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Zoo Saddened by Death of Chimpanzee, Harvey

Toledo, Ohio—The Toledo Zoo is sad to report that one of its most beloved animals, 52-year-old male chimpanzee, Harvey, died in his sleep on August 17, apparently of natural causes. According to Dr. Chris Hanley, the Zoo's Chief Veterinarian, "Initial necropsy findings indicate that heart disease contributed to his passing." Further tests are pending.

Harvey was estimated to be the third oldest male chimpanzee in any American zoo. According to information from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), the median life expectancy for a chimpanzee is approximately 26 years for males and 35 years for females. Only four males in the AZA zoo population have ever lived longer than Harvey.

Except for several years at the Baltimore Zoo, Harvey had been at the Toledo Zoo since the late 1970s. He enjoyed good health throughout his long life, a testament to the excellent care he received at the Zoo. An examination in 2010 revealed an abnormal heart rhythm due to an enlarged heart, much like humans sometimes get. Harvey's close relationship with his keepers, particularly with Suzanne Husband who worked with him for nearly 20 years, enabled animal care staff to perform ultrasounds, EKGs and blood pressure testing without having to immobilize him. Veterinary staff prescribed medication to manage Harvey's arrhythmia, which helped ensure a high quality of life during his last months.

"Losing an animal is always hard," said Dr. Anne Baker, executive director of the Zoo. "Harvey was a part of our Zoo family and a part of our community for more than three decades. We are grateful to have spent so much time with him."

The Toledo Zoo is committed to inspiring others to join in caring for animals and conserving the natural world. As part of that mission, The Toledo Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), a leader in global wildlife conservation. AZA member institutions are dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for visitors and a better future for all living things.

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