

BULLETIN

Fall 2023, Volume 39, Number 4



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Antelope Valley Indian Museum State Historic Park

15701 East Avenue M, Lancaster, CA 93535
(Between 150th and 170th East)

Museum: 661-946-3055
Facebook: AVIndian Museum
State Parks Museum Curator III: Peggy Ronning

Built in the 1920s among towering rock formations in the Mojave Desert, the museum is a unit of the California State Department of Parks and Recreation system.

President’s Message

Bruce Love, Ph.D.

Hello dear friends,

We at FAVIM are thrilled with the success of the visiting artists program (see article in this bulletin) and look forward to more and more visiting Native artists as we move into the new year. The visiting artists have reported success and lots of good feelings being at the museum on weekends selling their wares. Not only does the public get to interact with the artists and buy hand-made Native items directly, but our gift shop manager also buys from them and so can support them (and share their artistry) after they have left.

The 2024 Celebration is tentatively planned for the third weekend in October (October 19-20), so mark your calendar—though only in pencil, because it’s not firm yet. FAVIM board member Cydnee Ashmore (Diné) is still checking on the pow-wow schedules around us that might conflict, so stay tuned.

FAVIM board member Kat High (Hupa) and I met at the Theodore Payne Foundation and purchased 100 packets of white sage seeds to have for sale at the weekend showing of *Saging the World* in AVIM’s Kachina Hall (January 27-28).
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The 2023 Celebration attracted hundreds of visitors to the museum, who came to enjoy dancing, food, craft-making, and artists’ booths. All photos in this issue by Charles Hood

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Our new map of “Tribes Without Borders” is being developed by the chief cartographer at CSUN, David Deis, and is almost ready for unveiling. It shows the tribes that shared the Antelope Valley and still have a strong presence here, but unlike on other maps, their presence is not portrayed by hard, fixed lines. This is contrary to the tribal maps presented in anthropology textbooks.

This map was developed in collaboration with tribal representatives from around the Antelope Valley and in cooperation with the Museum of Art and History (MOAH) in Lancaster. We at FAVIM are eager to collaborate and cooperate with entities throughout the AV, as we promote greater and deeper understanding of Native American ways of being.

FAVIM is grateful we were able to fund the AVIM Virtual Tours Project. Our Treasurer/Bookkeeper Nancy Park works miracles keeping all our income and outgo organized and clearly presented at each of our board meetings. We were able to front the money for the AVIM Virtual Tours, and now we’re getting reimbursed from the granting agency, which of course demands a crazy amount of virtual paperwork, but Nancy is keeping us straight. The virtual tours are now completed and can be viewed at https://avim.parks.ca.gov/virtual_tours.shtm

In the gift shop we have a newly built set of shelves to install, to be filled with carefully selected Native-relevant literature. New T-shirts and tote bags should be ready this spring as well. Thank you to Charles Hood for helping to organize that. Pamela Anderson designed this bulletin and also is managing the new FAVIM website, which soon will go live. And thank you also to current board members John and Suzy Martin, for your long-standing service. See everybody in the next bulletin.

FAVIM President
Bruce Love



Anne Kittlitz Honored

By Bruce Love, Ph.D.

Former Board member Anne Kittlitz has a long association with the Antelope Valley Indian Museum. She first visited the museum as a little girl in 1944 when Grace Oliver showed her and her parents around.

When the museum became a state park, Anne was in the first docent training class of 1982 and she stayed active in committees, docent and volunteer training, and for a time even was FAVIM Board President. In 2023, after 42 years, she stepped down from the Board, and was voted emerita status in recognition of her extraordinary service.

Thank you, Anne! Her appreciation plaque was designed by FAVIM friend Matthew Whitebear McMasters (Cherokee).





Visiting Artist Nadia Reed pauses for a photograph.

Visiting Artists Program at the Museum

This past winter, the Antelope Valley Indian Museum hosted visits by a delightful array of Native American artists.

First was Judy Einboden, who on Saturday, November 18, shared her gourd art and pine needle baskets. Judy honors her mother's Panamanian heritage by incorporating patterns from Mola textiles into her art. However, to add relevance (and a "personal touch") she adapts the Mola style to depict California animals.

Judy was followed by Rowan Harrison, who displayed his art on Sunday, November 19. He works in ceramics and clay to create hand-built, hand-coiled, and hand-painted pottery that is connected to his Pueblo of Isleta and Navajo culture.

Sunday, November 26, showcased Nadia Reed, a member of the Chinook Nation in Washington State. Her Pacific Northwest Coastal Native American heritage inspired paintings convey a mixture of symbolic, expressionistic imagery of dancers, waterfalls, forests, animals, fish, masks, and mythical beings. Nadia is working on raven designs for new FAVIM tote bags and t-shirts.

Visitors had the opportunity to meet Michael Chas Williams, a member of the Wichita Tribe of Anadarko, Oklahoma, on Saturday, December 9. He creates jewelry, dreamcatchers, and portraits of contemporary subjects and historical Native American people.

Saturday, December 16, highlighted internationally recognized gourd artist Nadiya Littlewarrior (Potawatomi/Cherokee). Nadiya founded Spirit Vessels Studio in 1993. Regarding her gourds, Nadiya says, "They are Spirit Vessels to me because The Creator makes the Gourd People and puts their spirit in them, and I get to dress them with regalia."

The museum featured Maria Martinez, an artist of Yaqui heritage, on Sunday, December 17. Maria creates copper and sterling silver jewelry by hand.

Finally, ready to help out the last-minute shoppers among us, Steven Saffold visited. He is a coastal Chumash artist of Goleta, California. He incorporates traditional materials and techniques in his art and jewelry. Steven shared his flint knapping and abalone art on Saturday, December 23, 2023.

FAVIM and the museum staff want to thank these artists for sharing their time and vision with us. We look forward to an even more robust schedule of art visits in 2024.



A box decorated by Nadia Reed, with salmon and orca imagery.

Nature Corner

Meet the . . . Cactus Wren

by Charles Hood

One avian inhabitant you can see at the Indian Museum is the cactus wren. They nest in cholla or “jumping” cactus. (They can’t jump, but the microscopic hooks on the spines are very good at snagging clothes.) The birds navigate the cholla with admirable ease, while a snake or coyote would have a hard time reaching the nest.



*The cholla cactus says
“Look but don’t touch!”*

The cactus wren’s song is not very melodious. In fact, it sounds like an old-fashioned car struggling to turn over. The “song” goes cha-cha-cha-CHUG, as if somebody is grinding the starter on a beat-up car. On a still day, you can hear it from a hundred yards away.

Nimble and curious, cactus wrens hunt actively on the ground, under the eaves of buildings, and along the branches of the creosote bushes. You might see one taking a dust bath to control parasites. Our birds are resident here and can be seen year-round.



A cactus wren pauses on a trash can.

Friends of the Antelope Valley Indian Museum
State Historic Park
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Lancaster, CA 93584

