



# Arizona Branch AALAS Newsletter

Vol. 24 No. 1  
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Arizona Branch of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science

**Have you sent in your membership renewal?  
If not, see membership form on the last page.**

## WHAT'S INSIDE...

<i>President's Message &amp; Important Dates</i> .....	<a href="#">1</a>
<i>Member Profile &amp; Past Meeting Minutes</i> .....	<a href="#">2</a>
<i>Louise Brooks Memorial Raffle Sponsors</i> .....	<a href="#">3</a>
<i>Want to Attend the Leadership Academy?</i> .....	<a href="#">4</a>
<i>Updated Guide Comparison Doc Available</i> .....	<a href="#">5</a>
<i>AALAS Awards Nomination Deadline</i> .....	<a href="#">5</a>
<i>AALAS Foundation: Your Research Advocate</i> .....	<a href="#">5</a>
<i>Train the Trainer</i> .....	<a href="#">6</a>
<i>EE Improves Fertility and Pup Survival</i> .....	<a href="#">6</a>
<i>Ron Orta Humanitarian Award - Nominations</i> .....	<a href="#">7</a>
<i>Knockout Rats Have Arrived</i> .....	<a href="#">7</a>
<i>5 Ways to Turn Angry Clients into Happy Ones</i> .....	<a href="#">8</a>
<i>Bronze Membership Scholarships Available</i> .....	<a href="#">9</a>
<i>Successful Delegation of Authority</i> .....	<a href="#">9</a>
<i>3 Keys to Beat Procrastination</i> .....	<a href="#">10</a>
<i>Sponsor's Page</i> .....	<a href="#">11</a>
<i>Membership Application</i> .....	<a href="#">12</a>

## President's Message

I'm very privileged to be the AzAALAS President once again and I thank all of you for your continual support over the past twenty years. This is my fifth (and I promise Jane – my last) term. My previous tenures were fairly easy ones, however, this year it appears could be one of the most challenging our organization has ever had to face.

In 2010, the Arizona Branch of AALAS was privileged to host the District 8 Meeting in Tempe along with the Utah and the Sierra Nevada Branches. The symposium was a success given the current economy; more than 200 people were able to attend, some from as far away as New York. However, what was very disappointing to me as the Program Chair was that many of our own members were unable to take advantage of the convenient location due to the limited funds available to attend educational opportunities. This was especially true for technicians at our state universities.

Many of our employers have been hit hard by the economic downturn and are facing additional budget cuts in the coming months. All of us are also working with fewer people and thus cannot afford to allow for large numbers of employees to be gone all at once to attend seminars, especially if they are at another institution let alone in another city. So our organization is going to have to be creative in the coming years looking for ways to

## Important Dates

**3 I's Conference** - 4/2-6 - La Jolla, CA [www.swaabr.org](http://www.swaabr.org)

**LAMA ATA Meeting** - 3/30-4/1 - Scottsdale, AZ  
[www.lama-online.org](http://www.lama-online.org)

**Summer Fun Event** - TBA - Flagstaff, AZ

**Fall Video Conference** - TBA

**Holiday Installation Event** - 12/3 - Flagstaff, AZ

## Arizona Branch AALAS News

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provide training to the largest group of people at the lowest cost to our members. We would normally be planning a small branch symposium this year, most likely in the Tucson area. However, given the limited financial resources attendance would probably be poor.

I would like to propose to the Board of Directors and also to the membership at large that we are looking at joining the AALAS Learning Library. This is a great learning resource, especially for technicians who are preparing to take their certification exams. For \$1250 a year, we could offer admission to 75 of our members. There are many ways our group could pay for this; the first would be that we could charge a nominal fee (\$15) per person. This would be reasonable, but our organization made about \$3500 from the D8

**Member Profile**

**Bob Perrill, retired Research Specialist Senior, Valley Fever Center for Excellence at the UA**

Bob has a BS degree in biology and spent 4 years in the Air Force in the School of Aerospace Medicine working on new medical devices and for several NASA programs. He spent 2 years at Rocky Mountain National Park before coming to Arizona in 1970. He worked 15 years at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum as the Assistant Curator of Plants. He left to become an independent biological consultant, surveying for and working with rare or endangered plant and animal species for the next 8 years. On a spotted owl survey in the Catalina Mountains, his knee cap went one way and his knee another. Running up and down mountains and across sand dunes were no longer possible so he applied to and joined University Animal Care. Bob spent 2 years in husbandry, where he worked with everything from amphibians to NHP, and 3 years in the Biological Support Services, Surgery Section, before moving into research. For the past 12 years he has worked for the Valley Fever Center for Excellence to develop a vaccine for Valley Fever. He developed the Biosafety and SOP Manual for the Select Agent ABSL3 laboratory in CAF, the VA BSL3 laboratory, and the BSL3 laboratory in Bio5. He worked with the only ABSL3 Class III glovebox in the state.

