

# TAA QUARTERLY

Volume II, Issue I

February 2014

## TENNESSEE AUCTIONEERS ASSOCIATION



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### Upcoming Events

#### Summer Convention

June 8-9, 2014  
Chattanooga, TN

#### NAA Convention

July 8-12, 2014  
Louisville, KY

#### Winter Convention

Nov. 30-Dec 1, 2014  
Nashville, TN

*This newsletter is published by the Tennessee Auctioneers Association as a service to its members and supporters in the auctioneering industry. Suggestions are welcome for articles in future editions.*

## Message From The President...

Hello fellow Auctioneers, I hope that 2014 is a prosperous year for you all. I think it's safe to say that with the weather we've had the past couple of months, we are certainly ready for the spring.

We had a great winter meeting in Nashville where a new slate of officers were elected and sworn in. Personally, I enjoyed seeing the nominations made, some from the floor, and written votes cast. It reminded me of the way elections were done many years ago, with candidates lobbying for their desired positions. While on the topic of electing association officers, as you may or may not know, the membership will be voting at the upcoming June conference to make changes to our bylaws. The position of President will now be, if approved by membership, an at large position, no longer rotating from one grand division of the state to the next each year.

I would be remiss not to thank Past President, Mr. Rick Hinson, for his service to our association. Not only serving as President twice, but also for the many years of dedicated service that he has provided for our association. Now, as the saying goes, behind every good man is a good woman. Rick's wife Susan, has also provided many years of support for the association by helping with registration, clerking and cashing the fun auctions and we also owe her a tremendous thank you.

Congratulations to Junior Staggs, the 2014 Tennessee Bid Calling Champion and we wish him luck as he goes on to represent Tennessee at the National Auctioneers Association Championship. Thank you to Justin Ochs for doing a fantastic job spearheading this year's Tennessee Bid Calling Championship. In my opinion, the suggestions Justin brought to the championship was evident with one of the best field of contestants we have had in the 24 years I've been a member of the TAA.

Also congratulations to the Hall of Fame, 2013 inductees, Mr. Tim Mast, Mr. David Fall & Mr. Van Massey. Thank you for your many years of service to not only the association, but also our profession as well.

The summer convention is coming to Chattanooga this year for only the second time since I've been a member. The downtown area and waterfront have been rejuvenated in the past several years. We have chosen a hotel that is ideally located within walking distance to the Riverbend Festival, Tennessee Aquarium, IMAX theatres and all the restaurants you could want to choose from. The Riverbend Festival will be going on during our convention, therefore I **STRONGLY** encourage you to make your hotel reservations as soon as possible.

Finally, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve you.

Marcus D. Gravitt, CAI, AARE, GPPA

### TAA ANNUAL SUMMER CONVENTION

**WHEN:** Sunday and Monday, June 8-9, 2014

**WHERE:** DoubleTree Hotel, Chattanooga, TN

Please visit our website, [www.tnauctioneers.com](http://www.tnauctioneers.com), for registration.

**JOIN US!**

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**PUBLICATION DATES**

Articles and ad deadlines:

**FEBRUARY 1    APRIL 1**  
**AUGUST 1      NOV. 1**

Any and all TAA members are encouraged to send information on past or coming events they have conducted or news articles that would be of interest to other members. Please send profiles of members that you feel deserve to be highlighted in our publication.

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**CONGRATULATIONS HALL OF FAME RECIPIENTS**

Hall of Fame Recipients Inducted during the TAA Convention,

Sunday, December 1, 2013

David Fall, Tim Mast, Van Massey

**Save the Dates!**

**Upcoming Events**  
**Summer Convention**  
 June 8-9, 2014  
 Chattanooga, TN

**Winter Convention**  
 Nov. 30-Dec 1, 2014  
 Nashville, TN

**2014 Mule Day Champion  
Auctioneer Contest  
Friday 10:00 AM**



The Columbia Breakfast Rotary Club hosted their annual Mule Day Auctioneer Contest on Friday April 5, 2013. The contest was held at the Tennessee Livestock

Producers Sale Barn in Columbia, TN. Auctioneers from Tennessee, Alabama and Kentucky came to see if they could claim the 2013 Grand Champion Mule Day Auctioneer belt buckle. The Tennessee Livestock Sale Barn was full of excitement as the contest started. Each auctioneer took their turn on the sale block as they sold items to live bidders. The bidding was fast and exciting as each auctioneer captivated the audience with their magical auctioneer chant. The auctioneers competing in the contest were some of the very best in their profession.

