

The Joshua Tree

January 14, 2025

UNPRECEDENTED GROWTH AND EXCELLENCE

Dr. Dan Walden, Superintendent/President of Victor Valley College, has become a transformative figure in the college's history. His visionary leadership has propelled VVC to be one of the fastest-growing colleges in California and the nation. With a commitment to fostering a culture of care, innovation, and academic excellence, Dr. Walden has made it clear that his tenure will conclude with retirement from VVC in six years, ensuring his legacy remains deeply rooted in the Victor Valley community.



Under Dr. Walden's guidance, VVC has experienced remarkable growth and success. The college's enrollment has reached a total of 24,874 students for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, affirming its status as a middle-sized institution with a national reputation for growth. This success is a testament to Dr. Walden's dedication to creating a "five-star experience" for students and staff alike.

A cornerstone of Dr. Walden's leadership is the implementation of innovative student services. The Connections2Success Call Center, established in 2021, exemplifies this vision. In its first year, the center answered 50,000 calls, providing crucial support to students, parents, and community members. In the 2023-2024 academic year, the call center achieved an impressive 118,087 answered calls, with 90% resolved on the first attempt. Caller satisfaction rose to 85%, a 4% increase from the previous year, thanks to the

dedication of Student Service Specialists who handle tier 1 inquiries.

The Engagement Center has also been pivotal in supporting students. Since its inception, the center has assisted over 17,500 students with services such as class registration, navigating Canvas, troubleshooting records holds, and resolving email issues. This academic year alone, the center has served 921 students, with 2,713 unduplicated students benefiting from its resources.

VVC's academic accomplishments continue to shine under Dr. Walden's leadership. Last year's graduation ceremony attracted over 10,000 attendees, celebrating 900 in-person graduates out of 2,000 eligible students. To support the growing student body, VVC added 20 new full-time faculty members and 112 part-time faculty

This Week's Functionaries

Invocation:	Bill Edwards
Flag Salute:	Bryan Gillespie
4-Way Test:	Darron Poulsen
Fine Master:	Ryan McEachron

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GILLESPIE'S GAB

Thank you to Dr. Dan Walden for taking time out of his very busy schedule to share the latest news and

updates on Victor Valley College. We look forward to more



exciting plans coming to the campus in the next few years.

The 35th annual Peace Conference is coming up on January 25th in Yorba Linda, and we will sponsor four Club members. Please see me if you'd like to attend.

Sign ups are now ready for our annual Super Bowl Party on February 9th at the home of Darron & Donna Poulsen with lots of food, lots of drink and football! All attendees are requested to bring a side dish or desert with pulled pork, chicken, tri-tip and mac n cheese already on the menu!

Our annual Valentine's Dinner is being planned for February 12th at Chateau Chang in Victorville. Please mark your calendars.

Until next week...

Bryan

Dr. Walden

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members this year, with plans to onboard an additional 16 full-time faculty in the near future.

The college's Educational Event Center, seating 1,000 people, stands as a testament to its commitment to hosting significant academic and community events.

Dr. Walden's efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2023, he received the prestigious Dr. John W. Rice Award, honoring his commitment to advancing equity and student success.

Victor Valley College has broadened its educational offerings to include non-credit courses and certificates. Currently available programs include Home Economics, Auto Non-Credit, Commercial Driver's License, Emergency Telecommunication Dispatcher, Cosmetology, and Forklift Operation. Future offerings will include Court Reporting, Low Voltage Installation Technician, Notary Public, Pharmacy Technician, Phlebotomy, Real Estate Non-Credit, and Photography, further enhancing opportunities for the community.

Dr. Walden's approach to leadership is grounded in his role as a "Chief Experience Officer." By fostering a supportive campus culture and implementing programs like the Caring Campus Initiative, VVC has seen increased retention and engagement among students and staff.

