

Dr. August Battles
Attending Veterinarian
Director of Animal Care Services
Dr. Marcel Perret-Gentil
Assistant Director of Research,
Surgical & Training Programs
Editor



UNIVERSITY OF
FLORIDA

ANIMAL CARE SERVICES **NEWSLETTER**

Animal Care Services
Health Science Center
Communicore CB-159
P.O. Box 100006
Gainesville, FL 32610-0006
Telephone: 352-392-2977
Fax: 352-392-3766

Volume 3, Issue 4

August 2003

ACS Research Lecture Series

ACS has begun a new Research Lecture Series by asking investigators to conduct seminars for ACS staff. By better understanding the investigator's research, we are able to provide better service. At the same time this allows ACS staff to understand how they are contributing to biomedical research and the improvement of human health.

We would like to Thank Dr. Paul Oh and Dr. William Hauswirth for contributing to the lecture series and their excellent presentations.

Renovations and Improvements

Currently, the ACS is actively working on several projects to improve the quality of the program. The 23rd Street cat complex has received its *Certificate of Occupancy* for Environmental Health and Safety. Occupancy will begin this week. Improvements to the security system include the addition of palm readers to control access to the Communicore perimeter and the SPF area. Palm readers have also been installed to control access to the 23rd Street cat complex. A test room to evaluate a new system to provide HEPA filtered air to ventilated caging will be set up by Allentown Caging in CB-118. The new system provides consistent air changes to each rack while controlling the room exhaust. The test room will allow us to determine the effectiveness of the system that is designed decrease costs and increase the effectiveness of the caging. At the 34th Street Farm a new roof and screening for another dog run has completed. In addition an insulated roof was installed on the primate building.

Animal Care Services Environmental Monitoring Program

Animal Care services began an environmental monitoring program in April 2002. This program monitors the effectiveness of the sanitation or sterilization of ACS rooms and equipment. The program also tests the efficacy of autoclaves and cage washers. All caging, equipment and rooms that are used to house and care for laboratory animals under ACS care are cleaned and sanitized or sterilized on a periodic basis. The period between cleanings varies with the item and its use. Most caging must be processed at intervals of two weeks or less because of federal laws and regulations. Animal room surfaces, food and bedding containers and other support items are usually processed monthly. To ensure that the sanitation or sterilization is properly done several methods of monitoring are used. Charm® is a rapid method that detects bacterial residues (ATP) and is used on large surfaces such as animal room walls. Bacterial culturing is also used. Cage washers and autoclaves use a combination of electronic controls and monitoring devices to ensure appropriate temperature and time parameters are reached during each cycle. Temperature indicators are also run daily in each cage washer and in each autoclave load. Failure to pass the monitoring system results in corrective action. For instance after an animal room is sanitized each month, the animals are not returned to the room until it passes the Charm test. A little over a year after the start of this program results indicate much improvement in the effectiveness of the sanitation program. This is in part due to replacement of aged

Animal Care Services (ACS) and the office of the Attending Veterinarian publishes, every other month, a newsletter to communicate with those who use or provide support to the animal care program at the University of Florida. This newsletter contains new policies, new services provided, updates on animal facility improvements, updates on federal regulations, policies and other items of importance to animal users. We use e-mail as our primary method of distributing the newsletter and also have copies of the newsletter available in the animal facilities. Please print this newsletter and distribute it to members of your department. If you did not receive this newsletter by email, and would like to be added to the email list, please send an email message to tmkegley@vpha.health.ufl.edu with "add to ACS newsletter" under subject. This and all past issues of the newsletter can be accessed at <http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs/subnewsanns.htm>.

cage washers and autoclaves but also reflects the effect of the monitoring system, which allows assessment of performance and timely corrective action.

New PPE Requirements for Conventional Rodents.

