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**THE LIVING DESERT ANNOUNCES NAME  
FOR THE NEWEST GIRAFFE CALF – VICKI LOU**

*An Anonymous Donor Gives \$100,000 to Select Her Name*

**PALM DESERT/INDIAN WELLS – (April 8, 2019)** – The Living Desert Zoo and Gardens is excited to unveil the name for their newest giraffe calf born March 20, 2019. The calf, **Vicki Lou**, was named through a generous gift of \$100,000 by an anonymous donor, and was named in honor of a loved one.

Vicki Lou was born in the early morning hours of March 20, 2019 to mother, Dadisi, and father, Hesabu. At her well-baby check last week, she weighed in at 149.6 pounds and stood 6 feet 1 inch tall. Vicky Lou made her public debut in the giraffe habitat on Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup> and continues to delight guests.

“We are thrilled to formally announce our baby giraffe’s name – Vicki Lou,” said Allen Monroe, President/CEO of The Living Desert. “The generous naming gift will continue to support The Living Desert’s conservation initiatives and programs that help save giraffe from extinction.”

The anonymous donor’s significant gift will help support giraffe conservation projects, such as Wild Nature Institute’s (WNI) environmental education programs. WNI works with teachers and schools to inspire the next generation of Tanzanian conservationists through educational materials, storytelling, activities and workshops.

“We are grateful for our anonymous donor’s generosity and support of The Living Desert,” said Jan Hawkins, Director of Development. “By naming our newest giraffe calf, our donors are sharing their commitment to the future of desert wildlife here in the Coachella Valley and around the world.”

Currently listed by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) as vulnerable, giraffe populations have declined up to 40% over the last 30 years. There are fewer than 98,000 giraffe in the wild. Native to southern and eastern Africa, major threats to giraffe population is habitat loss and fragmentation, civil unrest, and ecological changes.

Visitors can get up-close and personal with these majestic animals by participating in the giraffe feedings from 9:30 a.m.- 2:30 p.m. daily. The cost is \$7 per person or \$5 for members. The Living Desert is open daily from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m., with last admission at 4 p.m.

**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 attraction in the Palm Springs area for nearly 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).

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