

Best Practice #014, Purchasing Raffle Prizes  
Heading: Member Services  
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The Carolina Mountain Woodturners has a great idea for purchasing raffle prizes. Unfortunately, because we meet on federal property we are prohibited from holding raffles; and therefore, were forced to discontinue the practice. However, we would like to share our idea with other chapters not so constrained.

As a fundraiser, the Carolina Mountain Woodturners held a tool and turning supplies raffle at each monthly meeting. Prizes included such items as a 3/8" spindle gouge, 1/2" bowl gouge, bottles of CA glue and accelerator, gallon jug of wood sealer, 1 lb. bag of mixed grit sandpaper, as well as small tools like Vernier calipers, compasses and tape measures.

Once a year, the chapter purchased enough raffle items to serve for 12 months. We started the process by making a list of the items we desired and then presented it to several suppliers to get their best prices. We pointed out that when the item was raffled, they would be recognized as a supporter of our chapter for having given a discount. When we received the bids, we purchased in bulk from the lowest bidders. For inexpensive items, the best prices were usually from the mail order importers who do not offer further discounts. Because of volume purchasing, shipping was a minimal portion of our costs. We purchased the raffle tickets from a party supply store.

At the beginning of each meeting, the raffle items were displayed on a table. During the meeting, we sold tickets: at the end of the meeting, we held the raffle. Tickets were drawn, and the winner picked the item of their choice. The next ticket was then drawn and the next winner selected from what was left, and so on until all of the items were gone.

Our system has several advantages. We only go through the purchasing process once a year; we get volume discounts from the lowest bidders; shipping costs are minimized; and, we have no worries about late deliveries. We also encouraged members to donate wood to the raffle.

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