

# THE BIDDING KNOCKED THEIR SOCKS OFF

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BYLINE: CHRIS SMITH

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COLUMN: CHRIS SMITH

Going into the auction of the Charlie Brown statues, Craig Schulz and other organizers thought it would be great if the 16 figures brought in \$4,000 or \$5,000 apiece.

Good grief, if the bidding in Santa Rosa were any hotter, it would have melted the ice in the late Charles Schulz's skate rink. The winning bids averaged nearly \$19,000, and the one by ex-Santa Rosa Lebo Newman alone raised the temperature several degrees. Lebo, a community dynamo who moved to Nevada after selling Redwood Landscaping in 1998, decided on the spur of the moment he wanted the Charlie Brown that was painted by artist Tom Everhart -- the only person on Earth authorized to include Peanuts characters in his works.

Lebo didn't know this: A Florida woman named Linda Shefner- Holden had come to the auction determined to add that statue to her collection.

Linda went to St. Paul when it honored native son Sparky Schulz with its own statue project, and she was the high bidder for four Peanuts figures by Everhart. She wanted his Santa Rosa piece -- ``Who Let the Dots Out?'' -- in the worst way.

But in St. Paul she'd paid only about \$60,000 for all four of her Tom Everhart figures. In Santa Rosa on Sunday night, she wasn't prepared for this guy Lebo to bid and bid and bid against her, up to \$54,000.

Lebo didn't know beforehand about Linda's quest to expand her collection. He said that if she wants his Charlie Brown badly enough to make him an offer, he'll listen.

If he sells, he'll donate anything above \$54,000 to the Schulz museum.

**BRAVO, TOO**, to community-minded Santa Rosa hotelier **Pierre Ehret**. He came to the auction on a whim and wound up spending \$69,660 for three statues, including the one signed by Barry Bonds and all the San Francisco Giants.

Pierre plans to rotate his Blockheads in and out of the lobby at his Flamingo Resort Hotel.

**THE WINNING TICKET**: One of the Chucks -- the one dressed as a Wine Country tourist -- was given away in a raffle won by Santa Rosa's Kristy O'Shaughnessy.

Kristy, who owns a bookkeeping firm and bought a hundred \$1 tickets, said her family's Charlie Brown will go in the back yard.

Kristy said her kids, Conor, 12, and Shannon, 9, ``are very excited to have a new brother."

**STUCK IN TEXAS**: Forest Riggs loved living in Santa Rosa, where he worked for Sylvan Learning Center and then Memorial Hospital but realized he'd never be able to afford a home here.

So just two months ago, he moved to Galveston and bought a gorgeous 1860 antebellum home and made it into a three-room B&B. Then Hurricane Rita came knocking.

Forest said by phone Monday he reluctantly obeyed the evacuation order and joined the exodus that left him disbelieving that he was still in America. He'll never forget the agony he saw, especially among the very young and the very old, as he crept just 53 miles in 27 hours on a sweltering and tormented highway.

Forest trusts that his new home is OK and that he and Galveston will do fine. But just now, he said, ``Santa Rosa never looked so damn good."

**ARRIVED UNWRAPPED**: Every Sept. 25, Santa Rosa kid

Elizabeth Hamilton, now 10, shares a birthday with her grandmother, Sheila Gondola. The birthday girls did something special Sunday.

They welcomed into the world their family's third Sept. 25 baby. Elizabeth's new sister and Sheila's new granddaughter, Madison Ann Hamilton, who arrived at 12:48 p.m. at Kaiser Hospital.

For the party next Sept. 25, Madison's parents, Steve and Patricia Hamilton, will need three cakes.