THERE ARE OVER 300 CAPTIVE ELEPHANTS IN NORTH AMERICA

THIS IS ASHA

AND SHE NEEDS YOUR HELP

THE *LONELY* ELEPHANT

AT NATURAL BRIDGE ZOO IN VIRGINIA

Can *YOU* be a voice for Asha?

YOUR HELP IS DESPERATELY NEEDED TO SAVE HER!

Photo credit: Barbara Baker

THIS IS ASHA'S STORY.

We have fallen in love with her and, once you know her story, you will want to help her too!

Asha is a 36-year-old African female elephant who was born in Zimbabwe somewhere between 1982-83. Asha lost her entire family in a horrific slaughter orchestrated by the government of Zimbabwe in 1984. She was left alone and scared, still needing her mother's milk and guidance, before being rounded up and sent to the USA by the Shultz Company to later be exploited by the Natural Bridge Zoo at only two years old, a frightened baby destined for a life of human torture. There are few details that exist, but we do know that at least two elephants resided with her, Teaha from 1992- 1996, and Luna who arrived in 1999 (with few other details and the presumption that she didn't live long). Asha has been forced to give backbreaking rides for nearly two decades to over 10,000 people every season. The heat is sweltering with no shade, and it is reported that water is withheld from her so she won't need to urinate in front of paying customers. She is prone to potential foot and skin problems, has a concrete barn floor that is not heated in the winter. She has no pool and is chained frequently in an exhibit and riding pen with major containment concerns. It is time she sees true grass, true freedom, and is released to an accredited sanctuary where she'd have the option to decide whether or not she wants to interact with other elephants and the space to learn to be the elephant she's never had the chance to be in all of her 30+ years in the United States.

In 2017, Natural Bridge Zoo was cited for for violating the federal Animal Welfare Act based on its inadequate veterinary care, deteriorating buildings, and for leaving Asha alone and unattended in an inappropriately fenced enclosure. The most recent violations included "mistreatment and improper care of animals, including the mishandling of Asha by her keepers." This deteriorating facility's animal welfare violations go back as far as 1994, yet unbelievably, it remains open to the public.

WILL YOU HELP? WILL YOU SPEAK UP FOR HER?

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR ASHA'S FREEDOM!

CONTACT US TODAY TO BE HER VOICE!

Join

THE COLLABORATION FOR ASHA

For more information on
The Collaboration for Asha

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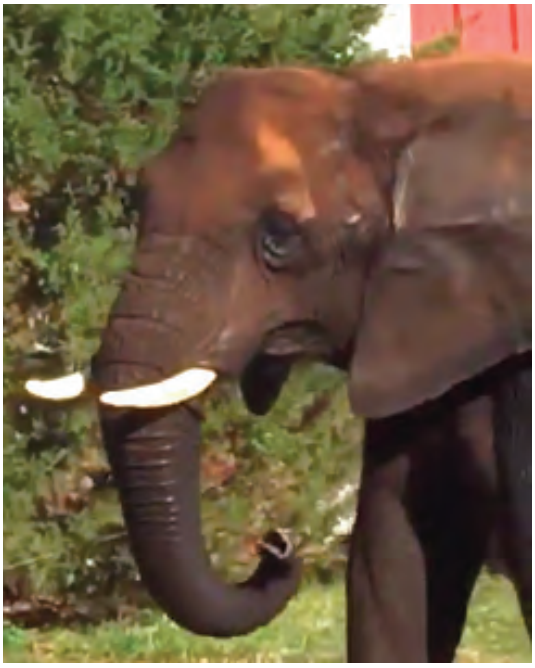
Life and Death at the Natural Bridge Zoo



Asha freshly oiled up for the 2018 riding season.

