

# BILL MENISH

## PHILANTHROPIST WITH A TWIST

article by: **Jeanne Ferris**

Bill Menish has a talent most people don't know about. Not that he's isn't well-known by any stretch. In fact, San Diegans are well-aware of his former career as a successful morning news anchor and winner of several Emmys. However, Bill has a unique talent that people within the philanthropic community, and most recently our own real estate community, are taking advantage of. Bill Menish's passion to support cancer research has led to his most recent job title: auctioneer-extraordinaire. Bill just may be San Diego's man with the golden tongue.

His technique on audience warm up is unique and fun. At a recent fundraiser, he invited a woman onstage to join him in a simple tongue twister. She gamely followed his lead, stumbling a little as the rhyme became too much for her. Bill Menish, the true professional, never missed a word or beat. When asked if he really practiced tongue twisters in the mirror, Menish proudly said, "Absolutely!" Like smooth, Italian Corinthian leather, he enveloped the audience with a comfortable feeling of ease.



Their response was enthusiastic applause, and for that, he boldly asked them to pull out their wallets.

Literally. Donating can be both exciting and successful with Menish is at the helm.

At another charity event, in a matter of fifteen minutes amidst a crowd of over 275 attendees, he sold ten centerpieces and raised \$10,000 before the event had begun! He has since earned the distinct title of Benefit Auctioneer Specialist through the National Auctioneers Association. A unique profession to be sure, as there are only 67 in the world.

Menish hails from Greenwood, Indiana from a working class family and an older sister of two years. At eighteen, his motivation was performing arts, and he announced his decision to go into broadcast journalism - despite his business major and much to his parents' chagrin. He shares that his childhood hero was Vince Lombardi. Why? After reading a biography on Lombardi and learning what a powerful and almost ruthless motivator he was, it left a lasting impression on eight-year-old Menish in regards to



the power of motivation.

Today, his hero is his sister, Vicki. He dedicated one of his 15 Emmys to her. She succumbed to cervical cancer and thereafter served as an inspiration for Menish's career change from NBC television morning anchor to benefit auctioneer. After attending a Scripps Cancer fundraiser and serving as an emcee and auctioneer voluntarily for various charities, he developed an excellent reputation. A friend convinced him this was his true calling, and being a life learner (his phrase), he graduated from the Worldwide College of Auctioneering with certificates in both Auctioneering and Bi-lingual/ Spanish Auctioneering.

Currently, Bill serves on several boards: The Scripps Hospital Stevens Cancer Center, The American Red Cross and the San Diego Center for Children. Continuing as a life learner, Menish recently graduated from the AARE (Accredited Auctioneer Real Estate) and can add that distinction to his numerous awards and accolades. He is using his tongue twisting talents in the new niche of auctioning homes for sale throughout San Diego County.

## Q+A WITH BILL MENISH

**What was the most a live auction item went for and what was it?**

\$115,000! At the fundraiser, VOICES FOR CHILDREN, a tennis lesson with Andre Agassi.

**What would your top three be for advice to an**

**aspiring auctioneer?**

Be a lifelong learner. Be a good listener. Be passionate about their success (the client) as much, if not more.

**How do you find your inner peace?**

Just stepping on to the dock on the water and getting into a powerboat with my wife and two girls gives me peace. That moment of pulling away from it all is peace.

**Any regrets leaving broadcasting?**

NO!! When in six to eight months of auctioneering, I hadn't missed it once; I knew I was on the right path.

**What do you do for fun?**

Boating, running in marathons. The Zen of running is like a natural high. The longest was 26.2 miles. It took about 3-4 days.

**What are you currently reading?**

Real estate exam.

**Describe your greatest accomplishment?**

My two daughters, in that people find them kind and respectful.

**What is your most prized possession?**

A plastic bin filled with childhood personal effects. Valuable in sentiment.

**What is your top three on your bucket list?**

Travel to Italy and the Caribbean.

Take my Dad on a special father and son trip.

A boat.

**What are your hopes and plans for the future?**

Work with Disney and to grow the commercial side of the business in real estate.

**What is your motto?**

"I may have been born yesterday, but I have been downtown all day today!"