In the short time since its inception, peta2—PETA’s Youth Division—has taken on a life of its own and grown to become the world’s largest youth animal rights organization.

Routinely setting up booths at some of the biggest music tours and festivals around the U.S., the peta2 crew reaches out to thousands of young people and inspires them to lead a cruelty-free lifestyle and become advocates for animals. This past summer, just as the summer tour season was kicking off, their job got a little easier, thanks to PETA members Bronte Jornod and Joe Guastafeste. Bronte and Joe had recently purchased a motor home to transport themselves and their animal family to their cabin in the frontier of Minnesota. Since 1995, they have made frequent long-term trips to enjoy their 90 acres of solitude and thought that a motor home would be the perfect solution to eliminate the need to drive separately in two cars. On the first nerve-racking trip driving such a large vehicle, they quickly realized the mistake that they had made. But always ones to look on the positive side, they just as quickly turned their mistake into a valuable donation for animals.

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Scott Anderson | Vice President, Membership Development

When I first came on board at PETA more than 25 years ago, things were a bit different. Our first office was a small private apartment. Then we moved to a split-level house and then to what can only be described as a decrepit warehouse in Rockville, Md. But we put up walls, slapped on paint, and fashioned offices out of the mess, and we were good to go.

When I started, there were only three people on staff. Today, the staff of PETA and the PETA Foundation approaches 320, and we have offices in Norfolk, Va.; New York, N.Y.; Oakland, Calif.; and Los Angeles, Calif.—and affiliates in the U.K., the Netherlands, Germany, India, Australia, and the Philippines! Better yet is the fact that our numbers have grown from fewer than 1,000 members and supporters to more than 2 million!

In the ‘80s, if executives at McDonald’s and Burger King were told that someday they would be sitting at the negotiating table with us, they would have doubled over with laughter. Now, decision-makers from the biggest fast-food companies and grocery chains in the world are pulling up a chair in PETA’s conference room in Norfolk, ready to make a deal!

Through our shareholder activism campaigns and corporate negotiations, we’ve convinced a number of major food companies and grocery chains in the world to pull for a new technology in slaughterhouses that greatly reduces suffering. Some are beginning to buy from poultry suppliers that use a new technology in slaughterhouses that greatly reduces suffering. Some are buying an increasing number of eggs from suppliers that don’t use battery cages, in which hens are cramped so tightly that they can’t even stretch a wing, and an increasing amount of pork from suppliers that don’t use gestation crates, in which pregnant pigs are painfully immobilized for months on end. Some companies are doing all three. Most KFCs in Canada have also added a vegan chicken menu item to their stores!

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We’ve also seen progress when it comes to the killing of animals for their fur. It was not too long ago that almost every designer and retailer sold fur. Now, Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Chico’s, Arin Taylor, Polo Ralph Lauren, Vivienne Westwood, J. Crew, Limited Brands, and dozens of other influential retailers have stopped selling fur—all thanks to PETA pressure.

Twenty years ago, our small staff did not include any scientists. Now, we have five first-rate scientists on staff who hail from Ivy League universities with degrees in fields such as molecular biology, biochemistry, and genetics. Together, often behind the scenes, they are changing minds and policies at the highest levels of government and corporate decision-making.

To cite one example, the National Academy of Sciences—the government’s chief scientific arm—released a report last year on the use of animals in toxicity testing. The report reflects the language found in the many hundreds of letters, fact sheets, and white papers that PETA has prepared and submitted to federal agencies and Congress. The report indicates that non-animal test methods “would generate more-relevant data” and that “harm to the animal tests are for humans … has often been called into question,” which are points that PETA has been making for years. The report asserts that, with a new approach, “animal testing could be greatly reduced, and possibly even eliminated …” Using non-animal test methods, the report continued, would “generate better data” and build “a stronger scientific foundation that can improve regulatory decisions, … reducing the time, money, and animals needed for testing.” This has been PETA’s stance all along, and the government is starting to catch on.

This is a 180-degree turn in the position of the U.S. government on animal testing. When PETA first started negotiating with federal agencies 10 years ago, they stonewalled and insisted that animal testing was the only way to go. Now, years of unrelenting persistence on PETA’s part are paying off, and the government is finally listening! Just as resolutely, we decided several years ago that not only did we need to reach today’s decision-makers, we also needed to reach the decision-makers of tomorrow if we wanted to be successful. We have done this with enormous success through PETA’s Youth Outreach Division, which we call peta2. By making it “cool” for high school and college students to get involved in animal rights, peta2 has attracted more than 1.4 million members, making it the largest youth animal protection movement in the world.