The Columbia Breakfast Club appreciates Justin Ochs of Hendersonville, TN the 2012 Grand Champion coming back and auctioning one of the 2013 Mule Day Knives to raise money for their scholarship program.

Jacob Massey of Fayetteville, TN after being named Reserve Champion in 2012 was named Grand Champion in 2013. Jacob has been practicing the art of auctioneering since he was 10 years old. Trey Morris of Mayfield, KY was named Reserve Champion. The Columbia Breakfast Rotary Club is proud to host of the Mule Day Auctioneer Contest and is looking forward to the 2014 contest. Make your plans to be at the Tennessee Livestock Producers Sale barn on April 4, 2014 at 10:00 AM to see who will wear home the 2014 Grand Champion Belt Buckle.



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11 AM - 5:00 PM  
Ham & White Beans \$6.00**

**FRIDAY & SAT: 6 AM - 10 AM  
Ham & Biscuits \$2.00  
NOON - 4 PM  
Music**

**THURSDAY 9:00 AM  
Hand and Foot Canasta Tournament\*  
Trophy/Prize \$50, \$25, \$15**

**THURSDAY 9:00 AM  
Pool Tournament\*  
Trophy/Prize \$50, \$25, \$15**

**SATURDAY  
Corn Hole Tournament\*  
*Must register for tournaments.***

**RAFFLE TICKETS \$10**  
Cash and other prizes totaling \$4,000!  
Visit [www.mccc2.org](http://www.mccc2.org) for more info. Raffle drawing on Saturday before Mule Day Knife Auction at 3PM at the Main Stage.

Located at the Maury County Park  
For more information, call  
931-380-3950 - visit our website  
[www.mccc2.org](http://www.mccc2.org) or email: [mccc3@cpws.net](mailto:mccc3@cpws.net)

## Seven Rules To Know

By Steve Proffitt

I recently wrote about the importance of auctioneers following sound risk-management principles to avoid claims in our trigger-happy society. Lawyers have discovered auctions and that discovery leads to more claims being filed against auctioneers. This is an unsettling scenario that will only worsen over time.

My last column referred to a case that came out of an auction to demonstrate how vulnerable auctioneers are to claims. I emphasized two rules for auctioneers to know.

No. 1 – While people are creatures of habit, times change, attitudes change, and risks change. Businesspeople must know this and be ever watchful and keep up with change, lest they find themselves in a lawyer's crosshairs.

No. 2 – Smart auctioneers never try to win claims. Instead, they focus their efforts on avoiding them. Once a major claim strikes, the best result the target can hope for is to survive the ordeal (mentally, physically, and financially) that is going to follow.

I'm going to add five additional rules that auctioneers should know and always heed. Doing so could save you a lot of anguish and money. Failing to do so could invite a visit by a man wearing a brown shirt, displaying a gold badge, and bringing some very unpleasant papers with your name on them – and you wouldn't want that. Here are the other five rules to know.

No. 3 – Your best insurance is self insurance. That doesn't mean not to carry adequate liability insurance. You should always be adequately insured for the risks you incur. What this rule means is that you can do a lot to "insure" yourself against claims. Conducting your business legally and ethically is how. If you're going to pay money to an insurance company to help protect you, why not get the added benefit of protecting yourself for free? Think of this as defensive driving in your business.

No. 4 – A positive and cooperative attitude with those with whom you deal is an extremely important attribute for insulating you against claims. Sure, good guys get hit with claims, too, but they fare far better than the bad guys for obvious reasons. Being a good guy will carry you a long way in life, particularly in the eyes of others who may be called upon to judge you and what you did or didn't do in a certain situation. Be the very best person that you can be with everyone ... all the time!

No. 5 – Auctioneering is a service that is provided to people who are often in difficulty and experiencing great strife and challenge. Auctioneers are frequently called upon to help sellers solve very intimate problems in their lives – problems like the three terrible "D's" – debt, divorce, and death. In this vein, auctioneers are akin to lawyers who regularly assist clients with difficult problems. Never forget this intimate aspect of auctioneering. Physicians were rarely sued in the era when they were known for selfless sacrifice for their patients, and not for the size of their cars, houses, and 401k's. Develop a good "bedside manner" to use with sellers that emphasizes genuine interest in them and sincere concern for solving their problems. Take care of your business and your money will take care of itself.

