

Words of Enlightenment

Mid-MO AALAS
Branch

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March MID-MO AALAS Branch Meeting with Kansas City

Speaker: Catherine M. Vogelweid, DVM, PhD, DACLAM

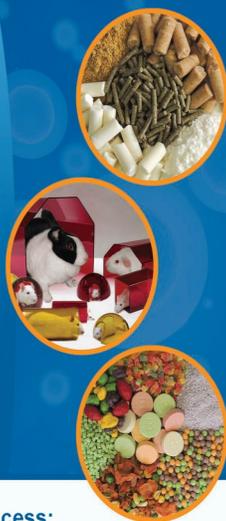
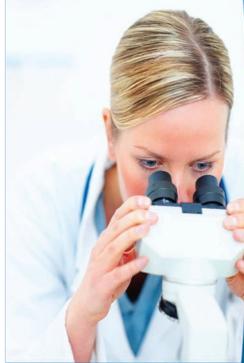


Title of Presentation: Lessons Learned from Disasters, How the PETS Act Changed Disaster Response in the United States, and My Experience during the Joplin Tornado Response

thought, and my response to the third question would be a definite “NO WAY!” However, my perspective was changed after May 22 2011, when an EF-5 tornado touched down in Joplin, MO. As a member of the Missouri Volunteer Veterinary Corps, I was deployed to the Joplin Humane Society to help care for displaced pets in the second week following the storm.

My presentation will review the progress that has been made in animal disaster response since national attention was focused on the abysmal plight of the animals that were impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Passage of the PETS Act in 2006 dramatically and positively changed the nature of disaster response for pets. The operation of the mass care shelter by the ASPCA in Joplin stands as an excellent example of how far animal disaster response has come since 2006. Operating a mass care shelter in a disaster impact area was an incredibly complex task, and I will present my thoughts and share my experiences in caring for 600+ animals in less-than-ideal working conditions.

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Rabbit Housing Ideas

Dana Weir, BS. LATG, CMAR, Facilities Manager, Office of Animal Resources, Columbia, MO



Left cage with plug installed

With the Guide requirement to socially house all animals that do not have an exemption, the OAR at MU has been evaluating their rabbit housing. We currently have 30+ rabbit racks that satisfy the space requirements, but do not allow for socialization. One option was to house the animals on the floor in a group. This has been

successful when the space is available and the animals are compatible, but it's not feasible all the time. When housed on the floor as a single-sex group, not all rabbits 'play nicely' together and it can eat up a lot of valuable space.

To help combat these issues and utilize existing resources, we modified our cages so that two rabbits can be socially housed per level of each rack. This was a DIY project with our Physics shop. I purchased 6" PVC female adaptors and cleanout plugs to serve as rabbit tunnels from one cage to the adjacent cage. The rabbits can be introduced to one another for short periods of time via the tunnel to establish compatibility and then the plug can be reinstalled to allow them some 'alone' time. Once they have demonstrated compatibility, the plug can be removed. It can be screwed back when the animals need isolation, such as when they require veterinary care or study monitoring.



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Rabbit Housing at Merial LTD.

By: Chelsea Ballard, Klancy Vandeloecht, & Jane R. Flynn

At Merial Ltd. in Fulton, MO, environmental enrichment is an important part of research animal care.

The Animal Science & Welfare staff has developed an alternative means of housing rabbits, a social species that finds safety and comfort in groups. Our goal was to bring the animals out of single housing stainless steel cages and introduce them to group housing and a more natural habitat. Particularly important to us was to provide enough floor space for the rabbits to move around as much as they wanted and lie comfortably wherever they chose to stop and rest.

We are fortunate to be able to use young (2 kg.) does in our research, so group housing compatible animals is relatively simple.

First, we bought two sets of small pet fencing from our local Orscheln's Farm and Home store. At 24" high it is tall enough to keep the animals from getting out. Two pens joined together with clips total 22 feet long, which we set up in a circle.

Next, we set in the pen recycled / discarded cardboard boxes large enough to hold 1-3 animals at one time. We placed absorbent pads around the parameter, particularly around food hoppers and water bottles, which are hung on the sides. We put loose timothy hay in wire whisks and hang them also. There are jingle balls and other small plastic or rubber toys for the animals to play with.

We do not put bedding on the floor itself in order to ease daily cleaning but provide plenty of straw in deep-sided litter boxes for the rabbits to dig in.

