

Benefit Auctions Are Popular Fund Raisers

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EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — Benefit auctions are growing in popularity.

The auctions are held to raise money for non-profit organizations such as fire companies, hospitals, private schools, churches, missions, and community betterment.

People affiliated with the organization or those who value its services donate a vast variety of items for the auction.

Although donations include antiques, furniture, cars, tractors, and even livestock, don't underestimate the little stuff sold at these sales. Discarded kitchenware, used books, and odds and ends add up to dollars for the organization it benefits.

Local businesses also donate a substantial amount of items to be auctions. Donations may be in the form of gift certificates for services or merchandise. Sometimes it's outdated wares. Whatever

it is it's sure to sell over the auction block.

People also use their talents to make quilts, crafts, and woodworking projects. Artists donate paintings and prints.

Volunteers spend hours preparing items for the event. They often obtain free advertising. Even the services of an auctioneer — usually more than one — are free.

Many new auctioneers volunteer their services to establish themselves in the first years of business. Almost every auctioneer continues to volunteer services for causes they believe in.

In a way, this also serves as a bit of advertisement for the volunteer auctioneer. People attending the sale become acquainted with the auctioneer and his or her style. Later, if the services of an auctioneer are needed, those in attendance may contact the auctioneer who they have seen in action and can trust.

It is not unusual for a benefit sale to garner \$100,000 and more.

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