



# The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

April 26, 2021

## Program

Lion President Javon Daniel introduced our speaker, Commander of Cullman's VFW, retired U.S. Air Force Col. Ken Brown. Col. Brown brought us information about a problems and treatments related to post-traumatic-stress syndrome (PTSD), once known as battle fatigue. Many U.S. soldiers have slogged through a half-dozen or more tours in armed conflicts in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. This is generally a much longer cumulative time than what soldiers endured during WWI or WW2. As a result, PTSD is a much bigger problem. There are 375,000 vets in Alabama and 42,000 in the County; 12% suffer from PTSD. This has led to problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, broken marriages, and worst of all – suicide; 22 veterans kill themselves every day in the U.S.



Lion President Javon Daniel presents a token of appreciation to Col. Ken Brown.

Ken said here is exceptionally good news for new treatment of PTSD. This treatment consists of in injection of a mild anesthetic into a bundle of nerves in the neck, and it is called "stellate ganglion block (SGB)." The treatment only takes 5 minutes, but a

miraculous improvement seen is almost immediately in most patients. Many patients require at least one more shot about a year later. SGB has been approved for years by the Veterans Administration and insurance companies for neck pain, but not PTSD. One reason appears to be because of its cost, which is \$800 per injection; he felt another big reason may be political influence, because pharmaceutical companies are currently making a fortune off mainly ineffective PTSD drugs.



Lion Richard White, in the pink shirt, leads in the song, "My Country Tis of Thee."

Col. Brown informed us that despite the lack of VA's approval to pay for the treatment, his VFW organization is doing all it can to get help our veterans. He found a clinic in Annapolis, MD that agreed to provide the SGB, and sent a few vets there to get this treatment. He told several very moving stories about local veterans' success after their SGB treatment. With that success our VFW has now sent 105 vets to get the SGB injection. Ken mentioned several organizations and local



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governments that have contributed funding to make this possible. He also met with Cullman's State Senator Garlan Gudger to get his help. The Senator committed to work on legislation with other Senators and Representatives for a trial SGB program in place for north Alabama veterans late this year.

Col. Brown and the VFW are commended to the support of our veterans, and they are indeed worthy of our admiration and support. He gave a great presentation.

### Other Business

Lion David Bussman returned to us tonight after his fainting incident. He was diagnosed with vagus-nerve syndrome and will be grounded from driving a vehicle for the next 6 months. He responding to treatment well and feels completely normal. About 200,000 people are diagnosed with this ailment each year.

Lion Secretary Don Smith gave the Club Board of Directors (BOD) report telling us that funding was approved for 3 new Lions Club emblem signs posted at Cullman's major highways, coming into the city. Funding was also approved for American Boys and Girls State event and for the 211 Resource Center.

Lion President Javon Daniel led a short discussion about going back to weekly meeting. He asked for a vote from all members present. The vote was to begin weekly meeting, again, starting next Monday, May 3rd. It was noted that in the coming weeks, meeting in an un-

airconditioned building would be problem for attendance. As that time approaches, it was agreed that we would seek another venue. Col. Brown spoke up, saying that the VFW building might be available for us, since it is not being used on Monday nights.

Lion Charlie Childers gave a report on the Fair Association BOD meeting last week. The BOD approved the purchase of two large TVs for the AG building. These will be used to continuously show agricultural related videos made by high school students during the Fair. We intend to offer scholarship money for the winners of the best student-produced videos. Lion Charlie also announced that we have secured the same motorcycle & trapeze group that we had last year as our entertainment again for the 2021 Fair.

### Upcoming Programs and Events

May 3: Starting weekly Club meetings every Monday.

May 22: Annual Shred-a-Thon in the King Edward parking area. Lions should be on the scene between 8:30 and 8:45AM.

### Tale Twister Input

If you need something special or to report a correction in the *Tale Twister*, see Lions Carey Thompson or Don Smith at the meetings. Lion Carey can be reached at 256-739-0580 (H) or 256-426-3207 (C). Lion Don can be reached at 256-737-7433 (H) or 256-426-7722 (C).