



CHIMP LIFE

KEITHVILLE, LOUISIANA

30 YEARS OF THE **CHIMP LIFE**

This year, Chimp Haven celebrates 30 years since its founding and the countless milestones and special moments you've made possible for the chimps and their sanctuary home.

In 1995, Linda Brent and Amy Fultz were among a small group of primatologists who had gathered at a conference to discuss a unique problem: Hundreds of chimpanzees bred for AIDS research in the 80s had proven not to be ideal models for developing a vaccine, and now they remained in research facilities across the country with no clear plans for their future.

The CHIMP Act, which formalized sanctuary retirement for former research chimps into law, would not be signed for another five years, but the chimps' future was already a hot topic among primatologists. As the group explored the issue, there was plenty of conversation, but no tangible plans emerged.

"Linda and I headed back to our room to lay down and rest for a while," remembers Amy. "Linda looked at me and said, 'Let's do this – let's go home and do it,' and for me, this is where Chimp Haven began. Linda is a force, and if anyone was going to make this happen, I knew it would be her."

When Linda and Amy arrived back to work in San Antonio the next week, they approached their department chair, Tom Butler, with their big idea.

"Many of us knew eventually we'd have to do something for these chimps," recalls Tom. "Amy and Linda came into my office and started talking about a sanctuary – of course, in my mind I'm



Co-Founders Amy Fultz, Tom Butler, and Linda Brent at the sanctuary in April 2018.

thinking, 'How in the world are we going to do this? We don't have land. We don't have money.' For once in my life, I kept my mouth shut and said, 'Let's do it!'"

The group became incorporated and began selling t-shirts and tote bags (featuring chimps, of course) to raise funds – the next big hurdle would be finding land.

"We initially looked for land in the San Antonio area because it made the most sense logistically, but didn't have any luck," remembers Tom. "Then we heard from someone in Shreveport who was keen to have a primate sanctuary in the area and invited us to tour properties."

Finding a suitable home for hundreds of former research chimps is no small task. The land would need to offer ample trees, natural landscape,





Debbie, one of the sanctuary's first arrivals, climbs a tree in her habitat.

and vegetation to create the environment the team had in mind for the chimps' habitats and be remote enough to provide safety and privacy. After many 15-hour round trips between the two cities, they viewed a 200-acre forested property that had recently been deeded to Caddo Parish, nestled within what would become the 800+ acre Eddie D. Jones Park.

"It was almost funny when we saw it," says Tom. "We were just looking at each other like, 'Yes! This is it!' It was such a great feeling – like we were finally getting somewhere."

"It was absolutely gorgeous," agrees Linda. "Acres and acres of forest and hills. Tom and I looked at each other and knew – we could see chimps here."

From the spark of an idea, co-founders Linda, Amy, and Tom embarked on a journey that would change the future for chimps in the United States forever. Years later, after the CHIMP Act was passed, they would witness the very first chimp retirees – Rita and Teresa – establish their home in a multi-acre forested habitat and watch on in amazement as they and their groupmates exhibited wild chimp behaviors like climbing, nesting, and patrolling.

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Over the past 30 years, more than 500 chimps like Rita and Teresa have called Chimp Haven home, and today, the sanctuary has been the site of countless extraordinary moments – from Bob Barker calling for the chimps to "Come on down!" to the habitat named in his honor, the rescue of Henry, a former pet, a historic expansion, hundreds of sweet friendships and inspiring transformations, the chimps' Disney debut, and so much more.

This year, we'll be sharing memories from Chimp Haven's earliest days, along with plenty of throwback moments, inspiring stories, historic photos, achievements, learnings, and of course, plenty of chimps and pant-hoots. We hope you'll join us in the weeks and months to come as we commemorate the amazing achievements of the past 30 years and all the wonderful chimps who have called the sanctuary home.

From all of us at Chimp Haven, thank you for being part of Chimp Haven's amazing past and joining us for its future. We're so grateful for your support.



Co-Founders Amy Fultz and Linda Brent find a nest in a habitat.

OLD-TIMERS AND LONG-TIMERS

The sanctuary isn't alone in reaching a milestone year – here are just a few of the chimps celebrating landmark birthdays and anniversaries in 2025.

Jacob and Julius: The oldest living male chimps in the U.S.

Two special gentlemen are celebrating a special birthday this year. Jacob and Julius, both marked their 65th birthday this January at Chimp Haven, making them not only the eldest chimps at the sanctuary, but also the oldest living male chimps in the United States.

One of Chimp Haven's "Golden Oldies," Julius is one of the sanctuary's most beloved curmudgeons. He's famous for his raspberry noises, which he employs to get his caregivers to bring him his favorite snacks. (They're always happy to oblige.)

