

the auctioneer

June/July 2024

The official publication of the National Auction Association

PRESIDENT JOHN SCHULTZ



SCHOLARSHIP
WINNERS

DAY ON THE HILL
RECAP

MEET NEW NAA
STAFF

Coral Gables, FL

August 25-27, 2024

BENEFIT

AUCTION

SUMMIT

2024

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Looking at the Past Sure Does Make the Future Look Bright

Lance Walker here with my last installment of "Prez Says!" I have had so many highlights this year as your NAA President. Some I have participated in and others were made by other NAA leaders. Some of the highlights include:

Increased youth involvement. From the 37 teams in the DECA auction presentations to the Oklahoma FFA youth competition to the youth involved in state bid-calling competitions, I saw a renewed interest in auctioneering among young people. The Tennessee Mule Day auction contest had its first youth competition, and the results were great. You will see the top two winners at the IJAC competition in Pittsburgh.

Even though online bidding is still growing, I observed that bid calling is still alive and well. I attended several NAA member equipment auctions and there were huge crowds at each event with prices higher than ever. Hats off to past president and IAC Champion Terri Walker, who is producing a documentary on bid calling and the history of auctioneering. It will feature many NAA auctioneers and focus on the art of bid calling. *Going Once* will give the public a positive look at the art of auctioneering and demonstrate how competitive bidding at auction is a viable way to dispose of property. It will spotlight auction professionals as they work as problem solvers in utilizing a competitive bid form of selling.

Real estate auctions continue to increase in popularity. One of my seminar topics presented to state associations was about working with Realtors. The recent lawsuit that Realtors lost will work to our advantage as we have an excellent opportunity to win real estate professionals over to cooperate with us in selling and buying properties using the auction method of sale.

Increased interest in Advocacy. Day on the Hill in Washington, D.C., was well attended. The Advocacy committee and new NAA hire Katie Mechlin better prepared auctioneers to advocate for legislation and policies that affect our industry. A special shout-out to my board-appointed Attorney, Addison Dower Russell. Her input at board meetings and the Day on the Hill benefited the NAA. Many thanks to auctioneers Billy Long and Jeff Duncan for putting their auction careers on hold and serving several terms as Congressman. They have both retired from Congress, and we will miss our special connection with them.

Working with a dedicated NAA board was such a pleasure. You elected a board that put the interests of the NAA first. I especially want to commend Chair of

the Board Sherm Hostetter for his direction in running the weekly Executive Committee and board meetings. Treasurer Ailie Byers is one of the best number crunchers and budget producers I have enjoyed working with. Our finances are in good hands with her. One of NAA's most popular seminar presenters is incoming president John Schultz. He will be an outstanding president who will think outside the box and lead in taking our association to new heights.

CEO Aaron Ensminger has surrounded himself with an excellent staff with several new additions this year. When you interact with staff at Conference & Show, let them know you appreciate their service to our industry.

Change is the last thing I want to highlight. It is the one thing we can count on happening in our industry. For example, who would have thought that a 44-year-old seasoned auctioneer who loves attending live auctions and prefers touching anything before he buys it would go online to an auction held in Cedar Rapids, IA. For several days, he would bid on a classic 1946 Chevy pickup and, while sitting in church at choir practice (forgive me, Lord), placed his final bid and bought the truck. I love that truck. The point is auction professionals now have to stay on top of what methods of sale are best for our client, what forms of advertising we should choose to reach the best buyers, would simulcast be the best option, would forming an alliance with another auction company be of best interest to our client, etc. Dealing with change is one of the best reasons we need an active, vibrant, forward-thinking National Auction Association that will provide the necessary tools to help auction professionals run their businesses professionally and profitably.

Together, we will celebrate the past and plan for the future. ♦

Lance Walker



Lance Walker, CAI, BAS, CES
NAA President

Lance Walker is the founder of Walker Auctions. He is a previous NAA Board of Directors member, and has served as President of the Missouri Auctioneers Association and Vice President of the Tennessee Auctioneer Association. Lance was named to the Tennessee and Missouri Auctioneer's Hall of Fame. He co-wrote the Benefit Auction Specialist curriculum for benefit auctioneers and taught the course to hundreds of auctioneers through the National Auction Association.



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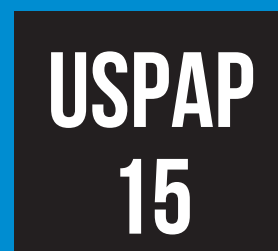
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one's life:
1. Start
immediately.
2. Do it
flamboyantly.
3. No
exceptions.”

William James

”



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National Auction Foundation Scholarship Application

The information provided on this form will be used by the National Auction Foundation.

What scholarship are you applying for?

Select items

If other, which event?

Other NAA event

Personal/Contact Information:

Full Name *

First Name Last Name

Address *

Street Address

Apply for NAA education scholarships all year long!

Through generous donations from people like you, the National Auction Foundation funds scholarships for NAA educational events. The application process has changed, as mentioned in the previous issues of *The Auctioneer*. Now, there is one easy-to-use form to apply for any available scholarship throughout the year. This means no more missing the application window. Apply at any time for any event. Find the updated application form now at auctioneersfoundation.org/about-scholarships.

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2024 NAA Planner

EVENTS & CONVERSATIONS

June

- **Community Conversations**
 - » **New Members** *(invitation only)*
 - » **State Association Leadership** *(invitation only)*
 - » **Auction Schools** *(invitation only)*
 - » **NAA Candidates**
 - » **BA Summit Q&A**

September

- **Community Conversations**
 - » **New Members** *(invitation only)*
 - » **State Association Leadership** *(invitation only)*
 - » **Auction Schools** *(invitation only)*
 - » **Community of Practice: Real Estate**

October

- **Community Conversations TBA**

July

- **75th Conference & Show in Pittsburgh, PA**
- **Community Conversations**
 - » **NAA Ambassadors**

August

- **Benefit Auction Summit in Coral Gables, FL**
- **Community Conversations**
 - » **Past Presidents** *(invitation only)*
 - » **Designation Academy Q&A**
 - » **Community of Practice: Firearms**



Find additional event details at
auctioneers.org/calendar_list.asp

Your Association at Work

Name Change Reflected at HQ



DECA, FFA, & NAA's NextGen Continue Building Relationships

FFA and DECA are both student organizations focused on preparing young people for careers in business, marketing, and leadership. FFA, formerly known as Future Farmers of America, now incorporates a broader spectrum of agricultural education and leadership. DECA, on the other hand, specifically focuses on marketing, management, and entrepreneurship in business.

Sponsorships typically involve organizations providing financial support, resources, or mentorship to help students participate in activities such as competitions, conferences, and leadership development programs. NAA was proud to be involved with both of these student organizations through sponsorships of programs developed and administered by FFA and DECA.

Through partnerships such as these, the NAA is able to promote the auction industry to youth across the nation as a potential career path and as a viable method of conducting business.



Your Cornerstone Committees at Work

PROMOTIONS

National Auctioneer's Week is now behind us for this year, but that doesn't mean the National Auctioneer's Week Task Force is taking a rest! Plans are already in the works for next year and the gears are already turning.

With Conference & Show just around the corner, final touches are coming together on the Marketing Competition Awards Competition, and of course the IACLIVE! Task Force is immersed in the details required to put on such a production.

In addition, the Promotions Committee is keeping their eyes toward the future and thinking strategically on the next few years, refining and clearly identifying the committee's purpose, goals, and how to best promote the industry.

ADVOCACY

Day on the Hill 2024 is a wrap! After attending educational sessions, NAA members from across the country met with key legislators to advocate for the association's legislative priorities. These meetings aimed to inform members of Congress about the value of auctions, as well as secure their support for policies that benefit the industry. A top priority was junk fee legislation, which NAA believes has the potential to unfairly burden auctioneers. Additionally, members advocated for legislators to assist the association in getting the Small Business Administration to revise its guidelines to better accommodate business liquidation auctioneers when selling encumbered assets acquired through the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program. Our meetings proved to be successful, as lawmakers expressed an understanding of the priorities and a willingness to assist us. Many discussions yielded positive momentum, and we anticipate seeing movement on these issues in the near future.

Attendees also met with Aretha Robinson, our political action committee manager from Van Scoyoc Associates, who educated them on how to support the auction industry through the new PAC. Please stay tuned for updates on how you can contribute!

COMMUNITY

In April, DECA held a ceremony in Anaheim, CA, to present the winners of the various corporate challenges with their awards. The NAA sponsored challenge requiring high school DECA students to build a marketing campaign for an estate auction that included real estate. Plans are already in the works to repeat the challenge next year!

In May, it was FFA's turn to be in the NAA spotlight during the 2024 FFA Auctioneering CDE finals. This new program was developed by FFA in conjunction with the Oklahoma State Auctioneers Association, with the NAA onboard as a sponsor. The FFA and DECA programs have provided the Community Committee and each appropriate task force an avenue to reach a younger generation about auctions.

Staying in the NextGen point of view, the Community Committee is partnering with the Education Committee and the Foundation's Legacy Youth Committee in a cross-committee strategy planning endeavor. Focused on the big picture of where should the NAA's future be headed as it relates to those between 12–18 years of age, the next few months will be exciting to see what ideas are brought to the table and then selected as the direction to take.

EDUCATION

The Education Institute (EI) Committee of the NAA has continued working to enhance and expand educational opportunities for our members. The committee successfully conducted candidate interviews and recommended two new EI committee members to the NAA Board of Directors, ensuring a strong leadership team for future initiatives. In a major milestone, all 25 online courses within the Auction Team Training Program have been published, providing comprehensive training resources for auction professionals. Additionally, the EI Committee has begun assembling volunteer committees and task forces to support upcoming education events, fostering a collaborative environment to drive our educational mission forward. Strategic planning has been at the forefront of the committee's efforts. They have set the strategy and scope for a complete rewrite of the Auction Marketing Management (AMM) designation class, scheduled to debut at the Designation Academy in December 2024. Furthermore, through dedicated planning meetings, the committee has outlined several education initiatives to recommend to the Board for the coming year, ensuring continuous improvement and innovation in NAA's educational offerings.



