we also gave special programs and tours to students from Trona Elementary through an extended learning grant the school was awarded. They were able to donate \$2,000 to docent programs.

In 2025, the Docent League officers were: President-Shirley Crouse; Vice-President-Cam Alden; Secretary-Ingrid Carroll. We no longer have a Treasurer or Computer Librarian. Active docents include Cam Alden; Dan and Brenda Burnett; Ingrid Carroll; Don and Shirley Crouse; Charlotte Goodson; Glenn Harris; Cathy Heseman; Fran Kelty; Dave Kurdeka; Penny LePome; Judy Martin; Terry McGuire; Susan Moore; Chuck Morgan; Nora Nuckles; Bob and Sue Parker; and Renee Sloane. Charlotte Pofeldt and Jocelyn Norcross have recently joined us. We average about 15 docents per monthly meeting.

Terry McGuire is the Planetarium lead. She has been training Bob Parker and Ingrid Carroll to operate the Planetarium. Fran Kelty, Nadia Mohsen, and Scott Oku have assisted with the Planetarium on Science School Nights. Cam Alden and Carol Dezelle continue to lead the art program, which is very popular with many teachers. Charlotte Goodson is the Children's Hour lead but has asked Sue Parker, Ingrid Carroll, Shirley Crouse, Susan Moore, and Judy Martin to take on lead positions for different months. Sue Parker has donated countless hours to help Charlotte organize her materials, CDs, and thumb drives. We appreciate that Charlotte is entrusting her story hour materials to the Museum and moving some of them into my office.

Sherry Brubaker and I still need to review some animal acquisitions. We have to trace what happened to the jackrabbit that was listed as being paid for. The docents also have a coyote that needs to be repaired. It was bumped from the shelf and has a broken leg. I am still not sure how the docents are billed for taxidermy.

I participate with the other docents in many of the programs we present. I communicate with the people requesting programs and tours and plan the schedules. I volunteer to help with Museum endeavors and support other staff members as well as the docents.

The docents are grateful for the support shown to the Docent League. We appreciate the continued support of individuals and community organizations through generous donations. 2025 was an exciting and productive year!

**The DOCENTS 2025
Clockwise**

The Burros are here, the
Domesters, We made
points, Viewig Science
Night, Breakfast Burritos,
Charlotte, Careful there,
Glen, Chuck's Magic Solar
Scope, Is it metamorphic?
Birds are ready!



Art Gallery 2025 Annual Report

Submitted by Andrea Pelch Art Gallery Coordinator and Newsletter Editor

The Maturango Museum's Art Gallery Exhibits are displayed in the Coso Room. These exhibits provide a synergistic role in the mission of the Maturango Museum by providing a professional exhibit space; this includes an audio-visual projection system and lighting for visually pleasing exhibits by local, visiting and traveling artists to be experienced by our local community and visitors.

This gallery space is also used for informative workshops, lectures, concerts, docent activities including Children's Hour storytelling and art programs, room rental for meetings, parties, etc., and the annual wildflower show.

The art gallery provides funds for the specific needs of the gallery and overall for the museum from sales of art and sponsorship by individuals and organizations. Total sales in the gallery for 2025 was \$19,187. The museum received a 40% commission on that amount.

The gallery exhibits also provide incentives for memberships by giving a 10% discount on sales during opening receptions and discounted fees for members to participate in various art-related activities and the opportunity to join "member only" exhibits.

Thank You to all the people that helped set up exhibits including lights, wall signs and opening reception food. Also Thank You to all the people that purchased artwork.

Lori Michelin: "Desert Miscellany" and Jael Hoffman: "States of Being" November 2, 2024 – January 31, 2025

Lori Michelin

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.



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.



Debbie Abshear - 'Evoking Emotions: A Visual Exploration' February 1 - April 8, 2025

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."





**Jacques Canot: “Desert Sensations – in Memory of Midge”
April 13 - June 24, 2025**

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.”



