



The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

October 5, 2026

Program

Lion Vice President Craig Gadow introduced our speaker, Ms. April Bowen German, founder and director of Victoria's Hope Thrift Shop. She spoke to us about three years ago. Since then, the store has been named Cullman's Best Thrift Shop two years in a row. April also works as a teacher, while her husband runs the store with help from their two sons. Together, they serve about 50 families each month.



Our speaker, tonight, Ms. April German of Victoria's Hope, flanked by Lion Vice-President Craig Bowen and Lion President Jeff Lawson

The roots of Victoria's Hope reach back to 2018, when April Bowen German established the ministry in memory of her mother, Victoria Hankey. Her mother's experiences as a single parent had a lasting influence on April, who remembered how hard her mother worked to provide for her children while still finding ways to help other people.

Victoria Hankey understood the challenges of stretching a limited income. According to reporting by The Cullman Tribune, she worked multiple jobs to support her family and sometimes went without necessities herself. Yet

she continued helping people in need, including families struggling with bills and housing. Those memories helped shape April's vision. Rather than allowing grief to remain only a personal hardship, she created a ministry that could carry her mother's generosity forward. Victoria's Hope began with a straightforward goal: providing clothing and other essential items to single parents and families who needed assistance.

Initially, the project operated on a small scale, using storage space and a modest office in Dodge City. Donations arrived, however, and the need for additional room quickly became apparent. What started as a small ministry was developing into something much larger than its founder had originally imagined. In July 2019, Victoria's Hope Thrift and Treasures opened its first public-facing thrift store in Cullman and moved again in 2022 to a larger building. The concept combined affordable shopping with direct community assistance. Customers could purchase donated merchandise at low prices, while qualifying families could receive needed items free of charge.



Victoria's Hope Thrift and Treasures at 230 U.S. Hwy 278 West, just west of I-65 and the Dollar General store.

This approach helped establish a sustainable cycle of giving. Community members could



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donate items they no longer needed; shoppers could find useful products without paying traditional retail prices, and proceeds could support the organization's charitable work. The store's growth reflected both the demand for affordable goods and the community's willingness to participate. By the end of its first year, the organization had reported giving away \$16,246 and paying off outstanding lunch debt at Good Hope Primary School. It was also helping families affected by emergencies, including house fires, and providing clothing and household necessities to people experiencing financial hardship.

These accomplishments showed that the store was not simply a place to buy secondhand merchandise. It has become a practical resource for people facing circumstances that could quickly overwhelm a household budget.

Parents in-need can fill out a form that allows other more well-off families to "adopt" them to help them, especially around Christmas. Last year 250 kids' families were adopted in this manner.

The organization's story is ultimately about people helping people. Its continued growth reflects the belief that useful possessions can find new homes, financial pressures can be eased through collective effort, and even a small act of kindness can create opportunities for someone else.

Through Victoria's Hope, April has helped transform a personal tribute into a community resource. The result is a thrift store whose value cannot be measured solely by its merchandise or sales, but by the families it helps, the partnerships it builds, and the hope it continues to bring to Cullman.

Other Business

Monday October 12th, we are going to start meeting at 4:30 here, having hot dogs, hamburgers, beans, chips, and cokes. You can grab and go, or you can sit down and eat whatever you desire. Then do coordination, Fair-prep work, scheduling, and planning with your group for the Fair. But we're going to start at 4:30. Plan to be through by 6PM.

Lion David Peacock gave an update on health of Lion Jeff Byrd. Lion Jeff had hip joint replacement about 5 years ago. He has an infection that developed around that artificial joint and had a temporary antibiotic plastic joint installed to help clear the infection, along with heavy antibiotic infusions. He's improving, but after the infection clears, he will have another artificial joint surgery, replacing the plastic joint; still, it may take several weeks of treatment and rehab after this surgery before he'll be back on his feet.

On October 10th, this past Saturday, Exhibits first began to be accepted in Bldg. #1.



Handicraft exhibits start rolling in.



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Art and photos start filling shelves.



Lions Don Smith and Cindy Pinyan registering early exhibitors.



Chaiman of Handicraft, etc. in Exhibit Bldg #1, Lion David Peacock talk strategy before crowds arrives.

Page 4 of the newsletter shows Club members work assignments for the Fair. If you wish to change your assignment, work it out with chairpersons of the to & from groups involved. If you have been left-out, contact Lion Carey Thompson.

