

Elephant Havens Wildlife Foundation

Protecting & Preserving
the African Elephant

Annual Report

January 2022 to January 2023

Calendar year 2022 saw Elephant Havens come out of the pandemic without having taken a step back and, as this report reflects, going forward with renewed energy and hope for the possibilities that the project presents. The prior year proved to be a sort of “soft opening” as the Botswana orphanage received many visits from the local Motswana and as international travel began to ramp up. Our support and donations remained steady. At the orphanage, they moved past the, sometimes, dire conditions in Botswana after tourism ceased. And, after a multi-year drought, they enjoyed decent rains into early 2022. Existing programs continued and grew, new opportunities have been identified and new partnerships have been forged. As we have said before, we are proud of our team in Botswana and are grateful and humbled to be making our fourth annual report. With each year we find new energy, new support, and new progress, while maintaining support from those who have been with this project from the beginning. We offer sincere thanks to all of the supporters worldwide and to the hardworking team in Botswana, in the United States and all of those who work with the other African initiatives that Elephant Havens (U.S.) supports. We reiterate that none of this happens without the donors, and we want to acknowledge you and your indispensable kindness and generosity.

We enjoy reporting on the accomplishments of 2022 and what we anticipate for 2023.

Here in the United States

- Fundraising continues and was steady in 2022, increasing 25% over 2021. We increased grants to the missions of the Foundation by almost 10% in calendar year 2022 over 2021, while also beginning to create reserves and a fund that will grow to support long term sustainability of the charity's programs. It is gratifying to see this initiative mature and become established, and also to see that, with continuing work, we are proving the viability of Elephant Havens, and to observe its importance to the wildlife, human communities and environments it serves. The project requires daily commitment from all involved, and those in the United States and in Africa are pleased to put in the hours in order to honor the donors who trust us to be good stewards of their trust and generosity.
- We raised more than \$900,000 in calendar year 2022 from donors large and small. We have also reached the goals of each matching grant that was offered.

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- Our partnership with the incredible Dallas Zoo was maintained with the Zoo facing real hardship as a public venue, dependent upon its role as a gathering place. They continued their support even through their lengthy closure. Elephant Havens has continued as one of 12 wildlife partners under a program where the Zoo engages and qualifies organizations that have field operations that work to protect and preserve selected species. The laboratory established by the Zoo at the Botswana orphanage continues to be the gift that keeps on giving. The Zoo's assistance has been targeted for maximum impact to the charitable initiatives of the Foundation. An example of this was with their monetary assistance with the miles of electric fencing at the large soft release area.
- Over 95% of funds raised have been directed to the charitable outreach of the Foundation or are held as cash balances of the Foundation pending approval of appropriate projects that have been selected for Foundation support.
- The Foundation maintains a first-class website, has branded and protected its various marks, and established many and varied fundraising systems and sources.
- The Foundation produces regular detailed reporting and newsletters to an ever expanding mailing list. Our social media initiatives bring in new supporters every day.
- The Foundation actively seeks other initiatives in Africa that are worthy of its support and that share the Foundation's goals and missions. The Foundation has identified the Big Life Foundation in Kenya, Reteti Elephant Sanctuary, also in Kenya, and Great Plains Conservation Foundation in Botswana and Zimbabwe, as worthy beneficiaries and is directing support to these fine charities.

In Botswana, even more has been accomplished

- The Botswana Trust continues to expand its beautifully wooded site in the Okavango Delta on the banks of the Gomoti river channel in the Shorobe District; 45 minutes northeast of the airport in Maun, Botswana. The third expansion since the inception is now fenced as of the end of 2021. The orphanage provides excellent habitat for the current rescues, including an oft used swimming pan (pond), mud wallow and sand bathing area, plus plenty of browse and grazing habitat. Once weaned, these youngsters continue to be able to roam and feed naturally all day as if they had not been uprooted. In the evenings, they all return to a boma (corrals or stable areas) area where our community supplier has cut fresh mopane and silver terminalia branches, favorites of any elephant in Botswana, for nighttime snacking.
- The expanded site has been fully fenced with an adult elephant-proof and solar-powered electric fence as specified by wildlife authorities in Botswana. The fencing is primarily to keep wild elephants out, as these young elephants do not seem to think the "grass is greener on the other side of the fence".

