



# The Joshua Tree

October 14, 2025

## LANGUAGE, LORE, AND THE WEIGHT OF STORIES

Growing up in the Ozarks is more than a matter of geography, it's a culture, a cadence, and a language all its own. The Ozarks have long been defined by resilience and story, the kind that is told around kitchen tables, in church pews, and across front porches, often half-truth and half-poem. The rhythm of speech in these hills, what linguists call "Ozark English," is a living artifact of migration and survival. As described in the Encyclopedia of Arkansas, it is part of the South Midland dialect family, descended from the speech of settlers who moved west from Tennessee and Kentucky. Its hallmarks, words like brickle for brittle, jarfly for cicada, or phrases like might could and I'm a-goin' home, may sound quaint to outsiders, but they reflect a deep continuity of culture and community. Ozark speech preserves ways of thinking and living that tie modern families to their ancestors, who worked the same land and prayed under the same skies.



**Jim Cox** reflected on this heritage and the power of the stories we inherit. He spoke about how, as a child, he was taught a version of history that painted Native Americans as brutal, that they killed settlers, ravaged villages, and took women and children captive. But as he learned more over the years, Cox discovered that

the truth was far more complex. Many Indigenous tribes in the Ozark region were peaceful farmers, cultivating the land long before settlers arrived. When white settlers exhausted their own food supplies, they often raided Native farms and the violence that followed was as much about survival as savagery. The Indigenous people took captives not to enslave them but to teach them farming and self-reliance. When given the chance to return to the white settlements, many women refused, finding freedom and respect among Native communities where women often held authority, even declaring war while men farmed, hunted, and fought. Some of this culture, Cox noted, likely reflected that of the Comanche, who embodied a balance of strength and order that settlers rarely understood. The stories we tell, he said, shape our sense of right and wrong, and learning the truth is an act of courage that bridges understanding between peoples.

That idea of growing up with stories that turn out to be more myth than memory, lies at the heart of J.D. Vance's

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### This Week's Functionaries

**Invocation:** Chris Ackerman

**Flag Salute:** Maureen Mills

**4-Way Test:** Alyy Martinez

**Fine Master:**



## BILL'S BANTER

Thank you to Jim Cox for sharing his adventures of growing

up in the Ozarks and its rich history that seems to draw many back to the region for

a different way of life. Just when you think you know everything about Jim, he throws another curve ball at you!

We received a letter from ICR Staffing thanking the Foundation for a donation to their Turkey Drive that will help provide Thanksgiving meals to more than a thousand people in our community. Just another example of the work we do in our Club!

Teacher Mini-Grants have now officially opened! We are 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 next week at the start of our luncheon. Please plan to attend to have your voice heard.

*Bill Edwards*



## Jim Cox...

*Continued from Page 1*

Hillbilly Elegy, a book that speaks to the pride and pain of Appalachian and Ozark life. Like Cox, Vance wrestled with inherited tales of struggle, loyalty, and betrayal, learning that love for one's roots can exist alongside the need to challenge them. The Ozarks, like the Appalachian hills, hold that same tension: a fierce devotion to place, a suspicion of outsiders, and a language that sounds rough-hewn but is rich with meaning. It's a region where people say done been here or fair to middlin' without irony; phrases that encode both humility and humor. To grow up speaking that way is to carry a kind of cultural fingerprint, a reminder that one's voice is as much a part of identity as bloodline.

**S.C. Gwynne's** Empire of the Summer Moon deepens that historical context, chronicling the Comanche people's complex society, one that, far from the caricatures of savagery, was organized, deeply spiritual, and built on principles of adaptability. The Pursuit of Happyness by **Chris Gardner**, though set in a different world entirely, echoes the same theme of transcending circumstance, while **Judith Haas Smith's** Larger Than Life: The Legacy of **Daniel Longwell** shows how a Midwesterner rose to shape national thought without abandoning his rural sensibilities. All of these stories, like those told by Jim Cox, remind us that the line between truth and legend often blurs, but that the work of an honest life is to listen carefully, to learn which stories heal and which must be rewritten.

