

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

Caption: *Jim Sprankle's tri-colored herons sculpture sold for \$155,000 at the SanCap Cares fundraiser.*
(Photo credit Skipp Tutor)

Sprankle sculpture raises \$115K for two island charities

[April 17, 2017-Sanibel Island] The life-size sculpture “Ding’s Darlings – Two Tri-colored Herons” by famed island wildlife sculptor Jim Sprankle sold for \$115,000 in a live auction for SanCap Cares’ 17th annual Island Celebration on April 9, 2017. Proceeds will be split 50-50 between Golisano Children’s Hospital and the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS).

Brenda and Dewey Tate, former Sanibel Island residents, donated the 3-foot-high sculpture to SanCap Cares, a non-profit that raises money for the children’s hospital. “I’m confident ‘Ding’s Darlings’ are flapping their wings with joy to help benefit two of our favorite causes – Golisano Children’s Hospital and ‘Ding’ Darling,” said Brenda Tate

“I am so pleased that the piece, which took me more than six weeks to carve, is fulfilling a destiny with two of my favorite island non-profits,” said Sprankle.

“The SanCap Cares committee and wildlife society share not only a place in Jim’s and the Tates’ hearts, but also a philosophy that island non-profits work better by combining forces,” said Amanda Cross, this year’s honorary chair of the SanCap Cares fundraiser. “Sanibel and Captiva are incredibly philanthropic communities, and we know that many islanders support multiple organizations. We are happy to include ‘Ding’ Darling in this effort.”

Sprankle has donated works of art for most of SanCap Cares’ live auctions, Cross added. “In 2015, he surpassed the quarter-of-a-million mark for money raised to support the children’s hospital with his generous donations -- an achievement for which we are incredibly grateful. This year’s piece was the largest and most valuable we have had the honor to auction in our 17 years.”

“Jim’s contributions to ‘Ding’ Darling are immeasurable,” said Birgie Miller, DDWS executive director.

“He served as board president for many years, has volunteered since 1997, and has donated dozens of sculptures and his famous ‘Sprankle Feather Club pins’ for charity auction. In addition, a showcase full of

his hand-carved duck decoys, each sold for sponsorship, and a whole flock of his bird sculptures decorate and educate at our ‘Ding’ Darling Visitor & Education Center. We are so thankful to him, the Tates, SanCap Cares, and the sculpture’s buyers for adding a whopping \$57,500 to refuge coffers at a time when federal budget cuts are really strapping the work force here.”

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 proceeds. To support DDWS and the refuge with a tax-deductible gift, visit dingdarlingsociety.org or contact Birgie Miller at 239-292-0566 or director@dingdarlingsociety.org.

ABOUT GOLISANO CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Golisano Children’s Hospital of Southwest Florida, named a “Top Hospital” by The Leapfrog Group in 2016, is the only acute care children’s hospital between Tampa and Miami. Part of Lee Health, the children’s hospital opened in 1994 within HealthPark Medical Center. In 2012, the hospital was renamed Golisano Children’s Hospital of Southwest Florida after B. Thomas Golisano’s generous donation to the capital campaign to build a new, state-of-the-art facility. The new, 300,000-square-foot, 128-bed Golisano Children’s Hospital, is set to open in the spring of 2017. For more information, visit GolisanoChildrensSWFL.org.

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