

Fundraising

By: Jennifer Holt, Area Coordinator



This year in Salt Lake City UT, we decided to have a fundraising event to benefit NILMDTS. I had an idea that this would be a good community to support such a fundraiser. People are always asking me ways in which they can help, and many people have approached me wanting to donate goods, services or cash. And thus, the idea of a silent auction was born. A lot of ideas were tossed around, and tentative plans made, but at this point, no businesses had been contacted.

Knowing that any fundraising that was done would have to benefit NILMDTS as a whole and not just the local photographers, my first call was to headquarters to find out the rules.



Once we knew what the restrictions were for tax exemptions and how all that would work, we were off and running. As the word got out using e-mail and facebook, personal friends, family members, and those who had previously received our services were on board to help!



What made our fundraiser so successful was truly making it a group effort. Enlisting the help (and contacts) of photographers in your area can get you some rather unexpected bonuses. One photographer was able to get us time at a reception center donated to our cause, which was the springboard for setting a date and time for the auction. One photographer got her dentist to donate a "free" tooth whitening to be auctioned, another was able to procure John Mayer concert tickets and yet another contacted a client and had an EZview desk by the Original Scrapbox donated which turned out to be the biggest seller of the night bringing in about \$300.

One of the most amazing things was the number of angel families and friends that donated goods, services and cash. Once they heard that there was a way to give back to an organization that had given them priceless photos of their angels at no charge, many were excited to participate.



All of the food donated was from local restaurants. Speaking with the manager or owner of the restaurant nearly always resulted in a donation (usually larger than expected). I suggest telling them that the organization is a 501(c)(3), as I found that this made them more comfortable when deciding to donate.



When auctioning items on a silent auction, be sure and set minimum bids and give enough time for people to see all the items and return several times to re-bid as they wish.

After the success of this year's auction, which netted just below \$4,000, we are already looking towards next year and ways we can do even better. Perhaps a live auction or maybe

something with a carnival theme that involves the whole family, the decision has not been made yet, but you can bet it will be soon!