Warner Graves’ Art Exhibit: “Other Worlds” June 28 – August 24, 2025

“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.

Open Studio Tour 2025 August 30 – October 27

This year we tried a new format for OST fees and museum commission. The fee to apply was \$100 for museum members and \$140 for non-members, the commission in the gallery was still 40%, but the sales at the studios was 100% to the artist.

Betty Spindler’s yard sign circa 2005!



**Ray Wood’s “Singing DAX/Instagram Girl” Exhibit
November 2 – January 13, 2026**



After 40 years, Wood is back with another solo show at the Maturango Museum to share his paintings of models and actresses from around the world posing by request with his dog “DAX”

DAX is half black labrador retriever and bloodhound and loves to sing. DAX made his debut singing on Instagram about 2 years ago and Wood discovered people not only loved DAX for his singing ability but also his charm and the way he would interact with people. As time went on, models from around the world asked to be painted with DAX and things began to take off. Singing DAX is now a household name on Instagram and people ask to be painted with him daily.

Wood discovered that art is an excellent way to bring people together and gives them a common ground to discover each other and their cultures. DAX now has over 750 followers from around the world and not only brings a positive message to people enjoying beautiful models but also a subliminal message with a little humor.

2025 Volunteer Activities (Hours)

Docent Activities	1630
Museum Store	1634
Gallery	248
Field Trips	209
Fundraising	663
Curatorial	158
Administration	381
Board	466
Exhibits	2200
Gardening	504
Wildflower Show	981
Other	1181
Facilities /Building	5713
<hr/> <hr/>	
Total Hours	16,560

Membership Statistics

Lifetime	102
Premium	171
Family/Individual Renewals	184
Family/Individual New	111
Complimentary	13
Business	42
<hr/> <hr/>	
Membership Totals	623

Museum Use – Attendance

Admissions	10,141
Art Receptions	192
Lectures	263
Audubon	128
CLAS (Astronomy)	152
CTTC (Tortoise)	64
Docent Meetings	680
Gallery Meetings	18
CLMRG Meetings	210
Children’s Hour	273
Field Trips	81
Docent Programs	1700
Concerts/films	352
Misc. Meetings	665
Annual Meeting	60
Wildflower Show	295
Fundraisers	243
Special Museum Events	263
<hr/> <hr/>	
Visitors	15,780



Fundraising Dinner Auction
2025







2025 Wildflower Exhibit March 28 – March 30

Typically, the Wildflower Exhibit Committee selects the first week in April to sponsor the Exhibit. However, this year, we held it on the last weekend in March to accommodate the botanists whose expertise in plant identification is invaluable and essential. We are fortunate to have their knowledge every year.



This year's lack of early winter rainfall reminds us that we live in a desert where precipitation can be minimal. With an average of less than five inches per year, we are bound to experience dry years. From January 1, 2025, to the weekend of the Wildflower Exhibit, my home weather station measured just 0.93 inches in 2025. A notable sign of a dry year is the absence of filaree or storksbill (*Erodium cicutarium*) growing around town from December through March. While this results in fewer weeds, it also leads to a scarcity of wildflowers. Fortunately, the canyons received some rain and snow, allowing resilient plants to grow and bloom. Coreopsis, poppies, and small annuals thrived, covering the hillside south of the Short Canyon trailhead. Annuals in other high-altitude areas also grew and flowered.

Collectors searched for annuals but also took the opportunity to examine various shrubs in their collection areas. Those who had access to creeks or water sources discovered plants that thrive in moist environments. The Sierra canyons yielded the most diverse species. This year's collection included 15 areas: 9-Mile, Cow Heaven, El Pasos, Fossil Falls North, Grapevine, High Aqueduct, Horse Canyon, Indian Wells Canyon, Lower Aqueduct, Poison Canyon, Rademacher Hills, Sand Canyon, Sage Canyon, Short Canyon, and Walker Pass. We collected 203 species from 47 families, with six new additions to this summary:



Wildflower Exhibit Events

This year, we had two speakers. On Friday night, resident Glenn Harris spoke on "Climate and Vegetation," and Rachel Tangeant, a master's student at California Botanic Garden and the Claremont Colleges, presented on "The Floristic Inventory of the Owens Headwater Area." Members of the Desert Artists' League (DAL) once again set up workspaces in the Coso Room to paint wildflower specimens. Artists created sketches, watercolors, and pastels from selected wildflowers, allowing us to display their work throughout the weekend.