Bob has been an AzAALAS member since 1993 and earned his LATg in 1995. He was a member of the Institutional Biosafety Committee and the Animals Hazards Committee and is the Laboratory Safety Officer for the ABSL3 lab at CAF and the BSL3 lab in Bio5. He served as the Southern Arizona AALAS board member for over six years and for the past several years has written over 65 member profiles for the AzAALAS and the university's Staff Tracks Newsletters. When asked, how would you influence others to follow in your footsteps? He answered, "You never know what opportunities life will offer or where you will end up. Follow your instincts, pursue your dreams, work hard, and learn everything you can. Be prepared for anything." Bob has retired and plans to spend more time birding, writing (fantasy and non fiction), reading, working in his boojum nursery, getting out in nature a lot more, doing some consulting work, and a little traveling.

With Bob's retirement, there is an opening for another AzAALAS member to volunteer to write the member's profiles. Yes, it takes a little time, but it presents an opportunity to contact and get to know other AALAS members that you might never have had a chance to meet. If you are interested, contact [azaalas@ahsc.arizona.edu](mailto:azaalas@ahsc.arizona.edu).

meeting; I think it would be prudent to take this money and give back to our membership. I believe we should take our proceeds and set them aside to pay for three years of access to the Learning Library and offer the services free to all who want to learn. The Board can always reevaluate this decision annually. But right now, we need to find affordable training opportunities for our membership.

Feel free to contact me if you have any additional suggestions and/or concerns. I'm hoping that 2011 will turn out to be the best year for Technician Training in the Grand Canyon State. - Tim Martin, (480) 4 0 6 - 4 0 0 3 o r [timothy.martin@chw.edu](mailto:timothy.martin@chw.edu).

**Past Meeting Minutes**

**Minutes of the 9/23/10 Board Meeting**

The meeting was held via conference call. President Tedd

Brandon welcomed and thanked the board members for attending. He called the meeting to order at 12:04 pm.

The minutes of the board meeting on 7/15/10 were distributed and reviewed. Tedd asked for any corrections or changes to the minutes. The minutes were accepted as written.

Secretary Tom Greene reported that there were 155 members on the 2010 membership roster to date. Tedd stated he would like to see the total reach 160. Tom mentioned there will be one or two new northern arizona members coming on soon.

Treasurer Grace Aranda distributed the financial report. To date savings has \$874, checking has \$5,569 and money market has \$4,060. This makes our total about \$10,503 but there are still donation items to account for and we have upcoming expenses of more than \$1000 for: raffle, and buyers guide printing and mailing.

Grace reported the buyers guide will be done by the end of September. The delay has even allowed for a last minute submission from a new sponsor.

Grace reported the status of the newsletter as follows: The newsletter would normally be due now but we are off schedule. Grace asked to keep submissions coming and keep the member profiles coming too. Tedd stated he would send his president message before the end of September.

Fall Video Conference follow up. Karena Thek from Bio-Serve gave a great talk. Tedd mentioned that he regretfully could not attend the conference. There were technical difficulties throughout the conference. Tedd asked where the breakdown occurred and Grace noted that UA has a new system and ASU has an old system that seems to be non compatible with the new. The conference was followed by a short meeting and past president Jane Criswell spoke about the D8

**Many thanks to the following sponsors who generously donated to the Louise Brooks Memorial Raffle Sponsors**

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**Gold Sponsors**

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Meeting last May and plans for the fall fun event. Northern AZ site was off line by that time. The topic of moving to web casts was brought up to potentially avoid future glitches though costs may be a factor in any alternatives.

Jane reported that we have not had any further requests for the branch scholarship for national membership. Our one submission, Stephanie Bybee, has had her national aalas membership paid for and is in the process of taking her ALAT exam.

Grace briefly mentioned the

Leadership Academy for the National meeting in Atlanta. Chris Fix is all registered and ready to go. No one has requested to be an alternate as yet.

The AALAS Foundation auction was discussed and the silent auction is to be held at the National meeting on October 13, 2010. An item with an Arizona/Southwest theme has been purchased for around \$98. Members April Wagner and Michael Rand have always done a great job with this and we will undoubtedly be pleased with their selection.

Jane updated the board on the Fall Fun Event: Registration is all set up and people should begin to sign up as soon as possible. The Wildlife World Zoo & Aquarium opens at 9am and people should start arriving around 10 to give the people from out of town time to travel. Jane brought up the idea of a scavenger hunt or some activity to keep our people together. She will contact the Zoo director and see if something can be arranged. Tedd mentioned the BBQ wasn't going to work out. No realistic location that would be close and affordable could be found.

Member and Technician awards nominations are due September 30. Grace is still notifying people and pushing for more nominations. She also noted that there was a low turnout for nominations this year. Tedd added he would submit some nominations before the deadline.

Grace talked briefly about the Louise Brooks Memorial Raffle. Tickets have been sent out and everyone should get busy selling tickets! Tom mentioned that he will have a gift certificate in the mail from Busters soon. Updates will be made to the website as needed. Drawing will be at the Installation Event on December 4 at Tim Martin's house.

Officer nominations have been put together by Grace. The list looks good so far and the hopes are to have at least two nominees accept for each board position. Notices of nomination have been sent out and she is waiting for nominees to accept or decline. The same online voting

method as last year will be used.

President Elect Tim Martin gave us a quick summary of the District 8 Summer Council Meeting in Las Vegas: San Diego is preparing for Nationals in 2011 and there will be no D8 meeting. Denise Breazeal is the 2012 D8 meeting chair and Bruce Kennedy is the program chair. Tim reminded the board that the National meeting will be in Phoenix in 2015.

