



# The Tale Twister

## Cullman Lions Club

February 25, 2019

### Program

Lion Richard Gurley introduced our speaker, tonight, Ms. Erica Ball, Varsity Cheerleader Coach at Cullman High School. In addition to cheerleading coach, she has taught special education at Cullman High for about 15 years. Cullman High's cheerleading squad really began in 1990, and by 1994, it had really developed into a competitive program. The program Erica continues to lead at Cullman High School can only be described as elite, in both the State, as well as, in the Nation. Starting back in 2005 this cheering squad won its first State cheerleading Championship, and that began a tradition of excellence. It proceeded to win State Championships in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2019. To cap everything off, the team competed in the Universal Cheerleaders Association High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida; there



(L to R) Lion Richard Gurley, Ms. Erica Ball, and President Lion Mike Ponder.

were over 100 teams competing, that even included some international teams. After one round of preliminary competition at this National event, Cullman was one of six teams that advanced directly to the semi-final events. The Bearcats made school history with their fourth-place finish at Nationals, and they became the first Game Day team from Cullman to advance to the National semifinals. With this win Cullman also qualified for the 2020 World Schools Division Championship. Here is a quote from a recent Cullman Times article, following this achievement: "We're losing three seniors, so I expect we're going to have an even stronger team next year because this really catapults us. The girls are super hungry," Ball said. "Today they immediately started talking about their goals for next year. We're going to have a huge senior class next year, and they're already talking about their goals for nationals next year and we're ready to go for it. Something like this just makes the team that much hungrier and more excited for a win."

The squad has 22-23 members, and it requires all members of the varsity team to first be members of the JV squad for one year. Ms. Ball noted that the Cullman High's squad has accomplished much on a more or less shoe-string budget. It supports all Cullman High's football games, and it has financial support from football team's ticket sales for the cheering teams travel. However, Cullman High's basket ball team does not produce the revenue to support the cheering team's away-games, allowing only home-game,



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basket-ball cheering support. Erica stated that the cheering team's cost per student per year is \$3,800 per year.



Cullman High's cheering team that won the title of 4<sup>th</sup> in the Nation in 2019.

The Cullman High cheering squad, under Coach Ball's leadership is a great representative for our State and City. The team visits with the City's elementary schools to promote literacy and as well as to campaign against drug use.

### Other Business

Lion Lummie Speakman is improving after suffering a broken collar-bone in a fall; he will likely be in therapy for about 5 weeks. Lion Steve McSwain's mother passed. Lion Jim Howard cracked a few ribs in a fall, but he is improving.

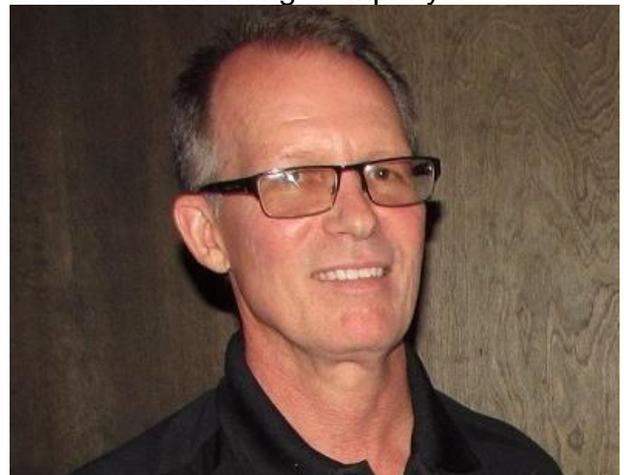
27 Lions attended the annual Empty Bowls dinner held at 1st United Methodist Church, Monday February 18th.

Lion Carey Thompson discussed the Fish and Ham assignments.

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

### Upcoming Programs and Events

Mar 4: Mr. Mike Mullaney, Co-founder of Goat Island Brewing Company.



Mr. Mike Mullaney

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

Mar 11: Brian Vance, General Manager of Cullman Bowling Center.

### 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.