



MUSEUM ^{of}
VENTURA
COUNTY

YEAR IN REVIEW
2024

CURIOSITY • COMPASSION • CONNECTION

Message from The Barbara Barnard Smith Executive Director, Elena Brokaw



At the Museum of Ventura County, we believe that history is not just about facts. It is about meaning. In a world where information is available at the tap of a screen, our role as a museum is not to simply store the past. It is to spark curiosity, create connection, and inspire understanding.

We are Ventura County's repository of regional history, including its voices, its objects, and its stories. More than that, we are a storytelling institution. We do not just collect. We interpret. We do not just exhibit. We connect. We bring the past into conversation with the present, helping people see themselves in those who came before and perhaps even catch a glimpse of their future.

The artifacts and documents in our galleries, collections, and archives are more than relics. They are anchors in time, touchpoints of identity, and pathways of connection. Each item has a story. Each story has a person. When we encounter someone from the past whose life resonates with us, something powerful occurs. We are reminded that history is not something that happened. It is something that is still happening.

The 2024 Year in Review celebrates a vibrant year of exhibitions, community programs, and bold storytelling. We invite you to reflect on the ways we have explored our shared past, honored the people who shaped this place, and helped our community connect the dots between then and now. In doing so, we are not just preserving history. We are making it.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elena Brokaw". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Elena Brokaw
The Barbara Barnard Smith Executive Director



William Kearney,
Chair



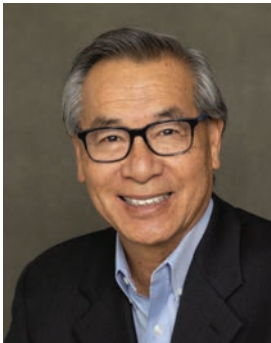
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The Museum of Ventura County first opened its doors in 1913 as the Ventura Pioneer Museum. For its first decade, it shared one room with the Chamber of Commerce and Farm Bureau in what was then the County Courthouse. The Museum has come a long way in the last century, and now has multiple sites:



THE MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY IN DOWNTOWN VENTURA

The flagship of the Museum facilities, the downtown Ventura campus has presented programs, exhibitions, and educational activities since its opening in 1977. Situated in the heart of downtown's historic district, the Museum has 3,000 square feet of gallery space, a research library, an events pavilion, an open-air courtyard, plaza, and gardens. These spaces work together to spark curiosity and encourage learning about Ventura County and the region. MVC also operates the Albinger Archeological Museum next to the Mission Basilica San Buenaventura.

THE RESEARCH LIBRARY AT THE MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY

MVC's Research Library houses a vast collection of photographs, maps, oral histories, family papers, and other archival records that together, tell the story of our community. The Research Library is free and open to the public by appointment. Its online archive allows researchers access to digitized materials from anywhere in the world.

THE AGRICULTURE MUSEUM IN SANTA PAULA

Located in the historic Mill Building in downtown Santa Paula, the Agriculture Museum is a compelling tribute to the region's farming and ranching history, exploring the legacy of the farmers and innovators who shaped the local landscape. This campus engages visitors with its rotating community-focused exhibitions, broad collection of farming equipment, raised garden beds, a native plant garden, a live observation beehive, and interactive, agriculture-focused activities for children.

MVC'S ONLINE CAMPUS - AVAILABLE WORLDWIDE

Founded in 2020, the expanded online presence through MVC's website and social media platforms acts as the Museum's newest "campus." With virtual tours and exhibitions, lectures and talks hosted digitally, history blog posts, educational resources, digital jigsaw puzzles, and more, the Museum's online offerings bring our community together to celebrate art, history, and culture from anywhere across the world.



NUMBER OF
MUSEUM
VISITORS

21,899

NUMBER OF NEW
EXHIBITIONS

5

NUMBER OF PROGRAMS
AND EVENTS

38

NUMBER OF
DONORS

1,113

OUR MISSION: *The Museum of Ventura County engages participants in meaningful experiences with history, art, culture, and each other.*

OUR VISION: *The Museum of Ventura County aspires to spark curiosity and encourage compassion to build community and connection.*

OUR PURPOSE: *The Museum of Ventura County is an arts, history, and culture museum, the largest repository of history in Ventura County. We spark curiosity, foster compassion, and create connection through programs and exhibitions that are bold, inclusive, innovative, and fun. We use history and culture to address universal themes and inspire hope for the future. MVC is the guardian of our region's identity.*



DIGITIZED
PHOTOS AND
HISTORIES

1,245

IN-PERSON
RESEARCHERS

212

RESEARCH JOURNAL
PUBLISHED

1

DIGITAL JIGSAW
PUZZLES

117

HISTORICAL BLOGS
PUBLISHED

4

MUSEUMS FOR ALL INITIATIVE

The cost of admission can be a barrier for low-income families. In 2024, MVC joined over 1,400 national museums, botanical gardens, zoos, and more to ensure that visitors receiving food assistance can explore our museums without an admission fee.



