



Nebraska Foundation  
for Children's Vision

# Ideas for NFCV Auction Donations

## High End Items

- Timeshares
- Cabin rentals
- Vacation packages with few restrictions or strings
- Optometric equipment
- Electronics

## Other Item Ideas

- Sports tickets
- Sports memorabilia
- Tickets for local cultural events
- Gift certificates for dinner at a nice restaurant
- Wine
- Golf
- High-end jewelry
- Zoo season passes
- Children's museum season pass
- Husker football tickets
- Husker volleyball tickets
- Fun center passes
- Hotel & dinner deals
- Gift cards from businesses in Omaha or Lincoln, where there are a significant number of members and paras able to take advantage
- Skatedaze in Omaha
- Pizza Machine in Omaha
- Spas
- Golf courses
- Pizza Hut restaurants gift certificates
- Other places with an interest in children

## Themed Basket Ideas

- Backyard Chef or Grill  
Out: barbecue sauces, grill accessories, Omaha Steak gift certificates
- Car Wash: bucket, sponges, chamois, paper towels, Armor All, Turtle Wax, air fresheners
- Chef's Delight: cookbooks, kitchen gadgets, bowls, spices, oils, cutting board
- Christmas: ornaments, cards, wrapping paper, decorations
- Coffee Break: mugs, assorted coffees, chocolate-covered spoons, biscotti
- Do-It-Yourself: tool belt, instruction books, painting supplies, store gift card
- Fiesta Fiesta: Mexican jumping beans, fancy salsa and chips, recipe book, Margarita mix
- Fisherman's Cove: rod and reels, fishing line, tackle and bait, gift certificate
- Garden of Eden: seeds, soil, tools, garden artwork, accessories, plants
- Italian Feast: pasta machine, fancy olive oils, spaghetti fork
- Photo Supplies: certificate for portrait session, picture frames, albums
- "Best of \_\_\_\_\_" - put together a basket of things that make your community unique

## 7 Things To Avoid

- Collectibles with a narrow appeal (e.g., figurines, vases/ decorative glassware, coins)
- Anything used, unless it's antique and obviously valuable
- Certificates for partial value (e.g., \$100 off a \$20,000 roofing job)
- Homemade items, unless they are of exceptional quality
- Anything with a lot of fine print and restrictions—it's too hard for your guests to digest the fine print during the auction
- Anything perceived to have a lot of fine print, even if it doesn't—be clear that there are no or few strings attached (e.g., for a weekend at a resort, people might assume there are strict, undesirable date restrictions even if there aren't)

*See the next page for tips on approaching businesses*



## Nebraska Foundation for Children's Vision

### Six Steps for Boosting Procurement

By Stephen Hamann

Let's face it – when it comes to procurement it's all about who you know. The six degrees of separation comes into play because it's who you know, who knows someone, who knows someone else, who has a contact for a potential auction item....

You're scouting your family, friends, neighbors, business associates and vendors for auction items. Suddenly, you're looking at where you shop, eat, bank and wash your car very differently. How do you turn six degrees of separation into six steps for boosting procurement?

- 1. Know your audience.** What are their interests? What can they afford? What has sold well in the past? Ask your donors what they like. Target items that you know the majority of your attendees will have an interest in purchasing. A younger group will like family-oriented items, short weekend getaways and parties at the hippest clubs in town. An older group will bid on long cruises, gifts for the grandkids, theater and musicals, fine wines and dinners at the nicest places.
- 2. Be specific about what you ask for.** Most folks won't know what you want for your event. Offer them choices of things that you know they can provide. If left up to them to determine what you want, many people find it easier to say no.
- 3. You must make the ask.** Don't make the mistake of not asking someone for a donation because you don't think they will donate. If you don't ask them, you're pretty much guaranteed they won't donate for sure. It's a numbers game – the more you ask, the more items you will receive.
- 4. Close the deal.** If you walk away without an item or a commitment, your chances of getting something later will be greatly reduced. Have a procurement form with you. Set a date and time for pick-up or delivery of the item. Don't wait to the last minute.

# Tips on Procuring Donations

- 5. Have a plan.** Larger auction items typically don't just appear in the mail. Know what you want - dinner parties, trips, sporting events, ladies night outs, sports memorabilia, and unique opportunities. Provide volunteers with a wish list of items to find.
- 6. Be creative.** Think out of the box -- unique locations, opportunities and once in a lifetime experiences are key. Put a different spin on a common item. Offer items that can only be acquired at your event. Make it special!

*Source: auctionpay.com.*

*About Stephen Hamann: Stephen Hamann is a professional Charity Auctioneer, Master of Ceremonies and Event Host based in San Diego, CA. Known for his great enthusiasm and attention to detail, Stephen is an expert at extracting donations from guests while - at the same - time ensuring they go home with smiles on their faces. For more information, visit his website at [www.slhamann.net](http://www.slhamann.net).*

### Tips for getting donations from businesses:

- Visit in person
- Speak to the manager
- Have a letter to leave behind
- Offer to come back to pick up donated items
- Follow up a "maybe" with a phone call
- Be specific about what you want
- Be creative—take anything, lots of something, clearance merchandise, etc.
- Ask for a sponsorship donation if not an auctionable item
- Put yourself in their shoes—they want business-growth opportunities
- Send a proper thank-you letter in a timely manner