

# The Backbone

Special AAALAC Edition! January 2005

Volume 12 Issue 1



## AAALAC, INTL. ACCREDITATION SITE VISIT SPECIAL: YOUR INSPECTION CONNECTION

The Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International (AAALAC, Intl.) will conduct its regular triennial site visit to the UM on:


**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 28 — THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2005.**

AAALAC, Intl. is a non-profit organization comprised of professional societies in the life sciences. It is not a governmental agency, has no regulatory or legal function, and does not formulate animal care or use policies or regulations. Rather, AAALAC, Intl. accreditation is a voluntary peer-review process, and certifies whether standards of excellence in animal care programs are attained and maintained. The entire UM animal care and use program and facilities have been accredited since 1971.

The AAALAC, Intl. evaluation process begins with review of a comprehensive written description of the institutional animal care and use program. The description includes facility locations, institutional policies regarding animal care and use, veterinary care, husbandry practices, qualifications of personnel, and operation of the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA). Additionally, AAALAC, Intl. expects that the exercise of compiling this description will prompt institutions to conduct a thorough in-house self-evaluation. The 450 page UM animal care and use program description was sent to AAALAC, Intl. on December 1, 2004.

AAALAC, Intl. follows its review of the program description with a site visit by a team that includes veterinarians specializing in laboratory animal medicine and researchers who are familiar with the care and use of animals. The evaluation incorporates professional judgment and performance-based criteria. This year, the team is comprised of Andrew Grady, DVM (lead site visitor); Jerry Collins, PhD; Denna Benn, DVM; and Dave Ruble, DVM. They will spend four full days touring and evaluating the UM facilities and program.

AAALAC, Intl. accreditation is accepted as evidence of compliance with policies on animal care and use set by the National Institutes of Health, American Heart Association, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Agriculture, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, among others. Of the top 100 institutions receiving funding from the NIH, over 90% have achieved AAALAC, Intl. accreditation.

For more information about AAALAC, Intl. accreditation, contact the UCUCA Office at [ucuca.office@umich.edu](mailto:ucuca.office@umich.edu). 

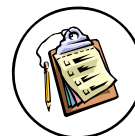
### Inside the "AAALACbone"...



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**The Backbone** is a quarterly publication of the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA)

# HEADS UP!

## WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR

The Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International (AAALAC, Intl.) will conduct its regular triennial site visit to the University of Michigan on 2/28/05 – 3/3/05.

The site visitors have been provided with a 500-page written description of the UM animal care and use program and facilities. During their four-day visit they will tour animal housing areas, animal surgery areas, and laboratories where animals are used. As they evaluate the UM program description, inspect the facilities, and interview members of the UM animal care and use community, the site visitors will be trying to answer some of the following questions:

- ❖ Is the University in compliance with all federal laws and regulations, and the standards outlined in the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*?
- ❖ Does the animal care and use program receive adequate support (authority and funds) from top level administration?
- ❖ Have problems identified during previous site visits or federal inspections been addressed and corrected?
- ❖ Is the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA) effective?
- ❖ Have all animal use projects and procedures being conducted been approved by the UCUCA?
- ❖ Is everyone who uses or cares for animals properly trained and skilled?
- ❖ Is the occupational health and safety program for animal care and use personnel effective?
- ❖ Are animal husbandry, veterinary care, animal surgery, and euthanasia performed in accordance with federal regulations and nationally accepted standards?
- ❖ Are the physical facilities (including caging, rooms, buildings, ventilation systems, etc.) designed and maintained in accordance with federal regulations and nationally accepted standards?
- ❖ Is the use of hazardous agents in animals conducted with due consideration for the safety of other animals, personnel, and the environment?

Additionally, the site visitors will pay special attention to animal use projects involving prolonged restraint, food and water restriction, multiple major survival surgeries, and the use of hazardous agents.

If you encounter the site visitors during their rounds on 2/28/05 – 3/3/05, please feel free to welcome them and respond to their questions in an honest and forthright manner to the best of your knowledge -- you may even take the opportunity to network by asking them questions about the animal care and use programs at their home institutions.