Grace has arranged for AZAALAS to have an information box at the 2010 National meeting in Atlanta. Grace will be taking copies of the branch poster with a calendar of events on the back.

New items from the floor: No new items. Our next meeting is November 18, 2010 at noon.

The meeting adjourned at 12:24 pm.

**Minutes of the 11/18/10 Board Meeting**

The meeting was held via conference call. President Tedd Brandon welcomed and thanked the board members for attending. He called the meeting to order at 12:02 pm.

The minutes of the board meeting on 9/23/10 were distributed and reviewed. Tedd asked for corrections or changes to the minutes. The minutes were accepted as written.

Secretary Tom Greene reported that there were 158 members on the 2010 membership roster to date. Tedd noted that we will possibly be losing some Covance members due to recent layoffs. It was also noted that the membership renewal period will be starting soon. Lets get some new members!

Treasurer Grace Aranda distributed the financial report. To date savings has \$874, checking has \$5,811 and money market has \$4,061 with a total of \$10,748. This is not including checks for reimbursements for the video conference. The holiday instillation event will also have some costs which have not been spent yet.

#### ■ 4 March 2011

Tedd inquired about what was needed for the next newsletter. Grace mentioned that Tedd has not sent in his piece yet. Tedd asked for a steady barrage of reminders and he would get it done, otherwise we will wait until the next newsletter to get it out.

Grace stated the Buyers guide is presently being printed. Look for it soon.

Cindy reported we have on the Branch scholarships for AALAS registration: One more scholarship coming soon. Cindy does not have the persons name at the moment.

President Elect Tim Martin gave us a District 8 update: San Diego is preparing for Nationals in 2011 and there will be no D8 meeting. The D8 meeting in Tempe 2010 made a little less than \$12,000, AZAALAS will receive about \$4,000 but the check has not been received yet. The 2012 D8 meeting in Irvine is in the works and we can expect a request for donations for that meeting.

Jane Criswell gave a follow up on the fall fun event at the World Wildlife Zoo: Everyone had fun even though it was a bit hot.

Grace mentioned that the Member and Technician awards ballots will be sent out by the middle of next week. It will be the same format as regular balloting. Winners will be announced at the installation event on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

Grace had attached an update for the Louise Brooks Memorial Raffle. Tedd stated that he was pleased by the great donations made and Grace announced the addition of a signed Arizona Cardinals football. If anyone needs more tickets let her know and she will get them to you.

The installation event on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2010 is coming up fast. The event will be at President Elect Tim Martins house in Mesa. Tim will supply the adult beverages and Grace will bring soda and water. Tim mentioned that the event will start at 2:00 p.m. Tom volunteered to bring a dessert. The address will be sent out soon to members.

Cindy brought a new item from the floor: A member had inquired about the AALAS learning library and

if the branch could contribute to members who are preparing for their certification exams. If a group from one organization signs up together the cost will go down. Individual membership cost is \$100.00. Tedd suggested talking with other branches to get an idea of how they manage this situation. Send feedback to the board for review.

Upcoming meeting will be January 13<sup>th</sup> 2010.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

#### **Are You Going to National AALAS Meeting in San Diego and Want to Attend the Leadership Academy?**

AALAS for the past several years has held a leadership skills training seminar in conjunction with the AALAS National Meeting. The AALAS Leadership Academy this year will be held in conjunction with the 62<sup>nd</sup> National AALAS Meeting in San Diego, California. This training session is open to representatives from each AALAS branch at no cost to the individual.

Branch members may nominate themselves or someone else; however, **the nomination must be endorsed by the Branch President.** Each branch is allowed one primary and one alternate individual to attend. A branch may submit additional alternates to be placed on a waiting list; this list will be used to fill any available vacancies that may be created should a branch not nominate any attendees.

The 2011 Leadership Academy session will be held on **Sunday, October 2, 2011**. The session will be held at the **San Diego Marriott Hotel** and will begin promptly at 7:00 a.m. Breakfast will be served and the Leadership Academy materials will be provided for each participant upon their arrival. A luncheon will be provided and the attendees will have an opportunity at the luncheon to meet with members of the AALAS Executive Committee and Board of Trustees. **In order for an attendee to receive their certificate of**

#### Arizona Branch AALAS Newsletter

**completion from Leadership Academy they must be prepared to attend the entire session which will begin at 7:00 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m.**

If the branch nominee has any special dietary requirements this information needs to be attached on a separate sheet.

**Arizona Branch members who are planning to attend and who would like to be the branch nominee MUST submit their name by April 15<sup>th</sup> to [azaalas@ahsc.arizona.edu](mailto:azaalas@ahsc.arizona.edu).**

Nominees who are submitted to the AALAS office no later than April 30<sup>th</sup> will be notified of their acceptance on or before May 5<sup>th</sup>, and they will be able to make their hotel reservation prior to the time the National Meeting housing opens to the general membership.