- A one-of-a-kind permit from Botswana wildlife authorities has been streamlined, allowing the team to quickly rescue and translocate orphaned or abandoned elephants. Of course, the permit also allows the Botswana trust to keep, maintain and reintroduce orphaned elephants into the wild together as their own herd.
- Joining MmaMotse, the first rescue, who continues acting as a leader and matriarch at now four years old, are five other beautiful young elephants, two more females and three males. There are regular posts and messages that chronicle these wonderful little creatures as they enjoy their new safe haven.
- We have added separate bomas (corrals or stable areas) as the nighttime shelters for the babies, bringing the total in the primary boma area to 13 superior enclosures. There are 2 enclosed boma areas to provide proper shelter and special care for newborns and the handlers that sleep with them while still very young. Separated from the main boma area by the length of a football field or two, are two large new roofed bomas that are used as quarantine areas for older rescues so that the team are able to gauge any health issues, conduct lab tests (in the on-site lab) and stabilize new rescues before introducing them to the rest of the herd. They are now able to maintain good records as these youngsters flourish. It is a beautiful facility that is fully solar-powered.
- In the boma area, there is an elephant formula-prep kitchen, laundry, laboratory, food and medical storage room, and refrigeration for elephant medicines and formula.
- We are in the process of doubling the capacity of the solar system. To do so, solar panels are being added and the battery capacity expanded to power more efficient equipment that takes advantage of current leading battery technology.
- The Trust maintains its relationships with excellent large-animal veterinarians who are great with young elephants.
- The staff in Botswana continues to be led by co-founder Boago (Bee) Poloko, who was formerly the lead local elephant handler at Abu Camp in the Okavango Delta. Bee Poloko has expanded his team of elephant handlers. In addition to him, the staff includes three handlers with at least 10 years of experience with elephants that have been rescued as adults from captivity or culling operations, or have been orphaned as youngsters. To supplement these four experts, the Trust has added additional handlers who are dedicated to the mission. These new additions are almost exclusively from the local communities and are great advocates for elephants and wildlife. The Trust is very pleased to have been able to create many full-time jobs within the local community, as community outreach is an important part of our mission.

- The Trust has added staff to handle maintenance, cooking and other support needs at the orphanage. The folks from the Dallas Zoo have trained Bee and one of the other elephant experts to be proficient in the lab.
- Staffing and elephant care are a 24/7 operation with the staff doing 10-day shifts, then rotating off for 4 days. Elephant Havens, while only 45 minutes from an airport that serves international locations, is off the grid from the standpoint of water, sanitary sewer, and electricity services. There is also spotty cellular service. The Trust has had to overcome these issues in short order. At the facility now, there are: (i) six new raised tents in addition to the nine initial housing tents—all with permanent floors for staff, plus permanent separate showers and toilets; (ii) a public reception area with offices and public toilets; (iii) management housing with full bathroom facilities; (iv) a main area that overlooks the mud wallow and the delta that houses public dining, a public kitchen, lounge, bathroom, and meeting space; (v) a raised tent for major donors and other major benefactors who may want to stay at the facility overnight; (vi) full solar array to power all improvements and all utilities to operate this facility; (vii) full water and composting sewer facilities that leave no appreciable human footprint; (viii) maintenance and storage facility; and (ix) the expanded elephant boma area and quarantine facility for new arrivals. There have been three expansions of the physical location of the elephant habitat with commensurate extension of the electric fencing.
- A remarkable, high speed internet capacity has been installed over much of the property allowing real-time broadcast to various audiences all over the world. This permits excellent phone and WiFi capacity via an antennae system.
- We are currently fencing the land granted to the trust from local tribal authorities, land boards and communities [an additional 400 +/- hectares (nearly 1,000 acres) of land]. This is to be used as the soft release area for the elephants at Elephant Havens as they outgrow the orphanage at age 5+. They will then spend five years with little human contact before reintroduction into Okavango Delta. Electric fencing, housing, and utilities there will serve the small staff at the soft release area. The Trust has also developed a water well and solar support for communities near the release area. This is a beautiful, perfect elephant habitat that will be preserved as such. It will be relegated to wildlife preservation and removed from grazing and cultivation. It is a fairly short walk from the orphanage to the interim release area.
- We are proud that the Botswana Foundation was considered by the United States Embassy in Gaborone, Botswana, to apply for a grant from the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund Program. This program benefits only local Botswana organizations. The Foundation completed the application process and presented budgets and bids for the five miles (+/-) of electric fencing at the soft release. Out of approximately one hundred applicants, we were one of only three selected to receive a grant. The Embassy staff were very complimentary of our program.

