

JUNE 2024

WASHINGTON BRANCH AALAS



SAVE THE DATE!

**WBAALAS SUMMER PICNIC
SATURDAY AUGUST 10TH**

**Free to attend and open to WBAALAS
family and pets!**

**National AALAS Meeting:
November 3rd-7th 2024 Nashville, TN**

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CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Volunteers Always Needed!



There are a lot of obvious benefits to volunteering with WBAALAS —a sense of accomplishment, giving back to the LAS community, gaining perspective, and meeting new people. But did you know that volunteering is a **RESUME BOOSTER**? In these times of slim budgets and limited promotions, volunteering with WBAALAS offers you the opportunity to build transferrable skills!

Here are 3 reasons volunteering with WBAALAS is a smart career move:

Develop new skills or sharpen existing ones. Volunteering can be a way to get training and practice in areas your current role doesn't provide.

- Project management: organizing events or fundraising efforts are highly desirable skills
- Communication skills: consistently ranked in the top ten desirable skills by employer surveys
- Managing a team: many projects require a group effort, and a leader to coordinate it
- Accounting skills: familiarity with accounting enables you to manage at higher levels in a company

Develop professional relationships. You never know who you'll meet volunteering with WBAALAS. Volunteering helps you develop new networks, through which you will hear about job openings, training opportunities, and networking events.

Add experience. Volunteer experience is professional experience and it belongs on your resume. Using your time to gain new skills and help your professional community highlights your willingness to jump in, learn new things, and do more.

Visit <http://www.wbaalas.org/contact/> and inquire about any positions on the upcoming ballot to learn more.

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Volunteers Always Needed!

The following Elected positions will be available for the 2025 Year



President-Elect

- 3 year total commitment
- 1st Year as President Elect where you learn from the President on what and how to do President role.
- 2nd Year serve as President: run board meetings, manage annual events, provide leadership to organization
- 3rd year as Past-President: provide current president with mentorship regarding the President position, help plan events, in the event that the President elect and president are unavailable, run meeting.



Secretary

- 2 year term
- Approx. 2-10 hours a month
- Keep membership records
- Write board meeting minutes and upload to website
- Send and receive official branch electronic communication
- Help plan events
- Vote on agenda items



Board Member 1 & 3

- 2 year term
- Approx. 1-3 hours a month
- Attend board meetings and be a voice of the membership
- Help plan events
- Vote on agenda items
- 2 positions will be open

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Volunteers Always Needed!

Don't have the ability to commit to an elected position? Check out these other volunteer opportunities:

Committee Positions:

- Program committee: Helps plan all branch sponsored meetings and activities (time commitment varies on activities)
- Newsletter committee: Disseminate information about the national, regional and local AALAS organizational affairs as well as any other pertinent information to the members via a newsletter. (10+ hours a month)
- Social media: Help update/post on WBAALAS Facebook and LinkedIn accounts
- Nominations and Elections Committee: Solicit nominations, give instructions on voting in the elections, tally votes, give results to secretary.
- Awards Committee: solicit nominations for each award and submit names of winners. Ordering award plaques.
- Membership committee: prepare reports of membership to the board of directors, maintain membership list, reports to secretary.
- Management Information System Committee: Maintaining and updating the branch website and email accounts.
- Ad Hoc: occasionally we will be in need of other help, such as setting up or cleaning up after events, or someone to assist with registration/sign in, placing fliers etc.



TEAMWORK

Together Each Achieves More

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

CERTIFIED ROCKSTAR!

Ashley R. Earned her rLAT!

What exam did you take? LAT

How did you study: Reading both the ALAT and the LAT books from AALAS, using the learning library, as well as using and completing the Kizer Learning Exam Prep course for LAT were incredibly helpful! (A special note that we have access to both the learning library and the Kizer Exam Prep Course through WBAALAS).

I felt strongly that the Kizer Exam Prep course offered the most variety, and can say that I don't think I would have passed without taking that course as well. Specific shout-out to the Kizer flashcards! (NOT a paid advertisement).

Why take the exam: Like many jobs, my work is proud I have achieved this certification, but this was mostly for me. Being a part of this registry shows that I am serious about my career. I hope to continue on and get my LATG.

What would you recommend for those who want to test: Believe in yourself and your knowledge. I find I second guess myself a lot and it put a delay on getting certified (I didn't feel like I "knew enough"). I also highly encourage you to take advantage of all the learning portals offered between Learning library and Kizer. Even listening to the book on repeat works, although this wasn't as exciting to me. I personally learn best through flashcards.

Another thing that worked for me was working on my harder to learn subjects at the end, for me it was Math, so it was fresh in my mind when I studied that last.

Have you or your staff recently earned a certification? Want to be featured in the WBAALAS Newsletter?