You Can Help! Please join PETA in spreading the word about Hormel’s cruel treatment of pigs. Visit GetActive.peta.org/campaign/iowa_pigfarm_abuse2 to send our undercover footage to your friends, family members, and coworkers, and tell them that the best way to help animals is not to eat them. Please contact Jenny Lou Browning at 757-962-8332 or JennyB@peta.org for more information.

There are points that PETA has been making for years. The success of peta2 has inspired us to focus on the 180-degree turn in the position of the U.S. government on animal testing. When PETA first started negotiating with federal agencies 10 years ago, they stonewalled and insisted that animal testing was the only way to go. Now, years of unrelenting persistence on PETA’s part are paying off, and the government is finally listening! Just as resolutely, we decided several years ago that not only did we need to reach today’s decision-makers, we also needed to reach the decision-makers of tomorrow if we wanted to be successful. We have done this with enormous success through PETA’s Youth Outreach Division, which we call peta2. By making it “cool” for high school and college students to get involved in animal rights, peta2 has attracted more than 1.4 million members, making it the largest youth animal protection movement in the world. Thousands of young people visit the peta2.com Web site every day for the latest news, action alerts, and information on living a cruelty-free lifestyle.

This means that we’re making a whole new generation of consumers, teachers, scientists, entrepreneurs, and policymakers who will be aware of—and care about—how their decisions affect animals.

The success of peta2 has inspired us to focus on the strengths and talents of PETA members from other walks of life—and especially on how we can best engage the baby boomers among us, whose vast experience and talents are an extraordinary resource for helping animals. That’s why we created PETA Prime. PETA Prime is a new Web site specially designed for those of us who are more than 50 years old, enjoy being in the prime of our lives, and are passionate about helping animals.

We want PETA Prime to be for boomers what peta2 is for the under-25 crowd—a galvanizing, interactive community for people to learn, share, laugh, and come together to make a difference for animals.

If you haven’t visited PETAPrime.org already, please hurry to check out this wonderful resource. You’ll find photos, blog posts, book reviews, healthy recipes, travel tips, financial information, ways to volunteer, and much more. Readers contribute their thoughts, experiences, questions, and advice about health, the home, gardening, travel, family, friends, animal companions, favorite cruelty-free products, travel experiences, money-saving tips, and many other topics.

I hope that you enjoy PETA Prime. I also want to personally thank you for ensuring that our progress continues for generations to come!
I am writing to tell you about a wonderful friend with whom I shared my life for 11 years. Unfortunately, my dog Roxanne passed away on January 5 of this year from congestive heart failure, and I miss her greatly. It was in November of 1996 that Daisy, whom I had adopted a year earlier, and I brought Roxanne home from a wonderful animal shelter in Washington, D.C. It was not the first time she had been at the shelter. As a 10-week-old puppy, she had been adopted in the summer of 1995 by someone who a year later relinquished her because of chewing—a behavior that Roxanne never really outgrew. I am only now learning that I can place a blanket on my bed and not worry about her making Swiss cheese out of it. At first, Roxie’s hair was scant. She also was not affectionate, disliked walking on a leash, and objected to being taken out in the rain. Although she never became a fan of the great outdoors, she soon became a sweet and loving companion.

During her 11 years, she won ribbons at a just-for-laughs dog show (including second place for Least Obedient), loved to spend time with her grandparents, adored car rides, threw herself onto her back for belly rubs ..., and entertained at parties. After 11 years together, she would still shake when anyone had to leave her at home. I always said that the lyrics of the 1977 song “The Goodbye Girl” described her perfectly.

Late in life, Roxanne developed breathing problems as a result of congestive heart failure. On January 5, 2008, Roxie and I both knew the time had come, and she could no longer carry on. That night, I took her to the emergency veterinary clinic for euthanasia. Her death was an extremely sad moment for me as I tried to make her final moments calm and serene. Still, I was comforted in knowing that there are far worse fates for animals and that she died having lived a pleasant life and brought joy to many.