News

State Watch

Michigan

The 35th Annual Michigan Auctioneer Championship took place on February 2 at the Michigan Auctioneers Association Annual Conference held at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. Annual elections and the 17th annual Ringman competition also took place.

Election Results

President: Mathias Donat

Vice President: Jason Clark

Chairman of the Board: Noah Smith

Board Members: Greg Holiday & John Michael

Hall of Fame: Scott Sykora

Competition Results

Auctioneer Champion: Brad McGovern

Ringman Champion: Colt Johnson



Nebraska

Election Results

President: Rusty Rhynalds

Vice President: Clay Schaardt

President-Elect: Adam Marshall

Board Members: Kristin Kraupie, Clay Bixby, & Austin Creamer



Rusty & Hailey Rhynalds

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Meet the new NAA staff: Education & Advocacy



Alex Evans - *Education Program Specialist*

How long have you been at the NAA?

3 months

What hobbies do you like to do in your spare time?

I love to play guitar, read, and explore Kansas City museums, restaurants, and coffee houses with my family.

What's a fun fact about you?

I'm a map enthusiast and I collect atlases, maps, and globes.

What would you like members to know about what you do?

I strive to manage and expand educational opportunities through Auction Team Training and through the Auction Institute, in general. I hope to make these learning modules as accessible and relevant as possible for members and those interested in the auction industry alike.

What do you love about working with NAA members?

I have had very positive experiences working with numerous task forces and committees. In particular, I have learned so much in a short amount of time through my work with the Benefit Auction Summit task force.

What are you looking forward to most at your first Conference?

I am looking forward to meeting NAA members in person. Thus far, every member I have met has been through Zoom. I think an in-person event will help me to become a more familiar face to everyone.



Katie Mechlin - *Government Relations Specialist*

How long have you been at the NAA?

4 months

What hobbies do you like to do in your spare time?

I love live music, trying out new recipes, and finding ways to de-stress, like yoga or hiking. I'm also a big reader and movie buff, but honestly, my favorite thing is just hanging out with my partner Warren and our cats. I also love to travel whenever I can.

What's a fun fact about you?

I interned with the House of Representatives in 2019 and I fell in love with D.C. - it's vibrant, historic, and there's always something going on!

What would you like members to know about what you do?

I'm your go-to person at NAA for anything related to policy and advocacy, but you know what's impacting your profession better than anyone. That's why your input is absolutely invaluable to me.

What do you love about working with NAA members?

I have gained an appreciation for the complexity involved in auctioneering. Members have been generous with their knowledge, and I'm excited to keep learning more about the industry from them.

What are you looking forward to most at your first Conference?

I really enjoyed meeting everyone at Day on the Hill, so I can't wait to get to know more members!

2024 Scholarship Winners



Sam Scarborough
Trussville, AL



Mia Blackford
Evansville, IN



Dale Chupp
Inola, OK




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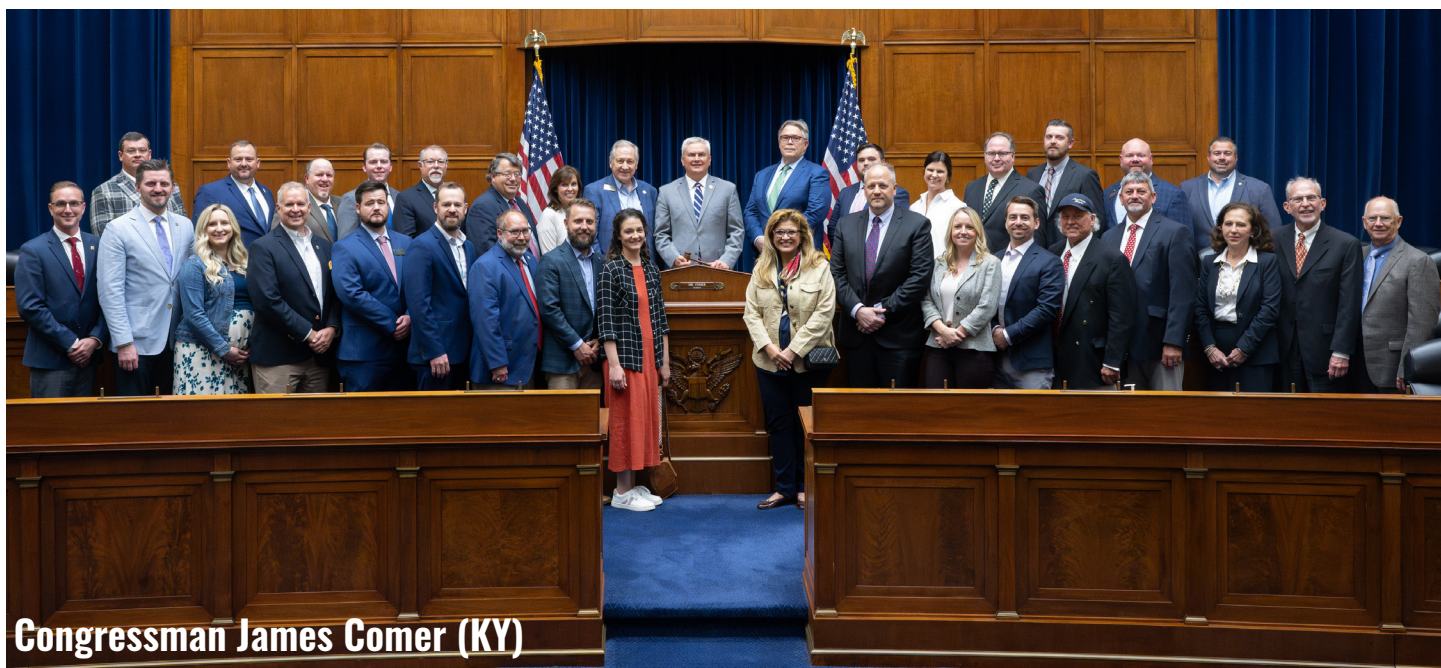
Podium from \$66



Thank you to all of the NAA members who participated in this year's Day on the Hill. Through your dedication to the auction industry, we are making significant strides towards achieving our advocacy goals.

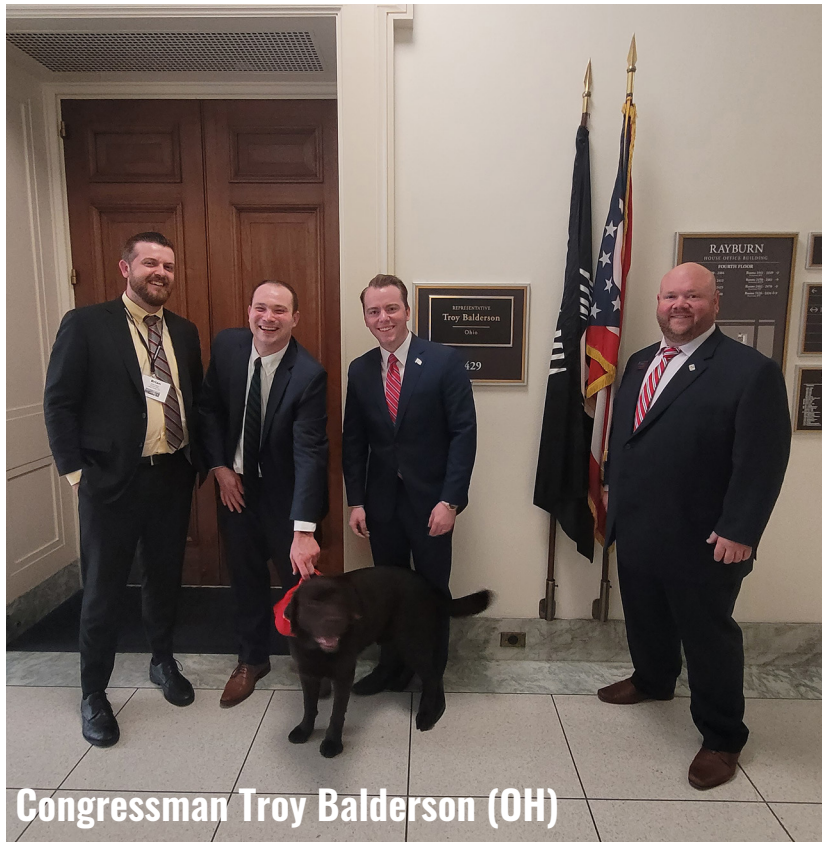
But this is just the beginning! To keep the momentum going, we've got a pipeline of exciting initiatives lined up, including PAC fundraising, an advocacy Zoom series, and the release of our key legislative priorities for the upcoming year.

Stay tuned for further updates and more opportunities to get involved with the Advocacy Cornerstone!





Congressman Lloyd Smucker (PA)



Congressman Troy Balderson (OH)



Senator Sherrod Brown (OH)



Senator J.D. Vance (OH)



**National
Auction
Association**

DIGITAL MARKETING SUMMIT



The NAA's Digital Marketing Summit held February 19-20 in Albuquerque, New Mexico was a resounding success! Savvy auction professionals across the auction industry gathered for two days of insightful sessions, engaging discussions, and networking opportunities. This year's summit focused on the latest strategies and tools for maximizing your auction business's online presence. From optimizing websites and social media to leveraging data analytics and understanding the ever-evolving digital landscape, the summit brought together like-minded marketers to collaborate and problem-solve from across the digital landscape.





