



December is Disease Prevention  
and Treatment Month

Thursdays, 12:15 pm  
The Plaza Restaurant  
217 South Broad Street  
Thomasville, GA 31792

## Merry Christmas



Merry Christmas to you and your family. May you have a joyful and safe holiday!

### What You Missed Last Week!

The tagline for Rotary International is, "Rotary Opens Opportunities." Sometimes those opportunities are found at our weekly meetings. Whether we attend the in-person or online meeting, opportunities are opened to us. If you missed last week's meeting, you missed the opportunity to hear some great music performed by the Thomas County Central High School Jazz Band.

There was also the opportunity to meet several past district governors. There was a combined attendance of about one hundred last week. The highlight of the meeting may have been the announcement of Rotarian Andre Marria as the district governor for the 2023-2024 year. Congratulations Andre! We wish you much success.

Last week's program was Walter Geer. Walter is CEO & co-founder of JingleRing / Santa's Fantastical and co-owner of PictureU. He lives in in Alpharetta, Georgia. Walter shared several of his business ventures with the club. JingleRing, one of his latest ventures focuses on having a "Virtual Santa, Your Way!" Walter explained how he had to make creative with his businesses because of Covid-19. We thank Walter for making it possible for families to enjoy the holiday season even in the midst of a pandemic.

For those who may not know, our hearts are heavy with the passing of Rotarian Pat McLeod on Saturday.

At the time of this writing, there is no further information available. Please keep Pat's family in your prayers and thoughts. Also please remember those Rotarians who have had surgery or are recovering from other health challenges.

"If a window of opportunity appears, don't pull down the shade."

### The Story of Silent Night



Father Joseph Mohr sat at the old organ. His fingers stretched over the keys, forming the notes of a chord. He took a deep breath and pressed down. Nothing. He lifted his fingers and tried again. Silence echoed through the church.

Father Joseph shook his head. It was no use. The pipes were rusted, the bellows mildewed. The organ had been wheezing and growing quieter for months, and Father Joseph had been hoping it would hold together until the organ builder arrived to repair it in the spring. But now, on December 23, 1818, the organ had finally given out. St. Nicholas Church would have no music for Christmas.

Father Joseph sighed. Maybe a brisk walk would make him feel better. He pulled on his overcoat and stepped out into the night. His white breath puffed out before him. Moonlight sparkled off the snow-crusted trees and houses in the village of Oberndorf. Father Joseph crunched through the snowy streets to the edge of the little Austrian town and climbed the path leading up the mountain.

From high above Oberndorf, Father Joseph watched the Salzach River ripple past St. Nicholas Church. In the spring, when melting snow flowed down the mountains and the river swelled in its banks, water lapped at the foundation of the church. It was moisture from the flooding river that had caused the organ to mildew and rust.

Father Joseph looked out over the Austrian Alps. Stars shone above in the still and silent night. Silent night? Father Joseph stopped. Of course! "Silent Night!" He had written a poem a few years before, when he had first become a priest, and he had given it that very title. "Silent Night."

Father Joseph scrambled down the mountain. Suddenly he knew how to bring music to the church. The next morning, Father Joseph set out on another walk. This time he carried his poem. And this time he knew exactly where he was going -- to see his friend Franz Gruber, the organist for St. Nicholas, who lived in the next village.

Franz Gruber was surprised to see the priest so far from home on Christmas Eve, and even more surprised when Father Joseph handed him the poem.

That night Father Joseph and Franz Gruber stood at the altar of St. Nicholas Church. Father Joseph held his guitar. He could see members of the congregation giving each other puzzled looks. They had never heard a guitar played in church before, and certainly not during midnight mass on Christmas Eve, the holiest night of the year.

Father Joseph picked out a few notes on the guitar, and he and Franz Gruber began to sing. Their two voices rang out, joined by the church choir on the chorus. Franz Gruber's melody matched the simplicity and honesty of Father Joseph's words.

When the last notes faded into the night, the congregation remained still for a moment, then began to clap their hands. Applause filled the church. The villagers of Oberndorf loved the song! Father Joseph's plan to bring music to St. Nicholas Church had worked.

## Meetings

December is Disease Prevention  
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12/24 MERRY CHRISTMAS - NO  
MEETING TODAY

12/31 NO MEETING TODAY -  
HAPPY NEW YEAR

1/7

1/14 Regular Meeting

## Our Rotary Family BIRTHDAYS

12/6 Andy Sheppard

12/7 Oscar Mims

12/10 Andy Jones

12/11 Eric Ward

12/13 Bob Drummond

12/14 Walter Gilbert

12/16 John Bracey, Jr.

12/16 Mike Bixler

12/23 Eugene McNease

12/24 Carlton Bryant

12/29 Susie Shin

12/31 Rob Milberg

12/31 Robert Jackson

12/31 Brett Jenkins

12/31 Richard Christenson

## WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

12/1 Harry Tomlinson (41)

12/11 Rankin Smith, Jr. (29)

12/14 Robert Vice (124)

12/19 George Stephens, Jr. (68)

12/21 Fran Milberg (51)

12/22 Shelba Sellers (29)

12/27 Frederick Buechner (45)

12/27 Matt Brown (30)

12/29 Joe Brown (62)

12/30 Tim Filston (25)

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## YEARS OF SERVICE

12/1	Scott Rich (43)
12/1	Rebecca Strickland (17)
12/1	Pat McLeod (33)
12/2	John Brown (10)
12/3	Thomas Carlton (5)
12/3	Howard Stephens (5)
12/10	Richard Christenson (0)
12/13	Gerhard Sommer (19)
12/13	John Blackmon (2) 5 years in Rotary
12/13	Matt Brown (2) 6 years in Rotary
12/13	Julie Cannady (2)
12/13	Susie Shin (2)
12/13	Barbara Williams-Anderson (2)
12/18	Frank Helms (6) 7 years in Rotary
12/19	Gerry Gilmer (1) 3 years in Rotary

## Rotary Online

<https://thomasvillerotary.org>  
<https://rotary6900.org/>  
<https://rotary.org/>

## ROTARY CLUB OF THOMASVILLE

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## LEADERSHIP

President	John Brown
President-Elect	Wayne Newsome
Immediate PP	Kim Walden
Treasurer	Teri White
Secretary	Angela Williamson
Foundation	Fran Milberg
Membership	Janet Liles
Public Image	Mike Bixler

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