

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Contact: Chelle Koster Walton

239-699-4754

ChelleKWalton@gmail.com

Event Logo attached

CAPTION

One-of-a-kind art goes on auction block for Go Wild for ‘Ding’

Carvings by famed bird sculptor Jim Sprankle, an original osprey sculpted out of recycled bike tires, and a 5.5-foot-long beaded alligator are among the unique items that go on the auction block at the seventh annual fundraiser for the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge. Go Wild for “Ding” – Call of the Osprey takes place on Wednesday, Feb. 13, 2019, at The Community House on Sanibel Island.

This year’s Go Wild theme continues a series of annual bird events to benefit conservation and land acquisition efforts at J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel.

Each year, world-renowned sculptor Sprankle carves a signature feather pin to keep with the Go Wild theme. The bid winner becomes a member of the exclusive, 60-member Sprankle Feather Club, which flocks together for a special annual event. This year’s hand-carved, hand-painted, and artist-signed pin will be modeled after the feather of an osprey.

Sprankle has also carved an osprey necklace slider. Winner of that auction item also becomes a Feather Club member and the head of the Feather Club for the coming year, helping to plan 2020’s Flock of the Feather Club event.

The Osprey “sculpture” created by Sanibel artist Andrew Corke, who also sculpted the manatees for the refuge’s award-winning Learning Lavatories, was donated by Cal and Jill Werner. Like the Sprankle sculptures, it will be sold in live auction at Go Wild, led by Bailey’s General Store co-owner Richard Johnson

The hand-beaded alligator figurines fair-trade handiwork done by women in South Africa, donated by Dick and Pat Levinson. The alligator sculpture is currently on display for silent bidding in the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center.

Banner items for the silent auction include other one-of-a-kind art and prizes such as hand-painted, porcelain wildlife ornaments by Patty Sprankle; a two-night stay at the Everglades cottage of photographer Clyde Butcher; a limited edition ceramic osprey sculpture by Ray Ayres, donated by Elizabeth Gardner; and two framed, limited-edition Ikki Matsumoto prints.

Those unable to attend the event may bid on auction items remotely by contacting DDWS executive director Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

“For this year’s theme we showcase osprey calls, a distinct audio feature at ‘Ding’ Darling,” said Miller. “Plan on joining us for tasty dishes at a number of food stations, generously donated by Sanibel Catering Company by Bailey’s; unique nature-themed auctions; and live entertainment. A big thanks to Diane Valerian and Kathy McCabe for their help organizing this year’s event.”

Admission to the Feb. 13 event is by reservation only. Tickets to the Go Wild at “Ding” party are \$150 each. Only ## seats remain. To reserve your spot, register at tinyurl.com/gowild2019. Or call 239-472-1100 ext. 239 or email dot@dingdarlingsociety.org to make reservations. For more information, visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/go-wild-for-ding.

Event sponsorships are still available; for more information, contact Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

The following sponsors have already pledged their support for Go Wild for “Ding” – Call of the Osprey. **Call of The Wild Level:** Boomer Duvin & Family, Sanibel Catering Company by Bailey’s, Jim & Patty Sprankle; **Champion Level:** Mark & Gretchen Banks, Wayne & Linda Boyd, John & Kathy McCabe, Bill & Diane Valerian; **Guardian Level:** Sarah Ashton (Broker Associate RE/MAX of the Islands), Ron E. & Josephine Smith; **Protector Level:** Mike & Terry Baldwin, Doug & Sherry Gentry, Geoffrey & Karen Moss, Queenie’s Ice Cream, Sanibel Captiva Beach Resorts, Hank & Linda Spire, Cal & Jill Werner; **Defender Level:** 50% Off Framing, Cast About Charters, Jerry Edelman & Maryanne Daly, Greenwood Consulting Group, The Gresham Family, Mitchell’s SandCastles, Sanibel Moorings, John & Kay Morse, William & Barbara Millar, R.S. Walsh Landscaping, Stewart & Sons Insurance Inc., Stroemer & Company LLC.

ABOUT DDWS

As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, DDWS works to support J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge’s mission of conservation, wildlife and habitat protection, research, and public education through charitable donations and Refuge Nature Shop profits.

To support DDWS and the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-472-1100 ext. 4 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

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