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"Ding" Darling Wildlife Society - Friends of the Refuge

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Caption: Master sculptor Jim Sprankle works on his hallmark feather carving.

Event Logo attached

Enhanced Sprankle Feather highlight of DDWS 40th anniversary Go Wild fundraiser

For the 40th anniversary of the “Ding” Darling Wildlife Society-Friends of the Refuge (DDWS), island sculptor Jim Sprankle works collaboratively with the Cedar Chest Fine Jewelry of Sanibel Island to create a first-of-its-kind, carved-wood spoonbill feather with 18-carat gold and diamond accents. It will be the featured live auction item at the 10th annual Go Wild fundraiser on Wednesday, Feb. 9, at The Community House on Sanibel Island starting at 5:30 p.m.

Tickets are on sale for \$150 each and moving quickly at tinyurl.com/GWTickets. They include drinks, dinner, silent and live auctions, live entertainment, and a unique program built around this year’s theme: Year of the Anhinga—Soar for 40 More. The anhinga is DDWS’ signature bird, featured on its logo.

“Stay tuned for exciting plans to be revealed about future projects at the J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge, which this, our biggest fundraiser of the year, supports 100 percent,” said DDWS executive director Birgie Miller. “Jim’s annual feather carving auction is always a highlight, but this year, a first-of-its-kind piece promises to create extra excitement.”

Each year, world-renowned sculptor Sprankle has carved a signature feather pin for Go Wild. The bid winner becomes a member of the exclusive, 60-plus-member Sprankle Feather Club, which flocks together for a special annual event.

This year's hand-carved, hand-painted, and artist-signed feather pendant will be modeled after the feather of the refuge's signature roseate spoonbill. Special for the 40th anniversary of DDWS, it will be presented as a necklace, instead of the traditional pin, on a gold chain with an 18-carat gold bale inset with a diamond.

Those unable to attend the event may bid on auction items remotely and live by contacting Miller at 239-292-0566 that evening or prior to the event.

Admission to the Feb. 9 event is by reservation only. For more information, visit dingdarlingsociety.org/articles/go-wild-for-ding.

The following sponsors make Go Wild for "Ding" – Year of the Anhinga possible. **Call of The Wild Level:** Bill & Laurie Harkey, Jim & Patty Sprankle; **Champion Level:** Gretchen Banks, The Bluedorn Family, Ron E. & Josephine Smith; **Guardian Level:** Jim & Liz Birmingham, Wayne & Linda Boyd, Doc Ford's Rum Bar & Grill, Boomer Duvin & Family, Stan & Connie Grayson, John & Kathy McCabe, John & Beth Newland, Priority Marketing, Greg & Linda Scherer, Bill & Diane Valerian, Anonymous Donor; **Protector Level:** Ashton Kirchner Group, Mike & Terry Baldwin, Captiva Spirits, The Cedar Chest Fine Jewelry, Mitchell's Sand Castles, Shawn & Laura Shaffer, John & Elizabeth Simler; **Defender Level:** HighTower Advisors, Pinocchio's Original Italian Ice Cream, R.S. Walsh Landscaping, Hank & Linda Spire.

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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