



The Joshua Tree

December 31, 2025

A VIEW FROM THE HILL: A HALF YEAR IN REVIEW



It has only been half a year into our Rotary year, and already we have experienced an incredible amount of change and growth. One of the most significant transitions came with the departure of **Bill Edwards** and his wife **Marianne**, whose journey has taken them north to Washington. Bill's leadership and vision left a lasting mark on our Club, and his absence was certainly felt, especially as he had planned to serve as President through 2027.

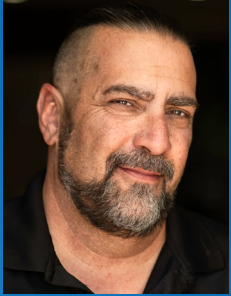
Stepping up during this time of transition, **Steve Murray** and **Brad Letner** have graciously taken on the responsibility of leading the Club, with their roles to be formally finalized at our Club Assembly when we return on January 6. Supporting this renewed leadership

team, **Pam Murray** has stepped into the vital role of Club Secretary, while **Darron Poulsen** has taken on the responsibilities of Treasurer. Their willingness to serve reflects the strength and dedication of our membership.

While it is always difficult to say goodbye to valued members, we were thrilled to welcome new faces to our Rotary family. **Don Kennard** and **Chandale Sutton** joined the Club this year, and notably, Chandale represents our first-ever Corporate Membership through High Desert PACE, an initiative originally established by **Bill Edwards**, making this milestone especially meaningful.

This year also marked the return of our popular "Craft Talks," where members shared personal stories rather

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FROM THE CAMERA'S LENS...

Just six months into the Rotary year, our Club has already experienced meaningful change and renewed momentum. While we said goodbye to longtime leader Bill Edwards and his wife Marianne as they began a new chapter in Washington, their legacy continues to shape our path forward. Stepping in during this transition, Steve Murray and Brad Letner have taken on leadership roles, supported by Pam Murray as Secretary and Darron Poulsen as Treasurer.

As I pray for our Club, my thoughts seem to go to Steve and Pam, as they have served this Club faithfully for many years and are now taking a lion's share of executive duties. Each week I see Arsalee Morales collecting Polio Pig Totals and guests lists so the meetings can be cataloged correctly. I have noticed Darron Poulsen take the Club in a real business mindset, securing our finances to where we should have been years ago.

There have been some rough waves these past six months, but I truly feel over the next couple of months, things will begin to settle and it will be clear sailing, just in time for Brad Letner to take our Club to new and exciting places!

Until next time I hijack this column...

Ackerman

A HALF YEAR IN REVIEW

Continued from page 1

than professional backgrounds. **Jim Murray** reflected on his family's move from Long Beach to the High Desert, **Jim Cox** shared memories of growing up in the Ozarks, and **Chris Ackerman** offered stories from his upbringing within a well-known Hollywood family. These talks reminded us of the diverse paths that brought each of us to Rotary.

The Club proudly continued several of its annual traditions, including **Ryan McEachron's** insurance update and the always-anticipated real estate update presented by **Jason and Chris Lamoreaux**. In November, we also hosted our Teacher Mini-Grant Program, awarding 60 local teachers grants of up to \$300 each to support creative and impactful learning experiences for our students.

Perhaps the most memorable milestone of the year occurred in September, when the Club celebrated its 75th Anniversary with a fundraising gala. The evening featured great food, music, an exciting bingo game courtesy of the Barstow Rotary Club, and a highly successful opportunity drawing. With 100 tickets sold at \$250 each, one lucky winner walked away with \$10,000, while the remaining funds were reinvested directly back into the Club's service efforts.

Throughout the first half of the year, we also followed the inspiring journey of our Rotary Scholarship recipient, **Annabella Garcia**, as she pursued anthropology studies abroad in Dundee, Scotland—an experience that truly embodied Rotary's commitment to education and global understanding.

So, what will 2026 bring? While challenges remain, the Club enters the new year with renewed leadership, a fresh outlook, and a strong sense of optimism. The road ahead may be steep at times, but there is light at the top of the hill and the view promises to be well worth the climb.

UNITE FOR GOOD

U.N. AND ROTARY CELEBRATE 80TH ANNIVERSARY



On December 11, Rotary International joined leaders from the United Nations in San Francisco to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter. The event highlighted the long-standing relationship between Rotary and the UN, which began in 1945 when Rotary members served as official observers at the Charter Conference, helping shape discussions, propose resolutions, and encourage international cooperation during a pivotal moment in world history.

Speakers from both organizations reflected on the shared values that continue to unite Rotary and the UN, emphasizing the importance of collaboration at a time when global challenges such as conflict, inequality, climate change, and rapidly advancing technologies threaten international stability. UN leaders noted that multilateral cooperation is under increasing strain, making partnerships with service-driven organizations like Rotary more vital than ever.

Despite these challenges, the event also highlighted meaningful global progress. Gains in education, especially for girls, declining rates of disease, improved maternal and child health, and the reduction of extreme poverty were cited as evidence that collective action can deliver real results. Speakers emphasized that this progress is not accidental, but the result of sustained commitment by individuals and organizations working together across borders.

Rotary's ongoing collaboration with UN agencies was also reaffirmed, including partnerships in global health, peace-building, environmental protection, and Rotary's leadership role in the Global Polio Eradication Initiative alongside the World Health Organization and UNICEF. More recently, Rotary and Rotaract members have partnered with the United Nations Environment Program to support local waterway protection efforts around the world.

The commemoration served not only as a reflection on the past, but as a call to action for the future. Leaders encouraged Rotary members to continue aligning local projects with global goals, reinforcing the belief that lasting peace and sustainable development are built through service, cooperation, and the steady, people-driven work of choosing connection over division.

CLUB ASSEMBLY JANUARY 6, 2026

Members will be voting on:

**Steve Murray to be Rotary President through June 2026 and
Brad Letner to be Rotary President for the 2026-2027 year.**



VICTORVILLE ROTARY CLUB OFFICERS

Board of Directors

President 2025-2026	TBA
President 2026 - 2027	TBA
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.....	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.....	Ben Tafoya
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

- Jan 13** **Board of Directors Meeting**
5:30pm Board Meeting
ISU ARMAC Insurance Agency
17177 Yuma St., Victorville, CA 92395
- May 2** **Rotary Golf Tournament**
Apple Valley Golf Course
\$100 per Player • \$400 per Foursome

Rotary



Club of Victorville, CA

Upcoming Programs

- Jan 4:** Chandale Sutton, High Desert Pace
TOPIC "TBA" (Page)
+ Club Assembly
- Jan 13:** **4-Way Speech Contest** (Espino)
- Jan 20:** **OPEN**
- Jan 27:** **Dan Stover Music Competition**
(Espino)



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