



The Joshua Tree

June 23, 2026

THE VANISHING WATERWAYS

For the third installment of his popular Mojave River presentation series, **Tony Winkel**, Principal Hydrologist with the Mojave Water Agency, continued guiding Rotary members along the path of the Mojave River's historic perennial flow, revealing how dramatically the High Desert landscape has changed over the past century.

Known as the "Hide and Seek River" or the "Upside Down River," the Mojave River is unique because much of its water flows underground. Historically, however, there were several locations where groundwater naturally surfaced year-round. Tony explained that there are four locations along the river where perennial surface water once existed, creating oases that supported travelers, ranchers, wildlife, and entire communities.

Tony began at Hawley's Station, located near present-day Minneola Road. Long before it became a stage stop, the area was known as "Punta del Agua," or "Point Over Water." Early Mormon travelers described the area in 1850 as having "plenty of trees, grass and water." Settlers soon followed, attracted by the reliable water source.

In 1874, Isaac Hawley established Hawley's Station, which became a popular stop along the desert route. Historical accounts from the 1880s described the station

as offering every comfort for travelers, including fresh milk, eggs, vegetables, shade trees, cool water, and well-aired bedrooms. Another account praised its sports, dancing pavilion, green fields, and beautiful shade trees along the Mojave River.

By 1929, reports still described abundant mesquite and poplar trees surrounding a pond more than 100 feet across and up to 12 feet deep that persisted year-round. Today, visitors to the area find a vastly different landscape. What was once a thriving oasis is now largely dry desert, illustrating how changing climate conditions and declining groundwater levels have transformed portions of the Mojave River corridor.

Tony also discussed the nearby Calico Fault, noting that vegetation once flourished along portions of the fault zone where groundwater reached the surface. These geologic features often influenced where water emerged and where early settlements developed.

The presentation then moved east to Newberry Springs, once known simply as the "Great Spring." Water was so abundant that it became essential to the growth of the railroad across the Mojave Desert. Tony explained that steam locomotives required frequent refilling, leading railroads to establish water stops every few miles along the route.

Newberry Springs became a critical water source, providing water to multiple rail stations. Historical records indicate more than 200,000 gallons of water per day were pumped into tanks and transported to railroad stops east of Newberry. The volume was so significant that it equated to approximately 224 acre-feet of water

Continued on page 2

This Week's Functionaries

Invocation: Chris Ackerman

Flag Salute: Jim Cox

4-Way Test: Jon Hove

Fine Master: Ryan McEachron



RYAN'S WORDS

Thank you to Tony Winkel for joining us for Part 3 of his fascinating series on the Mojave River.

What was originally planned as the final installment will now continue on July 14! Thanks to the many great questions from our members, Tony never made it all the way through his presentation.

We had a fantastic turnout of 42 people at last weekend's Demotion Party. Congratulations to Angel Espino, who was honored as Rotarian of the Year! A special thank-you also goes to Bill and Linda Scott for graciously opening their home and hosting such a wonderful evening for our club.

Incoming President Brad Letner has invited all club members and their families to his annual Fourth of July celebration at Spring Valley Lake on Saturday, June 27. If you plan to attend, please contact Brad so he can get an accurate headcount for food and refreshments.

Don't forget, our 50/50 raffle drawing will take place at next week's 5th Tuesday Evening Meeting. We'll gather at 5:30 p.m. at Chiao House in Apple Valley, located in the former DiNapoli's Fire House building. The jackpot has now grown to more than \$1,000, with one lucky winner taking home over \$500!

Ryan

Tony Winkel

Continued from page 1

annually, enough to irrigate dozens of acres of farmland or fill more than 100 Olympic-sized swimming pools each year.

Tony shared stories of early life in Newberry Springs, where residents enjoyed a surprisingly active social scene. Historical accounts describe families gathering for dinners by the lake, community plays, dances at the local schoolhouse, and Sunday softball games that drew participants from neighboring communities across the desert.

The final stop on the journey was Camp Cady along present-day Harvard Road. Established in 1858 and named after Major Albemarle Cady of the 6th Infantry, the site served various roles throughout its history, including a military outpost, ranch, way station, and milling operation.

Like other locations along the river, Camp Cady was once supported by abundant groundwater and artesian wells. Historical records from 1929 described a stream flowing from a pond approximately 1,000 feet long and 25 feet wide before disappearing downstream, another example of the Mojave River's famous "hide and seek" behavior.

Tony noted that perennial flow continued at Camp Cady until 1987. Since then, groundwater declines and changing environmental conditions have significantly altered the area. The loss of perennial water serves as a reminder of how interconnected the region's history is with its water supply.

Throughout the presentation, Tony blended hydrology, geology, and local history to paint a vivid picture of a Mojave River that once supported ponds, streams, shade trees, ranches, railroad operations, and thriving communities. His presentation offered a fascinating glimpse into a landscape that many High Desert residents would scarcely recognize today and underscored the importance of understanding and protecting one of the region's most valuable resources.

UNITE FOR GOOD

Big Blue Poker Chip



Don Lager had the chance to draw the Blue Chip but picked green and saved the chance for another.

We will continue in 2 weeks with 6 chips and \$400 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

Rotary Guests

This week we welcomed **Courtney Jefferson** from High Desert PACE and **Darron Poulsen** brought **Kyle Parker** from the VVWRA as his guest. **Harrison Hove** attended with **Jon Hove** and our Stand-in was **Stefanie Montoya** for **Bryan Gillespie**.

Fine Session

Ryan McEachron was our Fine Master and only fined **Darron Poulsen** in the amount of \$11 for the 11 million gallons of water VVWRA uses per day!

Spoon of Exception

Keith Metzler had his final week with the Spoon and reminded the Club that Victorville's 4th of July celebration is moving this year to Silverado High School at 7:00pm Cost is \$2 per person. After July 4th, they will move to their annual "Victorville Sings" competition as part of their Concerts in the Park series. Finally on July 18, Victorville will hold a "Free Dump Day". Just bring proof of residency, or borrow one from someone!

It was then time to auction the Spoon for the month of July and **Angel Espino** took it for \$50.

Raffle

This week, Don Lager took home a VVTA swag bag from **Chris Ackerman**, and **Bill Scott** won a Rotary International tumbler, donated by **Arsalee Morales** and a Hi-Grade Materials 70th hat and koozie from **Jon Hove**. **Jim Cox** also received the same prize, and looked very cool in his new hat.

Ryan McEachron will enjoy using his \$10 Starbucks gift card he received from **Mr. Lager** and guest **Kyle Parker** will use the Country Club shirt he won, courtesy of **Don Kennard**. Finally **Ackerman** won a Car & Driver seat warmer and massager from **Steve Murray**.



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



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	Dr. Ron Boyd
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.....	Kirsten Acosta
Billing.....	Pam Murray & Darron Poulsen
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	Brad Letner
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

July 6

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30pm Board Meeting
ISU ARMAC Insurance Agency
17177 Yuma St., Victorville, CA 92395

July 25

Movie Night at the Hove's

Movie: Pretty Woman (1990)
Time: 6:30pm
18970 Appaloosa Rd, Apple Valley

Rotary

Club of Victorville, CA



Upcoming Programs

June 30

5th Tuesday Evening Meeting

5:30pm D'Cerboni's Ciao House
17856 Highway 18, Apple Valley

July 7

President Brad Letner **Title: "Annual Patriotic Presentation"** (Letner)

June 14

Tony Winkel, Mojave Water Agency
Senior Principal Hydrogeologist **Title: "The Hide and Seek River"**
(Part 3.5) (Page)

Design & Layout By



Printed By



www.victorvillerotary.com