Smart Approaches to Using AI

By Kenya McCullum

Artificial Intelligence can be a helpful tool that saves you time on various tasks—whether you want to create content, conduct research, or get a critique on an auction. However, to get the most out of the technology, you must use it smartly. Some approaches will serve you well, and others may not be as effective. The following are some do's and don'ts to help you use AI to work smarter, not harder.

Do experiment with AI. The more time you spend experimenting with AI, the more it will benefit you. Whether you need to understand how to write prompts effectively or generate images, investing time in AI is key to being smart with it.

“Spend time in AI to learn how it can work for you. Invest time in your prompts and use different AIs,” said Mike Fisher, CAI, AARE, AMM, GPPA, CES, BAS, of Redfield Group Auctions. “Some of them are stronger than other ones. Some of them are better at certain things than other ones are. Use two or three different ones to find out which work best for you, and invest time in your prompts.”

Don't give AI your blind trust. AI tools can do a lot for you, but you shouldn't put too much faith in them. Since artificial intelligence may make up information, it's wise to be vigilant about the content it's giving you so you're not led astray based on an AI hallucination.

“Blindly trusting AI is a big mistake. If you literally copy, paste, and send, it'll probably work some of the time, but some of the time, it's going to do things that you're like, ‘Oh, boy, if I would've taken the time to read that, I would've not said that,’” explained John Schultz, AMM, of Grafe Auction Company. “Use your brain. You were given something between your two ears for a reason, and we have intuition. Don't just throw that out because there's this new fun technology.”

Do train AI to understand your business. Charissa Bires, Director of Marketing at Grafe Auction Company, says that one of the mistakes she made when she first began using AI was not giving it enough information about the business—and as a result, she was not getting the content she wanted. Instead, a more innovative approach would be to train AI tools on the specifics of your organization so they will create content catered to it.

“I think that's where people can make mistakes if they use AI for content creation because things are going to end up being super generic if you don't have the tone of voice and your style written in there. So, what's the point of posting? It's not going to be exciting; it's just going to sound like it's been made by AI,” she said. “I think in the beginning, my mistake was not knowing how to create a style guide for AI and not knowing how to feed that into it first. I think that's what you should look out for to make sure you're not posting generic content. Make sure it fits your brand and fits your style.”

Don't forget to plan. If you're excited about using AI, that's great, but don't get too far ahead of yourself. As with any tools you incorporate into your business operations, it's smart to have a plan for the best ways you can use artificial intelligence to get work done. For example, if you think this type of planning is unnecessary for creating AI-generated content, Sara Rose Bytnar, CAI, AARE, AMM, BAS, of Beth Rose Real Estate and Auctions suggests you think again.

"We've always known how important organic content is, but now there's this amazing AI that's going to do it for us, and we can just plug in a few sentences and then start putting content out there. I think that was kind of everybody's initial reaction," she said. "And then you think, 'Wait a second, we do everything else in our business with strategy. What type of strategy should be used in order to use AI in a way that's going to help our business?' If you don't use it correctly, it could end up hurting you."

Do keep up with the trends. Just as Bires needs to keep up with trends as a marketing professional, she also says that any intelligent AI user will keep up with the changing technology. Since new tools are being created constantly, and existing ones are regularly being updated, it makes sense to continue learning about AI—as you would with any area of the auction field.

"I think you need to keep learning continually about AI, doing research to see what's coming out, and using more than one platform. I use ChatGPT, Claude, and Gemini, and they're always fighting against each other and adapting. I think a mistake would be to keep doing the exact same thing with it because it's changed so much in the past year—and it's going to continue to do that."

Don't wait to get on board. If you're not using AI tools yet, you shouldn't wait to start. Like any other technology, generative AI is moving fast—and if you don't move soon, you may miss out. This means the most thoughtful way to think about AI is to acknowledge that it's here, it's not going anywhere, and chances are, it will have some impact on your work.

"I don't know if there's a skill set that's not going to be impacted by artificial intelligence. Those who choose to ignore it or be afraid of it, I think, are going to be in trouble in the next five to ten years. I don't believe people's jobs will be replaced, but I do believe skill sets will be replaced—which will especially impact people who aren't using it at all," said Schultz. "I'm one of many who are using AI every day in our jobs, and so we'll have two, maybe even three, years on people who aren't using this technology. I think that to catch up is going to be hard, and that's unfortunate for those who think, 'No, I'm not going to.'" ♦



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Kurt Bachman
Attorney and licensed
auctioneer from
LaGrange, Indiana

Business Practices

Express and Implied Warranties

Question: In the context of an auction, what is the difference between express and implied warranties?

There are two main categories of warranties: express and implied. An express warranty is clearly stated either verbally or in writing. A verbal warranty can be valid and enforceable, but proving the warranty was made may be challenging. An implied warranty is one that the law imposes unless otherwise disclaimed, in certain situations.

Before examining express or implied warranties in the auction setting, it is essential to be aware and have a clear understanding of what constitutes a warranty in the first place. A warranty is a representation made by a seller (or its agent – the auctioneer) to a buyer of a product or service that a refund, repair, or replacement will be made if the product or service proves defective or unsatisfactory, especially within a specific time period. A warranty is essentially just an agreement by a seller to provide repairs or a replacement for a faulty product or property that fails to conform to such representations.

Express warranties can be provided for real estate, cars, goods, and practically anything. For example, there can be express warranties about the title or condition of real estate. There can be express warranties on the condition of cars or other items. E-commerce companies typically include some express warranty on the goods they sell. This is partly because of the nature of online purchasing and the limited ability to inspect the item being purchased.

Article 2 of the Uniform Commercial Code relates to the sale of goods and has specific provisions relating to warranties. Section 2-313 provides: “Express warranties by the seller are created as follows:

(a) Any affirmation of fact or promise made by the seller to the buyer which relates to the goods and becomes part of the basis of the bargain creates an express warranty that the goods shall conform to the affirmation or promise.

(b) Any description of the goods that is part of the basis of the bargain creates an express warranty that the goods shall conform to the description.

(c) Any sample or model which is made part of the basis of the bargain creates an express warranty that the whole of the goods shall conform to the sample or model.”

It continues to explain that it “is not necessary to

the creation of an express warranty that the seller use formal words such as ‘warrant’ or ‘guarantee’ or that he has a specific intention to make a warranty, but an affirmation merely of the value of the goods or a statement purporting to be merely the seller’s opinion or commendation of the goods does not create a warranty.” UCC Section 2-313. Statements of fact may create an express warranty, but puffery and statements of opinion do not. So, an auctioneer who is not careful could create express warranties (either as the agent for the seller if authorized or personally if the seller did not authorize) even when he or she does not intend to create a warranty. Announcing a factual statement (such as the amount of acreage being sold or the specific condition of a piece of machinery) about an item or property when calling for bids could be argued to constitute a warranty guaranteeing that particular factual statement.

Implied warranties are unwritten guarantees that a product or service should work as expected. For example, if you buy a set of headphones, you would expect them to function when you first use them—unless you were told otherwise when you agreed to purchase them. The most common implied warranties are also from Article 2 of the UCC. Section 2-314 relates to the implied warranty of merchantability, and Section 2-315 relates to the implied warranty of fitness for a particular purpose.

Section 2-314 relates to the warranty of merchantability. It provides, in part, as follows: “Unless excluded or modified (Section 2-316), a warranty that the goods shall be merchantable is implied in a contract for their sale if the seller is a merchant with respect to goods of that kind.” The implied warranty of merchantability is restricted to sellers deemed to be merchants. A merchant is defined as “a person who deals in goods of the kind or otherwise by his occupation holds himself out as having knowledge or skill peculiar to the practices or goods involved in the transaction or to whom such knowledge or skill may be attributed by his employment of an agent or broker or other intermediary who by his occupation holds himself out as having such knowledge or skill.” UCC Section 2-104.

Section 2-315 relates to the warranty of fitness for a



particular purpose. It provides as follows: “Where the seller at the time of contracting has reason to know any particular purpose for which the goods are required and that the buyer is relying on the seller’s skill or judgment to select or furnish suitable goods, there is unless excluded or modified ... an implied warranty that the goods shall be fit for such purpose.” This implied warranty is broader because it is not limited to merchants. Implied warranties can also be created in some instances from a course of dealing or usage of trade.

Words such as “as is” and “with all faults” tend to negate express warranties. What happens when an auctioneer makes different types of express warranties but says “sold as is” at the end? Article 2 of the UCC provides: “Words or conduct relevant to the creation of an express warranty and words or conduct tending to negate or limit warranty shall be construed wherever reasonable as consistent with each other; but subject to the provisions of this Article on parol or extrinsic evidence negation or limitation is inoperative to the extent that such construction is unreasonable.” UCC Section 2-316. In these situations, the courts have to examine the evidence and determine what warranties have been made and what (if anything) was disclaimed. As such, the disclaimer of implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose generally should be in writing and conspicuous.

Auctioneers must exercise caution and be aware of issues related to both express and implied warranties. Auctioneers should know when they are making a warranty and avoid doing so unless they clearly intend

to guarantee the factual representations made. Auctioneers should only make warranties on behalf of a seller when they have written authority to make the warranty in the signed seller listing, consignment, or auction contract terms and conditions. Otherwise, the auctioneer may be deemed to have personally made a warranty for which they could be held accountable. ♦

Kurt R. Bachman and Beers Mallers Backs & Salin, LLP appreciate the opportunity to review and answer legal questions that will be of interest to Auctioneers. The answers to these questions are designed to provide information of general interest to the public and are not intended to offer legal advice about specific situations or problems. Kurt R. Bachman and Beers Mallers Backs & Salin, LLP do not intend to create an attorney-client relationship by offering this information, and anyone’s review of the information shall not be deemed to create such a relationship. You should consult a lawyer if you have a legal matter requiring attention.

