



Eyes of PROGRESS

Serving the Community Since 1943

From the Chamber President

The fat lady hasn't sung...

Cullman will never stop the show. Join us as we begin Scene 71, Act 1. The COC is ready to begin and we are ready for action!

I just saw the fat lady. She's sitting in stony silence, sipping a hot cup of herbal tea. After Thursday night's 70th Annual Meeting and Gala, I hope you recognize that your COC is not coming to a close. On the contrary, we are picking up the next piece of music and belting out the chorus.

For those who were not able to attend the Gala, let me fill you in on what you missed. Upon entering the Dominique Room, a red carpet paved the way to a grand entrance filled with violin music and vintage pictures of Cullman. As you passed through the double doors leading into the large glass room, Frank Sinatra and Glenn Miller

welcomed you back to an era of days gone by. Our next generation of leaders then ushered you to the black and white clothed tables lavished with roses, silver chargers and recollections of the past, packaged neatly in a clear box.

The evening was filled with memories of our roots through a thirty minute video documentary. The timeline stretched from 1943 to the present and included personal interviews with past chamber presidents (chairs). The film was dedicated to our beloved Chester Freeman. We revealed our new chamber logo and talked about the significance of the

COC (chamber of commerce) icons and of the railroad within our logo. We unveiled our commemorative art created by Adrian Scott of WSCC. Charlie Nesmith talked about the past year's trials and triumphs and Melissa Cartee encouraged us with her vision for the next year. The community service awards were given: Billy Coleman for the Chamber Citizenship Award and Randall Shed for the Mayor's Association Service Award. As we toasted in the new executive year, we were all reminded of how important this organization has been and continues to be in the progress of our community. We invited all of our members to join us in this new era of progress and promised to connect all of them for the continued success and growth of the entire Cullman area.

So yes, it's very evident the fat lady is not even close to warming up. In

fact, I think we should forget her altogether. She has no place in our production. Cullman will never stop the show. Join us as we begin Scene



Leah Bolin

71, Act 1. The COC is ready to begin and we are ready for action!

**Cullman Area
Chamber of Commerce**

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In the News...

Hooked 'em: Cullman selected to host the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame (With Video)

Read more...CullmanTimes.com

Construction of Interchange at Co Rd 222, one of nine local projects identified by Governor Bentley

Read more...CullmanSense.com



Chamber begins an exciting new year in March 2013

| MEET THE NEW OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS |

2013-14 Executive Committee

Chamber Chair
Ms. Melissa Cartee
Cullman Electric Cooperative

Vice Chair, Business Development
Mr. Jason Grimmett
Drinkard Development, Inc.

Vice Chair, Finance & Administration
Mr. Jason White
The Final Touch

Vice Chair, Tourism & Recreation
Ms. Sammie Danford
Cullman County Economic Development

Chair-Elect
Mr. Jim Weidner
Cullman Regional Medical Center

Vice Chair,
Community & Workforce Development
Mr. Perry Shields
ATN-Cullman/Hanceville

Vice Chair, Membership & Marketing
Ms. Gloria Williams
Freedom Insurance, The Gloria Williams Agency

Immediate Past Chair
Mr. Charles NeSmith
Merchants Bank of Alabama

2013-14 Board of Directors

Mr. Nathan Anderson
Cullman City Schools

Mr. Bill Morgan
The Cullman Times

Mr. Randy Millar
Computer Partners, Inc.

Mr. Mike Manning
Cullman Power Board

Mr. Ben Harrison
Cullman Regional Airport

Ms. Kristen Holmes
Wallace State Community College

Mr. William W. Cooch, P.G.
Highland Technical Services, Inc.

Mr. Jeb Williamson
Jeb Williamson CPA, LLC

Ms. Samantha Way
DQ Grill & Chill - Cullman

Ms. Frances Cooper
The Community Shopper's
Guide, Inc.

Mr. Randy Earnest
Chick-fil-A of Cullman

Mr. Jeff Curtis
Cullman Area Career Center

Mr. Albert von Pelser
REHAU Automotive, LLC

Hon. Barry Willingham
Cullman County Revenue
Commissioner

Ms. Emily Niezer Johnston
Emily Niezer Johnston, LLC.

Ms. Susan Guthrie
Royal Technologies, Inc.

Mr. Tim Johnson
J2 Technologies, Inc.

Mr. Randall Shedd
Cullman County Commission on Aging

Mr. Jason Spann
Amercian Proteins, Inc.

