Vol. 16, No. 4, December 2001

LAP/PACUC News

“LAP/PACUC office has moved”

The Laboratory Animal Program (LAP) and Purdue Animal Care and Use Committee (PACUC) administrative offices have moved from SCC-D to VAHF (Veterinary Animal Holding Facility). All campus mail should either be addressed to LAP/VAHF or PACUC/VAHF. Thank you.

“New additions to the LAP staff”

The LAP welcomes Dr. Peggy O’Neil and Ms. Melissa Planner to their staff.

Melissa joined the LAP in November as a veterinary technician and she may be reached at 62886.

Dr. O’Neil joined the LAP in December as a laboratory animal veterinarian and she may be reached at 49145.

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Spring 2002 PACUC Meeting Dates

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<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Deadline Date for Protocol Submission</th>
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<td>January 16</td>
<td>Dec. 26 at 5:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>February 20</td>
<td>Jan. 30 at 5:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>March 20</td>
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<td>April 17</td>
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Please contact Lisa Snider (ldsnider@purdue.edu) if you have any questions regarding these dates. Thank you.

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Spring PACUC Orientation Programs Offered

The orientation program for new faculty, staff, and students, who will be using animals in research, teaching, and/or testing, will be held on the following dates during the spring semester:

Tuesday, January 15 – 9:30-11:00 a.m. in STEW 218A.

Tuesday, February 12 – 1:30-3:00 p.m. in LILY 3-113 (A&B).

Wednesday, March 6 – 1:30-3:00 p.m. (place to be announced at a later date.)

April and May dates will be set at a later time if needed.

Attendance at one of these sessions is mandatory for personnel (faculty, staff, students) who initiated work with vertebrate animals on or after December 4, 2001 (this was the last date the session was offered) or those who wish to initiate work with vertebrate animals in the future. Personnel will not be
approved to work with animals until such time that they have attended one of these meetings. This program presented by staff of the Purdue Animal Care and Use Committee and the Laboratory Animal Program is designed to introduce new personnel to the Purdue system for maintaining regulatory compliance with federal and University guidelines and ensuring humane care and use of laboratory animals.

Please register for one of these sessions via e-mail to Lisa Snider at ldsnider@purdue.edu.

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A Reminder of Two Important Responsibilities … Know Your Protocol and Report Concerns to PACUC

As we meet during our PACUC-LAP Orientation sessions with new staff and students who will utilize vertebrate animals in their research, teaching, and testing programs at Purdue, there are several important “take-home” messages we try to deliver. Two of these are the importance of everyone (i) being familiar with the protocol, approved by PACUC, that describes their project or teaching activity and (ii) being aware of how to address concerns about animal care and use if they should arise.

(i) The protocol approved by PACUC, with all its amendments, defines in detail the scope of research and/or teaching procedures utilizing vertebrate animals that you may implement as part of a teaching or a research activity at Purdue. All experienced with research recognize that it is inherent in the research process that plans and procedures evolve. Experiments should always provide new insight. Sometimes this insight informs the investigator of a weakness in the experimental design or a specific procedure; sometimes the insight exposes the need for a previously unanticipated control or entirely new question requiring empirical resolution. However, federal regulations and Purdue policy require that before any new procedure, or other substantial change in a protocol that has the potential to impact animal welfare, is initiated, that change must be reviewed and approved by PACUC. Implementing changes in protocol without prior approval by PACUC may place both the investigator and the University in jeopardy due to non-compliance with federal regulations. One of the best ways to ensure this does not happen is for all personnel to be familiar with the approved protocol.

How can an investigator know what represents a substantial change in a protocol requiring an amendment? PACUC offers the following guidance to help in addressing this question. If the change would lead to a different response to one of the questions asked on the protocol form (PACUC Form 1), it requires an amendment. A list of examples of changes requiring an amendment is provided in the PACUC Handbook, which is available on our website (http://ag.an.sc.purdue.edu/nielsen/PACUC/animals.html). If you are still unsure, please call the PACUC office at 494-7206 and ask us.

