

Chapter Eight

The History of the Laboratory Animal Management Association

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The management and administration of laboratory animal facilities, employees, and budgets began changing in the late 1970s. It became apparent that managers would need to be better trained in order to meet the new standards that were beginning to appear. Before this time, the emphasis was on the standards of care provided the animals, but now the emphasis included the legal rights of the employees, good management techniques, budgeting, and planning.

The need for better management was recognized by many of the facility directors, who were primarily veterinarians. Many of the directors were very good managers of personnel, facilities, and budgets; but were beginning to realize that these areas were becoming very complex. They knew they could not spend the time required in management and stay current in the emerging changes in disease management and control. These changes resulted in the need for developing laboratory animal managers that were educated in management and personnel issues, aware of the functions of the laboratory animal programs, and cognizant of scientific methods. The American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS) was a scientific organization with little opportunity to fill this niche in training and education. Therefore, the Laboratory Animal Management Association (LAMA) was conceived to help managers prepare for this need.

LAMA was not conceived and started immediately. It took many discussions in the early 1980s at meetings around the country, from AALAS National Meetings to Continued Medical Education (CONMED) meetings to finally formulate ideas that could be structured into the beginning of something worthwhile. The first known document was a memorandum



LAMA members during an annual meeting in Puerto Rico in 1997.

from Tom Darby to Paul Ernest, U. Kristina Stephens, Gail Heidbrink, Regina Herron, Jim Alford, and Clayton Cisar. Darby's letter laid out a plan to identify people in the field of laboratory animal care that could meet and recommend subject areas for the development of the educational programs, prioritize the need for these programs, and develop preliminary schedules for initiation of the programs. The people identified should be managers or directors of animal facilities. The recommendations emanating from this group should be given immediate attention because of the critical need for educational programs in animal facility management. That meeting took place on November 8, 1983, in San Antonio, Tex., at the AALAS meeting and was chaired by Tom Darby.

More than 40 animal facility managers, directors, and veterinarians attended the meeting in San Antonio. Many discussions were held about the need for management training programs and how best to address the development of future training programs. By consensus, this group agreed that an organization should be formed to address the needs of animal facility administrators. It was agreed to hold another meeting at the 1984 AALAS National Meeting.

The first general meeting of LAMA was held on October 29, 1984, and U. Kristina Stephens was nominated as chairperson of a steering committee consisting of: Clayton Cisar, Gail Heidbrink, Paul Lofgreen, Jr., James D. Stevens, and Roger Thacker. The steering committee was charged with setting up policy and by-law statements, including membership rules. The steering committee composed and presented to the membership the following:

Purpose

The Laboratory Animal Management Association will develop a continuing education effort to review and renew basic and advanced management techniques as it pertains to laboratory animal resources. More specifically, the purpose is to educate laboratory animal facility management and make available resource material, personal resources, as well as set up exchange programs for management personnel. LAMA aims to develop managers through dissemination of ideas, experience, and knowledge among managers in the field; to act as spokesperson for members before other biomedical associations or groups; to encourage and assist in training of managers; to increase the standards of those employed in the field; and to encourage appreciation of the role that managers play in biomedical research.

Affiliate Status

The LAMA will seek affiliate status with the American Association

for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS) as soon as formally organized. The formation of the LAMA in no way reflects any intent for members to separate from AALAS, but instead wishes to strengthen and unify efforts of the two organizations. LAMA became an affiliate of AALAS and later Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC) International. The exchange of ideas and shared resources has been a benefit to all three organizations.

Meetings

It was decided that the use of seminars, demonstrations, vendor presentations, visits to vendor and research facilities and workshops would be used as educational tools to address the needs of animal facility managers. Suggestions were solicited from the meeting participants as to future topics for workshops or seminars. The ten most popular topics were as follows:

- a. Computers
 - 1) Utilization of institutional data processing equipment in the operation of an animal facility.
 - 2) The use of personal computers in animal facility management.
- b. Personnel Relations
 - 1) Disciplinary actions
 - 2) Employee motivation
 - 3) Communications
 - 4) Problem solving
 - 5) Performance evaluations, etc.
- c. Time Management
- d. Effective Writing
- e. Cost Containment
- f. Grant Writing
- g. Unionization
- h. Animal Welfare
- i. Accounting and Bookkeeping
- j. Communications with Administration and Investigators

Charter Officers

In the early fall of 1985, a ballot was mailed out to all the members for the election of the charter officers of LAMA. It was asked that the ballot be returned by October 1, 1985. The results were published in the *LAMA LINES* as follows:

New Officers

President—Clayton F. Cisar
 President-Elect—Gwen Fitzgerald
 Secretary—Delores Pfifer
 Treasurer—Jeanne DeWard
 Board of Directors
 One Year—James A. Alford, Jr., Paul Schwikert
 Two Years—Paul Lofgreen, Jr., U. Kristina Stephens

LAMA Publications

LAMA printed a brochure to define the goals and purposes of the organization. Following are excerpts from this publication.

The utilization of animals in research has led to rapid recent advancement in medical knowledge. Use of laboratory animals has provided increasing insight into the physical, mental, emotional, and social needs of man and other animal forms.

The purpose of LAMA is to develop programs to educate laboratory animal facility management personnel through resource material, personal resources, networking, and programs.

The specific objectives of the Laboratory Animal Management Association are to:

- conduct annual management seminars to encourage and assist in the training of managers;
- increase the standards of those employed in the field;
- encourage appreciation of the role of laboratory animal managers in biomedical research;
- be a consultant within the field of laboratory animal management; and
- be a spokesperson for laboratory animal managers to other biomedical associations or groups.

The Laboratory Animal Management Association is an organization specifically for individuals involved in the training and supervision of personnel, and the design, operation, and management of animal facilities and equipment.

