



## District Conference Recognition

*By Marta Jones-Turner*

At District Conference last month, Rotary Club of Thomasville was recognized in several areas, thanks to your hard work throughout the year.

**Per Capita Giving to GRSP:** As the birthplace of the Georgia Rotary Student Program, it has always been important for our club to support GRSP with financial contributions. This year, Thomasville earned **top per capita giving among large clubs** (with more than 100 members) and earned the **GRSP Jake Cheatham Award** with 100% giving to GRSP. We've earned this recognition for at least 15 years, as we maintain our 100% giving rate. Kudos to all our members for their donations and to our GRSP Chair **Debbie Goodman**.

Thomasville also was recognized as an All-Star achiever finalist in four of six areas of service that the District Governor identified as most significant this year. Our All-Star finalist recognitions were:

- **Peace Pole:** We will place specially designed peace poles in historic Paradise Park and at Olmapinu School in Kenya, in connection with the club's recently approved Rotary International global grant project. [Read more about our project in Kenya.](#)

- **Club Fundraiser:** The club held its inaugural online auction of high-end items to raise funds to support our Big Impact projects. Again, thanks to your help - donating items, asking friends to donate, sharing the auction among your friends and families, and bidding on or buying items - we raised more than \$30,000 and netted \$25,000. It was a phenomenal fundraiser that I am happy our team was recognized for.

- **Member Engagement:** To expand members' engagement level and improve board succession, we filled assistant officer and director deputy positions with a combination of new and experienced members. We also built advisory boards for finance, tradition, and event support. These teams have positively impacted our club and helped set the foundation for continued development within our club.

- **World Polio Day:** On World Polio Day, Thursday, Oct. 24, Foundation Chair **Carol Jones** presented a history of polio and the dramatic impact of the vaccine. She also brought a guest speaker who shared his experience as a child with polio who now has adult polio syndrome. Additionally, our members **Walter** and **André Marria** traveled to India to help administer polio vaccines to children.

As we close out this Rotary year, I am proud of all that our club has accomplished, and these district-wide recognitions serve to highlight the service our Rotarians put into the community.



Rotary Youth Exchange

## Support Ivan's Study Abroad Year



**Ivan Santoyo** is still fundraising for his upcoming study abroad program through Rotary Youth Exchange. We are very excited for Ivan, our first-ever Rotary Youth Exchange participant, and our club has committed to help Ivan pay his out-of-pocket expenses for the program. To assist with fundraising, Ivan's mom, Aida, is selling cookies from her homestead bakery, **Cookies Crumble**, three dozen for \$25. Please share the link among your family and friends to help offset Ivan's costs. Several of our Rotarians can attest to how good her cookies are - with locally sourced ingredients, baked with love.

Ivan frequently volunteers at Rotary produce distributions and a range of other community service activities; please support him as his year in France comes closer. If you are not interested in purchasing cookies but would like to help, please consider a donation through Ivan's [GoFundMe page](#) or bring cash or check to one of our weekly meetings and we will pass the funding along to Ivan and Aida.

[Learn more about his journey so far.](#)

Thursday, May 8

## Center for the Arts Update

This week's program is brought by Britt Shiver and Sam McCoy with the [Center for the Arts](#).

**Britt** is director of programs and engagement for the Center for the Arts, where she cultivates relationships with community members, partners, artists, and instructors, and is responsible for shaping the vision for day-to-day programming.

She has established five new programs in the past year, all of which are open and accessible to a wide-ranging audience, including newcomers and beginners.

**Sam** is director of exhibitions at the Center. She works with artists and is part of the curatorial team that brings shows to the Center's main building and Wall Space at Grassroots Coffee Co. She works with established artists who showcase contemporary exhibitions three times a year, emerging artists to develop and build their professional practice as fine artists, and the Center's local collective of artists, the THOM Collective, on putting together juried exhibitions.

Sam also is an instructor in the Interior Design and Architecture department at Florida State University as well as a contemporary painter who earned her MFA from FSU. Her work focuses on contemporary landscapes with a focus on hyperlocal flora and fauna. She's interested in how tourism has shaped our ecology and the roles of curated gardens and the ecotourism industry.

They will provide an update about what's happening in art in our community.



Upcoming Events

## Mark Your Calendar

Here is a look at our upcoming events for May.



- **Thursday, May 8:** Sam McCoy & Britt Shiver, artists from Thomasville Center for the Arts

- **RESCHEDULED: Monday, May 12:** Board Meeting, 5:15 p.m. at the Chamber

*All Red Ribbon members are required to attend a board meeting as part of their Red Ribbon program.*

- **Thursday, May 15:** Sort and Pack at Second Harvest, beginning at 11:30 a.m.

- **Saturday, May 17:** Produce distribution, Weston Park. Set up begins at 7:30 a.m., distribution begins at 8:30 a.m. or as soon as set up is completed.

- **Wednesday, May 21:** Coffee Chat at Grassroots Coffee. No agenda, just drop in to get to know your fellow Rotarians a little better. Anytime between 7:30 a.m. and 8:15 a.m.

The calendar is subject to changes. Find the most updated Rotary calendar anytime:

- [Add any individual calendar item from the Rotary calendar to your personal calendar.](#)

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May is Youth Service Month

Thursdays, 12:15 pm  
Vashti Center  
1815 East Clay Street  
Thomasville, GA 31792

May 7, 2025

## Meetings

May is Youth Service Month

- 5/8 Sam McCoy & Britt Shiver from Thomasville Center for the Arts
- 5/15 Meet at Second Harvest to Pack & Sort
- 5/22 TBA
- 5/29 TBA

## Events

- 5/12 Board Meeting
- 5/17 Produce Distribution at Weston Park
- 5/21 Coffee Chat
- 6/5 Wine or Whine

### ROTARY CLUB OF THOMASVILLE

Thursdays, 12:15 pm  
Vashti Center  
1815 East Clay Street  
Thomasville, GA 31792

### LEADERSHIP

|                 |                    |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| President       | Marta Jones-Turner |
| President-Elect | Nathaniel Tyler    |
| Immediate PP    | Mary Beth Donalson |
| Vice President  | Nathaniel Tyler    |
| Treasurer       | Warren Ballard     |
| Secretary       | Anna Lee           |
| Public Image    | David Sofferin     |

### Directors

|                  |                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| Membership       | Angela Williamson         |
| Service Projects | Barbara Williams-Anderson |
| Foundation       | Carol Jones               |

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Club Director Scott Rich  
Youth Service Chandler Giddes  
Admin Devona Thompson

## Rotary Online

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

## YEARS OF SERVICE

5/1 Eugene McNease (47)  
5/4 Bob Drummond (8)  
5/9 Rich Massa, Jr. (1)  
6 years in Rotary  
5/16 Lauren Radford (6)  
10 years in Rotary  
5/23 Melanie Cromartie (1)



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