



# PETA's augustus CLUB

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## Nothing Gets Past Karen Porreca: Editor, Activist, and Augustus Club Member

Karen Porreca is not only an Augustus Club member but also one of PETA's most longstanding staff members.

Because Karen is a veritable living archive of PETA history, we thought Augustus Club members like you, who have made a lifetime gift in support of our mission, might enjoy hearing her perspective on how PETA has evolved over the years.

We hope you enjoy the following interview with Karen, who has this message for her fellow Augustus Club members: "I feel very fortunate to have spent almost my entire working life in the service of animal rights, and I am so grateful for the generous PETA supporters who have made this work possible."

### When did you start working at PETA?

I started working for PETA in 1986. The organization was only 6 years old at the time. I had moved to Germany with my then-husband, Harald Ullmann. We saw PETA's employment ad in *The Animals' Agenda*, and we both flew back to the U.S. for a two-week working interview.

At the time, PETA was holding a months-long vigil at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to put pressure on it to release the "Silver Spring monkeys" to a sanctuary. The monkeys were from a laboratory that had been shut down following PETA's very first undercover investigation. My job interview with Ingrid took place while we sat outside on the curb in front of the NIH campus.



Harald and I were both hired. Little did we know that I would still be at PETA 28 years later and that he would eventually go on to his current position as vice president of PETA Germany.

### Describe your first job at PETA.

We worked out of a small warehouse in Kensington, Md. There were 28 employees. I worked in the mailroom with two others. We filled merchandise and literature orders and answered correspondence. Back then, we actually wrote most of our letters by hand!

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**You eventually developed PETA's library, which became the world's largest animal rights library. How did that evolve?**

After six months in the mailroom, I moved into what was then called the Research & Investigations Department. I organized all our research resources—periodicals, books, and articles—into a system, and that became our library. After a year or two, the library became its own department, and I was in charge of it. Around that time, I also started editing/proofreading our written materials.

For the next 20 years, the library was in its heyday. This was before the Internet, so almost every department at PETA relied on the library as an important resource, and we also got many outside requests for information from the media, students, activists, members, and others.

Then with the advent of the Internet and Amazon, information became accessible online and specialized, hard-to-find books became more readily available. The need for a physical library diminished, so we eventually closed it in order to use the space for other expanding departments.

I'm now senior director of editing and foreign languages. My department proofreads and edits all the published content of PETA and most of our international affiliates—Web copy as well as hard-copy publications, such as literature, annual reports, newsletters, membership mailings, and much more.

**In your time at PETA, which accomplishments have been among the most gratifying?**

I was a foreign-language major in college, so it's very gratifying for me to be able to use my language skills to edit materials in other languages. The opportunity arises frequently because our activities have become so international. I also edit the websites and other materials for PETA France and PETA Netherlands. I'm even beginning to learn Chinese, now that PETA Asia is growing so rapidly and its Chinese Web content is expanding.

I'm also proud of having created a consistent PETA editing style. The high quality of our written materials has helped establish PETA's reputation as a professional, credible, and knowledgeable organization.

There was also one year during which I wrote "KP's Dog Blog" for PETA, and I thoroughly enjoyed pouring all my knowledge and experience of dogs into it. It was very rewarding to be able to offer people information on treating dogs humanely, holistically, and with respect for their rights.

**In your opinion, what makes PETA more effective than other social-change organizations?**

Our fearlessness (which comes from the top, from Ingrid) and our willingness to tackle topics that no one else wants to take on—topics such as pigeon racing; crustacean slaughterhouses, in which lobsters and crabs are torn limb from limb [see story on page 4]; the painful dehorning of cows used in the dairy industry; angora production, which involves tearing the fur off the bodies of live rabbits; and much



*Karen with Harald Ullmann (above) and in the mailroom at the PETA office (below), circa 1986.*



more. Most people hadn't even *thought* of these things before PETA exposed them. And we're not afraid to take unpopular positions or to defend unpopular animals. We try to do what's in animals' best interests at all times without worrying about our own popularity.

Also, our work ethic has very high standards (which are also set by Ingrid). If you're a slacker, you don't belong at PETA.

