



# The Tale Twister

## Cullman Lions Club

March 4, 2019

### Program

Lion Chris Robinson introduced our speaker tonight, Mr. Mike Mullaney, a co-founder of Goat Island Brewery Company in Cullman. Mike brought us up to date on his brewery's activities since he presented a program about two years ago.



(L to R) Lion Chris Robinson, Mr. Mike Mullaney, and President Lion Mike Ponder.

As a reminder of its history -- this brewery began its formation and planning shortly after the tornado in March 2011 by Mike Mullaney, Gery Teichmiller, John Dean, and Brad Glenn. After getting support of the Chamber of Commerce, obtaining Federal & State & local licenses (those took about nearly 6 months), adjusting for building codes, such as a fire-sprinkling system, etc., the brewery opened in April of 2016. There was a great deal of sweat equity on the part of the founders and their families, since funding turned out to be much more than they originally imagined. It is the 1<sup>st</sup> legal brewery operating in Cullman County since the 1880's. Its flagship beer is the recipe from Richter's

Saloon of that 1880 era in Cullman. Goat Island's motto is, appropriately, tied in with their name: "Life is too short to drink [baaad](#) beer!"

Goat Island is about the same size of any other local craft brewery in the State and brews about a thousand gallons of production at a time. They have been up and running for about 3 years, now, with distribution throughout the State, and just recently, in the pan-handle of Florida. They have 5 full-time and 8 part-time employees, running one shift per day, six days per week. The brewery uses a mobile canning company to periodically visit to can their beers. They are located at 1648A, John Cooper Dr. (down 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave SW & Old Hanceville Highway, past the County Jail). Not only do they have the brewery operation going, but a tap-room, serving beer and providing entertainment in its tap-room Mon-Sat from 2 to 10 PM.

The company beer sales have grown 30% in the past year. Goat Island is in the process of more than doubling their production capacity; the demand for their product is more than they can produce right now. The company has had to greatly increase the concrete depth in its facility to handle the weight of thousands of gallons more brew for the new tanks and other equipment. They also intend to purchase their own canning equipment. The brewery has recently experimented with barrel ageing beer, where by it gets liquor barrels from companies like Knob Creek, Jim Beam, and Jack Daniel, and ages its beer for a few months. The



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results have been very encouraging; this may be a whole new line of products for the company.

There are 37 other breweries in Alabama that have banded together to get legislation changed to permit taxing as is done at the Federal level -- by the barrel, rather than by the can or other small container, which requires much more effort and expense to manage. They also want to be able to expand to other locations, rather than just be tied strictly to the individual brewery, itself.

It would be difficult for any other craft brewery to match the proven quality of the Goat Island Brewery's beer. In just their first couple of years, its beers have won many awards, and mentioning some:

- Sipsey River Red - Gold Medal at the Alabama Craft Beer Competition.
- Richter's Pilsner - Bronze medal at the Alabama Craft Beer Competition.
- Big Bridge IPA - Winner of the Cullman Brewers Guild Pale Ale Contest.
- Richter's Pilsner - Named one of the "Nine Best Craft Brews in North Alabama" by the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association.
- At Mobile's People's Choice – 99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall competition, its Dunkel won the "Best Tasting Award."
- At the recent Birmingham Sweet 16 Beer Championship it won 1<sup>st</sup> Place for its Blood Orange Beer. This is a product that is now accounting for 45% of its sales and cannot meet the growing demand.
- At the Great American Beer Festival (a Nation-wide competition) it took the Silver Metal for its Goat Island Dunkel.

Duck Island's tap-room has proven to be a great profit-maker for the company. Every Thursday is Karaoke Night and live bands are routinely booked for Friday and Saturday nights. It schedules other live bands or groups for singing or dancing on other occasions. Other than providing popcorn, or purchased pizza, visitors have to bring their own foods. The tap room can also be rented for birthdays, business meetings, special occasions, charity fund raisers, weddings, church get-togethers, etc. It has really become a community meeting place. Lion Frank Odell proposed that we have a Club meeting there to sample some of the product in order to judge the quality for ourselves.

### Fish & Ham Dinner

Lion Frank Odell says that this Friday, Club members should come to the Cullman Middle School from 2 to 5PM to help upload the food truck and make preliminary preparation for the Fish and Ham Dinner.

Committee Chairmen should set the time for their committee members to show-up this Saturday morning; communicate with them and provide them schedules as necessary.

Foul weather is still in the forecast for Saturday, but there is no change to cancel or postpone this event.

Lions who sold tickets to groups or businesses, should contact those groups and ask them for their pick-up times which you should pass on to the take-out coordinators, Lions Charlie Powell, or Charlie Childers. If the time is, as yet,



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unknown, ask them to call ahead as soon as possible to you or Charlie Powell or Charlie Childers. The reason for calling ahead is this for example: Someone showing up with tickets for 20 plates, without calling ahead, should expect to have a wait awhile to fill that order – it would also delay others in line behind them. If several of these large orders show up at once, there could be further delay if the supply of already cooked fish or hush-puppies is temporarily depleted.

### Other Business

Lion Lummie Speakman continues to improve, but he is still very sore after suffering a broken collar-bone; he may be out, recovering, a few more weeks. Lion Danny Frasier had to take a trip to the ER for an infection, and he is recovering with the help of anti-biotics. Lion Jim Howard is still recovering from his recent fall.

Lion Secretary Don Smith was directed to remind Club members that with over 100 members, it is not practical for just any member to unilaterally commit the Club to provide funds or other help, even for a good cause. If an emergency charitable action appears to be urgent and justifiable, first contact the Lion President; he can approve and direct Club support without Board of Directors approval in such cases. Also, Committee chairs for the Concession Stand, Fish and Ham Dinner, Food, Vision,

Mops and Brooms, and The Fair Parade can commit the Club if within their committee scope. If a member uses his own money as a contribution to charity without following the above procedures, there is not a guarantee of his reimbursement or support from the Club for that Charity.

“Thank You” notes were received from the Good Samaritan Health Clinic, the 2-Shoes organization, and Cullman Caring for Kids for the Club’s donations

### Upcoming Programs and Events

Mar 9: Fish and Ham Dinner at the Cullman Middle School cafeteria. A [\\*link\\*](#) to the latest committee assignments can be found on the front page of the Club website, [www.cullmanlions.com](http://www.cullmanlions.com).

Mar 11: Program by Brian Vance, General Manager of Cullman Bowling Center.

Mar 18: Program by Past District Governor and current Club Treasurer, Lion Jerry Bonner.

### 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.