

Gopher Tortoise Council annual meeting auction

We are very excited that Jimmy Stiles will be hosting this year's auction, which will be carried out through zoom at the end of our conference on Friday (promptly at 4:00 PM). Jimmy is sure to bring an unprecedented level of excitement to our auction in this virtual setting! So, please come prepared to the auction ready to bid on one (or all!) of the three wonderful and one-of-a-kind items below!

Item 1: Custom Gopher Tortoise mosaic by Harriet Smith.



Description.- Harriet Smith, a mosaic artist, based in Tempe, Arizona, has been creating mosaics for nature lovers for over 15 years. Her artwork showcases the birds, butterflies, reptiles, mammals, and wildflowers of the Sonoran Desert, Sierra-Nevada Mountains, and central Florida. Her mosaics are sold at Harlow Gardens in Tucson, Arizona, and at the Mono Lake Committee Store in Lee Vining, California. Explore @monkeyharriet on Instagram to see her entire gallery of nature mosaics. Harriet was commissioned by Gopher Tortoise Council to create this year's mosaic, which is a Gopher Tortoise emerging from its burrow. The mosaic measures 8 X 10 ". You NEED this piece adorning your own walls; after all, where's the fun in quarantining inside without great wall art?!

Item 2: Custom made cornhole boards featuring gopher tortoise, eastern diamondback rattlesnake, and diverse upland plant community



Description.- These boards were handmade by local St. Petersburg craftsman Rick Hames. The boards are made to cornhole regulation size of high-quality wood and come with regulation sacks. Each board features a hand-painted design created by Eckerd College undergraduate student, Makenna Riley. Makenna is currently studying animal studies and biology, and works in the lab of Jeff Goessling conducting research on gopher tortoises and other reptiles. In Makenna’s own words, she says “I have been working with gophers for the last three years and I have come to love and admire them and the ecosystem in which they thrive.” The paintings Makenna has developed onto the boards feature a gopher tortoise emerging from its active burrow, surrounded by a savannah of blooming blazing stars. The second board features a cryptic eastern diamondback rattlesnake basking on an abandoned gopher tortoise burrow, surrounded by a diverse upland plant community, including fruiting beautyberries and a blooming prickly pear cactus. You NEED to be the only person on Earth sporting these slick (and ecologically-accurate!) boards at your next socially-distanced outdoor party!

Item 3: Weekend getaway to St. Pete Beach



Description.- This package includes a multi-night stay at the Hotel Zamora (<https://thehotelzamora.com/>), where “Spanish ancestry meets cool Mediterranean attitude” on the idyllic St. Pete Beach. Featuring one of the finest rooftop bars around, enjoy a panoramic view of the sunset while sipping your favorite cocktail. Also included in this package is a gift basket from local St. Petersburg brewery, Three Daughters Brewing (<https://3dbrewing.com/>), which includes a gift certificate for brews and glass mugs. Lastly, with this package you will receive a \$100 gift certificate to Sea Salt St. Pete (<https://seasaltstpete.com/>), a top-rated local St. Petersburg fine-dining establishment with outdoor seating, located just blocks from the new St. Pete pier. Each of these items can be utilized under current guidelines for covid prevention, including ample use of outdoor space. Whether you choose to use this gift package for next year’s in-person conference in St. Petersburg, or you’re just looking for a relaxing weekend at the beach, this package is sure to satisfy!

Special thanks to our auction sponsors listed below!

- Harriet Smith
- Rick Hames
- Hotel Zamora
- Three daughters brewing