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Contact Kurt Bachman: (260) 463-4949, krbachman@beersmallers.com



Keeping Your Auction Calendar Full

The Art of Client Retention

By James Myers

Rachel Muir founded GirlStart, a non-profit organization that empowers girls in science, technology, engineering, and math, at 26. Muir's entrepreneurial spirit and marketing know-how have led her to help non-profits with fundraising – more than \$10 million to date. Her enthusiasm, success, and knowledge have led to appearances on Oprah, the Today Show, and CNN. She offers numerous services now, including leading team-building exercises and board retreats. So, how can this dynamic go-getter benefit the auction industry? If retaining clients is essential, then she has plenty to offer.

"It's hard to keep clients, just like it's really hard for non-profits to keep their donors," she said, adding that consumers today expect an exceptional customer experience, more so than ever before. "If it was easy, I wouldn't be talking about this topic." Muir mentions statistic after statistic on consumer behavior that can translate to the auction industry, including that companies that focus on a positive customer experience boost their revenue by 80 percent.

A seemingly meager five percent increase in customer retention can boost profits by 25 to 95 percent.

"It costs a lot of money and it takes a lot of your time to go out there and get new customers," she said. "You have to build trust and rapport. It is 10 to 20 times cheaper to keep an existing donor, and this is true in the for-profit world, too."

Personalizing Relationships

One of the most substantial relationships an auctioneer can have with a client is one where the client becomes a brand advocate. Not only do they feel loyal to the auction company, but they also spread the word to others about the services they receive. "In good times," Muir said, quoting a marketing executive from Belfor Franchise Group, "building customer loyalty can help you grow faster and more profitably. In tough times, it's the difference between surviving and going out of business." To that end, Muir poses the question: How often are you contacting and maintaining a relationship with your clients? If they're not reaching out to you to complain about something, does that mean they're happy with you? Great brands ask for feedback all the time."

Outreach to an auctioneer's target audience could be as simple as going through a contact list and sending a card, email, or text message on specific dates, like birthdays, holidays, quarterly, or annually. The more you know about your clients, the more personal you can make that outreach. This speaks to the personalization that consumers value so highly.

Muir says that one of the big keys to retaining clients is proving to them that they are of value. Several tools are available to auctioneers to make this personalization process more manageable.

One such tool is Feltapp.com, which allows users to digitally create handwritten cards where a mobile device can be used to "write" with



a finger or stylus on the mobile app, and the recipient gets a printed, handwritten card with a stamp. Users can upload photos or designs to use in the cards. “It’s very inexpensive and very worth it,” she said.

Another option is punkpost.com, a custom card company that makes creating and sending thoughtful cards easy. “That’s next-level attention to detail,” Muir said.

An even more straightforward way of connecting with the target audience is to use text messaging.

Muir offers some interesting stats to back this up, quoting from sources that the open rate on text messages is 98 percent; 95 percent of texts from businesses are read within three minutes, and text messages are eight times more likely to get a response than voicemail or email.

Muir says one tool auctioneers can use for more efficient texting is Textology (Textology.co), which utilizes proprietary technology that enables landline numbers to accept text messages. Furthermore, users can send texts via desktop computers.

Textology’s automated features allow users to schedule messages in advance, and rather than sending them as a group message, they’re sent as one-on-one correspondence. “(Texting) is the 21st-century version of a phone call,” she said.

Using Video in Email

Visuals are king in marketing. Video, for example, allows viewers to

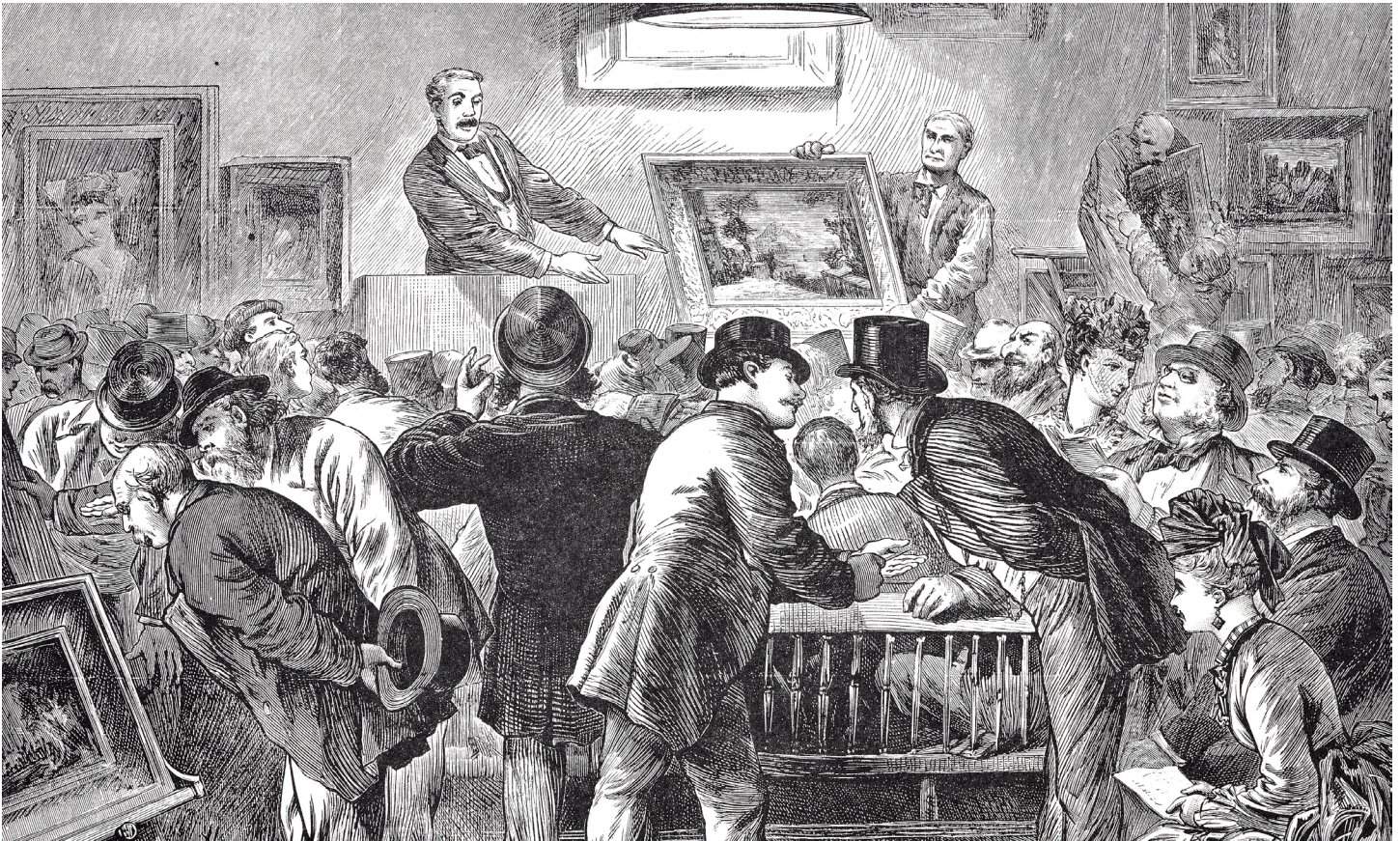
retain roughly 95 percent of the shared content compared to 10 percent of a text version of the same information. With so much of the auction experience being an in-person event, clients want to see what they’re getting into, which is why using video email can be an integral part of the process, whether the message is meant for non-profit board members who need motivation to start fundraising or if it’s to make a good impression on a potential new client.

“I’m a big fan of video email,” Muir said. It is a very inexpensive and great tool. Like you, I’m in a business where if you’re going to hire me to come speak to your non-profit, you want to see me, hear me, and try out the goods. This is a really great way to put you in front of people—to put your face in front of them.”

Muir recommends two video email services, BombBomb and Bonjoro, each offering free trial periods, and they work with Gmail and Outlook. “What I love about this is it lets you cut through the noise and your prospects’ extremely busy inbox. It’s extremely personal and lets you get your foot in the door with someone.”

From building relationships, following up with clients, personalizing content, collecting feedback, and continuously focusing on the client/customer experience, auctioneers have a far better chance of reaching their client retention goals. ❖

This article is based on a session from the NAA's 2023 Conference & Show. Watch it now on The Auction Institute®.



Auctioneering at Elite Levels

Contract Auctioneers Share Their Tips

By James Myers

Among the most competitive positions to hold in the auction industry is that of a contract auctioneer. Even if it can sometimes be exaggerated, the mystique of the position is often derived from the unique command the contract auctioneer has over all the moving parts of an auction, particularly the high-stakes sales that involve classic cars or thoroughbred/purebred stock. But there's also the extensive travel, jetting around the country, and sometimes around the world, serving a multitude of clients that also lends to that mystique.

So, what does it take to get to that level, and how does an auctioneer know when they're ready to try?

"A lot of people want to hold that microphone, but they're not ready," said Cody Shelley, a contract auctioneer marketing automobiles, purebred cattle, quarter horses, and heavy equipment. Shelley worked in the ring for several years before he got his foot in the door selling rerun cars, which was back when those were still being sold at automobile auctions. "There were more cars than they could possibly sell. I was just very lucky at the time I came in."

But it wasn't all luck. His time in the ring helped him develop an eye for how the auction process ebbs and flows and how the auctioneers and the ringmen work together. It's something contract auctioneer Angie Meier, who works five auto auctions every week, also picked up after many years of block clerking and learning from the best in the industry.

"You need to understand what market you're actually in," she said. "Understand the ins and outs of it and be a student of the craft."

Nick Bennett, CAI, AMM, BAS, said the bulk of his contract work has come from taking a chance, letting people know what he wanted, and being willing and ready to step up to the microphone.

