



LCES names May Bucket Fillers

Bucket fillers are based from the book *Have you Filled A Bucket Today?* by Carol McCloud. Bucket fillers are students who demonstrate good character and aid in filling up buckets through good manners, helping others, and trying their best each and every day. Lincoln County Elementary School May Bucket Fillers were, (front row, l-r) Tessa Rutland, Willa Blanche Turner, Eleanor Hand, (middle) Anthony Earle, J'Cyanna Durant, Allie Parker Harvey, Cooper Thompson, Aly Wertz, Neveah Zellars, Maesyn Norman, Libby Osborne, Bria King, (back) JR Quarles, Morgan Turner, Autumn Miller, Nikian Jones, Ranson Thompson, Destiny Turner, Blake Lamar, and Preston Searles.

Bobcat fever poses serious threat to domestic cats

By Denise M Hatcher
for CAES News

Experts at the University of Georgia are urging cat owners across the state to proactively protect their pets as cases of cytauxzoonosis, or bobcat fever, an often fatal tick-borne disease, are spiking in middle Georgia.

Five counties in particular have seen a significant increase in cases of cytauxzoonosis, caused by a protozoa, which has a high mortality rate if not diagnosed in the earliest stages, said Nancy Hinkle, UGA Extension veterinary entomologist. Baldwin, Greene, Hancock, Jones and Putnam counties are currently ground zero for the deadly feline disease.

But being proactive can make all the difference for pets, emphasized Hinkle.

"The primary way to keep cats safe right now is to keep them indoors, safe from ticks," she said. "As much as they may protest, cats can be indoor animals."

Lone Star ticks pick up the disease organisms by feeding on bobcats and carry it to domestic cats when they feed on them. Interestingly, bobcats — which are common in Georgia — are unaffected by the protozoa.

If keeping pet cats inside 24 hours a day is not an option, Hinkle said that the animals should be protected from the ticks using an effective acaricidal product consistently and according to label directions.

"That means the right amount and the right timing. Please do not

overdose and kill your pet while trying to protect it from ticks," she warned. Suitable tick control products can be found in the home edition of the Georgia Pest Management Handbook.

Bobcat fever shows up periodically in domestic cats in Georgia and is deadly to cats, with more than 70% of infected cats dying unless they receive immediate veterinary care, Hinkle said. Cytauxzoonosis results in protozoal sepsis, characterized by systemic inflammatory response. Symptoms to look for are lethargy, lack of appetite, fever, anemia (pale gums), jaundice and difficulty breathing. Cats can become ill up to 15 days after a tick bite.

"You know your cat — if it's not acting right, consult your veterinarian," Hinkle, a cat owner, urged. "Again, once a cat becomes symptomatic, death can occur in less than three days without veterinary treatment."

Even so, because this disease is not caused by bacteria, ordinary antibiotics are not effective. Prevention is the key.

Fortunately, humans nor dogs are susceptible to bobcat fever. However, dogs can pass ticks on to cats living in the same household. If pets spend time outdoors, daily tick checks are crucial, Hinkle said.

"Run your fingers through the animal's coat, checking particularly around the head and neck as well as creases at joints. Ticks should be pinched close to the skin and pulled out with firm pressure,

trying not to crush the tick. Any recovered ticks should be refrigerated in dated zipper storage bags for a month so they can be tested if the animal falls ill," she recommended.

Keith Fielder, Extension coordinator for Hancock and Putnam counties, has been fielding calls for the past two weeks from four of the hardest-hit counties in Georgia as citizens have been reaching out for advice on tick control.

"This is a nasty disease. Protection is necessary and early treatment is crucial," he said of the consistent advice he offers stressed callers.

Hinkle thinks this year's "cyclical phenomenon" is likely due to the interactions of a variety of environmental factors that are out of a pet owner's control. The only factor pet owners have control over is exposure of pet cats to ticks.

"All of my cats are strictly indoor animals. They experience no exposure to ticks. While some cats may protest not being allowed to roam outdoors, they live longer and healthier lives if they are maintained as indoor pets," Hinkle said.

For more information about controlling ticks and other external parasites, see the "Animals and Honey Bees" section in the 2021 Home and Garden Edition of the Georgia Pest Management Handbook.

Michele Hatcher is the editor of the *Hexapod Herald*, the newsletter of the University of Georgia Department of Entomology.

USDA kicks off National Homeownership Month

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack kicked off National Homeownership Month, Monday, June 1, as part of a nationwide celebration to highlight U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) efforts to provide access to affordable housing for rural Americans.

"Safe, energy-efficient, affordable housing is essential to the vitality of communities in rural America," said Secretary Vilsack. "The American Rescue Plan is providing critical relief to rural homeowners and helping to keep more Americans in their homes. USDA is committed to using our resources to help support healthy, resilient and more equitable communities through homeownership."

Since 1949, USDA has helped 4.7 million families and individuals buy homes in rural areas. USDA Rural Development supports rural homeownership through the following programs:

- The Single Family Housing Direct Home Loan Program provides loans directly to families and individuals so they can buy or build homes in rural America. In its lifetime, this program has helped 2.2 million families and individuals purchase a home.

- Through its Single Family Housing Guaranteed Loan Program, USDA has partnered with more than 4,000 private lending institutions, backing their loans to help nearly 2 million families and individuals buy homes in rural areas since the program was cre-

ated in 1991.

- The Home Repair Loan and Grant Program provides loans and grants to help families and individuals repair and modernize homes, making them safer, healthier places to live. Since it started in 1950, the program has helped nearly 434,000 families improve the quality of their homes.

