

Daisy and I had a busy auction weekend recently. For the Reader's Digest version, feel free to skip down to the last paragraph. If you have a few minutes to kill, keep reading. We left our home at 7:45 am Friday morning after making sure the kids were safely on their way to school. We headed south on I-29 toward the Kansas City, MO area to work an antique collectible motorcycle auction with a fellow MSAA Auctioneer. The stiff northwest wind blew us most of the way there. We stopped in Iowa for lunch, made a pit stop for gas and a Harley Davidson t-shirt (a slight addiction of mine), and made our destination by 7:00 pm. Safe and sound in a hotel bed, we got a good night's rest before the sale the following day.

Before the sale the next morning, I was telling a coworker that I was hoping the sale was done before the local Harley shop closed so I could grab a shirt from there, too (each Harley store orders unique shirts and did I mention my addiction?). Looking around the Ag Building at the State Fairgrounds, I quickly realized that would most likely not happen. He mentioned that the owner of the bike shop had been in the day before at the preview and that he might come back for the sale. That gave me an idea! I hustled into the clerk trailer and told Daisy to keep her eye out for anyone with the last name Yeager, as in 'Yeager Harley-Davidson,' as she was checking people in. About 10 minutes later an older gentleman approached me in a nice Harley jacket. He said his name was Rick Yeager and the nice lady in the trailer had informed him I was looking for a store shirt. He said he started the shop years before and was retired, but he might be able to help me out since his kids are running it now. I told him my size and he said he'd see what he could do. After about fifteen minutes, he found me again to deliver my shirt! He said when the kids made him retire they forgot to ask for his key to the back door; he let himself into the shop before it was open for the day to help a guy out. I was happy to pay him for the shirt and tried to give him a little extra cash for his trouble, but he said I only needed to pay for the shirt and he was happy I would advertise for his store by wearing it.

Having worked a few antique collectible motorcycle auctions in the past, I know these biker guys can get a little crazy with their bidding. Vintage parts are getting harder to find. We held a pretty fast pace. Jump bids were the order of the day. These guys wanted to buy, and they wanted to shut down the competition. The neat rows and lines of parts, rims, seats, and memorabilia turned into numbered piles scattered throughout the Ag Building. We started at 9:00 am and at 7:00 pm we said "SOLD" for the last time. Soon the people and the piles started to disappear. We had one customer that wasn't quite willing to pay for everything that he bought, but in the end he paid his bill in full. By 8:45 after a quick stop at Steak and Shake, Daisy and I were northbound.

We traveled I-35 north until about 1:30 am, stopped at a hotel for a quick nap and shower, and were on the road again by 5:30 am. A Caribou Coffee Double Espresso Americano is quite delicious and effective at keeping the eyes open. By 10:45 we arrived in Little Falls, MN for the Spring Board Meeting. The meeting went very well and was quite productive. Isaac asked if I was glad to have the meeting so close to home. I laughed when I told him I only had to travel 1400 miles to be this close to home. Two and a half hours later we were home in time for supper. After a few hours catching up with the kids we were in bed by 9:00 pm and fast asleep by 9:01.

In closing, these are the lessons I hope you take away:

1. Being a member of the Minnesota State Auctioneers Association has opened a world of opportunity for Daisy and I. Having friends and mentors have helped us learn and grow so much - Thank You!
2. Be nice to people you meet at an auction. I would even go so far as to say treat people with dignity and respect in general. You just never know who might be willing to help you out in a pinch if you've treated them kindly. Grandpa said, "You can catch more flies with honey than vinegar."
3. If you find yourself in a disagreement with a customer, keep calm and retain your composure. Don't make rash remarks you may need to walk back from. Hopefully you use audio or video recording at your sales. Cooler heads will prevail.
4. Know your limits. There are only 24 hours in a day, and you can't physically be in two places at once. Schedule your time, and make sure you plan time for yourself and family. A good friend once told me, "Do what you HAVE to do today so that you can do what you WANT to do tomorrow."
5. Work Hard, Have Fun!

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