

The Joshua Tree

May 13, 2025

CLOTHING THE COMMUNITY WITH LOVE

This week, the Rotary Club of Victorville welcomed **Jessica Crouch**, owner and operator of Rhea Lana's of the High Desert, as their guest speaker. Originally from Arkansas, Jessica brings not only entrepreneurial drive but also a deep connection to Rotary—having grown up around the organization with her father, a former Rotary District Governor. Now a High Desert resident, Jessica is combining her passion for family, community, and service through her work with Rhea Lana's.



Rhea Lana's began in Arkansas in 1977 as a small, local children's consignment event. In 2008, it expanded into a nationwide franchise model, and today there are over 100 franchises across the country. Jessica has been involved in Rhea Lana's for 11 years, and after noticing a need for such an event in the High Desert—where the nearest locations were Temecula and San Diego—she brought the concept to local families.

These seasonal pop-up consignment events provide gently used children's clothing, shoes, toys, books, backpacks, baby gear, and furniture, serving families

with kids from newborn through teen years. The model allows consignors to earn 60–70% of their sales, while the remaining proceeds support event operations such as venue setup and staffing. It's a win-win for families looking to both save and earn money.

The High Desert location has hosted three successful events so far, with a fourth planned for September. Their most recent event saw 2,000 to 3,000 attendees and featured over 30,000 items for sale. Following each event, unsold items are

donated to local nonprofit organizations such as Rose of Sharon and Mouse's House Ministries. After the last event, over 15,000 items—valued at more than \$50,000—were donated to families in need.

Each event spans about a week. Fridays and Saturdays are reserved for VIP and early access ticket holders who want first pick of the merchandise. From Sunday through Thursday, the event is open to the general public. At the end of the week, foster and military families are invited to shop entirely for free before remaining items are donated.

Jessica's presentation to the Rotary Club highlighted how Rhea Lana's is more than just a consignment sale—it's a community-building effort that supports families at every stage. Through affordability, sustainability, and generosity, she's helping the High Desert grow stronger, one event at a time.

Find out more at highdesert.rhealana.com

This Week's Functionaries

Invocation: Bill Edwards

Flag Salute: Bryan Gillespie

4-Way Test: Dr Derek King

Fine Master: Bill Edwards

www.victorvillerotary.org



GILLESPIE'S GAB

Thank you to Jessica Crouch from Rhea Lana's of the High Desert for stopping by and sharing information

about your organization. It sounds like your September event will be your biggest ever!



Please mark your calendar for the Rotary Leadership Academy coming to Excelsior Charter School on May 17th! The Academy runs from 10am - 3pm and I have been told there will be a mixer for attendees at Oggi's in Apple Valley following the Academy.

On Tuesday May 20th, we will have this year's Read B4K Graduation at 5:00pm at the Ralph Baker Learning Center in Victorville. Let's have a big group of Rotarians there to support these youngsters!

There will be a Past Presidents' Dinner at Mama Carpino's in May 22nd. If you are a former President of our Club, please make plans to attend.

Tickets will be available soon for our 75th Anniversary Gala & Fundraiser on September 6th. Someone will walk away with \$10,000.

Until next week...

Bryan

A New Rotarian...Again!



Like a prodigal son returning, **Brad Letner** became a Rotarian with our Club for a second time this week. Sponsored by **Steve Murray** and inducted by Past District Governor **Margaret Cooker**, Brad spoke about his passion for Read B4K, a program that he originally started with our Club during his first stint. As Brad mentioned during his introductory time, as Polio is a health vaccine, education is a poverty vaccine.



THE MAGIC OF ROTARY

Big Blue Poker Chip



Jim Cox had the chance to draw the Blue Chip and picked the correct one and walked away with \$475! We will start again next week with 14 chips and \$200 for the lucky Rotarian who can draw the Blue Chip.

Fine Session

Bill Edwards was our Fine Master this week and began by giving **Brad Letner** a \$5 fine for becoming a Rotarian...again. **Dr. Derek King** was penalized \$10 for going for the sympathy vote for his recent shoulder surgery, and **Steve Murray** took a \$20 hit for being Brad's Rotary Sponsor. Steve offered to pay Brad's fine, so his total went up to \$25.

Finally, **Mike Page** gladly accepted a hard fine of \$25 for announcing his first granddaughter coming this September!

Raffle



This week, **Chris Ackerman** brought a bean bag phone holder that will be used by **Bill Edwards** and **Bryan Gillespie** won a VVTA Highlighter set from Ackerman too. **Alicia Anderson** gave away Excelsior Charter School cups

with chocolates that will be enjoyed by **Bo Goulet**, **Bob Basen** and **Brad Letner**. Finally, Brad donated two bottles of wine that will be sipped by Basen and Gillespie.

Rotary Guests

This week our only stand-in was **Aly Martinez** for **Angel Espino**.

Spoon of Exception



Alicia Anderson had her second week with the Spoon and shared the success of Excelsior Charter School currently celebrating their 30th year as a Charter school and their new Beauty Shop Class for students.

The public is invited to the North Victorville campus on Mondays for donation only haircuts, styling and nail services from students.

A poster for a graduation event. It features a close-up of a young child with curly hair wearing a blue graduation cap. In the top right corner is the Rotary Club of Victorville, CA logo. The text on the poster reads: "Read B4K Graduation", "May 20, 2025 • 5:00pm", "RB21 Dr. Ralph Baker", "21st Century Learning Center.", and "15456 El Evado Rd • Victorville CA 92394".

Rotary
Club of Victorville, CA

Read B4K Graduation
May 20, 2025 • 5:00pm
RB21 Dr. Ralph Baker
21st Century Learning Center.
15456 El Evado Rd • Victorville CA 92394

The Polio Pig

Collected this week: \$19.00

Collected to Date: \$21,430.83

Total equals: 103,840 Doses!

*One dollar equals 2 Doses of Vaccine!
\$500 pays for a Polio Clinic!*



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	Please Volunteer
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	Bill Edwards
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 17: Rotary Leadership Academy**
10am - 3pm
Excelsior Charter School
18422 Bear Valley Road, Victorville
- May 20: Read B4K Graduation**
5:00pm • Ralph Baker Center
15456 El Evado Road
Victorville, CA 92394
- May 22: Past Presidents' Dinner**
5:30pm Fellowship • 6:30pm Dinner
Mama Carpino's Apple Valley
\$50 per person/\$95 per couple
- June 9: Board of Directors Meeting**
5:00pm Fellowship
5:30pm Board Meeting
Location: Robar Enterprises
17671 Bear Valley Road, Hesperia, CA

Upcoming Programs

- May 20:** Jim Cox, Former Victorville City Manager **TOPIC "Growth and Development of a City - Good Planning or an Accident?"** (Page)
- May 27: OPEN**
- June 3:** Dan Munsey, San Bernardino County Fire Chief **TOPIC "TBA"** (Page)

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