"Be proactive," he said. "Don't sit on your haunches and expect somebody to come to you."

Reaching the Highest Highs

Meier's achievements go back to 2005 when she was only two years post-auction college graduation and became the Texas rookie auctioneer champion. She's racked up many championships since, including winning the Lone Star Open in 2019. Those distinctions certainly don't hurt in paving a path

to being an in-demand contract auctioneer.

"Contract auctioneering is becoming more of an elite situation," she said. That climb is staying true to what you are, ethically and morally, and being right about how you're connecting (with others) at the auction. Your body language, your whole demeanor on the block, is so important."

Bennett said simply being available will also help. He can't even count the times he's been called the day before an auction, asking if he can come to work it. "You better have your butt in that seat the next day," he said. "I know that is hard, but if you want that job, be available." But what about holding onto those jobs? With so much competition and highly skilled auctioneers all gunning for that gavel, what does it take to maintain the position? "Be ready for the job, and don't screw it up," Bennett offered. "Don't step on your own toes while you're there."

Shelley said that when he first started, he worried too much about making the right impression, but he finally realized that the client saw something in him; otherwise, they wouldn't have asked him to come.

"Do what you do every day, enjoy it and be professional and do your job," he said. "If you're the right fit for them and they're the right fit for you, it will work out."

Playing "Hurt"

Saying "no" is not usually in a contract auctioneer's vocabulary and can cause strife. Being contracted to be at the auction means you must

be there, even when you're beaten down and maybe even sick or injured. These industry veterans all agree that while you must make every effort to follow through with your promises, you also need to make arrangements to have someone step in for you if you're physically unable to do the sale justice. However, the profession can also take a toll on personal life. Bennett mentioned that his wife reviews 95 percent of his offers before he commits to a contract job.

"I think it's important to listen to yourself and to know your limits," he said. "Keep in mind the different people in your lives, because it's no hidden fact that there are a lot of auctioneers that are divorced once, twice. It puts stress on relationships, and it's important for you to know what your priorities are."

Meier said the hours and stress add up to contract auctioneering being a difficult job but she does her best to take care of her voice and give herself a break when needed.

"Sometimes, playing hurt is a little self-induced," she said, mentioning one auction where she ran the show for four hours without a break. Now it is time to relax and go with the auction team and have dinner and drinks and unwind a little bit. Take care of your voice and be able to understand when your voice is stressed out to give yourself a break." ♦

This article is based on a session from the NAA's 2023 Conference & Show. Watch it now on The Auction Institute@.

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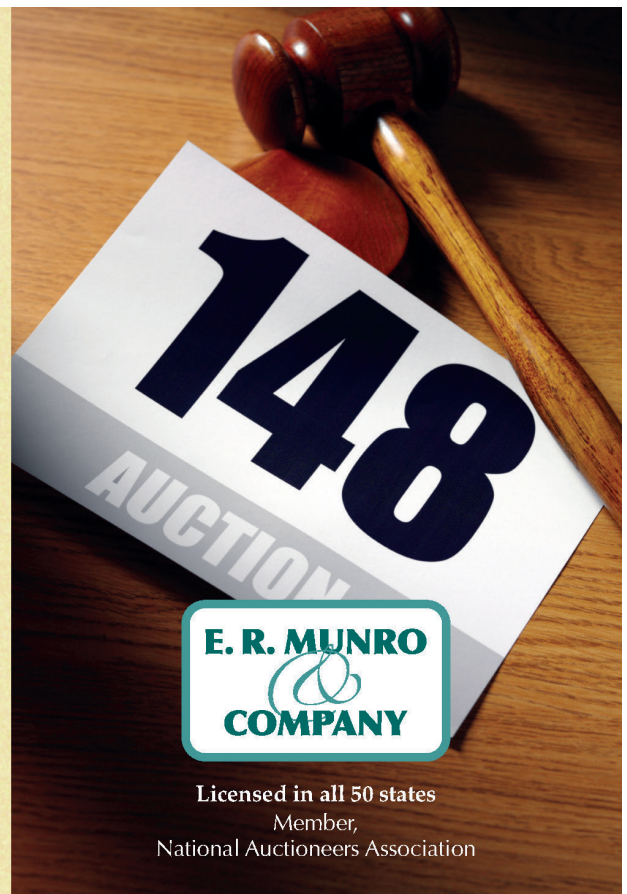
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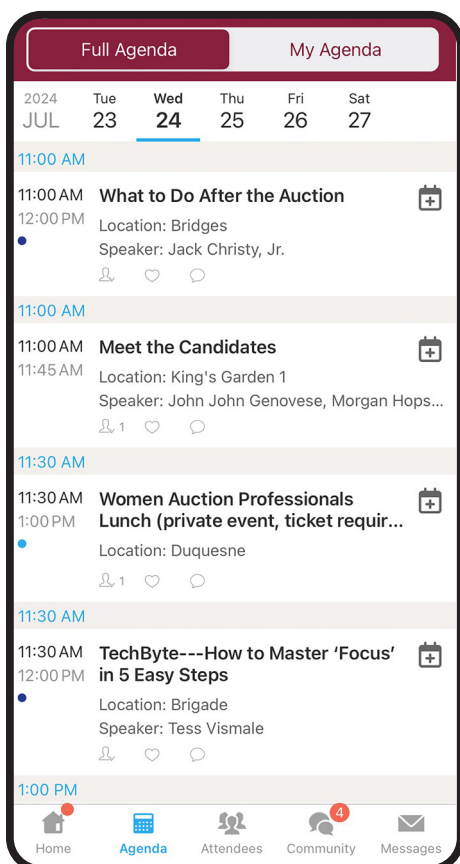


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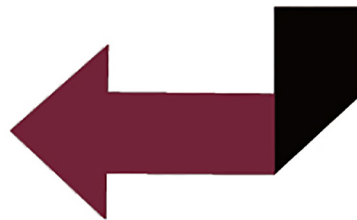
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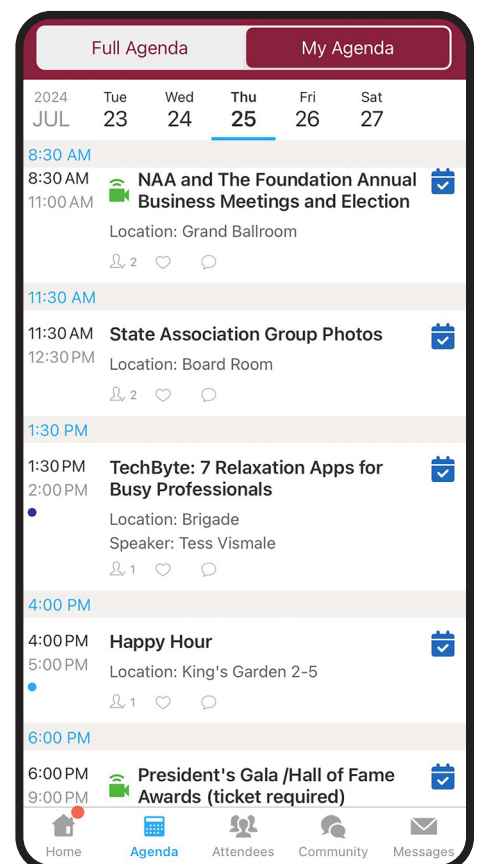
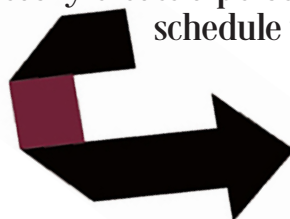
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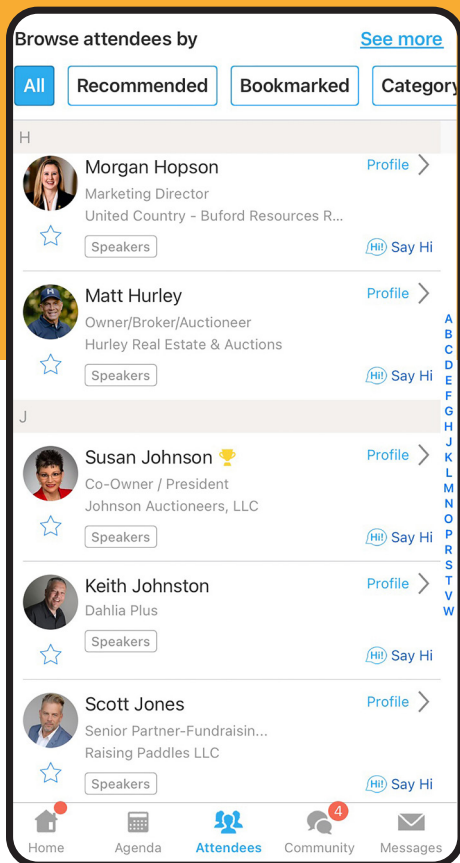


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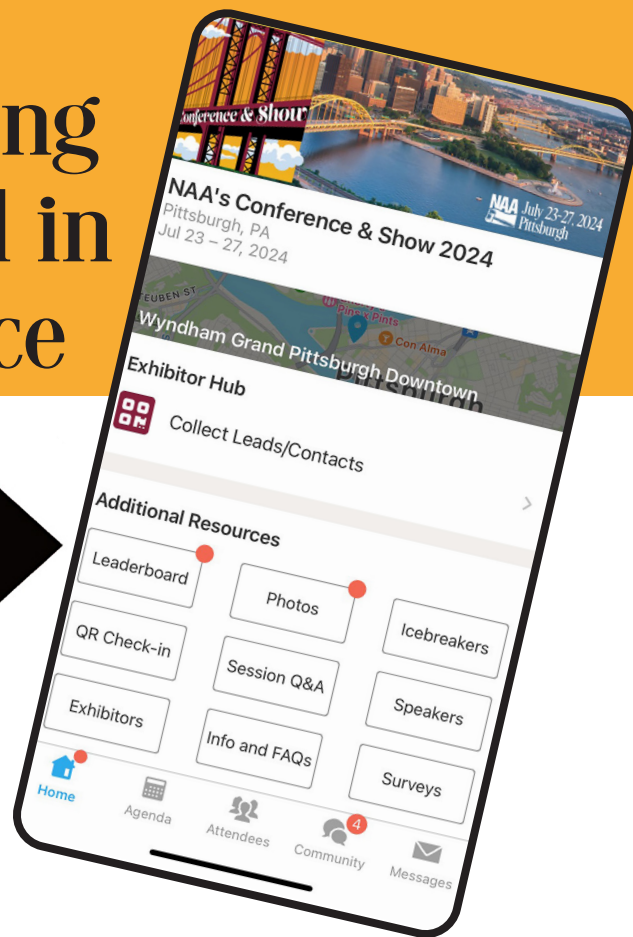