**The deadline** to submit the 2011 Leadership Academy nomination form to the AALAS office is July 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Fall Fun Event was a Blast at the Wildlife World Zoo & Aquarium**

On Saturday Oct 16 Arizona AALAS branch members toured the World Wildlife Zoo and Aquarium for their Fall Fun Event. Attendees braved the trails leading through the park. It was a hot day for October, but water was plentiful and refreshed the zoo goers. Kids and adults alike enjoyed the log ride, merry-go-round, and the sky ride. There were a variety of animals and lots of colorful birds. The highlights seemed to be the baby monkeys, a baby giraffe, two tiger cubs and a young lioness. The petting zoo had baby goats and deer that had most of the kids laughing as they tried to get their treats. The aquarium was cool and dark and provided a respite from the heat outside. The hands on experience with the manta rays, horseshoe crabs, star fish and sea urchins was fun. Even though each group went their own separate ways, I believe a great time was had by all.

- Jane Criswell

■ 5 March 2011

## Updated Comparison Document Available for the *Guide*

AALAS has posted a Word document that compares the 7th edition (1996) of the *ILAR Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* with the recently published 8<sup>th</sup> edition (December 2010). This document, available at [www.aalas.org/bookstore/download\\_s.aspx](http://www.aalas.org/bookstore/download_s.aspx), reflects all changes made between the prepublication version made available in June 2010 and the final edition released at the end of December. As with the previous comparison document, users may use the functionality available in Microsoft Word's "Track Changes" feature to view the changes between the 1996 and the 2010 editions of the *Guide*. The document will be helpful for investigators, technicians, facility managers, veterinary staff, and IACUC members and administrators.

## AALAS Awards Nomination Deadline Approaching

AALAS is accepting nominations for the prestigious AALAS awards, which are presented at the Opening General Session at the National Meeting. Nominees for all AALAS awards, other than the Nathan R. Brewer Scientific Award, must be national members of AALAS. Each of the awards, excluding the AALAS Technician Publication Award and Poster Awards, requires a complete nomination packet. Including inaccurate information in the packet may result in disqualification of the nominee.

In 2011, three awards in each poster category will be given: first place winners will receive \$300, second place winners will receive \$200, and third place winners will receive \$100. Poster award winners will be selected during the AALAS National Meeting in San Diego and honored during the Poster Reception.

Please help the Awards Selection Committee evaluate your nominee properly by sending your nomination packets to the AALAS

office by May 1. For nomination information, please visit [www.aalas.org/association/awards.aspx](http://www.aalas.org/association/awards.aspx).

## The AALAS Foundation: Your Research Advocate

The future of laboratory animal science depends on public acceptance of the use of animals in research.

That's why it's vitally important for AALAS members throughout the country to stand together to advance public understanding and respect for laboratory animal science

Since 1999, the AALAS Foundation has coordinated the AALAS community's efforts to educate teachers, students, parents, and public officials about the importance of quality laboratory animal care, research, and medicine.

A separate 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, the Foundation relies exclusively on the financial support of the AALAS community to develop educational materials, web-based resources, and training courses to educate the public about the essential role of animals in research and education.

**Ensuring the Future of Laboratory Animal Science** - Nothing is more essential to the future health of biomedical research than human resources — the people we are counting on to produce the next generation of knowledge and products in laboratory animal science.

That's why the Foundation is continually creating educational resources aimed at inspiring today's students to become tomorrow's laboratory animal science professionals.

From the ever popular [Animal Roles in Medical Discoveries](#) poster to the [Accept the Challenge to Care DVD](#), the Foundation has a wealth of student-themed posters, flyers, and brochures available for free through the AALAS Bookstore.

The Foundation also offers a number of online educational resources, including the [Kids 4 Research website](#) and the award-

## Arizona Branch AALAS Newsletter

winning [Whyville Community Animal Research Environment](#).

These interactive resources, together with our growing arsenal of print materials, educate students about the benefits of biomedical research and the wide variety of career opportunities in laboratory animal science.

**Educating Today's Research Professionals** - While many of the Foundation's outreach materials are aimed at young people, the Foundation also offers a number of products and programs designed to help research professionals advance their education.

Through the contributions of AALAS members, institutions, vendors, and branches, the Foundation recently developed interactive training materials to accompany AALAS training manuals and created training courses on common laboratory animals on the [AALAS Learning Library](#).

These important resources can help you gain the knowledge and skills you need to advance your career.

**Support Your Profession. Support the AALAS Foundation** - Show your dedication to your profession by volunteering your time or making a donation to the AALAS Foundation. Here are some of the ways you can help the Foundation advance laboratory animal science: Volunteer Your Time: Conduct a public outreach program in your community; Participate in career day at your local school; Serve on the Foundation Board of Directors; Share your passion with [AREA Program](#) students; Serve on a [Foundation committee](#); Participate in the AALAS Foundation Auction - Donate an item or participate in the [AALAS Foundation Silent and Live Auction](#); or [Make a donation](#).

Remember, giving to the AALAS Foundation is not a donation. It's an investment in our future! *For more information, please contact [foundation@aalas.org](mailto:foundation@aalas.org) or visit [www.aalasfoundation.org](http://www.aalasfoundation.org) - Ray Butler, AALAS Foundation Board of Directors*

### Train the Trainer

Our training core is comprised of trainers from the different areas of our department. These trainers share responsibility for providing training to husbandry and clinical staff and the research community. The objectives of the training core are to provide consistent training in the care and use of laboratory animals across all areas by sharing training design and development responsibilities. Each of the five trainers maintains an area of specialization while participating in and contributing to training needs in other areas.

