

ANIMAL CARE SERVICES
NEWSLETTER

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AAALAC, International Update

In the aftermath of the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care's required triennial Program Description, we at Animal Care Services are now pondering a new thought - the immortal words of Socrates, when he said, "I drank what?" Although no one here, luckily, has consumed any poison recently, this Program Description, in its complexity and trials, has become our metaphorical hemlock. It was submitted on August 1, and now the focus moves to the upcoming Site Inspection this autumn (October 17-21) to ensure our accreditation for another three years.



The University of Florida's animal care program has been AAALAC certified since 1966. This certification demonstrates that the university voluntarily meets the federal regulations and standards accepted throughout the laboratory animal care industry. AAALAC accreditation also impacts the quality of research conducted, serving as an important recruiting tool for scientists. ACS will continue its efforts to retain this important accreditation to better serve and protect the research animals entrusted to our care.

Florida AALAS Meeting

The Florida Association for Laboratory Animal Science (FAALAS) held its annual meeting in Gainesville on the 22nd and 23rd of July this year. As the University of Florida hosted the event, Luis Zorrilla chaired the event and ensured that the program ran smoothly. Sherry Scruggs, who doubled as a speaker, assisted Luis in planning and orchestrating the occasion. Meeting attendance was excellent, due in part to the various amenities that the city itself has to offer. In attendance were a variety of suppliers and vendors, as well as a large number of new AALAS members.

This year's FAALAS Technician of the Year was awarded during the meeting, and the winner of this award was Kevin Chadbourne, the HSC Large Animal Section Lead Technician. Kevin was selected based on his efforts toward continuing his education, dedication to animals (he volunteers regularly with Jungle Friends), and the diligence he shows in his work. This is the second year in a row that a member of ACS staff has been named as FAALAS Technician of the Year; the previous winner was Luis Zorrilla.

Rat Housing Update

Standard rat housing is in the ventilated rack system within the Communicore, McKnight Brain Institute and Progress Park facilities. If the research being conducted requires static or conventional housing for the rats, this must be noted in the "Special Instructions" section of the Animal Care Services Animal Order Form, regardless of historical needs or arrangements. Failure to denote this housing requirement affects the records kept by the Front Office, and may result in ventilated rack housing being arranged for the animals ordered. Your assistance in this is greatly appreciated, as ACS continues to improve the quality or care for all research animals housed at the University of Florida.

Rat Enrichment Update

The NIH *Guide* states that when possible, social animals should be housed in groups, to include rats. When an animal must be housed alone, it is basically required that other forms of structural environmental enrichment be supplied, and it is recommended for all animals unless scientifically justified to withhold it. While nestlets work well for mice, rats require a bit more in the provision of enrichment. Rats, like most rodents, enjoy chewing, and as it is less than desirable for them to chew on caging or playing with automatic watering valves, ACS has decided to offer Nylabones, a long-time chew toy for dogs, to these singly-housed

rats. These toys have been used for laboratory animals for quite some time, and unless there is an IACUC-approved experimental justification to the contrary, an autoclaved Nylabone will be added to all cages with a singly-housed rat. This should especially help in those cages that are prone to flooding, as a distraction or alternative to playing with the water valve. Eventually, the plan is to add these chew toys to all rat cages as a standard practice, unless there is a specific reason not to. If questions or concerns remain of any kind, please contact Bob Gump at 392-7697.

Visitors to the Facilities

Visitors to any ACS-managed facility must, upon arrival, check-in with the Front Office, located in CB-160 in the Communicore Building. They will be issued a yellow Visitor Pass, which must be surrendered when they are ready to leave. This pass is to be prominently displayed while they are in the facilities, and visitors are to be escorted by a member of Animal Care Services staff, unless otherwise authorized by the Director or Associate Director of Animal Care Services. Animal Care staff will be monitoring the facilities and may ask questions of those they do not recognize. Please understand that this is for the safety and security of the research, the staff, and the animals themselves.

Staff Recognitions

Once upon a time, it was difficult to find a member of staff at Animal Care Services who was AALAS-certified, but now one can barely swing a whistle without finding at least one. The number of staff certified is up 300% from just two years ago, and the most recently certified are, Erica Borchardt, RALAT, who takes care of cage cards, Kevin Chadbourne, RLAT, who works in the Large Animal section, Mike Cormier, RALAT, our engineer and fixer-of-all-things, as well as Kathryn Jones, RALAT, who handles animal ordering. Also in the line-up are Shannon Leach, RALAT, who is one of our veterinary technicians, Alexis Manning, RALAT, who works in SPF, David Miller, RALAT, who works in the Large Animal section, Stacey Robinson, RALAT, who coordinates the front office and handles ACS services, and Leslie Sallen, RALAT, who also works in SPF.