As Dr. Walden looks ahead to retirement in six years, his focus remains on ensuring Victor Valley College's continued trajectory of growth and excellence. His enduring impact will leave a legacy of opportunity and success for generations to come.



THE MAGIC OF ROTARY

Big Blue Poker Chip



Jason Lamoreaux had the chance to draw the Blue Chip, but drew green and saved the chance for another next week! We will continue next week with 12 chips and \$250 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip!

Rotary Guests

This week **Alysa Martinez** from Raymond James was a Stand-in for **Angel Espino**.

Spoon of Exception



Keith Metzler had the Spoon this week and shared that the City of Victorville have sent engines and firefighters to assist with the Eaton an Palisades fires and on Monday, January 20th at 10am, the City of Victorville will be holding

its annual Peace March in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Raffle

The only raffle prize this week was a bottle of wine from **David North** that will be enjoyed by **Bob Basen!**



Fine Session



Ryan McEachron was our Fine Master and congratulated **Stew Anderson**, who received a \$500 check for winning the Chip Draw last month. Of course, Ryan took 10% (\$50) for the Club as a fine. **Jason Lamoreaux** paid a \$55 penalty in honor of his birthday and **Mike Page** gave an update on this three daughters and was charged \$10 for each, equaling a \$30 fine. Speaking of Mr. Page, **Mike Johnson** told Ryan about his new office at Providence St. Mary, that resulted in a \$10 "new job" payment.

Proposed Member

If you protest the admission of this member please respond in writing by 5 p.m. February 3 to President Bryan Gillespie.

Dr. Terry Walker
Adelanto Elementary School District
Interim Superintendent
Classification: Education
Sponsor: Angel Espino





VICTORVILLE ROTARY CLUB OFFICERS

Board of Directors

President 2024-2025	Bryan Gillespie
President 2025-2027	Bill Edwards
President 2027 - 2028	Please be Interviewed
Immediate Past President	Steve Murray
Executive Secretary/Foundation/Grants	Margaret Cooker
Treasurer/Scholarships	David North
Youth Services/Ethics Essay	Ron Boyd
Club Service & Membership	Bill Edwards
Community Service/Speech Contests	Mike Johnson
Vocational Service	Please Volunteer
International Service.....	Ben Tafoya
Member At Large, Young Leaders Contact.....	Arsalee Morales
Member At Large, Special Projects	Rob Kilpatrick

Members-at-Large: Bob Basen, Darron Poulsen, Angel Espino

Positions & Committee Chairs

BOD/PP Secretary.....	Pam Murray
Special Billing	Esther Mears (TBD)
Public Service Awards	Please Volunteer
Teacher Mini-Grants	Angel Espino
Dan Stover Music Contest.....	Angel Espino
Joshua Tree Editor	Chris Ackerman
Read B4K	Please Volunteer
Foundation & Grants	Margaret Cooker
Food Baskets.....	Please Volunteer
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

- Feb 9:** **Super Bowl Party**
2pm
Home of Darron & Donna Poulsen
18841 Nowata Rd, Apple Valley
- Feb 10:** **Board of Directors Meeting**
5:00pm Fellowship
5:30pm Board Meeting
Location: Robar Enterprises
17671 Bear Valley Road, Hesperia, CA

Upcoming Programs

- Jan 21:** **Dan Stover Music Contest** (Espino)
- Jan 28:** **High School 4-Way Speech Contest**
(Johnson)
- Feb 4:** Col. Tony Marshall USAF Retired **TOPIC**
"Millionaire Minds Kids Aviation Club" (Page)
- Feb 11:** Rob Kilpatrick, Sr. Project Manager,
Dave Evans & Associates **TOPIC**
"History of the High Speed Rail from LA to Las Vegas" (Page)
- Feb 18:** **Area High School 4-Way Speech Contest** (Johnson)
- Feb 25:** Melanie Ajanwachuku **TOPIC "Fueling Life: How Smart Nutrition Choices Empower Health and Longevity"** (Page)

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