Natural Bridge Zoo in the mountains of Virginia has opened for another season, that for Asha, means more hardship, dominance, pain, and intimidation for their "star" exhibit – Asha, the lone African elephant. 34 years of captivity. Decades of loneliness and deprivation. She may have been exposed to nothing but bullhooks, elephant rides and solitary confinement, but as an elephant, Asha needs far more than this. Asha is not given a choice about anything she does. Freedom is not part of her daily life. Take a look at elephants in the wild, or even rescued elephants who now thrive in accredited elephant sanctuaries such as The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee or PAWS in California. They get to CHOOSE! To forage, to roam, to splash and play in ponds with other elephants, to socialize. To be alone, to sleep, to eat, to play. Freedom from pain, from exploitation, from abuse. Freedom from physical pain, mental stress, emotional anxiety produced from a tool called the bullhook, ankus or elephant goad that is used to discipline her and keep her in line.

Our goal is to rescue Asha from this roadside zoo and get her to an accredited Sanctuary –

According to the Elephant Sanctuary of Tennessee (TES), "Sanctuary" refers to "providing a safe haven and natural habitat, dedicated solely to elephant wellbeing".

One of Asha's advocates recently visited her. She found Asha doused with mineral oil. The handler reported they keep 50-gallon containers of it for Asha's use. One of the downsides to this is there was no shelter for Asha to get under if she chose to protect herself from the sun during the hours she is giving rides. There was no pond for her to frolic in or mud in which to bask to soothe and protect her skin. In addition to the barren exhibit, there was no food, no water, no enrichment toys. Asha's eyes reflected the barren tiny spot of land. Empty. Asha's entire world is comprised of either is standing in small electric fence enclosed portion of her small paddock with no shade, or giving rides, or chained to the barn in the summer, and being confined alone in a barn for a large portion of the long winters there. An electric fence surrounded her in the tiny area. She groped the ground for something to eat, but again, it was barren. Elephants typically eat 200- 600 pounds of food a day. They can also drink up to 50 gallons of water a day (according to The National Elephant Center.) As we watched, listened and filmed Asha, she vocalized with a loud grumble in response to the handler briskly moving toward her in an assertive way. She immediately cowered and backed up. Asha was freshly oiled up for the 2018 riding season - "oiling" is an antiquated circus practice that has been found to lead to eventual health problems. Inside the back of Asha's old metal barn animal cages, where other animals are also housed were visible propped next to the window. The floor was concrete, an unhealthy and inadequate surface for elephants to stand upon.

