



The Joshua Tree

March 17, 2026

THE ETHICS THAT CHALLENGE TEENAGERS

The Rotary Club of Victorville recently welcomed some of the High Desert's brightest young minds as student winners of the annual Ethics Essay Contest shared their powerful and deeply personal reflections. The program was hosted by Ethics Committee Chair **Dr. Ron Boyd**, who continues to lead this meaningful tradition of encouraging ethical thought and dialogue among local students.

Taking top honors for the second consecutive year was **Kyla McFarlin**, a senior at University Prep, who received \$150 and will go on to represent the Club at the Rotary District Conference. Kyla also shared exciting news about her future, having earned a full-ride scholarship to the University of Southern California, where she plans to major in Pre-Law.



Kyla's essay, "Bad Blood," delivered a moving and courageous account of living with Sickle Cell disease

and the ethical struggle between remaining silent to fit in or speaking up to live authentically. Through vivid storytelling, she described years of hiding her condition out of fear of judgment, only to ultimately find strength in advocacy. Her message was clear: ethics are rooted in character, and doing what is right often requires courage, even at a personal cost.



Runner-up **Sheridan Alderson**, a junior at University Prep who plans to become a veterinarian, earned \$75 for her heartfelt essay. She reflected on the difficult choice of avoiding visits with her terminally ill

grandmother out of fear of making her condition worse, a decision that later brought regret. Her story highlighted how ethical dilemmas often involve choosing between two painful outcomes, and how growth can come from those experiences.

Also recognized as a runner-up was **Kierra Gesulga**, who received \$75. Her essay focused on her experience navigating the healthcare system with a congenital heart condition, emphasizing the importance of communication and patient advocacy.

Together, these remarkable students reminded Rotary members that ethics are not just theoretical concepts, but lived experiences, often shaped in moments of vulnerability, courage, and reflection. Through their stories, they demonstrated that the next generation is ready to lead with integrity.

This Week's Functionaries

Invocation:	Chris Ackerman
Flag Salute:	Brad Letner
4-Way Test:	Darron Poulsen
Fine Master:	Ryan McEachron



MURRAY'S MINUTE

Wow, what a month it has been awarding and recognizing so many in our community! As you

will see in this week's newsletter, we honored police and fire leaders with our Protective Service Awards and heard essays from our Ethics Essay finalists. We will be rooting on Kyla McFarlin loudly



at the District Conference. Thank you to Dr. Ron Boyd and Arsalee Morales for chairing these two committees.

Our big 50/50 drawing is still growing, with half going to one lucky winner. Let's grow that pot of money and give Brad Letner a big financial push to start his presidency in July.

Do you have your foursome yet? Please be a part in our joint golf tournament with the Apple Valley Club on May 2, 2026. This event is a great opportunity for fellowship and raise much needed dollars for the programs each Clubs serve. Sign up your foursome, become an event sponsor and donate a raffle prize!

Steve

Protective Service Awards



The Rotary Club of Victorville proudly recognized outstanding members of our local public safety agencies during this week's Protective Services Awards, presented by Committee Chair **Arsalee Morales**.

From the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Victorville Station, Detective **Matthew Mayer** was honored for his 22 years of dedicated service and his strong leadership in mentoring the next generation of deputies. Deputy **Corrin Cassidy**, a nearly 10-year veteran of the department, was also recognized for her leadership, serving as both a member of a multi-enforcement team and a field training officer.

The Victorville Fire Department was equally well represented. Captain **Carlos Torres**, who had just been promoted from Engineer only two days prior to the ceremony, was recognized alongside Engineer **Shara Aivazi** for their role in a critical "Jaws of Life" rescue. Their efforts, supported by multiple agencies and the City of Victorville through grant funding, resulted in a successful outcome for the victim, demonstrating the power of teamwork in emergency response.

Both Torres and Aivazi have been with the Victorville Fire Department since its founding in 2019, further highlighting their commitment to serving the community from day one.

The Rotary Club of Victorville is honored to celebrate these individuals who exemplify courage, leadership, and service above self.

UNITE FOR GOOD

Big Blue Poker Chip



Ryan McEachron had the chance to draw the Blue Chip but picked green and saved it for another. We'll continue next week with 8 chips and \$350 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

Rotary Guests

Joining our meeting this week were family members of our Ethics Essay finalists including **Donald and Pricilla McFarlin**, and **Evangeline Alderson**.

From our San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department we were introduced to **Kevin Kraft** and **John Clough**. From the Victorville Fire Department we met **Nick Noriega**, and **Ely Woody**.

Dr Ron Boyd was joined this week by his wife **Stephanie Boyd**.

Our Stand-ins this week were **Tony Camargo** for **Keith Metzler** and **Aly Martinez** for **Angel Espino**.

A promotional poster for a golf tournament. The background is a scenic view of a golf course at sunset. The text is white and yellow. It includes the title 'ROTARY GOLF TOURNAMENT', the location 'APPLE VALLEY GOLF COURSE', the date 'MAY 2, 2026', and the start time 'SHOTGUN START AT 8:00 AM'. It also lists the cost: 'FOURSOME • \$400' and '\$125 PER SINGLE'. At the bottom, it provides contact information for Peter Allan.

HIGH DESERT ROTARY CLUBS OF APPLE VALLEY AND VICTORVILLE PRESENTS
ROTARY GOLF TOURNAMENT
PROCEEDS BENEFIT HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SCHOLARSHIPS
LOCATION: APPLE VALLEY GOLF COURSE
MAY 2, 2026
SHOTGUN START AT 8:00 AM
FOURSOME • \$400
\$125 PER SINGLE
FOR MORE INFORMATION:
CONTACT PETER ALLAN
(760) 486-5686

Raffle



The big winner this week was not **Steve Murray**, but his grandson **Silas!** Young Silas went home with a VVTA goodie swag bag from **Chris Ackerman**, a \$10 Starbucks

gift card and a Bob's Tire hat, both donated by Grandpa!

Ackerman also gave away a VVTA bean bag phone holder that will be used by **Ben Tafoya** and a notebook for **Jim Murray**, who also won a bottle of wine from his own daughter-in-law **Pam Murray!**

Brad Letner didn't go home empty handed, with a set of wine and glasses from Pam and mechanics gloves from Steve.

Spoon of Exception

Jon Hove had the Spoon again this week, and along with sharing some of the deep, rich history of Robar Enterprises, also had more concrete fun facts for everyone!

Did you know a ready-mix truck can hold up to 10 cubic yards of concrete, which is enough to fill about 80 wheelbarrows!

The British Army used concrete to detect enemy aircraft. Before the use of radar, they used enormous concrete sound reflectors along England's coast.

Finally, reinforced concrete is the only building material that is highly resistant to both water and fire!



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	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

May 2 Rotary Golf Tournament
Apple Valley Golf Course
\$100 per Player • \$400 per Foursome

Upcoming Programs

Mar 24: Tony Winkel, Principal Hydrogeologist, Mojave Water Agency, **Title: A Tale of Two Damns and a (mostly) Dry River, Part 1** (Page)

Mar 31 5th Tuesday Rotary Meeting
BJ's Brewhouse at 5:00pm
11600 Amargosa Rd, Victorville, CA

April 7 Tony Winkel, Principal Hydrogeologist, Mojave Water Agency, **Title: A Tale of Two Damns and a (mostly) Dry River, Part 2** (Page)

April 14 Mary Villa, Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Counselor, Outreach & Education Coordinator **Title: Medicare** (Espino)



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