And there are many other factors: our reliance on humor, our unparalleled talent for attracting attention to an issue, our forward-looking ability to capitalize on new forms of technology such as social media, and our knack for riding the wave of pop culture to get people talking about animal issues. For example, when we did a twist on the "got milk?" slogan with our "got beer?" campaign, the media pick-up was huge, and that was the very first time that the dairy industry's abuse of animals had become the focus of national media attention.

**Coworkers cite you as an example of someone who is never silent when it comes to advocating for animals. Can you describe some situations that might help others speak out for animals?**

When I'm out walking my dogs on the beach, I sometimes see people doing things that harm their dogs. I always say something, but the trick is to be diplomatic. For example, if I see a dog wearing a shock collar, I might strike up a conversation with the dog's guardian and then, after a minute or two, ask, "So tell me, why would a nice person like you put a shock collar on your dog?" The answer is

usually that without the collar, the dog won't come when called. So I explain that shock collars cause not just a temporary moment of pain but also a constant state of anxiety in the dog, who never knows when another shock is coming. Then, right there in front of the guardian, I train the dog to come when called.

**How do you do that?**

When I'm at the beach with my dogs, I always have a pouch of treats with me. So I feed the person's dog a couple of treats (with permission, of course). Then after the dog runs off, I call the dog, and the dog always comes right back to me. People often seem amazed by this and say, "But he never comes when I call him." I ask, "Do you carry treats with you?" They say no. And I say, "Well, that's all it takes! No electric shocks needed—just a pocketful of whatever kind of treat your dog loves the most."

**And do people take your advice?**

I'm happy to say that they often do—I've seen some of those same people at the beach and their dogs are no longer wearing those awful collars.

**Sometimes the prospect of speaking up in those situations can be daunting. What keeps you motivated?**

I ask myself, "If I don't speak out, who will?" This might be the dog's one and only chance for relief. Also, I know from personal experience that even just a single brief comment from a passerby can create real change. For example, a few years ago when my dogs Sunny and Dexter were younger, Sunny would occasionally tackle Dexter at the beach—really roll him—and Dexter would just kind of put up with it because he adored her. I didn't intervene because, at that time, I viewed it as something that they would work out on their own. But a woman walked by one day and saw what Sunny did and called out to me, "Why are you letting your dog do that? Make her stop!" That really woke me up. From then on, I started intervening, and soon the tackling behavior completely stopped, so I'm really grateful to that woman for showing me a better way.

**You're an Augustus Club member. What made you decide to include PETA in your estate plans?**

Yes, I have left my house to PETA in my will. I've seen firsthand how many victories for animals have been made possible through the support of our Augustus Club members, so I'm proud to be one of them. (I'm also a Vanguard Society member, by the way.) It makes me happy to know that my estate will strengthen PETA's work after I'm gone.

# Animals Are Wondrous: Lobsters and Crabs



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Crustaceans are like us in many ways. Lobsters have a long childhood and an awkward adolescence, and just like us, they carry their young for nine months and can live to be more than 100 years old.

Like dolphins and many other animals, lobsters use complicated signals to explore their surroundings and establish social relationships. They take long-distance seasonal journeys and can cover 100 miles or more each year—assuming that they manage to avoid the millions of traps set along the coasts.

Scientists have found that two neighboring crabs will never fight each other and that if a male Australian fiddler crab's burrow is being invaded, his male neighbor will leave his own burrow to help fight off the intruder.

Bromeliad crabs, who live in small pools of water in bromeliad flowers, provide their young with loving care. The mother crabs continue to feed and tend to their babies for several months after they're born. S. Blair Hedges, a biologist who has researched the manner in which crabs care for their offspring, says, "The mother crab manipulates water quality by removing debris, by circulating the water to add oxygen to it, and by carrying empty snail shells into the water to buffer the pH levels and add calcium."

As an Augustus Club member, you're among the perceptive people who realize that animals in the sea deserve no less compassion than those on land and that just because an animal lacks soft fur or big brown eyes, that doesn't mean that he or she lacks the capacity to suffer. How we wish everyone realized that!

