



The



Joshua Tree

September 22, 2026

ROTARY CONNECTS TO VICTORVILLE'S PRIORITIES

Members of the Rotary Club of Victorville had an opportunity this week to hear directly from local leaders during a Community Roundtable held at Victorville City Hall. The discussion brought together representatives from the City of Victorville, public safety, homelessness services and Victor Valley Transit Authority to share current programs, upcoming initiatives and ways Rotarians can help strengthen the community.



Victorville City Manager **Keith Metzler** opened the roundtable with an overview of the City's third Strategic Plan, a three-year roadmap designed to turn the City Council's vision into multi-year goals and measurable

priorities. An independent consultant was brought in to assist with developing the plan. Metzler explained that one of its primary goals is building stronger connections with residents through increased outreach, communication and new community programs.

Police Chief **Jerry Davenport** discussed several technologies being used to help law enforcement respond to and investigate crime. Among them is Victorville's ShotSpotter gunshot detection system, which uses

acoustic technology to detect and pinpoint suspected gunfire, allowing deputies and emergency personnel to respond more quickly. Victorville was the first city in San Bernardino County to implement the technology.



Davenport also discussed Automated License Plate Readers, or ALPRs, which use high-speed cameras to capture license plate information that can be compared with vehicles associated with crimes or investigations. He emphasized that the technology is an investigative tool rather than a system that continuously tracks individuals. According to Davenport, Victorville's ALPR program has generated approximately 1,150 investigative hits resulting in 223 arrests connected to crimes including kidnapping, murder and domestic violence. He noted that Victorville and Highland were early adopters of ALPR technology in the region, with its use later expanding to additional communities.

Community Services Director **Donna Meester** shifted the conversation to Victorville's young people and the City's efforts to provide opportunities for leadership, recreation and community involvement. Her department oversees Recreation, Library, Parks and Facilities, with community engagement playing a central role in its work.



Meester introduced the Teen Activity Group, or TAG, a program for youth ages 13 to 16 that meets twice each month at Hook Community Center. TAG gives teens opportunities to develop leadership,

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This Week's Functionaries

Invocation: **Brad Letner**

Flag Salute: **Jim Cox**

4-Way Test: **Ryan McEachron**

Fine Master: **-**



LETNER'S LETTER

If you missed our first Victorville Rotary Community Roundtable, I'm sorry. It was one of the best Rotary meetings I've been a part of. "Lightning round" briefings from our City Manager, Police Chief, Community Services Director, Fire Marshal, Homelessness Initiatives Manager, and VVTA, all wrapped into one meeting loaded with valuable information about what's happening in our city and around the region!



Huge thank you to our City Manager Keith Metzler for his support and for hosting us at City Hall.

Our next Community Roundtable will be hosted by Victor Elementary School District on the fourth Tuesday in January. Circle that date now. You don't want to miss two in a row!

Next Tuesday, the 29th, from 3-5 PM, we have a guided tour of the Victorville homelessness initiative. If you can carve the time out of your Tuesday afternoon, do it! You'll be glad you did.

Finally, our annual fundraising gala is moving to a new date. Stay tuned!

Brad

Victorville

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communication and teamwork skills while participating in community events and volunteer activities. The program also includes an end-of-year field trip.

Working alongside TAG is a Teen Advisory Committee that functions much like a youth version of a city council. Teen advisors help guide programs, assist with community outreach and budget development, identify speakers and activities, and make recommendations for future projects. Participants also gain experience with formal meetings, parliamentary procedure and Robert's Rules of Order. Most importantly, the committee gives young people an opportunity to have a voice in their community.

Meester also shared information about the Recreation Assistance Program, or RAP, which is designed to make recreation more accessible for eligible Victorville families. Assistance is based on factors including household income, Victorville residency, age, program requirements and available funding. Eligible activities include youth sports, group swim lessons, Kids Camp and preschool programs.

Victorville Fire Marshal **Jeremy Kosik** addressed community safety and prevention, beginning with the serious issue of drowning. The Fire Department is working to expand water-safety education for children and families, including outreach connected with the American Red Cross and educational materials placed in locations such as apartment complexes with swimming pools.

Another major change discussed by Kosik is Victorville's transition involving CONFIRE, the regional agency that provides fire, EMS and rescue dispatch services and coordinates emergency resources throughout San Bernardino County. Kosik said the transition planned for October 1 will bring changes to emergency medical dispatch and ambulance service, including additional options such as nurse triage and alternative care pathways. The goal is to better match patients with the level of care they need while reducing unnecessary demands on firefighters, paramedics and emergency resources.



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CREATE LASTING IMPACT

Victorville Priorities...