In addition to the speakers and DAL in the Coso Room during the event, the Wildflower Exhibit Committee introduced three new activities. The Oasis Garden Club conducted a flower arranging workshop on Friday, where Charlie Shockley, Wanda Hewitt, and Bev Hill brought flowers from their home gardens. Linda McCauley graciously brought Apricot Mallow and other flowers to add to the

2025 Wildflower Exhibit March 28 – March 30



collection. Each participant left with a lovely bouquet, thanks to the help of the Oasis Garden Club. On Saturday, Andrea Pelch and Tara Moorehead presented "Mesquite Pods and Cactus Pads." Andrea discussed food preparation using mesquite pods and cactus pads, while Tara, a nutritionist, explored the nutritional benefits of these foods. Andrea provided books for attendees to view and brought muffins made with mesquite flour and samples of cactus pads to taste. Carol Dezellum contributed mesquite and corn muffins, and Tiana McGowan provided cookies made from mesquite flour. The

Sunday event focused on showing attendees the

various parts of a flower.



Over 70 volunteers participated in the 2025 Wildflower Exhibit, setting up the Coso Room and Winslow Gallery, collecting, bottling, identifying plants, giving presentations, and cleaning up after the event. Three botanists from the California Botanic Garden came to identify the collected specimens: Dr. Naomi Fraga marked her 17th year volunteering for this task, Joy England her 6th, and Dr. Mare Nazaire her 5th. The Maturango Museum is immensely grateful to these botanists for taking time away from their jobs to assist with plant identification.

We also appreciate the contributions of the 70+ volunteers who made this event successful and the United Methodist Church for loaning us seven 8-foot tables, a practice we've maintained for at least 10 years. Kathy LaShure, a former chair of the Wildflower Exhibit Committee, generously donated funds to help cover the botanists' travel expenses to Ridgecrest. Additionally, Kem Park of KP Productions offered his time to update the date on the Wildflower Exhibit banner.



Respectfully submitted,
Maturango Museum
Elaine Wiley



2025 Sylvia Winslow Gallery Exhibits

Two exhibits graced the Sylvia Winslow Gallery in 2025: *The Soaring Exhibit* and the *Pacific Crest Trail Exhibit*.

Soaring Exhibit

The Soaring Exhibit, installed in 2024, featured a full-size glider on loan to the Maturango Museum from Cindy Brickner. It's not every day that visitors can see a glider up close and in person! We appreciate Cindy's willingness to loan her glider.

Informative boards along the walls added interesting information about soaring, such as weather conditions that allow a glider to fly, the history of gliding, the local history of individual glider pilots, the Sierra Wave Project, local gliding records, and the Perlan Project.



**Prepping for the move -
Peter Wiley, Bob McGowan, Howard McCauley,
Bob Westbrook, Mike Ford, Gary Staab,
BJ Holden, and Nick Panzer**

At the conclusion of this exhibit, many people volunteered to maneuver the glider out of the museum and transport it to Cindy Brickner's home in Mojave. Many thanks to Mike Ford, BJ Holden, Howard McCauley, Bob McGowan, Nick Panzer, Gary Staab, Bob Westbrook, and Peter Wiley.

Pacific Crest Trail Exhibit

Following the *Soaring Exhibit* came the visual storytelling of the Pacific Crest Trail through the eyes of professional photographer Bob Steele. This exhibit, titled *Pacific Crest Trail*, gives the viewer glimpses of the 2,650-mile trail from the border of Mexico to the Canadian border.

