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"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society - Friends of the Refuge

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption: The exhibit will feature artifacts never before on display.

‘Ding’ Darling partners with Sanibel Public Library for 75th anniversary exhibits

To spread its message about Jay Norwood “Ding” Darling’s creation, 75 years ago, of the refuge now named for him, the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge and “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS) are partnering with the Sanibel Public Library on 75th anniversary exhibits this fall.

“Ding” the Sportsman, Conservationist, and Artist will feature artifacts from Darling’s life that have never before been publicly displayed, along with an exhibit of his editorial cartoons, which were syndicated throughout the U.S. in the 1920s through the 1940s. Other works by the artist, memorabilia from his time spent on Sanibel and Captiva starting in the mid-1930s, and historical documents will also be on display.

On Nov. 3, the day the Sanibel City Council reads a proclamation declaring Dec. 1 as the refuge’s official 75th anniversary, the exhibit opens with the “Ding” the Sportsman theme. Throughout the coming months, the exhibit will segue into the other two themes that examine Darling’s importance as a key conservation figure in American history and his reputation as an artist.

“We continuously want to tell the story of ‘Ding’ the man, because he is a legend in conservation and conservation art history,” said supervisory refuge ranger Toni Westland. “We are grateful to the Sanibel

Library for the opportunity to take that message out into the community in a very real way, especially now when our Visitor & Education Center has been closed by the pandemic.”

The refuge began the end of last year celebrating Darling’s creation of the Sanibel National Wildlife Refuge in 1945. Until COVID hit, DDWS and the refuge sponsored special exhibits and events in the “Ding” Darling Visitor & Education Center. On Dec. 2, the center debuted a newly engineered exhibit featuring the man, whose name was attached to the refuge following his death in 1962.

“Congratulations, ‘Ding’ Darling, on 75 years!” said Margaret Mohundra, library executive director. “We are happy to be partnering with the refuge and DDWS. The library will have a display from its Florida collection to complement the wonderful items provided by the ‘Ding’ team.”

The “Ding” exhibit is open free to the public daily during normal library operating hours. For more information about the refuge’s 75th anniversary celebration, visit ding75.org.

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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