Volume 64, # 11 **November 2026**

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

"We don't need more to be thankful for; we just need to be more thankful." — Carlos Castaneda

The clouds building around the Sierra Mountains, the lingering warmth of the day, and the evening chill slipping into the night make the Indian Wells Valley a wonderful place to be in November. It's always a pleasure to pull on that favorite sweater or flannel and enjoy the changing season.

At the Maturango Museum, we find many reasons to be thankful for our friends and our community. There are times when I feel I have said the words, but I'm sure it's not often enough. Too often, I am reminded of the generous and kind nature of so many people in our valley, as well as those who now live in other communities but still keep us in their thoughts.

I find that these moments of gratitude seem to grow even as the daylight hours become shorter. We are fortunate to work with some amazing people, both as staff members and as volunteers. So many people contribute their time and talents to our education programs, help our visitors find their way while emphasizing the importance of safety, maintain the interior and exterior of the Museum, and help us plan for the future.

You make a difference, and every moment matters.

Thank you for everything you do. Thank you for being.

My best to you all! Take care and be well!



November is Double Dip Sunday Month

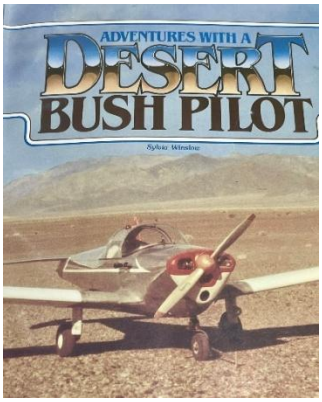
All current members will receive double the regular discount. That's 20% off regular priced merchandise every Sunday in November. Not a member? Stop by the store or go online at https://maturango.org/become-a-member-2/

Cerro Coso Students' Art Exhibit
Opening Reception Sunday November 8, 2 - 4pm

Cerro Coso Community College Art Students will be showing their artwork featuring various mediums including painting, sculpture, ceramics, woodworking, and metal.

This exhibit will continue through mid-January.

Book of the Month
"Adventures with a Desert Bush Pilot"
By Sylvia Winslow



The Ercoupe featured in this book has recently returned to the Indian Wells Valley. She will need work and care to get her ready to display; plans are just beginning to create a new home for "Buttercup". This will take some time and love but it will happen.

Thank you Bill, Loretta, Mark, Russ and Bill for starting us on this path!! More people are getting involved; It's a great story.

Children's Hour: "Hoot Like an Owl"
Friday, November 13, 10:30 - 11:30 am



Young children and their families may be hooting like owls at the next Children's Hour! Puppets, poetry, stories, and songs promise a morning of fun and learning that includes an 'owly' craft and mounted specimens of our desert residents: barn owl, burrowing owl, and great horned owl!

Children's Hour, a free monthly program throughout the school year, is led by an enthusiastic story group of volunteer docents of the Maturango Museum. The upcoming traditional program in December is scheduled for Friday, December 4th, 2026. Information about all of the Museum's activities is available at www.maturango.org or call 760-375-6900.

Free Saturday November 134: "Identified Flying Objects", 11am – 2pm
Free admission - Museum open 10am – 5pm

Calling All Archeology Fans (Look, Don't Touch)!

Have you ever wanted to hike around looking for historic relics on the ground? Here is your chance! The Ridgecrest Field Office (RIFO) in collaboration with the California Site Stewardship Program (CASSP) will be hosting training to help you become a site steward! Think of it as getting a front-row seat to the past (time machine not included).

Part 1: Online Classroom
When: November 14, 2026, 9am to 3pm
Where: Your couch, kitchen table, or wherever your Wi-Fi is strongest (Online)
You'll hear from our Law Enforcement (Mellisa Brown), myself, and CASSP. Topics include:

- Background on the local archeology (spoiler alert: people have been living here for a very long time)
- Cultural Resources within the BLM RIFO
- Safety (because the desert is beautiful but also trying to dehydrate you)
- Legal protections for cultural resources
- Native American concerns

To sign up, please visit https://www.cassp.org/events/. (contined next page)

Part 2: Field Exercise

Once you successfully complete Part 1, you'll be a candidate for Part 2, a field exercise led by myself and CASSP. This is where the classroom meets the actual dirt and sunshine.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. Thank you!

