



# LIKE A KID IN A CANDY STORE

Just try to stay focused, at Silver Auctions. Actually, why try? No sooner do you home in on one delight, than you spot ten more. Look at the top right photo, for example. Nice Chevelle. Really nice. But nearby are a '60 Chevy, a Studebaker pickup, a panel hot rod, a Corvair, even a vinyl-roofed Cadillac sedan or a '70s Ford Bronco. Check out the other photos. The corner of a '58 Mercury Turnpike Cruiser convertible, or a Triumph TR-3. An early Lexus SC, a Mercedes-Benz SLK or best of all, the Chevy's sibling, a beautiful '57 Buick Roadmaster. More hot rods or a '58 T-Bird convertible in primo shape. Where do you stop? Maybe you don't. Things are pretty affordable here, though we're starting to see an upward trend on some. Cars at Silver are fun, random and driveable. Inspiration is bound to strike, ready or not. It's like a car show where everything's also in the for-sale corral.

If you've ever wondered how the top-dollar auction houses keep coming up with a seemingly endless supply of multi-million-dollar Ferraris and such, it may also cross your mind that fun, funky and affordable Silver Auctions seems to never stop coming up with their incredible range of fun, funky and affordable auction cars. This crosses our minds as Silver now runs three auctions a year in Arizona, alone in doing more than one. And why not? There's every indication Mitch Silver likes coming here to sell some cars and have some fun, as much as we and his consignors and bidders like it when he does so.

The events are held out on the Beeline Highway, Arizona 87, next to the We-Ko-Pa Resort & Conference Center at the Fort McDowell Casino on the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. The people are friendly. The cars are accessible, before, during and often after sales. The process is easy, and bargains abound. It brings us back to a time when you could buy an old car just because you thought it was the neatest thing, and you could drive it, maybe even putter on it. If you want something to put in the vault, by all means stick with the multi-

million-dollar Ferrari. If you like to drive your cars and maybe even get a little dust on them on the way home, this is your best serendipitous used car lot.

Here are a few examples, shown above and at right.

Cicely works the crowd and comes up with a buyer for this beautiful, ready to roll 1970 Chevrolet Caprice convertible with a new top, at \$5600.

The 1972 Chevrolet Chevelle SS 402 resto-mod has had a frame-off restoration and has a 500 hp built engine, B&M Billet shifter and original 12-bolt posi-traction rear end. The custom interior includes four-point belt and racing seats. Hotchkiss suspension is lowered, with heavy sway bars front and rear. Every piece is rebuilt or replaced. The car bid to \$31,000 but was still for sale.

There were two Studebaker Avantis at the sale, but this gold Avanti R2 would be hard to top—with a treasure trove of original release memorabilia, as complete as its own creators could hope to have. It's a 289 automatic, also with original records, original parts and new parts. Bid to \$25,000, it's still for sale.

The blue '57 Chevy is the entry level One-Fifty model, an all original frame-off restoration with matching-numbers engine, transmission and rear end. Purchased in 2011 from its original owner, the car came with thorough original records. Appraised and insured at \$63,000 (so yes, the lower models have been discovered now), this beautiful '57 was bid to \$23,000, but is still for sale.

This Elite J2X 1965 Allard replicar has a Ford 289 V8 and C4 automatic, Ferrari red paint, five wire wheels and six new tires including spare. Brakes and suspension have been upgraded, and other machined features include a grille from Jay Leno's shop. Bid to \$24,500, this one was also still for sale.

Are these the original owners of this '31 Ford Phaeton? It's fun to speculate. Sold at no reserve, it went for \$22,750, while a replica of the same model was a no-sale at \$6100. You can't beat the real thing, and this one was a real gem.

It can't hurt just to register to bid, just in case. See you there next fall! ■