The Laboratory Animal Management Association:

- advances professionalism,
- provides leadership development opportunities, and
- offers networking opportunities for exchange of ideas among its membership.

LAMA Lines

LAMA Lines began publication on a monthly basis beginning in January, 1986, and has grown from a one-page newsletter to eleven pages. The first editors were Donald W. Holt and Robert H. Weichbrod, PhD. Dr. Weichbrod continues to be the editor and driving force behind the LAMA publications. There were many things of interest in the first issue. One was the logo depicting a Llama in a circle with the words Laboratory Animal Management Association around it. Also in the January issue were the constitution and by-laws with a request for comments by February 1, 1986. By this time LAMA was a well-established organization with international recognition and the second annual meeting was held in Chicago on October 4, 1986 in conjunction with the AALAS National Meeting.

LAMA Review

The official LAMA journal known as the *LAMA Review* began publication in January 1989 with Robert H. Weichbrod, Ph.D., as the editor. The journal is dedicated to providing the highest quality management information to the membership, comprised of professional managers, supervisors, and administrators of laboratory animal care and use programs throughout the world.

Strategic Plan

LAMA progressed nicely through the continuing years under the skilled leadership of its elected officers. In 1995 the President-Elect Joe Bailey proposed that a Strategic Plan be drafted. A Strategic Planning Facilitator, Ed Vovsi, was hired and a committee composed of Paul Schwikert, Dennis Miller, Robert Weichbrod, Beverly Keniston, James Boardman, Regina Herron, Fred Douglas, Charles Schmieder, Kristina Stephens, James Alford, Dennis Taff, and Howard Mosher met in Baltimore, Maryland on October 19 and 20 to formulate the plan.

Awards

The Board of Directors agreed that the Laboratory Animal Management Association would recognize members who have distinguished themselves and LAMA through an awards program. The awards program consisted of The Charles River Award, U. Kristina Stephens Award, LAMA Scholarship Award, and Special Service Award(s).

LAMA Scholarship Award

This award is funded by the LAMA Foundation. The intent of the award is to assist recipients in attending the Institute for Laboratory Animal Management (ILAM) by providing a stipend to help defray the cost of the second year phase. Selection is based on merit pertaining to job performance, academic achievement, professional involvement and contributions, management potential and achievement, and participation in the first year phase.

U. Kristina Stephens Award

The U. Kristina Stephens Award is given for outstanding and exceptional service to the Laboratory Animal Management Association.

Recipients were: 1987-U. Kristina Stephens; 1988-Clayton F. Cisar; 1989-Robert H. Weichbrod; 1990-Robert Mueller III; 1991-John and Kathy Cogan; 1992-Fred Douglas; 1993-Gail A. Heidbrink; 1994-Mary Dittmar; 1995-James Boardman; 1996-Jan Malycky; 1997-Charles R. Schmieder; and 1998-Paul Schwikert.

The Charles River Medallion

The Charles River Medallion is given in recognition of distinguished contributions to the field of laboratory animal management by an administrator/manager who is currently a member of LAMA and engaged in laboratory animal management. LAMA and The Charles River Foundation jointly sponsor the award.

Recipients were: 1990-Clayton F. Cisar; 1991-Charles R. Schmieder; 1992-Robert H. Weichbrod; 1993-John C. Cogan; 1994-U. Kristina Stephens; 1995-Robert Mueller, III; 1996-Fred Douglas; 1997-James A. Alford, Jr.; and 1998-Howard Mosher.

LAMA Special Service Award (The Eagle Award)

These awards are given at the discretion of the current president in recognition of a member who contributes to the success of the organization.

Recipients are: Robert H. Weichbrod; Barbara Leard; Howard Mosher; and Mary Dittmar.

LAMA Foundation

The LAMA Foundation was founded in memory of Clayton F. Cisar who was a founding member, past president, and inspirational leader of LAMA. The foundation served to hold and administer the memorial funds donated in Cisar's name. The foundation grew slowly until 1992 when LAMA and the Institute for Laboratory Animal Management decided to utilize the Foundation as a way to administer scholarships for second year ILAM students.

Institute for Laboratory Animal Management (ILAM)

LAMA members originally conceived the idea of ILAM and felt this close relationship should remain. Both organizations function to educate and enhance the careers of managers in the animal research field.

ILAM is an educational program organized by the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science. The LAMA leadership and the ILAM organizational committee entered into an agreement in 1992 to hold a silent auction to generate revenue that would be used to fund scholarships for second-year ILAM students. This scholarship was originally conceived by the charter members of ILAM. They subsequently asked LAMA if they would be willing to coordinate the scholarship program. The ILAM Board of Regents found this to be beneficial to both parties in that the ILAM Regents would not be involved in the selection process and thereby not subject to student bias, and the auction would be administered by LAMA, thereby relieving the Regents of an additional responsibility, and placing the funds in the LAMA Foundation would facilitate the process of collecting and distributing funds. The cooperation between these two organizations is critical and the LAMA Foundation creates a wonderful opportunity for nurturing this relationship. The ILAM program benefits greatly by the fact that it is associated with LAMA and conversely LAMA benefits by its association with ILAM.

Membership

The membership has grown over the years from a few people who felt a need and had a vision to more than 500 members who share that vision. LAMA presently has 530 members, with 49 institutional members, and 45 members representing 10 countries other than the United States. The membership in international with members from Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, England, France, Greece, Latvia, Sweden, and The Netherlands.

The Continued Vision

The association continues to dedicate itself to enhancing the quality of management and care of laboratory animals throughout the world. We will do this by developing programs to educate managers of laboratory animal facilities with resources consisting of educational materials, personnel, networking, and programs.

References

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2. Darby, Thomas. 1983. Unpublished data.
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