



The Joshua Tree

July 15, 2025

THE RETURN OF THE ROTARY “CRAFT TALK”

This week at the Rotary Club of Victorville, past president **Jim Murray** brought back the tradition of “Craft Talks”—an opportunity for members to share their personal and professional histories. Through these talks, Jim noted he’s learned some unforgettable things about fellow Rotarians, including **Chris Ackerman’s** days as a rock star, **Bill Edwards’** drug dealing past, and the legendary Rotary deep sea fishing trips organized by Rotarian **George Lewis** in the late 80’s and early 90’s.



This time, the spotlight was on Jim himself, as he shared the fascinating story of the Murray family’s path to the High Desert—starting with his grandfather, “**Cap**” **Murray**.

Cap, a ship captain in the Red Chinese waters during the 1950s, was involved in a tragic accident in which a ferry capsized, and 18 lives were lost. The crew was detained during the investigation and later released—

except for Cap. Rather than face harsh conditions, Cap was treated unusually well, staying in a five-star hotel across from an American bar with freedom to explore, so long as he didn’t leave the country. He would later say it was the best time of his life.

After his release, Cap ran a shipping company in Guam before retiring to Apple Valley in the early 1960s with his wife **Florence**. But retirement didn’t last long. When the Vietnam War ramped up and the U.S. government needed experienced skippers to transport ammunition and supplies, Cap agreed—especially when double pay was offered. He completed three and a half voyages, which ultimately paid for his home in Apple Valley.

Meanwhile, Jim’s parents, **Bill and Lucille Murray**, were living in Long Beach. Bill owned Waterfront Sales a lumber yard, where Jim helped run operations. Their company supplied ships with lumber to stabilize barrels, a demanding 24/7 business. One shipment often required six truckloads or one and a half rail cars of lumber.

When Bill was suddenly diagnosed with tuberculosis and quarantined, a young Jim had to take over the business completely. While he excelled in operations, the client entertainment side of the business was a challenge. After Bill recovered, he opted to retire and move to Apple Valley to join Cap in the homebuilding business.

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This Week’s Functionaries

Invocation: **Bill Edwards**

Flag Salute: **Mike Page**

4-Way Test: **Don Lager**

Fine Master:



BILL'S BANTER

Thank you to Jim Murray for speaking this week and sharing

the amazing story of how his family ended up in the High Desert! I agree with Jim, we need to have more of these of programs.



I am pleased to announce we received our approval from the State and next week we can begin to sell our raffle tickets for our huge opportunity drawing at our 75th Anniversary Gala. As a reminder, only 100 of these \$250 tickets will be sold and someone is going to walk away with \$10,000 on September 6th! Tickets will be available next week and are by cash or check only, no billing allowed for these tickets.

Join us at VMI on August 6th as we will have a table and will do a Shout Out about the Fundraiser and I want all Club members on stage with me!

This past Friday, we spoke to over 100 parents about Rotary programs at the City of Victorville Concerts in the Park! I was joined in the booth by Arsalee Morales and Steve Murray and Bryan Gillespie will be in attendance this Friday. Please join us this Friday. Set up at 4:30pm, and the event runs from 6pm - 8pm.

Bill Edwards

Jim Murray

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Tragedy later struck when Jim and Lesley's 5-year old son, Tom, was severely injured in a bicycle accident, suffering a traumatic brain injury. While Tom was recovering in the hospital, Jim—now a father of three—took a long, hard look at his life. Though the business was successful, he realized it was time for a change.

Jim sold Waterfront Sales and relocated his family to the High Desert. He joined the family trade of homebuilding and quickly formed new connections in the area. One such connection was local attorney **John Delatorre**, who introduced Jim to a client selling Bob's Tire Service. After purchasing the business, Jim was trained in tire repair by the shop's manager, **Jim Byrd**, who made sure the new owner learned the trade from the ground up—starting with fixing truck tires.

Jim's story is far from over, and he promises to continue the tale at a future Rotary meeting.

Proposed Member

If you protest the admission of this member please respond in writing by 5 p.m. July 21 to President Bill Edwards.

Don Kennard

Company: CalPortland Cement

Position: Senior Marketing Manager

Classification: Marketing: Cement

Sponsor: Jon Hove

UNITE FOR GOOD

Big Blue Poker Chip



Jim Murray had the chance to draw the Blue Chip, but picked green and saved the chance for another. We will continue next week with 10 chips and \$300 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

Rotary News

Rotary and the Gates Foundation are renewing their longstanding partnership to end polio, announcing a joint commitment of up to US\$450 million to support the global polio eradication effort at the annual Rotary International Convention.

“While historic progress has been made toward defeating polio—90 percent of the world’s population is free from the wild poliovirus—we’re facing significant challenges from competing financial priorities to fragile health systems. Furthermore, the detection of polio in places like Papua New Guinea that were previously polio free demonstrates that polio anywhere is a threat everywhere,” said Rotary International PolioPlus Committee Chair **Mike McGovern**. “The extension of our fundraising partnership with the Gates Foundation allows us to reach children around the world with lifesaving vaccines, keeping every child and community safe from this preventable disease.”

Rotary will continue to raise \$50 million per year, with every dollar to be matched with two additional dollars from the Gates Foundation. This renewed agreement will translate into up to a total of \$450 million to support the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI).

Spoon of Exception

Chris Ackerman had another week with the Spoon and shared that on August 3rd, VVTA will partner with Life Church for their annual “Stuff the Bus” event as part of Life Church’s “High Desert We Love You” week-long initiative. This year they will be collecting toiletries, hygiene products and professional clothing that will benefit those served at the Symba center.

Rotarians are encouraged to bring your unwanted professional/interview clothing to a Rotary meeting this month that can be added to the event or bring on August 3rd to Life Church between 8am - 1pm.

Rotary Guests



This week we welcomed **Lesley Murray**, who attended with **Jim Murray** and **Pam Murray** was also in attendance with **Steve Murray**. We were also please to meet Steve & Pam’s adorable granddaughter **Madelynn Sprague!**

Our only Stand-in this week was **Aly Martinez** for **Angel Espino**.





VICTORVILLE ROTARY CLUB OFFICERS

Board of Directors

President 2025-2027	Bill Edwards
President 2027 - 2028	Please be Interviewed
Immediate Past President/Club Service	Bryan Gillespie
Executive Secretary/Grants	Margaret Cooker
Treasurer	Please Volunteer
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.....	Bill Edwards
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

- Aug 4:** **Board of Directors Meeting**
5:30pm Board Meeting
Virtual Meeting
- Aug 9:** **Movie Night at the Hove's**
Movie: Rain Man
6pm Fellowship • 7pm Dinner
8pm Movie
18970 Appaloosa Rd, Apple Valley
- Sept 6:** **75th Anniversary Gala/Fundraiser**
6:00pm Dinner • 7:00pm Drawings
Spring Valley Lake Community Center
12975 Rolling Ridge, Spring Valley Lake

Upcoming Programs

- July 22:** Ryan McEachron, ISU-ARMAC **TOPIC "Insurance Industry Update"**
- July 29:** **5th Tuesday Evening Meeting at Pancho Villas Mexican Grill**
11620 Amargosa Rd, Victorville
- Aug 5:** **San Bernardino County Sheriff Dicus** (McEachron)
- Aug 12:** Colonel Brad Letner (Retired) **TOPIC "Look Who's Back, How Did He Get Here"** (Page)
- Aug 19:** Angel Espino, Raymond James Financial Advisor **TOPIC "Today's Stockmarket"** (Page)

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