



The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

January 19, 2026

Program

Lion Director Craig Gadow presided over tonight's meeting. Lion Brad Mitchell introduced our speakers, Ms. BJ (Betty Jean) Morgan, President of Cullman Master Gardeners and Ms. Sheila Scott, Chairwoman of the Wildflower Garden Committee. BJ's family has farmed and gardened in Cullman County through at least 5 generations.



Ms. Sheila Scott and Ms. BJ Morgan, along with Lions Brad Mitchell and Randy Kraft, display poster, showing layout of the Wildflower Garden & Arboretum at Sportsman Lake.

The ladies' main topic for their presentation was the 35-year-old, 3-acre Cullman County Wildflower Garden which continues to be maintained by Cullman's Master Gardeners. It had originally been started by Ms. Nona Moon, wife of the Sportsman Lake park manager in around 1991 as a small native plant garden, and after help from friends was named the Native Plant Society and continued to grow. By 2022 many of the founders has passed and the Society asked Cullman's Master Gardeners to take over care and maintenance of the garden and was renamed as it is today. Many features have

been added over the years. The Garden has 2 clear streams running through it, gravel trails, several sturdy bridges, benches, a pergola, a storybook trail for children, and a 16x20 ft. outdoor classroom, among other features. It is part of the Roslyn Carter National Butterfly Trail and a certified Arbnet arboretum, recognizing its importance to conservation and education. Something is blooming all year-round, and it attracts many varieties of birds. Master Gardeners provide classes on gardening and demonstrations at the Garden and encourage tours by school kids. Everyone is free to walk through the Garden and enjoy a peaceful place of quiet recreation that supports mental and physical well-being.

The Master Gardeners have persuaded a landscape architect from Birmingham to come in and give suggestions about improvements to make the Garden even better. A weather-resistant kiosk is planned near the Garden entrance to show a map, highlights, plants & wildlife information, and QR codes for events, resources, and self-guided tours. The Master Gardeners are seeking a partnership with the Cullman Lions Club to help fund this kiosk. This would give prominent recognition to our Club and be a lasting legacy project aligned with the Lions Club mission.

During questioning the ladies were asked about membership as a Master Gardener. They explained that a potential member must sign up for a training class that usually starts in June and goes for 12 weeks (one day a week for about 4 hours for botany, biology, and general gardening, to get a nice well-rounded knowledge base). Then, first year



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trainees must do 50 hours of service with them. And after that, they must commit to 25 hours of work per year (most volunteer for more than that). They also mentioned that they work as a further extension of the Alabama Extension Service. This was a very informative and interesting presentation.

Other Business

Lion Javon Daniel's heart condition continues to restrict his activities. Lion Craig Gadow reported that Lion Chris Brooks is struggling with medical problems of several close family members. Pray for these Lions, as well as for Lion Eric Ponder and family, following the passing of Eric's dad, Lion Mike Ponder.

Lion Gadow noted years-of-service anniversaries for Lions Javon Daniel – 12 years, Steven McSwain – 13, and David Peacock – 2. Lion Craig also read thank-you notes from Cullman County Bosum Buddies and the Agriplex for our recent donations. The Agriplex noted that it has achieved its capital campaign of \$3.2M and is now continuing to raise funds to get the new facilities equipped.

Lion Secretary Scott Starosa gave an update on last week's Board of Directors meeting. Funding was approved for Alabama Lions Sight, Cullman Family Expo, the Heart Association (in the name of our Fair Queen), and Brooks Place. He also reminded us of the Empty Bowls Dinner coming up on Feb. 16th, and that Lions from our Club and any guest may eat for free – paid for by our Club. He encouraged us to submit donation recommendations to the BOD for thorough review and consideration.

Lion Don Smith shared that we purchased a tricycle for a special-needs teenager, Ms. Aubrie Parker, whose own trike was stolen. This followed a recommendation from Lion Jerry Bonner who noticed the circumstances in Facebook.



Lions Charlie Powell, Bill Wilt, Don Smith, and Richard White present a new tricycle to Ms. Aubrie Parker.

Lion Steve Cartee will have tickets available for Fish & Ham Dinner at the next meeting. We are behind in having tickets available as planned. Ticket price (donation) remains \$15 each. Lion Steve says to get more tickets that you think you may need from the start – you can get a refund on any remaining unsold. You can pay with a check to Lion Steve or his helpers or pay with a card through Lion Don Smith. In any case you will receive a receipt in order that Lions Steve can maintain accurate records.

Lion Frank Odell announced the upcoming New Member Roundtable sessions for new Lions who have not yet completed this excellent set of discussions about how our Club operates. Roundtable (RT) dates and subjects are as follows:



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RT1-Jan 26 — Constitution & Bylaws (cancelled and rescheduled due to weather).
RT2-Feb 23 — Events and Projects.
RT3-Mar 16 — BOD & Operations.
RT4-Apr 20 — District, Multi-District, & Global.

February 16: Empty Bowls Dinner at 1st Methodist Church.

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

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

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

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

Upcoming Programs and Events

February 2: Lion Phillip Garrison will be speaking on Bee Keeping and other agricultural topics.



Lion Phillip

February 9: Mr. Wayne Reed will speak about Patriot Catfishing, Inc.



The Guest Speaker Will Be

Wayne Reed

Director Wayne Reed from Patriot Catfishing Inc.



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.



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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).