By Astrid Haakonstad, BA, LVT
UCUCA Regulatory Compliance Associate

It is almost time for the triennial site visit from the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International (AAALAC, Intl.)! Please keep your eyes and ears open for more information about the visit, including the dates that the site visitors will be on campus this spring.

The site visitors will be provided a written description of the UM animal care and use program and facilities. During their visit they will tour all animal housing areas, animal surgery areas, and support spaces. The site visitors will be trying to determine whether the UM’s animal care and use program is being run effectively and maintained in accordance with federal regulations and nationally accepted standards.

So what can you do to prepare? To begin with, ensure that all procedures done on animals are approved in your animal use protocol. Also ensure that all applicable documentation is maintained according to UCUCA policies and guidelines. This includes post-operative monitoring records, controlled substance records, and tumor monitoring sheets. To read or download applicable policies and guidelines, please visit the UCUCA website (www.ucuca.umich.edu). More information can also be found in the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Ensure that all animals are properly identified, all solutions and dry goods are properly labeled, all hazard labels are current and posted, and that all expired drugs, treatments, and foods are properly disposed of. All items (e.g., controlled substances, chemicals, hazards, food, bedding, carcasses) should be stored appropriately.

Animal caging, enclosures, and housing rooms should be cleaned and sanitized on a regular schedule. Light timers, washers, sterilizers, room temperature and ventilation, and security systems (e.g., card readers) should all be working properly. Ensure that daily health checks, housekeeping, and room parameters are recorded on the proper log sheet.

Questions and concerns regarding the AAALAC, Intl. site visit can be addressed to the UCUCA office at 763-8028 or ucuca.office@umich.edu. The UM has been accredited by AAALAC, Intl. since 1971, and is one of the top notch animal care and use programs in the country.
I’d like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Noel Ramsey and I am the newest regulatory compliance associate in the UCUCA Office. I am responsible for PIs in the alphabet range of G-L.

I have a fairly extensive background in animal research. I am a graduate of Michigan State University with a BS in Animal Science. After college, I came to work here at UM in the area of cardiology with a focus on vascular reserve and myocardial function. At the end of 2 years, the lab closed and I then moved on to Warner-Lambert/Parke-Davis (Pfizer). There I stayed for 15 years working on many surgical models for disease. These areas included 5 years in heart failure and coronary artery disease. It was at this time that I completed my training and license as a veterinary technician (LVT). I then moved on to the Department of Psychiatric Disorders. I worked on many rodent models including obesity, anxiety and schizophrenia. I also had the privilege to work with non-human primates. This included training primates in working memory and attention tasks using a computer touch-screen system.

Most recently, I spent 3 years working in veterinary transfusion medicine. I assisted with the research and development of a new line of lyophilized blood components. I also had the opportunity to work as a clinical research coordinator (CRC) for a multi-center clinical trial testing lyophilized platelets in dogs with thrombocytopenia. At this time I began working on my Masters degree in Clinical Research Administration which I plan to complete by mid-2011.

In conclusion, I hope to bring to this position my vast experience working with many different species of animals in a variety of disease spectrums. Working as a PI and LVT/CRC has given me a unique understanding of the needs of the investigator, lab animal medicine and regulatory affairs. I am committed to proper care and use of laboratory animals and look forward to new challenges here at UM.

Please contact the appropriate UCUCA regulatory compliance associate (RCA) if you need help with your protocol. Each of the RCAs is responsible for a section of the alphabet, based on PI last name:

**A-F:** Astrid Haakonstad: 764-6850, astridh@umich.edu  
**G-L:** Noel Ramsey: 764-2187, nbramsey@umich.edu  
**M-R:** Pat Kehres: 764-9122, kehres@umich.edu  
**S-Z:** Matt Taylor: 615-8791, matttayl@umich.edu

For help with facility-related issues, contact Dawn O’Connor: 936-9329, oconnord@umich.edu.
Lucy Benson Kennedy

Lucy Benson Kennedy always knew she wanted to have a professional life, but like many of us. pursued other academic interests before coming around to veterinary medicine, the professional life that was meant for her. She started her student career at Hiram College in Ohio as an English major, then changed majors to chemistry, and then to biology because it was required for a pre-vet curriculum. She thought that veterinary medicine, a field that embraces technology and advances in medicine, would show her new things along the way; that it would hold her interest across her professional life. Lucy had had pets all her life, and re-reading the books authored by veterinarian James Herriot reminded her that veterinary medicine was an option.

