Leader of the Pack
By: Dr. Michael Huerkamp, Director

There’s an old proverb that wishes “may you live in interesting times”. While many of us might readily receive that as a blessing and hope for life experiences that are stimulating and remarkable, rumor has it that its origins can be traced to an English translation of an ancient Chinese curse! Be that as it may, we do live in interesting times right now. We find ourselves at the convergence of not only the progressively increasing anticipation and exhilaration of the year-end holiday season, the feelings of warmth and goodwill engendered by being with friends and family, and the restless excitement associated with the expectation of a national change in political direction; but with a downturn in the economy and the worst financial situation and overall hard times in 80 years in the United States, anxiety about what that development may mean for all of us, a serious illness challenging a beloved and valiant coworker held in high esteem throughout our organization and the university, and even the worst vermin outbreak in the “modern” history of the DAR. Perhaps, the real curse is to not only live in interesting times, but to combine that with feeling powerless against events and fully at the mercy of capricious outside forces. While the proverb curse of “may you live in interesting times” remains of arguable and unclear origin, none other than Wikipedia, that indisputable wellspring of information, speculates that the phrase is from a Chinese saying "时势造英雄" (pronounced: pin-yin: shi shao ying xiong), meaning heroes are made in turbulent times. This interesting and turbulent era of ours has the power to worry and dismay us, but also affords each of us the chance to be heroes in our personal and professional lives. These times certainly remind us that what we do within the context of the research enterprise both at Emory and as part of the national effort are important to our economy, to the health and wellbeing of people everywhere, and fuel the buoyant anticipation that Michelle will be back working with us healthy and soon. It was interesting to me how avidly the world, much of it not blessed with democracy or peaceful transitions of power, watched our November 4 elections and in some cases wildly celebrated the result, but those of us here, whether elated by or simply accepting the decision of the electorate, went quietly back to doing the work of America on November 5. That serves as an example of what we must continue to do here in the face of institutional and national challenges. As we push for ever more quiet successes ourselves, please know that I am so grateful for each of you and thank you for your daily efforts in our care of animals and support of science. I am not particularly good at eluding some things (for example, as about 10% of my columns would suggest, I like to write about juxtapositions and convergences and cross-roads), but I am going to stay away from wishes about interesting times as I close this column. My hope, as usual, is that your holidays are filled with joy and goodwill, but also that the New Year inspires and finds us to be heroes and not victims.
Kudos to **Greg Kable** from Darlene Wyche-Alha-De for always being there to solve my computer problems. You can always be counted upon, even with your hectic daily schedule. It is tremendously appreciated.

Kudos to **Lynne Morelock-Roy, Greg Kable and Russell Neal** from Karen Lieber for dropping everything on a Friday afternoon to help me hire a work study.

Kudos to **Cisco Calderon and Gary Roesinger** from Nancy Miller for all their hard work in moving equipment and supplies, no matter what. Thanks for getting Peavine and B Tunnel cleared out and set up again, after floor repairs.

Kudos to **Kasia Moore, Tony Favaloro, Deb Mook, and Marilyn Arce** from Dondrae Coble for the hard work on 11/26/08 prior to the Thanksgiving holiday.

Kudos to **David McDaniel and everyone else helping in Surgery** from Dr. Huerkamp and in acknowledgment of high praise received from Vivek Kumar in the Chaikof lab for organizational assistance and other support.

Kudos and special thanks to **Lynne Morelock-Roy, Michelle Kulasiewicz, Greg Kable, Dr. Huerkamp, Dr. Mook, Dr. Taylor, Nancy Miller, Karen Lieber** from Lisa Copeland who sat through the website meetings and helped dredge through the DAR content. All of your ideas and input have been invaluable.

Kudos to **Tina Engle** from Darlene Wyche-Alha-De for always so willingly taking on some of my responsibilities when I am away. You do it with a smile and I thank you very much. You are a pleasure to work with.

Kudos to **Neville Whitehead** from Nancy Miller for keeping up with all the equipment repairs and still handling Whitehead.

Kudos to **Kasia Moore and Tony Favaloro** from Dondrae Coble for ivermectinizing all primates except Maggie on such short notice.

Kudos to **Drs. Lee, Jean, Arce, Coble, Mook, Taylor, Sharma and Garcia** from Dr. Huerkamp for an outstanding set of necropsy reports over the period of March into July 2008. The histories, histopathologic descriptions, clinicopathologic correlations and all other aspects of the reports were superb.

Kudos to **all the veterinary staff** from Doug Taylor that stayed behind during the AALAS meeting and kept the DAR ship sailing smoothly.

Kudos to **Russell Neal** from Darlene Wyche-Alha-De for gathering Benefits information for me and for so patiently explaining FSA’s. You are always pleasant and I enjoy saying Good Morning to you as well as working with you.

Kudos to **Ann Griffey and the Woodruff Staff** from Nancy Miller for handling the "wild rodent" crisis. Especially to Shannon Baker, for standing his ground, and not letting the "intruders" take over his cage wash.

Kudos to **Deb Mook** from Dondrae Coble for helping with parasitology (feral rats).