Liz Gonzalez Negrete
Lead Archeologist
Bureau of Land Management
(760) 384-5452, Office (760) 677-3809, Cell

Flying into Researching History

By Terry McGuire, Museum History Curator

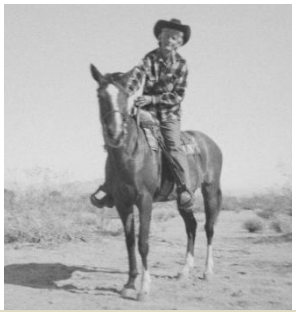
"Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing."- Wernher von Braun

Artifacts based on local history can be difficult to research when the people associated with them have passed on, or when eyewitnesses have forgotten details. This month, researching the requested information for several people or organizations has been a priority.

Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce, which turned 80 this year, asked for information and evidence of their long history. I looked through our collection and was able to provide them with photos and news articles about past events; the Chamber of Commerce has been instrumental in the growth and development of the Ridgecrest community for the last 80 years.

Researching the Maturango Museum's founding curator, Sylvia Winslow, is rewarding. The details of her life and her desert travels are fascinating to discover. Sylvia and her late husband traveled to many remote desert locations by an Ercoupe plane or their jeep. She was able to see the desert unrestricted and painted many works of art depicting the landscapes she witnessed. She is an interesting subject to learn about.

With the year winding down and the cool weather setting in, working in the new curation building is bearable. Getting the inside organized and cleaned will be a priority in the next few weeks.



Slyvia Winslow 1954

The Regional West Coast Hoop Dance Championship



Saturday, November 7, 2026 (with related events or dates spanning November 7–8, 2026)
Freedom Park (110 W. California Ave., Ridgecrest, CA).

Grand Entry starting at 12:00 PM (noon).

Activities: Features competitive championship hoop dancing, social powwow songs and dances, and cultural storytelling.

Docent Doings

By Nora Nuckles

September marks the beginning of a new season of programs for the docents. Teachers from many different schools in Ridgecrest are making requests for programs and tours of the Museum. Children are back in school and love to learn great science from us.

Our art docents already taught an art lesson, Line/Shape, to three classes at Pierce Arts Academy. Our Children's Hour docents met several times in September to plan for the fall season. Our first Children's Hour focused on Coyotes and was a howling success!

Science docents prepared an outstanding presentation on "Desert Alive" for fourth graders from Vieweg Stem School. Our programs focus on the California Science Standards at the request of teachers. Science docents also presented a program on "Birds" to 37 students from Heartland School. The students were especially interested in the various feet and beaks and realized they could determine how the birds probably "made their living," what they ate, etc. It was nice that Jane McEwan happened to be present to explain more about some of the birds. She has very good knowledge of birds because she goes to Owens Lake Bird Festival and other presentations to learn and observe birds! Do you happen to know about a water bird that cannot walk on land? Google "grebe" and see what you can learn. (contined next page)

Finally, for September Free Saturday, docents presented a program on Bones and provided a fun craft activity making a skeleton on black paper using q-tips – thank you Shirley Crouse for designing this craft!

Carol Ann designed a fun scavenger/passport activity for our October Free Saturday. Our Free Saturday On Nov 14 will feature IFO's (Identified Flying Objects) such as Owls and Bats. Visit the Museum that day to see our bat and owl specimens and participate in an identification task and a craft.

The docents will hold their first meeting of the school year on Tuesday, Sept. 1, at 10:00 AM at the Museum. Call Nora at the Museum if you would like to attend.

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Operating Fund

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Byron & Amy Butler
Shelley Crabtree
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David Kurdeka
Penny LePome
Susan McEwan
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New Member

Blake White & Crystal Hanson

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Steven Miller

New Lifetime Member

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New Business Member

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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)

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Maureen Goff, Store Manager/Buyer
Barbara Bane, M.A., RPA, Archaeology Curator
Nadia Mohsen, Curation Technician
Terry McGuire, Local History Curator
Sherry Brubaker, Natural History Curator
Andrea Pelch, Art Gallery Coordinator, Newsletter Editor
Nora Nuckles, Education Coordinator, Museum Assistant
Barbara Ingle, Membership, Donations, Museum Assistant
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RIDGECREST
Chamber of Commerce

Upcoming and Ongoing Events

- **First Double Dip Sunday in November:** Sunday Nov 1, 12 noon – 5pm
- **The Regional West Coast Hoop Dance Championship**
  Saturday, November 7, 2026, 12 noon
- **Cerro Coso Students' Art Exhibit Opening Reception**
  Sunday November 8, 2 - 4pm
- **Children's Hour, "Hoot Like an Owl":** Friday, November 13, 10:30 - 11:30 am
- **Free Saturday** November 14: "Identified Flying Objects", craft activity 11am – 2pm

Maturango Museum
100 E. Las Flores
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

"Thanksgiving is for "turkeys". too.++