



The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

July 25, 2022

Program

Lion Chris Robinson introduced our speaker tonight, Ms. Patti Bearden, Program Director for Youth Advocate Programs, Inc (YPA). She was accompanied by Program Coordinator, Ms. Constance Thrailkill. In his introduction, Lion Chris noted, among a long list of accomplishments, that Ms. Bearden was the daughter of a pastor with a focus on local and foreign missions; with her husband she opened her house as a group home for the mentally ill while pursuing a degree in social work; and she obtained a master's degree while caring for her family. Her expertise is in family preservation.

Ms. Bearden explained that the YPA program is part of a non-profit, Nation-wide program that began in 1975. Her part of that program is operating in 6 north Alabama counties, including Cullman. Its primary goal is to keep families safely together.



(L to R) Ms. Patti Bearden and Ms. Constance Thrailkill of the Youth Advocate Programs, Inc.

YPA provides intensive support to families with at-risk children. This is done in the homes, in the schools, and in the wider

community to create the best possible environments for these families. This is done by partnering with people and organizations already working in the community. YPA assesses and prioritizes families' critical needs first and focuses on those things, like groceries, first, then teaches life skills. It connects these families with organizations, churches, etc. that can help meet the family's needs.

One of the groups that YPA works with is the Juvenile Justice program for youth, involved with the court system, because many of these youths have made poor choices and are struggling. It works to keep these youths from having to be incarcerated, to keep them with their families in the community, to keep them safe, and to help them be successful. The YPA program here started with 16 to 20 families with juvenile justice youths in Cullman and Blount Counties. It is a wrap-around program that takes care of health, teaches parenting, providing support groups to parents, and working with the kids as well. The YPA team starts by finding good behavior in kids and reinforcing it, monitoring their attendance in schools and their grades, and helping them communicate with their teachers. They work on anger management, and basic life skills. They also provide funding for support work that pays someone to allow the youth to get a job as an apprentice to learn a skill that they can use to help provide support for themselves and their families in the future.

The program also partners with the Department of Human Resources (DHR),



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receiving referrals for children that have been taken out of a family for the child's well-being. DHR provides a list of goals that the parents should achieve to be able to be reunited with their children. YPA conducts supervised visitations so that families can be maintained while their cases are investigated. It does healthcare, budgeting, and provides support to meet the set goals. It deals with all kinds of situation including domestic violence. The YPA workers make deep connections with these families and the community organization trying to help solidify them and their relationships. Their intent is to be consistent and stick by these families through tough times.

Each State helps fund its share of the YPA, mainly through grants, so most of the workers are paid, not volunteers. These folks do great work but there is such a tremendous need for support to more families than are currently being helped. Those speaking to us tonight really deserve our respect and any assistance that we may provide for their success.

Other Business

The Lake-property- proceeds-Steering Committee met and is asking for suggestions from Club members on how we should use these funds to get an overall direction of how the Club thinks it should proceed. For example, one of the consistent suggestions is for the Club to build its own Club house, whether it be a totally new building, or else using remodeling one of our existing buildings at the Fairgrounds as a less expensive option, or neither. All ideas are welcome for use of these funds – think about it and have your ideas ready to discuss at the next meeting.

Tail Twister Lion David Bussman was with us in-person tonight. He noted that last year he promised that he would present the 3 Lions, who sponsored the most new members for the Club, with four prime-cut, steaks. Those three Lions turned out to be Lions Morris Mangum, Randy Kraft, and Dennis Berse. However, when these Lions came up to receive their steaks, the steaks turned out to be wooden stakes that Lion David said he carefully cut and wrapped, himself, from prime lumber.



(l to R) Lions Morris Mangum, Randy Kraft, David Bussman, and Dennis Berse. Proud Lions displaying their four prime-cut stakes.

Lion Richard Gurley's wife, Lioness Jennie, had COVID, but she continues to show improvement.

Lion Bruce Harbison and Lioness Kaye are now living in Birmingham at a residence near their daughter. Lion Bruce is doing much better since his reaction to the Covid vaccine.

Lion Alton Pitzing is in need of a van that has wheelchair accessibility for his wife, Lioness Pat. She is recovering from a stroke and seizures. Contact him at 256-734-6493 if you know where he might locate one.



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Lion Javon Daniel is having problems with vein phleboliths or blood clots which can lead to serious other problems.

Lion Don Smith instructed the Club in how to go the Cullman County Fair's website to get the Fair's information on ticket and ride prices. That site is: cullmanfair.org.

Lion Don also gave a report on his review of the Club's financial records, under control of Treasurer Lion Jerry Bonner. He stated that he found no errors and gave the Treasurer a very favorable rating.

Lion Randy Kraft, who is one of the Directors of the Alabama Association of Fairs, reported that our Fair was the 3rd most attended in the State, following # 2, the National Fair in Montgomery, and # 1, the Peanut Festival in Dothan. He had a great deal of praise for the help that we always get from our Extension Service he in Cullman.

Lion Jerry Bonner presented Melvin Jones Fellow Progressive pins to Lions Raymond Williams, Doug Spradlin, and David Bussman.

Frank Odell discussed a series of Lion Roundtable training that he will lead, with the first session in August for 16 of our newer Club members. The training will take place at Freddy's Catering following regular Lions Club meetings on the 3rd Monday of the month, across 4 months; there will be another block starting in January. The two blocks of instructions will each take about half of those 16 newer Lions at a time. Lion Frank said the classes will be entertaining, allow Lions to ask questions, and learn details about our Club's operations

For the last two weeks Secretary Lion Craig Gadow made successful trial runs for live video broadcasts of our meetings. We plan to continue with this effort, so that anyone who is unable to attend, due to sickness, work, MAL status, or whatever, will be able to keep up with Club activities. Any member of the Club can access current or past meetings going forward. The only requirement for hardware is a computer or smart phone with access to your web browser on the internet, as well as a Facebook account. If you don't have a Facebook account, set up your account by going to the following web site: <https://www.facebook.com> After you have your Facebook account set-up with your user ID (usually just your email address) and the password of your choice, go to the following web site:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1106236123576541/?ref=share>. This site will ask you to click a blue button if you want to join the "Cullman Lions Only" Facebook page. Once you get there, it may ask again you again to click a blue button to join. You have to sign-in to Facebook each time that you go the, above, "Cullman Lions Only" Facebook page. As another option, if you have a smartphone with a QR Reader, you can scan the following QR code to go to the Lions Only page:



QR Code for "Cullman Club Only" Facebook page. Once you are at the site, page down and you will start seeing Club videos. The last 2 Club meeting are already there; you will have to click on the audio icon at the bottom of the video if it is crossed-out in order to hear; don't



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click for audio on more than one video at a time, or else you will hear two videos at the same time. You can also see a video, live, while its happening. If you have any problems using the above instructions, contact Lion Craig Gadow at 256-736-8361. If he gets a bunch of calls asking for help due to poor instructions on my part, he may have to send out an email with corrections to help everyone.

Upcoming Programs and Events

August 1: Travis Sharpe, President and Founder of Cullman-based, Unsheltered International, will speak on his organization.



Travis Sharpe

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).

August 8: TBD.