While still getting her undergraduate degree, a BA in Biology, Lucy worked in a mixed practice where she decided that even though she loves spending time with horses, her veterinary interest lay in a different direction. During veterinary school at Michigan State University she was required to take an ambulatory rotation in field medicine, something that brought her into close contact with dairy cows. Once again, she enjoyed her large animal experience greatly, but knew that she was not interested in going into purely livestock medicine. Lucy recalled a school assignment that sent her to an Upper Peninsula farm to assist with lambing. Lucy was watching when an ewe dropped twins and, while attending to them, dropped a third lamb, the triplet, without so much as a backwards glance. The new mother continued to ignore her latest offspring so, responding to the mother’s neglect and the triplet’s need, Lucy bent over the baby, cleaning its mouth and nostrils, when suddenly the ewe head butted her, leaving her sitting in the hay! As if to say, “Stay away from my baby!” the ewe finished the job that Lucy had started. Between the process of elimination and something she felt in her gut, Lucy knew she wanted to be a laboratory animal vet.

When you meet Lucy, you’re reminded of how small the world of laboratory animal medicine is; it seems that everybody knows somebody in the field. She is from Cleveland, Ohio, like ULAM Director Howard Rush. When her initial application to vet school was denied, a professor at Hiram, Brad Goodner, contacted his colleague, Vic Dirita, who sent Lucy’s job application on to Kate Eaton. She ended up spending two years working in Kate’s research laboratory. It was there that Lucy discovered how much she liked research and that she wanted to practice veterinary medicine in the research world as a laboratory animal veterinarian. When she was accepted into the veterinary program at Michigan State University, Lucy was mentored by Tom Meier, a previous ULAM resident.

Since beginning her ULAM residency this past summer, Lucy has cared for dogs and rabbits on the medical campus. Her next clinical rotation will take her to the sheep farm, an area that enjoys a little break during the winter, pre-lambing season, as well as to a more thorough introduction to non-human primates. Although she has helped the other residents with some of their non-human primate cases, Lucy is new to that aspect of animal care here, and is looking forward to spending time with the non-human primates. Before her clinical rotation is through, Lucy will also have become better acquainted with the pigs under ULAM care, rounding out her exposure to all the species cared for here.

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Year two of the residency will be the same for all the new residents: stepping away from the clinical side of lab animal medicine and into the nuts and bolts of running a facility. That part of the program introduces the residents to the challenges and rewards associated with personnel management, facility maintenance, public relations, and the thousand and one details that management is supposed to keep a handle on in the course of a research facility day.

Lucy’s interests in microbiology, public health, and pathology are open for exploration when she enters the research phase of her residency, but at this time she’s leaning a little towards microbiology. The future beyond that seems a little clearer: Lucy wants to be a clinical veterinarian at a pharmacology or research institution, and can even see herself running an animal care program. Until then, she is happy to share life with an ancient dwarf hamster named Sooty, and her husband, Scott, who, by the way, she met through the friend of a friend while working in Kate Eaton’s lab. Small world, indeed.

Sara Hashway

Sara Hashway did not arrive at the Unit for Laboratory Animal Medicine (ULAM) by the conventional route. In fact, the detour was wide enough and long enough that she might never have ended up with us at all. While still an undergraduate biology student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, she was recruited by Cerner Corporation, a software company that creates custom laboratory systems. As a consultant for them, Sara traveled the country helping clients set up and then maximize the database systems created for them. Cerner was a dynamic company with a young staff, and Sara prospered there.

But then, something changed. Over time, Sara began to feel that something was missing. Instead of being energized and excited about her career, the 60-70-hour work weeks began to deplete her, and she discovered that she had no passion for what she was doing. Now, I would like to point out that many average people would have settled for a well-paid, passionless job, especially if that job could, for all intents and purposes, be considered successful. However, Sara is neither average nor conventional. After much soul searching and thought, she asked herself the question that would change everything: “What would I be willing to put in the extra hours for?” The answer: working with animals. Sara has always felt that animals deserve to be well cared for and treated humanely. As a veterinarian, she would be well placed to serve as their advocate and voice. While assessing the skills she would bring to that field, Sara considered what she’d learned as a consultant for Cerner. Her years of working with diverse clientele in laboratory settings helped her decide on the field of laboratory animal medicine. The decision to return to school and pursue that goal gave Sara a new energy and purpose. She has never looked back.

