ANNOUNCING
THE 2004 JODY C. UNGERLEIDER AWARD WINNER:
DIANA FARRIS!

By Terry Fracala
ULAM

Diana Farris, Research Associate II in the Jobst Vascular Research Laboratory, was awarded the 2004 Jody C. Ungerleider Memorial Award. Amongst several highly-qualified and well-deserving individuals, Diana was selected for her outstanding contributions to the humane care and use of laboratory animals. Diana has been involved in the humane care of animals for 21 years. In the Jobst Vascular Research Laboratory, Diana has an active role in all of the surgical protocols, devoting time and energy to ensure that animals are protected and cared for. As a teacher and expert rodent surgeon, she patiently instructs undergraduate students, veterinary students, medical students, and postdoctoral fellows in the use of sound microsurgical techniques and rodent survival surgery practices.

A quote from a letter supporting her nomination best describes Diana’s contributions to animal welfare: “While working with my rats, I found myself talking to them, caring for them with a particular maternal instinct; attending to them after surgery to make sure they were comfortable. These are traits I learned from Diana in the course of watching her work with the animals.”

A similar quote from a colleague and nominator demonstrates her impact on attitudes and standards toward providing humane animal use: “Not only is Diana technically an excellent surgeon but she also is very concerned about animal welfare. She treats the animals with the utmost respect and she is able to convey this respect to all those whom she works with. I can say with absolute certainty that she sets a tremendous example in the laboratory for those who work with her and observe her.”

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WHEN ACTIVISM GOES TO THE DARK SIDE: ANOTHER ALF BREAK-IN

By Stephen Durkee, BS, RALAT
UCUCA

On November 14, 2004, activists from the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) broke into two buildings on the University of Iowa’s campus. The buildings, Seashore Hall (classrooms, offices, laboratory space) and Spence Labs (laboratory space and animal facility), both received extensive damage due to the release of hazardous agents, specifically acid used to destroy computers, experimental equipment, and data. Seashore Hall was closed for two weeks and Spence Labs for several additional weeks.

In addition to the destruction of laboratory and office space, the intruders also removed 401 animals (88 mice and 313 rats) from the animal facility. ALF released its own video of the break-in to news media; ironically, this video illustrated the inhumane treatment of the seized animals by their “saviors.” Animals were dumped into plastic bins that served as the transport devices. Food and water were not provided for the animals, and the containers did not allow air to circulate through them. Many containers were overcrowded, resulting in even more stress for the animals. At least two rats were found wandering loose in the animal facility without access to food or water.

The damage caused by the ALF break-in does not end at the University of Iowa. The tax-paying public will have to shoulder not only the cleanup costs, but also the tax dollars lost from the destruction of equipment, the loss to the research community of valuable data, and the cost of replacing lost animals to complete the studies. And, of course, there is the distress forced upon the stolen animals by the very people who hoped to “free” them.

Please be aware that animal rights groups such as ALF (and others like them) resort to the use of violence to accomplish their goal of eliminating animal use in research. Please be vigilant in following security procedures, including locking the doors, always using your University of Michigan ID and pass code to access the animal facility, not letting others in who “forgot” this information, being aware of unrecognized individuals in your laboratory area, and properly screening prospective new employees (including reference checking). We all need to work together to prevent a tragedy similar to the University of Iowa incident from happening here at the UM.

ANIMAL CONCERN HOTLINE
(734) 763-8028

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HEY! LISTEN UP!

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.

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THE DISASTER BLASTER
STRIKES AGAIN

The following article is being re-run as a reminder to animal facility managers to finalize and practice their disaster plans. A fire at a Covance Research facility in Colorado on January 24, 2005 resulted in the loss of an undetermined number of rabbits. The facility staff present at the time of the fire were lucky to escape without injury. Please be vigilant and practice the procedures for different emergency situations, as described in your disaster plan.

THE MASTER OF DISASTER

By Stephen Durkee, BS, RALAT
UCUCA

Imagine the following scenario: After a huge thunderstorm, virtually all power in southeast Michigan is lost. Temperature and humidity are skyrocketing and it looks like it could take three to four days to restore power. It’s a good thing that the animal facility has a plan developed for how to handle such an emergency! Supplies and personnel will be available to ensure that the research animals receive the same quality of care during the power outage as they do under regular circumstances.

The Blackout of 2003 brought the issue of “disaster preparedness” to the forefront of animal facility agendas across the country. Currently, animal facility managers are all preparing written documents on how various disasters, both natural and man-made, will be managed so as to not affect the quality of animal care in their areas. In order to assist with this process, the UCUCA recently created the “University of Michigan Animal Facility Disaster Planning Guidelines” document. These guidelines provide recommendations on supplies to have on hand for animals and responding personnel, escape routes, evacuation procedures, communication networks, responses to specific types of disasters, and other important information. The UCUCA Office has designated a staff member to assist with the development of a disaster plan for each animal housing area on campus. Please contact Steve Durkee at 936-4983 or email sdurkee@umich.edu with questions or suggestions in the development and implementation of your area’s plan.

