



The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

May 18, 2026

Program

Lion Barry Willingham introduced our speaker, Ms. Alyssa Thomas, of the North Alabama Development Manager for Make-A-Wish Alabama.



Lions Delane Ray and Barry Willingham present our speaker, Ms. Alyssa Thomas of Make-A-Wish with our Club's token of appreciation.

Alyssa explained that Make A Wish started in 1980 in Arizona to grant the wish of a critically ill boy with leukemia who wanted to be a Police Officer. By 1983 the Make A Wish Foundation was incorporated as 501(c)3 to help both terminal and critically ill children ages two through eighteen nationwide. The Alabama state chapter formally split from an initially combined Alabama/Georgia chapter in 2012. As part of the larger Make-A-Wish Foundation network, the Alabama chapter serves communities across the state by organizing wish experiences, fundraising events, volunteer programs, and partnerships that bring hope and encouragement to children and their families. The organization's work combines compassion, community involvement, and

charitable support to create meaningful experiences for young patients facing difficult medical challenges. Make A Wish Alabama supports about 200 wishes a year throughout the state. The average wish costs about \$10k with a wide variance in cost depending on the type of wish.

Wishes are divided into five categories: "To Go Wishes" which provide for travel to a destination, often Disney World but sometimes foreign countries like Italy or Japan. "To Have Wishes" which often are things or pets like puppies. "To Meet Wishes" which provide for the child to meet celebrities like Nick Saban or Bo Jackson. "To Be Wishes" where the child is a police officer, fireman, or whatever they desire to be for a day. And finally, "To Give Wishes" where the child desires nothing for themselves, but something for others. Alyssa tearfully spoke of a terminally ill high school musician who provided new band uniforms at her school for her wish. Make A Wish Alabama has several fund-raising efforts throughout the year including a marathon length hike, golfing, and telethons. This was a very moving program.

Other Business

Lion Randy Kraft made a motion to dissolve Cullman Lions Charities, seconded by Lion Don Scott. The motion passed unanimously by the Club membership. Cullman Lions Charities was originally created as a separate 501(c)3 committee within our Club which selected local charities to receive proceeds from the Club's Fish & Ham Dinner. This committee has been inactive for a few years, and its function had been



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assumed by the Club's normal support of charities through its Board of Directors. Any monies still associated with Cullman Lions Charities were moved into our Club's regular accounts. This motion just formalized the current situation for proper accounting purposes.

Lion Charlie Childers shared a thank-you note from the Cullman County Dairy Show.

Lion Javon Daniel, who has a heart condition, remains in stable condition, but is currently limited to restricted activities.

Crystal Widner and Roy & Erica Bates



This is the new management team now operating Freddie Day's Catering. Freddie said he will occasionally pitch-in to help out if needed. Meals continue to be great.

Upcoming Programs and Events.

May 25: No Club meeting -- Memorial Day.

June 8: Agriplex Teaching Kitchen Opening Ceremony and dinner at 5:30 PM. Club meeting & meal on this night will be at Agriplex, not at Commission on Aging building.

June 15: Club Officer Installation at the Church of Christ on Child Haven Road. Doors open at 5:30PM; meals served, starting at 6:00.

June 29: Club Family Picnic at the Fairgrounds at 5:30PM. Also, a group photo will be taken of all Lions present. Be there in Lion vests or Lion T-shirts.

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 256-426-3207 (C). Lion Don can be reached at 256-737-7433 (H) or 256-426-7722 (C).