Questions and concerns regarding the AAALAC, Intl. site visit can be addressed to the UCUCA Office, 3502 ARF 0614, Ph: (734) 763-8028, Fax: (734) 936-3234, e-mail: [ucuca.office@umich.edu](mailto:ucuca.office@umich.edu).

The UM has been AAALAC, Intl. accredited since 1971, and is one of the top notch animal care and use programs in the country.

**With your cooperation, we anticipate a successful accreditation site visit!**



# THE BIG TEN

## TIPS FOR SITE VISIT SURVIVAL

Here are ten tips to help you survive the AAALAC, Intl. site visit:

- ① **Know what AAALAC, Intl. is.** The Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International (AAALAC, Intl.) is a non-profit organization comprised of professional societies in the life sciences. Accreditation is voluntary, and based upon the peer-review process.
- ② **Know the site visit details: 2/28/05 – 3/3/05.** A detailed itinerary will be provided to facility managers in advance, and will also be available to others upon request from the UCUCA Office ([ucuca.office@umich.edu](mailto:ucuca.office@umich.edu)).
- ③ **Know the AAALAC site visitors:**
  - Andrew Grady, DVM—Director, Lab Animal Facilities, University of Mississippi. Lead Site Visitor, Member of AAALAC Council
  - Jerry Collins, PhD—Chair, IACUC & Professor, Anesthesiology, Yale University
  - Denna Benn, DVM—Director, Animal Care Services, University of Guelph
  - Dave Ruble, DVM—Laboratory Animal Veterinarian, Wyeth
- ④ **Be familiar with the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*.** The full text is available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/labrats/>. In addition to the *Guide*, also be familiar with the *PHS Policy on the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/references/PHSPolicyLabAnimals.pdf>) and the Animal Welfare Act and Regulations (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ac/publications.html>).
- ⑤ **Bring ALL research and husbandry staff members up to speed on animal care and use, including students and temporary laboratory members.** Anyone who works with animals should be acquainted with the basics of animal care and use (occupational health and safety, how to contact a veterinarian, UCUCA approval of animal use procedures, etc.). Use the information in this issue of the *Backbone* to conduct a review session with all members of your laboratory or facility staff.
- ⑥ **Be familiar with the UCUCA-approved protocol for your animal use project.** Every research staff member using animals should be familiar with the UCUCA-approved protocol for their projects, and ensure that the animals are used accordingly. Expect the AAALAC, Intl. site visitors to compare actual experimental activities conducted with those described in the UCUCA-approved protocol. The UCUCA-approved protocol for each project is available from the principal investigator.
- ⑦ **Spruce up, but don't shut down.** Site visitors expect that everything will be especially ship-shape, but even the spiffiest facility will not make the best impression if it is deserted. Knowledgeable research personnel are encouraged to be available to discuss the scientific objectives of their animal use projects.
- ⑧ **Answer questions in an honest and forthright manner -- and STOP.** If you must chat, use this opportunity to network by asking the site visitors about their home institutions, or discuss the scientific background of the research project. Don't hesitate to answer a question "I don't know" if that's the case (you could add that you'd call ULAM or UCUCA to find out!).
- ⑨ **Insist that the site visitors adhere to all entry requirements and restrictions for your area, such as protective clothing, traffic patterns, light schedules, etc.** For special clothing requirements, facility managers should be prepared to supply clothing and/or other protective gear for at least six people (2-3 site visitors, 2-3 facility representatives).
- ⑩ **Notify area housekeeping staff.** They will want to be extra vigilant about the cleanliness of public areas of buildings to be visited during the site visit.



# GET READY, GET SET, GO!

## SITE VISIT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

The following checklist will assist you in making your final preparations for the site visit:

### LABELS

- Check that all animals are properly identified** with species, strain/stock/breed, source, principal investigator, pertinent dates (birth, arrival, capture, etc.), and especially the UCUC A approval number. Remember that dogs and cats are required to have a neck tag or tattoo, and monkeys are usually tattooed.
- Check that containers of all solutions and dry goods are properly labeled** to prevent accidental misuse or injury.
- Check that all hazard labels are current.** Take down those obsolete hazard signs. Make sure signs are prominently posted for current hazards.
- DISCARD ALL EXPIRED ITEMS** -- drugs, treatments, fluids, foods, etc. If it has an expiration date, throw it out on or before that date.

