



The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

October 19, 2020

Program

Although Lion President Javon Daniel is feeling pretty good, his physician advised him to wait another week before attending Lions Club meetings; so again, Lion Vice-President Milford Parrish continued to run the show at tonight's meeting. He called upon the team leaders of each work group to talk about its experience in Fair 2020, beginning with the Fair President, Lion Charlie Childers.



Lion Vice President Milford Parrish (L) looks on as Fair President, Lion Charlie Childers talks about our just completed Fair.

Lion Charlie read a note from Lion David Bussman who could not be present, but sent his special thanks to Richard Gurley who helped him set up every day, to Lion Fuller Smith and Melissa (Lion Steve) Cartee, Lion Tim Scott, Tim's daughter Arleigh, and, as always going the extra mile to help, Lions Charlie Powell and Jerry Bonner. Lion David Bussman, himself, is to be recognized for the countless hours and expense that he has contributed for his upgrades to the Lions concession stand this past year. Lion

Charlie commented on the pageants and Fair Queen operations which were handled without incident due to past experience and great pre-Fair coordination from Lions Randy Kraft and Chris Robinson. Lion Charlie noted that our carnival contractor did well and had an average year, financially, but that overall, the Fair Association's take from our Fair looks like it will be down from what we have done in the past few years. He said that the older folks – the grandparents who usually come with the kids, were significantly down in their attendance. Also, the first Saturday was a complete wash out, and we shut the fair down that day due to thunderstorms. And Sunday's attendance was less than half due to weather, although several other days were near the top in attendance, compared to other years' Fairs. Lion Charlie feels that after all bills are paid, the Fair Association will be able to make a significant contribution to the Lions Club, and will not require any loans to pay for Fair Ground operation and maintenance during the year, and be able to start next year's Fair in a good financial position. We were able to give the Fair Queens \$6,000 in scholarships, and able to provide some joy, happiness, and entertainment to our community, as well as funds for charities and the less fortunate. We had numerous compliments about the quality of people working the Fair, the cleanliness, police presence, and safety measures in place.

Lion Richard White came to the "mike" to tell about his parking group. He said everyone showed up as scheduled and did a great job, and there were no parking



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problems – except that he managed to get his own car stuck in a muddy spot. He read off names of all Lions who helped on his crew. Also, he noted that Lion Chris Brooks slipped and hurt his shoulder and will required a little surgery for that. Lion Richard said he kept his crew well fed from our concession stand, and they kept a good attitude, talking with and getting to know their fellow Lions during slow periods.

Lion Chris Robinson did have \$1,200 in damage to his car while it was parked in the small Fair office parking lot. A Fair vendor couple was trying to park a rather large travel trailer up next to the fence and managed to scrape his vehicle. He had a tough time trying to communicate with the owners of the trailer since they are a deaf/mute couple. Lion Chris also tried to pass some blame to Lion Richard, too, since he had ultimate responsibility for parking.

Lion Dennis Berse talked next about the exhibit operations in Bldg #1. He said things generally moved very quickly because we had limited exhibits per person to just 3. However, his staffing of workers had been generally older folks who were afraid of working at the Fair, just as they were of even attending the Fair; also, the Auburn Extension Service was prohibited from handling any exhibits. Fortunately, Lion Dennis' wife, Shannon, who worked last year and also with a couple of veterans from past Fairs, as well as Lion David Gratz, were able to keep pace with all the incoming exhibits of handicrafts, art, and canned goods. The only real problem they encountered was a

lady who complained to everyone she could about the quality of the judging. Lion Dennis said he held his tongue but said he was shaking in anger for some time after this confrontation. He later found out that this problem lady had a brain tumor and was not “right,” mentally. Despite this one issue, the operations were smooth, and Lion Dennis said he had a lot of compliments and that his group would make it better next year.