Mr. Bill St. John
St. John & Associates, Inc.

Mayor Kenneth Nail
City of Hanceville

Mr. Keith Lann
Guthrie's

Ms. Melody Basch
Prestigious Pets

Meet Chamber Board Member Gloria Williams



Tell us about your career and current position:

I am the owner of Freedom Insurance Agency. I have been in the Insurance business for 36 years and had my own agency for the last 18 years.

What is your educational background?

I graduated from Vinemont High School. I have attended Wallace State Community College and completed numerous insurance courses.

Introduce us to your family:

I am married to Raymond Williams, we just celebrated our 37th anniversary. We have one daughter, Kris Todd. She has been married 14 years to Shawn Todd.

What do I like MOST about living in the Cullman area?

I moved to Cullman when I was 13. My father's family is from Cullman County and I feel a peace in my heart living here. What I love most about Cullman is the people- good people- kind, caring, patriotic, and they know God's love. This county is unique because when a need arises friends and neighbors join together to meet these needs. We care about what happens to one another. This is what makes the quality of life in Cullman so wonderful!!

FREEDOM AGENCY
GLORIA WILLIAMS - AGENT
166A COUNTY ROAD 1435
CULLMAN, AL. 35058
PHONE - 256-737-0011
FAX - 256-737-0616



Is there a specific accomplishment or project of which you are particularly proud?

I am honored to have been a part of several projects in Cullman County of which I am very proud. As far as my accomplishments, I would have to say my greatest accomplishment is my beautiful daughter. Raymond and I were very humbled when selected as Farm-City Family. We were speechless. I have also received the "Emma Marie Eddleman Citizenship Award", this was totally shocking. My family is truly honored to be a part of Cullman County and to help in any way that we are lead.

What is the one thing you would like to see accomplished in the community during your term on the Board of Directors?

I would love to see growth in our memberships. This will help our Chamber to become stronger and I am hoping thru our actions that Cullman Countians will regain confidence in the Chamber.



Chamber to host monthly “Fourth Friday”

Special guest speaker Sammy Lee, Bass Hall of Fame President

The Chamber’s Tourism Committee will host the “Fourth Friday” Luncheon on Friday, March 22, in the All Steak Restaurant’s Banquet Room (new location: 323 3rd Avenue S.E., Cullman, AL 35055) The keynote speaker is Sammy Lee, Bass Hall of Fame. The event is sponsored by **American Proteins.**

Doors open at 11:30 am to allow networking opportunities before the program begins at 11:50 am. Lunch is

\$10 per person for Chamber members and \$20 for “Future” members. Reservations in advance are required. Please REGISTER online at www.cullmanchamber.org or RSVP by contacting the Chamber via e-mail at info@cullmanchamber.org or by calling 256-734-0454.



Getting to know Sammy Lee

Sammy Lee, of Birmingham, Alabama, is a former touring professional bass fisherman and host of the weekday, syndicated radio/fishing program: “*Tight Lines® with Sammy Lee*”.

Sammy entered his first professional bass fishing tournament at age 16 and has since participated in over 400 tournaments in more than 20 states. In 1982, Lee was honored by the Frank Carter Company, of Atlanta, Georgia, as “*Master Fisherman of the Year*”. An award that was chosen from 90 promoter fishermen in 10 Southeastern states.

Sammy Lee, as host of the syndicated “*Tight Lines® with Sammy Lee*” radio program, provides both the experienced and novice fisherman with winning methods and hints on angling. His down-to-earth approach and easy-going manner have made his program a favorite among sportsmen in all 50 states.

His topics cover the full range of the sport, from the more technical aspects, such as the effect of weather on the day’s catch, to the selection of tackle and their proper use.

Additionally, Lee frequently interviews other fishing personalities, who speak from experience on their techniques and catches.

Going beyond the technical, Lee has invited country music legend's, including John Anderson, Ricky Van Shelton, Porter Wagoner, Merle Haggard, Bobby Bare, Bryan White and Ray Price, among others, to talk fishing from the point of view of the layman who loves the sport.

On the air since March 1st, 1984, “*Tight Lines® with Sammy Lee*” programs are three minutes long and are broadcast five days each week, on over one hundred participating radio stations and Podcast via 32 different Podcast sites including iTunes, where “*Tight Lines®*” is the most downloaded ‘Outdoors’ podcast on iTunes.