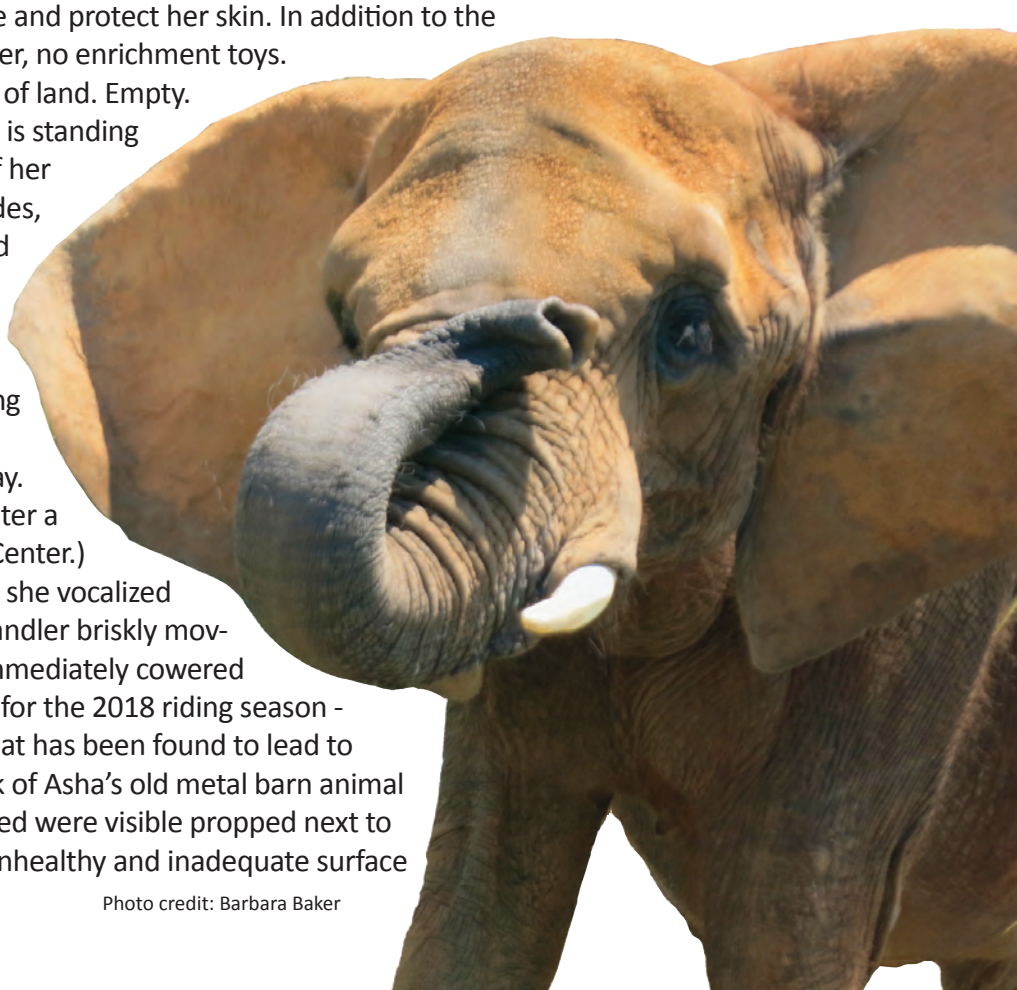


Photo credit: Barbara Baker

Photo courtesy: SNN

"Zero animals to interact with.

Especially elephants.

Little enrichment.

No opportunity to freely

roam and forage.

Her life is empty.

And that's how her eyes look.

EMPTY"

-Kim Reid Hogan
Recent Park Visitor, Voices for Asha

Photo courtesy: SNN

**The only thing worse than dying....
is living at this road side zoo.**

Statements about Asha

from Elephant Scientist for In Defense of Animals, Toni Frohoff, Ph.D.

• "Elephants, social isolation is an extreme and particularly devastating form of cruelty and deprivation."

• "Elephants who are kept in a small enclosures are in increased danger of developing chronic foot disease and arthritis, both of which lead to frequent instances of death for captive elephants. In fact, the most common reason for premature death of captive elephants is lack of space and standing on hard and/or otherwise inappropriate surfaces."

• "Natural Bridge Zoo uses "unprotected contact" in working with Asha. Such contact forces close interactions with the handler which is a very dangerous practice that is being phased out of zoos. It is not safe for Asha, the handler, and poses a public safety danger. Consequently, more modern, humane, and safer "protected contact" options are increasingly being used by zoos."From the records that are publicly available and photographic and video evidence, it is clear that the living environment and management of Asha the elephant at Natural Bridge Zoo falls far below acceptable standards and is seriously adversely impacting Asha's welfare, as well as placing the public at unnecessary and excessive risk. "

• "There are *"many"* indicators of compromised welfare to Asha but perhaps the most overt is that this elephant is alone and isolated from conspecifics. For a female African elephant that has evolved to maintain exceptionally close and lifelong bonds with other elephants, social isolation is an extreme and exceptional form of cruelty and deprivation."

• "The staggering number and dangerous nature of U.S. Department of Wildlife (USDA) Animal Welfare Violations (AWA) incurred by Natural Bridge Zoo over the years, some of which appear to repeatedly reoccur and/or persist, combined with the solitary confinement of Asha relative to conspecifics for roughly a decade, compel me to recommend the immediate confiscation of this elephant and transfer to one of the two certified elephant sanctuaries in the U.S. "

Photo credit: HSUS

The window at the back of Asha's old metal habitat showed cages inside propped next to the window. Asha stands in filth, excrement, on a urine soaked concrete slab. The unheated barn is rat infested.

