



Meet Penelope

*IN THE WORDS OF HER PERSON,
HOLLY JILL ST. JOHN*

HOME: San Diego, California

BIGGEST LEGISLATIVE WIN:

In May 2016, Penelope and her story helped convince the Carlsbad City Council to change a retail pet sale ordinance. Under the new ordinance, pet stores in Carlsbad, California, are no longer able to sell dogs (and cats) from commercial breeding facilities, also known as puppy mills. Now pets raised in puppy mills will no longer be sold in Carlsbad pet stores, giving pets in local shelters more opportunities to find their forever homes.

WHY IT MATTERS: Too often, dogs who are born in puppy

mills and then shipped off to pet stores to be sold simply don't live very long. Many of them don't survive to adulthood because they become sick as a result of the poor standards of care in puppy mills. Penelope got lucky. So many others aren't so lucky, especially the mother dogs, who live in small cages for their entire lives, producing litter after litter of puppies. Also, our community does not need or want sick puppies shipped in, especially when our shelters and rescue groups are full of great dogs available for adoption.

WHAT MAKES HER AN AWESOME AMBASSADOR:

Penelope was born in a puppy mill and placed for sale in a

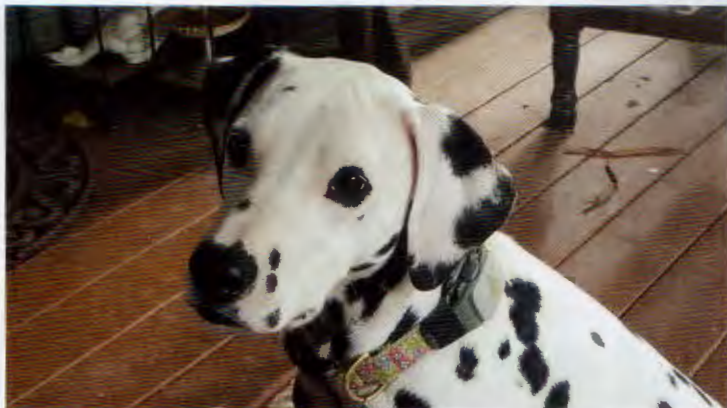
pet store in Carlsbad. A young military couple bought her, only to discover she had pneumonia, giardia, a urinary tract infection and parasites. The couple, overwhelmed by the number of illnesses and the expense to get her healthy, surrendered her to Save the Dalmatians, a rescue group I volunteer with, rather than return her to the store. About a week after we took her in, we realized that she's also deaf.

Penelope is extremely loving and sweet, and because she is deaf, she isn't fazed by crowds and noises nearly as much as many other dogs. When the city council was considering the retail pet sale ordinance, Penelope came with me to the council meeting, and was able to meet and greet people there.

During the meeting, I stood up to speak about her story in front of the council and the public. The council members connected with her story, and that, among many other arguments in favor of a change, led to the council voting for the pet sale ordinance.

HOBBIES AND FUN FACTS:

Penelope's nickname is "The Princess" because she seems to know how pretty she is. And she often gets quite a bit of attention from strangers when we go out. People are drawn to her at first just because she's a Dalmatian with a pretty spotted coat, then they often ask to pet her, and we get to talking. I tell her story, about where she came from and that she's deaf, and people seem to bond with her upon learning that.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HOLLY JILL ST. JOHN