

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **SPCA Wildlife Care Center Raises \$150,000 At Fire and Ice Gala**

Fort Lauderdale, FL—On January 12, The SPCA Wildlife Care Center (WCC) hosted its 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Fundraising Gala: “Fire and Ice” at the Fort Lauderdale Grande Hotel. The event was a magical evening, which raised \$150,000 to benefit harmed and displaced wildlife, domestic, exotic and farm animals.

Janet Buhl and Coleen Darni-Sotiré, co-chaired this year’s Gala, which is the largest and most important fundraising event of the year. Darni-Sotiré of Shades of Light Gallery created the awe inspiring look of the 2008 Gala from glowing tables, illuminated ice bars and a 13 foot projection of a Snowy Egret.

“This year’s Gala was a tremendous success. The SPCA Wildlife Care Center is a priceless priority in the State of Florida. Spending an evening celebrating the supporters of this organization, while raising necessary funds to care for our precious wildlife was truly an honor. Thank you to all who made this a spectacular event. We could not have done it without you,” said co-chair Coleen Darni-Sotire.

Prior to the Gala, the elegant VIP reception, aboard twin Azimut Yachts courtesy of Allied Richard Bertram Marine Group, was enjoyed by presenting sponsors and VIP supporters. More than 150 silent auction items consisting of a wide variety of goods and services to bid on, from exquisite artwork and autographed sports memorabilia to fine dining certificates, spa visits and much more. The event boasted a luxury raffle for a 12 day Holland America Cruise, a cash raffle worth \$1,000 and \$500 were awarded to two lucky winners, and a Champagne & Diamond Raffle, where one lucky winner won a one-carat diamond. A live auction of a Galapagos trip, an African Safari and a Chopard watch further helped raise money for the Center.

World famous ballroom dancers dazzled guests. Hot Brass Monkey, a popular South Florida band, gave a stunning performance, which kept the crowd on their feet until midnight. US Senator Bob Smith and President of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Wayne Pacelle were among the many special guests who attended the Gala.

“What makes this event so successful are the people that give their time to put it together,” added Jeff Arciniaco, president of the board of the WCC. “Thank you to our outstanding co-chairs, committee members and sponsors for making the Wildlife Care Center’s Gala possible.”

Honorary committee members for the gala include: Gertrude Maxwell, founder and president of Save-a-Pet (the winner of the first Tri County Region Humanitarian Award), Kevin Boyd of Boyd & Powers, Steve Chaney of Mortgage Professionals, Linda Corley of WPBT, Kathryn Fox-Winokur, Artist Bruce Helander, Nancy & Ron Hummel, Debbie Igoe, Broward County Commissioner Ilene Leiberman, Tracy Mandart of Janney Montgomery Scott LLC,

Cindy Morgan, Kirsten & Ross Parker of Native Visions Gallery, and Joan and Arnold Weiss.

Committee members include: Jeffrey Arciniaco, Gail Blount, Marcy Celentani, Toni Daby, Jessica Dietrich, Anne Ennis, Ginger Achille, Emily Hirschman, John Karr, France Karr, Ethel Lipoff, Amy Loebel, Ardath Rosengarden and Laura Ngo.

Sponsors of the event include: The Miami Herald, Comcast, HSUS, Allied Richard Bertram Marine Group, Gunster Yoakley, Waste Pro, Whole Foods, Maroone, Edwards, Angell, Palmer & Dodge, HSBC, Republic Services, Ocean Drive Magazine, Clear Channel, Gold Coast Magazine, Rosenblum Cellars and Go Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale, Bank of America, American Airlines, Holland America, and Premiere Beverage Company.

For more information about the WCC 2009 Gala, contact Ethel Lipoff at 954.524.7154 or visit [www.wildlifecarecenter.org](http://www.wildlifecarecenter.org).

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***About the SPCA Wildlife Care Center:***

*Serving the South Florida Tri-County Region, the mission of the SPCA Wildlife Care Center (WCC) is to rescue, rehabilitate and release native wildlife that has been harmed or displaced; to treat and place certain domestic, exotic and farm animals; and to educate the public toward co-existence with all animals. With 4.5 acres of property, three full-time ambulances, 70 employees and 600 volunteers, the WCC is home to up to 900 injured, harmed or orphaned wildlife at any given time. Last year alone nearly 14,000 sick, injured and orphaned animals were admitted to the SPCA Wildlife Care Center.*

*Over the past 39 years, the SPCA Wildlife Care Center has grown to be the largest facility of its kind in the nation. Located at 3200 SW 4th Avenue in Fort Lauderdale, the WCC recently announced its first multi-million dollar capital campaign to fund a new, state-of-the-art wildlife hospital and education center to serve South Florida. For more information, please visit [www.WildlifeCareCenter.org](http://www.WildlifeCareCenter.org).*

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