



# The Tale Twister

## Cullman Lions Club

November 4, 2024

### Program

Lion Chris Robinson introduced our speaker tonight, Cullman County District Attorney, (although he really did not need an introduction since he is a fellow Lion of our Club) Champ Crocker. Lion Champ has over 20 years of experience as a full-time practicing attorney. He took office in January 2023. He has been an assistant district attorney, law professor, municipal judge, and a law enforcement training officer.



Lion & Cullman District Attorney Champ Crocker speaks about the DA Office's work while Lion Chris Robinson looks on.

District Attorney Champ stated that his intention was to give us an update from the DA's office. He provided an excellent brochure that provided a comprehensive listing of his office's accomplishments. One of the first things he mentioned was the progress made in closing old cases, which was at a substantial number when he took office. During 2023, 6387 traffic court cases were cleared with 6123 new cases filed for a 104% clearance rate; 2488 District Court cases were cleared with 2665 new cases files for a 110% clearance rate; 811 Circuit Court cases were cleared with 627 new cases filed for a 129% clearance rate. Notable trials in 2023

included convictions of a man with 11 prior DUI's sentenced to 131 years for a 2018 DUI crash that killed a motorcyclist in Cullman County. A man previously of sodomy of a 5-year-old child, was sentenced to 75 years in prison for failing to register as a sex offender; the jury found him guilty in 8 minutes. A man was convicted of slaying his wife after a 4-day trial; he had shot her 7 times in the back. A man was watching his girlfriend's little girl who would not stop crying; he was found guilty of child abuse for throwing her down from a table and kicking a child. A man was sentenced to life in prison for cold and callous 2020 murder; he had just gotten out of prison and stabbed a man in the chest killing him instantly. There are others in a long list of successful convictions. The brochure included photos of the 16 members of the DA's staff, one of which was of a yellow lab dog (K-9 ADA) that is in the H.E.R.O. Program. DA Crocker was also proud of the \$421,678 in restitution that was recovered for Victims in Cullman County in 2023.

One program of his office is the Pre-Trial Intervention Program. This program diverts certain first-time nonviolent defendants from the traditional court system into an individualized and supervised restorative program, instead of a prison sentence. Defendants that successfully complete the program will not have their case brought to trial. Instead, they may be required to work at community service, participate in counseling, drug & alcohol treatment, anger management, pay restitution, and other focused programs that the DA thinks will aid in rehabilitation. On the other hand, a recently passed law called Anaya's Law (Anaya Blanchard was raped and murdered by a man out on bail). This law allows a judge to deny bail in the case of certain violent Class A felonies,



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and his office has convinced the judge in 20 cases to invoke this no bail rule.

Other work undertaken by DA Crocker's office is enforcement of Alabama's truancy law compelling parents to keep their children in school. Studies have shown that keeping a child in school dramatically reduces the likelihood that the child will ever be a lawbreaker.

Lion Champ brought copies of Tuesday's election ballot which had one item that he was particularly interested in -- that was getting funding for treatment of mentally ill law breakers. He illustrated the problem with a recent case of a man running around naked at a gas station. The sheriff's department responded, arrested the guy, and probated him to mental health, not jail. This treatment only lasted a couple of days, and the same thing happened again. In seven months, law enforcement responded to over 700 instances of people causing problems or breaking the law.

Our community is fortunate to have such a dedicated District Attorney as Lion Champ Crocker protecting us and insuring that the law is enforced and getting lawbreakers behind bars.

### Other Business

Lion Vernon Parker, who runs the Lions vision warehouse & gets the glasses ready to recycle, had a family tragedy due to his wife Jame unexpectedly passing away.

Lion Gordon Boyd is not doing well. Lion Ron Seybold continues to make progress in his cancer recovery and is looking for good news following a CAT scan on Friday. Keep these Lions in your prayers.

Fair Association President Lion Charlie Childers called a Fair Association meeting. The only

subject was to announce an election of half of our current Fair BOD for a 2-year term. Candidate selection Chairman, Lion Steve Cartee presented a slate of 6 Lions as candidates as seen in the sample ballot, below, and asked for any nomination from the floor -- there were none. After a voice vote from all Lions present, nominations were finalized. The vote will take place at the Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> Club meeting. Lion Charlie closed the Fair Association meeting following the voice vote on candidates.

