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Patti Payne: Oprah, Dr. Phil and Steven Tyler help auctioneer Jeff Stokes break records

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Stars packed into Rogers Arena in Vancouver, B.C., on Oct. 21 for the David Foster Foundation 30th Anniversary Miracle Gala and Concert. It was a gold-star night for the organization, which raised a record \$10.2 million for non-medical expenses of families with children getting organ transplants.

And guess who was smack in the middle of the fundraising action, getting the bids sky high? It was renowned auctioneer Jeff Stokes, founder of [Stokes Auction Group](#) based in Pierce County.

That \$10.2 million was not just a record for the David Foster Foundation. It was also a record for Stokes.

“The most I’ve ever raised at a charity auction,” he said.

It was Stokes’ fourth time doing that particular event.

“It moves your heart. It was awe-inspiring,” Stokes said of the more than 1,000 families who have received assistance from this organization.

The gala drew celebs from entertainment, sports, business, politics and more, including **Oprah, Steven Tyler, Dr. Phil McGraw, Jay Leno, Reba McEntire, Bo Derek, Goldie Hawn, Carly Rae Jepsen, CeeLo Green, Laura Bretan, The Tenors, Andrea Bocelli’s son Matteo Bocelli, Andre Agassi** and **Steffi Graf**. The list goes on.

There were only eight live auction items, but each was something you’d likely never get a chance to buy anywhere else.

The item that went for the most money — some \$380,000 — was a Yamaha Grand piano belonging to the foundation’s founder, Grammy Award-winning producer **David Foster**.

Exquisitely finished in polished ebony, Foster’s piano had been center stage for dozens of major events featuring the most accomplished performers in the world and had been personally signed by more than 80 artists, entertainers and celebrities — **Steven Tyler, Lionel Richie, Reba McEntire, Frank Sinatra, Jennifer Lopez, Seal** and **John Legend** to name a few.



KELLY MAVES

Seattle area-based Auctioneer Jeff Stokes, founder of Stokes Auction Group, was eclipsed on stage at the recent David Foster Foundation fundraiser which raised a record amount for the organization and set a personal record for Stokes as well.

Another item — a glitz and glam trip for two to Italy in style — went for \$180,000. And why wouldn't it, in this crowd? The high bidder and a guest will fly to Florence along with a few choice celebrity attendees from this concert, on a privately chartered, first-class jumbo jet. Among the indelible experiences included in the trip is a black-tie gala outside in Florence, with world-class entertainment from performers such as Foster and iconic tenor Andrea Bocelli.

Stokes, who is in constant demand for charity auctions, kept the momentum up, in one instance joking when a couple was heatedly discussing whether to bid higher on an item.

"Oops," he said. "There's a marital spat at table 72. Dr. Phil, we need your services."

The crowd of 2,900 roared, as did Dr. Phil.

Stokes began his career at the age of 15, auctioning chickens, ducks and rabbits, and then progressed to auctioning cars.

He's come a long way from chickens. He is a triple crown champion auctioneer, including the 2003 Men's International Champion Auctioneer; 1993 World Champion Automobile Auctioneer; and the 1987 World Champion Livestock Auctioneer. He was the first and only triple crown auctioneer champ until last June, when someone from Ohio also accomplished that feat.

And speaking of fundraisers, Transplant House, a small Seattle-based nonprofit that provides affordable housing for pre- and post-transplant patients and their families, is celebrating the results of its recent art bash/auction gala that brought in more than \$230,000, about \$100,000 more than the last year. The Oct. 6 event was chaired by community leader **Lorna Kneeland**, who was very pleased with the outcome.

Transplant House co-founder and board chairman **Larry Winn**, himself a transplant success story, said the funds will allow Transplant House to add more housing units to the growing total and help with housing scholarships for people without insurance or Medicaid.

The event was held at Winn's 21-year-old Grand Image studios and gallery in Georgetown, a provider of and creative clearinghouse for high-end art for customers all over the world.

And on Oct. 21, Cancer Lifeline held one of the last events that will ever be staged at The Ruins, a 25-year-old, kitschy private dining club that will close its doors for good on Jan. 1. The event was Cancer Lifeline's annual Resources for Hope dinner. Some \$190,000 was raised, significantly more than last year, with more money expected to come in.

The funds go to low-income people in cancer treatment who are falling through the financial cracks and need help with medical co-pays, rent, utilities, medicine, child care, food and so much more.

This 41-year-old Seattle nonprofit supports cancer patients and their families from the start of diagnosis and beyond. Cancer Lifeline receives no government funding and depends on the generosity of donors to keep its doors open.

A very powerful, effective ask was made by Cancer Lifeline advisory board member **Monica Adams**, who shared a heart-wrenching story about her brother's bouts with cancer and the bills that piled up making the ordeal so much more difficult and stressful than it already was.

Adams and **Jane Caron** co-chaired the event which attracted 100 people, many longtime supporters, active with the organization: **Lynn** and **Howard Behar**, **Sheri** and **Les Biller**, **Gov. Dan** and **Nancy Evans**, **Bill Sr.** and

Mimi Gates, Ian and Laura MacNeil, Morgan Frome and more.

COFFEE TALK: Mansion sports 'Millennial Pink'

A brand new, 4,600-square-foot urban-modern house in the Lochleven neighborhood near Bellevue Square, listed at \$3.8 million, is showing shades of pink in its interior.

NWG Real Estate Brokers **Gayla Kirstine** and **Peter Freet** have the listing, and collaborated with Andrea Braund Home Staging to incorporate pops of pink. They are calling it a nod to October and Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which has pink as its signature color.

Prospective buyers touring through see pale pink in plush chairs, duvets, rugs, lamps, plates, flowers and even pumpkins. Kirstine says the pink accents, against lots of gray tones in the home, have been very well received as a color palette.

The pink will remain beyond October. But in November it will be called "Millennial Pink." Yes, that is actually a pastel color that started trending, with the help of the [Pantone](#) standardized color matching system, a year ago but has not gone away. In fact, Millennial Pink has morphed into several shades of soft pink and salmon and is showing up on appliances, toothbrushes, walls and even on hair, to name a few blushing items, now including the interior of NWG's new listing in Bellevue.

Patti Payne

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Puget Sound Business Journal