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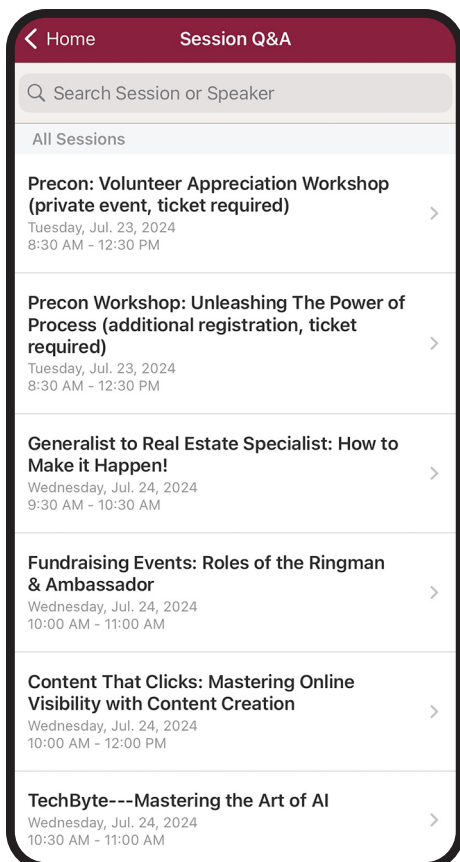




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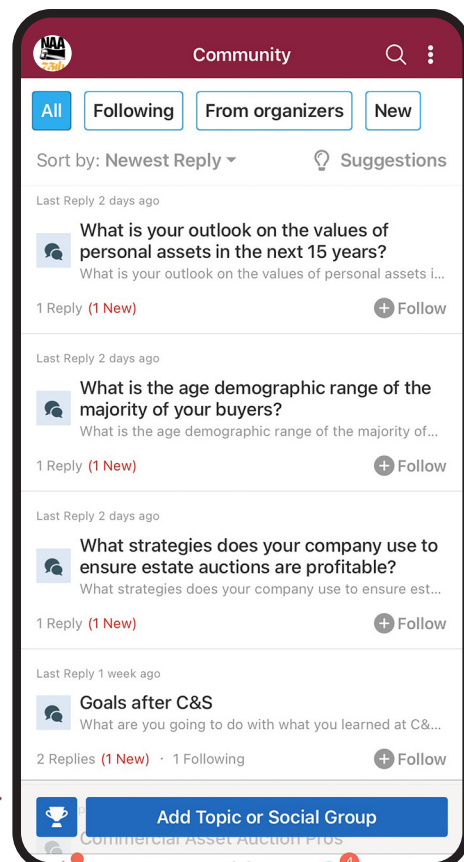
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What to Know Before You Go To Pittsburgh

We are excited that you have chosen to join the NAA as we look to build bridges at the 75th International Auctioneers Conference & Show. The landscape for auctions is ever-changing and the NAA provides you with what you need to be on the cutting edge, both in business and service.

There are extensive educational sessions and opportunities to choose from in Pittsburgh. Networking is the key to building professional relationships and this Conference & Show looks to be providing opportunities daily for those that wish to connect with other auction professionals.

Visit conferenceandshow.com to view the Conference schedule! Use the following information to best prepare yourself for your upcoming experience.

Before you leave...

- Conference attire is business casual for the week. The President's Gala is more formal; professional business attire is typical. The Welcome Party is held at PNC Park to watch the Pittsburgh Pirates play against the St. Louis Cardinals. A relaxed, casual attire is appropriate.
- Dressing for the week with the option of layers is encouraged as it can be chilly, or even cold, indoors. Pittsburgh weather can be hot and humid. In July, the average high is 85 and low is 75.
- The essentials—to gather and be sure you can easily access:
 1. A valid ID, your hotel reservation and Conference registration confirmations.
 2. Plenty of business cards to share as you network with colleagues and vendors.
 3. Many places are cashless, including NAA Registration. To be fully prepared, please bring various forms of payment.
- Download our Conference app using the QR code on page 30. The App will enable you to see who is in attendance and connect with one another, create your own schedule, and the map for way-finding.
- To get the most out of your conference experience, thoroughly review the daily schedule, determine which functions are most important and applicable for you to attend. Add sessions to your calendar in advance so you can spend your evenings on-site catching up with friends.

Upon your arrival in Pittsburgh...

Transportation

The Wydham Grand Downtown Hotel is about 20 miles from the Pittsburgh International Airport (PIT). There are several ways to travel to and from the airport. A list of transportation options can be found at flypittsburgh.com/ground-transport

Parking

For the convenience and comfort of guests, Wydham Grand offers overnight and hourly valet parking on property. Valet parking, if available, is \$43 per night (price subject to change without notice.) Self-parking options are available within walking distance for a fee. Otherwise, visit parkpgh.com for information on parking in downtown Pittsburgh.

Getting around Pittsburgh

For an easy, efficient, and affordable way to get around Pittsburgh, go to visitpittsburgh.com/plan-your-trip/transportation/ to find out more about getting around downtown.

The Venue

The conference events are located on the first and second floor of the Wydham Grand Downtown Hotel. Once you get checked-in, mosey around the hotel's first and second floor over to familiarize yourself to where the meeting rooms are located, and locate the emergency exits.

Badge pickup/registration

Registration credentials are available for pickup beginning at 12:30 pm, Tuesday, July 23, in Kings Garden 4.

The NAA is going cashless. Bring various forms of payment so you are fully prepared.



75th

PRESIDENT JOHN SCHULTZ



Q&A WITH PRESIDENT JOHN SCHULTZ

Why did you want to become NAA President?

My desire to serve as NAA President is fueled by a deep-rooted passion for the auction industry and a strong commitment to serving the auction community.

This passion was ignited many years ago at my grandfather's auction. I witnessed firsthand the incredible sense of community and support within our industry.

Auctioneers from across the state came together to help our family during a difficult time, leaving a lasting impression that instilled in me the importance of leaving a legacy for future auction professionals.

This experience, coupled with my years of involvement in the industry and dedication to the NAA's mission, drives my desire to give back and contribute to the continued success of the auction profession. My skills and experience can help guide the NAA through the evolving landscape and ensure a bright future for our industry.

Why now?

The auction industry is at a pivotal moment. The rapid advancement of technology presents both challenges and opportunities.

My experience at Grafe Auction, particularly in developing and implementing digital solutions, combined with my understanding of the industry's needs, makes me confident that I can lead the NAA effectively during this time of transformation.



What do you want to see happen in the next year for the NAA? What are your priorities?

My top priorities include:

Technology Focus: We must invest in user-friendly online platforms and tools, ensuring technology is accessible and beneficial for all members, regardless of their tech-savviness.

Modernized Education: Expanding our educational offerings is crucial. This means incorporating distance learning options, engaging experts from diverse fields, and ensuring continuous learning opportunities for all members, regardless of location or experience level.

Strategic Partnerships: Building solid collaborations with other industry organizations, educational institutions, and technology providers will foster innovation and provide our members with cutting-edge solutions.

Advocacy: We must proactively engage with legislative bodies to ensure regulations and rules support the growth and success of the auction industry, protecting our members' interests.

National Promotional Campaign: Launching a nationwide campaign is essential to educate the public about the benefits of auctions, attract new audiences, and highlight our industry's transparency and inclusivity.



How can the NAA continue to grow?

Growth is vital for the NAA's future. I believe we can achieve this by:

Attracting New Talent: Implementing initiatives to reach younger generations and diverse communities, showcasing the auction industry's exciting and rewarding career paths.

Enhancing Member Value: We must continuously expand member benefits and resources, provide valuable tools and ongoing learning opportunities, and foster a strong community within the NAA.

Modernizing Education: By offering distance learning programs and engaging non-industry educators, we can provide diverse perspectives and ensure continuous learning opportunities for all members, keeping them engaged and invested in the NAA.



How can our four Cornerstone Committees best serve the NAA in the years to come?

Promotion Cornerstone:

Targeted Outreach: Develop data-driven strategies to reach new audiences and demographics, promoting the benefits of auctions and attracting new buyers and sellers to the industry.

Modern Marketing: Embrace innovative marketing techniques and digital platforms to increase awareness and engagement with the NAA and the auction method.

Member Success Stories: Showcase the achievements and success stories of NAA members, highlighting the value and expertise within our community.

Advocacy Committee:

Proactive Engagement: Establish strong relationships with legislative bodies and regulatory agencies, proactively advocating for policies that support the auction industry's growth and protect members' interests.

Industry Representation: Serve as the voice of the auction industry, effectively communicating our value proposition and addressing any misconceptions or challenges.

Grassroots Mobilization: Empower members to advocate for the industry at the local and state levels, amplifying our collective voice and influence.

Community Cornerstone:

Fostering Connections: Create opportunities for members to connect, network, and build meaningful relationships within the NAA community.

