



# Cheesy Bits



OFFICE OF ANIMAL CARE MANAGEMENT



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF VERMONT

**“Your Project, Our People,  
One Priority ”**

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## Fun Facts

- Guinea Pigs are related to Chinchillas and porcupines.
- The blood cells of reptiles, amphibians and birds have nuclei.
- Diabetes mellitus is a hereditary condition in hamsters.
- Rabbits do not have a true estrous cycle; they are induced ovulators.

## From the IACUC . . .

In October, the Institutional Animal Care and User Committee launched a new electronic protocol submission process. Protocols must now be submitted online in the form of a PDF file. A pre-review by the veterinarian is still required. IACUC meetings are still held on the 4th Monday of each month — but NOTE that the December IACUC meeting is on Monday, December 21st — and the deadline for submission to the IACUC is the 2nd Monday of each month.

Investigators no longer need to submit an entirely new protocol for their triennial protocol review. Check the IACUC website for instructions:

<http://www.uvm.edu/~iacuc/>

Questions about OACM?  
Check out our IMPROVED website:

<http://www.uvm.edu/~oacm/>

Find forms,  
contact info,  
and links to  
useful sites!!



## Animal Census Reaches Record Levels

In September of 2009, the research animal census at the University of Vermont surpassed 10,600. Of course, the vast majority of these research subjects were mice, at 10,119, followed by 426 rats, 44 guinea pigs, and 23 frogs. This is the highest census ever for Animal Care Management and represents a major milestone for UVM investigators and the animal care staff.

## AAALAC Site Visit in November

UVM's research animal program is fully-accredited by the Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC, Int.). From an animal-welfare perspective, this accreditation places the University among the highest-quality research institutions nationally and internationally. AAALAC, Int. is the ONLY accrediting body recognized by the Public Health Service. As an accredited institution, UVM falls under "Category 1" status in its assurance with the NIH's Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW). Maintaining AAALAC accreditation sends a clear message to funding agencies and to the public that UVM takes animal welfare seriously.

On November 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, AAALAC will conduct a scheduled triennial site visit and review of the UVM animal facilities and animal care program. The site visitors will be visiting investigators' laboratories and may have questions about your use of animals in research. Please take care that your protocols are up-to-date, that the procedures performed in the lab are accurately reflected in your protocol, and that drugs (controlled-substances in particular) are correctly logged and stored.

## New Staff Member

Because of our burgeoning census, Priority One Services (POS) has recently hired Ms. Lucy Trombley to fill an Animal Care Technician II position. Many of you will remember Lucy as she worked for several years as a research technician for the Department of Surgery. Lucy has extensive cell-culture & bench-top experience and also has assisted with animal anesthesia and surgical research preparations. She has a bachelor's degree in zoology and an M.S. in molecular biology. And if you want to see Lucy smile, ask her about her new grand-daughter!



Lucy Trombley

## Kudos to . . .

**Rebecca Hyzer**, Facility Manager and POS Project Manager, for winning the Poster Contest at the regional AALAS "Quad" conference in May. Becky won a complimentary registration to the National AALAS conference in Denver in November, where she will be presenting her poster, "Characteristics of Inbred Mouse Strains." The poster can be viewed on the OACM website.



Lee Dorf

**Lee Dorf**, Veterinary Technician, achieved his AALAS certification at the LAT (Laboratory Animal Technician) level in October. Lee obtained his B.S. in Biology from UVM in May of 2009.

**Chris Fileccia** is the POS "Technician of the Quarter." Chris has been with Priority One Services for more than a year and works with Dr. Teuscher's and Dr. Jaworski's colony rooms the Given building. Chris has shown a great "can-do" attitude and a drive to learn new skills.



Chris Fileccia



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## Pandemic Flu Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

The VT Department of Health reports a significant rise in the incidence of influenza and respiratory disease in recent weeks, and H1N1 has been confirmed throughout the state. Here at UVM, heads of Departments, Colleges and Service Operations have made plans to assure that the University continues to function with a minimum of disruption in the face of the influenza outbreak. Animal Care Management has participated in this planning process. Most importantly, our contract staffing vendor, Priority One Services, Inc. (POS), has made the following pledge:

Should 30% or more of the animal care staff be unable to work because of illness or the need to care for family members, essential functions will be met with overtime and/or temporary and corporate workers.

In recent weeks, operations have stayed on-track in spite of a slightly increased rate of absenteeism due to illness. If you have any concerns about disruptions in the husbandry of your research animals during the influenza outbreak, feel free to contact Dr. Blauwiekel at [drruth@uvm.edu](mailto:drruth@uvm.edu).

## Reconfiguration of Rooms in HSRF

At the end of October, two animal rooms in HSRF were consolidated into a single large animal-holding area in 005D. As before, the mouse colonies in this room are barrier colonies (autoclaved caging, filter-sterilized water, irradiated feed). There are now four work stations in 005D; animals should ONLY be handled under aseptic conditions in an operating laminar flow work station or biosafety cabinet. Investigators who require the use of the Class II Biosafety cabinet (BSC-II) for extended periods of time should use the sign-up sheet posted on the equipment in order to assure that the BSC-II is available when you need it.

## New Inhalation Exposure Room

Drs. Jason Bates and Charlie Irvin of the Vermont Lung Center have obtained funding to create an inhalation laboratory within the Given Animal Facility. The space to perform inhalation exposures will be within D001 Given. Prior to the renovation of D001, a 40-inch doorway will be installed off the Given "D" hallway into Room D011. This will permit the use of ventilated racks in D011 and allow us to convert that room into a holding space for rats. Only after animals have been transitioned out of D001 will those renovations on that room begin; this is anticipated to be after January 1st, 2010. All investigators utilizing D001 for housing their research rats will be kept informed of progress as it develops. Feel free to contact Dr. Blauwiekel or Rebecca Hyzer if you have questions or concerns!

## Mice on the Move

You might be surprised to learn that mice from UVM's breeding colonies make their way to exotic venues throughout the world. Over the past 12 months we've had imports from Riken, Japan and we've exported mice to Switzerland, Mexico, and Canada. We've shared animals with The Mayo Clinic, Wyeth Research, Schering Plough, The Trudeau Institute and Pharmexa. In 2009 alone, we've had 18 imports and 14 exports.

How do we share this valuable genetic material and still maintain a high health status in our mice? The first step is communication between the originating and receiving institutions. For instance, in the case of imported animals, OACM must ascertain that the incoming animals have no contagious diseases or parasites which would adversely affect UVM investigators' research. We review health-monitoring data from the proposed import, or share our health-monitoring results with an institution wishing to receive our animals. Then shipping must be managed; animals must be transported quickly and safely by a bonded carrier. Finally, new animals must spend 8 weeks in quarantine. During the first six weeks, sentinel mice are exposed to dirty bedding from cages of the imported animals. After six weeks of exposure, the sentinels are submitted to Taconic Laboratories for testing which includes serology, microbiology, parasitology and pathology. The animals can only be admitted to our colonies after testing demonstrates that they are negative for critical viral, bacterial and parasitic agents.

To initiate the import or export process, please go to the OACM website, complete the import or export request found on the "forms" page, and submit to Keirsten Rapoza by email ([Keirsten.rapoza@uvm.edu](mailto:Keirsten.rapoza@uvm.edu)) or fax (656-8315).

