



Dear Fellow Illuminator ---

A few disclaimers –

Although I mention web sites to visit in this little “how to donate to a silent auction” guide, I do not endorse any of them. They are here to serve as an example of how to find items and ship them without needing to actually get in your car, purchase, and then send your item to the lucky winner.

I am happy to say I have received phone calls from members wishing to support the Illuminator’s Scholarship Fund by donating an item or items to the Silent Auction being held at the WAFC but they are unsure how to go about it. This guide contains suggestions, steps, and possible places to go on the Internet to get the item you want to donate. These ideas in this guide are actually gleaned from the experiences of people who used these methods for the WFIE.

First of all – some interesting questions I have been asked...

1. Why the \$200 minimum on the donated item?

We set a minimum on the item donated because we have found in the past these types of items create a value for the purchaser and make the auction interesting. It presents to our potential bidder an item of interest and one they may want but have not yet purchased. Even when the item goes over the minimum value the bidder still finds value to it and feels good about giving the Scholarship Fund the overbid.

2. Do I have to pay \$200 for the item?

The \$200 is the retail value of the item if purchased in a general retail outlet. Last year several of our donators found when they went to purchase the item it was on sale on the web or in a store for less than the \$200 value. We are looking for items that, again, have a retail value of \$200 or more.

3. Do I have to bring the item with me to the Conference?

No. As a matter of fact we would prefer you not to bring it. First there is the hassle of trying to figure out how to get it to Hawaii and then there is the security issue once we take possession of it. It is better if you just let me know what the item is, its description, and its retail value. I will make sure we have a picture of the item for the bidders to see. Once we determine who the successful bidder is we will notify you and you can then have the company from whom you purchased the item ship it directly to the winner.

4. Why is it important to donate to the Illuminator Silent Auction?

The Illuminator Silent Auction helps the scholarship fund in a ***BIG WAY***. The auction is a great source to increase the amount of money in the fund. By increasing the fund we are able to give out more and more scholarships. The great thing about all donated items is the revenue derived from the donation goes directly into the fund. So, whatever money the gift earns us – it all goes to help deserving students. I also hope it makes you feel good (knowing what good work you are doing just by simply donating)!

5. I am not going to the conference this year can I still donate an item?

You bet! Every item helps us reach our goal of increasing the amount of scholarships given in the future. It will be disappointing if you do not come to the convention and we will certainly miss you since you are a vital part of the Illuminators but the item will be nice.

6. What if I donate something that has already been donated?

No problem. Often times we have bidders that would like to have the opportunity to bid on another like item if it is offered.

7. I never know what to donate – any suggestions?

This is always a tough question to answer. One of the best ways to look at it is to ask yourself what you would enjoy bidding on in a silent auction and look to donate a similar item.

Here are some other suggestions...

Is there something your company is known for that you would like to donate?

Make sure it has the appropriate value and have that serve as your donation. For instance at the WFIE Gerry Compas of Zee Medical donated a complete first aid kit. This is an item that his company makes and is very timely and definitely a good auction item. We had two different wineries (Gallo and Berringer) donate memberships in their respective wine clubs. For the WFIE the L.A. Times donated two reproductions of the sport pages that announced the Angels World Series Title and the Lakers NBA Championship Title. These are all items that they have available to them through their companies' willingness to be part of the Illuminator's silent auction.

One-of-a-kind items make for great gifts as well.

At the WFIE silent auction Vic Chiono of Coca Cola Enterprises donated a dinner at Club 33. This is the private restaurant above the "Pirates of the Caribbean" ride at Disneyland. It was a VERY popular item at the conference because it is not readily available to the general public. One-of-a-kind items can be akin to the item above (unique to your company or someone you know) – a private tour of a winery – a tour of a manufacturing environment – a theme park – a movie production lot. You get the idea – something that money can't necessarily buy.

Do you like to play golf? There are many potential bidders that like golf as well.

There were several donations for the WFIE this year that included Golf Clubs. Some retailers even offered a round of golf with them for an auction item. If you have a membership in a club and would like to host a threesome this would be a great auction item.

Do you like electronic gadgets?

I find them to be very good auction items. Last year there were two iPods and a Digital Camera offered as donations to the auction and they max'd out their bids fast. This year we already have two iPods and a DVD player being donated. These are always great gifts for the auction and well received by the bidders. We can always have multiples of these items since they are favorites. Just a small list of possible electronic items: iPods or any other MP3 Players, Read/Record DVD Players; Palm Pilots (or other personal type hand PC's that are out there); Mini-Stereo Systems; high-end walkmans; Digital Cameras, Cell Phones, etc.

Do you like shopping? Many people do.

Think of your favorite store and offer a gift certificate to that store as an auction item. If the store offers e-shopping that makes the gift certificate more universal. At the WFIE this year a \$1,000 gift certificate to Nordstrom was offered to the highest bidder. Needless to say – this was a very hot ticket item.

You get the idea. There are many different types of items that can serve as donations to the silent auction. There are many different types of bidders all looking for that treasure they want to bid on to support the Illuminator's Scholarship Fund. Just use your imagination. To give you some idea of what is out there and if you are not generally an on-line shopper you can go to web sites like ...

www.shopzilla.com www.overstock.com www.etratics.com www.golfsmith.com

(Again, we are not endorsing these web sites – just pointing out that you can get some good ideas from them as far as types of items that are available).

The whole point of this mini-manual is to give you ideas and to whet your appetite to participate in the silent auction as a donor and a bidder. The kids awarded the scholarships are the real winners in this auction. Yes, the successful bidders get their item to take home, or their golf game to play, but it is really all for the students. As trite as this saying is – these students really are our future. With your help we can make their future and ours a little better.

PLEASE BE GENEROUS IN YOUR DONATION