Mentorship Programs: Develop mentorship programs that connect experienced professionals with newer members, fostering knowledge sharing and career development.

Diversity and Inclusion: Promote a welcoming and inclusive environment for members of all backgrounds and experiences, ensuring everyone feels valued and supported.

Education Cornerstone:

Diverse Learning Opportunities: Expand educational offerings to include a variety of formats, such as online courses, webinars, and in-person workshops, catering to different learning styles and preferences.

Industry-Leading Curriculum: Develop a curriculum that addresses current and future industry trends, including technology adoption, digital marketing, and evolving regulations.

Expert Collaboration: Engage industry experts and thought leaders from diverse fields to provide fresh perspectives and cutting-edge knowledge to our members.



Where do you see the auction industry a year from now?

I envision an industry that embraces both tradition and innovation, recognizing the vital role of both live auctioneers and auction professionals in driving our success:

Technologically advanced, yet rooted in tradition: We will see increased adoption of online platforms and digital tools, enhancing efficiency and expanding our reach. However, the live auction experience, with its energy and excitement, will remain a cornerstone of our industry. The skill and expertise of live auctioneers will continue to be highly valued, captivating audiences and facilitating successful transactions.

Adaptable and Resilient: Auction professionals will be equipped to navigate challenges and seize new opportunities in a dynamic environment. We will see a greater emphasis on continuous learning and professional development, ensuring our members remain at the forefront of industry trends and best practices.

Diverse and Inclusive: The industry will continue to become more welcoming and inclusive, embracing professionals from all backgrounds and experiences. This diversity will enrich our community, bringing fresh perspectives and innovative ideas.

Community-Focused: Auction professionals will play an active role in their communities, promoting the auction method and contributing to local economic growth. We will see more robust connections between NAA members and the communities they serve.

Advocacy-Driven: The industry will be more proactive in advocating for policies that support its growth and success. We will have a stronger voice in shaping legislation and regulations that impact the auction profession.

In essence, I see a future where technology enhances but doesn't replace the human element of the auction experience. Live auctioneers and auction professionals will continue to be the driving force behind our industry, adapting to change, embracing innovation, and ensuring a vibrant future for the auction method of marketing.



What has made your career successful?

I attribute my success to the following:

Passion and Dedication: My unwavering commitment to the auction industry and continuous pursuit of knowledge and growth.

Leadership and Teamwork: My ability to inspire and motivate others, build strong teams, and foster collaboration.

Adaptability and Innovation: My willingness to embrace change and explore new technologies and marketing strategies.

Focus on Results: My data-driven approach and dedication to achieving measurable outcomes.

What does it mean to you to have family in the industry with you?

Family is at the very core of my journey in the auction industry. It all began in 1992, following the passing of my grandfather. As our family prepared for the auction of his lifetime of collected treasures, I witnessed an incredible outpouring of support from auctioneers across the state. They came to help our family, some to work, some to bid and buy, and some to offer a shoulder to lean on during a difficult time. This experience instilled in me a profound sense of community and the importance of leaving a legacy for future generations of auction professionals.

My aunt and uncle, Mike and Jan Schultz, who conducted the auction, played a pivotal role in shaping my career path. Their guidance and mentorship instilled in me the core values of integrity, hard work, and dedication that have been instrumental in my success.

It's extraordinary to share this passion with my cousin, Isaac, their son, who is also actively involved in the industry.

While not family by blood, Judd Grafe has a bond with me that transcends typical relationships. His unwavering support, encouragement, and willingness to challenge me have been instrumental in shaping me into the professional I am today. I wouldn't be standing here today without his guidance and the opportunities he provided at Grafe Auction.

My wife, Billie Jo, and our daughter, Anna Claire, are my constant sources of inspiration and strength. Billie Jo's unwavering belief in me and her understanding of the demands of this industry has been essential to my success. Anna Claire, even at her young age, reminds me of the importance of legacy and the future we are building for the next generation of auction professionals.

Having my family, including my brother Matt, both by blood and by bond, by my side reinforces my commitment to serving the NAA and its members. It's not just about my career; it's about ensuring a thriving and innovative industry for generations. Their presence reminds me that the decisions we make today will impact the future of the auction profession, and it motivates me to lead with integrity, vision, and a deep sense of responsibility.



Who is John Schultz...in your own words?

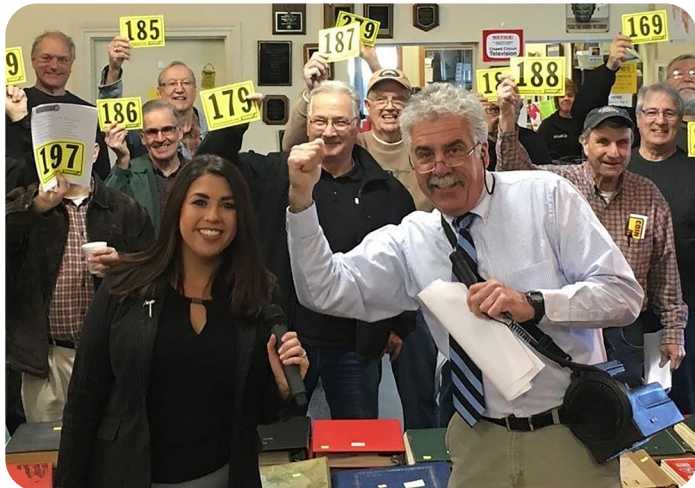
At my core, I am a dedicated auction professional deeply passionate about our industry's future. My journey began with a legacy of family involvement and a profound sense of community instilled in me at a young age. This foundation, coupled with my years of experience, has shaped me into a leader, educator, and innovator who always strives to make a positive impact. I believe in the power of collaboration, data-driven decision-making, and embracing new technologies to ensure a thriving future for the auction profession. I am a strong advocate for continuous learning and professional development. I am committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive environment where all auction professionals can succeed. But beyond titles and accomplishments, I value relationships and cherish the connections I have made within the auction community. My family, both by blood and by bond, plays a vital role in my life, serving as a constant source of inspiration and support. Their presence reminds me of the legacy we are building together, and it motivates me to lead with integrity, vision, and a deep sense of responsibility for the future of the auction industry.





Q&A

Carrie Hessney-Doran



What sparked your interest in becoming an auction professional?

After working outside the auction industry after college and taking a different path, I realized how special it truly was. The values, the family, how we help people, and the organizations we have are unique. It was not until taking a big step away from it all that sparked my interest, and I haven't looked back.

What road did you take to get there?

"Do you Want to go to Auction School?" my dad would ask every so often, never trying to push it too much. I worked my entire life in the family business. Growing up, I went to work with my grandparents and dad almost every day! I just never saw that it would be me with the Mic.

My future husband Tim one day said, "But Why Not." I slept on that; I never put it that way; I didn't have a why not; I felt I had to do something else. The next day, we signed up for Missouri Auction School. It was life-changing; I changed my perspective when we practiced our first chant. After growing up in auction life, I realized for the first time that, of course, I can do this and be good at it!

Were there any challenges you faced?

Of course, there are challenges in everything we do; I sell guns in New York! Life and business require us to make changes and persevere. However, it's been a blessing working full-time with my dad. Being in a family business provides us with more opportunities to have kids and family and be a mom while working together. We are fortunate to have the flexibility of bringing my kids to our office, auctions, meetings, working off hours, and switching our schedules to make it work. To me, all challenges are lessons we get to work through together.

Has your perception of the auction industry changed since you started? If so, how?

That it isn't just for men in cowboy hats! I never really knew how many facets the industry had and the diversity of auction professionals. I have been so lucky to join the fundraising auctioneer community. I love being part of an entire auction industry I never knew about growing up. By day, I am a firearms dealer; by night, I attend galas and specialize in paddle raises. I'm so proud of that. We all wear many hats, and cowboy hats are just one of them!

Why do you love what you do?

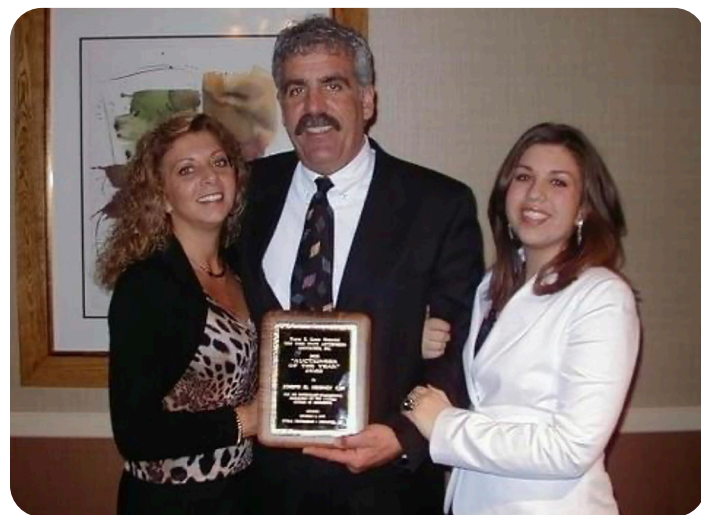
I get to solve problems and really help people every single day. I love bid calling. However, there is so much more to being an auctioneer than my bid call. Whether it is firearms estates, liquidations, or one of my fundraising auctions, I am making a difference in people's lives. I also love seeing my two little girls watch me do something I am passionate about and work alongside my dad daily.

What do you think is the most significant thing (or things) auction professions can do to stay relevant?

Never stop learning and advocate for the profession. As an auction professional, the biggest thing I've learned is to show up for yourself in the community. By educating your peers, community, customers, and other businesses on what you do and the profession's value, you raise the bar for yourself and the entire auction profession.

How has the NAA helped you become a better auction professional?