Email newsletter@wbaalas.org with your name and certification earned, and include a picture if you'd like!

CATCHING UP WITH WBAALAS

Ben Cohen Branch Management Summit

An advertisement for Ancare Material Handling. The top half shows a welder in a blue jacket and a black welding mask with a glowing blue light. The text "Ancare Material Handling" is overlaid in white. The bottom half displays several pieces of material handling equipment, including metal wire cages on wheels, a stainless steel table on wheels, and a flatbed pallet jack on wheels.

Want to know more, and aren't afraid to ask?
Contact us at 516-781-0755/800-645-6379 or
info@ancare.com

This year we were able to send two branch members to the Ben Cohen Branch Management Summit. Mel and Dante were able to travel to Memphis Tennessee to learn multiple facets of branch leadership within AALAS.

Advertisement

Make Training Easier with a Scruffing Restraint Device

By Kaitlyn Benjamin, BS, LATG

If you conduct technical training with mice at your institution, a scruffing restraint device is a valuable addition to your training aid tool kit. A scruffing restraint device, such as the ScruffGuard offered by Research Devices, is a small, simple restraint tool with varied applications (Figure 1).¹ Our team first found it as part of a search for viable training aids to further promote the 3Rs within our program. We found and created many great tools, but a scruffing restraint device is one of our most frequently used and valuable purchases. A scruffing restraint device is designed to be placed over a mouse so that the loose skin can be pulled through the opening at the top, allowing for effective restraint with a barrier between the mouse and handler.

One of the first applications we discovered for this device was to familiarize new handlers to the concept of scruffing a mouse. People who have never worked with mice can be hesitant to touch them and worried about being bitten. Using this device, we can show trainees how much extra skin is available to be scruffed and start restraining live mice safely. Our program has received great feedback from new trainees who used the device to gain confidence and familiarity with the animals. A scruffing restraint device can also be used when dosing subcutaneous (SC) or intraperitoneal (IP), which are the advertised uses for the ScruffGuard. It's a great way to introduce someone to SC and IP dosing while greatly reducing their fear of being bit. The benefits extend to the animal too, as it takes fewer animals and fewer attempts to successfully complete training. Additionally, we've effectively used scruffing restraint devices to perform nail trims, general health inspections, microchip implantation, and even ear tagging.

As part of our program, everyone is introduced to the ScruffGuards in training, and we keep them in-house to be used as needed (it's a great tool to use when dosing aggressive mice for new and seasoned technicians alike). This tool has helped our program exemplify the 3Rs as we use fewer animals to reach training signoffs, and the likelihood of both animal and human injury is also reduced.

Using a scruffing restraint device is very simple and easy. A device like the ScruffGuard comes in several sizes and can be used with mice up to 48g.² For everyone's



Figure 1. Disposable ScruffGuard, size 9.

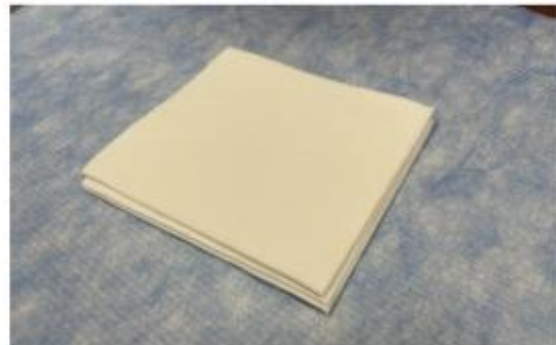


Figure 2. Vivarium grade towels being used as a soft surface in which to use the ScruffGuard.



Figure 3. Animal on a soft surface with the ScruffGuard placed over top.

CATCHING UP WITH LAS Pro



Figure 4. Loose skin gently, but firmly held through the slit of the ScruffGuard.



Figure 5. Mouse being restrained for a SC injection using a ScruffGuard.



Figure 6. Mouse being restrained for an IP injection using a ScruffGuard.

safety, it is essential to make sure you're using the correct size based on the animal's weight – too small and the animal could be harmed by the downward force applied, too large and the animal may fit its head through the top slit and have access to the handler. To get started, place a short stack of vivarium-grade paper towels or a disposable sponge (about ½ inch thick) on the tabletop to create a soft surface under the mouse where pressure can be gently applied (Figure 2). Next, place the animal on the towels or sponge in the direction you want them to face. Swiftly cover the mouse with the scruffing restraint device so only the tail extrudes on one end and ensure all feet are tucked in (Figure 3). Gently lift the loose skin through the slit at the top of the device and hold firmly between two fingers (Figure 4). Depending on the task, you could keep the mouse on the surface (Figure 5) or lift to expose the ventral side (Figure 6). Once complete, release your hold of the loose skin and lift the device while maintaining a grip on the mouse's tail.