Bob and Susan Steele walked the 2650-mile trek in 2016, capturing the wide range of beauty with an iPhone. Bob and Susan spent 5 months 11 days on the trail, taking time to photograph the scenery and birdwatching, which is Susan's passion. This trek traverses some of the most inspiring and breathtaking landscapes in the United States.



**Bob and Susan Steele
at Forester Pass - 2016**

Elaine Wiley coordinated with Bob Steele to give a presentation on their PCT trek in January 2026.

2025 Argus Room Exhibits

Three exhibits graced the walls of the Argus Room.

Continuing from 2024, taxidermied birds brought attention to the Argus Room. The birds, along with complementary photographs, gave the visitor insight into what the birds look like close up.

Following the *Bird Exhibit* was the *Wildflower Exhibit*, which showcased information on four desert plant families, along with related grocery store vegetables from each family. The four families featured were the Daisy, Borage, Pea, and Mustard families.

Later in the year, Sherry Brubaker and Dorie Cornell installed a historic display of President Kennedy's visit and black and white photographs of Ridgecrest.



Respectively submitted,

Elaine Wiley

Gardens and Grounds 2025 Annual Report

Bev Hill, Garden Coordinator

It was a quiet year in the garden. The weather was relatively mild, especially during the summer, which was beneficial to the various trees and shrubs. New plantings from 2024 are thriving and there were no major mishaps with the irrigation system. There were seven scheduled clean up days attended by museum members and Navy personnel for a total of 237 volunteer hours. The Navy volunteers from VX-9 and VX-31 provided invaluable help in weeding and general clean up as well as helping move numerous metal artifacts to the area near the Curation building. The April cleanup had the most volunteers for the year with sixteen Navy personnel and eleven museum members present.

Construction of the new Pollinator Garden was begun on December 30th by Bernie's Landscaping. This garden is a collaborative project of Oasis Garden Club and the museum. Planting will begin in Spring, 2026 and will include native and drought tolerant species with high pollinator value to attract butterflies, bees, moths, and other beneficial insects. Birds, especially hummingbirds, will benefit as well from this special habitat. Milkweed, desert marigold, mallows, various sages, and yarrow are just a few examples of the plants to be included in the new garden.

Many thanks to the museum members and the Navy volunteers for continuing to support and work diligently to maintain the gardens and grounds for the enjoyment of visitors to the museum.

Navy volunteers, April 2025



Maturango Museum

2025–2026 Strategic Overview

This document, resulting from a Strategic Planning Session with the Board and Staff, outlines the Museum's highest priorities for 2025–2026. The attention being on the work most critical to financial stability, visitor experience, and sustainable revenue growth.

Strategic Focus Areas

Financial & Systems Stability

Visitor Experience & Facility Improvements

Revenue Growth & Community Engagement

1. Financial Systems Modernization

Goal: Improve accuracy, efficiency, and transparency.

- Implement QuickBooks Online
- Clarify tracking of restricted and unrestricted funds
- Reduce manual data entry
- Integrate membership and accounting databases
- Replace outdated membership software

2. Complete Exhibits

Goal: Finalize a key exhibit project.

- Complete installation and interpretation
- Address cultural considerations
- Improve visitor engagement

3. Security & Safety Improvements

Goal: Reduce risk and protect people and assets.

- Install security cameras (restrooms exterior, register, curation building, north side, solar area, tortoises)
- Address tripping hazards and unsafe walkways
- Repair flagpole
- Establish basic safety guidelines

4. Lighting & Facility Enhancements

Goal: Improve visitor experience and retail performance.

- Consistent lighting in store, Coso Room, and Argus Room
- Improve gift shop merchandising visibility

5. Fundraising Structure & Revenue Growth

Goal: Create predictable and sustainable fundraising.