No. 6 – We lost a lot in this society when basic values, traditions, and respect for others came to be seen as corny – while arrogance, sarcasm, and disrespect rose to be "cool" and "hip." If you think the Golden Rule is for squares, this advice won't help you. If you embrace it, faithfully practice the maxim, as taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount – (paraphrasing) "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." When you treat others right and with respect, you will usually receive the same in return. People who respect each other typically like each other – and friends are not prone to making legal claims and filing lawsuits against one another.

No. 7 – The amount of money in issue is a good indicator of the likelihood

of whether a claim might be asserted against an auctioneer. The threat can be measured on a sliding scale in direct relation to what's at stake. The larger the sum, the greater the likelihood someone could end up unhappy and look to do something about it. As the money increases, the matter becomes more attractive to lawyers looking for their next case. A \$50 controversy is low risk and almost no one will make a serious claim over it. The potential for a claim is quite real, however, when \$5,000 is in dispute, and exceedingly strong when the amount is \$50,000 ... and when you reach six figures, well, you can do the math.

Here's a closing thought to fortify the importance of all seven rules. If you're an auctioneer who sells assets of value for others, look in the nearest mirror to see the big, red circle on your forehead just above your nose. It's a bull's eye – a target for lawyers. It's always there. The reason for it is that auctioneers work in an environment of conflict and risk. An auctioneer represents sellers who want to sell assets for premium prices. The auctioneer attempts to make these sales to customers who want to buy the assets for bargains. These competing interests can result in one party or the other ending up dissatisfied which increases the risk of a claim against the auctioneer. Never forget that or the need to safeguard your interests.

*Steve Proffitt is general counsel of J. P. King Auction Company, Inc. ([www.jpking.com](http://www.jpking.com)) in Gadsden, AL. He is also an auctioneer and instructor at Mendenhall School of Auctioneering in High Point, NC. This information does not represent legal advice or the formation of an attorney-client relationship and readers should seek the advice of their own attorneys on all legal issues. Mr. Proffitt may be contacted by email at [sproffitt@jpking.com](mailto:sproffitt@jpking.com).*

JohnStephen Proffitt III  
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February 5, 2014

*Welcome fellow TAA members. The following article really hit home for me and I decided it might be best to share it with my fellow Auctioneers as it was written by an expert in this field. I am sure you would rather read some potentially valuable information for you and your company rather than how to say “here to buy getem on to buy now”. So here you go... --Steve Holt*

## **6 Ways to Leverage Social Media**

When your business has limited resources, every marketing investment has to pay off. This is why social media campaigns tend to be the first things cut. Although free to set up, they take valuable staff resources to manage, and the ROI is not as apparent. While launching a social media campaign likely won't affect leads and sales right away, when you implement a few social media success strategies, you'll find it much easier to drive a positive ROI with social that benefits your organization for years to come.

### **Reframe your outlook.**

Many businesses fail at social media because they think it means Facebook or Twitter. Social media is actually much more than that. Rather than putting labels on social media, think of it as a concept. Social media is actually about engaging with your audience in a broader way. Traditional media has always been one directional – you place an ad, the customer calls and you have an offline private conversation. Social media is the first time where businesses interact with their community in a public online forum. That openness and transparency is scary to many business owners, but it's exactly what customers crave.

### **Start small.**

As you delve into social media, begin with the platforms that can make the biggest difference for you. Usually, this means starting with the three main platforms that can drive results and interaction: Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube. Depending on your business model, there may be others; however, if you are just getting started, this is a great set to begin with.

**Facebook:** Facebook has a high adoption rate and people of all ages spend time on this social media platform, thus giving you great exposure.

**LinkedIn:** While LinkedIn is not consumer-focused like Facebook, it can help with B2B sales, vendor connections, recruiting and other business needs.

**YouTube:** Although a bigger investment than the others, consumers resonate with different types of content, and YouTube videos tend to pay off in the long term.

### **Don't overinvest.**

As you delve into social media, don't rush out and hire a full-time person to manage it. Instead, start by looking around your company and finding someone (or a team of people) interested in the additional responsibility. Chances are you have someone personally involved in social media who would love to have this as part of their job description. As your social media presence grows and becomes successful, you can see the business case for growing the department.

