



**TOWN OF APPLE VALLEY  
HISTORICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA  
REGULAR MEETING  
April 11, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.**

The Apple Valley Historical Advisory Committee will hold its regular meeting in the Development Services Building, Conference Room 1, located at 14975 Dale Evans Parkway, Apple Valley, California 92307 on April 11, 2023, at 9:00 a.m.

The Town of Apple Valley recognizes its obligation to provide equal access to those individuals with disabilities. Please contact the Town Clerk's Office at (760) 240-7000, ext. 7800, two working days prior to the scheduled meeting for any requests for reasonable accommodation.

Materials related to an item on this agenda submitted to the Committee after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Town Clerk's Office at 14955 Dale Evans Parkway, Apple Valley, CA during normal business hours.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

**ROLL CALL:**

\_\_\_\_ Tom Hoegerman - Chair      \_\_\_\_ Marcy Taylor - Vice Chair  
\_\_\_\_ Barbara Davisson      \_\_\_\_ Pat Orr      \_\_\_\_ Rick Piercy

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Please Limit Comment Time to 3 Minutes

**4. HISTORICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONSENT AGENDA:**

**4.1 Approval of Minutes**

That the Historical Advisory Committee approve the subject minutes as part of the consent agenda.

**5. BUSINESS OF THE COMMITTEE:**

**5.1 Historical Points of Interest Book #2**

Review Historical Points of Interest Book #2, make any final edit suggestions and approve for printing.

**5.2 Apple Valley Driving Tour**

Review GIS mapping and tour script and listen to tour script for the Apple Valley Places to Visit Video.

**5.3 Strategic Planning Meeting**

Strategic Planning Meeting scheduled May 2, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. to set goals and define committee direction and purpose.

**5.4 Planning Ordinance Regarding Historical Buildings**

**5.5 Placement and Status of Signs at School and Other Locations**

**6. COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**6.1 Suggested items for next Agenda**

**6.2 Time, Date & Place for Next Historical Advisory Committee Regular or Special Meeting**

A. Regular Meeting – May 9, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. Development Services Building, Room 1

**7. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Please Limit Comment Time to 5 Minutes

**8. STAFF MEMBER COMMENTS:**

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

Recommended Motion:

To adjourn the meeting of the Historical Advisory Committee at TIME.



Town of Apple Valley

## Apple Valley Historical Advisory Committee

### MINUTES

March 14, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

Development Services Building, Room 1

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rick Piercy called to order the regular meeting on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, at 9:03 a.m.

#### PRESENT

**Members Present:** Chair Rick Piercy, Vice Chair Marcy Taylor, Committee Member Tom Hoegerman, and Committee Member Pat Orr

**Members Absent:** Committee Member Barbara Davisson

**Staff:** Julie Ryan, Special Projects Manager

**Council Member:** Mayor Pro Tem Larry Cusack

#### 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

#### 3. SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Selection of Chair and Vice Chair was as follows:

- (1) Committee to select one of its number as Chair

**Motion by:** Committee Member Orr nominated Committee Member Hoegerman

**Seconded by:** Committee Member Piercy

Motion Passed Unanimously.

- (2) Committee to select one of its number as Vice Chair

**Motion by:** Committee Member Orr nominated Committee Member Taylor

**Seconded by:** Committee Member Hoegerman

Motion Passed Unanimously.

#### 4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

#### 5. HISTORICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE CONSENT AGENDA

##### 5.1 Approval of Minutes

That the Historical Advisory Committee approve the subject minutes as part of the consent agenda.

Vice Chair Taylor pulled item 6.7 to discuss. Mayor Pro Tem Cusack stated minutes numbering and next meeting date listed on 7.2 were incorrect.

**Motion by:** Chair Hoegerman to approve minutes to include the updated numbering and item 6.7 and 7.2.

**Seconded by:** Committee Member Piercy

Motion Passed Unanimously.

**6. BUSINESS OF THE COMMITTEE**

**6.1 Historical Points of Interest Book #2**

Committee provided additional edits. Final to committee in April. If approved, book will go to Council for approval 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in April.

**6.2 Apple Valley Driving Tour Collaboration**

GIS map provided. A couple edits to locations needed.

**6.3 Strategic Plan Discussion**

Committee members advised to speak with respective Council Member for direction of committee. Strategic Planning discussion set for May 2, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**6.4 Development of Flyers for Public Education**

Vice Chair Taylor requested flyer development for Heritage Room.

**7. COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**7.1 Suggested items for next Agenda**

Book #2, Strategic Plan, Tour script reading & listening.

**7.2 Time, Date & Place for Next Historical Advisory Committee Regular or Special Meeting**

A. Regular Meeting – April 11, 2023 – Development Services Building, Room 1, at 9:00 a.m.

**8. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

Chair Hoegerman – No Comment.

Vice Chair Taylor – Distributed flyer for April Clampers event April 30, 10:00 a.m. at Horseman's Center

Committee Member Orr – No Comment.

Committee Member Piercy – Taking approved Tour Script to AAE.

No formal action taken.

**9. STAFF MEMBER COMMENTS**

No comment.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

To adjourn the meeting of the Apple Valley Historical Advisory Committee at 10:12 a.m.



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Julie Ryan, Special Projects Manager



**Town of Apple Valley**

***"A Better Way of Life"***

## **Historical Points of Interest in Apple Valley Book 2**



**Compiled by the 2022-2023  
Apple Valley Historical Advisory Committee**



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## Dedication and Credits

This first published edition of “Historical Points of Interest in Apple Valley” Book 2 is dedicated to the past committee members who started the process by selecting sites, writing drafts, and collecting photos. The locations identified in this book do not have markers in front, are not included on the driving tour, and many are no longer standing. The locations include several sites that were moved from the original Book 1, for various reasons.

The current committee members hope to give the newcomer to Apple Valley an insight into the development of the Town from the early homesteaders and guest ranches, through the flurry of building during the Bass and Westlund era, to the historic and more contemporary structures that define the Town of Apple Valley today. The booklet should evoke pleasant memories for long-time residents, who have watched the Town grow and change over the years.

Special thanks to Victor Valley historians Kate O’Rourke, Fran Elgin, Michelle Lovato, Richard Thompson, Leo Lyman, and others too numerous to mention, whose publications aided in the research for this booklet. In addition, the collections located at the Apple Valley Town Hall Heritage Room, the Apple Valley Legacy Museum, and the Mohahve Historical Society archives housed at the Victor Valley College Library, provided the research and photos to make this publication possible.