ATTENDANCE OF
SCHOOL TOURS

3,218

NUMBER OF K-12
SCHOOLS SERVED

42

NUMBER OF INTERNS

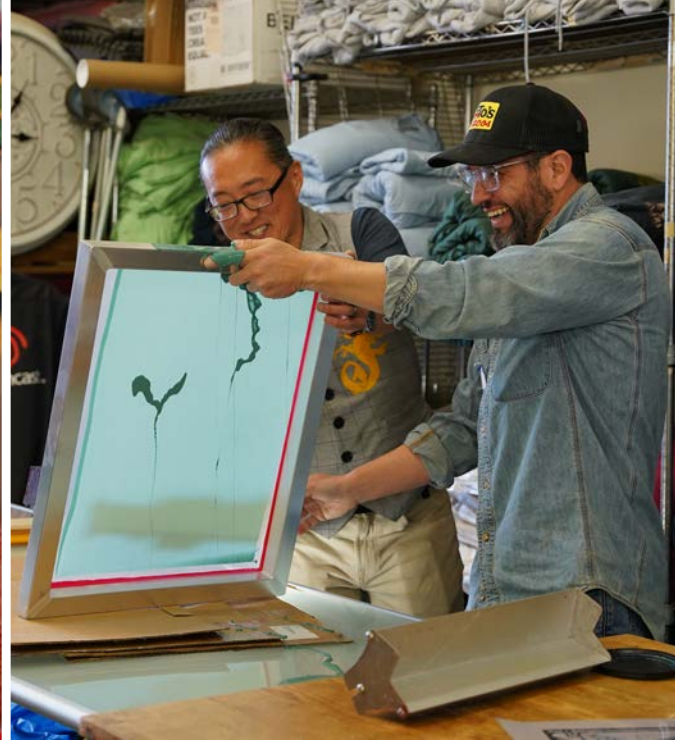
16

ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL TOURS

107

2024 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

JANUARY	Ivor Davis: Up Close and Personal with <i>The Beatles</i>	MVC
FEBRUARY	Zine Making Lab	MVC
	Documentary Screening of <i>6 Generations 200 Years Later</i>	MVC
	Garden Guardians: 2nd Annual UC Master Gardener Open House	AG
MARCH	Ventura Chronicles: Unveiling the Archives	MVC
	Partner Event: <i>The Legends of Hobson Heights</i> Documentary Screening	MVC
	Book Talk: <i>Strong & Resilient Women of Rancho Guadalupe</i> featuring Colleen M. Delaney	MVC
	Nowruz: Celebration of the Persian New Year	MVC
	Citrus Label Society Public Meeting	AG
APRIL	Play Date in the Garden	MVC
	History and Horizons Fundraising Luncheon	AG
	3rd Annual Ventura County Wildflower & Weed Show	AG
MAY	Ivor Davis: Up Close and Personal on <i>The Devil in My Friend</i>	MVC
JUNE	Ventura Chronicles: Unveiling the Archives	MVC
	Exhibition Opening for <i>Masters from the Museum of Ventura County Collection</i> and <i>InnoVision: Ventura County Artists to Watch</i>	MVC
	Play Date in the Garden	AG
JULY	Partner Event: <i>The Legends of Hobson Heights</i> Documentary Screening	MVC
	McCartney Tea Fundraiser with Ivor Davis	MVC
	Threading Together: Weaving Our Indigenous Heritage/Tejiendo Juntos: Entrelazando Nuestra Herencia Indígena	MVC
	MEMBER EVENT: Artists and Amplifiers Fête & Bonita C. McFarland Scholarship for the Visual Arts award winners reception	MVC
AUGUST	Book Release – <i>Ventura County Lima Beans: A History</i> by Jeffrey Wayne Maulhardt	AG
SEPTEMBER	9th Annual Labor Day Vintage Tractor Fair	AG
	Taste of History Dinner	MVC
	MEMBER EVENT: Opening Reception for <i>The Curse of the Vampire: Tales from the Book of Nosferatu</i>	MVC
OCTOBER	Ventura Chronicles: Unveiling the Archives	MVC
	Studio Spotlight: <i>InnoVision</i> Workshop with Jasmine Delgado	MVC
	Play Date in the Garden	MVC