A scruffing restraint device is easy to use, promotes the 3Rs, and improves overall animal welfare. I highly recommend trying it out in your program to see the difference it can make.

All procedures performed on animals were in accordance with regulations and established guidelines and were reviewed and approved by an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee or through an ethical review process.

Kaitlyn Benjamin, BS, LATG is a Global Trainer at Pfizer in Cambridge, MA. She may be reached at Kaitlyn.benjamin@pfizer.com.

REFERENCES

1. Benjamin KE, Dunbar J, Kim H. 2023. P147 Assessing Stress Impact and Subcutaneous Dosing Effectiveness of a Scruffing Restraint Device in C57BL/6J Female Mice. AALAS National Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, October 22-26, 2023. Poster Presentation. Awarded 2nd prize in category.
2. Research Devices Ltd. [Internet] 2020. ScruffGuard. [Cited 21 February 2023]. Available at: <https://researchdevices.com/scruffguard/>

LEARNING WITH WBAALAS

Washington Branch AALAS offers members access to **TWO** learning portals!



Learning Library

(AALAS)



Exam Prep Courses

(Kizer Learning)

The AALAS Learning Library provides training that is essential for technicians, veterinarians, managers, IACUC members, and investigators working with animals in a research or education setting.

Washington Branch AALAS is proud to be able to offer free access to the AALAS Learning Library to all Branch members!

Research, husbandry, and veterinary staff can earn continuing education credits to maintain certification and licensure (**up to 34 courses approved by AAVSB for RACE CEs**). Check out the over 238 courses available by downloading the [course catalog](#).

ALAT, LAT, and LATG Exam Prep Courses

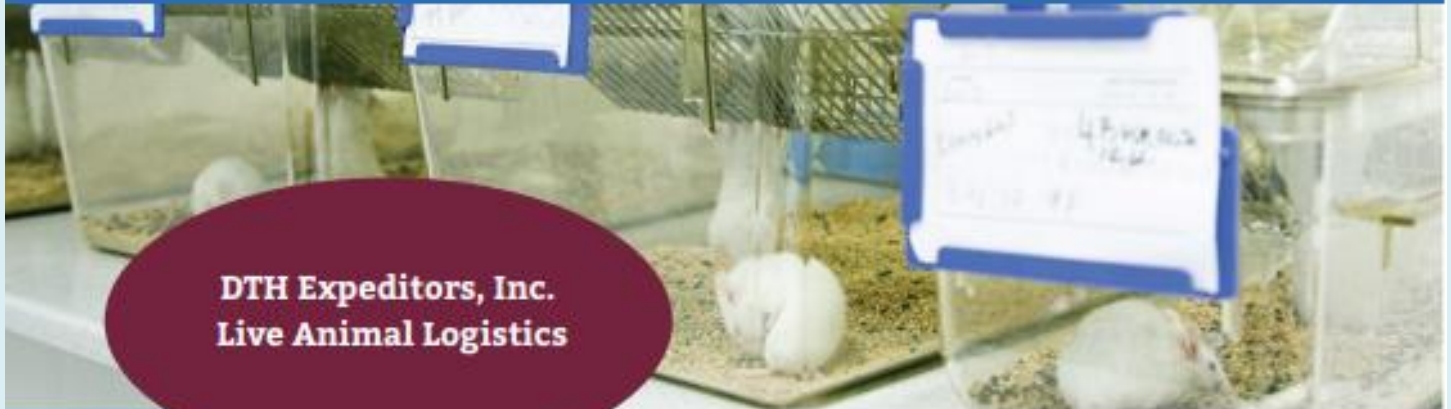
We've partnered with Kizer Learning to offer free enrollment in their innovative exam prep courses.

Here's what makes them effective:

- On-demand access
- Comprehensive study plans and study nudges
- Knowledge pre-check insights
- Concept-driven chapter summary videos
- Note-taking worksheets for active learning
- Reduce anxiety with test-taking strategies
- Flashcards that adapt to you

These courses equip you with lifelong learning skills you won't find in any other program. They're crafted to transform your approach to learning, ensuring success on any exam.

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DTH Expeditors, Inc. is a nationwide logistics provider in the field of Live Animal Movement (LAM), offering Next Flight Out (NFO) and Expedited Courier Services for these specialized moves.

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HeroRat UPDATE



In the March 2024 edition of the APOPO newsletter, we celebrate the contributions of women in our projects around the globe, in line with International Women's Day. This issue shines a spotlight on the incredible women working with APOPO in Ethiopia's tuberculosis detection program. We're also excited to share a video produced by AJ+ that delves into the heart of APOPO's mission and our work.

We also bring you news from Azerbaijan, where our mine detection rat (MDR) team is springing back to action after the winter pause. In addition, we're happy to report a record-breaking number of visitors at the APOPO Visitor Center in Siem Reap, Cambodia. This surge in interest is a sign of the global community's growing support and fascination with our work.

