



# The Tale Twister

## Cullman Lions Club

June 17, 2019

### Program

Lion Barry Willingham introduced our program speaker, tonight, Mr. Chris Chambers who is Principal of the Cullman County Child Development Center (CDC). He was also a special-ed teacher and a baseball coach for several years. Chris told us about this special school and what its greatest needs were at this point.



(L to R) Lion President Mike Ponder, Mr. Chris Chambers, and Lion Barry Willingham.

In general, the CDC is a state-of-the-art facility for the education of special needs students from 3-year old preschoolers up to students, 21-years old. These students have all been evaluated to determine that they have needs, beyond what is available to other special education classified students, served by regular schools. The CDC student population is made up of 205 Cullman County students with autism, Down students, and other low IQ or disabled students who are not able to communicate, normally. It requires uniquely talented teachers with a great deal of patience, skill, and love in their hearts to help these students. As Chris stated, "It's now how much you know, but

how much you care." And his students really understand and respond to the "care" part. Mr. Chambers says that the CDC's efforts have even allowed 66 of its students to "main-stream" back into regular local schools. He also stated that his current staff is the best that he has ever had.

Under Mr. Chambers leadership, the entire facility is now equipped with hi-bandwidth wi-fi with overhead digital projectors and screens in its classrooms; keypad locks have been installed on all exterior doors. He has overseen the repainting of halls and classrooms and creating numerous specialized teaching and therapy spaces.

The CDC is continuing to actively pursue a new playground, especially designed to be wheel-chair accessible. The existing non-special-needs, 15-year-old playground was totally worn out. The one now planned meets the needs of CDC kids in terms of not only recreation, but sensory needs of students with severe needs, occupational therapy needs, physical therapy needs, etc. with a special artificial surface, rather than asphalt or concrete. This playground would also be used for birthday parties and family gatherings of its students. The Center has just completed phase one of its playground, costing ~\$120,000. There are four more phases to go, and Chris has sought funding from other community clubs and businesses, as well as, an Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ASECA) grant in partnership with the Cullman Economic Development Office. Chris is to be applauded for his



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efforts and leadership of the CDC, and the CDC itself is worthy of our support in completing its playground.

### Other Business

Lion Ed Henke is recovering from surgery to remove lesions on his vocal cords. Lion Javon Daniel was back and seems to have barely skipped a beat after his recent surgery.

Installation dinner for newly elected Lions and Lioness Clubs' officers will be June 24th at Top of the Town restaurant. Dress for Lions will be with coat and tie, as usual. Fellowship will begin at 5:30PM, with dinner served at 6:00.

Lion Jerry Bonner announced that the Central Blount County Lions will be celebrating its charter night with a banquet on June 27<sup>th</sup>. Cost is \$20. Location is One Way Outreach Ministries, located at 36560 Al Highway 79 in Cleveland. Time is 6:00PM. You can RSVP with Lion Russell Murphree at 205-625-2013. Lion Jerry will be attending, and you might catch a ride with him.

Continuing in July, the Cullman Lions Club will be meeting at St John's Church in Christ Hall until further notice. Everyone seems to agree that our food, catered by Freddy Day, has been consistently the best that we have had in recent memory. We've had everything, expertly cooked, from a selection of BBQ pulled-pork, ribs, porkchops, & chicken – to boiled shrimp, fried cat-fish, & fried soft-shell crab, along with slaw, mixed green salad, green beans, butterbeans, potato salad, mac &

cheese, seasoned-baked potato slices, and more, plus, garlic-toasted bread and a wide assortment of great deserts. It's not easy for anyone on a diet to lose weight. My mouth waters thinking about it.



The food has been hard to beat !

### Upcoming Programs and Events

June 24: Lion Frank Moore will officiate at our Club's Officer Installation Night at the Top of the Town restaurant, beginning at 5:30PM.

July 1: First meeting led by new slate of Club officers. Program TBD.

### .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)