



TBAALAS Newsletter

Texas Branch American Association of Laboratory Animal Science

Spring 2017

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The President's Message



Howdy All,

I am truly overwhelmed with joy, and honored to be your 2017-2018 TBAALAS President. It means a lot to me to know that the wonderful members of this organization believe in me to carry out this role for the next year.

I would like to give a **HUGE** shout out to Lindsay Holmes for the outstanding job she did this past year as TBAALAS



President. Her guidance will be so valuable as I now serve in the role.

I would also like to give attention to her Program Chair, Eli Rodriguez and the rest of the program committee. The TBAALAS/District 7 Meeting was a huge success and people cannot stop raving about it. KUDOS!!!

This year's meeting included several AMAZING presentations, posters and labs. I would like to recognize our celebrities of the meeting Laurie Pycroft, The Keynote Speaker and our lovely, and always hilarious MC, Dr. Cindy Buckmaster for their OUTSTANDING presentations. The words that they shared with us should make you feel proud of the great work that each and every one of you do on a daily basis. It is time for us to speak up and stop hiding. Let's work with them and share our stories and truth. Finally, I would like to give a huge thank you to all of the presenters and our loyal vendors. Without you, we would not be able to have this great meeting each year. I have had the privilege of being a member of TBAALAS since 2005 and have been actively involved ever since. I have served on the awards committee, served as the metro-coordinator for the central area, co-chair for nominations, and a board member -at-large. I highly

encourage those of you that are interested to get involved. Right now is the perfect time so please feel free to contact me, if you are interested or have questions in taking that first-step. It is very rewarding and you will meet so many outstanding individuals. Many of these folks are now my dearest friends and mentors.

Even though the TBAALAS District 7 meeting just ended, we have already hit the ground running to start planning the 2018 meeting. I have put together an outstanding team to help plan and organize this meeting. We have some great things already in mind. So go ahead and mark those calendars now as the 2018 meeting will take place at the Hilton in College Station, TX on February 7 -9, 2018.

Once again, thank you all for the opportunity to serve as your TBAALAS President. I look forward to working with each and every one of you, and hope to see you all in College Station in 2018.

-Ryan

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Another Successful Silent Auction at TBAALAS 2017!



Thank you to everyone who donated items for the TBAALAS silent auction. The quality of the donations was excellent! The cool items ranged from flying monkey metal lawn ornaments, to reclaimed wood pieces, expensive wine and beer gift sets, handmade crafts, travel gear, theater tickets, Cowboys paraphernalia, and gift cards galore! We successfully auctioned a chimpanzee painting using an online auction service to increase our sales. The auction ended with several items in bidding wars - we were biting our nails waiting for the last minute to see who would end up with the auction items! A special thank you to everyone who donated items for the auction. Due to the generous donations, and those of you who purchased items at the auction, we were able to raise over **\$2100**, this is even more than our silent auction last year! These funds will again allow us to offer a technician scholarship and send someone to the national AALAS conference. **Nice job everyone!**

~ Elizabeth Magden



AALAS Foundation Announces "Guitar Animal Hero" Contest

Sound Check...One, Two, Three!

Tune up your guitars and gather up your paint brushes - registration into the "Guitar Animal Hero" contest - to benefit the AALAS Foundation and its mission is OPEN!

Austin, Texas is known for its live music scene - country, blues and rock. We know all the people and animals working in laboratory animal science are ROCK STARS - strumming to a fast beat to achieve medical discoveries!

That's why, this year, the AALAS Foundation has designed a "Guitar Animal Hero" contest to be held at the 2017 AALAS National Meeting in Austin, Texas!

We're challenging contestants to creatively paint/ decorate a wooden 10" guitar! An official wooden guitar will be shipped to contestants upon payment of contest entry fee and completion of registration form.

Don't worry - you don't have to know how to play a guitar to enter the contest! Simply show off your imagination and talent by creatively painting/decorating an official contest guitar!

Visit <https://www.aalas.org/national-meeting> for more information and rules

Deadline to enter the contest is September 8, 2017 - so, don't delay!





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Contact Trida Lutman - 636.742.6295

Or Info@labdiet.com

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2017 Texas Branch AALAS

Annual Meeting



Technician Scholarship Award – *Jake Moore*
Animal Care Systems “First Time Presenter Award” Presentation Award – *Erica Dean*
Edstrom “First Time Presenter (Poster) Award” – *Chitra L. Reddy*
LGL animal Care Products, Inc. Presentation Award- *Kristin Dean*
Envigo Presentation Award – *Christopher Southern*
Alternative Design Presentation Award – *Diana Baumann*

Total MRO Presentation Award – *Latisha R. Gray*
TBAALAS Technician Recognition Awards:
Level I Rookie – *Tocarra Reynolds*
Level II “Non Supervisor” – *Cadie Larson*
Level III “Supervisor” – *Marita Husted*
Allentown Caging Facility Manager Award – *Kelly Campbell*
Charles River Outstanding Clinical Veterinarian Award – *Dr. Vanessa Jensen*
President’s Award – *Leticia McGuffey*

Congratulations to all our 2017 TBAALAS Award Winners!



The Houston/Galveston Metro Event was a howling success. We visited the St. Francis Wolf Sanctuary in Montgomery, TX. Over 20 people were in attendance from MD Anderson, UT-Health Science Center and UTMB-Galveston.

Our tour guide Gentry Leonard, was very knowledgeable, friendly and a bit entertaining. The audience was very engaged as we learned the differences between wolves and wolfdogs, their senses and the meaning of “pack”. Currently the sanctuary houses 11 beautiful wolves and wolfdogs. Gentry explained the back story of each wolf/wolfdog, and how they came to have the sanctuary as their residence.



