I appreciate Dr Calnon's letter and note that she has not argued in principle against the use of electronic collars. Also, the story recounted by Dr John Aubrey about his Golden Retriever's recalcitrant recall difficulty was much appreciated. Similar stories abound amongst trainers and vets who utilise electronic collars. Such a happy ending for a variety of otherwise difficult to treat problems is a regular event for me.

I would like to raise the issue of why there is resistance to electronic collars and implore readers to honestly soul search on this subject. Could their fears be based on electrophobia or neophobia? We are all taught a healthy and fearful respect for electricity from a young age. Overall (1997) states that "The electronic age has discovered veterinary medicine" (p 287). That is so, but why is it greeted with such irrational fear and resistance?

It reminds me of when fabric weaving was industrialised in England and a band of artisans named Luddites vandalised the weaving machines they perceived as unholy and threatening their jobs. The term Ludditism was coined to refer to the irrational sabotaging or fear of mechanical advancement. I can see parallels here and believe the current resistance to electronic collars is a form of Ludditism.

If the anti-electronic collar campaign were rational, we would see some factual rational arguments forwarded. The anti-electronic arguments to date have been based on a poverty of facts and backed up with personal rhetoric. They are devoid of substance and scientific fact. Our electronic collar Luddites should clean up their position and accept they have a right to their own personal ethical position against electronic collars, but they must respect the ethical right of others embracing the electronic age in veterinary medicine. The final policy regarding the use of behaviour modifying collars should reflect this evolved ethical solution.