- Develop annual fundraising calendar
- Establish clear fundraising procedures
- Improve event profitability
- Plan donor recognition initiatives

6. Marketing & Audience Development

Goal: Increase attendance, membership, and visibility.

- Develop a formal marketing plan
- Strengthen social media and email outreach
- Improve promotion of Free Saturdays
- Engage younger and more diverse audiences

Secondary (Phased) Priorities

- Finish energy display labels
- Begin Discovery Area renovation planning (grant-ready 2026)
- Digitize historical documents and archives
- Improve signage (multilingual, QR codes)
- Expand tours, docent training, and volunteer communication
- Improve outdoor exhibits, grounds, and parking areas

Summary

By concentrating on a limited number of high-impact priorities, the Museum can strengthen its foundation, enhance the visitor experience, and grow revenue while continuing to serve the community effectively

BENEFACTORS 2015 – PRESENT

BUSINESS PATRONS

Alta One Federal Credit Union
Ridgecrest Regional Hospital
Searles Valley Minerals

BUSINESS SUPPORTERS

Ashley Furniture HomeStore
Beanster's Espresso
Bernie's Landscaping
Boulder Creek RV Resort
Clarion Inn
Coso Operating Co.
Desert Garage Doors
Desert Valleys FCU
Earth Landscaping
Eastern Sierra Custom Framing
Epsilon Systems Solutions, Inc
High Desert Haven
Historical Society of the Upper Mojave Desert
Hyla Nursery
IWW Self Storage
Law Offices of Phyllis M. Hix
Jacobs Naval System Group
KPartners Hospitality Group
Kristy's Family Restaurant
Lugo's Restaurant
McDonald's Restaurant
Meith Operational Solutions
New Directions Technologies, Inc.
Oasis at Death Valley
Oasis Garden Club
Pizza Factory
Packwrap
S. Wheeler Reliant Mobile Live Scan & Notary
Ridgecrest Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
Ridgecrest Automotive
Heritage Inn
Saalex Corp.
St. Ann's Catholic School
Service Master of the IWW
Sierra Club Owens Peak Group
Sierra Sand Unified School District
Sinclair Legal Council
Sinclair Tax Service
Springhill Suites by Marriott
The Car Wash

The Swap Sheet
Gary Charlon State Farm Insurance
Tax Time Services
TJ Frisbee Bicycles, Inc.
T&T Alignment, Inc.
Vaughn Realty
WACOM
Warren's Automotive
WEBCOR Construction LP

BENEFACTORS

Ed and Cam Alden
Camille Alden
Mathew Alexander
Scott and Heidi Allen
Dana Alloway
Ken Amster
Dan and Mary Anders
Camille and Ian Anderson
Camille Anderson
Howard and Margaret Anderson
John and Janice Anderson
John E. Anderson
Linda Anderson
Margaret Anderson
Matt Anderson
Philip Archibald
Vicki Ardoin
Frank and Beth Armogida
Frank Armogida
Mary Anne and Gary Arnold
Andrea Atkins and Evan Eustis
Ron Atkins
Mary L. Atkinson
Ken and Alice Atwood
Sandy Aubin
Audubon Society
Balas Montessori
Barbara Auld and Family
The Howard and Barbara Auld Family
Bruce and Ann Auld
Vince Avalos
Liz Babcock
Mark and Pat Backes
Jeanne Backman
Helen Baker
Lewis and Sharon Ballenger
Barbara Bane

Ken and Leilani Banks
Craig Bansmer
William Barajas
Elizabeth Barbee
Nivia Barker
Pamela Barnes
Pam and Charles Barnes
Jane Baron
Russ and Linda Bates
Roger and Bonita Becker
Jim and Linda Bego
Katie Benadom
Jan Bennett
Andrew Benson
Anna Benson
Dick and Debbie Benson
Deborah Benson
The Benson Family
Steve Benson
Tom Benson
Michelle Behseresht
Dr. Kristen H. Berry
Glenda Blackshaw
Henry Blecha
Thomas Boggs
Philip Bowen
Jerry and Sandy Bradley
Jack and Judy Bradshaw
Margaret Breeden
Gene and Judy Breitenstein
Harris and Pat Brokke
Tine Brouwer
Mike Brown
Mike and Karen Brown
Kim Brown
Pat Brown
Pat Brown-Berry
Sherry Brubaker
Charlie and Cindy Bruce
Karen Bruno
Sue Bue and Phil Bowen
Sue Bue
Frank and Debby Buffum
Debbie Buffum
David and Jo Burdick
Milt and Jane Burford
Dennis Burge
Dan and Brenda Burnett

William Burns
Byron and Amy Butler
California Turtle & Tortoise Club
Bob and Alice Campbell
Marilyn Cannemeyer
Christie Cantrell
Louise Caraway
Bob and Jamie Carr
Ken Carr
Ruth Carter
John and Suzette Caufield
Susan Catlin
D.V. Charles
Robert and Bev Charlon
Katie Christman
Jay and Peggy Chun
Marek Cichanski
Adam Clayson
Joey and Sandy Clubb
Leslie Collier
Janet Coleman
Andie Cominos
John Cook
Vernon and Jeanene Cook
Carol and Leroy Corlett
Gilbert and Dorie Cornell
Michael Cosentino
Douglas Cowan
Mrs. John Cox
Jamie and Drew Corbin
Don and Shirley Crouse
Kathy Cummings
Anthony and Cynthia Damiano
Blaise David 4% Wellness Challenge
Jeanette Davis
Sharon Davis
Robert James Day
John and Judith Decker
Jerry Defeuille
Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc.
Linda Dewees
Bob and Carol Dezellem
Jimmy Diaz
Steve Dickson
Dianne Dilley
Dolores DiPol
Rod and Judy Ditzler
Fred and Irene Dodson

Alston Dotson
Wayne and Pat Doucette
Catherine Douglas
Cathie and Tom Doyel
Sondra Drake
Pat Dubets
Bill and Linda Duncan
Pam Easley
Linda Eberhart
Richard Ehlers
Flo Eichenberg
Bev Estis
Judy H. Fair-Spalding
James and Cheryl Fallgatter
Ward and Ann Fanning
Ward Fanning
Haley Farmer and Devon Primmer
Oscar Felson
Dennis Fenwick
Tom and Debra Fields
Shirley L. Fisher
Michael Flanigon
Tom and Toko Foggia
Michael J. Ford
Michael J. Ford and Denise Moliterno
Dianne Foucher
Sally Franklin
Clint and Joanne Freeman
Monte and Tina Frisbee
Sally and Gary Fry
G. Ike Fujiwara
Ed Gandara
Sandra Gamble
Christine Gardner
E. Norman and Suzanne George
Lisa Gibbons
Larry and Ruth Gleason
Robert and Rhodean Glen
Maureen Goff
Joy Gonzalez
Pat Gooch
Don and Charlotte Goodson
Jerry and Mary Grimsley
The Gritton Family
Karen Haden
Doris Hammer
Beth and Ken Hayes
Alexander Hansen

Geralyn A. Haradon
Jefferson Harrell
Esther Hart
Fred and Susan Hartson
Misha and Keith Hash
Marlyn Heeke
Shirley Helmick
James and Virginia Henry
Robert Henry
George Herr
George and Eleanor Herr
Mike and Paula Herr
James and Barbara Herriman
Gary and Carol Hewer
Gary Hewer
Gary and Mary Jane Hewer
Werner and Susan Heuber
Susan Heuber
Deborah Hickey
Laura Hickle
Bryan and Beverly Hill
Sylvia Hillesland
Marian E. Hills
Jerry and Lois Hinman
B.J. Holden
John and Rosie Holtrop
Cameron and Phyllis Hoover
Cameron Hoover
Jeffrey Ihnen
Jeffrey and Marcie Ihnen
Troy and Donna Ingle
Richard Jackman Jr.
Leroy and Connie Jackson
Elaine W. Janson
Dr. and Mrs. Edward Jayne
Sarah Jayne
Ed and Carol Jeter
Roy B. Johanboeke and Family
Gerald and Elaine Jones
Dr. Robert and Andrea Jones, Jr.
Bob Joy
Robert L. Joy, Jr.
Sharon Juarez
Russell Kaldenberg
Jennie Kalivoda
Courtney and Elliott Keeter
Kim Kelly
Raymond Kelso