### Apple Valley Town Council (2022)

Mayor Scott Nassif

Mayor Pro Tem Larry Cusack

Council Member Art Bishop

Council Member Curt Emick

Council Member Kari Leon

### Historical Advisory Committee (2022)

Chair Rick Piercy

Vice Chair Marcella Taylor

Committee Member Barbara Davisson

Committee Member Tom Hoegerman

Committee Member Pat Orr

Staff Liaisons Lena Quinonez & Julie Ryan



## Introduction

What makes a community? Say you have before you a vast expanse of nothing but soil, sun, and Joshua trees, how do you begin to build a place that people will call home? Apple Valley was legally incorporated in 1988, but the foundation was laid long before by visionaries who saw more than a barren desert. They saw instead a place people would want to put down roots - a place to live, a place to shop, and a place to play.

While settlement occurred in the High Desert hundreds of years ago, this booklet covers primarily the time since the early 1900s, and especially the activity since 1946, when Newton T. Bass (“Newt”) and Bernard J. Westlund (“Bud”), modern day co-founders of Apple Valley, first began the Apple Valley Ranchos Land and Development Company. This booklet is not meant to be a comprehensive history on the development of Apple Valley. There are several other in-depth resources that can provide more details for interested readers. Instead, the story covers some of the earliest examples of our community building blocks: Businesses, Churches, Schools, Ranches, Homes and Civic Facilities, as well as a few of the colorful personalities that brought it all to life.

## Part I: Guest Ranches (1920's and thereafter)

During the first half of the twentieth century, the dude ranch and guest ranch idea took off as a way to attract visitors to the desert and the Victor Valley. Some guests were curious Hollywood VIPs looking for a relatively close get-away; others came for health reasons, as the dry desert air was known to have healing qualities.

### Rancho Yucca Loma

From the 1920s to the 1950s, Yucca Loma Ranch was a desert hideaway for movie stars, writers, and other famous people tired of the hustle and bustle of Hollywood. However, its purpose was to provide a peaceful healing location for those in need.

The idea for the ranch was inspired by a vision of Dr. Catherine Boynton. She had a spiritual awakening, picturing a place in the midst of the desert with “strange, large yucca trees” where her psychotherapy patients could find “peace”. She found this place in the desert in what is now Apple Valley.



In 1911, her daughter Gwendolyn and Gwen's good friend Mildred Strong, established homestead rights for the property. When the 320 acres were in Catherine's name, she bought an additional 180 acres. Eventually the holdings grew to 1,300 acres, stretching from present day Rincon Road to Navajo Road, and from Yucca Loma to Sitting Bull Roads.

Visiting friends and family members would arrive by train to the Victorville Depot. The ranch's popularity grew until, in 1929, Gwen and her mother started accepting paying guests.

“Mother Catherine,” known as “the praying woman,” had a reputation for working with people suffering from stress or medical problems. Yucca Loma Ranch guests found an unpretentious and relaxing environment. Catherine's friend, Naturalist Ernest Thompson Seton, introduced residents to the Native American mysteries and lore. A young John Barry, future owner of



what is now known as the “Daily Press,” arrived for medical reasons, and stayed for the rest of his life.

The first outsider to build a home on the property was David Manners, an actor whose house still stands at Rincon and Waco Roads. Many other structures followed, all unique and artistically designed.

In 1934, Gwen and Catherine invited an impoverished Mexican artist, Ramos Martinez, who had traveled to Los Angeles to raise money for medical treatment for a seriously ill daughter. He stayed at the ranch for a year and, to show his appreciation, created several paintings and frescos, a few of which have been preserved in the David Manners cottage.

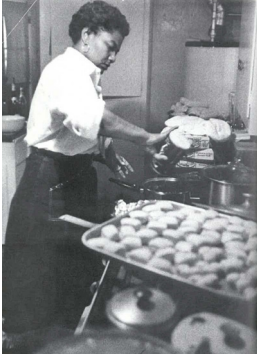
During World War II the ranch’s purpose changed. All facilities were rented to the men stationed at the Victorville Army Air Field. After the war was over, guests returned to the ranch. In the early 1950s, when the ranch was abandoned, Newt Bass purchased the property for a subdivision.

## Murray Overall Wearing Dude Ranch

In 1922, Nolie and Lela Murray moved to Apple Valley from Los Angeles and purchased 40 acres of land in the Bell Mountain area from Arthur Cook. Its original purpose was to offer underprivileged children, troubled youth, and children with health problems a better life. By the late 1930s the ranch boasted 20 buildings, a reservoir used as a swimming pool, tennis courts, stables with riding horses, a dining hall with a juke box, and a ball field. Visitors of all races enjoyed the Murray’s hospitality during the “Jim Crow” years.

Two African American westerns starring Herb Jefferies were filmed at the Murray’s in the late 1940s. The films were modeled after Roy Rogers and Gene Autry westerns, at a time when minority youth were not allowed in most theaters.





Yet by 1937 financial problems set in. The problem was solved by chance when professional boxer Joe Louis, in town for a Victorville rodeo, attracted a film crew to the unique ranch. A 1937 “Life Magazine” story and a 1947 “Ebony Magazine” cover story attracted much needed publicity and many additional visitors. More notoriety came to the ranch when popular singer Pearl Bailey and her husband, Louis Bellson, purchased the property in 1955.

### McCarthy Guest Ranch

In 1933, the 63 acres of the McCarthy Guest Ranch were home to 16 horses and 300 head of beef cattle. Its 13 buildings could house as many as 80 guests, some sent there by their doctors for arthritis, asthma, or other respiratory problems. Others were Hollywood stars looking for a relaxing escape from the city. Guests included Robert Mitchum and his crew, who stayed for a week while filming “G.I.Joe,” as well as Gene Autry and the Tumbling Tumbleweeds, also on a movie shoot. Today the Apple Valley Airport sits on the former McCarthy Guest Ranch grounds.



### Mendel Ranch

In 1939, Florence Mendel of San Francisco moved to Apple Valley with her son, Albert, and purchased 3,000 acres in the Mariana Ranchos area, formally part of the Hull Ranch. Albert and his first wife, Berenice, obtained government grazing leases for 15,000 additional acres and established Circle M Hereford Ranch, where they bred and raised a top strain of purebred “white-face” cattle. Their two sons attended the original Apple Valley School, and the whole family participated in local activities, including airplane spotting during WWII. Albert paid a substantial sum to bring a telephone line to the ranch, the only one on a 10-party line between Victorville and Lucerne Valley. This enabled other local ranches and homes to join the line. In 1945 the ranch was reinvented as the Circle M Guest Ranch. Guests included Newton T. Bass, later to become the modern founder of Apple Valley. As



the federal government began withdrawing grazing leases in favor of five-acre tract programs, the ranch was put out of the cattle business. Guest ranch activity also diminished, and in 1954, the ranch became inactive. For a time Al used his equipment to grade other ranches to earn a living. Later the Mendels established the Golden Land

Printing Company on the premises, producing such items as the Victor Valley College yearbook, and a four-color brochure for the Roy Rogers Museum.