Some of the challenges we faced in meeting our training goals were trainers with expertise in different areas, trainers with different skill levels and knowledge bases, and variability in course content even among experienced trainers. To address this variability, we created a training program for our trainers.

The objectives of this train-the-trainer program were to learn new skills, refine our current skills, ensure consistency in techniques among trainers, and be able to train others on these new skills. Techniques taught in the "train the trainer" class are determined during our weekly team meetings. Once the technique is identified, we identify a trainer to teach it. This trainer may be a fellow training specialist, veterinarian, research staff member, or external expert.

During the training session, the instructor describes and demonstrates the technique. The participants practice the technique, and proficiency level is determined. After the training session is complete, participants complete a survey and rate the learning outcomes, course content, and the instructor on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being unsatisfactory and 5 being very satisfactory. The survey is anonymous, and includes room for comments. Based on the survey results, the current rating of our "train the trainer" program is 3 (satisfactory). All of the trainers are learning new skills, refining old skills, and learning to train consistently.

The new techniques we have introduced into our training core include rat jugular blood draw, rat sublingual blood draw, mouse penile injection, mouse retro-orbital injections, suturing, rabbit hypnotism, and mock recovery surgical lab. The refined techniques include ear-tagging, tail nick and prick blood draw, rat restraint, and mouse techniques and restraint. - *Melissa Rogers, Training Specialist Senior*

(Tech Talk, Feb 2011)

### Environmental Enrichment Improves Fertility and Pup Survival

Environment enrichment is an essential component of encouraging laboratory animals' natural behavior. In this regard, it may also serve to foster a more successful breeding program. When involved in breeding and genetics research, it is imperative to have successful matings as well as pup survival. One of our mouse colonies was experiencing low fertility as well as low pup survival; therefore, we decided to investigate the addition of environmental enrichment to improve the breeding success of the colony.

Historically, we have added approximately half a cup of shredded aspen bedding for nest-making into each littering cage. This procedure was continued as we looked into additional environmental enrichment. There are many types of environmental enrichment available on the market, including various reusable or disposable shelters and toys. What best met our needs was a shelter or toy that could be added to the animal cages, transferred at cage change, and sanitized for reuse. One item that fits into this category is a 3-in. length of PVC pipe (1.25 in. diameter). This inexpensive and readily available enrichment device serves several purposes, including a place for the mouse to hide in, chew on, and climb over. One tube was placed into each cage of this low-productivity colony when the mating cage was set up (with one male and two females) at

age 12 weeks. The dams also had an enrichment tube added to the littering cages when separated from the sire at day 16 after initiating mating. At that time, the shredded aspen bedding was also added to the littering cage.

The addition of environmental enrichment caused dramatic changes in the performance of this colony. The number of unbred females dropped dramatically, from 4 and 11 to 0 and 1 per generation. The percent of viable litters jumped from 43% to 68% to over 90%. This increase in fertility and pup survival continued in the following generations as well. Although the comparison of enriched versus nonenriched cages were over different generations in the colony, the overall environmental conditions (room, temperature and humidity, light:dark cycle, feed and water type, bedding type) were kept constant.

After analyzing these results, we decided to add this same environmental enrichment to all of our mouse cages. It has kept our breeding program successful throughout our facility. Additional benefits we have observed from this enrichment include a reduction in fighting between males at cage change and calmer behavior in individually housed animals. - *Rhonda S Griess, BS, RALAT*

### Ron Orta Humanitarian Award - Call for Nominations

The Ron Orta Humanitarian Award was created after Ron's death, November of 2007 of ARDS (acute respiratory disease). Ron was a sales representative with Allentown for many years of his illustrious career in laboratory animal science. He was revered by all those who knew him. Subsequently, the District 8 Council, in conjunction with Allentown Inc., created an award in his honor for the members of the District 8 of AALAS. It is meant to represent his compassion, dedication, friendship, and humility to persons in the lab animal community. The Ron Orta Humanitarian Award is given in his

memory. To date, we have had three recipients: Grace Aranda, Debra Hicks, and Bill Heckt.

Application deadline is usually in early March and the award is presented at the annual District 8 meeting or at the District 8 Caucus when the National Meeting is held within District 8. The criteria for this prestigious award is exhibiting extraordinary compassion towards peers, displaying a spirit of cooperation and involvement in the activities of their local community, and participating in continuing education, either as an educator or student in the field of laboratory animal science or planning educational seminars or symposia.

The person that deserves this award is a well rounded individual that is all about serving their co-workers and goes out of their way to help whenever possible. They volunteer for community activities, and is either working on getting certified or involved in getting continuing education at any level, or participating in planning education seminars or symposiums, etc.

The Committee is inviting everyone to nominate someone without feeling intimidated. Ron was a man who loved everyone and would never be interested in an award bearing his name to be used as a promotional ploy or a popularity contest.

Check out the "Guidelines for Nominating a Candidate for the Ron Orta Humanitarian Award" below. You should be able to find at least one, maybe several, who would qualify in your facility! Maybe it's you!

#### **Guidelines for Nominating:**

1) Nominee must be a member from a Branch within the District 8: a) Technician, Secretary, I A C U C C o o r d i n a t o r , Manager/Supervisor, Director, Branch Officer, Branch Chair, Branch member, or Commercial Member; b) You can also nominate yourself.

