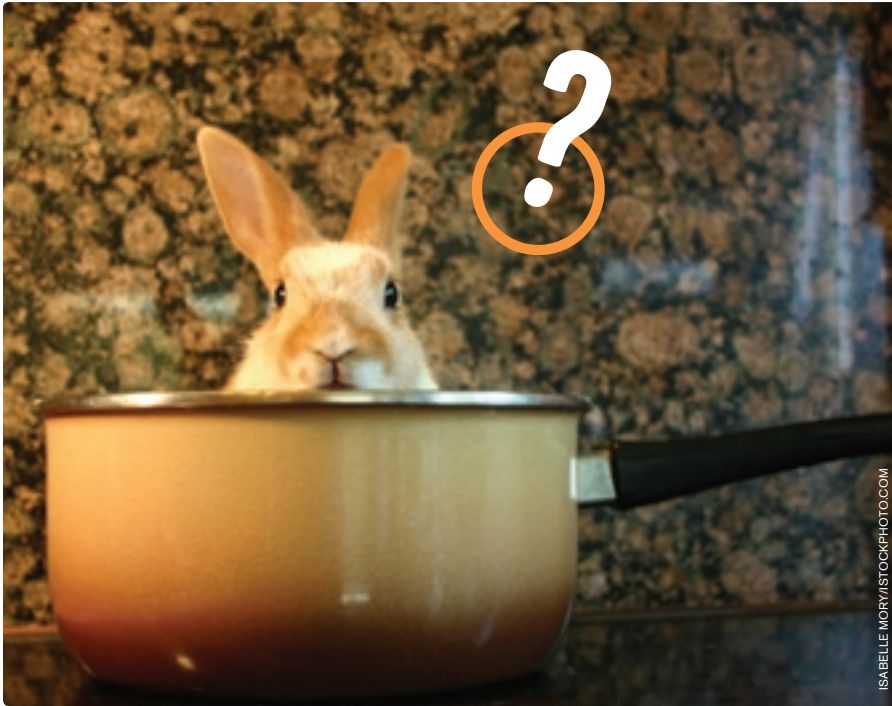


Coffee Break



What is the funniest question you've received from a member of the public?

That was the question we asked you for this issue's Coffee Break. Your answers ranged from the hilarious to the scary to the bizarre—and you sent us so many that we ran out of space in these pages. To read more readers' responses, visit animalsheltering.org/coffeebreak.

All of our rabbits are spayed or neutered prior to adoption, and it is clear on our website that these are pet rabbits. We had a woman ask if we had any large (12 pounds or more) rabbits, because she wanted to breed them for meat. According to her, they are very tasty and tender! We had to politely tell her all of our rabbits are pets only.

—Amanda Howard, Adoption Consultant, Quebec Rabbit Rescue, Dorval, Quebec, Canada

Just this morning, a woman called the shelter asking about volunteer opportunities. It seemed like a normal question until she asked how much volunteers were paid.

—Dolores Murray, Volunteer Coordinator, Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, Alexandria, Virginia

I had one adopter call to say her new cat was making a strange noise. She was afraid the cat was going to “explode.” It turned out the cat was purring.

—Phyllis Ayoob, President, CATS-CAN, Inc., Geneva, Florida

Someone recently called and asked us if we thought it was safer for them to have a pet wolf or a pet cougar in their house with their children (and two small dogs and a cat).

—Lisa Stoner, VP/Treasurer, Peace River Refuge & Ranch, Zolfo Springs, Florida

I received a long-distance call from an older-sounding gentleman. He was concerned about the problem with wild cattle in our area. (Understand: We are in Ottawa, Ontario, our nation's capital.) I asked him to clarify, and he replied, “I was looking at the paper and saw the headline ‘Buffalo Slaughters Senators,’ and was wondering if you had bison running loose, and if anyone was hurt.” Realizing he was very confused, I replied as seriously as could manage, “I’m sorry sir, but that is in regards to the (Stanley Cup playoff) hockey game, and no one was hurt—well, it was a hockey game, but no one seriously injured.” After a pause, he went on to ask me how the team was doing, and we had a short, but always serious conversation. I laughed the rest of the day.

—Carla Seguin, PAL Coordinator, Ottawa Humane Society, Ottawa, Ontario

“Can you save my cats’ testicles in a jar for my husband as a keepsake?”

—Laura Sureepisarn, Manager of Volunteer Services, NOAH, Stanwood, Washington

I received a call from a very well-spoken woman who was inquiring about our shelter's surgery schedule. Thinking she wanted to take advantage of our low-cost spay and neuter program, I informed her of our next available opening. She then asked if we did “just two” or “all four.” I asked what she meant by that. She wanted to know if we would declaw her 8-year-old golden retriever on his front feet or all four, because she just got new carpeting and he was snagging it with his toenails.

—Angela Rhodes, Resource Manager, Dane County Humane Society, Madison, Wisconsin

Several years ago, Catahoula Rescue ran an ad in the classified section of a big-city newspaper. It was a small ad that said something like "Adopt a Catahoula" and included contact information. Many people have not heard of the breed, so I was not surprised when I received calls asking what sort of dog a Catahoula is. I told each caller that Catahoulas are a large-breed, hunting/herding dog. I was taken aback when one woman replied, "Oh, I thought it was a cross between a dog and a cat."

—Mary DuPont, President, Catahoula Rescue, Inc., Muldoon, Texas

I was making a spay appointment for a dog, and when I told the owner that drop-off was at 7:30 a.m. and pickup was at 3 p.m., he asked if he could have his dog take a taxi to and from the appointment. When I said no, he asked me why, very seriously. I asked how the dog would pay, and he said he would give the dog money.

—Christie Ward, Customer Service Representative, SPCA of Texas, Dallas, Texas

A guy called and left a message saying that his dog was neutered, but the dog was acting funny. He asked if he could have his dog re-neutered to fix the problem.

—Alice Calabrese Smith, President, Lollypop Farm, Fairport, New York

"Is it safe for my rabbit to eat from my marijuana stash?"

—Joanna Campbell, President, Minnesota Companion Rabbit Society, Edina, Minnesota

[The funniest question came from] a very sweet elderly lady who called to tell me that I needed to come out and speak with the deer that were in her yard. She wanted me to tell them to go back into the country, and also to not cross Jake Alexander Boulevard, because it was too dangerous for them. She was quite serious.

—Ann Frye, Animal Control Officer, Salisbury Police Department, Salisbury, North Carolina

Animal Sheltering congratulates Alice Calabrese Smith of Fairport, N.Y., whose submission was selected in a random drawing from those published in this issue. Lollypop Farm, where she works, will receive a free coffee break: a \$50 gift certificate to a local coffee shop. "Bone" appetit!

Our next question: What advice would you give someone entering the animal welfare field?

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. 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.