

# Coffee Break

## What's the first thing you'd do for animals if you had limitless resources?

That was the question we asked you for this issue's Coffee Break. While ensuring widespread spaying and neutering was at the top of your lists, other priorities included cheap and accessible veterinary care, increased humane education, and coming together to form one rescue and sheltering powerhouse. For more wish lists, visit [animalsheltering.org/coffeebreak](http://animalsheltering.org/coffeebreak).



I'd set up funds in perpetuity for every shelter and vet clinic to offer no-cost spay and neuter to everyone. Then I would purchase and equip mobile spay-neuter trucks for every major city (or heck, every city, since I'm Empress!), to do in-home no-cost spay/neuter. And then I'd institute mandatory humane education programs starting in kindergarten and going through high school, and offer millions in college scholarships for kids who volunteer in the animal rescue or care world.

—Tara Goddard, Volunteer  
Yolo County SPCA  
Davis, California

With the enormous jump in gas prices, it has become more difficult to transport adopted pets if they have to go any distance. I'd buy a fleet of vans and hire drivers with animal experience to take pets to their new homes anywhere in the U.S. For a fast start while the vans are being equipped, I'd give gas vouchers to those who do this now, or had to quit because they can no longer afford to help. I would hire a staff to register the volunteers and to monitor the transports from a central office.

—Roberta Peters, Director  
HiPlains Animal Welfare  
Dalton, Nebraska

Hire the world's best researchers to develop an oral contraceptive for all companion animals—one dose, permanent sterility, no side effects.

—Julie Falconer, Manager,  
Online Answer Tool  
The Humane Society of the United States  
Washington, DC

That is an easy question for me ... I dream about it all the time! I would join all of the thousands and thousands of local, hard-working shelters, rescues and animal advocacy groups into one huge operation in order to share resources and funding. Can you imagine what one voice could do for all of the unwanted and abused animals? Everyone is working toward this goal, but we still have thousands of small, grass-roots groups trying to "go it alone." They are working as hard as they can and helping animals, but if we could join under one umbrella, we would become incredibly powerful. Our voice would be so loud that no one could ignore it. We could share resources and funding. WOW! So where is the magic wand?

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

That's easy! I would require the world to spay/neuter all dogs with the exception of responsible breeder's dogs. You did say "limitless resources." It's inexcusable that pets are killed daily. There will never be enough homes for all of these pets, therefore, the pet population has to be responsibly managed.

—Patricia Bungert, *Feed a Pet Chairperson*  
*Companion Animal Advocates*  
Glen Rock, New Jersey

I would want to improve the image of cats. People don't place as much value on cats as dogs. Our organization is overwhelmed with cats, and yet people regard them as throwaway pets. Cats are rarely redeemed because people just don't bother to look for them. If a cat is lost they just get another one.

—Judy Tarabochia, *Operations Director*  
*Kitsap Humane Society*  
Silverdale, Washington

I would organize volunteer task forces in each county and provide them with training, tools, and funds to run a TNR program. We would focus on one neighborhood at a time and duplicate the efforts in every county. Through determination, fundraising, public awareness, and soliciting volunteers who care, this state-wide program could be shared across the country to help end the unnecessary killing of cats. I would also help build no-kill shelters in every county to aid in the adoption process of those animals who are sociable and have the option of being placed in a loving home.

—Melody Blakely, *Volunteer*  
*First Coast No More Homeless Pets*  
Jacksonville, Florida

The first thing I would do with an unlimited amount of funds would be to build an animal shelter in every community that desperately needs one. Then I would provide funding for operating expenses for the first year, and provide a 50/50 grant for operating expenses the next; then reduce my financial support of operating expense over time to allow the community to take over the financial support of the shelter. In Arkansas, many small communities survive on a shoestring budget and can't afford to build.

—Tricia Power, *Director*  
*Bryant Animal Control & Adoption Center*  
Bryant, Arkansas

I would work with the Chicago Police Department to create a huge Animal Investigations Division. We currently have a small Animal Crimes Unit, but there just aren't enough police in that unit and there's not enough funding or political will to make that work as important as it should [be]. When discussing the creation of new laws, we are often mentioning how if the current laws were actually enforced, we wouldn't really need so many new laws. So let's enforce the laws now. That means really cracking down on dogfighting and any signs of its existence at all. That means really ticketing all owners of dogs off leash. That means investigating all reports of abuse or neglect seriously and punishing the guilty owners to the fullest extent of the law. We need to send a message that properly caring for animals is not something only some people have the time and money to do. It is what is required by law and will be enforced.

—Alicia Obando, *Coordinator*  
*of Special Projects*  
*The Anti-Cruelty Society*  
Chicago, Illinois

**Animal Sheltering congratulates Tricia Power of Bryant, Ark., whose submission was selected in a random drawing from those published in this issue. Bryant Animal Control and Adoption Center, where she works, will receive a free coffee break: a \$50 gift certificate to a local coffee shop. "Bone" appetit!**

**Next question:  
Tell us about  
the most difficult  
(or interesting!)  
field rescue  
operation you've  
ever been  
involved in.**

Please submit your responses (150 words or less) at [animalsheltering.org/coffeebreak](http://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](http://animalsheltering.org) for contest rules, or send an e-mail or letter to the above addresses to request a printed copy.