Much of the ranch was subdivided and sold off in parcels. A portion was sold to the Apple Valley School District for the future Mariana School. Along with this parcel, Albert donated an additional five acres to be used as a park. The school district deeded the property to Parks and Recreation for development of Mendel Park, a portion of which was later deeded to the Fire District for a much-needed fire station in southeast Apple Valley.

## Part II: Recreational Homesteads (1946)

### Ranchos Del Oro Community

In early 1946, the government opened areas of Apple Valley for “recreational homesteads” of five acres each. Local ranchers, who had leased the land for grazing, challenged the homestead claims. Ed Stine, George Wallior, and Walt Umhoefer appealed to Congress and the Bureau of Land Management to protect their property.

In 1951, the U.S. government issued three-year leases, allowing time to build a cabin a minimum of 18 by 20 feet, at a cost of approximately \$300 to “prove up” a claim. Each homesteader was also accessed a \$35 fee to cover a land survey and a graded road to the property. With dues of \$5 per year, the Ranchos Del Oro Association organized homeowners to survey land, grade and maintain roads, and secure R-1 (Rural) zoning. This original



property owners association, headed by Don Holmes, was instrumental in forming the Ranchitos Water District. Operating on a tight budget, the Board



of Directors themselves dug ditches, built well houses, and installed both water meters and storage tanks. The association still exists today, covering much of the area now known as the Mariana Ranchos County Water District in southeast Apple Valley.

### Part III: Apple Valley Ranchos Development (1946)

The Apple Valley Ranchos Land and Development Company, under the leadership of Newt Bass and Bud Westlund, was the driving force behind the progress that began in the mid 1940s. It was their pioneering spirit and



foresight that resulted in a well-planned, well-rounded community. In Part III, we will look at several Town landmarks that were used by Apple Valley Ranchos to attract visitors to Town in the hopes they will stay. The first lots were sold February 22, 1946.

#### The Apple Valley Inn

The Apple Valley Inn, which opened Thanksgiving Day 1948, was the social center of the Bass and Westlund era. It included the main lodge with its fine dining room, the Western Bar, and 36 guest rooms spread over 28 acres, along with a swimming pool. The Blossom Room was later added to the Inn, and the property eventually boasted 101 guest rooms. Before phone service was added to the outlying buildings, each room had a carrier pigeon in a cage, on standby, outside every hotel room, ready to carry guests' requests back to the main kitchen.



The Inn was often used to provide free lodging for potential buyers. One marketing tactic was to invite celebrities to visit. Many photos included in the “L.A. Examiner” advertising inserts, showed Hollywood luminaries enjoying the amenities of the Apple Valley Inn. Regular visitors included Errol Flynn, John Wayne, Bob Hope, Gregory Peck, Robert Wagner, Natalie Wood, Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin, just to name a few.

When Roy Rogers signed a lease agreement with Bass, the facility became known as the Roy Rogers Apple Valley Inn from 1964 to 1970. In 1965, the Rogers family, with children Dusty and Dodie, moved to Apple Valley after purchasing the Westlund’s home. In later years, as Bass scaled back on sales activity, the property was sold and used for other purposes, including New Medico, a neurological rehabilitation center. In 2005, the Inn changed owners again when the restaurant reopened to the public for a brief time. Currently the cottages and hotel rooms are rented to businesses, and the main portion of the Inn is available for private functions.



## KAVR

KAVR radio station began broadcasting from the Apple Valley Inn in May 1954. 960 on the dial, the station had a 5000 watt signal, the strongest in the area. Baritone opera singer John Charles Thomas was the original on-air personality starting each day with “Oh! What a Beautiful Morning.” He and his wife became permanent residents of Apple Valley. In 1975, Skip Young took over station duties. Many may remember him for his role as neighbor boy Wally Plumstead on the television show “The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet.” The KAVR tower still stands near the northwest corner of Rincon and Seneca roads.



## The Hilltop House

The Hilltop House was at first intended to be the home of Newt Bass, but was used instead as a guest house for wealthy visitors. It served as a museum of sorts, holding Bass’ collection of antiques and Hollywood memorabilia, such

as Scarlett O’Hara’s bed, from “Gone With the Wind.” The house fell victim to arson in 1967 when, unfortunately, a fire engine could not make the climb up the steep and icy road. Originally 7000 square feet, it was rebuilt as a smaller structure and used as executive offices and a conference room for



Apple Valley Ranchos into the early 1980s. It later sold at a tax auction and came under private ownership, slowly decaying into ruin. In 2014-15, a volunteer group attempted to garner support and funds for community acquisition. The Apple Valley Legacy Trail, as they were called, succeeded in bringing attention

back to the iconic structure, securing grants in partnership with the Town of Apple Valley. Then in 2016, the Town was able to negotiate a purchase from the owner, bringing the property into public ownership.

## Apple Valley Country Club

First opened in 1948, the Apple Valley Country Club, in close proximity to the Apple Valley Inn, created an oasis of luxury in the midst of the stark desert terrain. The beautiful 18-hole golf course was designed by William F. Bell, more commonly known as Billy Bell Jr., a mid 1900s renowned golf course architect. In 2008, the Town of Apple Valley took over management and



operations of the course, opening it to public play for the first time in its 60-year history. After securing water rights and clearing up title issues, the Town closed escrow and became the official owners of the historic property in 2011, changing the name to the Apple Valley Golf Course.

## Apple Valley Ranchos Fourth & Final Office Location

The building on the northeast corner of Highway 18 and Apple Valley Inn Road, now Dale Evan’s Parkway, was originally designed as the fourth and final office for the Apple Valley Ranchos Land and Development Company,



who occupied it from 1952 until 1986. The steeply sloping roof, very modern for the day, created a dramatic statement right across the street from the Apple Valley Inn.

The building, later a doctor's office, then served as the second Apple Valley Town Hall from 1993 to 2002. With a new Town Hall being built just one block to the north, the building sat vacant until it was purchased by Agio Real Estate in 2005. After an extensive building remodel, it was once again used to sell real estate, up until 2023.



## PART IV: EARLY BUSINESSES (1947)

As visitors descended on “The Golden Land of Apple Valley,” seeking the dramatic sunsets and Wild West mystique promised in the advertising, entrepreneurs were quick to seize the opportunity. Two distinct commercial districts sprung up, the Village and Desert Knolls. The Apple Valley Ranchos Businessmen's Association was formed in June 1948. After merging with the

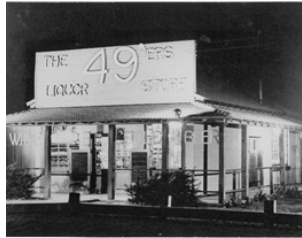


women's division, it became the Apple Valley Chamber of Commerce on August 7, 1952. The Chamber played a critical role in developing a sense of community identity. Members hosted annual events such as the Miss Apple Valley contest, the Apple Valley Pow Wow Days, and the selection of an Honorary Mayor. In 2020, the Apple Valley Chamber merged with three other cities to form the Greater High Desert Chamber of Commerce.

