



# The Tale Twister

## Cullman Lions Club

July 17, 2023

### Program

Lion Randy Kraft introduced Lion Jeff Lawson, a highly appreciated member of our Club and an investigator with the Cullman Sheriff's Department, as our speaker.



**Lion President Chris Brooks presents token of appreciation to Lion & Sheriff's Department Investigator Jeff Lawson.**

Lion Jeff, a former Marine, explained that he began his career in law enforcement several years ago in other local communities to include being school resource officer at Fairview, but was hired by Cullman's Sheriff and Lion, Matt Gentry, shortly after Matt was elected sheriff, and Lion Jeff is now an investigator for crimes against children and child trafficking. He says that one of the greatest dangers to children today comes from social media apps. Many parents are not aware of the danger that these apps can present, because individual phones were not that widespread when they were their children's age. Matt passed out a card with a listing from the DA's office of the 15 most prevalent of these apps (See page 3 of this newsletter). The most problematic in Jeff's opinion of these apps is one called "Snap Chat." Jeff says he gets search warrants signed by a Judge to search kid's phones after older adults have contacted them asking for pictures of themselves and their siblings and beginning the grooming process of taking advantage of them, getting user info and passwords. Jeff says that the abusers of

this app are all over the country and world. It is a money-making enterprise getting and selling this info to deviant persons. Parents are caught totally unaware of the danger impacting their child until damage is done. He says he can't tell how many cases he's seen where say --- a 25-year-old man manages to get a 12- or 13-year-old girl's Snapchat log-in data or phone number, or some other social media login data. Many kids today never disconnect from people at school or some perpetrator that gets their information and talks for 10 solid hours. Kids by themselves in the middle of the night can make bad decisions. Like this 19-year-old kid, a quarterback in Florida who lost his scholarship due to a couple of child porn photos on his cell phone. Once someone gets your data, it usually means they can lookup exactly where you live.

One other app that Jeff mentioned was Omegle, where you can be connected to anybody in the world – someone who makes promises of travel, meeting cool people, making big money, etc.

Lion Jeff noted that in today's world many mistakes and bad judgement are recorded, whether it be photo, video, or email. It's not like anything we experienced as kids. Very frequently people are getting roasted for something they said or did as teenagers or college students or even younger – but it shows up on social media, and it's like it happened yesterday.

In the aftermath of some kid making a mistake, Jeff said that he has met with families where the whole family is broken. And they are ashamed – kids do not want to go back to school – they don't even want to show their face.

As a counter to these social media dangers, Lion Jeff noted that parents can get an app that allows them to monitor everything that their children see



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or communicates on their cell phones. Jeff definitely recommended that parents get such an app and also collect their childrens phones at bedtime for charging their batteries and making sure that phones are not being used after bedtime.

Investigator Jeff Lawson probably opened a few parents' eyes tonight, regarding the protection of their children and grandchildren from dangers lurking within the social media world. Much appreciated information.

### Other Business

Lion Frank Odell invited new members and current members to participate in the roundtable discussions that will be occurring this year.

The club has been invited to the Unsheltered International auction and dinner on Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup>; let Lion Jerry Bonner know if you would like to attend. Our Club will have a free table at no cost for a great meal and a fun auction.

Lion Ron Seybold updated the club about The Alabama School of the Blind. They are planning to march in more parades in the future due to the experience in Boston where their band was judged as the best in the Lions International Conference parade.

Cullman will host the MD-34A cabinet meeting at the Church of Christ on Saturday, July 29<sup>th</sup> at the Cullman Church of Christ. Volunteers are needed to assist in hosting and set up that morning. Contact Lions Craig Gadow at 256-736-8361 or Dennis Berse at 256-727-3500 if you can help.

Lion Chris Robinson's wife, Nancy, was recently diagnosed with cancer. Initially indications are that the cancer is small and localized. She will be undergoing further diagnostic testing.

Former Lion Jim Tidwell, who was active in the early days of our Club, passed away.

New Lion Claude Clay introduced himself to the Club last week. Below is his photo with him proudly wearing his new vest.



Lion Craig Gadow presented Lion Chad Floyd with Melvin Jones Fellow Award. See photo below.



Lion Craig Gadow discussed the Leadership Conference Aug 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> at Faulkner University in Montgomery, AL. New Lions and new Lion officers, especially, are encouraged to sign up.

Lion Dennis Berse announced a cookout Aug 14 at the fairground. This is a family event



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Our Club meetings are being recorded and can be seen live, or you may view past meetings at the following Facebook web site:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1106236123576541/?ref=share> . Call Lion Craig Gadow at 256-736-8361 if you need help getting to this site.

### Upcoming Programs and Events

July 31: Keynote speaker will be Lion David Bussman. This will be a closed meeting – no guests.



Lion David Bussman

August 28: Speaker will be Ms. Rhonda McDavid, Executive Director SE Diabetes Education Services, Camp Seale Harris. Photo, below.



October 5 – 14: Cullman County Fair.

### 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).

**SEE DA'S APPS THAT PARENTS SHOULD BE AWARE OF :**

**Snapchat, KIK, Whisper, Bumble, LiveMe, Calculator+, TikTok, MeetMe, WhatsApp, Grinder, Skout, Badoo, Tinder, Yubo, Omegle**