2) Write your nomination letter and begin it by generally stating why you believe this person should receive the Ron Orta

Humanitarian Award and then adding the following: a) Examples of how he/she exhibits compassion towards his/her peers. "Walking the extra mile"...be specific; b) Examples of cooperation and involvement in his/her community. Volunteerism, involvement with FFA, Humane Society, Science Fairs, or other organizations; c) Examples of Continuing education. He/she working on certifications, etc, or participated as a presenter, or involved in promoting or planning a seminar, study group, or symposium.

#### **3) SPREAD THE NEWS:**

a) Send out e-mails or call everyone your nominee knows and ask them to write reference letters; b) Reference letters could include items 2) a-c above and be specific as to how they were personally affected by the nominees involvement in these activities or they can add their own; c) Reference letters should not be intimidating. Can be long or short...it's content is what will be judged...not appearances. (Suggestion: Get as many reference letters as you can).

4) Send your submission in before the **Deadline of April 15, 2011** to: Grace Aranda, University of Arizona, P.O. Box 210101, Tucson, AZ 85721-0101

#### **Knockout Rats Have Arrived**

by Jef Akst

Scientists have created a knockout rat that finally opens the model organism to the kinds of experiments that have only been possible in mice and some non-mammalian species, they report online today (August 11) in Nature.

"We're finally going to enable genetic manipulation in the most widely studied and well characterized animal model of human disease," said molecular geneticist Aron Geurts of the Medical College of Wisconsin, who was not involved in the research. "That's very exciting to everyone."

Rats have long been a popular model system for many aspects of biomedical research, but when it came to genetic

manipulation, the mouse was the system of choice. "We use the mouse because that technology was well developed and was being refined so as to allow us to make more and more sophisticated and specific alterations," said cancer biologist Tyler Jacks of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Rats simply weren't an option because no one had yet figured out how to culture their embryonic stem cells (ESCs).

Last year, with a few tweaks to the culture media, stem cell biologist Qilong Ying and his colleagues at University of Southern California finally succeeded in culturing rat ESCs, making it possible for them to use a technique often used to create knockout mice -- homologous recombination in ESCs. Swapping out some DNA in a region of the rat genome to disrupt a particular gene, the tumor suppressor gene p53, the team then injected the altered ESCs into developing embryos to create chimeric rats, which contain both manipulated tissues (derived from the injected ESCs) and unmanipulated tissues (derived from the cells already present in the rat embryos). When the rats' germline cells (sperm and eggs) happen to be derived from the manipulated cells, those rats can pass those genetic changes onto their offspring, and thus be bred to create complete knockout rats.

There were some minor "technical issues that we needed to overcome before we could make the knockout," Ying admitted, but the real hurdle was culturing the rat ESCs. Once they figured out how to do that, the generation of knockout rats via homologous recombination was relatively simple. Now "you can target any gene you want, delete just one amino acid or whole genes, [and] use an inducible system [to target a] gene to be expressed at a certain time in certain tissues," he said. "The investigator has full control over the type of mutation they want to make."

It's not the first time scientists have made a knockout rat, however. Another technology,

employing protein structures known as zinc finger nucleases (ZFN) to target genes in single-celled rat embryos, has already been used by Geurts and others to target and disable specific genes in the rat genome. While this technology is still useful, Geurts said, the homologous recombination technique "will allow us to do many types of experiments that you cannot do with ZFN."

Specifically, the ESC technology provides greater control when creating genetic knockouts, and could also make it easier to generate knock-in rats as well, in which new genetic sequences are added to the genome, Geurts said.

This technique is also cheaper than the zinc finger technology, he added, which involves costly reagents as well as the expense of raising and maintaining rat colonies. The ESC technology allows the genetic manipulations to be performed in culture before any animals are ever involved in the process, and could thus allow scientists to create knockout rat models "in a high throughput way," Geurts said, like is being done in mice to "knock out every gene in the genome."

Furthermore, this technique is likely to be more widely adopted because it is similar to the techniques scientists have been using in mice for years, added molecular geneticist Ronald DePinho of Harvard Medical School, who did not participate in the research. "This particular technology is more aligned with the couple of decades of experience that we now have in manipulating the mouse genome," he said. "[Thus, it] would dovetail very well with the existing body of reagents designed to manipulate specific genetic sequences."

And in general, it's always helpful to have additional model species to analyze gene function on the organismal level, DePinho added. "Yeast, *C. elegans*, *Drosophila*, the mouse, zebrafish -- these have all had significant impact on biomedical research," he said. "To have the rat join that pantheon of important model systems on the level of being able to manipulate its

genome is a very important advance for all of us."

(The Scientist, Aug 2010)

### **Five Ways to Turn Angry Clients into Happy Ones**

It's easy to connect with clients when things are going well. But when conflict arises, well, that's when knowing how to transform customer frustration into a stronger business relationship is critical. It happens to the best of us. An upset client calls to complain about a product or service, and you're completely caught off guard. How do you react? Do you fly off the handle right along with him? Or do you respond in a calm, thoughtful way that salvages and even strengthens your relationship?

Author Maribeth Kuzmeski says that a high-pressure scenario doesn't have to blow your client relationship sky-high—in fact, you can use it as an opportunity to connect with your client and keep him around for the long haul. Kuzmeski offers a few tips that will help you keep your business relationships from going bad...and rescue those that have started to sour.

