



The Tale Twister

Cullman Lions Club

June 17, 2024

Program

Following an introduction by Lion Randy Kraft, Mr. Tim Culpepper, CEO of Cullman Electric Co-operative spoke. Lion Randy pointed out that Tim was an attorney here in town, once hired by Lion Randy's Aunt, and is the younger brother of our last Chief of Police, Kenny Culpepper.



Mr. Tim Culpepper, CEO of Cullman Electric Co-op, gives an update on the Co-op's status.

Mr. Culpepper began by thanking us for our help in parking for the Co-op's annual meeting which will occur again this year on September 14th. Tim stated that the Co-op services electricity to 48,000 customers, which is most of Cullman County except those serviced within the city by the Cullman Power Board (TVA); it also serves most of Winston County and south to the Mulberry River.

Tim noted the recent unprecedented residential growth of our County, in which the Co-op has added over 1,400 new residences and has 86 miles of buried electrical pipe in the past two years. Tims says folks are moving here from all-over --- from Texas, California, Georgia, Tennessee, ...

Inflation is a burden, not only for every citizen, but for the Co-op. Underground pipe costs have gone up from \$1 per foot to \$4.5, which has amounted to \$2M total added costs for the last two years. He says that they build assets to cover growth predictions for the next 30 to 40 years and build to last. Furthermore, predictions as to what will really be required are harder than ever. So that instead of new development plans produced every five years, their plans are now updated every year or two. He says that the electrical requirements for the Lake area have literally exploded – they had very little infrastructure in place they just a few years ago; they have just built a new substation at Berlin; they spend about \$20M per year on infrastructure, and try to build more that is needed right now just to stay ahead of expected continued growth. Right-of-way cutting of trees and brush totals 3,500 miles, of which, 800 miles is cut annually, and they also spray defoliant every 2 years. If this is not done, it only causes higher costs for repairs and increases outages due to wind and ice damage. Although growth is good, Tim said that return on investment for a residential service takes 16 to 17 years for the Co-op's cost to build. It is interesting, he says, that although houses today are usually larger and have more electrical appliances than ever, they use less electricity because they are much more efficient – everything from light bulbs to motors, to electronics.

Mr. Culpepper also talked about plans to continue grow of the "Sprout" system to bring fiber optic internet service throughout the Co-ops service area. Running the cable costs about \$30,000 per mile. Their plans called for about a 30% take rate of potential customers, but so far that has been exceeded with a 40% rate of fiber internet customers. Tim says that



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right now Sprout has nearly 12,000 customers; the system should be complete in mid-2026 with over 17,000 expected customers. This system permits customers to use tera-bytes of data daily. Its biggest customer, Cullman Medical Center, uses 18 or 19 tera-bytes of data.

Tim told several stories about customers, problems servicing electrical vehicles, storing of electricity, rolling blackouts, and growth in terms of facilities and of Co-op personnel. This was a very interesting and informative presentation. As the CEO, Mr. Tim Culpepper seems well informed and suited to taking care of business quite handily.

Other Business

Lion David Goodwin's family has opened a raffle to supplement his family stay costs while he is undergoing cancer treatment in Texas. You can find the information under Holly Goodwin on Facebook (daughters are Brianna and Elizabeth Mae). Raffle prizes include 3 nights in Florida at the beach, 2 VIP Rock the South tickets, and a \$300 gift certificate.

Lion President Brooks recognized years of service for Chad Floyd (10), Bradley Williams (2), and Jordan Frost (2).

There will be no meeting July 1, 2024, due to the 4th of July holiday.

The club Board of Directors (BOD) made a substantial monetary contribution to Cullman Caring for Kids.

Lion David Wiggins was elected 3rd Vice President for the next Lion Year, following Lion Ricky Peek's declination of this position, due to personal and work conflicts.

Lion Randy Kraft had 2 guests tonight, Mr.& Mrs. Lance and Kathy Jeffery.



Lion President Chris Brooks passing check to Lion Javon Daniel for "Cullman Caring for Kids."

Upcoming Programs and Events

June 24: Mr. Ory Hampton, Director of Development at Cullman Christian School will be our speaker.



Mr. Ory Hampton with family.

July 1: No meeting due to the 4th of July Holiday this week.

July 8: Treasurer Lion Don Smith will provide update on Club's financial status. This will be a closed meeting.



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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).