UnNATURAL Life For Asha and Animals at Natural Bridge Zoo

Natural Bridge ZOO
TAKE A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE!

License suspension keeps zoo closed

NATURAL BRIDGE (AP) — The Natural Bridge Zoo, a 22-year-old tourist attraction, may remain closed this spring because federal inspectors suspended the operator's license for violating animal welfare laws.

"This is not representative of our average zoo," said Miava Binkley, a U.S. A... narian... Bridge... anima... camel... The... Moge... zoo a... ber. H... sectio... fare A... five ye... The... vide a... ter fo... dispos...

sages left on his answering machine Monday.

Animal welfare groups and local and state officials have heard complaints from visitors at the roadside zoo for some time.

"I saw the young female elephant outside on an unseasonably hot day with no available water and inade... ade," one visitor wrote to ...veterinarian in May 1992. ...tember, a visitor from North ...saw an elephant chained by ...leg inside a building. The ...re smeared with feces and ...was covered with what ap... ...be urine, the visitor wrote ...ane Society of the United ...

...inspection reports by Agri... Department agents docu... ...attern of similar conditions ...o, which normally closes for ...er and reopens in April. The ...how that the zoo corrected ...

NATURAL BRIDGE ZOO IN THE NEWS. LINKS:

DEAD ANIMALS

LICENSE SUSPENSION

GOVERNMENT SUES NBZ

STEREOTYPIC BEHAVIOR

ANIMAL ABUSE
UNDERCOVER VIDEO BY HSUS

Dead anima...

By DEBORAH SENSABAUGH
Special Writer

LEXINGTON — Both concerned residents and farmers worked with Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors at the meeting on Monday to look for a solution to the disposal of dead animals in the county.

An update of the county ordinance governing the disposal of carrion came under question recently when residents living near the Natural Bridge Zoo complained the owner was dumping animal parts left over from feeding his tigers and other animals.

Residents said the parts along with manure and straw were being spread on an embankment and dumped in piles near their backyards. They said the odor and flies were creating a health hazard.

F... ...mily r...

Estra... drive-... park just miles from father's

The Associated Press

NATURAL BRIDGE —

...allows guests to see more zoos in ...

...ugh

...he's got different ideas than what we do. We just look at things differently," Eric Mogensen said.

"Normally you'd wish your son well in business, ...

Dead zebra sparks lawsuit

LYNCHBURG, Va. (UPI) — The federal government is suing the Natural Bridge Zoo for refusing to pay for a $900 zebra that died shortly after arrival.

The zoo agreed to buy the zebra from the National Zoo in Washington three years ago.

Do You Love Elephants?

Photo credit: TES

That may be because elephants are much like humans. They are sentient beings who thrive on contact with others of their own kind. They Play. They Love. They Mourn. Physically and emotionally, they need to be together with other elephants. World-wide populations are declining at an alarming rate due to poaching, the ivory trade, trophy hunting, and human encroachment into their ecosystems. Elephants are suffering in CAPTIVITY. Elephants across the globe are also being captured for human use and profit in circuses, zoos, tourism, temple festivals and logging. Although wild elephants can live well into their 60's or 70's, most captive elephants die in their 30's or 40's. And their lives are misery.

True Sanctuary for Elephants

Photo credit: TES

There are over 200 zoo elephants and approximately 70 circus elephants in the U.S. today. We are working to improve their lives by ending all elephant captivity. But once they have been "broken", elephants cannot return to the wild. The only answer is retirement to an accredited sanctuary. Accredited sanctuaries give elephants room to roam and forage and an opportunity to be part of an elephant family again. Excellent medical and personal care is provided as the elephants live their independent lives. Most importantly, there are no more rides, performances or abuse. There are currently 2 true elephant sanctuaries in the USA, Performing Animals Welfare Society (PAWS) in California and The Elephant Sanctuary in Tennessee (TES). True sanctuary provides independence and autonomy for former captive zoo and circus elephants so that they can enjoy being elephants, not slaves to the human entertainment industry. In true sanctuary, human contact is minimal, and elephants are encouraged to be themselves. A new sanctuary called Elephant Refuge North America in Georgia is currently being built and will be open soon to accept more elephants. We wish true sanctuary for all enslaved circus and zoo elephants.

