



The Joshua Tree

April 21, 2026

THE IMPACT OF THE CHRISTMAS EVE STORM

The Rotary Club of Victorville welcomed an extraordinary speaker this week as **Trevor Samorajski**, Reserve Deputy Sheriff and Search and Rescue Team Lead with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, delivered a powerful and firsthand account titled Wrightwood flooding and damage of December 2025. Samorajski, whose unique background includes service as a firefighter, lifeguard, ski patroller, and IT Manager for the Mojave Water Agency, brought both technical expertise and real-world experience to a disaster that reshaped the local landscape.



to widespread damage. The intensity of the storm caused severe erosion, which in turn led to collapsing power poles and major structural failures along California State Route 2, a critical corridor stretching from Wrightwood through the Angeles National Forest and ultimately toward the coast.

The destruction was especially severe in higher elevations, where terrain and burn scars contributed to rapid water movement and instability. Large portions of Highway 2 remain closed today due to ongoing safety concerns and the extensive repairs required. Trevor emphasized that this was not just a storm event, but a stark reminder of how vulnerable even well-established systems can be when faced with extreme and unpredictable weather patterns.

Samorajski detailed the unprecedented storm system that impacted Southern California between December 24, 2025 and January 1, 2026. In higher elevations near Wrightwood, a personal weather station recorded an astonishing 38 inches of rainfall in just 24 hours, an amount far beyond what regional infrastructure was designed to handle. Flood control channels, runoff basins, and roadways were quickly overwhelmed, leading

As a member of Search and Rescue, Samorajski also shared insight into the life-saving operations that took place during and after the storm. Teams responded to both fire and flood-related emergencies, navigating dangerous conditions to reach stranded residents and assess impacted areas. His dual role as a Reserve Deputy Sheriff and SAR leader highlighted the coordination, training, and dedication required to respond effectively in such high-risk situations.

The presentation left Rotarians with a deeper understanding of the scale of the Wrightwood flooding, the challenges faced by first responders, and the resilience required to recover from such a significant natural event.

This Week's Functionaries

Invocation: Chris Ackerman

Flag Salute: Dr. Ron Boyd

4-Way Test: Maureen Mills

Fine Master: Brad Letner



LETNER'S LETTER

Thank you to Trevor Samorajski for stopping by to give us a first hand account of the Wrightwood

flood of 2025. While the images were devastating, the information brought everything into context. We appreciate all that you do for our community and the people in it.



Our 50/50 was last reported to have grown to \$640! Let's keep it going... you may have a chance to win some big money! Each ticket is \$5 or you can purchase 5 for \$20. Winner will be drawn on June 30, 2026.

District Assembly will be held on May 23rd at Granite Hills High School. If you plan to be on the Rotary Board of Directors, it is important for you to attend.

The Rotary Golf Tournament is only a few short weeks away and we still are in need of sponsors, raffle gifts and foursomes. Sign up today and we will see you on the links! See the flyer on this page.

Brad Letner



ROTARY GOLF TOURNAMENT

PRESENTED BY HIGH DESERT ROTARY CLUBS OF APPLE VALLEY & VICTORVILLE

SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026

APPLE VALLEY GOLF COURSE

SHOTGUN START: 8:00 AM

Proceeds Benefit High School Senior Scholarships

REGISTRATION

- Foursome: \$400
- Single Player: \$125

Includes refreshments during the tournament!

CONTACT

PAM MURRAY
760.963.1923

BE A SPONSOR - MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Platinum Sponsor - \$ 2500

- 2 Teams, Team Shirts
- Signage at Event

Gold Sponsor - \$ 1500

- 1 Team, Team Shirts

Bronze Sponsor - \$ 1000

- 1 Team, Signage at event

Greens / Tees Sponsor - \$ 250

- Signage at event

UNITE FOR GOOD



Big Blue Poker Chip



Jim Murray had the chance to draw the Blue Chip but picked green and saved it for another.

We'll continue next week with 3 chips and \$475 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

Raffle



This week **Chris Ackerman** donated a VTA swag bag that will be enjoyed by **Don Lager** while Don gave away a Starbucks gift card that will be used by **Bob Basen**, as well as a mini-hammer he received from **Steve Murray**. **Pam Murray** raffled some soaps that

will make **Rob Kirkpatrick** smell fresh as a daisy.

Spoon of Exception



Brad Letner stepped in as the Fine Master this week and gave the absent Fine Master **Ryan McEachron** a \$10 penalty since he sells insurance, and there were multiple times our speaker shared ways he has figured out the "insurance challenge" between working/volunteering for both San Bernardino County and LA County!

Bill Scott received a whopping \$60 fine in celebration of his birthday this week! **Happy Birthday Bill!**



Rob Kilpatrick had another week with the Spoon and this time, made the official announcement that he is "unofficially" retiring at the end of the month! He will continue to work part time though through the end of 2026.

Your retirement is well deserved Rob!



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	Arsalee Morales
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	Chris Ackerman
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

May 2 Rotary Golf Tournament
Apple Valley Golf Course
\$100 per Player • \$400 per Foursome

Upcoming Programs

April 28 Don Kennard, Sales Manager, Cal
Portland **Title: "Cement 101"** (Hove)

50/50 RAFFLE fundraiser

JUNE 30, 2026

All proceeds to benefit the projects of
The Rotary Club of Victorville

1 TICKET = \$5
5 TICKETS = \$20

Tickets will be sold at the Rotary Meetings.

Winner will be announced on June 30, 2026

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