We were able to see the pack enjoy a raw meat dinner and enrichment. The sanctuary purchases meat from the local food banks and grocery stores by the bulk to feed these unique animals. The enrichment program ranges from paper tubes filled with raw meat, dyed goose eggs (for Easter), and gift wrapped boxes filled with newspaper and tennis balls. SFWS provides a loving, caring and permanent home to their furry rescues. This sanctuary is a wonderful opportunity to get the family outdoors and learn about these exceptional creatures. A special thank you to Michelle Johnson for organizing this trip for everyone. If you would like to donate to SFWS or visit their location check out their webpage at <https://saintfranciswolfsanctuary.org>.

Houston/Galveston Metro Coordinators

DeShawn Thomas and Michelle Johnson



Member Spotlight

Ivan Duran



Facility: MD Anderson Cancer Center

Job Title: Senior Animal Technician

Years in Lab Animal: 5yrs

Education and Certifications: ALAT and some college

Membership: Local? National? Local

How did you get into this field? Through a friend

Why did you choose to go into the Lab Animal Science field? Always worked in the veterinary field and learned working at MD Anderson has it perks with great employee benefits and great to see the growth and knowledge of animal care in the lab setting.

What are your current interests in Lab Animal Science?

Learn as much as possible in husbandry and health care role and move to management in the future.

What do you like most about your job? At the current time is having the challenge and opportunity to work with PDX mice and keeping the room c. bovis negative.

Who are/were your mentors? I see every staff member and management as a mentor learning from each individual's insight.

If you had the podium at a speech for public outreach in Animal Science, what would your message be? We need to learn to communicate with our community that we are a group of individuals that provide as much love to the care of lab animals as human nurses do to their human patients and veterinary technicians provide to pets.

What are your career goals? LATG certification and get into management.

What advice do you have for others in the field? Always have great pride in your work no matter if you work in cage wash or the veterinarian approving protocols. We are a team!!!

What companion animals/pets do you have? Two dogs, two cats, and 4 kids.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be? Doctor
If you were not in your current position, what would you like to be? Retired living in a beach cottage with a farm.
Favorite quote? Ignorance does not come from a person's heart.

Favorite movies? I like action and comedy movies no favorite.

Favorite tv shows? One of my favorites as kid was The A team.

Favorite foods? Well-cooked and seasoned!! If it's delicious I enjoy it.

What are your hobbies? I need one.

When you are not at work, what do you like to do? Relax and be around family and friends.

If you were the boss, what is one thing you would change/do differently? Have a free cookie dispenser for the staff!!



Member Spotlight

Veronica Vasques

Facility: Texas Tech University – Animal Care Services

Job Title: Animal Health Technician

Years in Lab Animal: 4 years

Education and Certifications: Associate of Applied Science in Veterinary Technology and ALAT certification

Membership: Local? National? Local

How did you get into this field? After earning my degree as a veterinary technician a veterinarian from school referred me to Dr. Brooks. They were hiring a full time technician and I applied and got the job.

Why did you choose to go into the Lab Animal Science field? While I was in school I was unaware that this field existed. We mainly focused on companion animals and large animals. I remember only having one lab dedicated to pocket pets. I wouldn't say that I chose to be in this field but that I chose to work with animals which led me to this field.

What are your current interests in Lab Animal Science? I have been breeding mice for investigators for about a year now. I am not an expert by any means but I am very interested and committed in continuing to learn about this specialty.

Who are/were your mentors? Dr. Whittenburg, a veteri-

narian and professor from college. She pushed me to be the best student that I could be and believed that I would succeed once I was out in the field. I also have to thank Dr. Brooks and Sydnee Woodman for educating me in this field and believing that I can make a difference with the animals that I work with everyday.

What are your career goals? To continue to learn and grow in this field.

What advice do you have for others in the field? The job can be challenging at times but the rewards you receive outweigh the difficult times.

What companion animals/pets do you have? I have 2 dogs, a labrador named Honey and a pitbull mix named Kolby. A cat named Kitty and a turtle that I adopted from the biology department here at ACS that I named Mikah.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be? A veterinarian of course!

If you were not in your current position, what would you like to be? As long as I was working with or around animals I think I would be happy with any position.

Favorite movies? Action and comedy

Favorite foods? Pasta dishes

What are your hobbies? Spending time outdoors

When you are not at work, what do you like to do?

Spend time with my family

If you were the boss, what is one thing you would change/do differently? I don't feel like I would change anything at the moment. I've had two different bosses since I've been working here. I have seen what they do and how hard their job can be. I feel like my boss does a good job. She's prompt, caring, and understanding and that's exactly how I would be in that position.

Member Spotlight

Keisha Roberts

Facility: MD Anderson Cancer Center

Job Title: Team Leader, Animal Resources

Years in Lab Animal: 12 years

Education and Certifications: LAT, I have a diploma for medical assisting.

Membership: Local? National? I have been an intermittent member to both TBAALAS and National AALAS. I need to renew!

How did you get into this field? My family worked in this industry for years and they introduced me.

Why did you choose to go into the Lab Animal Science field? At first it was just a job, but now I enjoy learning new and interesting things.