### The Village

The Village, the original commercial center of town, is located along Highway 18 between Navajo and Central Roads. Many of the Town's first businesses were located there, including Apple Valley Building Supply, the first business to open in September 1946. The Village was also home to the El Pueblo

Shops, Apple Valley Lumber, the Double R Trading Post, the 49rs Liquor Store, Conrad Publishing, and The Rancho Department Store.



Opened in 1947 by the Apple Valley Ranchos Development Company, the Branding Iron was the first “social hall” in Apple Valley. On Saturdays, residents could drink and dance, then attend church services on Sunday. After several fires, the building was condemned, then demolished, in 1984. The incinerator from the Branding Iron still stands on the southwest corner of Highway 18 and Central Road. Hugo’s Deli opened in 1955 in the building where Napa Auto Parts is now located. The store was operated by the Ferrarese family, including their son, former Major League pitcher, Don Ferrarese.



## Desert Knolls Businesses



While restaurants and shops were springing up in the Village, similar growth was occurring near the western entrance to Apple Valley on Highway 18. Running from Apple Valley Road to Tao Road, the Desert Knolls area housed medical and professional offices, along with a variety of other businesses. Further east on Highway 18, Guy’s House of Pancakes was a popular restaurant that drew local customers who looked forward to a good meal.



St. Mary’s Medical Center, located at the corner of Highway and Kamana Road, was dedicated on November 19, 1956. Apple Valley Ranchos Development donated the land to ensure a state-of-the-art medical facility for the growing community. The Lynn Building, on the northwest corner of Kasota and Outer Highway 18 North and the Newton building, the 2-story structure near the

southeast corner of Highway 18 and Apple Valley Road, housed a variety of businesses over the years which included Walt Smith Real Estate, Dr. Fred Nassif (the first optometrist), and Pirate's Treasure Chest.

## Buffalo Trading Post

In 1947, Zeke and Frances Cornia and their young son, Danny, moved from Long Beach to Apple Valley and built the Black Horse Motel in the Village area. It catered to equestrian guests, boasting eight rooms and a stable. A gift shop which sold silver and turquoise Indian jewelry and small Indian artifacts opened in the office in 1953. This was the beginning of the Cornia's fascination with all things Native American, and the seed for the future Buffalo Trading Post.

In 1955, the family sold the motel and built a fabulous structure on the corner of Highway 18 and Rancherias. Designed by Los Angeles architect Douglas McFarland, it incorporated Spanish and Indian elements of the Southwest. The adobe and wooden building was of Pueblo design, with beamed ceilings and lodge-pole arcade. Here the Cornias had ample space to display for-sale items: jewelry, pottery, basketry, ceramics, hand-tooled leather items, rugs, drums, blankets, and clothing. On the wall outside the entry door, above huge 3D letters announcing the store's name, hung a large buffalo head. Nearby sat a life-sized "Indian Joe." In 1960, the familiar Buffalo sign was erected. On the west side of the shop was the family's living quarters, also furnished and decorated in keeping with the Indian theme. The living room, with its massive stone fireplace, was a good place for the family to relax, as well as entertain guests. In 2022, the Buffalo sign was removed.



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## Other Area Businesses

### Cotner's Corner

Cotner's Corner, located at Bear Valley and Central Roads got its start in the mid 1950s to service the southeast portion of Apple Valley. John A. Cotner opened Cotner's Store in the late 1950s. He and his friend Tom Archer built



a gas station there in 1956. Locals named the area Cotner's Corner, which is shown on early maps of the area. In 1964, Tom and Mary "June" bought the property and renamed the store Archer's Market. The market was moved to

another building on the property after a fire and renamed June's Little Store. In the 1970s the gas station was remodeled and converted into a breakfast restaurant, The Waffle Iron. The restaurant closed in the early 2000s and was home to a tire shop and recycling center before being demolished to make way for a new gas station and shopping center.

### Vic's Barber Shop

Vic's Barber Shop was located at the entrance to Apple Valley Inn from 1954 to 2006. Vic Brugliera offered haircuts for \$1.50 at his single-chair shop. He was barber to countless locals and many celebrities, including Bob Hope and Roy Rogers. Locals went to Vic's for more than a hair cut. He was a great conversationalist and always knew what was going on in Apple Valley. At the time of Vic's retirement, his shop was the longest operating business in Apple Valley by the same proprietor in the same location.



### The First Bank

In 1952 Bass and Westlund completed the groundwork for the formation of the Bank of Apple Valley Corporation. With Bonsall-McFarland and Thomas as architects, and Bennington and Smith as builders, construction was started in April of 1953 and completed on September 1, 1953, at the northwest corner of Highway 18 and Apple Valley Inn Road, now Dale Evans Parkway. The building won awards for its beauty and unique features, including a large

circular vault, made of locally quarried stone, dominating the front of the building. It had the distinction in being the only external vault in a banking industry. The bank opened in October 1953 as an independent bank owned by the citizens of Apple Valley, with Bass as president, and Westlund as secretary. It has gone through several title changes as mergers occurred: Bank of Apple Valley became Security Pacific Bank in 1957, and in 1992, it became Union Bank of California. The original building was torn down during construction of the Apple Valley Commons.



### Terri Lee Doll Factory

The Terri Lee Doll Factory produced unique dolls, popular with little girls all over the country, from 1952 to 1960. Many local women were employed here, where they put the finishing touches on the dolls; painting the features, adding the hair, and sewing the clothes. The molds were made in a factory located on Central, just south of Hwy 18. Developed by Violet Lee Gradwohl of Lincoln, Nebraska, in 1946, the dolls were made in the likeness of her two daughters, Terri Lee and Connie Lynn. Not only did the dolls have washable hair, but they had an extensive wardrobe and their own furniture. The dolls came with a lifetime guarantee; broken or damaged dolls were admitted to the doll hospital to be made well again. Additional playmates included Jerri Lee, Linda Baby, and ethnic dolls such as Guadalupe, a Hispanic Doll; Patty Jo, a Black Doll; Nanook, an Eskimo Doll; and one celebrity doll, Gene Autry. When the doll factory closed in 1960, the building became the new home of “DeeGee of California,” which made plush animal toys, and then in 1990 became the third branch of the Apple Valley Library.



## Part V: Churches (1947)

Newt Bass and Bud Westlund encouraged the development of churches to meet the needs of the families they were attracting to the area. As with schools, parks, and the hospital, Bass and Westlund donated money or land to a number of churches to help them get started.