NOVEMBER	Ventura County Farm Day 2024	AG
	Studio Spotlight: <i>InnoVision</i> Workshop with Elisa Torres	MVC
	MEMBER EVENT: <i>Bach to the Future</i> with Flutist Emi Ferguson in collaboration with Ojai Music Festival	MVC
	<i>Sip n' Shop</i> featuring Preview of <i>Nutcracker</i> by Ventura County Ballet	AG
	Small Business Saturday	AG
DECEMBER	Studio Spotlight: Ceramics Workshop with Marianne McGrath	MVC
	MEMBER EVENT: <i>Sip 'n Shop</i>	MVC
	PUBLIC EVENT: <i>Sip 'n Shop</i>	MVC
	Closing Reception for <i>Ventura County, The Place We Call Home</i> at Oxnard College	OXNARD COLLEGE
	Ventura Chronicles: Unveiling the Archives	MVC
	Winter Solstice Storytelling Festival	MVC

2024 PROGRAMS AND EVENTS FUNDED IN PART BY:

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- Ventura County Credit Union
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HISTORY AND HORIZONS

A special fundraising event to support the Museum of Ventura County's exhibitions, education, and collections, featuring a farm-to-table luncheon, special museum presentation, and garden and exhibition tours.



SUMMER EXHIBITIONS OPENING RECEPTION

MVC invited the community to join us for a celebration in honor of the unveiling of two new exhibitions at our downtown Ventura campus, showcasing the past, present, and future of art in Ventura County.

Masters from the Museum of Ventura County Collection celebrates the extraordinary artistic legacy of seven artists who have significantly shaped Ventura County's art history and achieved international acclaim. The exhibition presents a curated selection from MVC's exceptional collection, featuring a variety of artistic styles.

Artists included in the exhibition: Jessie Arms Botke / Omar d'León / Otto Heino / Vivika Heino / Cheryl Ann Thomas / Beatrice Wood / Hiroko Yoshimoto.

InnoVision: Ventura County Artists to Watch is an interactive exhibition that highlights the work of nine Ventura County artists. Through their innovative use of common materials, they create installations that reflect their personal visions and views of current issues such as the environment, immigration, identity, the housing shortage, and changing land usage in Ventura County.

Artists participating in the exhibition: Jasmine Delgado / María Adela Díaz / Daniela García Hamilton / Luke Matjas / Marianne McGrath / Gladys Rodríguez / Clark Song / Olguín Tapia Heredia / Elisa Torres.





TASTE OF HISTORY DINNER

This evening of refined taste and unexpected histories lead guests on a journey back in time to the early mid-century. This decadent evening began with a cocktail hour featuring classic specialty drinks, a red carpet, keepsake polaroids, and live jazz music. Guests enjoyed a live cooking demonstration by Chef Adam Hart of Oxnard College and an artifact gallery with objects from MVC's historic collection. The open-air dinner transported diners to an elegant mid-century supper club, with each dish paired with wine chosen by local restaurateurs. Entertainment continued in the form of a jazz quartet and a presentation of Olivas Adobe's history through food by MVC's Executive Director Elena Brokaw.



In 2024, MVC presented **26** educational programs open to the public, and offered **107** elementary school tours of our campuses.

- In spring of 2024, MVC launched an initiative to offer elementary school tours at both our Santa Paula and Ventura sites simultaneously, nearly doubling the number of tours from the year prior—a huge milestone in expanding our reach and impact!
- 3,218 students served
- 55.5% of VC districts served
- Tour focus: 45.8% Chumash Tour, 54.2% Agriculture Tour
- 107 tours given over 37 weeks
- 160 hours of instruction
- 42 schools served
- 77% of schools served were Title I schools
- 82 Title I classrooms



Increasing accessibility

In 2024, MVC offered \$10,000 in bus grants to Ventura County Title I schools, ensuring 82 classrooms of students could experience their MVC tours completely free of charge.

