

# The Joshua Tree

November 10, 2020

## A JOURNEY ACROSS THE THIN ICE

*Due to the scheduled speaker canceling his appearance with 2 hours until the meeting, Joshua Tree Editor Chris Ackerman volunteered to share his testimony for the first time publicly....*

Many people suffer from addictions. For some it's drugs, pornography, or alcohol, but for me it was what I like to call "Popularity". Since I was child, I have been seeking my place to be someone special and popular, and it was a journey that nearly destroyed me. Back in my younger days, I was the one who was not overly smart or athletic, but skinny, scrawny and always picked last for the team and left behind. Going into my teenage years, (1979-1985) I went the other way, as a metal head stoner and all the trouble and mischief that goes along with that. I found a passionate love for music and got lost in that.

In fear of what I was becoming, my mom read an article about a Christian Heavy Metal band called Stryper and bought me their first cassette. I ended up seeing them opening up a show at a club, even though I didn't believe in God, I respected them standing up for their faith, which led me to a youth group and in December 1985, I accepted Christ as my savior.

I thought I had finally become someone of substance and importance, but was soon to realized my Christian walk was akin



to walking across a lake of thin ice, and at any time something bad happened, the cracks would begin to emerge and so would my faith. My desire was more focused on having an identity over a deeper relationship with Jesus, and I soon learned that when I attended a conservative Bible College in Santa Cruz. Most of the students there were pastor's kids or missionary's kids, and quoting the Dean, "We've never had anyone like you here before, so we are going to let you in, but you have to be on probation from

day one." As a long-haired metal head Christian, it wasn't just the staff that didn't know what to do with me, but the students as well. Once again, I was back to my childhood, walking around the campus alone on Saturday nights, while most students were all in town, developing lifelong memories. After 2 years of this, I packed a few things and just drove away, never to return.

Back in Los Angeles, I found my purpose (or so I thought), I became the Lead Singer (Screamer) of a Christian Thrash Metal band, called Betrayal. We were signed to Wonderland Records, released two albums, "Renaissance by Death" and "The Passing". Once again the thin ice emerged. On the surface all looked good, behind the scenes, I was severely depressed, being taken advantage of, and doing things a front man of a Christian band should not be doing. Looking back now, my joy came from on performing on stage, signing autographs, and being recognized at other Christian metal shows.

In May of 1993, the unthinkable happened. On our way to Texas to play 3 sold out shows, the axle broke on our equipment trailer and the accident caused a father and 28-year-old son to hit our

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### This Week's Functionaries

- Invocation:** Chris Ackerman
- Flag Salute:** Kevin Kane
- 4-Way Test:** Steve Orr
- Finemaster:** Ryan McEachron



Thank you so much to Chris Ackerman for stepping in at the zero hour to speak and share with the Club his inspirational story on how God changed his life. Please take time to read the story and share with others.

It's time to begin our next round of auction items that will go live online for about six weeks as a fundraiser



for our Club. Kevin Kane has donated a basket

of "cheer" and I am encouraging all members to bring two bottles of alcohol to add to it. Please bid on these items, share on your



social media pages, and help raise the necessary funds we need. There are several trips, another load of gravel from Robar Enterprises and much more!

Rotaract is coming back and we are looking for six volunteers. Our Interact Clubs are at 6 schools and each need a Rotary Liaison to work with them as a resource. The minimum requirement is to attend the Interact Club's BOD meeting 1x a month and report back to the Youth Services Chair. Please see Ad on page 4.

Finally, don't forget we still have Luci Lights for sale for \$19. They make a great Christmas gift, and help our Foundation's Service Projects at the same time!

Steve



## ACKERMAN...

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tire, flip multiple times and end the life of one and a paraplegic for the other. Imagine being a 21-year-old, alone at 2:00am in the darkness of the Arizona desert standing over a dead body and severely injured person. The thin ice finally broke, and I fell through completely, as well as my faith. It didn't take much longer till the band officially broke up, never to be seen from again. I was alone again.