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Homelessness Solutions Manager **William Lamas** then provided an update on Victorville's efforts to address homelessness through street outreach, encampment response, supportive services and permanent housing. One of the most encouraging

statistics shared was the 68 percent reduction in Victorville's unsheltered homeless population since 2024. The County's 2026 Point-in-Time Count recorded 104 unsheltered individuals in Victorville, compared with 326 in 2024.

At the center of the City's strategy is the Victorville Wellness Center, a 170-bed campus that provides interim housing along with a medical clinic, recuperative care, meals, case management and other wraparound services. The facility was developed largely through a \$28 million Homekey grant and partnerships with state, county and community organizations. Lamas announced another milestone during the roundtable, sharing that the Wellness Center recently celebrated its 300th graduate into permanent housing.

Lamas explained that the City is also looking beyond homelessness after it occurs by helping vulnerable residents remain housed, including seniors who may need assistance with utilities and other necessities. As he described it, the philosophy is not simply to provide a handout, but a hand up that can lead to long-term stability.

Lamas encouraged Rotarians to spread the word about the 211 assistance line and noted that donations of hygiene products and household items can also help Wellness Center residents as they work toward greater independence. The City itself directs residents seeking homelessness resources to 211 among its available resources.

The final speaker was **Chris Ackerman**, Public Information Officer and Senior Marketing Manager for Victor Valley Transit Authority. Ackerman shared an update on VVTA's new hydrogen fuel cell electric buses and explained how hydrogen and oxygen are combined within the fuel cell to produce electricity that powers the bus. VVTA's 13

hydrogen buses are currently being phased into passenger service as the agency gathers operating data and evaluates their performance. Route 15, connecting the Victor Valley with San Bernardino, Fontana and Cal State San Bernardino, is among the routes where the buses are being deployed.

Ackerman also highlighted Route 31 and its connection to the Victorville Wellness Center, helping residents access employment, job interviews, shopping and other services. Looking ahead, he discussed plans for additional Micro-Link service in Adelanto and Lucerne Valley, as well as fare



modernization efforts including open-loop payments and fare capping. Open-loop technology will eventually allow riders to use a regular bank card as their fare payment, while fare capping is designed to ensure passengers stop paying once they reach the equivalent cost of an established pass within a specified period.

Ackerman closed with a request specifically for Rotarians: be positive champions for public transportation. Whether by riding the bus, sharing information about available services or helping others understand the role transit plays in connecting people to jobs, education, medical care and essential services, community and business leaders can help change perceptions about public transportation.

The Community Roundtable demonstrated how many different pieces must come together to build a stronger Victorville. From public safety and youth development to emergency preparedness, homelessness solutions and transportation, each presentation carried a common theme: meaningful progress requires partnerships. For Rotarians whose motto is "Service Above Self," the morning also provided several practical opportunities to turn information into action.



VICTORVILLE ROTARY CLUB OFFICERS

Board of Directors

President 2026 - 2028	Brad Letner
Immediate Past President	Steve Murray
Executive Secretary	Pam Murray
Treasurer	Darron Poulsen
Foundation.....	Jon Hove
Membership	Bryan Gillespie
Club Service	Arsalee Morales
Community Service	Craig Garrick
Vocational Service	Angel Espino
International Service.....	Ben Tafoya
Youth Service	Ryan McEachron
Directors/Members-at-Large.....	Bob Basen & Dr. Ron Boyd
Joshua Tree/Marketing	Chris Ackerman
Recording Secretary.....	Pam Murray

Positions & Committee Chairs

Scholarships.....	Kirsten Acosta
Billing	Pam Murray & Darron Poulsen
Public Service Awards.....	Arsalee Morales
Teacher Mini-Grants	Angel Espino
Special Projects.....	Rob Kilpatrick
Dan Stover Music Contest.....	Angel Espino
Read B4K	Brad Letner
Grants.....	Please Volunteer
Food Baskets.....	Ben Tafoya
Interact (Junior Rotary).....	Please Volunteer
Programs	Mike Page
Fundraising	Brad Letner
S.T.A.R. Students	Chris Ackerman
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 5

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30pm Board Meeting
Coldwell Banker
12138 Industrial Blvd., Suite102
Victorville, CA 92395

Oct 17

76th Anniversary Fundraiser

5:30pm Doors
6:00pm Dinner • 7:15pm Drawing
Spring Valley Lake Community Center
12975 Rolling Ridge, SVL

Programs & Events

Sept 29

5th Tuesday Community Service

City of Victorville • 3:00pm
Homelessness Initiative

Oct 6

OPEN

Oct 13

2nd Tuesday Fun: Scandia Night Out 5:00pm

Scandia, 12627 Mariposa Rd,
Victorville, CA 92395

Nov 10

2nd Tuesday Fun: Scandia Night Out 5:00pm

Los Domingos Restaurant
Apple Valley

Nov 17

2026 Teacher Mini-Grants

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