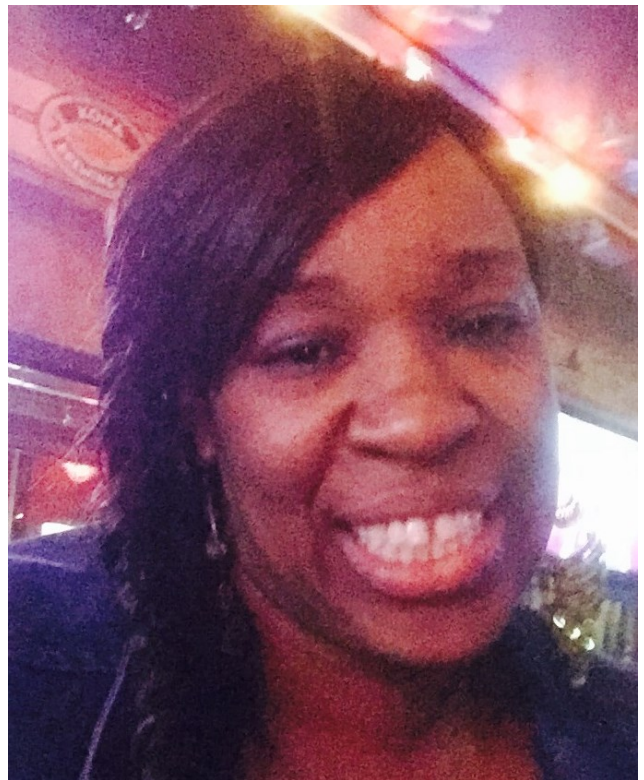
What are your current interests in Lab Animal Science? Everything! I enjoy learning about PI's specific protocols.

What do you like most about your job? I love the people that I work with.

Who are/were your mentors? Adrienne Duran, Dr. Vanessa Jensen and Jamie Greaver

If you had the podium at a speech for public outreach in Animal Science, what would your message be? Animals are your friends. They may save your life one day.

What are your career goals? To advance my career by earning my LATG certification and I would like to go back to school to finish my degree in Accounting.



What advice do you have for others in the field?

Hard work does pay off. Keep at it and be patient. Your time will come. Trust me, I know!

What companion animals/pets do you have? I

have a miniature Schnauzer named Blackie.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be?

A lawyer until I realized how long they have to go to school LOL!

If you were not in your current position, what would you like to be? Traveling the world!

Favorite quote? That's what's up!

Favorite movies? The Color Purple

Favorite tv shows? Grey's Anatomy, Scandal, How to Get Away With Murder

Favorite foods? Crawfish that's it. Nothing else

What are your hobbies? Reading, Attending Musicals & Plays, Spending time with my kids

When you are not at work, what do you like to do? Sleep and hang out with friends when I can



Technician Spotlight

Ana Castaneda

Facility: Baylor College of Medicine – TMF

Job Title: Animal Care Attendant

Years in Lab Animal: 10 months

Education and Certifications: some college

Membership: Local? National? No

How did you get into this field? A friend of mine

Why did you choose to go into the Lab Animal Science field? Sounded interesting and I wanted to try something different and new

What are your current interests in Lab Animal Science? To learn new skills

What do you like most about your job? Knowing that I play a part in animal research

Who are/were your mentors? My Parents

If you had the podium at a speech for public outreach in Animal Science, what would your message be? Beneficial discoveries are being made thanks to animal research.

What are your career goals? I want to get my

AALAS certifications and advance in the animal science field.

What advice do you have for others in the field?

Do the best you can at what you do.

What companion animals/pets do you have? 2 cats

When you were a kid, what did you want to be?

A professional Chef

If you were not in your current position, what would you like to be? A veterinarian

Favorite quote? “You have to do the best with what GOD gave you”

Favorite movies? Forrest Gump, The Addams Family, Underworld Movies Series

Favorite TV shows? Awkward, The Office, Games of Thrones, and Family Guy

Favorite foods? Tacos, crawfish, and buffalo wings

What are your hobbies? Playing video games

When you are not at work, what do you like to do? Watch tv and relax

If you were the boss, what is one thing you would change/do differently? Try to find new ideas to help get the job done easier.

Technician Spotlight

Christopher
Lanier



Facility: Texas Children's Hospital

Job Title: Animal Care Attendant

Years in Animal Science/Laboratory Animal Science:
6 months

Education and Certification: BS in Biology

How did you get into this field? My interest in a career in science at Baylor College of Medicine

Why did you choose to go into the Lab Animal Science field? I wanted to gain experience caring for laboratory animals

What are your current interests in Lab Animal Science? I am currently interested in learning more knowledge and skills to give a higher level of care to animals

What do you like most about your job? I love knowing that I make a positive difference in the lives of the animals and in the research process

Who are/were your mentors? Cynthia Aleman, Gustavo Galaviz, Elijah Calveron, Leslie Zamora, Tocarra Reynolds

If you had the podium at a speech for public outreach in Animal Science, what would your message be? All animal science brings only positive differences to research and care for all animals

What are your career goals? To make a positive and lasting impact that benefits the future of animals and those that care for animals

What advice do you have for others in the field? Persevere. It is sometimes hard to remember the difference we make happens everyday. Everyday counts

What companion animals/pets do you have? I

have two wonderful feline friends, Esmeralda and Solomon

When you were a kid, what did you want to be?

When I was young I wanted to be an astronaut

If you were not in your current position, what would you like to be? I would like to be in a position that

is more involved in the scientific process and increasing the public understanding of research

Favorite quote? "There is no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure." - Collin Powell

Favorite movies? Dances with Wolves

Favorite TV shows? Breaking Bad, House of Cards, The Americans

Favorite foods? Anything Italian!

What are your hobbies? Reading history, learning Spanish and community service

When you are not at work, what do you like to do? I am active in my church and like to work out at the gym

If you were the boss, what is one thing you would change/do differently? Request more individual feedback and make an effort to make positive changes that benefit everyone, both individually and as a team

Congratulations!

