The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

February 9, 2026

Program

Lion James Pinyan introduced Mr. Wayne Reed, Director, with Patriot Catfishing, Inc., a nonprofit organization that supports veterans by providing fishing trips and related events for those who have served our country.

Lion James Pinyan and Mr. Wayne Reed, Director at Patriot Catfishing, Inc., hearing announcements from the Lion President.

Mr. Reed explained how this organization was founded by U.S. Army veteran Kevin Breedlove, who served for 24 years. Patriot Catfishing, Inc. grew out of his personal desire to give back to fellow service members in a meaningful way. After retiring, Breedlove recognized a need among veterans — especially those who are wounded, disabled, or struggling with the transition to civilian life — for opportunities that foster camaraderie outside of clinical or traditional support settings. Fishing, he believed, could be that bridge.

The mission is straightforward yet powerful: to provide a sense of normalcy, camaraderie, and adventure for veterans — particularly wounded and disabled warriors — and their families through guided catfishing experiences, free of charge. These experiences are meant to create memorable moments, strengthen bonds, and celebrate service in a relaxed and supportive environment.

Patriot Catfishing organizes fishing excursions and events throughout the year, mostly in the Southeast United States, often centered around popular catfishing waters like Wheeler and Wilson Lakes in Alabama and Tennessee River tributaries. These events are typically hosted by volunteer boat captains and anglers who donate their time, boats, and equipment to help veterans catch some of the region's largest catfish. Typically, veterans and volunteers gather for multi-day events that include lodging, shared meals, fishing outings, and a weigh-in. Participants range from young veterans to older warriors who served decades ago, offering a wide span of military experience and stories. At these gatherings, every veteran gets a chance to fish with a seasoned captain and often catches fish — some of them personal bests — and enjoys fellowship with other veterans. Disabled veterans can be paired with volunteers who take them out for a day of fishing, tailored to their needs and abilities. These trips are entirely free for the participants, with the nonprofit covering costs like travel, licenses, bait, tackle, fuel, lodging, and meals; the estimate waived cost per veteran is $1,000. Although planned events usually involve fishing, on occasion hunting events have also been offered, such as hunting of wild pigs from airplanes/helicopters in Texas.

The experiences facilitated by Patriot Catfishing have a multifaceted impact**:**

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• Emotional and Social Benefits: Many veterans describe how the trips provide therapeutic relief from day-to-day stressors and a chance to connect with others who "get it" — fellow service members who understand the challenges of post-service life. • Boosting Confidence: Learning new skills, catching big fish, and overcoming physical or emotional hurdles on the water can boost confidence and provide a sense of accomplishment. • Strengthening Family Bonds: Some events allow family members to participate, reinforcing family ties and offering shared experiences outside the military context.

Participants often recount not just the size of the fish they caught, but the joy in laughing together, swapping stories, and forming friendships that extend beyond the water. These shared memories can play an important role in reducing feelings of isolation and helping veterans reintegrate into civilian life with renewed purpose. Fishing, especially when done in the company of others who understand military bonds, fosters camaraderie and a sense of belonging that is sometimes hard to find after active duty.

Patriot Catfishing's mission is not simply about catching fish — it's about helping veterans rediscover joy, purpose, and connection outside of service, in an environment that honors their sacrifice. A great program. You can get more info at https://patriotcatfishing.org/ .

Other Business

Lion Javon Daniel's heart condition continues to restrict his activities

Lion President Delane Ray announced years-of-service anniversaries for Lions: David Bussman – 25 years; Ricky Peek – 16, Kelly Duke – 15; and Joshua ray – 11.

Lion President Delane Ray presented International Key Member lapel pins to Lions Judy Smith and Randy Kraft, recognizing their recruitment of new Lions.

Lion President Delane Ray presented "Key Member" pins to Lions Judy Smith and Randy Kraft.

Future Round-table (RT) dates and subjects are as follows:

RT2-Feb 23 — Events and Projects.
RT3-Mar 16 — BOD & Operations.
RT4-Apr 20 — Beyond our Club: District, Multi-District, & Global operations.

Lion Carey Thompson reminded Lions that due to Empty Bowls Dinner coming up on the 16th, we will only have one more meeting before the Fish & Ham Dinner on the 28th. Get those tickets and sell'em or buy'em yourself to give friends or to people important in your life, like your church pastor.

Lion Steve Cartee had tickets available for Lion to sell and will continue to do so, going

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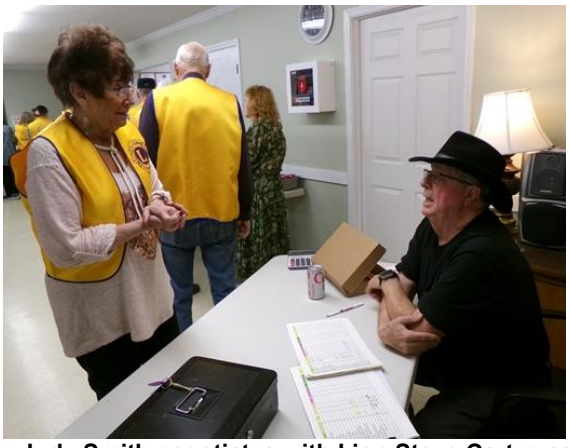
forward; he will also be taking in payments for those tickets.



Lion Judy Smith negotiates with Lion Steve Cartee as to how many tickets she should get tonight.

Upcoming Programs and Events

February 16: Empty Bowls Dinner at 1st Methodist Church. Lions and one guest/per Lion eat for free (must sign-in at event).

February 19-22: Alabama Association of Fairs Convention at Fairgrounds

February 23: Ms. Amanda Trawick, Executive Director of Alabama Lions Sight, will speak.

Ms. Amanda Traywick

February 27: Prep for Fish & Ham Dinner at Cullman Middle School at 3:30PM.

February 28: Annual Cullman Lions's Club Fish and Ham Dinner at Cullman Middle School cafeteria.

March 2: Ms. Kathy Sloss will be speaking about the Rails to Trails Conservancy.

Ms. Cathy Sloss

March 7: Hanceville Lions Club Bingo Night fund raiser at Hanceville Civic Center (just past Hanceville High School). Doors open at 5:00PM with drinks and snacks and featuring many door prizes valued in excess of $100.

March 14: District 34-A Convention at Cullman Church of Christ.

. ***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 256-426-3207 (C). Lion Don can be reached at 256-737-7433 (H) or 256-426-7722 (C).