As noted in the policy section of this newsletter ACS is starting the final phase of the Rodent Pathogen Control Program. This phase primarily involves the conventional colonies but beneficial effects accrue to all rodents since a major potential source of disease is removed. As a part of this process starting August 29, 2003, the PPE (personal protective equipment) for all conventional rodent rooms will consist of disposable gowns, gloves and shoe covers. Gowns and gloves will be put on outside the room. Shoe covers will be placed on as you cross the threshold of the room. All PPE must be removed as you exit the room. PPE will be completely changed between rooms. These PPE measures will be reevaluated when all of our facilities are free of rodent pathogens. These changes are also reflected in the ACS online auto tutorial on Blackboard and on the door signs. If you have any question, please contact Kelly Flint at 846-2416 or kflint@vpha.health.ufl.edu.

New Policies, Policy Changes and Policy Clarifications

ACS policies are posted on the ACS website at <http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs>.

Change in Cage Card Policy

In order to avoid any further confusion regarding cage card pick-up, ACS staff will no longer deliver cage cards ordered by investigative staff to the individual rooms. Investigators and their assistants are now responsible for picking up their cage cards at the Animal Resources front office, located in CB-160. It is the investigators' responsibility to make sure the cage cards are placed correctly and in a timely manner. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, and appreciate your cooperation. Effective date of this policy – 08/20/03.

Accounts Receivable Policy

Effective October 1, 2003, the Animal Care Services will charge 7% interest on all outstanding invoices 60 days old and a \$35 handling fee per month per investigator. Payments received will be credited on a first in/first out basis, paying oldest invoice first. Interest and service charges will not be applied to contested invoices.

Reminder: As posted on the Animal Care Services web site, Investigators have 45 days to contest invoices; otherwise invoices will be considered final. This policy has been in effect since July 1, 2002.

Rodent Pathogen Control Policy

Animal Care Services over the last several months has been able to reduce the number of rodent rooms containing rodents infected with one or more of the pathogens listed on the Pathogen Exclusion List (<http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs/>). We now have an opportunity to move into the next phase of our Rodent Pathogen Control Program. Over the next few weeks, we will begin to relocate rooms with infected rodents into the CB61 quarantine facility. This policy deals with SPF housing, quarantine, surcharges, animal relocation, embryo rederivation, biosecurity measures, and SPF expansion. The Faculty Advisory Committee has reviewed and approved the current Rodent Pathogen Control Program. We encourage you to visit the ACS web site (<http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs/index.htm>) to read this policy.

New IACUC Euthanasia Policy

Prior to disposal of animals killed by CO₂ death must be ensured using a physical method. The recommended physical methods are: Bilateral thoracotomy, cervical dislocation (mice only), decapitation, exsanguination, removal of a vital organ, or complete necropsy. This new policy was adopted by the IACUC to ensure compliance with the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia (<http://www.avma.org/resources/euthanasia.pdf>). Chemical methods will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis during the protocol review process.

Technical Notes

Identification of Rodents

Refinement, reduction and replacement (3-R's) with relation to the use of laboratory animals indicate principles that enhance the welfare of the animals. Their consideration is a requirement under current federal regulations. Identification of genetically modified mice presents significant challenges when applying the 3-R's.. Invasive and noninvasive methods are available. Noninvasive methods should be used where possible. Invasive methods include toe amputation, ear notching, ear tags and microchips. These methods may not work well for young animals because of considerations such as difficult anesthesia, small body size, maternal cannibalism and longevity issues such as lost tags and ear chewing. Noninvasive methods to consider include tail marking, hair clipping and stains. Depending on the color of the mice spirit based pens can be used to apply a circular band at varying positions on the tail such that individual mice can be identified by the number and position of the bands. Non-toxic correction fluid can be used as an alternative for black mice. Once hair has started to grow at approximately 10 days of age, histological stains such as malachite green can be used to mark a small area of the coat. Stains should be allowed to dry before returning the mouse to cage mates. Stains persist for approximately 2 weeks. Potential toxicity of the marking substance should be considered. Mice can be identified by clipping patterns in the fur using fine scissors or clippers. Such marking will be visible for about 3 weeks. (*Laboratory Animals. Vol 37 Suppl. 1, July 2003, pp. S1:33 - 34*)

Investigator's Animal Care Responsibility

The Principal Investigator is responsible for the daily monitoring of his/her research animals. If the investigator needs ACS to assume this role (in total or in part), such arrangements need to be made by contacting Veterinary Services at 846-0984 or 392-9536).