*To all of you who have recently become
AALAS certified!*

Baylor College of Medicine

Hector Acedevo- ALAT

Adam Cole – ALAT

Jacob Cortez- ALAT

Mariela Gonzalez Cortez – LAT

Scott Matthews- ALAT

Cyndi Pena-Olivo- ALAT

Jermario Reynolds- ALAT

Tocarra Reynolds- ALAT

Chris Zdenek- ALAT

University of Houston

Rena McMahan – LATG

Angel Saucedo – LATG

UT Health Science Center Houston

Amanda Trimble- LAT

UT MD Anderson Cancer Center Houston

Christa Addison- LAT

Gloria Garcia- LATG

Jack Hashem- LATG

Lucinette Marasigan- LAT

Dana Toomey- CMAR

UT MD Anderson Michael E. Keeling Center

Paul Koehle- LAT

Robyn Parker- ALAT

Texas Tech University Lubbock

Sydnee Woodman- LAT

Each of our newly certified individuals receives a complimentary one-year TBAALAS membership! If you have become certified in the last 12 months, please contact the TBAALAS Membership Chair:

Amy Swetnam, LVT, ALAT

amy.swetnam@bcm.edu

(936) 414-1106

Welcome TBAALAS Members!

We would like to recognize and thank these new or returning members for being a part of the best branch of AALAS!

Alternative Design

Shanna Wilcox

Baylor College of Medicine

Anilkumar Reddy

Nicole Saunders

Charles River Laboratories

Courtney Sands

Karen Guerra

Texas A&M University

Kelsey Johnson

Lisa Jones

Mary MacCallum

Shawna Meyer

Sherelle Milligan

Patricia Pitty-Montgomery

Erin Starnes

Amy Tucker

UT Health Science Center- San Antonio

Patricia Dlugosh

Stillmeadow

Drew Laird

Robert Sabol

Ruben Gonzalez

Stowers Institute

Biana Baumann

Gruenberg- TPS

Robert Davis

Texas Scientific Instruments

Carolynn McCarthy

TTU Health Science Center- El Paso

Christine Boehm

University of Houston

Elizabeth Rivera

UT Health Science Center

Amy Campbell

Thomas Gomez

Christopher Janssen

University of Texas- San Antonio

Adrian Ambriz

UT MD Anderson Cancer Center

LaVonne Parker

Patrick Brady

Brittany Fransaw

Madison Pease

UTMB Galveston

Calvin Patten Jr.

Members, we hope you enjoy and take advantage of the benefits your membership offers : reduced registration fees, access to the AALAS Learning Library, four newsletters per year, and special access to the branch website. Please direct any questions to your Membership Chair:

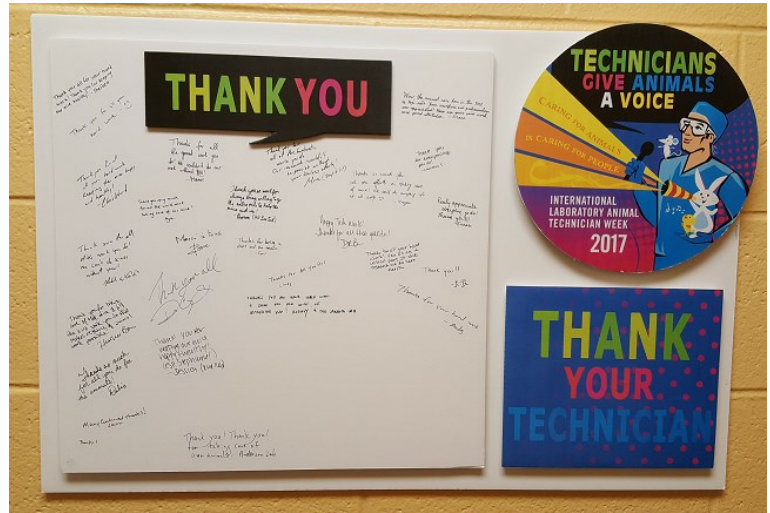
Amy Swetnam, LVT, RALAT

swetnam@bcm.edu

(936) 414-1106

2017 TECHNICIAN APPRECIATION WEEK

Baylor College of Medicine celebrated the hard work and dedication of each of its 180 OUSTANDING staff members during International Laboratory Animal Technician Week. We kicked off the week with an appreciation breakfast that included breakfast tacos. Appreciation boards were placed in the entrances of all 9 of our facilities for the research staff and others to show their appreciation for the technicians. Throughout the week we had several other exciting activities to celebrate our staff. They included a build your own mascot contest, ALAT facility scavenger hunt, Fear Factor, technician voting, and a social gathering followed by a presentation by our very own Dr. Buckmaster -“Homes for Animal Heroes: The Truth Never Felt SO Good!”





We also had an award ceremony with snacks. On Friday we ended the week with a Lunch -N - Learn with Pat

Sikes from Charles River over “Reducing Mouse Aggression.” It was very well attended and we invited the other institutions in the Houston Medical Center to come and join in on the fun. A huge SHOUT OUT to our AMAZING vendors, as every single person in our department was able to take home multiple tokens of appreciation for their hard work You all helped make this a very memorable Tech Week for our staff and we are very appreciative of each and every one of you.



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

More groups sue to force USDA to restore online animal welfare records

By **Meredith Wadman**

Science Insider

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today restored some of the tens of thousands of animal welfare documents that it **removed from its website** early this month.

In this announcement, the agency says that it is “posting the first batch of annual reports of research institutions and inspection reports” resulting from a “comprehensive review” that began with the complete removal of previously public documents that are generated by the agency as it enforces the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) and the Horse Protection Act. The new announcement points readers to the reposted information on the USDA website, **here**.

