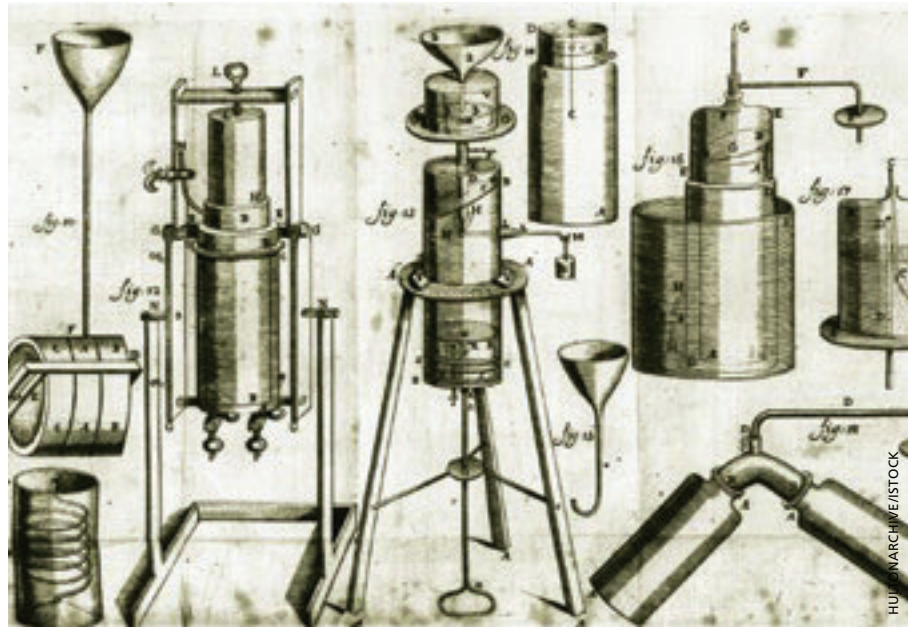


What gadget, real or imagined, would you most like to have? How would it help you help animals?

That was the question we asked you for this issue's Coffee Break. Many of you wrote of magic wands to neuter animals or make pet owners more responsible—but there were other creative thingamajig ideas, too! For more of them, go to animalsheltering.org/coffeebreak.



I would like a Teflon cat litter box. I am around a lot of cats. I have four cats from the shelter that I volunteer at, which only houses cats and kittens. I work at a veterinarian's office, where I clean and care for cats and kittens. I pet-sit numerous cats in many of my clients' homes. I've tried every cat litter product I can find, cheap and expensive, looking for a litter that could be scooped easily. I've used many different scoopers that didn't make the job much easier. I've also bought various cat litter boxes of various sizes and shapes. Then one day I thought, "What about a Teflon litter box?" Then everything could scoop easily and not stick. I've spoken to several people about this idea, and they didn't think I was crazy!

—*Caroline Delgado-Schneider*
Grateful Paw Cat Shelter
East Northport, Long Island, New York

Easy for me to answer—I've always wanted to see the day when microchips had a GPS component involved so we could track a lost animal. I think we might see this become a reality one day. Why not? We can track stolen cars this way.

—*Leilani Vierra, CEO*
Placer SPCA
Roseville, California

How about a Jetsons-inspired, all-in-one animal intake machine? Just drop the animal onto the conveyor belt, and it is bathed, brushed, groomed, vaccinated, and collared before it reaches the awaiting technician on the other end. Shelters could upgrade to the deluxe model that also features a pedicure station and a color-coordinated neckerchief to help them stand out in the crowded adoption room!

—*Shelly Simmons, Division Manager*
Greenville County Animal Care Services
Greenville, South Carolina

I would love to invent a Kitty Foster Momma. She would be washable, heated to keep kittens warm, have natural nipples for kittens to nurse off of, be refillable with kitten milk replacement and be kept at perfect kitten temperature, and be plush and furry to make them feel more secure. I would love to have a natural cat heartbeat button to turn on to settle upset kittens. This would be an amazing thing to help the numerous abandoned kittens we get every year. Nothing would replace a real momma, but I think it would be worth its weight in gold.

