



The Joshua Tree

February 17, 2026

GROWTH, RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

Members of the Rotary Club of Victorville recently welcomed **Bruce Ebmeyer**, President of Ebmeyer Charter and Tours, who shared the remarkable story behind one of the High Desert's most respected transportation companies and its journey from humble beginnings to statewide recognition.



Based in Apple Valley, Ebmeyer Charter Service & Tours has grown from a single bus and a dream into a thriving transportation operation serving schools, sports teams, corporate clients, churches, and major events throughout California and beyond. Bruce reflected on how the company began in 1980, when his father purchased their first coach, a 37-passenger MCI bus, despite having no prior experience in the charter industry. "It's not if it's going to break down, it's when will it break down," his father Hugh often joked, capturing the determination and realism that shaped the company's early years.

Over time, the fleet steadily expanded: adding additional coaches throughout the 1980s, incorporating

in 1999, and eventually transitioning leadership when Bruce became President in 2007. In 2008, the company expanded into school transportation while continuing to grow its charter operations. Today, Ebmeyer operates 14 modern motorcoaches, 17 school buses, and employs 31 professional drivers, supported by trained mechanics, office staff, and dedicated "bustodians" who keep the fleet clean and ready for service.

During his presentation, Bruce emphasized why charter bus travel remains one of the safest and most efficient transportation options available. According to national safety data, charter buses are significantly safer than passenger cars while reducing stress, minimizing convoy travel, lowering costs per passenger, and cutting environmental impact through higher passenger efficiency. A single motorcoach can transport over fifty passengers while reducing overall fuel consumption and emissions compared to multiple individual vehicles.

The company's resilience was perhaps most evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Before the shutdowns, Ebmeyer averaged about 25 trips per day. Between March 2020 and September 2021, a year and a half, the company completed only 72 trips total, a period that forced many operators nationwide to close. Bruce explained how Ebmeyer adapted by temporarily converting its maintenance operations into an RV repair

This Week's Functionaries

Invocation:	Chris Ackerman
Flag Salute:	Darron Poulsen
4-Way Test:	Jon Hove
Fine Master:	Ryan McEachron

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MURRAY'S MINUTE



Thank you to my dear friend Bruce Ebmeyer, who came by this week and shared his fabulous



success story with the Club. Thank you Bruce, for your kind words not to just myself, but to others in the Club. We look forward to hear of more successes as your children take helm in the near future.

Please note we have a new website! It looks the same but we have a new address, victorvillerotary.com! Please make sure you update your bookmarks so you can have the latest Club information with just a click of the mouse.

Please note our Board Meeting will be held March 2nd at ISU ARMAC Insurance Agency.

Please join us next week as Rob Kilpatrick will share the history of our Club. You don't want to miss it!

Steve

Bruce Ebmeyer

Continued from page 1

service, allowing the company to survive while the travel industry paused. When demand returned, they were positioned to expand, acquiring coaches from defunct companies and rebuilding stronger than before.

Safety remains a core value for the organization, with Bruce highlighting rigorous maintenance programs, skilled technicians, and comprehensive insurance coverage that support a strong safety-first culture. This commitment, along with consistent service and leadership, helped Ebmeyer Charter earn the distinction of being named California's Operator of the Year for 2025–2026, a major honor within the motorcoach industry.

Beyond business success, Bruce shared how community involvement remains central to the company's mission. Ebmeyer Charter has helped fund scoreboards for seven local school gymnasiums and continues to support schools and organizations throughout the High Desert. In 2025 alone, the company completed more than 2,000 trips, including its longest journey ever, an international trip to Canada, demonstrating both its operational capability and growing reach.

Today, the company's vision focuses on continued fleet modernization, clean technology, and steady growth while maintaining the local values that shaped its beginnings more than four decades ago. From school transportation and weddings to corporate conventions and major events such as the Super Bowl, NBA All-Star events, FIFA matches, and even preparations connected to the 2028 Olympics, Ebmeyer Charter continues to play a vital role in moving people safely and efficiently across the region.

Bruce's presentation offered Rotary members an inspiring look at entrepreneurship, adaptability, and community commitment, showing how a small family business with one bus and big hopes grew into a transportation leader that continues to keep the High Desert connected.

UNITE FOR GOOD



Big Blue Poker Chip

Raffle



Steve Murray had another chance to draw the Blue Chip but picked green and saved it for another. We'll continue next week with 12 chips and \$250 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

This week, **Steve Murray** donated a Starbucks gift card that will be enjoyed by **Don Kennard**, while **Ryan McEachron** will get use out of the instant read meat thermometer he won, also donated by Steve.

Jim Murray gave away an old sleeve of golf balls that was won by guest **Mike Johnson**.

Spoon of Exception

Fine Session

Ryan McEachron was our Fine Master and began by giving **Bill Scott** a \$10 penalty for not only bringing the weather back from Mammoth but also because his phone went off during the meeting. **Jim Cox** was also told to pay the same amount for having the Victorville Library named in his honor!



Jon Hove was the big winner at **Darron Poulsen's** Super Bowl pool, taking home \$200 for the winning square. Of course, Ryan had Jon pay a 10% tax on it, so he said goodbye to \$20.

Finally, **Arsalee Morales** received a congratulatory fine in the amount of \$10 for becoming part of the Victorville Planning Commission.



Kirsten Acosta had another week with the Spoon and reminded Rotarians that the annual VVC Hall of Fame Gala will be taking place on February 28th and it is almost sold out! One former honoree, **Darron Poulsen** was

recognized by Kirsten today.

Finally, Kirsten highlighted the value of the President's Circle through the Victor Valley College Foundation, a leadership level giving group that connects community supporters directly with the mission and future of Victor Valley College. Members enjoy exclusive quarterly luncheons featuring fine dining experiences prepared and served by the College's talented Restaurant Management students, offering a unique blend of culinary excellence and student engagement. Beyond the meals, the President's Circle provides opportunities to connect with college leadership, learn about emerging programs, scholarships, and campus initiatives, and see firsthand how philanthropic support helps students thrive. The program fosters meaningful relationships between community leaders, alumni, and the college, creating a collaborative network dedicated to advancing education, workforce development, and long-term success throughout the High Desert region.

Rotary Guests

This week we welcomed from the Rotary Club of Apple Valley, **Mike Johnson**. Our Stand-ins this week were **Alyy Martinez** for **Angel Espino** and **Stefanie Montoya** for **Bryan Gillespie**.

Our Club website address has changed from VictorvilleRotary.org to VictorvilleRotary.com



Rotary

Club of Victorville, CA

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If you are not receiving your newsletter, please contact Editor Chris Ackerman at
signifydesigns@yahoo.com or 760-559-1686 to be added to the e-mail or mailing list.

UNITE FOR GOOD

VICTORVILLE ROTARY CLUB OFFICERS

Board of Directors

President 2025-2026	Steve Murray
President 2026 - 2027	Brad Letner
Immediate Past President/Club Service	Bryan Gillespie
Executive Secretary/Grants	Steve and Pam Murray
Treasurer	Darron Poulsen
Youth Services/Ethics Essay	Please Volunteer
Foundation.....	Darron Poulsen
Club Service & Membership	Bryan Gillespie
International Service.....	Ben Tafoya
Youth Service	Ryan McEachron
Community Service	Arsalee Morales
Vocational Service	Angel Espino

Members-at-Large: Bob Basen, Ron Boyd, Steve Murray, Ron Boyd, Rob Kilpatrick

Positions & Committee Chairs

BOD/PP Secretary.....	Pam Murray
Scholarships.....	Please Volunteer
Special Billing	Esther Mears (TBD)
Public Service Awards	Please Volunteer
Teacher Mini-Grants	Angel Espino
Special Projects.....	Rob Kilpatrick
Dan Stover Music Contest.....	Angel Espino
Joshua Tree Editor	Chris Ackerman
Read B4K	Brad Letner
Grants.....	Please Volunteer
Food Baskets.....	Ben Tafoya
Interact (Junior Rotary).....	Please Volunteer
Programs	Mike Page
Fundraising	Stefanie Montoya
S.T.A.R. Students	Angel Espino
Club Learning Facilitator.....	Please Volunteer

The Victorville Rotary Club meets every Tuesday for fellowship
at 11:30 a.m. and meeting at 12:00 noon at the Bear Valley
Country Club, 13229 Spring Valley Parkway, Victorville

Make-up Days and Locations

MONDAY:	San Bernardino East, Imperial Palace, noon
TUESDAY:	Rancho Cucamonga Sunrise, 7:15 a.m. Empire Lakes Golf Course Rancho Cucamonga, 12:00 p.m., Etiwanda Gardens
WEDNESDAY:	San Bernardino Crossroads, Hilton, noon, Barstow, DiNapoli's Firehouse, 1358 E Main St, Barstow, CA
THURSDAY:	Apple Valley, Rusty Bull, 13685 John Glenn Rd, Apple Valley, Noon. Ontario, 12:15 p.m., Doubletree Hotel San Bernardino, Denny's at I-15, 7 a.m. Redlands, Masonic Temple, noon
FRIDAY:	San Bernardino North, Elks Lodge, 12:05 p.m.

Calendar Dates

- Mar 2** **Board of Directors Meeting**
5:30pm Board Meeting
ISU ARMAC Insurance Agency
17177 Yuma St., Victorville, CA 92395
- May 2** **Rotary Golf Tournament**
Apple Valley Golf Course
\$100 per Player • \$400 per Foursome

Upcoming Programs

- Feb 24:** Rob Kilpatrick **TOPIC: "Rotary Club of Victorville - A Brief History"** (Page)
- Mar 3:** Lori Clark, VESD Superintendent, **TOPIC: "State of the District"** (Page)
- Mar 10:** **4-Way Speech Competition - Area** (Espino)
- Mar 17:** **Ethics Essay Contest** (Boyd)
Protective Service Awards (Morales)

The Polio Pig

Collected this week: **\$7.00**

Collected to Date: **\$21,780.68**

Total equals: **104,540 Doses!**

One dollar equals 2 Doses of Vaccine!
\$500 pays for a Polio Clinic!

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