

What am I bid?

By Nick Wolochatiuk - STANDARD FREEHOLDER HOMETOWN

November 15, 1998

"SMORGASBORD OF TREASURES - There's something on display that will tempt even the most jaded collector to place a bid at the area's many auctions."

"KEEN PARTICIPANT - Alena Bhatnagar (in foreground) of Cornwall is a regular at area auctions. "I find them to be an enjoyable day in the country, and I often come away with some very interesting items", she says."

"A GREAT INVESTMENT! - Can you imagine putting down less than a dollar at a carnival to win a prize, then having it auctioned off years later for 2,000 times more than that? That was Leo Clouthier's return, thanks to auctioneer Theresa Taylor."

Every weekend there's an auction of some sort in the community centre, back yard or church hall in SD&G.

Theresa Taylor is no newcomer to auctions, for as a child she and her six siblings were taken from auction to auction as an affordable form of family entertainment.

"My Dad would buy a job lot of stuff for us for only a dollar." she reminisced.

"Those things would keep us amused for at least the rest of the day, if not until the rest of the week. Where else could a family of nine go out for such an enjoyable yet affordable day of entertainment?"

For the last 16 months, Taylor has converted her childhood experiences into an enjoyable after-work second job. So successful has been her new venture that she was the runner up in the novice division of Auctioneers' Association of Canada latest conference held in Toronto.

So far, she has conducted 17 auctions, most frequently in the Martintown Community Centre, but also in Cornwall, Alexandria, North Lancaster, Williamsburg and Apple Hill.

"Every one of my auctions is an audition for my next clients. If they see how I run the show, they may hire me to auction off their goods, whether it be one item or 100" Preparing for an auction is a monumental task.

Taylor rents an appropriate hall. She places ads in local newspapers. She networks with regular collectors and other auctioneers to ensure that anyone interested in what's

being offered will know about it. "Word of mouth" now included postings on two internet sites.

Every auction provides employment for contract workers associated with Taylor.

"I have four handlers, three clerks, a ring man (Scott Morris of Ottawa) and a set-up person." "Lee Cassidy, my set-up person, has a talent for making things look good.

An article that was in regular kitchen table use at Leo Clouthier's house was noticed by one of her staff.

It was suggested that the ornate piece might be of some value to the right collector.

At the latest auction in Martintown, the piece, a Fenton blackberry whimsy in cobalt blue, the type of carnival glass given away as cheap prizes at county fairs, was auctioned off for \$1,900! When asked "What would happen if the piece dropped and broke into pieces when a prospective buyer was examining it?" Taylor just shuddered.

"I'D faint. Even though the items being auctioned are never mine, we cherish them as if they were our own. They transfer from the original owner to the purchaser" was her reply.