

Wednesday, July 8, 2026	
7:45	CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
8:00-10:00	Session I – Rickettsial Disease Moderator: Ronald D. Tyler Jr., DVM, MS
8:00	The Opossum as a Potential Reservoir for Flea-Borne Typhus Gregory M. Anstead, MD, PhD, South Texas Veterans Healthcare System, San Antonio, TX
8:30	Determination of Risk Factors for Typhus Group Rickettsiosis (Murine Typhus), in Galveston County Lucas S. Blanton, MD, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston, TX
9:00	Analysis of Four Mortality Cases in a Cohort of Probable Flea-Borne Typhus at University Hospital, San Antonio (January 2020 - October 2024) Christopher Dayton, MD, UT Health San Antonio, San Antonio, TX
9:30	Healthcare Provider Training to Reduce Morbidity and Mortality Attributable to Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Flea-borne Typhus in the U.S.-Mexico Border Region Christina Nelson, MD, MPH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Fort Collins, CO
10:00	BREAK
10:30-12:00	Session II – Rabies Moderator: David Smonko, DVM
10:30	A Review of Kentucky Human Rabies Deaths: 1936-2024 Kelly H. Giesbrecht, DVM, MPH, Kentucky Department for Public Health, Frankfo, KY
11:00	Fox Rabies Variants: The Potential for Introduction, Re-emergence, and Host Shift Events in Texas Kathy Parker, MPH, Department of State Health Services, Austin, TX
11:30	The History of Rabies in Texas: Tales, Trivia, and Teasers Pamela J. Wilson, DrCH, MEd, LVT, MCHES, Department of State Health Services (Ret), Austin, TX
12:00-1:30	LUNCH ON YOUR OWN
1:30-3:00	Session III – Chagas Disease Moderator: Susan Schaff, DVM, MPH
1:30	Initial Outcomes of Modified Benznidazole Treatment in Dogs Across Different Stages of Chagas Disease Rachel Busselman, DVM, PhD, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
2:00	Acute Autochthonous Chagas Myocarditis in a Texas Infant Chia-Chi Angela Fu, MD, CTropMed, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
2:30	Veterinary <i>Trypanosoma cruzi</i> Infections: From Animals at the Home of a Recent Human Chagas Disease Case to Government Working Dogs in Texas Sarah Hamer, MS, PhD, DVM, DACVPM, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
3:00	BREAK
3:30-5:30	Session IV – Surveillance Moderator: Paul E. Grunenwald, DVM, MS, DACVPM
3:30	Tick Surveillance Leading to Identification of <i>Amblyomma hebraeum</i> Containing <i>Rickettsia africae</i> , But Negative for <i>Ehrlichia ruminantium</i> in a Texas Resident Returning from International Travel Brent Moore, DVM, MS, MPH, DACVPM, Department of State Health Services, Tyler, TX Michael Allen, PhD, UNT Health, Fort Worth, TX
4:00	Occupational Risk Factors for Latent Tuberculosis Among Dairy Farm Workers in Texas, 2025 Anabel Rodriguez, PhD, MPH, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX Loni Taylor, DVM, PhD, MPH, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
4:30	Identifying Drivers of Medically Important Mosquito Populations through Drone-acquired Imagery Analysis Following Hurricane Beryl in 2024 in Harris County, Texas Angela A. Zieba, MPH, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
5:00	Strengthening Tick and Tick-Borne Pathogen Surveillance through Animal Shelter Collaborations in Harris County, TX Brianna Weber, BS, Harris County Public Health, Houston, TX