### **Sample ballot -- Candidates are listed in alphabetical order. Choose 6:**

- Dennis Berse
- Brad Mitchell
- David Peacock
- Danny Ray
- Sam Roberts
- Chris Robinson
- Riley Smith
- Barry Willingham

Scott & Melinda Scofield visited with us again tonight. Our Club helped them on their training mission to the Ukraine military. We also had another guest visitor, Joey Robson, a local businessman who may be interested in joining our Club. Finally, Lion Champ Crocker's son, Henry, was also a guest tonight.

Lion President Chris Brooks announced that Lion Matthew Hogue achieved 9 years as a member of our Club. He announced that there would be a BOD meeting, following next week's Club meeting.

Lion Bill Ruehl thanked the volunteers for their support on Wednesday at Alabama Lion Sight exams at the Good Samaritan Clinic. 13 indigent Cullman citizens were served at this event.



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Lion Frank Odell presented Lion James Pinyan a mug for finishing the new Lion roundtable. He attended all meetings straight through, in order.

### Upcoming Programs and Events

November 11: Col Don Fallin, U.S. Army Retired, will be our speaker.



Col Don Fallin, U.S. Army Retired

November 18: Retired Naval Commander Vince Lambert will be our speaker.



Retired Naval Commander Vince Lambert

November 21: The annual Farm-City Banquet will be held at Loft 212 at 5:00PM. See Lion Brooks for tickets.

December 2: Closed meeting – no guests. Fair Board election and presentation of financial reports from Fair.

December 10: Wreaths Across America for deceased veterans at Cullman City Cemetery at 10AM. Lion will be needed to help transport wreaths and with placement of wreaths. Details to follow.

December 16: Fair appreciation dinner at Cotton Creek. Details to follow.

See page 4 for Committee Assignments

### 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).



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### Committee Assignments for FY 2024-2025

| <b>President Chris Brooks</b> |                 |                  |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Committees                    | Chair           | Co-Char          | Member           | Member         | Member           | Member          | Member       |
| Nominating                    | Steve Murphree  | Morris Magnum    | Dewayne Wilson   |                |                  |                 |              |
| Club History                  | Dennis Berse    | Charlie Powell   | Javon Daniel     | Dewayne Wilson | Ron Seybold      | Scott Starosta  |              |
| Explore                       | Jerry Bonner    | David Bussman    | Raymond Williams | Fred Osborne   | Delane Ray       | Craig Gadow     | Steve Cartee |
| <b>1st VP Delane Ray</b>      |                 |                  |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Committees                    | Chair           | Co-Char          | Member           | Member         |                  |                 |              |
| Diabetes                      | Milford Parrish | George Krigbaum  | David Peacock    | Javon Daniel   |                  |                 |              |
| Fair Concessions              | David Bussman   | Richard Gurley   | Judy Smith       |                |                  |                 |              |
| Finance & Community           | Don Smith       | Brian Spaeth     | Jerry Bonner     |                |                  |                 |              |
| Fish & Ham                    | Carey Thompson  | David Peacock    | Jason Tielking   |                |                  |                 |              |
| Membership                    | George Krigbaum | Javon Daniel     | Frank Odell      |                |                  |                 |              |
| Program                       | Sam Roberts     | Randy Kraft      | Chris Robinson   |                |                  |                 |              |
| Mop & Broom                   | Richard White   | Dave Gratz       | Chris Robinson   |                |                  |                 |              |
| Sight                         | Bill Ruehl      | Steve Cartee     |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| <b>2nd VP Jeff Lawson</b>     |                 |                  |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Committees                    | Chair           | Co-Char          |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Area Lion's Liason            | Craig Gadow     | Scott Starosta   |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Constitution & Bylaws         | Craig Gadow     | Steve Murphee    | Frank Odell      |                |                  |                 |              |
| House & Food                  | Dennis Berse    | Fred Osborne     |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Member Information            | Charlie Powell  | Dave Gratz       |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Song Leader                   | Richard White   | Chris Robinson   |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Youth Leos                    | David Wiggins   | Jeff Lawson      |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| <b>3rd VP David Wiggins</b>   |                 |                  |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Committees                    | Chair           | Co-Char          |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Tail Twister                  | Richard Gurley  | Richard White    |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Fair Parade                   | Steve Murphee   | Barry Willingham |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Branch Club Liaison           | Ron Seybold     | Jeff Lawson      |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Publicity                     | Sam Roberts     | Charlie Powell   |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| Communications & Web          | Sam Roberts     | Charlie Powell   |                  |                |                  |                 |              |
| New- Member Orientation       | Frank Odell     | George Krigbaum  | Richard Gurley   | Steve Murphree | Raymond Williams | Ginger Hogeland |              |