

Bush Family Cat Dies at the White House

India, a black American Shorthair, was 18. "She will be greatly missed," a spokeswoman said.

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Presidential daughter Barbara Bush named India after Texas Rangers outfielder Ruben "El Indio" Sierra. Photo credit: Paul Morse, The White House. India, the Bush family's pet cat, died at the White House at age 18, a spokeswoman for first lady Laura Bush said Monday.

The female black American Shorthair died Sunday, Jan. 4, at home at the White House. In a statement acknowledging the cat's death, press secretary Sally McDonough said "The president, Mrs. Bush, Barbara and Jenna are deeply saddened by the passing of their cat India ("Willie").

The family got the cat when the Bushes' twin daughters, Barbara and Jenna, were 9. Barbara named the cat India after former Texas Rangers outfielder Ruben Sierra, who was called "El Indio." (President Bush was formerly a co-owner of the Texas Rangers.) When Barbara and Jenna moved away to college, India, nicknamed "Kitty" and "Willie" by the family, stayed at the White House with the president and Mrs. Bush.

"India was a beloved member of the Bush family for almost two decades. She will be greatly missed," McDonough said.