Diana Farris...continued from page 1

The Jody C. Ungerleider Memorial Award was established in 1983 after the untimely death of Jody Ungerleider, a Research Assistant for the University of Michigan. Jody believed profoundly that the humane care and welfare of all animals used in research should be one of the highest priorities of those involved in biological experimentation. The purpose of the Ungerleider Award is to recognize individuals within the University of Michigan whose activities and attitudes toward the use of laboratory animals in research are consistent with those high standards. A quote from a nominator ascertains the honor in receiving this distinguished award: “I believe Diana Farris to be well deserving of the 2004 Jody Ungerleider Award and would represent all of the characteristics embodied in the history of this important award of those individuals showing outstanding compassion and concern for animal welfare.”

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A GUIDE TO THE GUIDELINES: SURGICAL SUITES FOR NON-RODENTS

By Dawn O’Connor, LVT, LATG
UCUCA

The UCUCA and ULAM veterinary staff recently updated the document, Criteria for Non-Rodent Mammal Surgical Suites. Please review the following information as it might affect the way you are conducting survival surgeries on non-rodent mammals. If you have any questions about this policy, or need help with surgical room criteria, please contact the UCUCA Office staff at ucuca.office@umich.edu or the ULAM veterinary staff at 764-0277.

CRITERIA FOR NON-RODENT MAMMAL SURGICAL SUITES

Regulatory agencies require that aseptic surgical technique be used when survival surgical procedures are performed on non-rodent mammal species such as rabbits, dogs, cats, primates, and farm animals. Aseptic surgery performed on non-rodent mammals must be conducted in a surgical facility that meets certain minimal criteria, as designated by the University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA).

The following are some required criteria for establishing and maintaining a surgical suite for non-rodent mammals:

1. Materials should be easily sanitizable and kept physically clean. The room must be thoroughly cleaned prior to aseptic surgery.
2. The room should be free of supplies and equipment that are not relevant to the surgical procedures being performed.
3. Facilities should be separate from other areas to minimize unnecessary traffic and decrease the potential for contamination.
4. A surgical light and table should be provided.
5. Appropriate anesthetic gas-scavenging devices must be available (if applicable).
6. Waterproof electrical outlet covers must be provided.
7. Non-sterile and sterile procedures can be conducted in the same operating room, but not simultaneously. The room should be decontaminated between procedures and a record of decontamination maintained.

There should be two separate surgical support areas; one for the surgeons to prepare themselves, and the other for the animal preparation. If the same room is used for animal preparation and surgeon preparation, the activities cannot occur simultaneously.

To learn more about specific and additional recommended features for non-rodent mammal surgical suites, please refer to the Criteria for Non-Rodent Mammal Surgical Suites document.

PROTECT YOUR PETS FROM SUMMERTIME HEAT!

Give them plenty of water... ...shelter them from the sun... ...and don’t leave them in the car!
DISCUSSION DISCRETION

By Steve Durkee, BS, RALAT & Astrid Haakonstad, BA
UCUCA

“I have often regretted my speech, never my silence.”
--Anonymous

There is a time and a place for everything, including conversations relating to your work. Corporations must protect their “trade secrets;” physicians must retain patient confidentiality. Scientists should employ the same sort of discretion as well when it comes to discussing their work in public areas.

Suppose an “Average Joe” walks by when you are enthusiastically relating, in great detail, your cutting-edge rodent surgical technique to a colleague. The best that can happen is that “Joe” will simply ignore you, go on his way, and forget everything you said before he turns the corner. But suppose the worst happens: “Joe” listens to every word you say, misunderstands it due to his lack of knowledge about surgery in general and your research in particular, and formulates the opinion that you are a bona-fide, grade-A, Mad Scientist of the quality to even rival Dr. Moreau. Needless to say, this assessment is hardly indicative of reality, but it doesn’t matter because the damage has been done.

Or perhaps “Joe” is a scientist from another institution, looking for a way to revitalize his sagging career. He could very well feign disinterest while mentally filing away every word you say, ready to claim your innovative technique as his own. Imagine him returning to his institution, presenting “his” great new idea to his colleagues, and earning the respect, recognition, and rewards that, by rights, should be yours. Or maybe he will scoop your idea and run off with it, making millions in collaboration with private industry.