Those familiar with the records say

USDA has so far restored only a small number of the previously posted documents. Among the data still unavailable are the vast majority of reports from regular inspections of animal-holding facilities that are monitored under AWA, including puppy mills and zoos. A number of groups have sued USDA to force it to repost all of the records.

“Under duress, the USDA is now attempting to get away with reposting only a tiny fraction of the animal welfare records it suddenly and indefensibly deleted ... and that does not satisfy PETA [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals] or the other plaintiffs in the pending lawsuit against it,” said Brittany Peet, director of captive animal law enforcement at the PETA Foundation in Washington, D.C. PETA has sued the agency to force it to restore the records, and says it won't drop the suit until USDA complies.

Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) in Washington, D.C., stated: “This is an important turnaround and a good start, but the USDA has a lot more to do

here. Lawmakers, the press, animal advocates, and even the regulated community want transparency and accessible records.” HSUS also noted that the agency has failed to repost documents that it agreed to make public under the terms of a 2009 legal settlement with the animal welfare group.

Another reaction came from Speaking of Research, a group that supports the use of animals in research and has offices in the United States and the United Kingdom.

“Speaking of Research welcomes the decision by the USDA to repost many annual reports and inspection reports to its website,” it said in a statement. “Such information helps foster and encourage a global trend towards openness in animal research. Nonetheless, there is more to do; all institutions which conduct or fund animal experiments should have a clear statement online, explaining how and why they do this, in order that the public can understand the important role of animals in research.”

The first batch of records being reposted, USDA wrote, come from

U.S. research labs regulated under AWA. The department's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service oversees more than 7800 animal holding facilities from zoos to circuses and aquariums, including roughly 1100 labs, some of them run by the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Tanya Espinosa, a spokesperson for USDA in Riverdale, Maryland, added in an email: "This first batch of [documents] ... was reviewed for personal information and reposted. We will continue posting documents over the next few weeks."

Complaints from Congress

Members of Congress from both parties and both sides of Capitol Hill are not satisfied.

Representative Vern Buchanan (R-FL), one of two co-chairs of the congressional Animal Protection Caucus, called the USDA response "insufficient," adding: "This website protects animals and the database should be fully restored."

"Many questions still remain," said Senator Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), the senior Democrat on the Senate Committee on Agriculture, which oversees USDA. Stabenow said she wants "clarity" about why the documents were removed to begin with.

The USDA announcement also not-

ed that reports of some enforcement actions—when USDA moves against violators of the law—are available for public viewing [at the website](#) of the agency's Office of Administrative Law Judges.

The move comes after a public outcry that included, in the last few days: [a lawsuit by animal welfare groups](#); [a letter of protest](#) sent to the agency from 18 Senate Democrats; and [this letter to President Donald Trump](#), sent by a bipartisan group of 101 members of the U.S. House of Representatives, demanding that the information be immediately reposted on the public website. The organizations that opposed the document blackout included groups that support medical research with animals, pet store chains, zoos and aquariums, and animal welfare groups. All argued that the lack of transparency would damage public trust and enforcement of animal welfare laws.

More groups sue

On 22 February, another coalition of animal welfare groups sued USDA to force reposting of the documents. Like organizations that sued the agency last week, the groups—the Animal Legal Defense Fund (ALDF), the Companion Animal Protection Society, Stop Animal Exploitation Now, and Animal Folks—invoke the Freedom of Information Act in arguing that USDA is legally obliged to restore the records.

But in their lawsuit, filed in federal court in the Northern District of California, the groups add a new

legal twist. They argue that USDA also violated the Administrative Procedures Act. That law prohibits government agencies from taking actions that are "arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law[.]" And the four groups say that USDA's action in removing the records fits this description.

"The information blackout is a tremendous blow to transparency and undermines advocates who are working to protect hundreds of thousands of animals across the country," Stephen Wells, executive director of ALDF, said in a statement.

ALDF is based in San Francisco, California; the Companion Animal Protection Society and Stop Animal Exploitation NOW describe themselves as national nonprofits; and Animal Folks is based in St. Paul.

Update: legislation introduced

Six Senate Democrats led by Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) introduced [a bill](#) on 2 March that would return to public view thousands of animal welfare documents generated during enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act. USDA removed the documents from its website on 3 February. It began restoring them piecemeal on 17 February, but that has not satisfied critics, including some in Congress.

"This legislation will ensure the restoration of all the data USDA

Continued from page 17...

recently wiped from its website,” Menendez said in a statement.

In the House of Representatives, Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and at least 30 cosponsors are planning to introduce an identical version of the Senate bill early next week. Called the [Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act](#), it would also take away a valuable tax benefit for five years from companies that violate the Animal Welfare Act or the Horse Protection Act.

**Update, 3 March, 4 pm: Information on the introduction of a bill in Congress was added. It would force USDA to return all documents removed from its website to public view.*

**Update, 22 February, 4:25 p.m.: Information on the lawsuit brought by ALDF and other groups was added to the story.*

Ebola vaccine for great apes shows promise, but ethical hurdles may block further research

By [Kai Kupferschmidt](#)

Science Insider

Swallowing just a few drops of a new vaccine could protect against

the deadly Ebola virus. The new immunization is not meant for humans, but chimpanzees and gorillas, for which Ebola is a devastating disease as well. Yet the vaccine may never reach these great apes. Further tests are all but impossible because of new ethical rules, the researchers charge.

