



# The Tale Twister

## Cullman Lions Club

February 11, 2019

### Program

Lion George Krigbaum introduced our speakers, tonight, Mr. Tyler Newman, Director of Cullman County Youth Advocate Program, as well as his Assistant Director, Ms. Heather Gable. Tyler graduated from Cullman High, then, Auburn in 2010; he will complete his MSW from Samford in May. Heather received her associate degree from Wallace State and, then, her bachelor's degree from VA College in 2009.



(L to R) Lion George Krigbaum, Ms. Heather Gable, Mr. Tyler Newman, and President Lion Mike Ponder.

Mr. Newman told us that this program was started in 1975 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and has spread to almost all States and 23 other countries. The vision of its founder, Mr. Tom Jeffers, was to create a legacy of hope for vulnerable and marginalized families whenever troubled youths from those families are identified; he believed that community-based care—not institutionalization and incarceration—is the right path for long-term success of young people, their families, and their

communities. As such, the program provides youths who are, who have been, or who may be subject to compulsory confinement, or jail, with the opportunity to develop, contribute, and be a valued community asset. Furthermore, the program provides a wide range of rehabilitation services not only to at-risk children, but also their families. Doctrine of this program include beliefs in the following: -- The needs of individuals and families, even those with high risk, can safely and most effectively be best met within a home and community setting. -- Every individual possesses strengths, potential, interests and talents that make them unique and can be built upon and shared. -- Everyone needs access to positive people, places and activities within their community to develop their natural potential and live full, productive lives. -- Partnering with families to identify their needs and preferences preserves dignity and improves outcomes. -- Investing in community-based programming is a cost-effective, responsible alternative to out of home placements.

Heather and Tyler explained the Youth Advocate Program works with other community agencies such as the Child Welfare, Juvenile Justice, Behavioral Health, Developmental Disabilities, Education and Adult Systems, as appropriate. Parenting classes, preparing resumes, advice on being a valued employee, and other “life” information is provided. This ensures that information and goals are tailored to each youth’s and family’s unique needs, strengths, and



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interests. The entire family becomes a co-designer of services and becomes invested in having it succeed. Although the program considers that a youth's own family represents the child's most desirable outcome for a permanent home, which is not always possible. Settlement in foster care or other arrangements may become necessary. Once a referral is made, and the staff begins the assessment process, it includes addressing any immediate safety concerns. Tyler stated that the Program's staff has a "never give up" attitude, regarding its clients. We heard several "success" stories where seemingly hopeless family situations and lives were turned around. These Directors, leading the Youth Advocate Program, are doing inspiring work for Cullman's community.

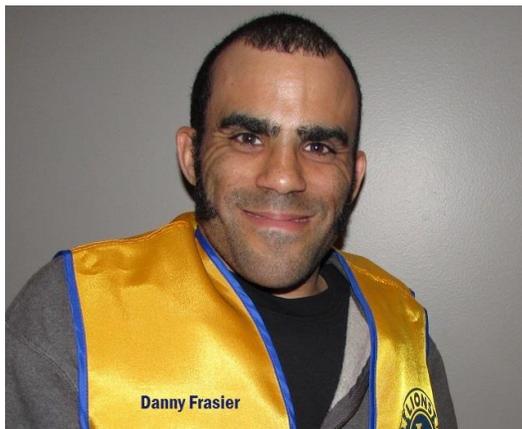
Lion Bill Ruehl's mother has the flu and has been moved to a nursing home. Lion Lummie Speakman will be seeing a specialist for his fall a week or so ago. Lion Jim Howard fell and banged himself up. Lion Javon Daniels is having issues after his cataract surgery.

The annual Empty Bowls dinner will be held at 1st United Methodist Church, Monday February 18th. A Club roster will be at each entrance. The Club will cover the admission of attending Lions; spouses and guests are the responsibility of the Lion.

Lion Carey Thompson discussed the Fish and Ham assignments which were forwarded in the last Tail Twister.

A "Thank You" was received from the Thanksgiving Steering Committee for the Club's donation.

### Other Business



New Lion Danny Frasier was welcomed into the Club tonight.

### Upcoming Programs and Events

Feb 18: No meeting. Support the "Empty Bowls" dinner across street at the First Methodist Church.

Mar 9: Fish and Ham Dinner at the Cullman Middle School cafeteria.

### 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.