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**THE LIVING DESERT'S ONE-MONTH-OLD GIRAFFE CALF HAS A NAME: COLE**

*Susan and Jim Gould Generously Named The Living Desert's New Addition*

**PALM DESERT/INDIAN WELLS – (March 24, 2022)** – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is excited to unveil the name for their newest giraffe, born February 21. The one-month-old calf's name is **Cole**. Long-time supporters of The Living Desert, Susan and Jim Gould, secured her naming rights at The Living Desert's 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Zoobilee Gala held on March 4.

"We are excited to reveal the name of our newest giraffe calf with the community," said Allen Monroe. "Cole has captured all our hearts since her very public debut, and as she grows, she will continue to inspire guests of all ages to help protect these amazing animals."

Cole was born to first-time parents, Shellie and Kelley on the giraffe savanna habitat and weighed 143 pounds and stood five-foot, 10-inches tall. She now weighs approximately 200 pounds and is over six-feet tall. Cole is now exploring the giraffe savanna habitat, along with her mother and the rest of the herd. The Living Desert is home to a herd of 10 giraffe.

"We named the baby giraffe Cole to honor our son, James Colford "Cole" Gould, who died tragically at age 23," shared Susan and Jim Gould, Board member of The Living Desert. "Cole, like countless children who visit The Living Desert, was always filled with awe and wonder at The Living Desert and its Bighorn Railroad."

Cole's naming rights were secured at The Living Desert's Wild Times Gala live auction. The Gould's winning bid of \$75,000 will help support the numerous education and conservation programs of The Living Desert, like Wild Nature Institute's environmental education program that teach ecological and social lessons, build national pride in Tanzanian wildlife, and motivate children to learn about their natural world.

"We are so grateful for the generosity of Susan and Jim Gould, and their love and support for The Living Desert," said Jan Hawkins, Director of Development at The Living Desert. "The Gould's generosity demonstrates their commitment to the future of desert wildlife here in the Coachella Valley and around the world."

Cole's birth is a successful result of the Species Survival Plan (SSP®) recommendation, which ensures the genetic sustainability and diversity of the species in human care. Giraffe gestation is about 15 months. Giraffe calves nurse for nine to 12 months and begin eating foliage at about four months. She will double her size in the first year of her life. Similar to human fingerprints, giraffe have their own individual spot-like markings and no two have the same pattern.

Currently listed by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) as vulnerable, giraffe populations have declined up to 40 percent over the last 30 years. There are fewer than 98,000 giraffes

in the wild. Native to southern and eastern Africa, major threats to giraffe population are habitat loss and fragmentation, civil unrest, and ecological changes.

Guests can get up-close and personal with these majestic animals by participating in the giraffe feedings from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., daily. The cost is \$8 per person or \$6 for members. For more information, visit [www.LivingDesert.org](http://www.LivingDesert.org) or call (760) 346-5694.

**About the Living Desert:**

The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is a nonprofit, accredited member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ensuring the highest standards of all aspects of animal care, education, conservation, public service, and operations. The Zoo is active in conservation research, habitat protection, breeding programs and education initiatives around the world, as well as in its own community. The Zoo has been a top destination in the Palm Springs area for over 50 years. The Living Desert is located at 47900 Portola Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260. For more information: (760) 346-5694 or visit [livingdesert.org](http://livingdesert.org).