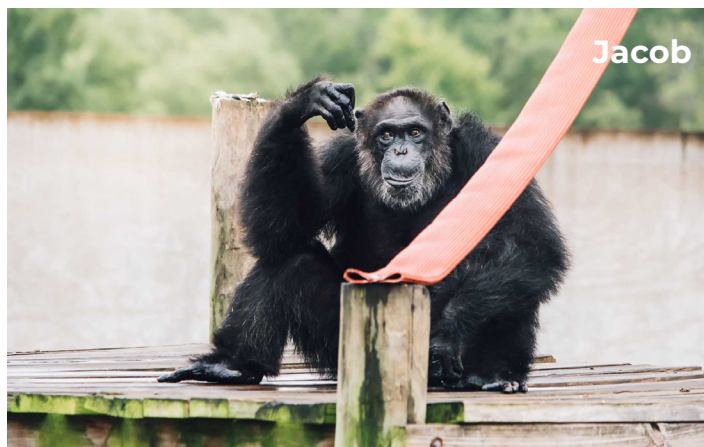
Laidback Jacob is an active member of a large social group and still climbs to the top of play structures for grooming sessions and panoramic views of the sanctuary around him. He makes excellent nests and is an easygoing and loyal friend to his chimp buddies (he's also a notorious flirt with the girls next door).

Sara Soda and Sheena: 20 years of retirement in style

Two of our longest standing retirees, among the first chimps to arrive at Chimp Haven in 2005, are celebrating 20 years of sanctuary retirement – and they're both doing it in their signature style.

Sara Soda served as her group's alpha for many years until young Mason came of age to lead. She's still a powerful, high-ranking member of her group, and has always served as a popular "auntie" to the group's younger female chimps. She's incredibly smart and makes the biggest, most epic nests, fit for the queen she is.

The sanctuary's only deaf chimpanzee, Sheena is a tough and independent female who regularly makes and uses tools. She has loud vocalizations and has even been seen using sticks to intimidate other chimps, earning her the nickname "Warrior Princess." Even though she's tough, she has a soft side and helps take care of elderly or ill chimpanzees in her group.



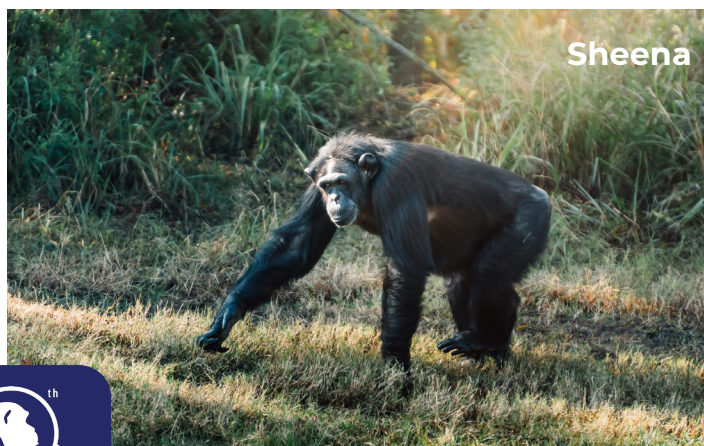
Jacob



Julius



Sara Soda



Sheena

CELEBRATE 30 YEARS WITH CHIMP HAVEN

Join in on the fun with limited-edition merch and special events to commemorate 30 years of providing sanctuary.

Special Edition Merch

The first funds raised for what would become Chimp Haven came from t-shirts and tote bags. Now, 30 years later, your purchase supports nearly 300 chimps at the world's largest chimpanzee sanctuary. Snag these special edition items before they're gone! chimphaven.org/store



A Year of Celebration

Join us this year as we commemorate 30 years of Chimp Haven history with special events at the sanctuary and online.

Chimp Haven at Home | Register: chimphaven.org/webinars

Join Chimp Haven staff for a look back at 30 iconic years from the comfort of your home.

- 30 Years of the Chimp Life *(recording available)*
- 30 Positive Reinforcement Training Wins *(May 9)*
- 30 Caregiver Triumphs and Lessons Learned *(Aug. 15)*
- 30 Iconic Moments *(Dec. 12)*

Brunch in the Wild | Purchase tickets: chimphaven.org/events

A beautiful, seated brunch with views of Chimp Haven's forested habitats and the chimps who call them home *(May 17)*

Chimp Chat | Purchase tickets: chimphaven.org/events

A special tour with a behind-the-scenes look at life at the sanctuary and in-depth conversation with experts on the Chimp Haven staff *(May 31, June 13, June 28)*

Chimpanzee Discovery Day | Purchase tickets: chimphaven.org/events

A special 30th anniversary-themed morning with the chimps *(Oct. 18)*