Introducing the rabbits to the community pen:

On arrival, the rabbits are pair-housed in traditional stainless steel rabbit cages. Pair-housing is important in order for the animals to settle in comfortably; we add a small cardboard box or waste can to each cage for a sense of security. We play background noise from a machine (\$19.99 at Walmart) to buffer the sound of people coming and going through the day.

After about two days, the animals have acclimated to their new surroundings and frequent handling. We then move them to the floor pen. It is fun for us to watch the animals to hop around and explore their new home, sitting on top of a "den".

In addition to the pelleted rabbit diet, the animals are offered green leafy vegetables: kale, red cabbage and collard greens are favorites.



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Jennifer Blair, ALAT Newsletter Chairman



*Jennifer Blair, ALAT
Training Associate
Sinclair Research, LLC*

My name is Jennifer Blair, and I am a Training Associate in the Human Resources Dept. for Sinclair Research, LLC. I arrange, and perform interviews, shadows, and background checks on potential employees. As well as perform new hire orientation for all incoming employees, and help train new employees in the field.

My interest in animals began at a young age. While growing up my family always had pets, and when I was 12yrs old I was given my first horse. From there my passion for horses took me many places, and gave me many great experiences. I learned how to start an unbroken 2 year old, and then moved into managing 2 studs and 13 broodmares while training roping horses.

Fast forward to about 10 years, I became a stay at home mom to one wonderful son. I decided to get back into the work force, and I didn't realize the experiences I had gained raising horses would be so applicable. I applied for an Animal Technician position at Sinclair Research, and was hired very quickly. After a year in the field I was promoted to Assistant Facility Manager. While in this role I was provided with the opportunity to attend ILAM, and my passion for this field really took off! With the help of my friend and boss, Christal Huber LATG, I obtained my ALAT, and now I am currently studying for my LAT. A few months ago I was moved into my current position where have been learning more administrative skills. I still like to maintain my roots in the field and I enjoy learning new things while adjusting to my new role as a Training Associate.

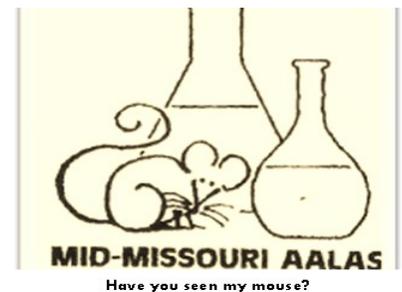
My current list of pets includes my AQHA gelding, Domingo who has been my partner for 17yrs and going strong, my dog, Rajah, and my 3 cats, Shogun, Thomas, and Jerry. All of my cats I have adopted from work, and they are the greatest! My son, William is my pride and joy and will be starting kindergarten this fall. He is very ready; however, I am not sure I am!

AALAS Awards

The AALAS Awards Selection Committee (ASC) has made significant progress in refining the awards criteria and scoring system to ensure a fair and consistent process. The six awards which will require nominations are the Griffin, Garvey, Bhatt, Brewer, Collins, and Technician of the Year. These awards all require the same basic nomination information to be considered. General nominations are not necessary for the AALAS Technician Publication Award or the Poster Session Awards. All eligible papers for the Technician Publication Award are selected from the previous years' Comparative Medicine, JAALAS, and LAS Pro. All awards except the Poster Session Awards will be presented during the AALAS Opening General Session. The poster awards will be presented during the poster session reception.

If you know of an individual that deserves this, then check out the AALAS website under awards and find out which award is most relevant and nominate them!

All supporting documents must be submitted to the AALAS office by April 15



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As February has come and gone so has Tech Week. This week provides us with the opportunity to show appreciation to our techs for all of their hard work. Our Technicians may not always see the end results of our studies, but without them none of this would be possible. Their care for the animals, who do so much for us, provides a solid foundation for our research. During tech week our institution took the opportunity to educate our techs about the wide variety of studies that we perform. We also provided fun activities throughout the week like an ice cream social, free lunch, exceptional tech contest, and a bling booth to decorate safety glasses and scissors. Also don't forget to reach out to your vendors who are more than happy to show their support as well. A special thanks goes out to Harlan, Marshall, VWR, and Animal Health International who provided support for Sinclair's tech week. What did your institutions do? E-mail your tech week activities to jblair@sinclairresearch.com or submit them online at www.midmoaalas.org.



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Upcoming Events

March 14, 2014

-MID-MO and KC AALAS Branches. Join us at RADIL, 5:30pm. DINNER to be served.

March 29th, 2014

KCAALAS Hands On Workshop
9am-1pm at maples Woods
Community College, KC, MO

More Info email:

KCAALAS@yahoo.com

June 21, 2014

Budweiser Clydesdales More details to come

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