- The Mutual Self-Help Housing Grant Program provides grants to qualified organizations to help them carry out local self-help housing construction projects. Through this program, USDA has worked with nearly 230 organizations to provide a unique opportunity for families and individuals to lower the overall purchase price of a new home by investing "sweat equity" into its construction.

To learn more about USDA homeownership programs, please visit the Single Family Housing program webpage or contact a Rural Development State Office near you.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal and high-poverty areas. For

more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit our GovDelivery subscriber page.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

LCDA to meet

The Lincoln County Development Authority will hold a called meeting at noon on Tuesday, June 8 in the conference room located at the Welcome Center, 112 North Washington St.

Sunday services

Blessed Hope Bible Baptist meets at the Presbyterian Church on Sundays at 11 a.m. and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. for prayer meeting. Come join us. For more information call 706-359-6759.

Planning, zoning meetings

The City of Lincolnton Planning & Zoning Board meetings for 2021 are scheduled as follows: June 29, July 27, Aug. 31, Sept. 28, Oct. 26, Nov. 30, Dec. 28. These meetings will be held in City Hall at 5:30 p.m. each month if there is an agenda.

Baseball's Best

How far did that ball travel?

By LAMAR GARRARD
Baseball historian



"After I hit a home run, I had a habit of running the bases with my head down. I figured the pitcher already felt bad enough without me showing him rounding the bases." — Mickey Mantle, Hall of Fame Yankees outfielder.

Mickey Mantle would probably not be fond of the antics and shenanigans that players exhibit today after hitting one out of the park. Jumping up and down, hand signs, taking a selfie, pointing, skipping, pounding their chests and every other imaginable gesture known to modern man. If Bob Feller or Bob Gibson were on the mound, it would mean definite retaliation in the form of a fast ball to the ribs the next time the "showboat" hitter came to the plate.

Mantle's 37th career home run occurred on opening day when the Yankees faced the Washington Senators at Griffith Stadium in D.C. on April 17, 1953. Too bad only a little over 4,000 fans witnessed what is now called Mickey Mantle's most famous home run.

With two outs, Mantle comes to bat in the top of the fifth inning with Berra the lone base runner. Mantle clouted a fast ball from pitcher Chuck Stobbs that cleared the bleachers in left field, careened off the score board bounced in the parking lot and finally wound up in the back yard of a house some 565 feet away from home plate.

Red Patterson, the Yankee's publicity director, may have coined the phrase: "Tape measure home run." This Mantle home run, not his longest, became his most famous home run. Patterson left the ball

Kemp bans vaccine passports in Georgia

By DAVE WILLIAMS
Capital News Beat Service

Gov. Brian Kemp signed an executive order last Tuesday, May 25, prohibiting state agencies, state service providers, and state properties from requiring COVID-19 vaccine passports.

The order also forbids vaccine passports as a condition for entering Georgia and prohibits state agencies from treating unvaccinated employees differently from those who have received vaccinations.

"While I continue to urge all Georgians to get vaccinated so we continue our momentum in putting the COVID-19 pandemic in the rearview, vaccination is a personal decision between each citizen and a medical professional — not state government," Kemp said in a prepared statement.

"This order also clearly states that data held by the Georgia Department of Public Health and their immunization system will not be used by any public or private entity for a vaccine passport program."

Other Republican-led states have taken similar steps to ban state agencies from requiring vaccine passports, while some have gone further by banning private businesses from requiring such documentation.

But some countries have moved to require travelers to show proof they've been vaccinated against the virus or proof of a recent negative COVID-19 test as a condition for entry.

In California, venues can allow more people to enter if they prove they have received vaccinations.

park and charted and approximated the distance that the ball traveled to its landing spot.

This home run was so noteworthy that the Topps Baseball Card Co. issued a card in its 1961 set commemorating the notable blast.

Baseball has many debatable occurrences and events. Babe Ruth's "Called Shot" in the 1932 World Series when the Yankee legend supposedly pointed to the outfield before he stroked a home run.

What is the the greatest team? Would it be the 1927 Yankees of Ruth and Gehrig, the '61 Yankees of Mantle and Maris, the '76 Cincinnati Reds "Big Red Machine," the 1998 Yankees of Jeter and Bernie Williams, on and on the list goes.

Who was the greatest hitter? Was it Cobb, Ruth, Hornsby, Wagner, Shoeless Joe, Mays, Aaron, Clemente or many other possibilities?

Jane Leavy, in her book, *The Last Boy Mickey Mantle*, goes into detail about the efforts that scientists and physicists and statisticians

have made to figure out the trajectory and actual distance of Mantle's 1953 home run in Washington.

Theory after theory has been debated back and forth and the "facts" as reported and written about year after year have been questioned. One thing is for certain and the question remains, "Just how far did that ball really travel?"

On a side note, there is a new book just out titled *This Never Happened The Mystery Behind The Death Of Christy Mathewson* by J. B. Manheim. It is a fictional account of events in the life of Ty Cobb and Christy Mathewson and covers the details of the two soldiers and their service in the Chemical Corps during WWI. It chronicles their exposure to poisonous gases during training exercises. Many of the stories take place at the WWI Camp Hancock in Augusta, Georgia. Comments about Cobb may not be pleasing to some, but remember it is fiction. If you like a good mystery, it qualifies as a worthwhile read.

A Lincoln County Republican Party Brunch
will be held
Saturday, June 12 at 10:30 a.m.
at the
Lincoln County Historical Park Pavilion
guest speakers will be
Lincoln County Chairman Walker Norman
District 33 Representative Rob Leverett

If you have conservative values and believe in a positive future for Lincoln County, join us for brunch!

If you have questions contact Chairman of the Lincoln County Republic Party Troy Balliew at balliewgop@gmail.com or call 706-825-9063.

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