I cut off my hair, went to College, studying Graphic Design became a business professional, which seemed to work. A few years later I became a sports announcer and that worked as well, and my desire to be popular began to devour me. Jesus teaches that our priorities in life are to be God, spouse, children, and then all the rest. My life priorities became "Crazy Chris" (*my sports announcer persona*), and everything else underneath. I spent countless hours at Chamber functions, mixers, events, motorcycle races I wasn't announcing at, wine tastings (which I didn't even drink), all to be seen and be recognized. My drive for popularity became a drug that gave me my self-worth, and it could never be satisfied. All I wanted to do was be a full-time professional sports announcer and every time I would hit a dead end; I would be livid. I wanted to be what I called an "A-List High Desert Business Celebrity" and whenever someone newer came in and took my spot, I would end up in a jealous rage. I was posting constantly on Facebook and always checking back to see how many "Likes" the post received. My kids used to say every time we went out, "Time to play the game on how many people recognize dad." It had taken control of my life, while God and family took more of a backseat.

In 2017, the ice started to crack again. You remember my love for music I mentioned earlier? A Christian artist I love named Neal Morse released a rock album, "The Similitude of a Dream" that was the story, "The Pilgrim's Progress", set to music. On this album there is a song, entitled "So Far Gone", (*you can find it on YouTube*) that shook me to my core. It felt like the song was written about and directly to me. This album made me begin to evaluate my life in a way I had never done before.

The ice finally broke wide in October 2018. My marriage was ending, and I was more the father of my kids than their dad. An incident happened that caused me to not only fall through the ice, but have a glacier fall on top of me for good measure. All I could feel was hopelessness and utter despair. My Brother-in-Law Curtis in Tennessee sent me a text that said, "God is going to show you how real He is through this situation", and long

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# Rotary Opens Opportunities

## Big Blue Dice



*Tina Escareño had the opportunity to grab the Blue Dice, but took out a white one and saved the opportunity for another Rotarian.*

*We will continue next week with 5 dice and \$425 for the Rotarian who can pick the Blue Dice out of the bag.*

## ACKERMAN...

*Continued from page 2*

story short, that is exactly what happened. Just like the character “Christian” in Pilgrim’s Progress, I ended up at a fork in the road, where one way kept me on the path I had been living, and the other, forgiveness. I chose the latter path and almost immediately all the years of anger, hate, egotism, and jealousy instantly melted away...

Today in 2020, my life is now much different. I have a wonderful relationship with my children, teach Sunday School at my church, and thanks to God’s grace I left a bad job situation and was blessed at a job where I now flourish as Marketing Manager/PIO for Victor Valley Transit. Not only do I look forward to going to work each day, love the staff, but it has allowed me to put my side company Signify Designs, almost to bed, and come home and be a husband and father. I am rarely on social media anymore and have left the Business Mixer life behind. I will never be perfect, and I still struggle with the desire for “Popularity” from time to time, but I surround myself with a small circle of Christian business leaders who keep me grounded. I have a real, mature relationship with God, instead of my past, which was all surface, no feeling.

Finally, when I am announcing sporting events now as “Crazy Chris”, I do an invocation, and I finish each one with the same words I received two years ago, “If you are heartbroken, in pain, in addiction, anger, depression or can’t look at yourself in the mirror, then ask God show you how real He is in ways you cannot imagine.”

## Raffle

**Stew Anderson** will get an early start on his Christmas shopping with the \$25 Walmart gift card he won from **Steve Orr**, courtesy of Heritage Victor Valley Medical Group. **Ryan McEachron** was the biggest winner, by taking home a bottle of Jim Bean Apple and a bottle of wine from **Dwight Johnson**, which Ryan proceeded to donate of the “Cheer Basket” for our fundraising online auction.

## Rotary Guests

We only had one guest this week, **Bob Wyatt**, who was invited by **Margaret Cooker**. He is also an old friend of **Mike Page**.

Our Stand-In this week was **Stefanie Montoya** for **Bryan Gillespie**.