### Church of the Valley Presbyterian



One of the earliest churches to be established in the “Golden Land of Apple Valley” was the Church of the Valley Presbyterian Church. It got its start on September 7, 1947 with a small group of people meeting on the patio at the home of George E. Stott. A growing group of worshipers continued to meet in

homes, restaurants, community centers – and later the Branding Iron Bar. Within three years, nearly fifty people from eleven different denominations made an appeal to the Southern California Council of Churches to form the only Presbyterian church between San Bernardino, California, and Kingman, Arizona. With fifty-four charter members, the first congregational meeting led by Pastor Ross Greek was held on October 29, 1950.

### St. Timothy’s Episcopal Church

St. Timothy’s Episcopal Church received generous support from the community shortly after its nine initial members began to meet in 1953. Built with donations from the Bass, Westlund and Ball families, contractors built the church and parish hall at cost, with materials that were, for the most part, donated by the community. The Very Rev. Dean E. Addis Drake officiated the dedication ceremony on August 28, 1955. St. Timothy’s was consecrated as a parish church on April 2, 1956, with Father Charles Parmeter serving as the first rector.



## First Baptist Church of the Valley

Similar to the origins of the Presbyterian Church of the Valley, First Baptist Church of Apple Valley began in June of 1956 as a small gathering in a home. By November, twenty-seven charter members rented the Apple Valley Grange Hall and began meeting with other churches from Victorville, Hesperia and Lucerne Valley to help establish a Youth For Christ ministry. In February 1957, the church put down a \$1,000 deposit and started making \$30 monthly payments towards a \$4,000 property on Nisqually Road. The first service in the new sanctuary was held on November 8, 1959.



## The Church of the Nazarene

The Church of the Nazarene, led by Edward Spruill, got its start by meeting for about two years in members' garages. Five acres on Central Avenue was purchased, and the new building was dedicated on May 1, 1960. The church went through many name changes from inception. Originally the Lucerne Valley Church of the Nazarene, it became the Victor Valley Church of the Nazarene in 1960, then the Apple Valley Church of the Nazarene in 1961.



## Lutheran Church

The congregation first met at Yucca Loma School while its new campus on Ottawa Road was being planned and constructed. Under the leadership of Pastor Horn, the new Ascension Lutheran Church opened on November 27, 1960, where it continues to serve its congregation today.



## Part VI: Homes and Architecture

The modern founders of Apple Valley envisioned a unique architectural style that incorporated the elements of the desert. The most common was the “sweeping ranch home,” characterized by low sweeping roofs, close-to-the-ground profiles, and clean simple design, reflecting an informal casual living style. Popular in the 1940s and 50s, many homes in Apple Valley were built from adobe using the smashed brick technique, allowing the mortar to squeeze out between the bricks. Many examples can be seen in the Village area. A number of true adobe homes still exist in Apple Valley. Adobe bricks are twice as heavy as concrete, and made of sandy loam, clay, and straw. The bricks create a natural insulation that can withstand the desert heat. The Adobe Brick Company, a small facility near the Mojave River at the west end of Yucca Loma Road, produced the bricks. These homes can be a challenge to modernize. For example, electrical wires cannot be easily run through the walls.



### Adobe House

An adobe home on Mondamon Road was built on 40 acres in the Desert Knolls section of Apple Valley in 1948. Known as an early California -style ranch home, the construction includes open wood beams, 12” adobe blocks hand made in Apple Valley, wooden floors throughout, a full basement, and a wood-burning stove in the kitchen. The home features a single-car garage with a workshop, in -ground pool and guest quarters. In 1954, Newton Bass bought the entire property to add to his Apple Valley Land and Development Company portfolio. Subdividing the entire 40 acres for new lots resulted in the original home split from the pool and guest house on two separate lots.



### Newton T. Bass’ Rancherias House

In 1949, Newton T. Bass and his wife Virginia and two children moved from the “Pink House” on Navajo Road to a 10.9-acre estate property on



Rancherías. Their first home then became the Apple Valley Ranchos Sales Office for the next three years. In a real estate ad, the Rancherías house is described as “an incomparable property [which] includes a residence of 6,500 square feet designed for gracious, yet comfortable living.” The five-bedroom, five-bathroom home has a maid or guest quarters, open-beamed ceilings, a huge stone fireplace, and many western accents such as wagon wheels incorporated into the design. The 1,200 square-foot porch was later enclosed, but still offers access to the jacuzzi, koi pond, and landscaped yard with swimming pool. The home’s location, less than a mile from the Apple Valley Country Club, offers space and privacy, as well as a “sweeping view” of the surrounding desert. The Bass family occupied the home until the early 1980’s. The older children, Leann and Eric, moved there as children; later their two younger siblings, Newton A. and Angelyn, enjoyed the home. It was the perfect setting to entertain family and close friends, away from the active social life of the Town.



### Early Rock House

The Rock house, located on ten acres west of Central Avenue, was part of the 160-acre 1920s homestead of Fred and Ida Miller. The first well was hand dug to 92 feet. The cellar walls were constructed of solid granite slabs from an Oro Grande quarry, with a floor of solid limestone. When sold to Roy C. and Julie White in 1934-35, a double car garage with living space above was constructed. In 1937, construction of the main living quarters began, with the exterior completed in 1940 and the 18-inch-thick interior walls in 1942. The upper floors are laid stone hauled from Fairview Valley. This impressive home, which sits across from Granite Hills High School, has a two-story stone fireplace and a loft bedroom, adding to its timeless beauty.



### Rancherías Home used for the Sky King TV Show/Later Home of Lloyd Mangrum

Sky King was a children’s show that ran from 1951 to 1959 starring Kirby Grant as Schuyler “Sky” King. The original Apple Valley Airport can be seen in

photographs and in the classic footage of this series. A home on Rancherias Road south of Hwy 18 served as the headquarters of “Flying Crown Ranch.”



Lloyd Mangrum, a professional golfer, retired to Apple Valley in 1962. He lived in this house across from the Apple Valley Country Club where he was well known as the Apple Valley Golf Pro. A display case and room in his honor are located inside the country club.

### **Captain Joseph McConnell’s Highway 18 Home**

Captain Joseph McConnell, the first triple jet ace in the Korean War, returned to the United States in 1953 having flown 106 missions. To thank him for his service, the Apple Valley community presented him with a \$16,000 “Appreciation House.” The home was built in 45 hours using volunteer labor and supplies furnished by local merchants. At a grand presentation ceremony staged by Newton Bass, the family was given the keys to their new home. Unfortunately, McConnell died one year later during a test flight in the Mojave Desert. The house is currently under renovation to restore it to its original condition, using photos provided by McConnell’s daughter, Trish McConnell. The 1955 film, “The McConnell Story,” based on a book by Charles Ira Coombs, is a fictionalized biography starring Alan Ladd as McConnell and June Allyson as his wife Pearl. The house used in the film was actually “The Weekender,” a Bass property located just west of the McConnell house.



