

# STRIKING SILVER



## Silver Auctions Fall in Arizona 2014 Fort McDowell Resort & Casino - November 28-29, 2014

As the calendar rolls around again to Arizona's January collector car auctions, we take a look at one just past. (And coming up, too. And then coming up again.) Silver Auctions is the only one of the bunch that runs events here more than once a year. Mitch Silver—a former college professor who turned an unexpected hobby into an unexpected enterprise—figures a place as big as greater Phoenix needs more than just one week of auctions a year. So he added another, in the spring, and this year added yet another, in the fall (the times when he figures snowbirds are coming and going, perhaps ready to acquire or ditch something cool). But frequency is not Silver's only distinction.

You could come to most of the January auctions with \$100,000 to spend and maybe not leave with anything at all. You could come to Silver Auctions with \$100,000 and leave tickled to death, with an absolutely top car, or easily with 6 or 8 or 20 or more cars, depending on your tastes. And change in your pocket. You could do the same with \$50,000. Heck, you could come here with \$10 grand and go home tickled to death. Or even less than that.

Mitch Silver has a bit in common with fellow Washington-stater Harold LeMay. LeMay had collected so many cars—hundreds—that after he departed this earth, his widow Nancy donated them as the basis for LeMay—America's Car Museum, in Tacoma. LeMay started out by keeping cars that had been discarded but struck his fancy, while developing his trash collection empire. Silver, in Spokane, made his move earlier in life. He got the bug at regional car shows, started acquiring what struck his fancy, and—long story short—evolved into reselling some, then facilitating others, then auctions.

As for keeping it real, the top ten sales at Silver Auctions this November

ranged from a high of \$42,000 for a '70 Chevelle, down to \$20,000 for a 1929 Model A Ford. These top ten combined brought in \$277,250.

Sixty-nine cars sold in total, right on down to a '97 Cadillac Eldorado for just \$1600. In fact, there were three sales under \$2000, twelve under \$4000, a whopping forty-three cars under \$10,000 ... you get the picture. All fun, probably all ready to drive, and all surely resellable down the road. The sales total was \$738,250. Even that \$1600 Cadillac had special appeal: an Arizona car, a top-of-the-line touring coupe with carriage top, chrome wheels, chrome fender-well trim, power everything, A/C and even a CD changer in the trunk.

Silver also provides a mechanism for sales after the event. November's Arizona auction had another eighty-three cars in the "still for sale" category, topped by a beautiful 1957 Dodge Custom Royal convertible, which bid to \$122,000 on the block. As an example of the event's range, this fully restored car bragged correct original and rare Ice Blue with matching blue interior and top, a HEMI 325 V8, 3-speed Torqueflite automatic, power everything and even a rare and unusual record player. Next on the not-quite-sold-yet list was the beautiful '56 Desoto Fire dome convertible shown above, with two-tone charcoal paint and black top, correct HEMI 330 V8, dual exhaust and more.

The still-for-sale cars totaled \$1,308,250, for an event potentially totaling about \$2 million, depending upon how those last eighty-three are resolved.

This is what auctions were like when people like Mitch Silver first realized just how much fun a collector car auction can be. A Silver Auctions event is sort of like a car show, but where everything's for sale, and where pricing is moderated and modulated within reality-based parameters.

Oh... and you can actually go home behind the wheel of your new acquisition from Silver Auctions, which has become far less likely at the stratospherically-priced auctions. And really, isn't that where this whole hobby is rooted? ■



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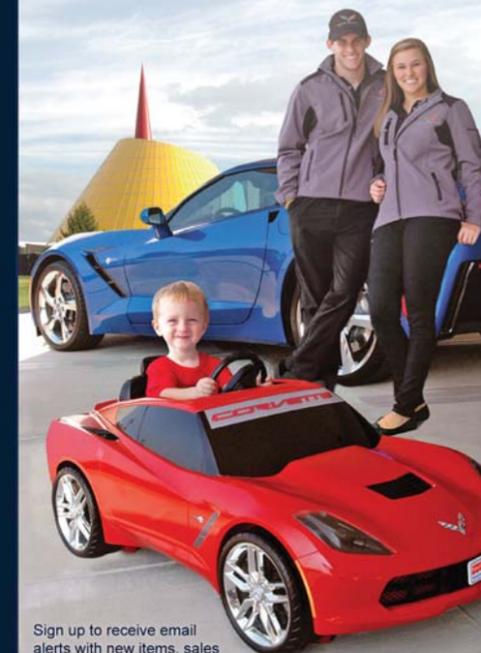
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