## Fine Session

**Ryan McEachron** was our Fine Master this week and chose to do a “Presidential Order” fine session, beginning with our current President **Steve Orr** in the amount of \$20. From there he hit each succeeding Rotary President, with **Jon Hove** taking a fine of \$21, **Arsalee Morales** for \$22, **Jessica Perez** for \$23, and finishing off with **Bill Edwards** in the amount of \$25 for his 2025-2026 Presidency. In a rare appearance, **Russ Stringham** came and left with \$20 less just for showing up. Ryan also gave himself a Hard Fine of \$100 for giving us all an election update.

The final fine was given to **David North** in the amount of \$25 for taking photos of Ryan eating his lunch. (*Note: David took photos of more than just Ryan mid-bite. I have the photos. They are awesome. \$100 each to release or \$250 to delete forever.*)

## The Polio Pig

**Collected this week: \$3.00**

**Collected to Date: \$17,610.23**

**Total equals: 96,334 Doses!**

*One dollar equals 2 doses of vaccine!  
\$500 pays for a Polio Clinic!*

# Rotary Club of Victorville, CA



The Joshua Tree is a Weekly Publication of the Rotary Club of Victorville  
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If you are not receiving your newsletter, please contact Editor Chris Ackerman at  
chris@signifydesigns.com or 760-559-1686 to be added to the e-mail or mailing list.

## VICTORVILLE ROTARY CLUB OFFICERS

### Board of Directors

President 2019-2021 .....	Steve Orr
President 2021-2022 .....	Jon Hove
President 2022-2023 .....	Arsalee Morales
President 2023-2025 .....	Jessica Perez
President 2025-2026 .....	Bill Edwards
Immediate Past President .....	Margaret Cooker
Treasurer .....	Donna Wells
Executive Secretary .....	Margaret Cooker
Publicity/Public Relations .....	Kevin Kane
Club Service .....	Bill Edwards
Community Service .....	<b>PLEASE VOLUNTEER</b>
International Service .....	Ben Tafoya
Youth Service/Ryla & TLC .....	Arsalee Morales
Vocational Service .....	Jessica Perez
Grants/Speech Contests .....	<b>PLEASE VOLUNTEER</b>
Scholarships .....	Please Volunteer
George Hensel Ethics Essay Contest .....	Ron Boyd
Membership .....	Don Lager
Billing Officer .....	Esther Mears

**Members-at-Large:** Dwight Johnson & Rob Kilpatrick

### Positions & Committee Chairs

BOD Secretary .....	Marilyn Buttlerwerth
Programs .....	Mike Page
Public Service .....	Rick Bessinger, Teressa DeAtley
Sergeant At Arms .....	Arsalee Morales
Dan Stover Music Contest .....	Dr. Bowtie Brian
S.T.A.R. Students .....	Jim Barnes/Robin Cackler
Fundraising .....	Bill Edwards
Flowers and Gifts .....	KayMarie Gregory
Joshua Tree Editor .....	Chris Ackerman

The Victorville Rotary Club meets every Tuesday for fellowship at 11:30 a.m. and meeting at 12:00 noon at the Green Tree Golf Course Clubhouse, 14144 Green Tree Blvd., 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>	High Desert/Hesperia Club meets 7:00 a.m., Denny's, 14165 Main St., Hesperia San Bernardino Crossroads, Hilton, noon, Barstow, Rositas, 540 Main St, 12:00 p.m.
<b>THURSDAY:</b>	Apple Valley, ZOOM Meetings, 1st, 2nd and 4th Thurs 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

**Dec 14: Board of Directors meeting**  
5:30 pm Meeting  
DCB Board Room, 2nd Floor  
Hesperia and Silica Roads

## Upcoming Programs

**Nov 17:** Jon Hove, President, CEO & Chairman of the Board Robar Enterprises, Inc. **Topic: Supplying the Foundation for Life in California** (Page)

## Rotaract

Rotary Club Partner



We are looking for Rotary members that would be willing to serve as liaisons for our Interact clubs at our local Jr. High and High Schools. We would need about 6 people to complete this project. Commitment is to attend the Interact Club's BOD meeting once a month.

If you are interested please contact either Margaret Cooker at 760-475-0117 or Arsalee Morales at 760-985-9581



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