Ebola is best known as a killer of people, but the virus also causes epidemics in wildlife. A 2006 [study](#) estimated that an outbreak in 2002 and 2003 in the Republic of the Congo claimed the lives of 5000 gorillas, but others have said the impact of the disease is hard to measure. Still, Ebola is a real and possibly growing threat to great apes, says epidemiologist Fabian Leendertz of the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin, who studies pathogens in nonhuman primates.

To address this problem, Peter Walsh, a disease ecologist at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom, and other researchers inserted a protein that’s on the surface of the Ebola virus into an existing live rabies vaccine that has been used on hundreds of millions of baits around Europe to fight rabies in foxes. At the University of Louisiana in Lafayette’s New Iberia Research Center, they injected four chimpanzees with the vaccine and gave it orally to another six animals.

After 28 days, both groups of chimpanzees had high amounts of antibodies against Ebola in their blood. In the lab, these antibodies showed similar activity against Ebola as those found in rhesus macaques that had been vaccinated in a pre-

vious study and had survived a challenge with the Ebola virus. “Everything indicates that if we take this to Africa and put it in chimps, it is going to be protective,” Walsh says.

The immune response was comparable to that of the only other Ebola vaccine ever tested in chimpanzees, but it has two advantages. The other vaccine had to be injected, which means getting close enough to the apes to tranquilize them; this one can be put on a bait, and then left for the animals to find. And just one dose suffices, whereas three are needed of the injected vaccine. That has [“massive advantages for the field vaccination of wild apes](#) that are difficult to locate in dense forest and fear human approach,” the authors write today in *Scientific Reports*.

“This paper is a step forward,” Leendertz says. Still, there are a number of hurdles before the vaccine can be used in the wild, he cautions. Unlike foxes, great apes are very wary about baits. And there are many competing animals that might get to the bait first. Developing a vaccine is the easy part, adds William Karesh, a veterinarian at EcoHealth Alliance in New York City. “The hard part is designing a successful vaccination campaign.”

Walsh, who is currently investigating this issue with automated camera traps in the Republic of the Congo, admits that these are major problems. “There are Gambian pouched rats all over the forest, and the minute you put anything out, they eat it,” he says. “I have to find a way to get around that and

that's what I'm focusing on now."

But new U.S. rules on research with chimpanzees are another hurdle, Walsh says. Further improvements on the vaccine, for instance to prevent it from losing its activity in the tropical heat, would require another round of testing on captive animals. And that looks all but impossible at the moment, he says.

Biomedical research on chimpanzees has been declining for years, and a **new rule** issued by the U.S. government in 2016 requires a permit under the Endangered Species Act. Although the rule still allows research on captive chimps if it benefits wild populations, the restrictions have made it too expensive to maintain chimpanzee groups for research, says Walsh, who cut his own vaccine study short when the rules took effect last September. Walsh has titled his paper "The Final (Oral Ebola) Vaccine Trial on Captive Chimpanzees?"

Such trials should only be done when all other questions about the vaccine's feasibility have been addressed, Leendertz says. But even then, the **animal sanctuaries** where many retired research chimps end up are unlikely to condone the rare studies designed to help animals in the wild, he says, because it might tarnish their public image. "People always think that animal welfare and conservation are basically the same, but here they are really pitted against each other and that creates a problem." And the scientific commission of the United Na-

tions's Great Apes Survival Partnership, that Leendertz is a part of, warned that the consequences of a vaccination program also need to be investigated. "Human communities will need to be consulted and public awareness campaigns developed to avoid the potential of such a program backfiring and resulting in the perception that bushmeat is "safe" to consume, leading to a rise to hunting activities," a statement read.

\$2 Billion Increase for NIH in Omnibus Spending Bill

NABR website

House and Senate leadership **reached an agreement** around 2:00 A.M. Monday morning on a spending bill that would fund the federal government for the remainder of FY 2017, which ends September 30, 2017. **The spending bill** contains an increase of \$2 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is 6.2 percent above the funding level provided in FY 2016. In total, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) would receive \$2.8 billion more in funding than the amount that was allocated for FY 2016.

Also in the spending bill is **\$153.4 billion** for programs at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Food and Drug Administration, a \$12.8 increase from FY 2016 levels.

Of interest to the animal research community is a provision that would prohibit any federal funds from being used to carry out activities related to the issuance or renewal of licenses

under the USDA's Animal Welfare Act to Class B dealers who sell dogs and cats for research, experiments, teaching or testing. The provision repeats a similar provision included in spending bills last year. The prohibition on funding does not apply to all Class B license activities.

Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Chairman Roy Blunt (R-MO) praised the omnibus spending bill and lauded the importance of funding medical research **by stating in a press release**: "The funding provided in this bill reflects the priorities of the American people, and puts us on track to maintain a robust, sustained federal commitment to medical research. I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan bill, and I'll continue working to ensure NIH has the resources it needs to give hope to more families battling cancer, Alzheimer's disease, and other chronic diseases."

The agreement comes just a few days after legislators scrambled to avoid a government shutdown. Funding for FY 2016 expired in December, and the continuing resolution that was keeping the government operating throughout the past several months expired on Friday, April 28. To prevent a shutdown, Congress approved a one week extension, which expires this Friday, May 5 at midnight. The deal reached last night by House and Senate leadership has been reported as a bipartisan agreement.

The spending bill is expected to pass both the House and Senate before Friday's midnight deadline. To read the full 1665-page text of the bill, **click here**. Stay tuned for more *Updates* from NABR about the spending bill and NIH funding.