1. Extend a peace offering. It's easy to reach out to clients when things are going well. However, it's all too easy to avoid them when hard feelings are present. Don't succumb to the temptation. Proactively reaching out to your clients can squash any negativity they may feel for you. Even the simplest of gestures can be effective: Offer an apology when you've made a mistake. Then, make things right by extending a peace offering. It doesn't need to be anything extravagant. It can be as simple as a hand-written note or a refund.

2. Don't follow your "strike back" instincts. If an angry client calls you fuming mad, your knee-jerk reaction might be to argue. Remember, though, fighting anger with anger seldom works. No matter how tough it is, do the opposite of what you feel like doing. Take a deep breath and

remain calm. And most of all, diffuse your client's anger by immediately assuring her that you will make it right.

3. Get them to listen to you by...listening to them. Customers will listen to what you have to say if you respectfully listen to what they have to say first. Knowing that you are truly listening to their concerns can cause your customers to agree to your suggestions much more quickly.

4. Have a standard service protocol at the ready. Creating standards, procedures, and methods of dealing with clients and servicing their needs can really help when it comes to resolving conflicts or handling a dissatisfied customer. By creating a service protocol in advance, you provide a way to "enforce" how client conflict situations are handled. This allows you and your employees to more easily resolve issues and deal with those impossibly and consistently difficult clients.

5. Ask for feedback. Obviously, you don't have to sit around, anxiously wondering when a problem is going to arise. There is a way for you to avoid some (unfortunately, not all!) client conflicts. You can do it by ensuring that customers aren't suppressing problems. And you do that by constantly asking for feedback.

"Conflict is a normal part of business, and we all need to learn how to deal with it in the right way," says Kuzmeski, author of *The Connectors: How the World's Most Successful Businesspeople Build Relationships and Win Clients for Life*. "Some clients are just plain difficult. And yes, 'easy' clients can also become dissatisfied for a variety of reasons. The good news is that there are effective ways to handle conflict and resolve issues—and these methods will actually strengthen your relationship."

*Maribeth Kuzmeski is the founder of Red Zone Marketing, LLC, which consults to Fortune 500 firms on strategic marketing planning and business growth.*

(ALN Newsletter, July 2010)

### Bronze Membership Scholarships Available in the TBR Corner

by Cindy Madura

AZAALAS is awarding bronze National AALAS memberships to technicians who are financially unable to pay for membership themselves and interested in becoming AALAS certified. Two scholarships per region will be awarded.

To apply, you must be an Arizona branch member and preparing to take your AALAS certification exam. Interested applicants should email the scholarship committee at: [azaalas@ahsc.arizona.edu](mailto:azaalas@ahsc.arizona.edu) stating why they wish to be granted the award.

**Not sure what to write?** A few things you can include in your letter are: when you plan to take the exam, why you would like the scholarship and your future goals.

If you are planning on taking the exam this year it would be best to get your letter in as soon as possible. The membership expires at the end of the year.

If you are taking it next year you should get your letter in by the first week of December so that you have the benefit of a full years membership.

As always, any comments, questions contact me at 520-626-6702 or [madurac@u.arizona.edu](mailto:madurac@u.arizona.edu).

### New Guide Course Is Available on the AALAS Learning Library

In December 2010, the 8th edition of the ILAR publication *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* was released. This new edition of the *Guide* contains numerous significant changes from the previous version, and for the first time includes information and guidance for using and caring for aquatic species in research facilities. AALAS has developed a new course on the AALAS Learning Library that summarizes this important document. If your job involves ensuring institutional compliance with the Public Health

Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals or the requirements of the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care, International, you should find this course useful. In this course, you will be familiarized with the sections of this *Guide*: Key Concepts; Animal Care and Use Program; Environment, Housing, and Management; Veterinary Care; and Physical Plant. The course will be helpful for investigators, technicians, facility managers, veterinary staff, and IACUC members and administrators. Those who complete the course and pass the exam can earn continuing education units towards their AALAS credential.

(AALAS in Action, Feb 2011)

### Successful Delegation of Authority

Susan Heathfield, About.com

As a supervisor, manager or team leader, you make daily decisions about the appropriate leadership style to employ in each work situation. You want to foster employee involvement and employee empowerment to enable your team members to contribute their best effort at work.

Tips for successful delegation of authority:

\* Whenever possible, when delegating work, give the person a whole task to do. If you can't give the employee a whole task, make sure they understand the overall purpose of the project or task. If possible, connect them to the group that is managing or planning the work. Staff members contribute most effectively when they are aware of the big picture.

\* Make sure the staff person understands exactly what you want them to do. Ask questions, watch the work performed or have the employee give you feedback to make sure your instructions were understood.

\* If you have a picture of what a successful outcome or output will look like, share your picture with the

staff person. You want to make the person right. You don't want to fool the person to whom you delegate authority for a task, into believing that any outcome will do, unless you really feel that way.

\* Identify the key points of the project or dates when you want feedback about progress. This is the critical path that provides you with the feedback you need without causing you to micromanage your direct report or team. You need assurance that the delegated task or project is on track. You also need the opportunity to influence the project's direction and the team or individual's decisions.