Kerncrest Audubon
Lisa Kidder
Shirley Kidner
Andrew and Michelle Kilikauskas
Jean and Michael King
Kathie King
Sarah King
Sally J. Kinsey
Timothy Kirkpatrick
Marianne Kistler
Linda and Richard Klabunde
Richard Klabunde
Patricia Kleinshmidt
Roxie A. Klett
Dennis and Mary Jane Kline
Evelyn Knierim
Betty Kobler
Janet Krockman Earthquake Relief
David Kurdeka
Ann Kurotori
Ralph and Dorothea Lachenmaier
Carol Lair
Howard and Wanda Laire
Patsy Lakin, et al
Dale and Donald Lane
Kathy LaShure
Jack and Joanne Latimer
Alan and Leslie Layfield
Jean Legarde
Greg and Ann Lenz
Penelope LePome
Virve Leps
Pete and Renee Lesniak
Janis Lindgren
Janis Lindgren and Bruce
Marsha Lloyd
Phil and Arlyne Lopez
Mary Lundstrom
Carolyne J. Lynch
Dana and Jack Lyons
Pat Maddux
Tina and Mike Magie
Diana Mahmud
Harry Mallory
James and Patricia Manion
Susan and Dennis Mar
Dennis Mar
Frank and Joyce Markarian

Lori Markoff
Bill and Kathy Martin
James and Judy Martin
Piero and Jill Martinucci
Randy Mathews
John R. Mathews
Mica Mawhirter
Mawhirter Family
Don and Judy McCauley
Howard and Linda McCauley
Bruce D. McClung
Cynthia McCormick
Robert and Becky McDiarmid
Cheryl McDonald
Kara McDonald
Melanie McDonald
Susan McEwan
Marie McGlothlin
Robert and Tiana McGowan
Joan and Don McKernan
Jenny McLaughlin
Robert Meador
David and Katy Mechtenberg
Therese Melbar
Cynthia Miller and Kathy King
Elaine Miller
Linda Miller Estate
Maria Miller
Ray Miller
Minnie Miller
Jim Minges
Barbara Miras
Andrew and Terry Mitchell
Mojave Senior Citizens, Inc
Denise Moliterno
George and Billie Jo Moncsko
Alisha Mondragon
Pat Moore
Susan Moore
David and Therese Moore
Gary and Therese Moore
Theresa and Atienza Moore
Dwight Morgan
Kim Morrell and Jay Hernandez
Paul Mouriski
Sam Mudie
Merritt Mullen
Tom and Janet Mulvihill

Colleen Murphy
Barbara Murray
Jack Murray
Robert Neaman
Columbia Nelson
Everette and Laverne Neuman
Charlene Newmyer
Ken and Debbie Newton
Debra Newton
Frances Nichols
James Nichols
Brian Norden
Nadine Norris
Naomi Norris
Brian Norden
Nora and Richard Nuckles
Janice Ogar
Marc and Barb O'Connor
Duane O'Donnell
Babs and Barry O'Neal
Charlotte Osterman
Barbara Padgett
Mark Pahuta
Mimi Paller
Dave Palmer
Carol and Clay Panlaqui
Bruno and Jean Pannuto
Nick Panzer
Bob and Sue Parker
Susan Parker
Teresa Pastor
Carol Pearson
Roger Peck
The Peck Family Foundation
Andrea Pelch
Thomas A. Perkins
Aubrey Phillips
Jann Philpott
Helen Pierce
Gale and Carole Poppen
Peggy Porteus
Craig and Carol Porter
Nancy Porter
Yvonne Portillo and Family
Susan Prazak
Lucille Poulin
Richard and Margaret Quinnelly
Brenda Radtke