Kudos to **Roger Dixon, Gary Menefee, and Monterris Fowler** from Dr. Huerkamp for being recognized by Portia Allen of the School of Medicine for positive attitudes, excellent customer skills and profound professionalism.

Kudos to **all the office staff** from Doug Taylor for maintaining a positive team spirit during these challenging times.

Kudos to my manager, **Lynne Morelock-Roy** from Darlene Wyche-Alha-De for all your hard work in keeping DAR’s finances on track. I enjoy our very productive weekly meetings.

Kudos to **Marilyn Arce** from Dondrae Coble for the wonderful necropsies (feral rats).

Kudos to **Rashidat Ayantunji and the Pediatrics Staff** from Nancy Miller for having a great IACUC inspection - no responses or corrections needed. Great job!

Kudos to **Claude Pitt** from Dr. Huerkamp for being recognized by the Shur lab for anticipating their needs, always asking if they need anything, and keeping their room well stocked.

Kudos to **Cisco Calderon, Dr. Mike Huerkamp, Nancy Miller, and Neville Whitehead** from Darlene Wyche-Alha-De for consistently handing in P-card paperwork on time. Not only is it on time, the paperwork is filled out correctly! All of you receive an A+. Many thanks!

Kudos to **Selma Yarney, Rachel Ransom and Koya Alford** from Dr. Huerkamp for going the extra mile in continuing to offer thoughts and recommendations on how to improve the DAR.
Under the Scope

Name: Sabrena Harvey
Position: Animal Care Tech I
Longevity: 4.5 years
Personal Background: I am a Georgia raised peach. Mother of four wonderful boys, Harvey 12, Brandon 10, Tyrone 4, and Jaylen 2. My mom's name is Janice. I have one brother, Dexter and he has three girls of his own. My boys are his boys and his girls are my girls.

Most Rewarding Aspect of your Job: Coming to work doing what I love. Looking after my animals and working with a good group of people.

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go: England, Paris, and Egypt to see Pyramids.
If you could have any luxury item in the world, what would you get: My own plane to fly where ever I want.
In your free time, what do you enjoy doing: Spending time with my family, going to the movies, reading books, swimming. When I am not doing any of those, I try to get some rest. :)

Happy Holidays

From the Desk of Darlene Wyche-Alha-De

To everyone that places supply orders, I would like to reiterate the importance of turning in packing slips of your goods to me. This includes CO2 tanks and Oxygen from Specialty Gases/NexAir. Please make sure you detach the packing slip, initial that you have received it, and place in my mailbox. By doing so, you are certifying that your goods have been received in order and that it is okay to pay the invoice. This practice also provides a complete history of the order from start to finish. Of late, many packing slips are not being turned in and I am having to hunt down the requestor to either find the packing slip or ask if it is okay to pay the invoice. Your assistance with this process is greatly appreciated.
Birthdays

Dondrae Coble
Ann Griffey
JJ Silva
Cisco Calderon
Thomas Jackson
Michelle Kulasiwicz
Darlene Wyche-Alha-De
Calvin Dunkley
Cristina Caldwell
Gideon Usifoh
Kathy McCormack
Sabrena Harvey
Shannon Baker
Gary Menefee
Tualsi Ghimirey
Deb Mook
Daniel Amankwah
Lisa Copeland

December 2nd
December 9th
December 11th
December 19th
December 21st
December 24th
December 26th
December 31st
December 31st
January 4th
January 9th
January 13th
January 14th
February 4th
February 11th
February 13th
February 24th
February 27th

Anniversaries

Thomas Tramas
Erik Thurmond
Marsha Howard
Rashidat Ayantunji
Claude Reese
Minida Dowdy
Neville Whitehead
Marlene Barnes
Monterris Fowler
Tony Favaloro
Darlene Wyche-Alha-De
Gary Menefee

December 1st (2)
December 3rd (7)
December 4th (8)
December 15th (5)
December 17th (7)
January 13th (12)
January 22nd (13)
February 5th (8)
February 11th (5)
February 12th (2)
February 25th (18)
February 25th (7)

Welcome

We have several new employees here at DAR. Please welcome:

Aaron Gray: Animal Care Tech I Whitehead
Carlos Magana: Animal Care Tech II Woodruff
Paul Jenkins: Assistant Operations Manager Whitehead
Jen Perry: Assistant Colony Manager Whitehead
Eugene Presley: AC Trainee cagewash Whitehead
Gray Vickery: AC Trainee cagewash Whitehead
Jimmy Brownlee: AC Trainee cagewash Pediatrics
Jonathon Buggs: AC Trainee cagewash Pediatrics
Kristy Weed: Vet Tech II

Milestones

Congratulations to Rashidat Ayantunji on her 5th year of service at DAR!
Congratulations to Monterris Fowler on his 5th year of service at DAR!
Congratulations to Koya Alford on her passing the LAT exam!
Daniel Amankwah participated in a pilot program for Supervisory Training, here on the Emory campus, that was launched in January. It took a lot of time commitment on Daniel's part to complete the program, but he did so.
Lamprey’s
By: April Wiles and Gideon Usifoh

Earlier this year, Max Cooper and his research team transferred from the University of Alabama in Birmingham to Emory University bringing with them two very interesting new species. The species are called lampreys and hagfish.