\* Identify the measurements or the outcome you will use to determine that the project was successfully completed.

\* Determine, in advance, how you will thank and reward the staff person for their successful completion of the task or project you delegated.

Successful delegation of authority as a leadership style takes time and energy, but it's worth the time and energy to help employees succeed, develop and meet your expectations. You build the employee's self-confidence and people who feel successful usually are successful.

(ALN Newsletter, Aug 2010)

### 3 Keys to Beat Procrastination

Procrastination occurs for a number of reasons and in varying degrees. The most prevalent reasons for procrastination are: 1. unanswered questions about the task; 2. unresolved fears about doing the task; 3. insufficient motivation to take on something new.

All of these reasons are internal, and really have nothing to do with the task itself. So if you have a few unfinished projects looming over your head and you can't seem to muster the initiative to get them done, put the following procrastination-busting tips into play today.

1. Find your passion - If

■ 10 March 2011

you're passionate about something, you don't need an outside motivator to get it done, nor do you fear the task or have unresolved questions about it. So the big question is, how do you find your passion? There are actually two routes to take: 1) either it's some aspect of the work you already do, or 2) it's something close to your heart. Keep in mind that your passion doesn't have to be something you're good at; it just has to be something meaningful to you – something that gets you excited to get out of bed in the morning. But what if you're stuck in a situation but fear leaving due to financial or other constraints? How can you beat procrastination under those circumstances? First consider talking to your supervisor about new opportunities you can take on within your current position. Something drew you to that position initially. Find out that reason and you may be able to uncover some aspect of your current situation that you are passionate about and that can motivate you to achieve greater goals.

2. Choose a motivational buddy - Often, other people can motivate you to keep going when you're suffering from procrastination. Your buddy or team can consist of anyone as long as the people you choose will truly hold you accountable for taking (or not taking) action. Make sure you choose people you feel comfortable talking to about your goals and aspirations. Detail exactly what you want to do and why, as well as how you plan to accomplish the goal. Then, make sure your team can monitor what you're doing on a regular basis.

3. Get moving - Newton's Law of Motion states that objects in motion will stay in motion. That's why you have to do something, no matter how small, to get going toward your goal and beat procrastination. Every one of us is full of potential energy – energy that has not yet started in motion. But once some sort of motion starts, it will keep going. Therefore, you have to take some step, even a small one sometimes, to start the

momentum. Once you do, continuing the activity will be a lot easier.

*Doug Vermeeren is an author and motivational speaker on goal setting and human performance.*

(ALN Newsletter, Sept 2010)

### **Selling Your Ideas to Management**

Your great research or business idea won't be implemented unless you convince your supervisor, co-workers, and funding sponsors that it is feasible and will be profitable. Failure to accomplish this is the main reason excellent ideas fall by the wayside.

\* Begin by describing your idea in a dated notebook. This will protect you should someone else try to take credit for your idea.

\* Discuss your idea with your coworkers and supervisor. View these critiques as opportunities to improve your idea.

\* Be sure you aren't re-inventing the wheel. Has your firm studied this idea before and rejected it? Research the public literature and check the patent literature as well.

\* Estimate the time, effort, and funding needed to develop your idea.

\* Be sure your idea fits your employer's business culture.

\* Present your idea in terms your business sponsors understand. Start your presentation with a "hook"—a clear statement of the business incentives to develop and commercialize your idea.

\* Ask for commitment. Make it clear what is the next step you are asking your business sponsor to take.

If management rejects your idea, keep it in your file. Your idea may be a good one submitted at a bad time. Changes in business conditions or technological advances may make it worthwhile to resubmit your idea later. Understanding the reasons for the idea's rejection will help you determine if and when to do this. It will also help you when you submit other ideas.

*Dr. Borchardt is a consultant*

### **Arizona Branch AALAS Newsletter**

*and technical writer and can be reached at [ikborchardt@hotmail.com](mailto:ikborchardt@hotmail.com).*

(ALN Newsletter, Jan 2011)

### **LAWTE FOUNDER'S AWARD To Recognize An Outstanding Educator/Trainer**

LAWTE (Laboratory Animal Welfare Training Exchange) is pleased to accept nomination for the 2011 Founder's Award to recognize an outstanding educator/trainer in the field of laboratory animal science and/or regulatory compliance.

The award will be presented during the Business Meeting of the July 27-29, 2011 LAWTE Conference being held in San Antonio, TX. The award will consist of monetary award, honorary life membership in LAWTE, waived 2011 LAWTE Conference Registration Fees and more.

The nomination criteria includes the requirement for the nominee to be a current LAWTE member for a minimum of one year and be engaged in training/education programs in laboratory animal science and/or regulatory compliance.

Provide the nominee's educational and professional background, along with a statement pertaining to his/her exceptional qualifications for the award. The nominator should provide his/her contact information in the nomination package. A minimum of two letters of support to a maximum of ten letters of support should be included in the nomination package.

*Special consideration will be given to nominees that have volunteered their time and effort towards LAWTE. Incomplete nominations will not be considered.*

**Submit by May 1, 2011 to:** Grace Aranda, University of Arizona, P.O. Box 210101, Tucson, AZ 85721 - 0101.

For more information on LAWTE, the biennial conference or the award, go to the [www.lawte.org](http://www.lawte.org).

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