Unfortunately, many sea animals—especially crustaceans—are treated as if they feel nothing at all. But PETA is making important breakthroughs in behalf of these misunderstood animals.



For example, despite the fact that many scientists and even some "seafood" authorities agree that lobsters and crabs feel pain, our recent undercover investigation of Linda Bean's Maine Lobster slaughterhouse revealed that live, conscious lobsters and crabs are ripped apart limb from limb, live crabs are dumped into boiling water, and mutilated lobsters are left in bins to die in agony.

Our undercover footage can be seen at [PETA.org/Lobster](http://PETA.org/Lobster). This is a trailblazing investigation that will no doubt convince many consumers to keep crabs and lobsters off their plates. It's also a historic inroad that we hope will change industry practices, too.

But the way they're killed isn't the only form of cruelty that lobsters endure. In grocery-store tanks, lobsters are piled on top of each other—with their claws bound with rubber bands—and forced to live amid their own waste. They are given no food and are often left to languish for days or weeks in filthy water with incorrect salinity and temperature levels. Many die before being sold.

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In an effort to alleviate this suffering, PETA helped persuade Whole Foods Market—the largest natural-foods grocery chain in North America—to ban the sale of live lobsters and soft-shell crabs in all but one of its stores, at which strict standards were enacted. Additionally, after receiving thousands of calls and e-mails from PETA members and supporters, the grocery chain Raley's declared that it would never sell any live lobsters again in any of its more than 130 stores.

With your support, we've also persuaded numerous restaurants to remove arcade-style games in which customers use a joystick-controlled claw to catch and "win" live lobsters.

In more good news, after hearing from PETA, Hershey Entertainment & Resorts has stopped selling hermit crabs in its amusement park gift stores, and numerous beach shops have stopped selling them as well. PETA has also persuaded several carnivals and festivals across the U.S. to stop giving away hermit crabs as prizes.

In their natural habitat, hermit crabs live in colonies of 100 or more. They lay their eggs only in the ocean and will not reproduce in captivity. That means that every single crab in every tourist shop and pet store condemned to a life of deprivation and loneliness inside a glass tank was taken from his or her home and family, not bred.



Thank you for helping PETA promote our message that *all* animals deserve respect and compassion and that *no* animals should ever be dismembered, boiled alive, or stolen from their homes and kept as "pets" for people's amusement.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

PETA is asking Linda Bean to switch to a less cruel means of slaughtering crustaceans, such as using electrical stunners. We tried meeting with her before releasing the results of our investigation, but our e-mails and calls were ignored. Please help us strengthen this push by contacting Linda Bean at [linda@lindabeansperfectmaine.com](mailto:linda@lindabeansperfectmaine.com) or 207-975-2502 and politely requesting that she and her company use commercial electrical stunners that can eliminate the ripping apart of live lobsters—who can survive for hours afterward in agony—as well as the mutilating and boiling to death of live crabs.



Marco Antonio Regil is one of the handsome faces on PETA's famous-vegetarians postage stamps.

## Uniting With the Latino Community to Help Animals

One of the keys to PETA's success is the fact that we reach out to as many different demographic groups as possible with our animal rights message.

Because they are the fastest-growing demographic in the U.S., Latinos have tremendous influence. Young Latinos make up nearly 25 percent of the U.S. youth population.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, Univision is now the fifth-most-watched television network in the United States, and it even beats fourth-place NBC's ratings on some nights. Every major English-speaking network has launched or is now launching its own Spanish-language channel, which means that advertisers have their sights set on the Latino consumer.

While PETA has been conducting outreach in the Latino community for many years by producing leaflets, posters, and other literature in Spanish, we have recently bolstered our efforts to reach out to this influential community in order to counteract all the unhealthy, anti-animal advertising from the fast-food, dairy, clothing, and entertainment industries.

PETALatino.com is a bicultural, multigenerational resource for the entire Latino community. All the information on the website is accessible in both Spanish and English. We designed it this way because the Latino community is heavily bilingual and family-oriented. At school, young people converse and receive most of their information in English, but they speak Spanish with their older relatives at home.