BONITA C. MCFARLAND SCHOLARSHIP FOR THE VISUAL ARTS



\$10,000 awarded to four art students across Ventura County:

- Audrey Abbe, California State University Channel Islands
- Jami Chambers, El Camino High School and Ventura College
- Emmalynn Tsai, Oak Park High School
- Wren Stepan, Ventura High School and Ventura College



MEET MVC'S TEAM MEMBERS

Meet the dedicated individuals shaping the Museum of Ventura County's story. In 2024, MVC upheld its commitment to fair wages for interns and strengthened its exceptional team of staff. We proudly recognize the collaborators, docents, volunteers, and committee members whose invaluable contributions enrich our community. Together, this passionate team is building a more sustainable, equitable, and connected future. Make sure you introduce yourself and say hello anytime you cross their paths!

STAFF 30

Miguel Aguiar Facilities Manager

Christine Ballestero Visitor Experience Associate

Thomas Blood Events & Facilities Associate

Angie Brinkhoff Marketing & Communications
Programs Manager

Elena Brokaw Barbara Barnard Smith
Executive Director

L.E. Brown Development Manager

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Office Manager

Andrea Contarino Store Assistant

Hannah Eaton Visitor Experience Associate

Loribeth Gregory-Beck Chief Programs Officer

Friday Gretchen Treur Visitor Experience Lead

Karen Hernandez Finance & Operations Coordinator

Michelle Hoover Visitor Experience Associate

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Manager

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Violet Loza Visitor Experience Associate

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& Cataloger

Kristy Rogers Event Specialist

Deya Terrafranca Chief Collections Officer
& Library Director

Suzanne Soprano Visitor Experience Associate
& Store Manager

Marcia Stock Archivist

Renee Tallent Manager Of Collections

John Treur Av Lead & Events & Facilities Associate

Heather Williams Chief Development Officer

INTERNS 13

Paulina Bonilla Outreach Intern, Moorpark College

Kelli Couse Library & Archives Intern, California State University Channel Islands

Jorja Garcia Library & Archives Intern, Columbia University

Amihan Franada Education Intern, University Of California San Diego

Douglas Joys Library & Archives Intern, University Of Colorado Denver

Cecilia Lopez Education Intern, California Lutheran University

Shayna Mairo Library & Archives Intern, California State University, Northridge

Alana Nehme Education Intern, California State University Channel Islands

Allison Phelps Library & Archives Intern, San Jose State University

Janely Quijas Education Intern, California State University Channel Islands

Vincent Romero Library & Archives Intern, California State University Channel Islands

Daniel Sales Library & Archives Intern, California Lutheran University

Nathan Vargas Education Intern, Ventura College

DOCENTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS 153

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Vanessa Acosta
Jose Alamillo
Julio Alcala
Mimi Allin
Ana Alvarez
Jessica Arciniega
Lynn Arneill-Brown
Asad Baig
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A Team

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Jim Kirkpatrick
Neale McNutt
Michael Peterson
Ed Russell



ENDOWMENT FUNDS

CHRISTINA ALLISON FUND

Supports operational priorities as identified by the Board of Directors. Established by bequest 2019.

LILA ATKISSON FUND

Supports the cataloguing, digitization, and preservation of the Library's visual print collection. Established 2021.

BERRY RESEARCH LIBRARY FUND

Supports the acquisition, conservation, storage, display, and accessibility of historical library materials. Established 2006.

FORUM OF THE ARTS ENDOWMENT FUND

Supports art installations and projects at both Museum campuses. Established 1990.

BONITA C. MCFARLAND FUND

Supports the purchase and exhibit of fine art, promotes appreciation and awareness of art, and awards one or more scholarships annually to art students. Established 1990.

KAREN AND TOM PECHT FAMILY FUND

Supports operational priorities, as identified by the Board. Established 2018.

MIRIAM SCHWAB FUND

Supports operational priorities as identified by the Board. Established by bequest 2018.

FRED W. SMITH GALLERY FUND

Supports the purchase, maintenance, and restoration of the Museum's collection of George Stuart Historical Figures®, and/or repairs and improvements to the Fred W. Smith Gallery. Established 1992 by Barbara Barnard Smith and Helen M. Smith.

SMITH-HOBSON FAMILY COLLECTIONS MANAGER FUND

Supports the Collections Manager position. Established 2019 by Jeff Smith, Marilyn Cassidy, Barbara Stupay, and Greg Smith.