### HUSBANDRY

- Ensure that all feed is fresh** (within 6 months of labeled mill date for most species) and appropriate for the species.
- Check that all animal caging is cleaned and sanitized on an appropriate schedule.** See the *Guide for Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* for specific information on sanitation requirements.
- Ensure that all animals are clean and dry.** Cages should be changed inbetween regularly-scheduled changes if the bedding appears wet or overly soiled.

### VETERINARY CARE

- All ill or injured animals must be reported to the ULAM veterinary staff.** Remind everyone who uses your facility. Information on obtaining veterinary care is found on Page 6 and should be prominently posted.

### MICRO AND MACRO ANIMAL ENVIRONMENT

- Check that animals are provided with adequate housing space.** See the *Guide for Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* for specific information on space requirements. No overcrowded cages! It is particularly important to pay special attention to cages in which litters of rodents are present; these can quickly and easily become too crowded.
- Check that all caging is in good repair and of appropriate design for the animals housed.** No sharp edges. No escape routes. No rust. No cracks.
- Check animal room temperatures.** They should be stable (varying not more than a couple of degrees each day) and appropriate for the animals housed. Make sure that minimum-maximum thermometers are reset daily.
- Check animal room ventilation.** Everyone who enters an animal room should perform the "Sniff Test." If the room is stuffy, malodorous, or experiencing temperature fluctuations, the ventilation should be evaluated and corrected as necessary. In addition, the pressure of the room should be evaluated daily to ensure that the air is flowing in the right direction (i.e., hallway air should not be flowing into an SPF rodent room, NHP room air should not flow into the hallway, etc.).
- Check light timers.** Don't just spin the knob, make sure the lights really go off at night by staying late or coming in early once every six months. A copy of the UCUC A Policy *UM Program for Monitoring Light Timers* is available upon request through the UCUC A Office (UCUC A.Office@umich.edu).

*Continued on next page...*

# GET READY, GET SET, GO!

## SITE VISIT PREPARATION CHECKLIST

...Continued from previous page

### FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

- Check those washers and sterilizers.** Don't depend on the machine's settings and read-outs. Use independent indicators (strips, vials, etc.) to ensure that your washer is actually sanitizing, and your autoclave is actually sterilizing. Make sure that your sanitation equipment logs are up to date and available for review.
- Check that moisture-proof outlet/switch covers or ground-fault interrupters (GFI) are installed** to protect you from electrical shock hazard in your area.
- Check your security system.** Are your animal room doors locked?
- Check that all surfaces in your animal housing rooms are in good repair,** vermin-proof (no holes or gaps), and sanitizable (non-porous).
- Check your animal room housekeeping.** Get into those hard-to-reach spots. Get rid of anything that is not absolutely necessary for daily animal care or use.
- Vermin problems?** Notify the pest control specialists in the Plant Department. They are knowledgeable about the special requirements of vermin control in animal research facilities.

### STORAGE

- Check that storage of food, bedding, caging etc., is separated** from storage of chemicals, cleaners, or other hazardous agents. Food and bedding must be stored off the floor and away from the wall. Opened (or torn) bags of food or bedding must be stored in a vermin-proof, leak-proof container with a tightly fitting lid.
- Check that any substances that may be toxic to animals,** but required for animal husbandry or use (cleaners, experimental agents, etc.), are stored in a cabinet or other secondary container to ensure that animals cannot come into contact with hazardous substances.
- Ensure that animal carcasses are stored in dedicated refrigerators/freezers.** The carcasses should be double-bagged using opaque bags.
- All trash receptacles must be leak proof and have tightly fitting lids.** In addition there should be adequate numbers of properly labeled waste receptacles strategically placed throughout the facility. Don't forget to empty them regularly!