- The entire operation has a very small environmental footprint, unless you count the prints of the elephants.

Community engagement continues to be a major focus

- We have expanded outreach with local communities with which the Foundation shares this special part of the world. Even though the humans wage a regular competition with elephants during the short planting season, the Foundation continues to have good reception from local leaders, farmers and herders. Our fencing contractor has completed the design of reasonably priced electric fencing that we can install around area fields to persuade the local elephants to stay away. And when technology fails, the Foundation has formed great relationships with the community. They know that they can call in the middle of the night to mobilize and direct wild elephants away from farms. This initiative has reduced the human-wildlife conflict, and people are not left helpless or in a confrontation that proves lethal for elephants or people. The Elephant Havens team is always happy to intervene regardless of the hour, and they bring much wisdom to the effort that eases stress for all involved.
- Coming out of tragic drought through 2019 into early 2020, the Delta received strong rains in the rainy season of 2020-2021 and a very good flood in the winter of 2021, which was a boon to farmers, herders, and wildlife. However, as the orphanage lies in the Okavango Delta with no less than four primary channels between the nearest pavement and our front gate, the Foundation had to become bridge builders and bridge repairers. The Foundation built one bridge where none previously existed and completely restored a bridge that had been left derelict for years. This provides access to Elephant Havens, but also a means for all of the community to reach their homes, fields, and livestock.
- Our shuttle for the local folks, most of whom do not have vehicles, has been a good success. Since our team drives back and forth regularly to Maun, the Foundation provides rides from the cattle posts and family enclaves nearby to the paved road some five miles away. Bus service is then available into town from there.
- As the Foundation sought more opportunities to serve in Botswana during this disrupted year, the Foundation conceived of a plan to engage local women (as in women who live within walking distance of our front gates, keeping in mind that in Botswana “walking distance” is measured in miles and an hour or more). In any event, the Botswana Trust seeks ways to help people make their own way and to have their own successes where all they require is an opportunity. To that end, the Foundation made training available to four to five local women who have now mastered the art of paper making using elephant dung as a primary ingredient. The Foundation supplies the dung free of charge, as you might imagine. The ladies make raw paper sheets for artists, notebooks, folios, and other products that are sold in the curio shop at Elephant Havens and in lodges throughout the Delta. It is a marked

success and these craftswomen are at work at the Gabomoccha community center five days a week.

- Speaking of the curio shop at Elephant Havens, the Foundation supports local craftspeople from the areas around Maun, Botswana, with sales of baskets and other goods crafted by these artisans. The Foundation does not operate on consignment, instead paying for the goods so that the sales risk is not left with the local folks.
- The Foundation has acquired a proper school bus that is used to gather local school children and carry them to and from their farms and cattle posts to the schools in Shorobe. These kids now can ride to school and avoid a harrowing long walk through corridors frequented by wild elephants during much of the year. It was a dangerous situation, and our school bus has been in service for a year now, making eight trips per day. The Foundation has a full-time dedicated driver now.
- In one of those classic situations where a plan results in unintended consequences, the Foundation found that having the bus service has spiked school attendance. A very good thing that was entirely unanticipated, and the local school became overcrowded. So, the Foundation bought nice, serviceable tents to create two new classrooms, and the school is excited to have these new young minds in class.
- The Foundation has found that if you put infrastructure in place along with a competent team, other opportunities to serve are presented. To that end, almost 290 wheelchairs have just been delivered to Elephant Havens from a wonderful donor (The Wheelchair Foundation). The Foundation has the facilities and administrative capacity to coordinate shipping and assure that the chairs are properly placed with those in need. Working with the Botswana government health officials and the local hospital in Maun, the Foundation is in the process of matching the chairs with well-vetted recipients. This has been a remarkable initiative. The Wheelchair Foundation has been looking for a well-run Foundation on the ground in rural Botswana for its first foray into Botswana, and the Foundation is very proud to have been selected to direct the entire process in Botswana.
- The Foundation have hired all local Botswana staff from the northern part of the country, and some of the staff comes from the immediate community.
- The Foundation continues to have very strong support from local Botswana wildlife officials, as well as our friends in public and private anti-poaching units across the country.
- With the introduction of shutdowns and shelter in place, the number two industry in Botswana continues to be only partially in operation, as tourism and all international entry into the country has partially been reinstated. This has been an extremely difficult time for the human community in which the Foundation operates. During this period, the Botswana trust never released employees, furloughed people, or reduced pay.