THE BARBARA BARNARD SMITH MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FUND

Supports the Museum's long-term stability by providing funding for its Executive Director position. Established 2017.

HARDISON KIMBALL THILLE FAMILY FUND

Supports operational priorities as identified by the Board. Established 2017.

TOM AND ESTHER WACHTELL FAMILY FUND

Supports the exhibit of works from the permanent collection. Established 2018.

HELEN YUNKER COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION FUND

Supports the Museum Research Library and Collections Department, and exhibits materials from these areas. Established by bequest 2018.

MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY ENDOWMENT FUND

Supports Museum operations. Established 2001.

MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY-AGRICULTURE MUSEUM ENDOWMENT FUND

Supports the Agriculture Museum. Established 2019.

ENDOWMENT FUND CONTRIBUTORS

We thank the many generous donors who have made contributions to the Museum of Ventura County Endowment Fund:

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Leave your legacy with a planned gift. It can be as simple as naming the Museum of Ventura County as a beneficiary in your will with a gift of \$1,000 or above. If you are interested in remembering the Museum in your trust or estate, please contact MVC's Development Team at (805) 653-0323, Ext. 330.

The Museum of Ventura County gratefully acknowledges these individuals, foundations, organizations, and businesses for their generous support of the Museum.

\$200,000 and above

City of San Buenaventura
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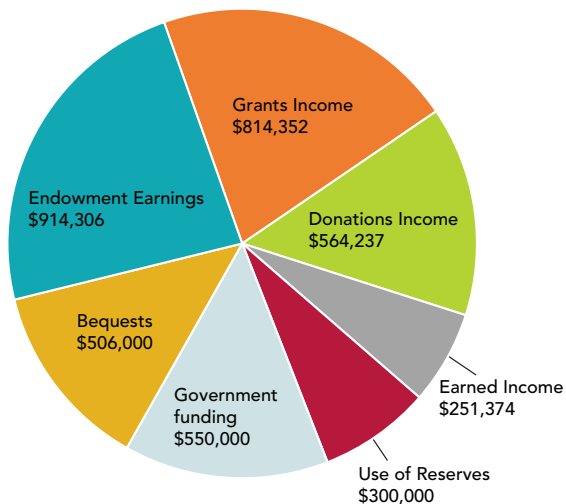
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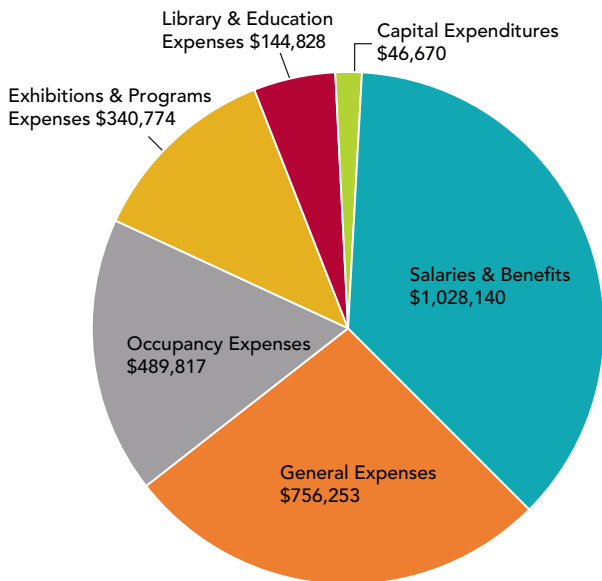
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The audited financial statements for these years are posted on the Museum's website when issued by the Board of Directors.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF MVC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS, WILLIAM KEARNEY



Dear fellow supporter,

This is my third and perhaps final year as the chair of our museum board. Beyond my time as chair, my experience on the museum board has been totally enjoyable and enlightening. In addition to all sorts of museum services, I have a new appreciation for

the value of our collection comprised of art, artifacts and amazing stories.

For too many, history is simply an accumulation of stuff, dates, and data. To those same people, studying an odd assortment of aging artifacts and stories has little value beyond the ability to spew out odd anecdotes and somewhat meaningless facts. Yet, interpreting history is critical to understanding alternative viewpoints and sensitivities. That basic understanding may even aid in dispute resolutions and more agreeable compromises. History offers the ability to introduce a type of empathy, allowing us to better understand others, and potentially modify our personal behaviors and demeanor.

