



Plano Symphony Orchestra GUILD GALA AUCTION DRIVE-THRUS

Presenter:



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Project Description

The COVID-19 pandemic prevented us from holding our annual holiday Festive Eve gathering, an event during which Guild members bring donations of wine for the PSO's annual Gala fundraiser, called FOR THE LOVE OF TEXAS AND COUNTRY. The wine collected is used for the "wine pull," which is a source of entertainment and contributed income at the Gala. We devised a great opportunity for Guild members to "drive-thru" and say hello from the safety of their cars, drop off a bottle or two of donated wine (valued at \$25 or more), and get some much-needed holiday cheer from Santa and Mrs. Claus. The "drive-thru" Holiday event was held on December 18, 2020, at the home of Guild member, Gala Co-Chair, and PSO Board Member Ms. Mirna Lynch. A second "drive-thru" event was held on March 13, 2021, in celebration of St. Patrick's Day at the home of Guild President Sue Wood. The concept was the same—offer an opportunity for Guild members and PSO supporters to drive by and drop off a bottle(s) of high value wine, gift cards, or other silent auction items for the Gala.

Purpose and Goals

The project need was determined because the COVID-19 pandemic limited our ability to hold our annual, in-person Festive Eve Guild gathering, which is normally a big source of donated items to the silent auction and "wine pull." The Goal was to contribute \$5,000 of in-kind donations to the PSO's Gala silent auction and wine pull. The PSO's annual Gala was held on June 26, 2021 and was called FOR THE LOVE OF TEXAS AND COUNTRY. The Guild has always been a significant source of support for the Gala. We wanted to be able to continue our support even despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Motivation and Need:

The event was devised to support the PSO's Annual Fundraising Gala by gathering donated wine and other items for the silent auction. This was a creative way to continue our Gala fundraising efforts despite the public health crisis and showed how well we were able to pivot using creative, new ideas.

New Information/Ideas gained from the Project:

This was a new approach to an existing event called Festive Eve. Instead of holding an in-person event, which we couldn't do because of the COVID-19 crisis, we decided to hold these drive-by fundraising events. This event taught us how to be resilient and creative in a crisis and to continue to support the PSO.

Volunteer Requirements:

It took 10 volunteers to organize the event and staff it on each day. The PSO staff helped with marketing and on-site coordination. This was a very easy time commitment for volunteers and staff alike as the event was not labor-intensive.

Timeline:

We began planning the first "drive thru" event in November 2021 with the Holiday Drive-Thru taking place in December. It was an easy and not very labor-intensive way to raise a significant number of in-kind donations for the PSO's Gala. A great advantage of this event was that it cost nothing to organize. Both homes used for the drive-thru events were donated by the respective hosts and the PSO helped us market the events via email and social media. We marketed the event to the PSO's Board of Directors, subscribers, single ticket buyers and Guild members.

Fundraising:

The PSO's annual Gala netted more than \$92,000, and the silent auction and wine pull brought in just over \$22,000. These two Guild "drive-thru" events made an enormous contribution to the success of the Gala, which was held on June 26, 2021. We had 42 bottles of wine donated for our Gala "wine pull" valued at nearly \$1,075 donated at the first drive-thru event. For the second drive-thru event, we had more than 25 gift cards, 30 bottles of wine, and various other auction items donated. The most beneficial aspect of this event was the ROI (return on investment) at 100%.