NAA has helped me continue to grow and become better year after



year. I am a graduate of the Certified Auctioneers Institute; I have designations including Auction Technology Specialist, Certified Estate Specialist, and I have taken the Benefit Auctioneer course. Every year, I learn new things through NAA and take them back to our business; it has helped me and our company grow to new levels. IAC has also made such a significant impact on my life. I never knew competing could be so rewarding; every year, I have grown from my confidence and bid call to my friendships with other auctioneers, leading to fantastic business opportunities.

What do you find most rewarding about this point in your career?

My two little girls, Lucy and Evelyn, see not only how hard I work but that I am passionate and care deeply about what I do. It is possible to be a Mom and be successful. That this is more than a job. They watch their Mom run an auction center and go to auctions, pick-ups, and galas in addition to being PTA president, helping school fundraisers surpass all goals, helping our community, and being present with our family. It's special to me that I get to do what I do every day. I know they're watching and someday can do anything with that strength. I also find it so rewarding carrying on as a second-generation auctioneer, a "3rd generation Hessney", as my Papa would say; he was not an auctioneer, but

one of the most outstanding business professionals who really came from nothing. I get to carry that on. I'm proud that he was so proud.

When you heard your name announced as "Contestant 1" at the IAC Roll Call, how did that change your competition preparation strategy?

Which time? I have competed 4 times and been "contestant 1" three times! Last year wasn't a "take my breath away" moment like in years past. I felt prepared; I was ready. The most significant difference is that you have less preparation, which can also be a blessing, a chance to be your authentic self. I hit the ground running, bring the energy for the day, and make my mark. Being on that same stage for the finals ten hours later was crazy. It's a long day, but it's totally worth it.

How does working with your dad translate into auctioneering success?

I learn from the best. He is the hardest-working person I've ever known. Our business is what it is because of his work ethic and passion. My dad puts everything into every auction we have. He has taught me that every item, every customer, and every seller is treated the same. From \$5.00 to \$500,000, he treats everyone and everything with the same amount of care, and that always shows.

Q&A with Bidsquare



When and how did your business start?

2015

Was there a specific need you saw in the auction industry that prompted the business?

Yes, we felt a void in the market for an online platform and solution provider tailored to and for auctioneers.

What do you hope you do for your clients/customers?

We hope to provide exceptional service, help auction houses solve their problems, and grow online by providing best-in-class software solutions and a platform to reach new bidders.

What do you love about working with your clients/customers?

I love knowing we are helping to level the playing field for small and medium-sized businesses and competing and staying ahead as the industry changes and evolves. We provide cutting-edge technology and tools to help auction houses manage their businesses and grow cost-effectively. During the pandemic, many new buyers bought at auction for the first time. Now, more than ever, it is critically essential that auction houses have a digital strategy in place. I believe Bidsquare can be an integral and supportive partner as auction houses navigate the ever-changing landscape of their industry.

Is there anything new you're particularly excited about this year?

Yes, this year, we launched our new inventory management system, Bidsquare Vault. This cloud-based comprehensive inventory management solution provides auction houses with end-to-end operations management, including consignment tracking, consignors, inventory, catalog auctions, and payment collection. We are excited for our clients to finally have a modern, updated software solution tailored for the auction industry.

What's on the horizon for the next few years?

We plan to build upon our existing products, continuing to enhance and improve them. In addition, we have already started to expand from fine art and antiques to other non-fine art categories, such as industrial and farm equipment, real estate, and automobiles. We are excited about the expansion potential of our software and look forward to serving our clients and seeing how our software can really help an auction house scale its business.

How has/will the NAA help your business grow?

NAA has been a terrific resource for expanding our network within the auction community. We attended the NAA Annual Conference for the first time this year in San Diego and had a great time seeing old colleagues and clients and making new connections and friends.

B I D S  U A R E

Are you an auction industry heavy hitter?

Consider becoming an NAA Corporate Member!

“As the Chief Marketing & Technology Officer at Grafe Auction, I've found the concierge service included in our corporate membership with the National Auction Association to be indispensable. The ease of registering our team for events with just an email allows us to focus on delivering the best for our clients. This streamlined approach saves us time and ensures we never miss an important opportunity. Plus, the monthly emailed touch bases by a dedicated point of contact kick butt! The concierge service is by far one of my favorite aspects of the program.”

John Schultz
Grafe Auction Company



The Corporate Member type includes, but is not limited to:

- Advance access to booth space & advertising space
- Transferable annual dues (limitations apply)
- Voting rights
- Eligible to hold office
- Eligible to earn designations

Visit auctioneers.org/members for a complete list and to learn more about our current Corporate Members





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*New members that joined
between
March 1 - April 30, 2024.*

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(Row 2) Mike Jones - President, Matt Moravec, Dylan Dewitt, Dalton Bartek, Justin Rutter, Thomas R. Bichler, Lori Jones, Craig Meier.
(Row 3) Beau Slaughter, Brandon Peterocelli, Isaac Slabaugh, Chandler Stone, Spencer Nolt, Vernon Slabaugh.

Congrats to the April 2024 graduating class Alex Barraco, Justin Wendell, Richard Revesz, Jay Sandhu, Gabe Ruiz, Efrain Silva, Ken Dayton, Ed Chang, and Max Cohen.

Florida Auctioneer Academy



Submit graduation classes

Graduation classes may be submitted to communications@auctioneers.org. Submissions may be edited for length. Hi-resolution photos and information about NAA and industry involvement appreciated. Editors will do their best to locate photos if none are submitted.



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To see a list of NAA's volunteer leadership holding positions on various committees, subcommittees, and task forces, scan this QR code or visit auctioneers.org/committees.



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In Memory



Brent Belcher

Brent Harcourt Belcher, 80, of Marshall, Michigan, passed away on March 29, 2024 at Ascension Borgess Hospital in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

He was born on February 14, 1944 to Edward and Genevieve (Tuck) Belcher in Marshall, Michigan.

On April 17, 1965 Brent married Wanda Peck in Marshall, Michigan. He was a proud active member of the Michigan State Auctioneers Association, was their Past President and was inducted into their Hall of Fame on January 29, 2000 and Brent's father Ed and family were on hand to present him the award. His other memberships included the Indiana Auctioneers Association and the National Auction Association. Brent was a third-generation auctioneer. He started clerking and setting up auctions for his father Ed Belcher in the early 1960's, while attending Kellogg Community College. He called his first auction at the age of 20 and has been a full-time auctioneer until retiring in 2023. He was very active with the Calhoun County 4H Livestock Project Auction for 56 years. He always donated his time to churches and charitable organizations that asked for help putting on an auction. Brent has sold at countless Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever Benefit sales throughout the state and at 30 plus Calhoun County 4-H Livestock auctions which have set three world records. He also helped at the Eaton County 4-H Livestock sales. Brent helped organize and served on the steering committee as well as selling at the annual Oaklawn Benefit Auction since its inception. The community was very important to Brent, and he volunteered his time by serving on the Marshall Area Economic Development Council, Calhoun County Fair Advisory Committee, Michigan National Bank Board of Directors, member and past president Marshall Lion's Club, donating equipment for the Marshall Area Relay for Life, Starr Commonwealth for Boys fundraiser selling at their annual event.

He was a longtime active member at Marshall United Methodist Church and enjoyed singing in the choir. Brent enjoyed outside activities around their home, water skiing at Lee Lake and showing Quarter Horses when he was younger. He and his horse earned Grand Champion at the Chicago International Livestock Show. Golfing was his favorite hobby along with his Bear Whizzer Golf Club friends. Above all, Brent loved his children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

Family was everything to him. He will be truly missed for being an excellent auctioneer and family man. Brent is survived by his loving spouse of 59 years Wanda, his children, Kristin (Dan) Gaston of Marshall, Michigan, Heather (Ray) Charles of Eaton Rapids, Michigan, and Kevin (Angie) Belcher of Marshall, Michigan; his grandchildren, Lexi Mead, Hannah Schroder, Logan McPherson, Jordan McPherson, Kira Belcher, Brielle Belcher and Katie Gaston; Great Grandchildren, Brenton Mead, Linden Mead, Sophie Gaston and Danny Gaston and his sister, Suzette Koster. He was preceded in death by his parents.

Please visit www.kempffuneralhome.com to view the online obituary, to sign the online guest book or to leave the family condolences.

Source: <https://www.kempffuneralhome.com/obituaries/brent-belcher>

Obituary Submissions

Obituaries may be submitted to communications@auctioneers.org. Submissions may be edited for length. Hi-resolution photos and information about NAA and industry involvement appreciated. Editors will do their best to locate photos if none are submitted.



Connie Johnson

Johnson, Connie Jean (nee Mueller), 63, of White Bear Lake, passed away on Wednesday, April 17, 2024. She was preceded in death by her parents, Connie and Al; brother, Mark; and sister, Debbie Shambo. Connie is survived by her husband, Kurt; daughter, Hannah (Alvaro) Garcia; grandchildren, Amy and Pepe; siblings, Todd (Michele), Craig (Patty), Scott (Heidi), Keith (Jennifer), Dan (Pam), and Julie (Regina); in-laws, Tamera (Carrol), Doreen (Robin), Janel (Richard), and Todd (Kelly); Connie's beloved companion, her dog, Quinn; and many nieces, nephews, and intimate friends.

Connie was a dedicated partner and fundraising consultant for Kurt Johnson Auctioneering. She was a chair member for the National Auction Association and the Minnesota State Auctioneers Association, was head of many conferences, and won many awards, including the golden gavel award.

Connie had a deep love and commitment for her family- especially her grandchildren. She was a fierce friend to many and was a passionate community supporter of Arts, Education, and Social Services. Her tenacity, humor, and love will be greatly missed.

Source: <https://www.muellermemorial.com/obituaries/connie-johnson>

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Bruce Mullen

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Nashville, Tennessee



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