At 6’ 6” and 280 lbs., Sammy Lee is an imposing figure as he shares his angling knowledge and fish stories at public appearances. His personal appeal is evident among sportsmen of all ages, as he speaks and gives fishing demonstrations to such varied groups as: students; civic and service organizations; youth fishing seminars; military personnel; Boy Scouts and those attending boat shows and fishing tournaments. Lee travels 80,000+ miles each year, as a lecturing professional angler and communicator.



Additionally, from 1993-2001, Sammy Lee occupied the position of National Promotions Director/Freshwater, for Ranger Boats of Flippin, AR. In this position Lee was responsible for overseeing budgeting for 18 accounts and a \$3.5 million yearly budget. He also served as the Pro Staff Fishing Liaison and Recruiter, involving over 700 anglers.

He was a liaison with industry manufacturers; served as a public relations representative, and handled public speaking engagements; Lee was also responsible for employee relations within the Promotions Department; Event organization and supervision; Extensively traveled the U.S., coast to coast, 300 days each year, and was a guest speaker at numerous sport fishing events.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama, March 6, 1956, Sammy Lee grew up in the heart of bass fishing country. At 14, he and his uncle teamed to win a local father/son bass tournament on Smith Lake, which influenced him to consider a career as a professional angler and communicator.

Lee then went on to receive his B.A. degree in Public Relations, from the University of Alabama School of Communications, Tuscaloosa, Ala-

bama.

Prior to the premier of “*Tight Lines® with Sammy Lee*”, Lee concurrently served as the Outdoor Angling Editor of The Tuscaloosa News and as the host of ‘*Outdoors with Sammy Lee*’, on Tuscaloosa’s WACT-AM & FM.

Among Lee’s many awards and achievements are being elected as the President and Founding Board of Director member of the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame, of Hot Springs, Arkansas, where he continues serving. Additionally, Sammy began designing and developing apps (geek talk for applications) for the Apple iPhone and other smartphones in early 2010. Currently Mr. Lee has three (3) apps on the market for anglers... *FishMate®* and *FishMate®Pro* for freshwater anglers and *FirstMate®* for saltwater fishermen. In addition, he has two (2) apps for hunters, *HuntMate®* and *HuntMate®Pro*. Lastly, Mr. Lee created a licensing company, *Social Fabric LLC*, in the summer of 2011 to license trademarked phrases and copyrighted images to both fresh and saltwater anglers, as well as hunters.

Montgomery Drive-In scheduled for March 13

The Chamber's 6th Montgomery Drive-In co-sponsored by the **Cullman County Industrial Development Board** and the **City of Cullman Industrial Development Board** is set for Wednesday, March 13. The cost for participants is \$50 for Chamber Members (\$100 for "Future Members") which includes transportation (bus) to and from Montgomery and lunch at the Capital City Club.

The program will also include presentations from various departmental and agency directors who will meet with our group and provide an update on their respective programs and activities. Furthermore, our local Cullman area state legislative delegation has been invited to join us for lunch that day to provide an overview on legislative issues.

Additionally, there will be a BCA Reception on Tuesday, March 12, at the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel & Spa at the Convention Center from 5:30pm-7:30pm. Although we will not provide transportation to this event, we hope you will consider attending. Since seating is limited, please contact the Chamber via e-mail at info@cullmanchamber.org or by calling 256-734-0454.

Get your copy!

Due to numerous requests for copies of the Chamber's "Historical Documentary" and "Commemorative Artwork" presented at this year's Annual Meeting and Gala, the Chamber will have these items for sale at our office for a limited time.

Historical Documentary DVD
"70 Years of Progress" \$20
History of the Cullman area

"Eyes of Progress"
Commemorative Art \$10
A dedication to the Cullman area by
local artist Adrian Scott

Thank you to these businesses for helping to grow the Cullman area

[RIBBON CUTTINGS AND GROUND BREAKINGS]

SHOP CULLMAN FIRST!



Below Chiropractic & Wellness
406 2nd Ave. NW, Cullman
(256) 734-6813



Common Grounds Coffee Company
708 Hwy 31 N, Hanceville
(256) 347-2467



Grand Pointe Pharmacy
2045 2nd Ave. NW, Cullman
(256) 737-1330



Sears Hometown Store
1726 Cherokee Ave. SW, Suite A, Cullman
(256) 739-3001



SHOGUN Japanese Sushi & Steak House
1702 2nd Ave. SW, Cullman
(256) 739-3001



St. John & Associates, Inc
508 7th Ave. SE, Cullman
(256) 734-2114



Walgreens
444 2nd Ave. NW, Cullman
(256) 736-9901