And there is also the possibility that “Joe” is an animal-rights activist, one who does not condone any kind of biomedical research. He could twist and distort your words, making you sound like a barbaric animal-abusing madman, and use them as leverage for his next anti-vivisectionist rally. Just like some people are disturbed by seeing rodents of the “pest” variety, some folks are disturbed hearing about the science they are involved in. It is in the best interest of yourself, your institution, and your research to be prudent about what you say around other people. In the same way we cover cages of animals when transporting them through public corridors, some places require us to “cover our conversation.” So when you are out there in the public, remember that you represent science and the image you portray is the image that people experience.

ANIMAL CONCERN HOTLINE: (734) 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. You also have the option of submitting an anonymous complaint form online at ucua.umich.edu. The University Committee on Use and Care of Animals (UCUCA) will promptly investigate any report submitted and will 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!
OH, GIVE ME (AND MY RATS) A HOME: UCUCA ANIMAL HOUSING GUIDELINES

By Steve Durkee, BS, RALAT & Astrid Haakonstad, BA
UCUCA

So you are writing your protocol. You have designed your study, selected your species, and determined how many animals you need. Then a dilemma presents itself. Where are you going to put all these animals? As in, where will they live while they are involved in your study? Can they live in your lab, out on a farm, in your living room, or at the Ritz? How long can we keep them out of their housing facility?

Animals must be housed in UCUCA-approved animal housing facilities, not in labs. The Animal Welfare Act (AWA) requires the UCUCA to inspect these areas on a semi-annual basis. The definition of what must be inspected is: any area in which animals are housed for more than 12 hours. So for animals covered under the AWA, they can only be out of an approved animal housing area for 12 hours.

Species covered under the AWA include all warm-blooded vertebrates EXCEPT laboratory rats, mice, and birds. So does this mean that you can keep your laboratory rats and mice in your laboratory space? Not so fast! All vertebrates are covered under the Public Health Service (PHS) Policy. The PHS Policy indicates that in addition to the central housing facility, satellite facilities must also be UCUCA-inspected. A satellite facility is any animal containment outside of a core facility or centrally designated or managed area in which animals are housed for more than 24 hours. This means that laboratory rats and mice can only visit the lab for up to 24 hours.

If your animals are going to visit the laboratory, you must also ensure that the animals will have enough food and water, and that the cage remains clean and dry. As mentioned in the UCUCA training classes, it is best to put your animals into clean cages when removing them from the animal room. For rodents this makes good sense because the regular scheduled changing time may be missed. If you miss the regular change time, not to worry, clean cages are in each animal room. Coordinating your work schedule with your animal husbandry technician can help reduce these complications. When transporting animals between the holding facility and the laboratory, make sure that water bottles are turned around so the sipper tubes are pointing up. This helps the animals stay dry.

In summary, all laboratory animals must be housed in UCUCA-approved animal housing areas. When the animals are removed from housing and taken to the lab or other workspace, USDA-covered animals can only remain out for 12 hours, and rats and mice can only remain out for 24 hours. If you’re unsure about the proper duration an animal can be removed from the housing room, please feel free to contact the UCUCA Office or the animal husbandry staff member assigned to the room. Any of these knowledgeable people can help you in your search for answers.

HAVE A WILD AND CRAZY SUMMER!

Diana Farris...continued from page 5

Diana was honored by members of the UM animal research community at an award ceremony in December. She received an individual plaque and a cash award of $200. Her name will also be engraved on a “traveling” departmental plaque, which will be put on display in the Jobst Vascular Research Laboratory during the next year.
EXTREME MAKEOVER: UCUCA WEBSITE EDITION!

It’s here at last! The new-and-improved, brand-spanking-new UCUCA website! Go to ucuca.umich.edu to see our spiffy new site design! The new site offers information on the who, what, why, and how of the UCUCA office, downloadable forms (including the Animal Use Application), veterinary guidelines, policies, training class descriptions, and access to the training registration page! Also look for Frequently Asked Questions in the near future! Please let us know what you think of the new site by emailing us at ucuca.office@umich.edu!

BRING NOTORIETY TO YOUR LAB!!

Nominate someone for the 2005 Jody C. Ungerleider Memorial Award!

NOMINATE YOUR STAFF MEMBER OR STUDENT WHO HAS MADE AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE HUMANE CARE AND TREATMENT OF ANIMALS USED IN BIOMEDICAL EXPERIMENTATION.

Nominees should meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. The nominees should demonstrate through their actions concern and compassion for laboratory animals and be advocates for the welfare of animals involved in laboratory research.
2. The nominees should have made specific research contributions that improve the humane use and treatment of laboratory animals.
3. The nominees should have made specific research contributions to the education of students, researchers, animal handlers, and/or the general public with respect to biological research using laboratory animals in particular.

Mark your calendars—August 2005!

Send your nomination packet to the Office of the Vice President for Research 4080 Fleming Building, Box 1340
Call 936-3802 for more information
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: _______________________

□ Add my name to your mailing list.

□ Send me _______ additional copies of The Backbone ____________________ (Month/Year).

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