Progress and Victories

Elephants trained with a bullhook do not perform because they want to; they are coerced and dominated by fear of pain and years of abuse. The public is demanding change…and it is working. Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus has closed due to public awareness, declining attendance, and high costs of operating. Cities across the US have banned animal circuses or use of the bull hook. Zoos are coming under increasing scrutiny of their claims regarding conservation and education. Social media and technology are making it much harder to hide animal abuse.

Working together, we can give all captive elephants the life they deserve. Join us!

Captivity: Cruel for Them ...

Captive elephants are sometimes kept alone and always in totally unnatural conditions when on public display or used for breeding. They develop debilitating arthritis and foot infections, which can lead to early death, and are stressed from solitude, poor diet, and lack of enrichment. They are prevented from breeding naturally and enjoying any independence. Traveling elephants spend hours in small trailers or boxcars, with little or no exercise. Circuses and zoos often claim they are protecting the future of wild elephants.

Captivity is not the answer!

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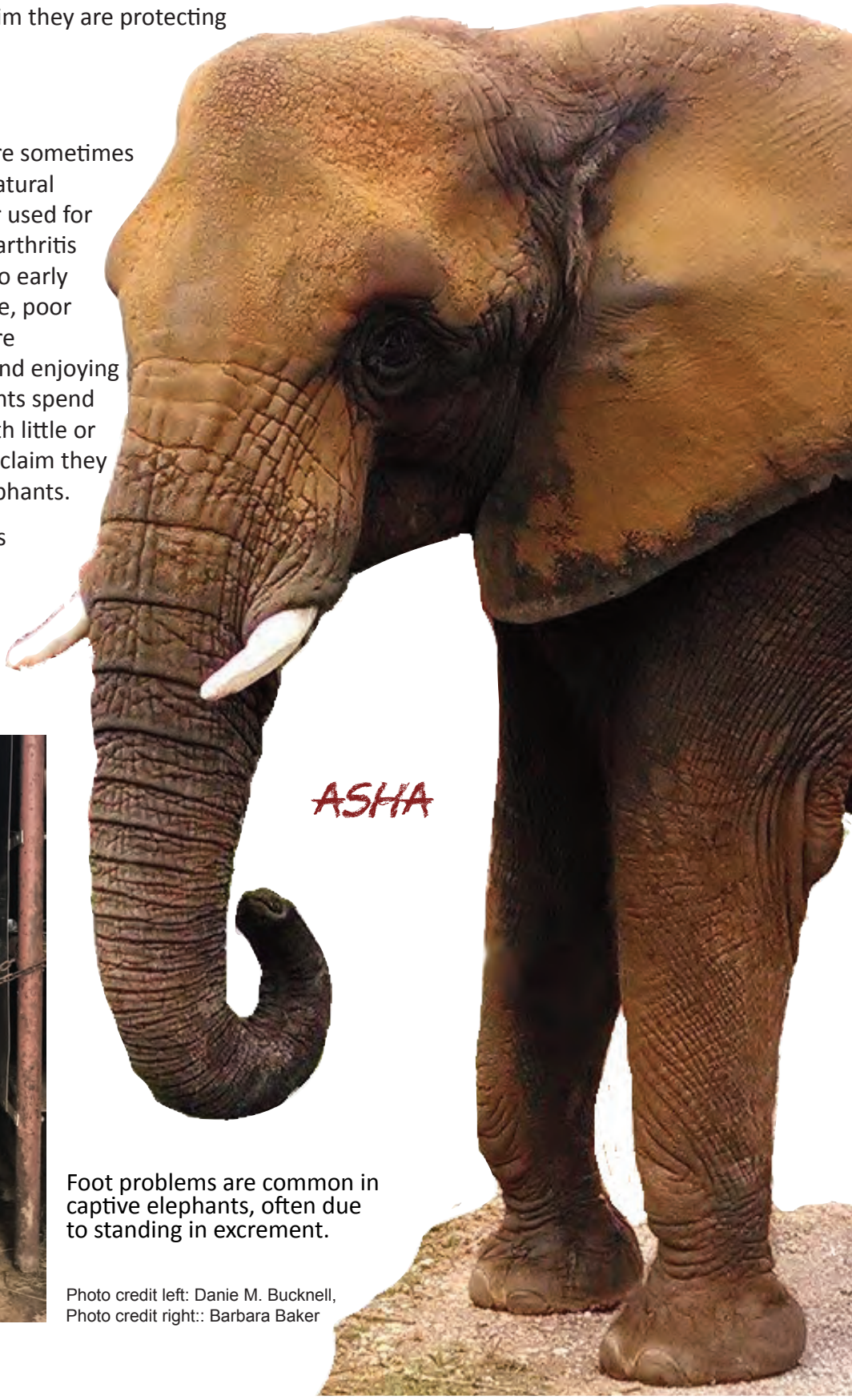
Elephants are known to carry tuberculosis which can be transmitted to humans. TB testing is not required by the Federal Animal Welfare Act. (AWA)