Sara attended the University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine. While there, she took advantage of as many laboratory animal medicine externship opportunities as she could. These externships took her to top schools across the country: the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Michigan, Emory University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and across the ocean to the Universitat Autonoma De Barcelona, Spain. Sara’s experiences confirmed what her heart had told her: that laboratory animal medicine was the right choice.
And now she is at ULAM, where her education continues as she moves through her first year of a 3-year residency. Sara finds that she’s happy here in what she describes as a good environment to learn laboratory animal medicine. She feels well supported by the veterinary faculty and other residents. When asked what she might do during the research phase of her residency, Sara’s eyes soften, and she talks about pain management for laboratory animals. What will come later, after her residency? Clinical work, maybe in tandem with teaching or training, a part of her former life as a consultant that she enjoyed. But there’s still lots of time to think about that. In the meantime, Sara wants to get to know Ann Arbor better, especially the food scene. She wants to find a way to keep up her Spanish language skills, a goal that was reinforced by her time in Barcelona. Whatever Sara does, she will do with the love and support of her cats, Sergio and Charlie Bean. And she will do so with the interest of her colleagues and coworkers, who will be watching this resilient, resolute, steadfast animal lover with her feet on the ground.

Gerald Hish

Gerry Hish likes people. With a ready smile and his undivided attention, he lets you know that you matter, and that he’s like this with everyone... oh, but that’s getting a little bit ahead of the story. Please read on.

A native Virginian, Gerry got his BS in Wildlife Biology and Management from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Blacksburg, Virginia. Although managing wildlife populations held an early interest, Gerry decided at the end of his first year of school that he would like more opportunities to work with animals, so he altered his course to pre-vet studies. Because Virginia Tech also offered a program in veterinary medicine, Gerry stayed on, getting his DVM degree there in 1999. Although one of his clinical rotations had exposed him to laboratory animal medicine, the idea of working in that field hadn’t quite clicked yet for Gerry; he still wanted the one-on-one human contact that a small animal practice would provide, and he completed his schooling specializing in the companion animal track.

For the next eleven years Gerry worked in small animal practice. In addition to his daily responsibilities, Gerry developed and participated in community education programs including grade school visits and a monthly seminar series for new pet owners, opportunities that gave him the human contact he so values. Gerry enjoyed the enthusiasm and excitement that kids express when they see animals up close, and he liked sharing his knowledge with the public. He also served as a point of contact for high school students interested in the veterinary profession, something he wishes he’d had as a kid. When students went to the clinic to shadow him for a day, Gerry became for them the mentor he never had.

One area of veterinary medicine that particularly interests Gerry is pain management. He likes how quickly he can see the animal feel and behave differently as soon as it’s freed of its pain. It was something he observed daily in the clinic. He mentions that the treatment of osteoarthritis in his older patients allowed him to develop long-term relationships with their owners. He helped many owners realize that the palliative care of chronic pain in their pets depended in large part on their compliance with his instructions. Gerry adds that he continues to communicate with the owners of some of his former patients, e-mailing or calling them to see how things are with them back in Virginia.

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The following policies and guidelines have been updated and are available for download from the UCUCA website (www.ucuca.umich.edu) or by clicking on the links below.

New documents:
- UCUCA Policy on Participation in the OSEH Animal Handler Program

Revised documents:
- Animal Transport Standard Operating Procedure
- UM Program for the Documentation of Animal Husbandry Activities Utilizing an Activity Log
- Guidelines for Blood Collection from Laboratory Animals
- UM Program for Education and Training of Animal Care and Use Personnel
- Guidelines for Non-Rodent Mammal Surgical Suites
- UCUCA Policy for Monitoring Sanitation of Primary Enclosures
- UM Program for Monitoring Light Timers
- UM Program for Monitoring Animal Facility Temperature and Ventilation
- UM Program for Monitoring Anesthetic Machines and Vaporizers
- UM UCUCA Policy on Physical Restraint in Research Animals

Please review the above referenced documents if applicable to your research. It is the PI’s responsibility to ensure that the most recent version of applicable guidelines and policies are followed and that all staff members working with animals are also apprised of these regulations. Please don’t hesitate to contact the UCUCA office at 763-8028 or ucuca.office@umich.edu if you have any questions about the updated policies and guidelines.