The Ozarks, like so many rural American places, are built on a foundation of storytelling, pride, and contradiction. Its language may sound plain, but it carries the weight of generations. And just as Jim Cox discovered in re-examining the stories of his youth, and as **J.D. Vance** chronicled in his own reckoning, there comes a time when every community must look at itself plainly, not with shame or sentiment, but with honesty. To grow up in the Ozarks is to inherit a language and a history both burdened and beautiful, to learn that words have power, and that truth, when finally spoken, can set both people and places free.

# UNITE FOR GOOD

## Big Blue Poker Chip



Jim Cox had the opportunity to draw the Blue Chip but picked green and saved it for another Rotarian. We will continue next week with 12 chips and \$250 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

## Rotary Guests

This week we welcomed **Don Kinnard** to the meeting as a guest of **Jon Hove** and our stand-in for this week was **Aly Martinez** for **Angel Espino**.

## Spoon of Exemption

**Chris Ackerman** has the Spoon this week and shared that VTA is inching closer to bringing Hydrogen Fuel Cell Buses to the High Desert! The first of 13 buses will be arriving on the 21st of October and will then go through a period of testing before being premiered to the public!

Chris will be in Lake Tahoe next week at a Transit Conference, so he passed the Spoon over to President **Bill Edwards** to use at next week's meeting to have the exception!

## Raffle



During this week's Raffle, **Chris Ackerman** donated two Victor Valley Transit highlighter pen sets, and both were won by **Bryan Gillespie**! A perfect gift for the Superintendent for Options for Youth Charter School!

Speaking of Bryan, he donated a Rotary cutting board that will be used by **Don Lager** and a Rotary goodie bag with wine glasses that will be enjoyed by **Jim Cox**.

## Scholarship Update



Our Scholarship recipient **Annabella Garcia** has arrived in Dundee, Scotland and attended her first Rotary meeting there. As our international student, she did a flag exchange with Club leadership. Annabella will be studying Forensic Anthropology at Dundee University.

We will continue to print updates on Annabella's progress as she continues her journey.

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



**VICTORVILLE ROTARY CLUB OFFICERS**

**Board of Directors**

President 2025-2027 .....	Bill Edwards
President 2027 - 2028 .....	<b>Please be Interviewed</b>
Immediate Past President/Club Service .....	Bryan Gillespie
Executive Secretary/Grants .....	Margaret Cooker
Treasurer .....	<b>Please Volunteer</b>
Youth Services/Ethics Essay .....	<b>Please Volunteer</b>
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.....	<b>Please Volunteer</b>
Special Billing .....	Esther Mears ( <b>TBD</b> )
Public Service Awards.....	<b>Please Volunteer</b>
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.....	<b>Please Volunteer</b>
Food Baskets.....	Bill Edwards
Interact (Junior Rotary).....	<b>Please Volunteer</b>
Programs .....	Mike Page
Fundraising .....	Stefanie Montoya
S.T.A.R. Students .....	Angel Espino
Club Learning Facilitator.....	<b>Please Volunteer</b>

**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**

<b>MONDAY:</b>	San Bernardino East, Imperial Palace, noon
<b>TUESDAY:</b>	Rancho Cucamonga Sunrise, 7:15 a.m. Empire Lakes Golf Course Rancho Cucamonga, 12:00 p.m., Etiwanda Gardens
<b>WEDNESDAY:</b>	San Bernardino Crossroads, Hilton, noon, Barstow, DiNapoli's Firehouse, 1358 E Main St, Barstow, CA
<b>THURSDAY:</b>	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
<b>FRIDAY:</b>	San Bernardino North, Elks Lodge, 12:05 p.m.

**Calendar Dates**

**Nov 3 Board of Directors Meeting**  
5:30pm Board Meeting  
ISU ARMAC Insurance Agency  
17177 Yuma St., Victorville, CA 92395

**Proposed Member**

*If you protest the admission of this member please respond in writing by 5 p.m. November 3 to President Bill Edwards.*

**High Desert PACE**  
**Corporate Membership**  
**Classification: Health Care: Home**  
**Sponsor: Bill Edwards**

**Upcoming Programs**

- 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)

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