Staff Announcements

Recognitions

We would like to recognize the following members of our staff:

Luis Zorrilla (Research, Surgical & Training Programs) - Received the "Technician of the Year Award" at the Florida Branch of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (FAALAS). The award was presented to him at the August 03 FAALAS yearly meeting in Clearwater, FL.

Maria Martinez (Veterinary Services) – Our newest Certified Veterinary Technician. She passed the National and State Licensure Certification exams.

Luci Kappell (Communicore Large Animals) and Georgette Dee (ARF) have been promoted from Assistant Laboratory Animal Technician (ALAT) to Laboratory Animal Technician (LAT).

The following are excerpts from unsolicited letters from investigative staff.

Holly Lyle and her staff (Communicore Large Animals)

"I just wanted to let you know that I have been really happy with the care you guys have been providing for my calves, and the way your staff are keeping the facilities. I realize that the calves can be pretty labor intensive and I have been very happy with the way that the ACS staff and our group have been able to work together re feeding etc. with problem calves."

Matt Amick (Communicore Conventional Rodents)

"I just wanted to tell you that I think he is doing an incredible job. He always appears to be in a good mood and he's always willing to help if there's something I need. We started performing behavior studies in my lab and I had to train the rats. I had no rodent handling training at that point because the courses were only offered once a month and they were on a day I had a Physics 2 class. I asked Matt if he had any pointers for me and he gladly took a few minutes of his time to show me the techniques that work best for him and he explained

why he doesn't handle them in certain ways and what to look for in an angry/unhappy rat. Matt seems very knowledgeable about the animals and concerned for their well being which is exactly what you want in someone caring for your animals. I just wanted to let you know that I think he does a great job!"

Danny Johnson, Vicki Criswell, Alison Edwards, ACS Supervisor, Sherry Scruggs (McKnight Brain Institute)

"On July 2, 2003, I noticed that one of my animals, who was recovering from prior surgery, was having difficulty breathing. An airway obstruction was difficult to visualize as the animal was stressed. I quickly transferred the animal to the ACS on the 5th floor of the Brain Institute to ask for assistance. Without hesitation, Danny Johnson escorted me to a surgery suite and began setting up the anesthesia machine. Danny, a novice in using isoflurane anesthesia, quickly asked Vicki Criswell to check his set up. After hearing the commotion, Alison Edwards, ACS Supervisor, arrived and decided the situation necessitated an emergency call to the veterinarian who arrived within five minutes. Sherry Scruggs also arrived and offered assistance. In the mean time, the obstruction was removed. Within five minutes, Dr. Harvey Ramirez arrived, but the animal was already breathing with ease. Dr. Ramirez gave the animal a final check before I returned her to her cage. This particular experiment requires that the animals live for almost 6 months. This specific animal was enrolled in the study more than two months and had the obstruction not been removed, would have been a great loss to the study. Without the quick response of your well-trained staff she surely would have died. I thank your staff for their prompt, professional assistance."

ACS management appreciates the time and effort taken by the investigative staff to recognize the professional performance by ACS staff. We also appreciate any constructive criticisms. We recognize this feedback is an essential part of improving the animal care program at the University of Florida.

Miscellaneous

Access to Animal Care Services Facilities

We would like to thank everyone who has completed all four of the requirements for ACS facility access.

ACS staff are now going through the Access Pending file. Those investigative staff who currently have access but have not completed all four requirements will be contacted by phone. This phone call will be a second and final chance to comply before access is revoked.

Again the four requirements are:

1. Enrollment in the Animal Contact Program through EH&S.
2. The Animal Awareness Seminar (within the last two and a half years).
3. The ACS online auto tutorials through Blackboard.
4. Listed on an approved Animal Care and Use Protocol

For more information visit the ACS website (<http://www.health.ufl.edu/acs/index.htm>). If you have not received an e-mail or a phone call, or if you have questions about your status, please contact Kelly Flint at 846-2416 or kflint@vpha.health.ufl.edu.