



Thinking of Auctioning a Labrador Puppy at Your Next Fundraiser?

USDA License Required

Fundraising can be a difficult task. Charitable organizations, institutes, private schools, all use live and silent auctions as a major fundraising effort in the course of their year. Fundraisers often look for just the right items to generate maximum revenue and create interest in the auction. The suggestion of auctioning a cute little puppy often generates a lot of excitement.

Everyone wants a safe and healthy environment for a puppy. The auctioning organization usually puts some caveats into the ultimate placement of the successful bidder for a puppy, but is this the right venue for a decision as important as adding a new four-legged addition to someone's family? Many times people will be caught up in the moment and bid wild amounts. They pledge to be a great puppy owner. This can put schools and institutions in a difficult position if they do not follow through with placement of the puppy.

The Labrador Retriever Club Inc. (LRC) takes dog ownership seriously. We encourage any prospective dog owner to think through this decision carefully.

Here are some of the items that the AKC asks people to think about before buying a puppy:

1. Recognize the Commitment

Dog ownership is not something to be entered into lightly. Owning a dog is a long-term emotional and financial commitment. Before deciding that a certain dog is right for you, you must make an honest assessment as to whether your home is right for any dog.

2. Evaluate Your Lifestyle

If you get a dog, he (or she) will become a part of your life. You need to make sure that he's suited for your lifestyle. For example, if you are athletic, you will probably not be happy with a dog that has a low energy level. If you are extremely neat, you will probably want a dog that doesn't shed much. All aspects of your family's life - hobbies, activities, personalities, schedules - should be evaluated before you get a dog.

3. Make a List

Based on your evaluation, determine what qualities you want in a dog. Consider size, energy level, grooming needs, trainability and temperament. Do you want a guard dog or a lap dog? Is it important that your dog get along with children? If you rent your home, are there restrictions on height, weight or breed? Answer these questions now - once you bring a dog home, it can be heartbreaking to realize that you made the wrong choice.

4. Choose a Breed

Once you have made your list of ideal characteristics, do some research to find the breeds that fit your profile. Go to your local library, attend a dog show, and visit the AKC website. (<http://www.akc.org/>) Narrow your choices to the breed that seems right for you.

If you consider the time required just to go through one of these items we hope you will agree that an auction is not an appropriate environment for making this decision. For this reason we at the LRC take a strong stance against this type of activity. In addition, many states have now made this practice illegal. We encourage you to check your state's statute.

Then, if you do decide to still go ahead with a puppy (or other animal) auction, please keep in mind this requirement from the USDA Animal Welfare Act:

§2142. Humane standards and recordkeeping requirements at auction sales

The Secretary is authorized to promulgate humane standards and *recordkeeping requirements* governing the purchase, handling, or sale of animals, in commerce, by dealers, research facilities, and exhibitors at auction sales and by the operators of such auction sales. The Secretary is also authorized to require the *licensing of operators* of auction sales where any dogs or cats are sold, in commerce, under such conditions as he may prescribe, and upon payment of such fee as prescribed by the Secretary under section 2153 of this title.

(Pub. L. 89-544, §12, Aug. 24, 1966, 80 Stat. 351; Pub. L. 91-579, §13, Dec. 24, 1970, 84 Stat. 1562; Pub. L. 94-279, §5, Apr. 22, 1976, 90 Stat. 418.)

This position was approved by unanimous vote at the LRC, Inc. meeting of the Board of Directors.

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