### **The Lynn House (The “Flying Nun” or “Glass” House)**

Berneice U. Lynn was a real estate broker and developer at a time when it was not fashionable for women to be in the business world. In 1966, ten years after constructing the Lynn Building, located on Highway 18 near St. Mary’s Hospital, she built the iconic glass Lynn House on Rimrock, easily visible from Highway 18. Designed by E.A. Thompson of San Francisco, and built by Wright C. Kemp, the home was unique in both design and construction. Built on the rocks of steel I-beams and glass, the one-bedroom home has



a small office, gourmet kitchen, large living and family rooms, and a downstairs maid's quarter. The master suite, with his and hers bathrooms, includes curving shower stalls that require no shower doors. A low voltage electrical system throughout the house can be entirely controlled from the master bedroom. Outside, the house sports a pool and whirlpool with hydraulic doors that completely seal the pool from the elements. The home was purchased in 2010 by Dr. Andrew Thorn to be used for retreats and leadership conferences.

### **Roy Rogers and Dale Evans - Second Apple Valley Home**

The Roy Rogers family moved to the former Westlund house on Highway 18 in 1965. In the late 1970s Roy and Dale began thinking about a move to a new home. Their son, Roy "Dusty" Rogers Jr., teamed up with Apple Valley builder Bob Tinsley to build the home on property adjoining the Apple Valley Golf Course. Construction on the 4,952 square-foot home, designed in a horseshoe shape around a central courtyard and swimming pool, was completed in 1980. The property showcases four bedrooms and five



bathrooms, with a small separate dwelling beside the pool, and a lower-level multi-car garage. The home is an open design that gives a feeling of the wide open western desert. A spa and sauna as part of the master bedroom suite provides relief from tension and the cares of the day. The double "R" on the entry gate clearly represents Roy Rogers.

Apple Valley's most well-known couple occupied the home from 1980 until Roy's passing in July of 1998 and Dale's in February of 2001.

## **Part VII: Civic Buildings and Community Facilities**

### **Post Office**

The first post office, which opened in 1949, was located near the northeast corner of Highway 18 and Navajo Road, just west of the El Pueblo Shops. It shared a building with the first library. In 1956, the post office moved to

Apple Valley Inn Road, just north of the bank. Bass staged a Pony Express-style mail delivery for the grand opening of the second location. The current location is on Outer Highway 18 and Quinnault Road in the “Apple Valley Village” area.



## Fire District

As the community of Apple Valley continued to grow, it had an obvious need for a fire department. In 1959, the County Board of Supervisors appointed Walter Woodbury, James Goble, and Newton Bass’ brother Ben Bass as Fire Commissioners. Having no budget, the fire district initially operated with 13 volunteers. The following year an approved tax allowed the construction of a station building, and the purchase of a fire truck and equipment. Station Number 1 at Highway 18 and Standing Rock Road was built on land donated by the Apple Valley Building and Development Company. In 1957, Station 2 opened at Highway 18 and Tao. By 1981 the department consisted of five stations, the fifth having been developed with community development block grants. The sixth station, located in the Jess Ranch area, was not opened until 2004 despite the fire district’s response area having grown to 176-square miles. The Fire District Headquarters is located Highway 18 and Central Road.



## The Apple Valley Library

Starting in a small room at the first local post office building near Navajo Road and Highway 18, the Apple Valley Branch Library began services on November 30, 1949. With a meager collection of two hundred books and room for only twenty two local patrons, the library opened its door. The first librarian was Edna Hollenbeck, who moved to Apple Valley in 1948. An enthralling storyteller, she started summer reading clubs for children and worked with the local schools in establishing their libraries.

When the post office moved in 1956, the library expanded into the space. In 1961 it relocated across the highway. During her 26-year tenure, Edna saw the first children who had come to the tiny library grow up, marry, and



have children. After retiring in 1975, she continued as a volunteer and was active in the Friends of the Apple Valley Library (FAVL).

In September 1990, the library was relocated to the corner of Apple Valley Inn Road and Wakita Blvd in the building that had formerly housed the Terri Lee Doll Factory. With the active

support of FAVL, soon this larger facility was overcrowded with visitors and a growing collection of books.

Finally, with the collaborative effort of the state, County of San Bernardino, the Town of Apple Valley, FAVL, the Apple Valley Foundation and the generosity of the citizens of Apple Valley, a 19,000 square foot San Bernardino County Branch Library facility was constructed. It was named the Newton T. Bass Branch in honor of his significant contributions through the Apple Valley Foundation (The Bass Family Trust). The library celebrated its 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in November 2019.

## Town Hall

The Town of Apple Valley incorporated in 1988. Four employees set up shop on Central Road south of Highway 18. From 1993 to 2002 they occupied the former Apple Valley Ranchos building located at Highway 18 and Apple Valley Inn Road.

The offices moved to a newly constructed Town Hall just north on Apple Valley Inn Road, now known as Dale Evans Parkway. The 3.1-million-dollar 25,000 square foot building houses many employees and includes a recreation center that is used for classes, special events and private rentals. Separate facilities on the same grounds were built to house the police department and code enforcement, as well as the San Bernardino County Newton T. Bass Branch Library.



In 2010, the Development Services Building was added to the north of Town Hall. Economic development, planning, building and safety, and engineering moved to the new building, which also includes a 6,000 square-foot conference center. Code enforcement moved to Town Hall, which allowed the police department to expand.

Public Works and Animal Control operated at the southeast corner of Highway 18 and Tonikan, until the newly built Apple Valley Municipal Animal Shelter was finished on Powhatan in 2009, with Public Works moving to Nomwacket in 2011.

### Parks and Recreation

It was not long after Newt Bass relocated to Apple Valley in 1945 and began developing the area in earnest that the need for recreation facilities arose. Social functions were an integral part of the small community's social life. In 1950, it was decided that a community center would be built on land donated by Bass with construction paid for by donations raised through community events like raffles for lots, also donated by Bass, and selling "Buck a Block" building blocks engraved with doners' names. The blocks were "borrowed" from the Tingley Lumber Company. A newly formed Community Services District oversaw the construction and fundraising. Construction was completed in 1951. The first Pow Wow Days celebration was held at the Center in 1951 and it became the place for dances, dinners, and community meetings.



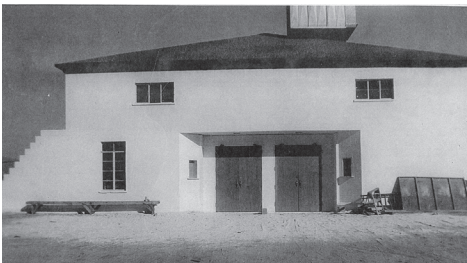
With taxes due and the community weary of raising funds to repay the mortgage, the community voted to create an independent Apple Valley Park and Recreation District on January 6, 1953.