Thursday, July 9, 2026	
7:50	CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
8:00-9:30	Session V – Parasitic Zoonoses Moderator: Brendan Sullivan, DVM, MPH, DACVPM
8:00	Leishmaniasis in Animals: Epidemiology, Pathogenesis, Diagnosis, and Management Capt. Gina D’Addario, VMD, OIC, Naval Air Station Corpus Christi (CCNAS), Corpus Christi, TX
8:30	The Curious Case of the Neuro “Sister Psychosis” Christi Olszewski, LVT, Department of State Health Services, Lubbock, TX
9:00	The Resurgence of New World Screwworm and the Impact to Texas Sonja L. Swiger, PhD, MS, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Stephenville, TX
9:30	BREAK
10:00-11:30	Session VI – Vaccine-based Interventions Moderator: Amanda J. Kieffer, DVM, MPH, DACVPM
10:00	Conserved Tick Cement Proteins as Universal Antigens for Multi-Species Vaccine Development Jacquie Berry, BS, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
10:30	Developing an Immunogenic and Cross-Protective Flavivirus mRNA Vaccine Megan Nicole Carey, MD, CTropMed, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
11:00	Within-Herd Transmission Dynamics of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 in U.S. Dairy Cattle: A Modeling Approach Dana Pittman Ratterree, MPH, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
11:30-1:00	LUNCH ON YOUR OWN
1:00-3:00	Session VII – Infectious Disease Testing and Diagnostics Moderator: Cherissa Abdul Hamid, DVM, MPH, DACVPM
1:00	A Metatranscriptomics Approach for Monitoring Arthropod-borne Pathogens in Texas Alexander Arrow, BS, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
1:30	The Defense Food Analysis and Diagnostic Laboratory’s Advances in Infectious Disease Testing and Diagnostics Robert Fathke, DVM, PhD, MS, MPH, DACVPM, U.S. Army, San Antonio, TX Charles Hart, PhD, U.S. Army, San Antonio, TX
2:00	Rapid Detection of blaCTX-M ESBL-producing Enterobacterales in Canine Urine Sara Lawhon, DVM, PhD, DACVM, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX
2:30	Metatranscriptomic Survey of <i>Ornithodoros turicata</i> Soft Ticks in Texas Reveals New Vector-Microbe Associations Alexander Kneubehl, PhD, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
3:00-4:00	SCIENTIFIC POSTER SESSION
4:00-5:00	Session VIII – One Health Moderator: Kelly Broussard, MPH
4:00-4:30	The Role of a Medical Entomologist in One Health Nina Dacko, MS, Texas A&M University & Gulf South VECTOR, Dallas, TX
4:30-5:00	TBD
5:00-7:00	J.V. Irons Keynote Lecture & Reception Moderator: Bonny Mayes, MA, E-RYT 200, YACEP
5:00-6:00	Chagas Disease in Texas and Beyond Caryn Bern, MD, University of California, San Francisco, CA
6:00-7:00	RECEPTION

Friday, July 10, 2026	
7:50	CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
8:00-9:00	Session IX – Case Reports Moderator: Briana O’Sullivan, MPH
8:00	Chronic Loiasis Presenting as a Migratory Conjunctival Worm Years After Exposure Divya Pillendla, MPH, Harris County Public Health, Houston, TX
8:30	Hantavirus, or Something Like it, in Travis County, Texas 2025 Anne Hanley, BSN, RN, Austin Public Health, Austin, TX
9:00	Novicidemia vs. Tularemia Revisited: A Suspected Novicidemia in an 8-year-old Female James Mobley, MD, MPH, San Patricio County Local Health Authority (Ret), Sinton, Texas
9:30	Soil, Spores, and Surprise: Travel-Associated Cutaneous Anthrax with Livestock Exposure Abisola Oladimeji, MD, MPH, Houston Health Department, Houston, TX
10:00	BREAK
10:30-12:00	Session X – Tickborne Disease Moderator: Sarah Murphy Gunter, PhD, MPH
10:30	Did the Prairie Dogs Volunteer as Tribute? Cherissa Abdul Hamid, DVM, MPH, DACVPM, Texas Department of State Health Services, Lubbock, TX
11:00	Addressing Challenges in Molecular Surveillance: Examining the Influence of Tick and Spirochete Biology on Relapsing Fever Spirochete Detection Job Lopez, PhD, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
11:30	The Dynamics and Epidemiological Implications of Vertical Transmission of <i>Borrelia turicatae</i> from the Argasid Vector, <i>Ornithodoros turicata</i> Brittany Armstrong, PhD, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
12:00	CONCLUSION

Backup Presentations:

Strongyloidiasis Epidemiology and Diagnostic Gaps in a Southern U.S. Safety-Net Health System	Megan Duffey, MD, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX
Arbovirus Surveillance in Equine Using Diagnostic Testing from a Medical Diagnostic Laboratory	Laura Hopkins, MPH, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX