The Our Fall Symposium & Trade Show was a huge success! It took place on September 22nd at the Salk Institute and our keynote speaker this year was Dr. Cindy Buckmaster, who is an active and passionate advocate for animal welfare and biomedical progress. We also had a special presentation on “What can SDAALAS DO for YOU?” where we had a chance to present to almost 200 attendees what SDAALAS is all about and some of the many benefits of being a member. We also introduced our new mouse mascot!

Our Holiday party this year was held at the beautiful Marina Village on December 8th. Attendees enjoyed great food and cocktails, an ugly Christmas sweater contest and dancing. We had a DJ, karaoke and a photo booth, which made the party very entertaining and fun. We also announced our Tech of Year winner Ashley Butterfield from Pfizer!

A new secretary and president were elected this year and we also had some very motivated volunteers join us. Our website is being completely renovated and will launch in January. Our branch is now on Instagram @SDAALAS and we will soon be on Facebook as well.

The board is also assisting with next year’s D8 meeting, which will be held in May at Newport Beach. It is going to be a huge event, therefore next year we won’t be holding the Fall Symposium, but we will continue to offer monthly “lunch and learn” sessions, workshops and wet labs, certification courses, public outreach, and summer and winter networking events. We will also continue our SDAALAS T-shirt design contest. The deadline for design entry was extended to early 2018 with the winning selection decided in early spring.

All these events were made possible because of our wonderful volunteers and amazing vendors who are an integral part of the San Diego AALAS community. We would like to thank them for another successful year and wish you all Happy Holidays!
Sacramento Valley
This year SVAALAS has provided many social and educational opportunities for our membership to get involved. Our lecture series is thriving with Genentech graciously hosting our monthly meetings. Our wonderful lecturers have covered everything from abnormal primate health cases to the preservation of the Amargosa Vole and even some advice on professional advancement using social media platforms. Each month we gather for dinner and get to listen in on the newest developments in laboratory animal science while connecting with our peers. SVAALAS is looking forward to these lectures continuing for many months to come. This spring our members had the opportunity to learn how to perform full body perfusions on mice! Our instructor Milton from the UC Davis Mouse Biology Program was very knowledgeable and ably taught the procedure to our participants in no time! After everyone got the hang of the perfusions, some eager participants were able to spend additional time learning more about necropsy techniques. It was a fun and informative Saturday afternoon for all who attended. We also hosted a tour of the UC Davis raptor center this fall where our members and their family members had the opportunity to learn about their raptor rehabilitation program and meet a few of their current residents. The SVAALAS guitar titled 'Clone or Die' did quite well at AALAS nationals winning third place in the branch category thanks to the artistic talents of Alex Verducci from Genentech!! As the year comes to an end we are eagerly looking forward to our 12th annual awards banquet where we acknowledge the hard work of some of our outstanding members, welcome our 2018 board members and end the night with a myriad of raffle prizes provided by local businesses and participating vendors.

Southern California
The Southern California Branch of AALAS hosted a sheep handling workshop in Riverside in November. Members had the opportunity to work with sheep handling experts and practice their hand at herding, restraint and hoof trimming. Care and welfare of this important animal model was also covered. Our branch will be hosting our annual Winter Meeting at the Pomona Valley Mining Company. In addition to some excellent food and prizes, members will be treated to an introduction to the interesting research surrounding of Dr. Douglas Fudge. His work at Chapman University focuses on the hagfish (aka, slime-eel), in particular the vast amounts of slime they produce as a defense mechanism. Also associated with this holiday meeting, the branch is sponsoring a blanket drive for the big cats at the Moorpark Teaching Zoo.

The SoCal Branch has been hard at work preparing for the District 8 meeting in Newport Beach. Mark your calendars for May 9-11, 2018 to be there for all the learning, networking, and fun! Please check http://www.socalaalas.org/2018d8aalas often for updates and registration for this exciting CE event.
OAALAS members had much representation at the National Meeting, as presenters, leaders, and award winners. Drs. Melissa Berg, Kris Coleman, Drew Martin and Heather Sidener, as well as Megan O’Brien, Kati Marshall, Nikki Sternberger, Heather Russell, Laura Rollock and Cara Stull represented ONPRC. Dr. Melissa Berg was selected by OAALAS to attend the National AALAS Leadership Academy to kick off the conference, while Dr. Drew Martin sat on the Leadership Academy Development Committee and attended the event to do her best impersonation of Alex Trebek for a fun, end of the day JEOPARDY game. Dr. Berg also received the American Society for Laboratory Animal Practitioners (ASLAP) Travel Award to support her travel to the conference and was recognized at the ASLAP Luncheon on Monday after a riveting lecture about Austin’s famous bats. Kati Marshall, who, as some may remember, took an enviable trip to England this year to tour their biomedical research facilities, officially received the AAALAC International Technician Fellowship and was honored at the AAALAC Luncheon.

We recently sponsored a trip to the Newport Aquarium (Newport, OR) and had a lot of fun playing tourist. Our annual fall Poster Round-up was a rousing success – we had over 30 people attend and more than a dozen posters to view. Dr. Melissa Berg presented a fascinating clinical case (check the December version AALAS’ Journal of Comparative Medicine for the full story!), and Jeff Stanton discussed his talk presented at APV “Development of an Allogeneic Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant Model in Mauritian Origin Cynomolgus Macaques”.

Our annual Awards Banquet is being held Friday, January 26th at the Holiday Inn in Wilsonville. We can’t wait to see familiar faces!
Greetings District 8 AALAS members,

I hope you all had a blast in Austin at the National AALAS meeting. We had a great attendance of over four thousand! While we were there the AALAS Board of Trustees (BOT) held our annual meeting. The full minutes from the meeting will be posted on the AALAS website under Leadership/BOT Minute Archive.

We started off by approving additional support for the AAALAC International Fellowship Award by allowing the provision of housing at the AALAS National Meeting for the one fellowship recipient.

We also approved our 2018 Operational and Capital Assets budgets and the appointment of Ms. Emily Slocum, Ms. Patricia Sikes, and Ms. Lisa Kelly as AALAS Foundation Board Directors-At-Large for three-year terms, 2018-2020.

AALAS BOT Representatives to the AALAS Foundation Board of Directors were approved for the duration of their Trustee terms: Stacy Cantrell (2019), Lindsay Holmes (2020).

The BOT approved the disbandment of the National Meeting Site Review Committee (NMSRC) and transfer of its functions to staff. The AALAS Policies & Procedures Manual (PPM) will be revised accordingly.

In addition to this there has been a reworking for the use of the Ben Cohen Educational Funds. The funds will be used to provide training and resource identification in association management for branch leaders through a Management Summit. The Management Summit will be held at AALAS headquarters in Memphis March 23rd-25th. Each branch president will receive an invite to send on branch member to this event. The Ben Cohen funds will pay for on-site expenses (lodging, transportation, meals, and materials), branches will be responsible for the transportation to Memphis for their participant. The agenda will include:

* Governance (Nominations, Elections, Board Meetings, Parliamentary Procedure)
* Legal Issues for Branches
* Membership Recruitment and Retention
* Meeting Planning: Logistics
* Meeting Planning: Programs
* Financial Issues for Branches
* Government Relations
* Fundraising and Sponsorship
* Advocacy (AALAS Foundation)
* Marketing (website, social media)
* Newsletter/Publications

Please consider sending someone who will be with your branch for a bit such as a vice president. This is a pilot program so don’t wait to send someone next time and miss this opportunity!

Have you ever heard of the Branch Challenge, currently this is where branches can opt in to compete and win a banner and plaque by having the greatest increase in national members joining their branch. However it is time to rework this as large stable branches who do great things will never have a chance of winning this and what do branches do with that giant banner! If you have ideas please send them along to me.

Please contact me if you have any questions, or ideas for things you would like to see.

Wishing you well,
Amber Carte
District 8 Trustee
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