

# Know Details Before Submitting Absentee Bids

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*Food And Family  
 Features Editor*

**EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.)** — Want an item going up for bid, but can't attend the auction on the day of sale?

You can purchase the item through an absentee bid. However, absentee bids are handled differently according to the auctioneer company.

R.L. Keck of Town and Country requires an absentee bidder to include a check in the amount the bidder is willing to pay and place it in a sealed envelope.

On the day of sale, the item is auctioned. After the last bid from attendees, the envelope is opened. If the absentee bidder offered a higher amount than that bid at the auction, the item goes to the absentee bidder in the amount of the check.

Perhaps the item reached a plateau at \$50 during bidding.

"If the absentee bidder submitted a \$100 bid, that is the amount he pays," Keck said.

Keck has been an auctioneer for 30 years, mostly in Potter County. About eight years ago he moved

to Lancaster County and auctions with Town and Country.

"It's unethical to open sealed bids ahead of time," Keck said. "Some auctioneers open sealed bids and start the bid at that price. I consider that unethical."

On the other hand, Merle Eberly of Horning Farm Agency said his firm handles it differently. They require a letter stating the amount the absentee bidder is willing to pay.

After the item is auctioned, Eberly tells the audience that he has a sealed bid, which is opened. If bidding stopped at \$50, but the absentee bidder was willing to pay \$100, he gets a bargain. The absentee bidder will get the item for the next dollar implement above the highest bid. The absentee bidder is contacted after the sale and asked to submit money in the amount determined by the highest bid at the sale.

"Absentee bidding must always be done openly," Eberly said. "I always tell the audience if I have an absentee bid."

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