I am making my bequest to PETA in her memory, and I only wish I could do more to help PETA help more animals—including kind hearts like Roxanne and Daisy, whom I always refer to as “The Girls.” Years ago, when I was fresh out of college, PETA opened my eyes to many animal issues, including the scourge of heartbreaking cruelty and neglect faced by so many loving, unfortunate innocents.

Although The Girls no longer exist in one sense, they will go on forever for me in another. Thanks so much, PETA, for helping to improve the lives of so many animals who may never be as lucky as Roxanne and Daisy to live such a happy, healthy life. Your amazing efforts to help animals are why you are one of the charities in my will.
Veggie Pot Pie
by Kathy Freston

This recipe is better than the pot pie mom used to make. The thick and creamy sauce smooths a hearty vegetable filling for a complete cold-weather meal.

- 4 Tbsp. vegetable bouillon or faux-chicken broth powder
- 2 cups hot water
- ¾ cup nutritional yeast flakes (available at health food stores)
- ½ cup flour
- ½ cup oil
- 1 tsp. garlic salt
- 1 Preparation graham cracker crust
- 1 box puff pastry sheets

Makes 6 servings

Pumpkin ‘Cheesecake’

What’s better than pumpkin pie? Delicious pumpkin “cheesecake,” of course!

- 10 oz. firm silken tofu, or 1 lb. faux chicken, moistened (try Tofutti brand)
- 4 Tbsp. vegetable bouillon or faux-chicken broth powder (try Osem or Telma brands, available in the kosher section of supermarkets)
- 2½ cups hot water
- ½ cup flour
- ½ tsp. pepper
- 1 15.5-oz. can white beans
- 1 box puff pastry sheets

Makes 4 servings

Carrot Ginger Soup

This elegant soup is the perfect start to a meal.

- 1 Tbsp. margarine
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1½ lbs. carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 tsp. fresh ginger, grated
- 1 box puff pastry sheets

Makes 4 servings

A day in the life of our director of special gifts, Jannette Patterson

Donna Karan was using fur, we were convinced the man that this baby needed more than some food in a box to survive. I finally convinced the man that the cat was OK. I insisted on seeing the owner “usually shows up at the end of the day.”

The neighboring businesses said that the owner “usually shows up at the end of the day.” I waited for more than an hour for the owner, and when he arrived, he did his best to tell me that the cat was OK. I insisted on seeing the kitten, and he finally opened the storefront. Inside the storage unit was a crate with a tiny 5-week-old kitten, frantic with fear. I finally convinced the man that this baby needed more than some food in a box to survive and whisked her away.

Now, she was a bit “messy” from her time in the crate, and while I was holding her, my lovely pale yellow nightgown got covered in kitten poo. I didn’t really pay attention to this until I was on the subway going home with my baby in need and the woman sitting next to me noticed her. She said, “Oh, she’s so tiny!” I apologized for the mess. Lucky for me, the woman was a kind animal person and was actually on her way to Animal Care and Control to adopt a dog, so we had a good laugh about my situation. Now, baby Jenny, as she would be named by me, has found her purrfect home with a PETA member who specializes in making sure that her cats have all their needs met! And I am looking forward to my next date with Donna Karan.

Pentai Rescue Kitten Finds a Purrfect home!

It was a lovely summer day in New York City, and I was on my way to a PETA demonstration in my nightgown. Wait, let me explain! Fashion designer Donna Karan was having a lingerie/ sleepwear fashion show, and since she is using fur, we were going to be in front of the show with signs that read, “Donna Karan: We’re Tired of Your Furs!” While I was walking through midtown Manhattan, praying that no one I knew would see me, I heard a baby kitten screaming in desperation. The screams were coming from behind a small storefront with a solid metal door, which was locked.

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Special Opportunity to Save Animals (and Taxes!)

The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act of 2008 provides that in 2008 and 2009, caring people with a traditional or Roth IRA may distribute up to $100,000 directly to charities without the distributions’ being reportable as income, and any distribution will count toward the IRA owner’s mandatory withdrawal amount. To qualify, you must be at least 70 ½ years old and also direct the IRA manager to transfer funds directly from your traditional or Roth IRA to PETA. A withdrawal followed by a contribution to PETA would not qualify, and the full amount would have to be reported as income.

Please consider speaking to your financial advisor about this opportunity. A check made out to PETA by your IRA manager can be one of the best ways to help animals in 2008 and 2009. For more information, please contact Scott Van Valkenburg, director of major gifts, at ScottV@petaf.org or at 757-943-0317.