A portion of the original building was destroyed by fire but rebuilt in 1954. An Arts and Crafts room named for Ms. Esther Brown, founding member

of the Apple Valley Art Guild, was added later. The Center is now named for James Woody who was Superintendent of the Victor Elementary School District and instrumental in expanding the Center and local recreational opportunities.

The 1950s also saw the growth of schools in Apple Valley with the addition of a new Junior High School that included locker rooms and showers, that was part of the Victor Valley Union High School District. With the help of Mr. Woody and Services District Member Bertolotti, funds were secured to build three new swimming pools at the Junior High School site, one for wading, lap pool for exercise or racing, and another for recreational use. Many Apple Valley children learned to swim at these pools. By 2001, the cost of major repairs to maintain the safety of the pools required that they be closed and removed by the school district.

About the same time that the new pools were being built, the equestrian community was actively seeking a way to provide a facility for area horse riding shows and events. The now streamlined Apple Valley Park and Recreation District acquired an eighty acre parcel from the Bureau of Land Management for \$2.50 an acre just north of Highway 18, now known as the Horseman's Center. An additional parcel was purchased a mile away for a 40,000 gallon well to provide water to the new site.



By 1971 there were four full time parks in operation in addition to the Community Center, and three more were under development. Lighted baseball fields, tennis courts, picnic areas and playground equipment were placed in the area around the building. Another classroom was soon added, and in 1989 a full-sized gym was built on the property. On January 7, 2017, the gym was renamed in memory of long-time employee Mike Martin, after his untimely passing.

As the Town continued to grow after incorporation in 1988, it was clear that an update to the operational model of the Park and Recreation District was

needed. In March 2001, the independent Park and Recreation District was transferred to the Town of Apple Valley.

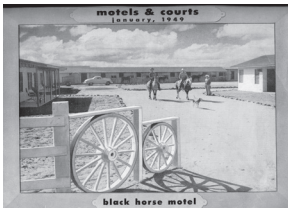
Since that time two additional parks have opened, Brewster Park Sports Center with eleven full soccer fields, and Civic Center Park featuring an event stage, a dog park, walking and skating path, as well as playground equipment, a new modern aquatic facility. Town Hall, Library, Police Department and Conference Center have all opened in the same area. As the Town continues to grow, new parks and facilities already planned will be brought online to support Apple Valley's commitment to "a better way of life."

## Part VIII: Lodging and Mobile Home Parks

Apple Valley began its development during the heyday of the automobile. Only a few miles from the famous Route 66 that passed through Victorville, a short distance from George Air Force Base (formerly Victor Army Air Field), and an hour and a half drive from Los Angeles, housing and hotel accommodations were needed. Trailer parks and small motels starting popping up all over town. Today many of the mobile home parks and three of the motels are still in operating.

### MOTELS

#### Black Horse Motel



The Black Horse Motel was built in 1948 by Zeke and Francis Cornia, friends of Newton Bass who moved from Long Beach to Apple Valley to help develop the new Town. They were seeking clean desert air and a horse friendly environment. Early photos of the hotel show both cars and horses in the parking lot.

The equestrian lifestyle was a selling point for Apple Valley. Horse lovers could trailer their horses up and stay at a horse friendly motel. Zeke Cornia could be seen riding his horse Raven in many local parades and other events. The hotel lobby had an interesting display of Native American artifacts and goods for sale, which eventually inspired the couple to expand their love of Indian lore and open the larger Buffalo





Trading Post in 1955. The Buffalo Trading Post is now closed, but the Black Horse Motel still operates today for long-term rentals.

## Apple Valley Motel

The Apple Valley Motel, which still stands on the south side of Highway 18 at Kiowa, got its start as Sandy's Apple Valley Resort Lodge. Although the swimming pool in front has been filled in, it looks much the same as when it was built in the 1950's in one of the u-shaped plots custom made for small motels.



## Oja Motel



The Oja Motel, built in the early 1960s on the south side of Highway 18 at Piute by Jack and Millie Baumgartner, had a more modern and non-Western look. Later becoming the Oasis Motel and then the Apple Valley Lodge, it still operates today offering both nightly and monthly stays. Its recent change of ownership and extensive remodel has brought it back to life, with its retro facade again attracting travelers.

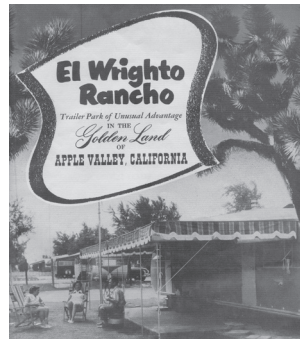
Other motels that are no longer in existence, but can be found on early Apple Valley Ranchos maps and advertisements, include these: Old Corral Motel, which was located next to the Branding Iron Restaurant and Bar on the southwest corner of Highway 18 and Central. Some foundations still remain on the site. Desert Lodge Motel, also known as the Chief Desert Lodge and the Desert Chief Motel, was located on the northwest corner of Highway 18 and Navajo where the Walgreens now stands. Half Circle T Guest Motel, located in a U-shaped motel plot on the north side of Highway 18 at Flathead, is now the site of a large condominium complex. Ocotillo Motel, located directly across the highway on the matching U-shaped motel plot, is now an open lot. No foundations remain, but a large hole seems to be the former swimming pool.



## Mobile Home Parks

Several trailer parks were built in the early years of Apple Valley. These, like the motels, had western themes and amenities such club houses, park areas and swimming pools. Equestrians and their horses were welcome. Today many of these mobile home communities still exist in Apple Valley. The mobile home parks shown here are included on the 1961 Apple Valley Ranchos Map.

El Wrighto Rancho Trailer Park was opened by Frank Wright on the south side of Highway 18 and what is now Hitt Road. The original swimming pool and bath houses still exist. The clubhouse was in front where residents enjoyed spaghetti dinners and other social events, has been converted into three small housing units. Today, the park is known as the Apple Valley Mobile Home Lodge.



King Mobile Home Ranch was located in the area of what is now Pioneer Road. Today it is known as the Pioneer Mobile Home Park.

The L&M Trailer Park was located on the south side of Ottawa close to the present day baseball fields. Today the park is called the Apple Valley Mobile Home Park.



Vali-Hi Mobile Homes, now known as Vali-Hi Mobile Home Park, is located south east of Cotner's Corner (East of Central Road on Bear Valley Road).

