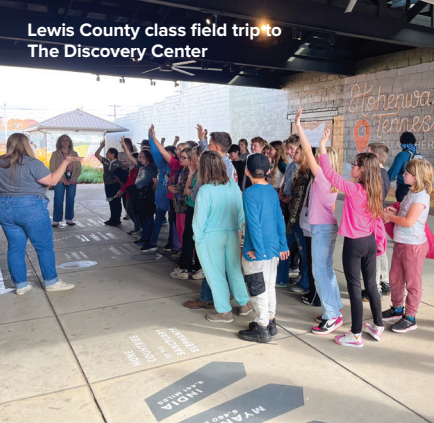


Annual Report 2025

30 Years of Sanctuary

 **THE ELEPHANT
SANCTUARY**
IN TENNESSEE™

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Sanctuary Staff

Mission

- To provide a natural habitat refuge developed around the needs of Asian and African elephants where elephants are provided with lifetime care
- To support and promote elephant welfare and conservation
- To educate the public regarding the complex needs of elephants and the challenges facing elephants in the wild

Leadership

Dr. Richard Rhoda, Chair
Member since 2010
Retired Executive Director,
Tennessee Higher Education
Commission

Stephen Shurter, President & CEO
CEO since 2026
CEO, The Elephant Sanctuary
in Tennessee

Albert Ambrose, Treasurer
Member since 2012
President, E.T. Lowe
Publishing Co. and Lowe
Graphics & Printing, Inc.

Sharon Langford, Board Member
Member since 2012
Marketing & Management
Consultant, Animal Welfare
Author and Volunteer

Dr. William Schaffner, Board Member
Member since 2007
Professor of Preventive Medicine
and Infectious Diseases,
Vanderbilt University
School of Medicine

Michael K. Stagg, Secretary
Member since 2016
Attorney, Environmental Law

Dear Friends,

In 2025, The Elephant Sanctuary proudly celebrated 30 years of providing lifetime care for elephants — three decades of refuge and commitment to elephants. The Tennessee General Assembly recognized this milestone with a joint resolution as a powerful reminder of the impact we have with our mission focused on elephant care, education, and conservation.

One of the great joys of this anniversary year was welcoming Asian elephant Punch and African elephant Mikki from the Louisville Zoo. Their arrival and successful immersion into Sanctuary life opened an exciting new chapter for social opportunities and habitat use across The Sanctuary.

We were honored to be named Outstanding Wildlife Sanctuary by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS). We also achieved reaccreditation by GFAS and remain the only elephant facility accredited by both GFAS and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. These recognitions affirm our passion for being a leader in the highest quality of lifetime elephant care.

Our Education Program reached over 12,000 learners across 41 states and six countries. Collaborations with Scholastic Magazine, NPR, ABC, and NBC's TODAY Show amplified our message, sharing elephant stories and The Elephant Sanctuary mission with audiences nationwide — helping to inspire the next generation of conservation leaders and elephant lovers.

Behind the scenes, operations at The Sanctuary achieved major sustainability milestones, including 97% landfill diversion, 25% of our electricity being generated through solar power, and recovering 40,000 gallons of rainwater for operational use. We received the Tennessee Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award for our efforts. Beyond providing food, habitats, enrichment, socialization, and medical treatments, caring for elephants also means caring for the environment they depend upon.

In May of 2026, Janice Zeitlin concluded her service as President & CEO of The Elephant Sanctuary after more than a decade of leadership. She states, "It has been one of the greatest privileges of my career to help steward this organization's growth, from expanding habitats and strengthening global partnerships to building a remarkable team devoted to elephants every day." With an exceptional, talented team, a dedicated Board, a committed community of supporters, and a solid strategic plan, The Sanctuary is well positioned for its next chapter.

Thank you for making our 2025 anniversary year so extraordinary. Because of you, elephants are roaming across 3,060 protected acres in Tennessee. They are forming bonds, exploring habitats, and receiving individualized, expert care every single day. Because of you, elephants have home, herd, rest, and refuge — today and for decades to come.

With gratitude and excitement for the future for elephants, here in Tennessee and beyond,

Stephen Shurter
President & CEO
The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee



Key Accomplishments

Celebrated **The Sanctuary's 30th Anniversary** — three decades of providing lifetime care to 36 elephants



Welcomed Punch and Mikki from the Louisville Zoo, bringing the **total number of elephants in residence to 14 during 2025**, including two bull elephants

Named **2025 Outstanding Wildlife Sanctuary** by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries



Received the **Tennessee Governor's Environmental Stewardship Award**



Engaged **over 12,000 learners** through Distance Learning programs across 40 states and six countries

Collaborated with Scholastic Magazine, NPR, ABC, and NBC's TODAY to **elevate public awareness** of elephant welfare



Achieved **reaccreditation** by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) and maintained dual accreditation with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA)



Achieved **98% landfill diversion**, generated **25% of electricity** through solar power, and stored **40,000 gallons of rainwater** for operational use

Hosted Shivam Rai of Wildlife SOS and Dr. Dominique Gonçalves from Mozambique's Gorongosa Restoration Project and Elephant Ecology Project, **strengthening international collaboration** in elephant welfare and conservation



Ronnie and Debbie

2025 Financial Summary

SOURCES OF REVENUE

50.57%	PUBLIC SUPPORT
37.36%	BEQUESTS
7.87%	GRANTS / FOUNDATIONS
2.27%	UNDERWRITING
0.65%	MERCHANDISE
0.51%	ENDOWMENTS
0.76%	IN-KIND
0.00%	CORPORATIONS

EXPENSES

89.88%	PROGRAM SERVICES
6.37%	MANAGEMENT
3.76%	FUNDRAISING

PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE

Public Support	6,950,540
Bequests	4,146,048
Total Public Support	\$11,096,588

EXPENSES & LOSSES

PROGRAM SERVICES

Shelter and Care	
Elephant Care	2,517,344
Veterinarian Care	741,087
Facilities	2,986,979
Education	1,100,135
Total Program Services	\$7,345,545

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Management	520,456
Fundraising	307,036
Total Supporting Services	\$827,492

TOTAL EXPENSES **\$8,173,037**

* The Elephant Sanctuary has set aside unrestricted financial operational reserves of five times its budgeted expenses to ensure the lifetime care and safe haven for an undetermined number of elephants. Elephants have an expected life span of 50–70 years and The Sanctuary is committed to providing food, shelter, veterinary care, medicine, caregivers, property maintenance and security. Along with the public's continuing support, these funds are needed to provide for the elephants currently in our care and for those that will come to The Sanctuary. The Elephant Sanctuary has \$11,431,298 in net assets.

* Figures listed in the Annual Report are taken from The Elephant Sanctuary's 990 Tax Form, as they represent true expenses after the tax allocation of Investment Management Fees. The 2025 audit and 990 can be found on our website at elephants.com/financials.



MIKKI & PUNCH

The Sanctuary is honored to provide lifelong care for elephants, meeting their changing needs as they age, and to increase public awareness and subsequent action to create a better world for all elephants.

Since 1995, The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee has provided home and care to 36 elephants. The Sanctuary began with 110 acres and has expanded to encompass multiple separate and protected, diverse habitats, spanning over 3,060 acres. Currently, there are 11 elephant residents, with space to welcome more.

In addition to direct care for elephant residents, The Sanctuary has reached a global audience through its educational programming and aims to raise awareness for elephant conservation and welfare worldwide.

Learn more at elephants.com



The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee is proudly accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

Our strong performance as an animal welfare/wildlife conservation 501(c)(3) non-profit is recognized by reputable charity monitoring groups.