...ULAM Residents, continued from page 5

It’s clear that Gerry regarded his patients and their people with compassion. When asked what he found especially rewarding in private practice, Gerry paused for a moment, reflected, then spoke softly: it was the hospice care he could give to patients that were not going to survive, and the comfort he could offer their owners with the heartache of letting go. It’s not hard to picture Gerry putting an arm around a grieving client, offering a kind word; in fact, it would be hard to picture anything less.

Gerry loved small animal practice, and he enjoyed it for many years. But after a while he felt that he’d experienced what there was to experience in that setting, and that it was time to explore other options. As he did so, he was ever mindful that striking out in a new direction might also mean taking his wife and children away from their home and extended family, never an easy thing to do. Gerry deliberated for the next two to three years to make sure that leaving the practice was the right thing to do for all of them. The choice became clear to him after attending a Charles River Short Course in 2009 that exposed him to the opportunities afforded a laboratory animal vet. He liked the role that a veterinarian can play in research, the clinical aspect, frankly, everything he saw that week. It was the turning point for him, and the event that led him to this residency with the Unit for Laboratory Animal Medicine.

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Why do dogs run around in circles before lying down?
...Because it’s easier than running around in squares!

What do cats have that no other animal has?
...Kittens!

What side of a porcupine is the sharpest?
...The outside!

What do you call a penguin in the desert?
...Lost!

Why are cats good at video games?
...Because they have nine lives!

What do you call a fly without wings?
...A walk!

What part of a fish weighs the most?
...The scales!

What kind of horse sleeps during the day?
...A nightmare!

What is as big as an elephant but weighs nothing?
...Its shadow!

...ULAM Residents, continued from page 6

Now that he is here, Gerry is happy with his choice of laboratory animal medicine. The differences between a small animal practice and the research setting can be great, especially if one considers the regulatory side of lab animal medicine, and the size of a research facility. But the differences can also be small: the knowledge obtained in working with one species often translates to other species; and at heart, people are the same everywhere you go. When asked about his future plans, Gerry says he’s leaning towards the academic side of veterinary medicine, and smiles at the possibility of teaching again, not a surprising step for this people person. A devoted family man, Gerry enjoys spending his free time with his wife and kids as they begin to explore Ann Arbor. Although they miss Virginia, a warm Michigan welcome will go a long way towards making them feel at home.

To contact the ULAM veterinary residents, please call 936-1696 or email ULAM-VET_RES@med.umich.edu.
Before working with any animal, please ensure that you have the right cage and the right animal by checking the cage card and/or tag on that animal. Make sure that the principal investigator and protocol number are both correct, and also ensure that the protocol expiration date is current.

This will ensure that you do not use another investigator's animals by mistake, and that your protocol remains in compliance. If you see a cage card that looks like it has incorrect information, or a cage that is mislabeled, please notify your husbandry supervisor as soon as possible, or if you have questions you can also contact the UCUCA office at 763-8028 or ucuca.office@umich.edu.

If you forgot your eSirius password or need to have it reset, please email the UCUCA office (ucuca.office@umich.edu) or call 763-8028 and we will be happy to assist you!

Animal Concern Hotline Number:
(734) 763-8028
Animal Concern Online Submission Form:
www.ucuca.umich.edu/complaint.htm
IF YOU SEE ANYTHING THAT TROUBLES YOU, PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CONTACT US!

The Backbone is no longer available on paper. It is distributed via email and published on the UCUCA website. As always, back issues are available on the website. To download an issue, go to: www.ucuca.umich.edu/backbone.

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Do you have new personnel in your lab? Make sure to add them to your protocol if they will be using animals; EVEN IF THEY ARE TEMPORARY OR SUMMER PERSONNEL! Anyone who uses animals at any time under a UCUCA-approved protocol MUST be listed on that protocol before using animals.

Also, if there are personnel who no longer work in your lab, they should be removed from your protocol.
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ULAM TRAINING CORE
Phone: 763-8039
Email: ulam-trainingcore@med.umich.edu
Website: www.ulam.umich.edu/Training.htm
Contact: Stella Webb

OSEH
Phone: 647-1143
HazMat: 763-4568
Fax: 763-1185
Website: www.oseh.umich.edu

ANIMAL CONCERN HOTLINE
Phone: 763-8028
Anonymous Online Submission Form:
www.ucuca.umich.edu/complaint.htm

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
Emergencies: 911
Non-Emergency Concerns: 763-1131
Anonymous Tip Line: (800) 863-1355
Email: public.safety@umich.edu
Website: police.umich.edu