Current laws do not protect the public and are rarely enforced.



Foot problems are common in captive elephants, often due to standing in excrement.

Photo credit left: Danie M. Bucknell,
Photo credit right:: Barbara Baker

FIGHTING FOR ASHAS' FREEDOM

COLLABORATING FOR ASHA

THE ANIMAL DEFENSE PARTNERSHIP

Jane Goodall's roots&shoots Greece

I am a voice for ASHA

IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS

SAVE NOSEY NOW

COMING TOGETHER TO COLLABORATE FOR ASHA.

Realizing that there is strength in numbers and great value in bolstering relationships and combining skills, Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots Greece, In Defense of Animals, Save Nosey Now, The Animal Defense Partnership and Voices for Asha decided to collaborate on the shared mission to remove Asha from the confines of the Natural Bridge Zoo and provide her with a path to an accredited sanctuary.

Photo credit: WILDLIFE S.O.S. India

The Animal Defense Partnership, Inc.
https://www.animaldefensepartnership.org/

The Animal Defense Partnership is an independent advocacy and consulting non-profit that provides pro bono legal and other professional services to animal rights, welfare and protection organizations and advocates.

The Animal Defense Partnership, Inc.

David Ebert • Co-Founder
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Joel Litvin • Co-Founder
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In Defense of Animals: IDA
https://www.idausa.org/

Support from people like you has enabled us to set animals free from zoos and laboratories, stop hunters and circuses, and make the world more compassionate. 20 victories to stop animal abusers in the past year alone. DISCOVER OUR VICTORIES and the Campaigns we spearhead to fight for a better world for animals.

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General Inquiries
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Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots Greece
http://www.rootsandshoots.gr/

JGRSG became a non-profit in Greece March 2017 and happily adds its name to the many others in nearly 100 countries around the world, all a part of Dr. Goodall's vision through the Jane Goodall Institute, to inspire the next generation of compassionate, environmentally conscious do-gooders!
If you are interested in joining Roots & Shoots Greece, contact us.

Roots & Shoots Greece
Co-founder,

Anna Katogiritis, BSc, DVM
Facebook/Twitter:
@katogiritis

Save Nosey Now, Inc.
https://savenoseynow.org/

Save Nosey Now, Inc. nonprofit's mission is to provide education, intervention, and litigation that will ultimately lead to sanctuary for captive elephants in circuses and zoos.

Save Nosey Now
Administrators,

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Voices for Asha
https://www.facebook.com/voicesforasha/

Official facebook page of Voices for Asha in support of retiring the female African elephant, Asha, from Natural Bridge Zoo, to sanctuary.

Voices for Asha
Administrator,

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