

SPOTLIGHT ON FUNDRAISING

SECOND FIDDLE SALE

Volunteers for Symphony

Who we are: Volunteers for Symphony was formed in 1996 as a result of a merger between the former Guild of the QCSO – formed in 1936 – and the Junior Board of the QCSO – formed in 1957.

The purpose of Volunteers for Symphony is to solely support the mission of the Quad City Symphony Association through its dedication to achieving excellence in music education with community outreach, supporting the financial growth through fundraising projects, and heightening awareness and value to the QCSO.

What we did: Following a tradition started in 1984 by a few members of the Junior Board, the Volunteers for Symphony held our 36th annual Second Fiddle Sale June 6-9, 2019. This is anything but your typical rummage or garage sale. This is the area's largest sale off gently used clothing and goods. It is a prime example of recycling in the truest sense of community service.

How it worked: After securing a large space conducive to displaying our merchandise in department store fashion and that has convenient access for our shoppers, we solicit our gently used merchandise from symphony patrons, plus the entire community. Many of these people have a place in their garage or basement where items are saved all year long waiting for Second Fiddle. All items are cleaned, repaired (if needed), sorted, and lovingly displayed for the sale. This all starts one month from the date of the sale with three drop-off days per week. We give tax deductible receipts to each donor.

It's always like Christmas morning as we sort through the "trash" destined to become another's "treasure". These items are set up and displayed in areas such as clothing (displayed on department store rounders), linens, holiday, kitchen, children, books, office, furniture, and gifts and collectibles. We stop taking donations the Saturday before the sale as everything must be individually priced.

On the Wednesday night before the actual sale, we have a "Preview Night" which is an \$8.00 ticketed event where shoppers get first chance at purchasing their special items. We also have musicians from our Youth Orchestra providing music, and we serve hors d'oeuvres with wine and water. We usually have a long line of shoppers waiting for the doors to officially open. The actual sale then runs Thursday, Friday, and Saturday with Saturday often being a half price day

What it took: Receiving, cleaning, sorting, and set up for all of the areas takes approximately 30-40 volunteers. Some volunteers work a few hours per week and

some work 30 to 40 hours per week. Many of these volunteers have worked for this particular project for many years.

On preview night, the Symphony orchestra office staff are also there to help with cashiering, wrapping, bagging, and anything else needed. We try to have at least one volunteer stationed in each department to answer questions or help shoppers carry their treasures. Many shoppers bring their own shopping bags or carts.

Our results: This last year after all expenses were totaled, we ended up with a net sale of \$13,000.00. We always have many people compliment us on how clean and organized our set up is. Also, with any merchandise not sold, we contact several local agencies and have them pick items they could use/sell. After that we contact D.A.V. to take what is left.

Keys to success: Lots of dedicated volunteers willing to put in time and get a little dirty to help provide a great service to our entire community while benefitting our beautiful and talented orchestra.

Presenters Contact Information:

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