

December 18, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Zoo's Most Recent Giraffe Calf Dies

"B.J.," the youngest giraffe calf at Dickerson Park Zoo died this morning. The zoo reported the calf's condition was very guarded a little more than a week ago. Because he was not nursing from his mother, zookeepers were tube-feeding B.J. and offering him grain, hay, water and milk throughout the day.

Although he seemed to show improvements over the weekend, B.J. took a sudden turn for the worse. He showed signs of bloating and diarrhea Sunday night. Tuesday morning, the calf collapsed and could not be revived. The zoo's staff veterinarian will conduct a necropsy (animal autopsy).

B.J. was born on Nov. 23. He was the first calf for 7-year-old Emma and the third calf sired by the zoo's breeding male Peperuka (11 years old).

B.J. was the 35th giraffe calf for Dickerson Park Zoo and the third born this fall. A fourth calf is due in January 2013. Although Dickerson Park Zoo has seen considerable successes with breeding giraffes, over time the mortality rate for calves is approximately 25 percent.

Dickerson Park Zoo is open daily 10 a.m.-4 p.m., weather permitting. The zoo will be closed on Christmas Day, New Year's Day and when the walkways are covered with ice or snow. For more information, visit the zoo online at www.dickersonparkzoo.org, or call the zoo's information hotline, 417-864-1800.

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