PETALatino.com allows people to explore the world of animal rights through a Latino lens. Visitors to the site can learn how to "veganize" their favorite traditional recipes, where to shop for vegan food and cruelty-free products, how to help animals in their neighborhoods, and how to combat health issues that are of particular concern to the Hispanic community.

In the past year, the site has grown from more than 4,000 "likes" on Facebook to more than 202,660 "likes." Monthly visits have risen from 18,000 to 426,787.

Since one of the most effective ways to reach people with our animal-friendly message is through their favorite celebrities, we've also teamed up with compassionate Latino stars to produce ads in both Spanish and English.

Kate del Castillo, named one of the "25 most influential women" by *People en Español*; Pablo Azar, from the popular soap opera *El Talismán*; actor and former Miss Panama Patricia De León; Mexican indie musical duo Rodrigo y Gabriela; Colombian actor and Telemundo host Natalia Villaveces; Constance Marie from the hit ABC Family show *Switched at Birth*; singer Rubén Albarrán; and Roselyn Sánchez, star of the CBS hit drama *Without a Trace*, have all starred in PETA ads to urge people to go vegan, shun fur, spay and neuter their companion animals, or speak out against bullfighting.

We're also releasing Spanish-language versions of our videos, such as "Glass Walls"—the graphic Paul McCartney video with undercover footage from factory farms and slaughterhouses.

We were fortunate enough to have the Spanish version of "Glass Walls" narrated by Marco Antonio Regil—the host of *The Price Is Right* and *Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?* on MundoFOX and one of North America's most beloved television personalities. The video already has 555,909 views on YouTube.

PETA does more outreach to the Latino community than any other animal-protection group in the U.S., and we're extremely pleased with the level of engagement that visitors are showing with PETALatino.com as well as with PETA Latino's Twitter account and YouTube channel. As this increasingly influential segment of society grows more and more receptive to PETA's message, the promise of a kinder future for animals grows even stronger.



Actor Marjorie de Sousa, along with her adopted dog, Dolce, reminds her fans that they can help prevent animal homelessness.



Marco has been with PETA Latino since the beginning and never hesitates to help PETA or animals.



# Preparing for Your Animal Companions' Future



As Augustus Club members, you already know the importance of planning your legacy. But one of the most overlooked yet most important aspects of estate planning is preparing for your animal companions' future when you can no longer care for

them. There are steps that you can take now to ensure that they'll continue to receive the loving care that you want them to have.

PETA's Companion Animal Planning Packet will help guide you through this process.

The packet includes a detailed booklet addressing short-term and long-term care needs, emergency contact cards and a window decal, and instruction forms for emergency caregivers, family, and friends.

The following are some of the most important planning steps, which are elaborated on in our packet:

- Identify one or more trusted people who can come into your home at a moment's notice to care for and comfort your animals until their long-term care is arranged. It's important for the person to be familiar with your animals and vice versa.
- Select a long-term guardian or guardians for your animals now. Choose someone who is trustworthy, capable, and willing to take complete responsibility for your animals. It's a good idea to name one or more backups, if possible.
- Files on each of your animals should be maintained and kept in your home. This will help in an emergency and can be used to find the best new homes for your animals. (PETA's planning packet contains forms for all this information.)

- Consult with your attorney to provide for the future of your animal companions in your estate plans (e.g., through a provision in your will or a "pet trust," which is now allowed in most U.S. states).
- Put a "Please save our animals" sticker in a location that's visible from outside your house, such as a window or a door, in case of an emergency. (This sticker is also included in PETA's planning packet.)

Our companion animals are an integral part of our lives, and we know that they depend on us completely. So it's crucial to incorporate the important steps described in the packet into your estate planning in order to ensure the long-term well-being of your animals and also make their transition to a life without you as stress-free as possible for them.

PETA is pleased to offer a complimentary packet to our supporters. Please e-mail [Legacy@peta.org](mailto:Legacy@peta.org) or call 757-962-8213. More information is available at [PETA.org/Legacy](http://PETA.org/Legacy).

## Clean Out Your Closet for Animals!



PETA's new WebThriftStore marketplace makes it easy to sell your items and raise funds to support PETA's work! Visit [PETA.org/Thrift](http://PETA.org/Thrift) to learn more.