Perhaps obvious, combatants don't adopt arguments they believe to be faulty. Each side of a disagreement believes they are right. Exploring the origin of the opposing viewpoints through past experiences, culture and ingrained prejudices, results in a better understanding of the views of others. Whether a politician, business leader or simply a good neighbor, we gain a special advantage and contentment when we appreciate the views of others, hopefully by putting ourselves in their shoes.

Our museum uses archives, exhibits, and both written and oral testimonies to aid in understanding differing backgrounds and cultures. A knowledge of history with the goal of increasing compassion and empathy aids in narrowing the gap between opposing views and, hopefully, arriving at compromises.

Although my term as board chair may come to an end, there is no end of my appreciation for the value of our extensive collection.

With my sincerest regards,

Bill Kearney



FEELING INSPIRED TO GIVE BACK?

The single most impactful way you can donate to MVC is by becoming a sustaining monthly donor! Sustain our mission and become a member online for as little as **\$6.25 per month**. Your tax-deductible monthly dues enable us to continue championing the stories of Ventura County.

Learn more by visiting our website: www.venturamuseum.org/membership



MUSEUM OF VENTURA COUNTY

100 East Main Street
Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 653-0323

Open Thurs – Sun, 11:00am-5:00pm

Admission:
Adults \$10 | Students/Seniors \$5
Under 18 and Members FREE

RESEARCH LIBRARY AT MVC

100 East Main Street
Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 653-0323, Ext. 320

OPEN BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
Weds – Fri, 11:00am-5:00pm

Admission: FREE



AGRICULTURE MUSEUM

926 Railroad Avenue
Santa Paula, CA 93060
(805) 525-3100

Open Thurs – Sun, 11:00am-5:00pm

Admission: FREE

ALBINGER ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM BY THE CITY OF VENTURA

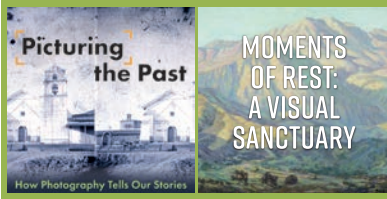
113 East Main Street
Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 658-4728

Open Sat – Sun, 11:00am-5:00pm
Admission: FREE

INCLUSIVITY • BOLDNESS • EMPATHY • INTEGRITY • CREATIVITY

2025 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

We hope you will join us at our Ventura and Santa Paula campuses for these exciting programs in 2025:



FIRST LOOK AT THE TWO NEW EXHIBITIONS

OPENING RECEPTION: Unveiling Two Exhibitions

Saturday, June 7

Museum of Ventura County

Join us to celebrate the unveiling of MVC's two newest exhibitions at our downtown Ventura campus.



COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE: Mexican Indigenous Experience in Ventura County

Sunday, August 17

Agriculture Museum

This community roundtable panel assembles a diverse group of panelists to discuss and contextualize the themes explored in MVC's exhibition *Enfoque: Voces Indígenas Mexicanas del Condado de Ventura*. This panel offers a more nuanced understanding of lived experiences and identities of the Indigenous diaspora in Ventura County.



10TH ANNUAL LABOR DAY TRACTOR FAIR

Monday, September 1

Agriculture Museum

The annual Labor Day Tractor Fair returns to encourage sustainable practices and motivate the next generation to explore agricultural careers! This program offers a fresh perspective on bridging farming's past, present, and future through engaging exhibits and interactive activities.

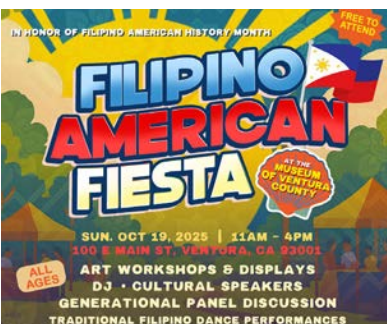


SECOND ANNUAL TASTE OF HISTORY DINNER

Thursday, September 4

Museum of Ventura County

This evening of refined taste and unexpected histories leads guests on a journey back in time to an impactful era of Ventura County's history. This decadent evening includes a cocktail and networking hour, live music, artifact gallery, oral history presentation, and multi-course dinner with paired wines.



FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

Sunday, October 24

Museum of Ventura County

This program is designed to connect our community, create lasting memories, and "edu-tain" learners of all ages. With engaging activities and interactive experiences, visitors can unleash their curious, explore, and create together all while having an unforgettable time.