Joleigh and Tom Rafalski
Billie and Shirley Raglin
Steven Rainey
Roy and Lorraine Randolph
Lois E. Reed
Mike and Bessie Reeves
Stella M. Renner
Alan Rice
Anthony and Barbara Rice
Joanna Rindt
Mike and Deanna Ripley-Lotee
John and Chris Robinson
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Rockwell
Bruce and Adriene Rockwell
Darrel and Martha Rodgers
Carolyn Roseth
Alexander and Frances Rogers
Pat and Terry Rogers
Valerie Rogers
Dr. James Rosenthal
Carolyn Roseth
Edwin Royce
Dorothy Saitz
Melanie Saldana
Charles and Melanie Saldana
Josue Salguero-Diaz
Larry Sawyer
Nancy Saxton
Sam Schoenhals
Robert and Carrol Sewell
Kevin Seymour
Jim and Carolyn Shepherd
Carolyn Shepherd
George and Pat Silberberg
Pat Silberberg in memory of George Silberberg
Edward and Colleen Simmons
Stuart and Charlene Sims
Diana Sliva Human Capital Management Group
Bonni Smith
Lloyd and Bea Smith
PJ and Linda Smith
John Smith
Don Snyder
Roger and Judy Sopher
Pat Sorensen
Sylvia Sotomayer
Andrew Sound
South Fork Parent Teachers Club

Arthur and Judy Spiegel
Clint and Betty Spindler
Harrell and Lynn Spoons
Gary Staab
Jill Stansell
Joanna Stauffer
Donald and Bartie Stapleton
Ed and Jean Steiner
Julie and Harry Stephens
Jim and Deanna Stewart
Laura Stockton
Richard and Rose Stone
Casey and Mike Stoner
Mark and Deb Storch
Craig Stump
Ted Stump
John & Barbara Sullivan
Elizabeth Swallow
Debra and Keith Sweitzer
Richard and Melba Swenson
Georgette Theotig
James Thomas
John and Mary Thurston
Toyon Research Corp
Leslie Treat-Carter Chris Carter Eagle project
Larry and Mary Trowsdale
Larry Trowsdale
Jim and Tammy Tucker
Danny Tyree, Jr.
Bob and Gail Ulrich
Sally Valiton
Mark Van Buskirk
Francina van der Hoek
Vivian Van Devender
Ed and Fran Van Valkenburgh
Emily Vassos
Jeremy Vaughan
Jennifer Venola
Nancy Vetter
Libby Vincent
Michael Vincent
Richard Villegos
Ann and Burton Wagner
Bill and Patricia Walters
John and Judith Ward
Greg Watson
Fred and Donna Weals
Carolyn Weeramantry

Helen Wells
Marvin Wendt
Bob and Paula Westbrook
Janet Westbrook
Jessica Weston
Raymond and Louise Wetzel
Patricia Wharton and Ken Wetzel
Gretchen Whisenand
Cindy White
Sandra Weiser
Susan Weiser
Dr. June L. Wieder
Charlie Wight
Peter and Elaine Wiley
J.D. Williams
Jody Wilson
Mrs. Eleanor Winnemore
Dick and Gerry Wisdom
Gerry Wisdom
Gretchen Whisenand
Cassie Witham
Rachel Woodard
Al and Joan Woodman
Peter and Sam Woodman
Donnie and Charles Woods
Terri and Wally Wright
Vivian and Richard Wright
Kay C. Wylie
Richard and Lee Anne Zajicek
Don and Carol Zdeba
Wayne and Ingrid Zellmer
Tom Zulkowski

This continues to be a work in progress.