Upcoming Programs and Events.

Oct 12: Fair Work Night & Pep Rally meal. Come in to eat at 4:30. Then meet up with your work group to make sure things are in order. Also, you can verify your own schedule with your work-group Chairman/co-Chair for Fair starting the Thursday (that's just 3 days later).

Oct. 15 through 24: Cullman County Fair.

Jan. 11: Ms. Michelle Lee, founder and Executive Director of Healing through Creativity Foundation will be our speaker.

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).

See Fair assignments on next page.



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FAIR WORK ASSIGNMENTS 2026-V4

A AG EXHIBITS		+Gates	E GATES		+Ag Ex	I PARKING		+Security +Security +Security
1	Mitchell, Brad		1	Willingham, Barry		1	Roberts, Samuel	
2	Murphree, Steve		2	Schofield, Sean		2	White, Richard	
3	Garrison, Phillip		3	Bryant, Jeremy		3	Aker, Adam	
4	Krigbaum, George		4	Earnest, Michael		4	Clay, Claude	
5	Osborne, Fred		5	Gadow, Craig		5	Duke, Kelly	
6	Ray, Danny		6	Gambrill, Chad		6	Fromhold, Michael	
7	Spradlin, Doug		7	Gudger, Garlan		7	Hadwin, Tony	
8	Byrd, Jeff		8	Hamm, Mark		8	Hogue, Matthew	
			9	Jackson, Quinn		9	Gentry, Matt	
B BARN			10	Johnson, Lee		10	James, Patrick	
1	Kraft, Randy		11	Martin, Joe		11	Lawson, Jeff	
2	Smith, Riley		12	Murphree, Steve		12	Mangum, Mike	
3	Brooks, Chris		13	Peek, Rickey		13	Manning, Andrew	
4	Ray, Delane		14	Rodgers, Steve		14	Monk, Brian	
5	Slaten, Terry		15	Scott, Don		15	Parrish, Milford	
6	Williams, Bradley		16	Smith, Jerry		16	Ponder, Eric	
			17	Sumner, Dewayne		17	Ray, Joshua	
C CONCESSIONS			18	Waldrep, Bo		18	Rainwater, Clark	
1	Bussman, David		19	Walker, Alan		19	Ruffner, Sam	
2	Gurley, Richard		20	Wilhite, Terry		20	Sivilli, Joseph	
3	Cartee, Steve	+Theater	21	Wren, Jeffrey		21	Spaeth, Brian	
4	Crocker, Champ		22	Scott, Arleigh		22	Smith, Shane	
5	Hampton, Ory		23	Galin, Jerry				
6			24	Jacobs, Woody		J Security		
7	Pinyan, James					1	Lawson, Jeff	+ Parking
8	Poulin, Quinten					2	Hogue, Matthew	+ Parking
9	Roden, Tyler		F THEATER			3	Gentry, Matt	+ Parking
10	Starosta, Scott	+Office	1	Robinson, Chris				
11	Tielking, Jason		2	Childers, Charles		K INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITS		
12	Wiggins, David		3	Carpenter, Noah		1	Peacock, David	
13	Williams, Jeff		4	Boozar, Bryan		2	Gratz, Dave	
14	Brown, Bruce		5	Cartee, Steve	+Conces	3	Daniel, Javon	
			6	Floyd, Chad		4	Doggett, Douglas	
D OFFICE			7	Hogeland, Ginger		5	Green, Cleve	
1	Wilt, Bill	+Mainten	8	Twilley, Dean		6	Mangum, Morris	
2	Pinyan, Cindy					7	Marks, Brooke	
3	Ruehl, Bill	+Mainten	G MAINTENANCE			8	Perry, Howard	
4	Smith, Don		1	Ruehl, Bill	+Office	9	Schofield, Melinda	
5	Starosta, Scott	+Conces	2	Powell, Charles		10	Williams, Doug	
6	Thompson, Carey		3	Wilt, Bill	+Office	11	Williams, James	
			4	Wilson, Dewayne		12	Bragg, Rodney	
Note: Light tan means person is on 2 jobs. Yellow indicate chair & co-chair of group.			H Not assigned			13	Pfeifer, Tom	
			1	Bonner, Jerry		14	Rowe, Chris	
						15	Windeknecht, Brooke	