TBAALAS Board Meeting

February 16, 2017, 11:30 pm-2:00 pm Sugarland Marriott Town Center

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:45 am by Ryan Byrd
A Quorum was confirmed

Attended:

Ryan Byrd, Lindsay Holmes, Karen Guerra, Sheri Brodie, Tressie Roark, Eli Rodriguez, Julie Roller, Chris Southern, Mike Dvorak, Brian Geyer, Lane Watkins, Nicole Monts De Oca, Kristen Flora, Keely McGrew, Jennifer Volkmann, John Park, Stephanie Fowler, Michelle Sager, Becky Blackwood, Oscar Sanchez, Brian Gilman, Liz Magden

Call in:

Cordelia Rasa, Jody Swain

Absent –

Carrie Schultz, Stephanie Cormier, Leticia McGuffey, Belinda Proctor, Amy Swetnam, Matthew Schmit, Summer Boyd, Ashley Pawelka, Michelle Johnson, Mitchell Moore, Kim Hildreth, Gabby Kapp, Brittney Hubbard, Igor Smiljcic, VelvetLee Finckbone

President Remarks – Ryan Byrd

Made introductions around the table. Thanked incoming and outgoing chairs and board members for their hard work.

Treasurer's report- Tressie Roarke

Income/Expense report provided. Preliminary conference report:

Income: \$73297.52 in checking (\$24,000 for hotel going out). \$34535.48 is in savings currently. PayPal transfer is pending \$4174. Exhibitor Registration \$12205 all other registrations \$17986. Social \$175, CMAR \$375, Silent Auction 2114 + \$125 coming in (this was the best year for the silent auction), sponsorships \$3100. Pending \$2415, donation for RACE \$800, Pfizer grant for AR-EA \$500. Membership \$27270 (all types).

Expenses: \$41,000.00 that includes Registration bags, program printing, Banquet program printing, Liability insurance ballpark, Skeeters social event, RACE, Award plaques, display boards for posters, Hotel, door prizes, meeting planner, MP mileage X2, AV equipment – Rock n Roll, AV equipment – Texas office products, display signs for sponsor logos, name badges- office depot, and PC name tag.

Lindsay Holmes motion to accept the treasurer report, Julie Roller seconded, passed unanimous.

PayPal has been an issue. 2.9% plus \$0.30 per transaction. Square is 2.5%. Would like to look at alternatives to PayPal. Wild Apricot has also gone to a square. Tressie will look into this and bring to next meeting. IRS was updated and we had filed on time. No penalty. Quicken is our current acct mgmt. software. Will look into QuickBooks \$275 vs Quicken at \$40. Will also look at revamping website for registration.

2017 Program Wrap Up– Eli Rodriguez/Jennifer Volkmann

Mostly positive comments about the meeting, the dog demo was well received, leadership training went well, vendors pleased with the 30 minute breaks and asked for that for next year, vendors asked for attendee list-the webmaster is often asked for this as well. Vendors get the list after they fill out the survey. Resume panel went well, had 8 participants this year. Next year will ask for the resumes ahead of time and send to the review panel. The panel will meet at the meeting and discuss the resumes and have one person scribe the summary of comments. Silent auction had one online item. It was online for 4 hours and received 30 bids with the winning bid of \$53. Next year will put 3 items online, but not offer them in the vendor hall. Would like to set up a TBAALAS eBay account for next year. Ideas for next year are to sell stuffed animals with our logo on it or pins with our logo.

2017 Local Arrangements Wrap Up - Stephanie Fowler/John Park: The social event went well. If there are any issues send to John.

Trustee's report- Karen Guerra – Review of Minutes from annual meeting. She will report later.

Committee reports:

Awards- Amanda Trimble/ Keely McGrew – Need to have posters up earlier for the judges and have a poster judge team and a separate presentation judging team.

Education/Training- Sheri Brodie/Summer Boyd – Technician Scholarship discussion
AREA program had 14 students, 4 Vet techs from VTI and 10 students from St. Agnus Academy. The vendors were very helpful with the scavenger hunt for the students. Thank you cards were given out to the vendors for participating and that went over very well. Summer will be taking over as Chair of this committee.

TBR- Julie Roller/Kristen Flora –

Social event and tech Olympics Wrap up went well, dog demo went well, sign up for the Technician Olympics was not strong, but once everything got going participation was good.

Technician Fun Fair Scavenger Hunt Wrap up Kristen said 15 turned in with 3 that had all of the answers and placed 1st - 3rd from those.

Sponsorship – Becky Blackwood/Michelle Sager–

All of the sponsorship spots were not filled. We didn't get donations for program printing. Need to have more solicitation for the sponsorships. Suggestion was made to update some of the amounts and perhaps eliminate some. Working for the Heart of Texas grant available through College Station Visitors Bureau- Paula will be working with Ryan to apply for grant. We might be able to use it for Kyle Field for our event or pay for buses, etc.

Commercial Liaison 2017 Meeting Wrap-up- John Eppes/Brian Geyer –

Good feedback from the vendors. The common complaint was the lack of internet; the vendors would be open to paying for internet. Add to vendor sign up as a drop-down box or get everyone to split the cost. Attendee list for the vendors will be sent to the vendors after they complete the survey. Cordelia will send questions to John Eppes and Brian Geyer who will send out to the vendor list. The vendor hall is named Helen Jordan Vendor Hall and the sign needs to be on an easel with a light on it.

Metro Coordinators:

DeShawn Thomas from UTMB has agreed to be the Galveston Coordinator and work with Michelle

Publications- Linea Morley/ Stacey Piotrowski – no report

Webmaster - Cordelia Rasa/Michelle Wodzak

Need photos of new board members for the website. Michelle moved to Canada so Tressie is helping Cordelia.

