

# Let's get Donations for the Sloat Silent Auction!

This holiday season we'd like to ask you to think about the Sloat Auction while you are out and about in the city. The best time to ask a business for a donation is while you are making a purchase or receiving a service. So, keep a few copies of the auction forms in your bag, ready to hand out as you make your purchases.

Having lots of items to bid on is what makes the auction fun and successful, so soliciting donations is the most important part, and we need your help! If you've never asked for a donation for an auction before, or even if you have, here are some helpful tips to get you started.

It's not hard...give it a try! If you're really not comfortable asking a business for a donation, feel free to purchase a special item—a toy, a piece of art, house wares or equipment, furniture, you name it—and donate it for the auction. We will be happy to provide you with a tax receipt so you can write off your donation.

But if you're excited about making our auction **big** this year, read on!

## The Auction Forms

- You want to go out and ask a business to donate, but don't have any idea what to say? Read the sample **Sales Pitch** script for some ideas!
- When you ask a business or a person to donate goods or services to the silent auction, they will often ask if you have a letter. That's the **Solicitation Letter**.
- If they agree to donate, we need a record of who they are, what they've donated, and how much it's worth. All that goes on the **Donation Form**, and we need that; don't give it to the business who's donating.
- They'll also want a receipt so they can write the donation off on their taxes. This is the **Tax Receipt**. You fill this out and give it to them! This document also has a thank-you portion.
- Some businesses are willing to give a gift certificate, but they don't have a blank one on hand. We made one; that's the **Gift Certificate**. Bring a blank one with you when you solicit businesses just in case.

## Soliciting Neighborhood Merchants

Gathering donations from businesses is a wonderful way to meet your neighborhood merchants. Your best shot is to ask businesses you visit frequently, like restaurants, dry cleaners, salons, spas, dog sitters, etc.

### If the answer is yes:

Say thanks! Tell them you've got everything with you if they'd like to take care of it right away. If that is agreeable, work with them to fill out the Donation Form and the Tax Receipt. If they don't have a gift certificate on hand, offer one of our blank ones. Keep the Donation Form, give them the Tax Receipt, collect the donation, say thanks again, and be on your way to the next one!

### If they ask you to leave something:

Give them the Solicitation Letter and Donation Form. Ask when would be a good time to come back. Then follow up!!! People are busy. Just because they don't call you back doesn't mean they aren't willing to donate. Some parents swear by self-addressed, stamped envelopes too, so if you don't mind donating the stamp, try that! Make it as easy for the business as possible.

### If the answer is no:

Thank them for their time and ask them if you may come back again next year. Notify Julia Martin so she can add the business name to the list of those we've contacted.

## Now that you have your donation in hand...

Bring the donation with the filled-out Donation Form to school and put the donation in the PCO locked box in the office. If your item is too large, contact [juliamartin5969@yahoo.com](mailto:juliamartin5969@yahoo.com) or 415-377-4911 to discuss pick-up and storage.

## What is the most important thing?

That we say thank you to businesses who donate. Thank you in words and thank you with a Tax Receipt. Don't -forget this important step!