### PERSONNEL

- Check that all personnel who work with animals are properly trained to do so.** Remind everyone that training is mandatory and is provided by the UCUCA Office staff. Descriptions of the training classes, as well as schedules and registration information, is available on the UCUCA website, [www.ucuca.umich.edu](http://www.ucuca.umich.edu).
- Eating, drinking, smoking, or applying cosmetics is not allowed in animal facilities.** Remind everyone who uses your facility.
- Check that emergency contact information** (nights, weekends, etc.) is prominently posted in each facility.

Relax; be friendly; and convey your enthusiasm, pride, and sense of tremendous responsibility toward ensuring ethical and humane care and use of animals!

Good Luck! 

# PLEASE COPY AND POST

## UNIT FOR LABORATORY ANIMAL MEDICINE OBTAINING VETERINARY CARE

### **NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS**

*(Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM)*

Veterinary medical care can be obtained by calling the Unit for Laboratory Animal Medicine (ULAM) @ **(76)4-0277**.

### **WEEKDAYS AFTER HOURS**

*(Monday through Thursday, 5:00 PM - 8:00 AM)*

Veterinary medical care can be obtained by calling the University Department of Public Safety (DPS) @ **(76)3-1131**. DPS will contact the appropriate veterinarian.

### **WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS**

*(Friday 5:00 PM through Monday 8:00 AM)*

#### **1) 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM on Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays:**

Routine and emergency problems relating to animal health and husbandry should first be directed to the weekend/holiday supervisor (veterinary technician). The office number for the weekend/holiday supervisor is **(93)6-1037**, and the pager number is **2124** (see pager instructions below).

If the supervisor cannot be reached, the veterinarian on-call can be contacted directly by paging. The weekend/holiday veterinarian's pager number is **2114** (see pager instructions below).

If the weekend/holiday supervisor or the duty veterinarian cannot be reached by paging, (s)he can be contacted through the University Department of Public Safety @ **(76)3-1131**.

#### **2) All other times on Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays**

*(i.e., 5:00 PM Friday - 7:00 AM Saturday, 3:00 PM Saturday - 7:00 AM Sunday, and 3:00 PM Sunday - 8:00 AM Monday).*

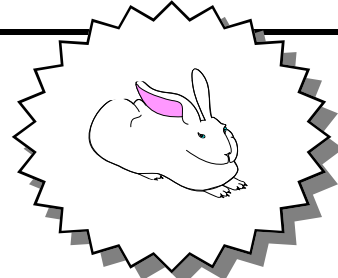
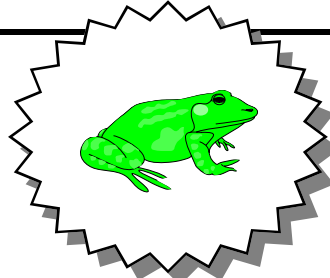
Veterinary medical care can be obtained by paging the veterinarian (**2114**), or by calling the University Department of Public Safety (DPS) @ **(76) 3-1131**. DPS will contact the appropriate veterinarian.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE UM HOSPITAL PAGING SYSTEM**

To access the UM Hospital computerized paging system, dial **(93)6-6266**, using a touch-tone telephone. The computer voice will direct you to enter the four digit pager # (use the telephone push buttons). The voice will tell you whether the pager is "on page," and will then ask you to enter your telephone # for the return call. Do this, and then hang up. If you only have access to a rotary (dial) phone, call **(93) 6-6267** for assistance.

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## **ANIMAL CONCERN HOTLINE**

# **763-8028**

The University of Michigan is strongly committed to the humane care and use of animals in research. The **Animal Concern Hotline** (763-8028) provides a mechanism for U-M staff members and the public at large to report any matter of concern about humane aspects of laboratory animal care and use. The University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA) will promptly investigate any report submitted and maintain confidentiality, within University guidelines, regarding the source of information it receives.

*IF YOU SEE ANYTHING THAT TROUBLES YOU,  
PLEASE DO NOT HESITATE TO CALL!*

# The Backbone

- Add my name to your mailing list.
- Send me \_\_\_\_\_ additional copies of *The Backbone* (Month/Year).

Please complete and return to the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA).

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Investigator \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Topics/areas of interest you would like to see explored in future issues: \_\_\_\_\_

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