—*Tammy Holloway, Director*
Marion-Grant County Humane Society
Marion, Indiana

We'd love to have soft, warm beds made of fabric that's totally nonchewable! If a hole were to be made, it would magically close itself, thereby alleviating the need to sweep up fabric scraps and stuffing from an overzealous pup who played with his bed all night instead of sleeping! Then we could keep sewing new beds and not have to repair old ones, plus less time would be spent by kennel staff cleaning up the mess.

—Joan Laisney, coordinator
Kennel Comforters
San Diego, California

I'd like to have a huge crane to lift the top off our building so people could see all the fabulous things we do to help pets every minute of the day. Hopefully, that would keep the donations coming in so we can expand programs and help even more pets.

—Lane Phalen, volunteer
PR Committee Chair
TAILS Humane Society
DeKalb, Illinois

When we have an offsite adoption event and an animal is adopted, we all stop and applaud. The gadget I would love to see is a beautiful bell that would ring throughout Jersey City whenever an animal is adopted. The beautiful sound would let everyone know that an animal now has a permanent, loving home and would bring a smile to their face. Hopefully, it would remind them that adoption is an option and how important animals are to us. They are truly "magic to our ears!"

—Janet Russell, Director of Development
Liberty Humane Society
Jersey City, New Jersey

How about a money tree? Oh, and a machine that instantly transforms irresponsible pet owners into responsible ones.

—Jess Allison, Shelter Manager
Orange County Animal Services
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

It would be remarkable if someone could invent a machine that lets animals talk (similar to the dogs in the movie *Up!*). They could tell us if they're not feeling well, what their favorite food is, if they'd prefer to live in a home with other animals, and what qualities they are looking for in their new family!

—Bethany Kloc, Special Events
Coordinator and Grant Writer
SPCA Serving Erie County
Tonawanda, New York

I would love to have a net with some sort of breakaway capabilities or something that made the transfer of angry cats into cages much easier and lessened the possibility of escape.

—Mary Ellen Wood, Humane Officer
Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA
San Mateo, California

A magic wand to wave over each and every town, village and city that would magically spay and neuter each and every stray, companion, and feral cat ... and if that doesn't work, each and every human that doesn't take the responsibility to spay/neuter and love forever their fur friends.

—Denice M. Martin, Assistant Kennel
Manager/Adoption-admissions Specialist
Finger Lakes SPCA, Inc.
Bath, New York

My gadget is an easily identifiable, brightly colored scarf/bandanna (called a "Look But Don't Touch" scarf) that dogs with "issues" would have attached to their collars when out in public. This scarf would alert other dog guardians at a glance that the approaching dog is uncomfortable with other dogs/people. This would be so helpful for those who are trying to exercise their special-needs dog and avoid those "My dog is friendly" and "My dog isn't" conversations.

—Lora O'Connor, Interim Director
Humane Society of Western Montana
Missoula, Montana

Animal Sheltering congratulates Lane Phalen of Illinois, whose submission was selected in a random drawing from those published in this issue. TAILS Humane Society, where she works, will receive a free coffee break: a \$50 gift certificate to a local coffee shop. "Bone" appetit!

Next question: What is the most heartwarming animal welfare experience you've ever had?

Please submit your responses (150 words or less) at animalsheltering.org/coffeebreak or send them to Editor, *Animal Sheltering*/HSUS, 2100 L St. NW, Washington, DC 20037. **Your answer may be printed in a future issue of *Animal Sheltering*.** If your response is chosen for publication, you will be entered into a drawing to win a **free coffee break (valued at \$50)** for your organization. Responses may be edited for length or clarity; no donation or purchase is necessary to win. See animalsheltering.org for contest rules, or send an e-mail or letter to the above addresses to request a printed copy.