Rosanne Luxton has earned her GED this summer. She has become the fifth person at Animal Care Services to receive her GED in the last three years. This now opens doors for other certifications, promotions and opportunities. Great job, Rosanne!



Along these lines, one of our newest staff members, of whom you will read about below, was published in the most recent edition of AALAS' *Tech Talk* Magazine. Bob Gump, in his previous post at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, developed a procedure to reduce the stress on frogs as they enter a new facility. His "Froggy Spa Treatments" effectively reduced or eliminated physical injury to the frogs and prevented a great deal of the trauma of unpacking and re-settling. The entire article, "Stress Reduction for Frogs", can be found in *Tech Talk* on page 4.

Staffing Announcements

- ❖ Robert Gump, BGS, RLATG, a.k.a. "Bob", is our new Coordinator of the Health Science Center, and although he comes to us from Illinois, we won't hold that against him. Bob hails from, and has also worked extensively in, Louisiana, so although he misses the snow, the heat of Florida's high summer does not faze him. Bob's single biggest reason for moving to the Southland – to get back into SCUBA diving and restock his aquaria. If anyone knows where to find a very tiny manatee, please call Bob's Fiddler Crab, Secretary, at 352-392-7697, or email to rgump@vpha.health.ufl.edu.
- ❖ Mabel Lopez has joined our crack accounting staff and handles Accounts Receivable. This Caribbean girl is both a scholar and an athlete, having graduated from the University of South Florida. Mabel comes to us from with a background in finance and investing, and we're hoping she can make ACS' money work for all of us! She can be reached via coconut at 352-392-0526 or you can email her at mlopez21@vpha.health.ufl.edu.
- ❖ Barbara Locke, CVT, LAT has joined the ranks of Veterinary Technicians. She comes to us from the University of Rochester's Department of Lab Animal Medicine, where she worked for

five years. She likes the color blue, (which works out well for the scrubs), and she likes all animals, except the kind that breathe. Contrary to her previous posts, she is a Southern Belle, and likes her biscuits with gravy. She can be reached on her call at 352-494-9431 or through email at bnlocke@vpha.health.ufl.edu.

- ❖ Denise Babiarz, CVT, has also joined our Veterinary Technicians from the great state of New York. She has a Bachelor of Science degree and is a Certified Vet Tech, having studied at the State University of New York in Delhi. She has worked in a small animal practice for several years, and really likes cats. No, I mean she *really* likes cats - like has five of them, likes them. To talk cats or other critters with Denise, just yowl, call 352-494-8991 or write her an email at dbabiarz@ufl.edu.
- ❖ Lauren Schleenbaker is our tiniest veterinary technician yet, and has been attending the University of South Florida for four years and will be completing her BS in Biology in just a few short months. Lauren comes to us from USF's Department of Comparative Medicine, where she worked with surgeries, assisted in research, as well as vet tech and husbandry duties. One of the few, and proud, she is a native Floridian who likes cats. But not for dinner. Lauren can be reached on her cell phone at 352-494-9276 or you can email her at schleenb@vpha.health.ufl.edu.
- ❖ Linda Thomas is from Alabama!! She is also our newest addition to the staff of the Diagnostic Lab. A self-proclaimed "certified lab rat" herself, this is also the woman with over 28 years of experience in Comparative Medicine and Animal Resources. When she's not out performing necropsies on right whales or capturing manatees, Linda likes histology, microbiology, tissue cultures, inhalation toxicology, PCR and RNA/DNA extraction. Linda can be reached in the lab by telephone at 352-846-1383 or via email at lthom@vpha.health.ufl.edu.
- ❖ Raul Ortiz-Umpierre is our newest member of the Veterinarian's Club. He studied in Grenada, which explains the nutmeg, and is originally from Puerto Rico. He will be certified in veterinary acupuncture and will be working with the USDA-covered species. Raul will also be helping out in the Surgery suite with anesthesia and other varied tasks. He can be reached at 352-494-9432, or write him an email at umpierre@vpha.health.ufl.edu. Bienvenidos!

Paying with PeopleSoft



Members of investigative staff are kindly reminded that PeopleSoft chartfields for payment of ACS services are due at the beginning of each month, in anticipation of that month's expenses. For example, if any ACS services are expected in the month of August, chartfield information should be entered into myACS for each

applicable and active protocol on or around August 1st. Unfortunately, missing or invalid chartfields, as well as chartfield data with insufficient funds will result in the account being placed on administrative hold, which will restrict the account to basic husbandry only. Individual fiscal managers are responsible for timely and valid input of chartfield information. If chartfield information is missing on the July invoice and your account has been placed on hold, please inform ACS of your payment chartfields using the invoice dispute function in myACS. This will provide a permanent record of your message.

Training Update

ACS training schedules are posted online at <http://acs.ufl.edu>

Animal Care Services is pleased to announce the resumption of two training workshops, the Rodent Handling and Techniques Workshop, and the Aseptic Techniques Workshop. Both registration and schedules are available on the ACS website, and although this is not a mandatory workshop, it is recommended for those new to the field or a particular procedure, as well as those who may want a refresher course.

The Rodent Handling and Techniques Workshop provides introductory didactic and practical training. The hands-on portion is designed to provide individualized training on specific tasks. The Aseptic Techniques Workshop is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the principles and practices associated with survival research surgery.

Health and Safety Reminder

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

With regard to incineration, there have been several incidents that have popped up that both compromise EH&S policy and make life exceedingly difficult for those who incinerate. Firstly, red biohazard bags (full or empty) must not be placed in regular trashcans in the incinerator room, but rather must be disposed of properly. This is in direct violation of EH&S policy. Secondly, animals that have been red-bagged for incineration should be placed in the container within the cold room that has been clearly marked and reserved for just such waste. Small animals, whether biohazard or not, should be placed on shelves, not on the floor. When filling out the red card to indicate an item is ready for incineration, investigators and their staff are asked not to write in the lower-right corner of the tags, as that is where the incinerator operator must initial. Red tags should be tied to the outside of the bag, not closed up inside or stapled to the bag. Which brings us to the next point, all bodies are to be placed in leakproof bags for disposal, not wrapped up in drapes, or left in punctured bags. Drapes and broken bags fail to adequately contain the bodies, fluids and odors that closed, whole bags do. Thank you for your consideration in this – these small actions make all the difference on burning days in terms of efficiency and compliance.

How to Report Sick Animals

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

In the event of an animal being observed ill, injured or dead, the research team member performing the observation should place a yellow *Sick Animal Card* in the cage card holder, report the animal's condition using a *Veterinary Services Sick List*, also known as a *Daily Sick Animal Checklist*, and either submit (in the box across the hall from the ACS Front Office), fax or call in the report to ACS. The yellow cards and forms are available throughout the ACS facilities, as are posted the fax and on-call numbers. Once received, the veterinary medical staff will schedule appropriate observations, if possible contacting the PI before any treatment is begun. If a problem is considered an emergency, it is advisable to call or page the ACS emergency on-call veterinarian or veterinary technician after placing the yellow *Sick Animal Card* on the applicable cage.

Some examples of the basic signs of illness and/or injury include the presence and appearance of urine and feces, weight loss or obesity, dehydration and changes in hair or fur coat. Animals that are showing abnormal behavior, changes in gait or

posture or difficulty breathing should be reported, as well as those with overgrown nails or teeth.

Weather or Not

ACS staff will do everything within our ability to get animal shipments delivered as scheduled in a timely manner. We ask members of investigative staff to please keep in mind that if weather conditions and/or temperatures are forecasted such that the lives of the animals may be jeopardized, all parties involved may be forced to postpone shipments. We understand that having orders delivered/shipped as scheduled is imperative to the efficacy of your research, and we will continue to alert you with as much notice as possible in the event that shipments are delayed due to forecasted weather conditions and/or temperatures and reschedule delivery or shipment as soon as weather conditions permit. Your patience and understanding is greatly appreciated.



Surgery Stickers

The veterinary staff will be transferring all dated, blue surgery stickers from the front of the cage cards to the back after performing rodent post-op checks. Members of investigative staff are requested to not replace the stickers to the front of the cage cards once they have been moved. This procedure is being implemented to make it easier for the husbandry staff to find recent surgeries and report them to veterinary staff for care. If there are any questions, kindly contact one of the veterinary technicians at 846-0984.

Mouse Breeding Services

Ryan Fiske currently works for Animal Care Services at Progress Park in Alachua managing the mouse colonies in flexible film semi-rigid isolators

that are housed in the small animal facility. This notice is to inform the UF community about mouse breeding services that ACS can perform for investigators who are interested in keeping their costs down and getting the most out of their colonies.

Placing one's transgenic or knockout mice in one of our isolators offers you a completely microisolated environment. Many different mice from different parts of the world can be housed in close proximity and contamination of strains will not occur. One flat per diem rate will provide you with the following: Mouse identification (ear tagging/punching), tail snip collection for DNA genotyping, blood collection (various applications), and of course management of breeding. As the program grows, more services will be offered. Ryan's contact information can be obtained in the ACS Front Office, or he may be reached via telephone at 386-418-1681.

Mouse Quarantine

In order for an animal to enter into the ACS barrier facility, it must first pass through the quarantine facility. The animal will be given a preliminary health screening upon arrival and then placed in a semi-rigid isolator with indirect sentinels. Dirty bedding from the incoming animals is placed with the sentinels at the time of each cage change. On the Monday following the sixth cage change, or next business day if Monday is a holiday, sentinel animals are necropsied and disease determination is made according to current sentinel SOPs. Although the investigator will not have access to the animals while they are in quarantine, any procedures that must be performed will be done by the Breeding Colony Manager and his staff. During quarantine, animals will be fed a diet containing fenbendazole at 150 ppm. When the results of the quarantine are negative, the animals will be moved to their final facility destination room designated on the Incoming Animal Record, provided that this destination is a clean room at the time of transfer. The Animal Health Technician overseeing the quarantine facility will notify the laboratory contact prior to moving any animals to their housing destination.

Animals that are imported for immediate use (within one week) will be placed in deferred quarantine. These animals will need to be removed from the deferred quarantine facility by 8 AM on the Monday following their arrival. Any animals remaining will be removed to the bio-containment facility. For animals to enter this room, the animals must meet the criteria to enter quarantine.

Water, Water Everywhere!

In any animal research facility, water quality testing is an important aspect of the environmental monitoring program. It is vital in maintaining the health of the animals while eliminating potentially confounding research variables, especially in pharmacologic studies. When done regularly, water testing helps identify any existing health problems and assesses the effectiveness of a treatment system. At the Communicore, McKnight Brain Institute and Psychology animal facilities, water samples were recently collected and submitted to an external laboratory for a comprehensive testing package. Based on the different parameters used which included coliform and standard plate count, toxic metals, chlorine by-products as well as organic chemicals and compounds, all the samples were found to meet drinking water standards and are not expected to affect animal research. The results are open for review and interested parties may contact the ACS clinical laboratory (phone: 846-1383, or email: bzamora@ufl.edu) for more information.

Murine Norovirus

A diagnostic test for murine norovirus has recently been developed and ACS will begin periodic monitoring of our mouse colonies for this calcivirus. This recently identified agent is still being characterized and limited information is available.



Like other recently 'discovered' agents (e.g., *Helicobacter*, MPV, etc.) the vendors are in the process of identifying and cleaning up their respective colonies, however due to the nature of their development and maintenance of production colonies most will be clean. ACS will make an effort to identify and preferentially order animals from Norovirus-free colonies, as is our practice regarding *Helicobacter*. Because many mice are

moved around the country, animals arriving from unapproved vendors will most likely be our largest source of infected mice. Investigators wishing to test select cages/lines in advance of sentinel testing are encouraged to contact Dr. Patrick Sharp at 392-8051 for more information.

Vendor-Provided Surgery Animals

Investigators are reminded of the availability and benefits of vendor-provided surgical procedures. Surgical procedures include various vascular and organ cannulations, neurologic procedures, and device implants. Although many vendors provide this service for a fee, one major benefit is that postoperative animals are received in a time frame where postoperative complications are unlikely, and should they occur, replacement animals could be available at no additional charge. Should you need additional information about this vendor-based service, please contact ACS or visit your vendor's website for more details.

Record-Keeping Requirements

Records of all survival and non-survival surgeries must be maintained in accord with USDA requirements and recommendations of AAALAC,

International. Records are important for prolonged anesthesia-only procedures, such as MRI imaging, where animals are anesthetized as a method of restraint and nonpainful or momentary painful (USDA category C) procedures are performed. These records are subject to IACUC review during semi-annual program review.

These records are to include the administration of anesthetics, fluids and any drugs; details of the procedure, including intra-operative monitoring; the method of euthanasia, including all drugs administered to cause death; and indicate the individual performing these tasks. All medications, including the name, dose, route and time of administration are to be recorded. Additionally, noting of any adverse outcomes requiring euthanasia of the animal prior to completion of the procedure is expected. ACS maintains these anesthetic, surgical, and postsurgical records on the ACS website for animals used in research, teaching and testing.

Please note that all locations where non-survival surgeries are performed are subject to inspection by the IACUC. All records relating to surgical procedures are subject to review during inspection or audit and must be available during regular business hours.

Welcome back to another academic year at the University of Florida!



Animal Care Services (ACS) publishes this newsletter to communicate with those who use or provide support to the animal care program at the University of Florida. This newsletter contains various items of importance to animal users. We use e-mail as our primary method of distributing the newsletter, but also have copies 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 cwasner@vpha.health.ufl.edu with "Add to ACS Newsletter" as the subject. This and all past issues of the newsletter can be accessed at <http://acs.ufl.edu/newsletter.shtml>.