Each of these stories shows the power of collaboration, innovation, and the strong spirit of our team, partners, and supporters like you. We are thankful for your continued support, which allows us to push boundaries and achieve milestones in landmine clearance, tuberculosis detection, and community development. We hope you find these updates inspiring and join us in celebrating these incredible achievements.



On International Women's Day, 8 March, APOPO highlighted the exceptional women at our tuberculosis (TB) research project in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The program is conducted in collaboration with the Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI) and integrates our HeroRATs for TB detection. Leveraging the rats' remarkable sense of smell, this project is an efficient second-line method for identifying TB.

The process begins with our HeroRATs, who detect TB's distinctive odor in human sputum samples from patients who initially tested negative for TB at our partner clinics. This odor is made up of a unique combination of volatile organic compounds that the rats have been trained to recognize. When samples are flagged by our HeroRATs, APOPO's lab staff confirm the results before alerting the clinics, ensuring prompt treatment for the patients.

At the heart of APOPO's TB detection initiative in Ethiopia are the women who bring their dedication and expertise to various roles within the project, from rat handlers to lab technicians and researchers. Their contributions both advance public health efforts and the fight against TB in Ethiopia. APOPO is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace and actively encourages women to apply for positions across all levels of our organization.

DISTRICT 8 MEETING



CATCHING UP WITH AALAS

The 2024 AALAS National election will open June 1, 2024 and will close June 30, 2024.

If you want to vote in this year's election, be sure to follow these steps:

- By April 30, please ensure we have your correct email address, as that is required to vote. For security reasons, generic or shared email addresses are not allowed for the election.
- Log in to the [Election 2024 page](#) to review all the candidates.
- Watch your email for information and links to cast your ballot on the voting website. This site is a different site than the AALAS website.

Please note, AALAS members must be logged into the website to view candidate profiles.



New Community Site

Live Now!



Attention AALAS Members! The first step in our digital overhaul is the new and improved version of our ACE community site, which is now live! Visit community.aalas.org and sign in to view the new page! And stay tuned for the launch of our new AALAS website this fall!

CATCHING UP WITH AALAS

Episode 7 of the LAsT Word (an AALAS podcast)

The new Journal Editorial Team: Drs. Mark Suckow and Michael Fallon.

Mark A. Suckow, DVM, DACLAM, is the newly appointed Editor-in-Chief. Dr. Suckow has nearly 40 years of experience in the LAS community, most recently serving as Associate Vice President for Research and Attending Veterinarian, and Professor of Biomedical Engineering at the University of Kentucky. As an award-winning scholar, Dr. Suckow has published over 150 peer-reviewed research articles and numerous book chapters, received over \$10M in research funding, and holds several patents. In addition to his extensive scholarly work, Dr. Suckow demonstrates a long service history to the LAS community, including serving AALAS as its President and as a member of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and Editorial Review Board. Mark earned his Bachelor of Sciences (BS) and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degrees from the University of Wisconsin, became a Diplomate of ACLAM in 1991, and serves as an emeritus member of the AAALAC Council on Accreditation.



To further enhance the AALAS editorial team, Michael T. Fallon, DVM, PhD, DACLAM (retired), has joined as the new Executive Editor. Dr. Fallon has served with AALAS for the past two years as the Interim Director of Education and Scientific Affairs and most recently as Special Consultant. In this new role, Dr. Fallon will continue to streamline the publication process and improve scientific rigor and timely review of manuscripts. Mike earned his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree from Purdue University, and his Ph.D. in Comparative Pathology from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He became a Diplomate of ACLAM in 1991. Dr. Fallon was instrumental in securing and implementing the AALAS Learning Library which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2023.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDC7ztgHD>
F4

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AALAS UPDATE



Our organization is celebrating our 75th anniversary in 2024, and we are elated to have hit that milestone! First and foremost, we want to thank you, our amazing members, for your dedication to our organization. We would not be here without you.

To honor and celebrate your contributions to our association, we invite you to tell us why you feel at home with AALAS. Our #IAmAALAS campaign allows you to share your story with our audience in a brief video clip. Submissions opened in Salt Lake City, and they will close on July 31, 2024.

Need some ideas for what to submit? Check out the teaser video below!

[I Am AALAS Teaser Video](#)

To begin the process, you'll first need to fill out the AALAS Video Agreement form listed on our website. After that is completed, you'll agree to our terms of service, and you're ready to send us your video!

[I Am AALAS Submission](#)

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Animal Welfare**

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INTERESTED IN JOINING **WBAALAS** AS
AN INSTITUTIONAL MEMBER?

Visit the Washington Branch AALAS website at
wbaalas.org/join for information on membership
fees, benefits, and other perks!

COMMERCIAL MEMBERS



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