Membership- Belinda Proctor/Amy Swetnam – 609members 435 active, 134 lapsed, 21 new members in the 30 days

Nominations/Elections- Stephen Sterle/Jody Swain – Under budget for the election.

Legislative- Nicole Monts De Oca, Liaison to the AALAS GRC committee. No report

Historian- Leticia McGuffey – Past President Recognition Ceremony summary. All of the historical documentation from Brian Gilman is on the hard drive. The hard drive and a CD was given to Leticia. There is also one box with photos, two binders with old newsletters, and the TBAALAS banner. This was also given to Leticia from Sheri.

Long range planning- Lindsay Holmes – no report

Parliamentarian- Lane Watkins – Reminder, review, amend, and edit SOPs as needed, bring to the board to vote on it. SOPs can be reviewed and approved by email.

AALAS Learning Library- Ashley Pawelka - no report

TSBR report – Brian Gillman – no report

Old Business – None

New Business –

Ryan remind board members to vote within 72 hours for online votes, Sheri will send that notice with the issue being voted on.

Insurance for offsite events needs to be added to the budget. Tressie has found a company that deals with animal groups.

Proposed either an annual or per event (metro events are a liability). Tressie will bring a quote to the board to vote on.

Board member assignments:

Ryan: Program, Local Arrangements, & Long Range Planning

Carrie: Commercial Liaison, Parliament, Publications, & ALL Coordinator

Liz: Membership, Nominations, Webmaster, & Historian

Eli: Legislative, Awards, & Sponsorship

Julie: Education and Training, Metro-coordinators, & TBR

Accountant – Lindsay update on having an Accountant review our books at some interval. Initial informal quote was \$5000.

Her recommendation is to have a past Treasurer assist with the audits. Requested business colleagues that might be interested in book review. It was noted that due to increased regulations and liability issues the cost for a CPA has gone up.

The meeting is in College Station next year.

Metro Meetings- If events are scheduled please work with the metro coordinators. The metro coordinators need to request the funds.

All committee chairs and metro coordinators need to be members

What is TBAALAS responsibility to National AALAS? Lindsay will discuss with Dale what we are able to support. Paula will talk with Paige Ebert and Dale with suggestions

Next board meetings will be May 12th, Sept 8th (in College Station-date may change due to hotel availability), and Dec. 8th.

Meetings will still be held at Charles River in Houston with the exception of Sept. 8th.

Tressie made a motion to adjourn and Karen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 pm.

Elected Officers, Board Members and Committee Chairs

President

Ryan Byrd, LAT
Ryan.Byrd@bcm.edu

Past President

Lindsay Holmes, LAT
Lindsay.holmes@bcm.edu

Secretary

Sheri Brodie, LATG, CMAR
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Treasurer

Tressie Roark
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President-Elect

Karen Guerra, MBA, CMAR, RLATG
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Julie Roller
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Alt District 7 Trustee

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Parliamentarian

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Historian Chair

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Legislative

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Membership

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Nominations/Elections

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Technician Branch Rep.

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Long Range Planning

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Texas Panhandle

VelvetLee Finckbone, MS, RLAT
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TSBR Representative

TBD

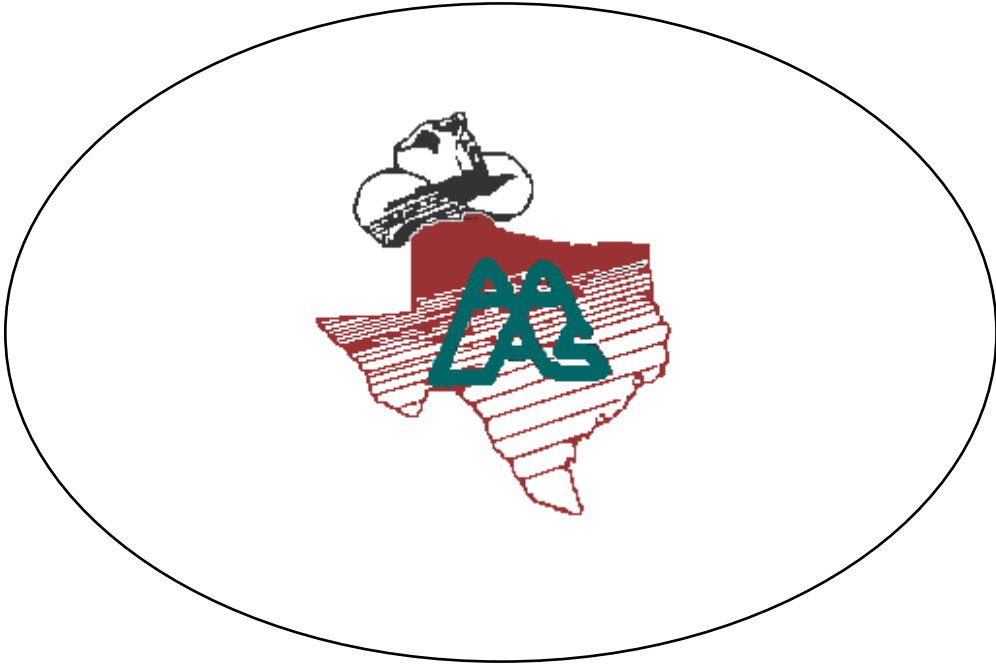
What's new with TBAALAS!
Member Spotlights
Much More!!

Deadline for Submissions
June 30, 2017
to

MSSchmit@mdanderson.org

We want to hear from you!

- News from your facility
- New AALAS Certifications or Staff Promotions
- Job Openings
- Technician Tips
- Showcase your pet
- Anything you want to share with TBAALAS
- Share a recipe, game or a fun fact



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