## Apple Valley History



Lloyd Mangrum  
Apple Valley Country Club Golf Pro



Apple Valley Ranchos  
Final Sales Office



Apple Valley High School  
Cheerleading squad



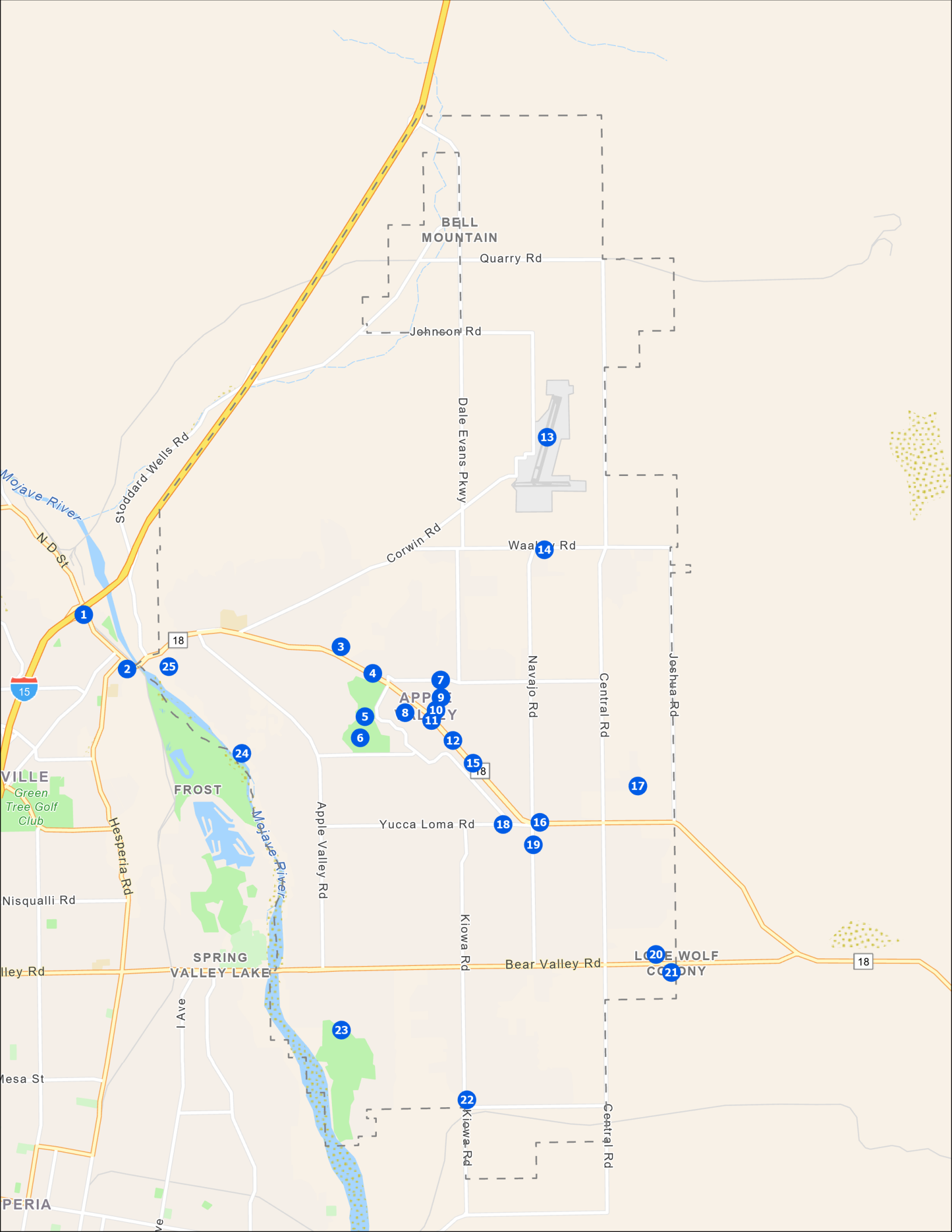
Early Chamber of Commerce  
Building



McConnell House Constructed 1953



Pow Wow Days 1950s



BELL MOUNTAIN

Quarry Rd

Johnson Rd

Dale Evans Pkwy

13

Corwin Rd

Waal Rd

14

Stoddard Wells Rd

Mojave River

N.D. St

1

18

2

25

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

15

18

APPLE VALLEY

Navajo Rd

Central Rd

Joshua Rd

17

FROST

Green Tree Golf Club

Nisqualli Rd

Hesperia Rd

Mesa St

PERIA

SPRING VALLEY LAKE

Mojave River

Apple Valley Rd

Yucca Loma Rd

Kiowa Rd

18

16

19

Bear Valley Rd

LOVE WOLF CANYON

18

23

22

20

21

1 Ave

## Podcast Driving Tour

### Points of interest for map

Including the Script as well which I hope will give more clarification.

1. Start Here (Exit 153A).
2. Victor Valley Cemetery. 15609 Eleventh St, Victorville, CA 92395  
34.532783902483466, -117.29011545178952
3. Flying Nun House. 15709 Rimrock Rd, Apple Valley, CA 92307  
34.536626414874334, -117.23698123084365
4. Roy and Dale Rogers first home. 19900 Hwy 18 and Symeron Road.  
34.53209588592323, -117.23048242990272
5. Roy and Dale's second home 19838 Tomahawk  
34.522436434384744, -117.23146997125079
6. The Fairhope House. 14695 Tigertail Road  
34.51783790025357, -117.23365689584118
7. The Apple Valley Center for Innovation. 20702 Thunderbird Road.  
34.53003326338267, -117.2148429823454
8. Bass Hill and the house.  
34.523434111159375, -117.22150295348281
9. Terri Lee Doll Factory  
34.52647881440032, -117.21261103214435
10. Town Hall  
34.52508679123524, -117.2155175628644
11. Weekender House. 20660 Outer Highway 18.  
34.521062918948545, -117.21331582151096
12. Appreciation House.  
34.51768187968347, -117.2097483847439
13. The Apple Valley Airport. 21600 Corwin Road.  
34.57173254833441, -117.19130022171174
14. Railroad Tie House. 21849 Waalew Road.  
34.55675219899308, -117.18637071042089
15. The John Charles Thomas Chorus Home, 21066 Outer Hwy.  
34.51264477992886, -117.20433783571872
16. The Village of Apple Valley.  
34.500808785608896, -117.18843600561812

17. Granite Hills High School, 22900 Esaws Ave.  
34.50803314833076, -117.16403096986343
18. Yucca Loma Elementary School, 21351 Yucca Loma Road.  
34.5004735090748, -117.19765166490184
19. James A. Woody Community Center, 13467 Navajo Road.  
34.49604715243229, -117.19010188354626
20. Apple Valley Unified School District Operations Center, 22974 Bear Valley Road  
34.4718740895301, -117.15965084926006
21. Lone Wolf Colony, 23200 Bear Valley Road  
34.47177310100366, -117.15637318670889
22. Mendel Ranch, Kiowa and Tussing Ranch Roads  
34.443504996511074, -117.20739654267008
23. Jess Ranch, 11000 Apple Valley Road  
34.46066105285366, -117.24050412423757
24. Adobe House, 14546 Riverside Drive  
34.51565587581612, -117.26172300904467
25. Academy for Academic Excellence, 17500 Mana Road, Apple Valley, CA  
34.53304594098058, -117.27780944241486