Then, Lion Steve Murphree talked to us and began with the subject of the Fair Parade; Lion Steve was the chair and Lion Milton Parrish was co-chair. He said that everyone who signed up to help did show up and really made a difference in having a smooth operation, saying, “many hands make light work.” Lion Javon Daniel had met with the City Council to assure them that we would do what we were supposed to do in regard to Covid-19, in order to get the parade permit. Lion Steve said that the entry form was amended to assure that the parade participants would be local entities only, to ensure that the parade was not co-opted by any outside organization that wanted to make the parade about themselves, rather than to highlight the Fair and our community. The only real problem that came up was that at the last minute, there was no place for the buses to park to pick up all the school bands, cheerleaders, etc. These buses had been planned for parking in the old depot area, across the railroad near AutoZone. The problem was that Oktoberfest organizers had closed this area off for its event attendees. However, the police came to the rescue by blocking traffic into the north shopping area and allowing the buses to



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park there. Quick thinking, being flexible, and coordinating saved the day. Despite this potential snafu, the parade went off without a real hitch, although one band did get slightly out of place with some parts of its wider community. Lion Steve also oversaw Building #2, the agricultural exhibits building. He noted that because of Covid, these exhibits were only about 30% of what we usually have at our Fair, but that what we did have was of very high quality. He also noted that we did have a 100 lb. pumpkin which exploded (not an unusual happening) before the Fair was over and had to be hauled out. Lion Steve did thank Lions George Krigbaum, Dewayne Wilson, and Doug Spradlin who showed up every day, although Lion Steve's committee had 10 Lions listed; but with the smaller number of exhibits, things worked out OK.

Lion Steve Cartee said that the Fair in general may have been off due to Covid-19, but the animal shows in the barn were probably the best that we have ever had. Steve said that these shows cost us more than any other activity due to judging cost, premium costs, awards, etc. Furthermore, they are a lot of work, but that our Fair would not really be a fair without these livestock shows. Lion Steve wanted to really commend Lion Charlie Powell and Lion Charlie McBrayer for their electrical work in the barn. Lion Charlie Powell also suggested that Lion Steve contact the Mayor (Lion Woody Jacobs) to seek help in getting asphalt millage for the barn parking area, along with Lion David Bussman in putting in piping and resetting gutters; the County came in and rolled, scraped, and smoothed everything out.

Thanks to this work, our barn was able to handle 25 trucks and trailers and operate the barn in a driving rainstorm. Lion Steve also thanked Lions David Gratz and Delane Ray who were working every day in helping receive livestock all day as necessary, although there were 7 other Lions assigned to his team. He also commended Lion Jay Conway who runs the 4-H and FFA programs through the schools to get those exhibitors to participate at the Fair. Steve said he does not know of any other County fair that had animal shows this year, yet we had our best one yet. Lion Charlie Childers said his feelings were hurt that we spent more on cows than we did on Fair Queens.

Lion Don Smith wanted to thank Lions from all exhibit areas who quietly supported his automation efforts, saying that he got 100% support, whenever they were involved in use of making certain exhibitors were registered and had their bar-code stickers, which made processing of all exhibits incredibly easy this year, both in the Ag area and the exhibits in Bldg #1. Lion Don commended Lion Dennis Berse, especially, for his organization this year.

Finally, Lion Charlie Childers gave credit and thanks to Lion Barry Willingham for the job he had done in establishing controls and his organization after assuming the Treasurer position on the Fair Board of Directors; he has really done an outstanding job. Lion Charlie noted that it is going to be so much easier to look at our finances and determine where we can trim our expenses or where we need to spend more money effectively. Lion Charlie also noted that our Fair managers, Lions



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Charlie McBrayer and Jerry Bonner had done a great job in the upkeep of the Fair grounds throughout the year and especially for the Fair itself. This was also the first year that we really started using credit cards across the Fair, although Lion David Bussman started accepting credit cards last year; use of credit cards has been highly successful for our Fair this year

Lion Jerry Bonner commented on how lucky that we had a Fair at all this year. He noted that the Annual Peanut Festival in Georgia was cancelled due to Covid-19 concerns. That festival makes over a million dollars from that event. Lion Charlie closed with appreciation for our Fair carnival contractor, Kissel for its great work and for all our Lions who really made of Fair happen under difficult circumstances.

Other Business

Lion Jim Rooker's health has worsened, despite treatment for his cancer; he is no longer able to speak.

Lion Milford advised the Club that the estimate from the property value expert for the Club's Smith Lake property was slightly lower than the lowest estimate from that of the Realtor who spoke to our Club several weeks ago. Now that Fair 2020 is behind

us, Lion Milford said the Board of Directors would further consider the sale of that property in the near future.



Set up for Club meetings in the foreseeable future in heated & insulated Bldg #3 at the Fair Grounds. The feasts just keep coming – great food, don't miss it.

Upcoming Programs and Events

Oct 26: Club members will meet in Exhibit Building #3 at Fairgrounds.

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).