### **Look beyond the “likes”.**

Judging a social media campaign solely by the number of your Facebook likes is a bit backwards. Although likes can be a good indicator of success, a new Facebook like won't feed your sales team's numbers. In order to measure a successful social campaign, here are a few metrics that social media can influence and you can measure:

**Reach, Likes, and Shares.** The soft metrics of social lets you know you are keeping your audience engaged.

**Social Referral Traffic and Goal Completions.** Measured through Google Analytics, you can figure out who is coming from social media and either buying something or filling in a lead form on your website.

**Social Media Leads.** Yes, you can drive business leads from prospects straight on social media.

**Increased Search Engine Rankings and New Inbound links.**

Having a presence on social media can have a huge effect on any other organic or SEO programs you are running. Social media can be a key component of driving search engine traffic to your website.

**Increases in Branded Traffic.** If you are keeping your audience engaged and getting prospects “warmed up” on social, you should see an increase of consumers searching for your brand in search engines. Again, this is measured through Google Analytics.

### **Measure your results based on goals.**

Now that you know that results are more than just “likes”, decide how you are going to measure results and which specific metrics you'll use to determine success. Social media is just like any other marketing initiative, which means you have to answer some key questions, such as “Why are doing this?” and “What are we hoping to get from it?” Each business will have its own definition of social media success. For one business, a metric like sales or leads is vital. Other businesses focus more on market share. Decide before you start what's important to you. For a free measurement tool, use Google Analytics. For standardized reports, consider using an out-of-the box report suite, such as Sprout Social or Raven Tools.

### **Commit to it.**

Too often, a small- or medium-sized business sets up a Facebook page, goes gung-ho with it for a few weeks, and then gets busy and forgets about it. That sends a negative message about the business. To avoid this scenario, start small with activity you can handle and stick with it. Post something daily, or at the very least weekly so your company can stay relevant. Additionally, make sure what you're doing looks professional by getting custom banners to match your website.

Social media can be one of the best investments your company makes. The key is to be smart about it and to treat it like any other business activity. So if you've attempted social media in the past but let it go by the wayside, or if you haven't embarked on this journey yet, now is the time to take the plunge and get on the social media platforms. By following these strategies, you'll find social media to be a rewarding, enjoyable, and profitable endeavor.

Works Cited: Henley, Natalie. “6 Ways to Leverage Social Media.” *Business Partner* Jan. 2014. Print.

### TAA Auctioneers Featured at Mecum Auction

The picture was taken at the first auction of the year for Mecum Auctions in Kissimmee Florida. Mecum is the LARGEST Collector Car Auction Company in the World. Justin Ochs and Steven W. Holt of Compass Auctions & Real Estate were featured Auctioneers in the 10 day auction that featured over 3000 Collector Cars. The final tally for the 10 Day record setting Auction resulted in a 70%+ sell thru rate generating over \$60,000,000.00 in sales. Mecum will be featuring 18 more Auctions throughout the North America as well as a featured event right here in Tennessee. Go to [www.soldoncompass.com](http://www.soldoncompass.com) for further details.



### “Baggage Battles” Filming



On January 11, Fountain City Auction located in Knoxville, TN held their annual advertisement auction. TAA member Ed Stallings assisted with auction duties along with the regular staff. The Travel Channel was on hand with the "Baggage Battle" production crew along with their traveling bidders Mark Meyer, Billy Leroy- Lawrence, and Sally Martin filming for a future show to be broadcast on the Travel Channel sometime after April.

Approximately 600 lots were sold with highlights being an Aluminum Sinclairs's Dino Dinosaur bringing \$3200 plus BP. This was a strong sell with several collectable advertisement signs bringing near the \$1000 mark. My Tupelo Entertainment produces "Baggage Battles" and also other shows including "Ghost Adventures" and "King of Vegas."

**Ed Stallings CAI-CES-CAGA**  
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Knoxville, Tennessee

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## Dates to Remember

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### Summer Convention

June 8-9, 2014

#### DoubleTree Hotel

407 Chestnut St  
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(423) 756-5150  
\$99 Rate

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### NAA Convention

July 8-12, 2014 in Louisville, KY

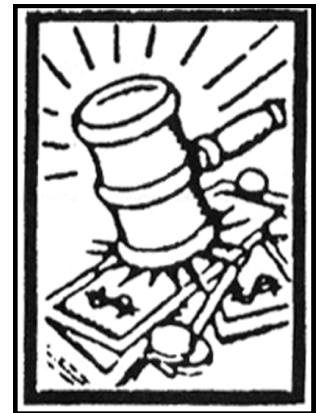
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### Winter Convention

November 30-December 1, 2014  
Inn at Opryland in Nashville, TN

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