A lamprey (sometimes also called lamprey eel) is a jawless fish with a toothed, funnel-like sucking mouth. While lampreys are well known for those species which bore into the flesh of other fish to suck their blood, these species make up the minority. In zoology, lampreys are often not considered to be true fish because of their vastly different morphology and physiology.

Lampreys live mostly in coastal and fresh waters, although at least one species, Geotria australis, probably travels significant distances in the open ocean, as evidenced by the lack of reproductive isolation between Australian and New Zealand populations, and the capture of a specimen in the Southern Ocean between Australia and Antarctica. They are found in most temperate regions except Africa. Their larvae have a low tolerance for high water temperatures, which is probably why they are not found in the tropics. However, the lampreys at the Rollins facility are housed in tanks that contain one bag of sand and dechlorinated water. The sand has to first be rinsed thoroughly to remove any debris that may be present and each tank is changed every three months.

Lampreys begin life as burrowing freshwater larvae (ammocoetes). At this stage, they are toothless, have rudimentary eyes, and feed on microorganisms. This larval stage can last five to seven years and so was originally thought to be an independent organism. They transform into adults in a metamorphosis which is at least as radical as that seen in amphibians. It involves a radical rearrangement of internal organs, development of eyes and transformation from a mud-dwelling filter feeder into an efficient swimming parasite/predator that typically moves to the sea. The adult feeds by attaching its mouth to a fish, secreting an anticoagulant to the host, and feeding on the blood and tissues of the host. In most species this phase lasts about 18 months. However, their current diet is five to six Brewer's yeast tablets that have been dissolved is given to them every two weeks and the water is changed the following day.

Studies have shown that lampreys have a unique type of immune system with parts that are unrelated to the antibodies, which identify and neutralize foreign bodies such as bacteria and viruses, found in mammals. The main objective for studying such a fascinating animal for the Cooper lab is to find out how exactly this unique immune system works. What has been discovered in recent years by Cooper lab is that lampreys do not have immune system involving immunoglobulin-based antibodies found in all vertebrates (including humans). In contrary, lampreys evolved an alternative adaptive immune system based on structurally different antibodies that are named Variable Lymphocyte Receptors. Even though structurally different from immunoglobulin-based antibodies, VLR antibodies are equally diverse and appear to have similar function to immunoglobulin-based antibodies, whereby microbe-induced VLR antibodies promote clearance of the infectious agent, presumably by neutralization, opsonization, and other mechanisms. Our laboratory tries to understand this unique immune system and to utilize it to develop novel biotechnology reagents. To learn more about Max Cooper and his research, you can visit the following website: www.pathology.emory.edu/cooperlab
Change in Accrued Holiday Leave Policy

This week, we became aware of a change in the accrued holiday pay policy that needs to be imparted to all staff. The gist of it is that employees may accrue the hours that they work on a holiday to be used within one year or they may be paid for it in that pay period. There are implications for doing this. The employee will receive the cash in hand, but many of our staff rely on these hours to pay for ancillary leave time and this would not be available if they chose to have it pay out. Please discuss this with your staff and let them all know before we go into the Christmas and NY holidays. This policy applies to bi-weekly employees only.

Policy Details

Nonexempt employees who work on a holiday recognized by Emory will receive a premium in addition to their base pay rates and applicable shift differentials for each hour worked.

The holiday premium is equal to half the employee’s hourly pay rate, resulting in the employee being paid time and a half for working on a holiday. For example, an employee who works the evening shift on a holiday would receive his/her base pay rate at a rate of time and a half, and the evening shift differential for the job (if eligible).

When the actual holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, Emory officially observes the holiday on a weekday; however, holiday premium may be paid for hours worked on either the actual holiday or the day observed by Emory. The day on which holiday premium will be paid is determined by individual departments. If an employee works both days, he/she is eligible for holiday premium on only one of the two days.

In addition to the holiday premium, an employee who works on a day officially designated as an Emory holiday may either take off hours equivalent to his/her full time equivalent status (FTE) with pay at a later date or receive additional pay for these hours in lieu of taking the time off at a later date. Employees who regularly work shifts of more than 8 hours and take the “holiday” at a later date receive 8 hours of holiday pay, and must use annual leave hours to be compensated for the remainder of the hours. Any accrued holiday hours must be taken within one year of the holiday worked, scheduled with the supervisor’s approval, paid at the regular base rate, and recorded as holiday hours.

Co-workers & Friends of Michelle

Let’s come together and be a part of Michelle’s healing process by contributing in any of the following ways:

Gift Card (Cash donations for meals)
Gift Basket (Inspirational or fun treats!)
Birthday Cards (Dec. 24th)

Blood Drive, Friday, December 12th, School of Medicine – Lobby, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

You can bring your donation or contribution to Tina or Russell. Greg will be delivering these gifts to Michelle on Friday, Dec. 19th. We ask that you drop off your gifts anytime between now and then.

Happy Holidays!