



The Joshua Tree

October 7, 2025

THE SPACE BETWEEN BETWEEN HOLLYWOOD AND HOME

As the youngest son of actress **Elinor Donahue** and producer **Harry Ackerman**, **Chris Ackerman** grew up surrounded by Hollywood's legacy, but never inside its bubble. His parents were determined not to raise him as "special," despite their fame. "They wanted normalcy," he often recalls. That sense of groundedness helped shape a perspective that was anything but typical for a child of Hollywood.



work, from *Father Knows Best*, *The Andy Griffith Show*, *The Odd Couple* to *Pretty Woman*, had seen both the glamour and grit of the industry.

Chris' dad, Harry, was an iconic television producer and Hollywood executive, responsible for shows like, "I Love Lucy", "Leave it to Beaver", "Bewitched", "The Flying Nun", "Gidget" and many more iconic television shows.

Chris remembers with humor that his parents' 25 year age difference occasionally earned raised eyebrows, jokingly described an incident where his parents were stopped by the LAPD Vice Squad, taking his dad as a "John", and his mom as a "Lady of the Night". But their love was genuine, and their household reflected both warmth and wit. Still, life in Hollywood was far from ordinary. Elinor, known for her iconic television and film

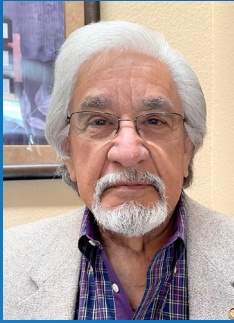
As a child, Chris had adventures that rivaled movie plots, like running away in the middle of Vacation Village in San Diego, only to be found in the middle of an intersection controlling traffic or almost crashing the Goodyear Blimp that still makes him laugh today. Later, through the entertainment world's close circles through an elite school, he crossed paths with people like Lisa Marie Presley and others whose lives mirrored the highs and lows of fame.

Though money and status were never his family's driving forces, there were challenges. His father, a man of integrity, often refused projects that relied on sex, sensationalism or violence, leading to leaner years. During that time, Elinor became the household's main breadwinner, taking on roles in shows like *The Adventures of Beans Baxter*, *Herman's Head*, *Get a Life* and even

This Week's Functionaries

Invocation: Chris Ackerman
Flag Salute: Jim Cox
4-Way Test: Dan Dever
Fine Master: Jon Hove

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TAFOYA TALKS

Thank you to Chris Ackerman for doing a craft talk this week, sharing stories of

growing up as the youngest child to Producer Harry Ackerman and Actress Elinor Donahue. We look forward to hearing you share more stories another time.



Teacher Mini-Grants have now officially opened! School administrators have been contacted, and many grant requests will be coming in very soon. As always, we will be asking club members and leaders in the community to help read grant applications, but most importantly, we need your generosity so we can award grants to many of our educators in the High Desert. Donation commitment sign ups are now open. Please give generously.

We will be holding a Club Assembly on Tuesday, October 21 at the start of our luncheon. Please plan to attend to have your voice heard.

Ben Tafoya

Ackerman...

Continued from Page 1

voiced a character on the animated show "Eek the Cat". Her commitment to craft and family left a lasting impression on Chris.

After his father's passing, Elinor made her final public appearance in front of hundreds of autograph seekers at a Star Trek convention, closing a chapter on decades in the spotlight.

Today, Chris carries that creative legacy forward in his own way—not in front of the camera, but behind the microphone. Known for his distinctive sports announcing as "Crazy Chris", emcee and voice work, he continues to build a unique career defined by authenticity rather than celebrity. His children are also carving creative paths of their own: Liam, a former child actor starred in the famous One Republic music video, "All the Right Moves", and daughter Aubrey, a music video actress in her own right, has upcoming roles in the latest Ice Nine Kills video, "The Laugh Track" and her first starring role in an upcoming music video for artist Lo Spirit.

Most recently, Chris lent his voice, to the new film "The Smashing Machine", starring "The Rock" Dwayne Johnson and Emily Blunt, in a poignant scene as a Demolition Derby Race Announcer, adding another layer to his multifaceted story.

From growing up amid Hollywood's golden age to finding his own voice and purpose, Chris Ackerman's journey is one of humor, resilience, and staying true to oneself, even when the spotlight burns brightest.

UNITE FOR GOOD

Big Blue Poker Chip



Chris Ackerman had the opportunity to draw the Blue Chip but picked green and saved it for another. We will continue next week with 13 chips and \$225 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

Fine Session



Jon Hove was our Fine Master this week, and went back and forth with Ben Tafoya, as he wanted to give Jon a \$25 fine for his phone going off during the meeting. Jon accepted the fine, but then penalized Ben \$25 for wearing shorts to the meeting.

The final fine was awarded to Bill Scott for declining to volunteer again for the Spring Valley Lake Board of Directors.

Blue Badge



This week, Jason Lamoreaux from Coldwell Banker Commercial Areal Estate Solutions was presented with his Blue Badge from Past Presidents Jon Hove and Ben Tafoya. Jason's acceptance of the Blue Badge came with a \$25 fine.

Raffle

Chris Ackerman donated two copies of his brother's book, "Mom, Dad, Me, & Classic TV" that will be read by guest Debbie Seay and Ben Tafoya. Amber Tromblee from the Rotary Club of Apple Valley brought a 4-pack of Apple Valley Air Show tickets that will be enjoyed by Ben.

Rotary Guests



This week we welcomed Amber Tromblee and Val Emick from the Rotary Club of Apple Valley, and Debbie Seay from Adspore attended the meeting as a guest of Chris Ackerman.

Speaking of Chris, he also had his wife, LeeAnn

Ackerman and her father, Gary Landry in attendance.

CLUB ASSEMBLY
will be held:
OCTOBER 21, 2025
at 12:00pm

Spoon of Exemption

The Spoon was auctioned off this week and there was only one taker. Chris Ackerman will share all things Victor Valley Transit for \$25 in the month of October.





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

Oct 6 **Board of Directors Meeting**
5:30pm Board Meeting
On ZOOM

Upcoming Programs

- Oct 14:** **OPEN**
- Oct 21:** Megha Gupta, MD **TOPIC "October Awareness, Future Care: AI in Screening for Men and Women"** (Page)
- Oct 28:** Craig Garrick, President, AVCom **TOPIC "TBA"** (Page)
- Nov 4:** **TEACHER MINI-GRANTS**
- Nov 11:** **VETERANS DAY PROGRAM** (Letner)
- Nov 18** Chris and Jason Lamoreaux, Coldwell Banker Home Source **TOPIC "Real Estate Update"** (Page)