(ii) A critical responsibility shared by all who utilize vertebrate animals in research and teaching is ensuring animal welfare. Whenever we observe an example of animal care or use that we believe may pose a risk to the health or safety of animals, we have a responsibility to address it. The first, and often the only necessary, step in addressing concerns is to speak with the individual(s) responsible for the animal or activity that is the subject of your concern. Often, concerns are a reflection of a misunderstanding or partial understanding of what we have observed. However, if we are unable to resolve the concern by this route, it is very important that these unresolved concerns be reported to PACUC. PACUC’s goal will always be to remediate the concern and protect the animal(s).
How do you report concerns to PACUC? Concerns should be reported to Peter Dunn (pedunn@purdue.edu), PACUC Chairperson; or to Bill Ferner (ferner@purdue.edu), LAP Director; or to Lisa Snider (ldsnider@purdue.edu), Administrative Assistant to PACUC and LAP; by calling the PACUC office (494-7206) or via e-mail. All reports of concern will be accepted in strict confidence and you may report your concern anonymously if you wish; however, this is less desirable since it precludes our ability to reach you if clarification were required. When a concern is received, PACUC will verify the situation, usually with the help of the LAP veterinarians, and take whatever steps are necessary to protect the animals involved. Generally, this is accomplished by providing information or training to staff responsible for the animal(s). Concerns and the actions taken to resolve them are then reported to the full PACUC, so that the committee can determine if all steps needed to resolve the concern have been taken. Only with your help, can we ensure the humane care and use of vertebrate animals at Purdue.

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On a lighter note…

**Regulations**

If you, as a good, well meaning and competent scientist feel like you are butting your head against a myriad of regulation in your animal research, you may sympathize with another individual whose problems are described in the following article from the *Wisconsin State Farmer*, dateline December 22, 2000.

“December 24 Deadline Looms for North Pole Shipper to Meet Animal Health Regulations”

Madison, WI

Wisconsin agriculture authorities find themselves embroiled in a legal standoff with an international shipper trying to bring nine reindeer into the state without proper documentation.

“I’d have to say that this is a scofflaw outfit – a repeat offender who’s able to ascertain what every child in the world wants for Christmas, yet can’t seem to keep track of regulations,” said State Veterinarian Clarence Siroky of the Division of Animal Health. “Still, we are willing to work with him to bring him into voluntary compliance by Dec. 24.”

At issue is a request by S. Claus LLC, to enter Wisconsin on that date. Among the legal tangle: Animals entering the state must be properly identified. While Claus maintains that all nine animals are officially identified, Siroky says identifications such as Dasher and Dancer are names, not official IDs. The animals need numbers, and the numbers must be displayed on ear tags, not jingle bell harnesses.

The reindeer will be entering from the north, through Michigan, so Siroky wants them to meet the tuberculosis testing requirements for captive cervidae from that state. Claus says the requirement that the animals be tested 30 days or less before entering the state is unreasonable, because those 30 days are his busiest of the year. Claus also noted the difficulty of finding a veterinarian willing to travel to his headquarters in mid-winter.

In years past, when asked to produce the proper paperwork, Claus has been able to present only lists of names. “Mr. Claus insists that he’s double-checked these lists. They do match the cargo, which appears to be mostly toys; the destinations, all over the world; and the receivers, mostly children, who are apparently pre-screened as ‘naughty’ or ‘nice’ to qualify for the shipment. But we need certificates of health for the animals carrying the cargo,” Siroky says. “We’ll continue to
work with Mr. Claus to improve his record-keeping."

One of the animals appears to have a chronic upper respiratory infection, indicated by an inflamed nasal area. In the past, Siroky said, epidemiologists have also observed other reindeer shunning this animal, perhaps a natural response to a diseased herd member. That response has now subsided, which may suggest the animal is no longer contagious. If lab tests can confirm that, the animal (officially identified as “Rudolph”) will be permitted into Wisconsin.

Siroky concedes there are some factors working in Claus’ favor. “These animals are all well beyond breeding age, and they will be in the state less than 24 hours. So far as we know, they have not infected our herds in previous years, despite these persistent problems of documentation. As long as they keep to rooftops and don’t come in contact with our cattle, deer or elk, we’ll allow some leniency,” he says.

Siroky could not speak for other state regulators, who have raised these issues:

Food safety issues persist, arising from milk left out overnight within reach of children in millions of homes.

Claus has not filed a nutrient management plan for animal waste that may run off rooftops or fall to earth as he travels.

In addition, activists have raised the questions of allowing merchandise into the state that was possibly produced under sweatshop conditions.

Siroky notes that Claus does have some incentive to cooperate with the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection. S. Claus LLC and partners E. Bunny and Tooth Fairy, Inc. have jointly applied to the department’s Agricultural Diversification and Development grant program to do a feasibility study of opening a branch office in Wisconsin Dells, so they can maintain year-round production.

We’ll be working with the department’s marketing division in a carrot-and-stick approach to enforcement,” Siroky says.

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All of us in the Laboratory Animal Program and Purdue Animal Care and Use Committee office wish you the happiest of holiday seasons.