- The Foundation continues our partnership with Helicopter Horizons, the foremost helicopter operator in the region. The Foundation continues to welcome guests to Elephant Havens who have traveled in with Helicopter Horizons. The Foundation believes these visitors and Helicopter Horizons will continue to be a great source of important friends to Elephant Havens. The Foundation is fortunate to have an excellent 'helipad' which allows these guests to arrive at our doorstep.

We are proud to use donors' funds efficiently

During calendar year 2021 for the US foundation

Use of funds	Percentage of whole
Charity program services	96%
Administration/Fundraising	4%

See the Form 940 Statement of Activity for the Foundation published on the website for calendar year 2021. This reflects the numbers reported above.

Plans for the remainder of 2022

Here in the United States, we will continue to pursue fundraising efforts and will grow and enhance our partnership with the Dallas Zoo and other institutions. We are also improving our social media footprint and looking forward to providing virtual encounters with the operations on the ground in Africa.

In Botswana, the Foundation will continue to enhance our support to and from communities. The Foundation believes that it has become very clear to all in Botswana that, while all local people do not necessarily see direct impact from the natural world they live in, it is their natural places that account for the livelihood of many, if not most, Batswana. And the Foundation is able to start welcoming guests again from all over the world. Elephants have been fully accommodated for all of 2021, and the staff has enjoyed comfortable quarters and full room and board. The facility is now fully operational, and the Foundation looks forward to welcoming many supporters this Botswana winter.

While the orphanage and our team are an amenity to the tourist industry in Botswana, this project is expensive to operate. Accordingly, we are pursuing avenues for fundraising that do not detract from the mission and will provide efficient returns on the Foundation's efforts. The primary capital outlays for the creation of the orphanage have been addressed and we have

paid for work to date. Additional capital needs are imminent as described below. Also, day-to-day operations will need to be funded from various sources. Accessing those funds is a daily concern and constant objective. The only limit on the plans and the mission will be funding. We have many excellent prospects for raising funds that we believe will bear fruit, and we are looking forward to continuing our mission in Botswana. We expect to organize a major fundraising event in 2022 in the U.S.

During the latter part of 2022 we anticipate some initiatives and will seek funding for:

- Another school bus and additional classrooms.
- Dairy goats for the dairy goat project that the Foundation wants to initiate as a means of sourcing milk for the younger rescues. The proposal is to allocate goats to local qualified herders who will provide milk as compensation for the gifted goats. Once compensation is complete, the Foundation will purchase the milk from the herders.
- The Foundation would like to contract with local tailors to make school uniforms for children who are unable to afford uniforms.
- The Foundation is always in the market to procure additional habitat for the orphanage.
- To defray the costs of rescuing young elephants in need, to employ good people to advance the mission, and to fund community initiatives that are sustainable and can be provided for a cost that is commensurate with the benefit.
- To procure a new Toyota Landcruiser as the primary equipment to be used in rescue and transport of orphans.
- With the brilliant assistance of Bee Poloko, to continue to enhance relationships with the local authorities and all relevant officials in Gaborone, the capital city. The Foundation is very fortunate to have Bee running the show, as he is broadly respected in Botswana and brings much wisdom and energy to the mission.

Debra Stevens, President

Scott Jackson, Vice President