Who to ask

1. Auction items do not necessarily need to be horse related. In fact, do not worry about approaching the local equestrian and feed businesses, you can be sure we will have already approached them. (Olson's, Gift Horse, First Fruits, Dayville, Snohomish/Monroe Co-Op, The Grange, Town Center Hardware are all businesses we will have contacted.)
2. Think about what might be useful or interesting to our members. Services like; riding lessons, equine and people massages, spa days, manicures, etc., for example. or merchandise ranging from lumber, gravel, to jewelry. Then think about the businesses that provide those items.
3. Or it could be places or people that could provide an experience or activity, like tickets to a game, use of a cabin, maybe you know a great cook who would enjoy cooking dinner for someone, or baking that terrific dessert.
4. Maybe you know someone who is an artist of some kind. It could be a painter, quilter, jewelry maker, potter, sculptor you get the idea. Auction item donation is a great way to spread the word about a talented friend.
5. Or think about putting together a basket based on a theme, like movie night, sporting event, pets, cooking, spa day, etc. and then ask business for donations to help create the basket.

What to do

1. We would recommend that you approach a business in person and ask to talk to whomever handles possible donations.
2. Bring with you two copies of the donation request letter (one to leave with them, one for you to take back and enter information into our online auction donation form if they agree to provide a donation).
3. Introduce yourself and let them know you are member of Lake Washington Saddle Club and are helping to request silent auction item donations for our Annual Banquet on November 9th. Ask them if they are familiar with Lake Washington Saddle Club.
4. Let them know we are a 501c3 organization. Let them know we are a community of equestrians dedicated to supporting horsemanship education and the enjoyment and preservation of Bridle Trails State Park. We provide schooling shows for equestrians of all ages so they can improve their skills in a nurturing and fun environment. Our membership dues, shows, and activities provide funds for preserving, improving, and maintaining the facilities and trails at Bridle Trails for the enjoyment of all.
5. Maybe you have a personal experience of the benefits you or your child have received from being a member. LWSC is also a steward of Bridle Trails State Parks and has a formal friends agreement in which we help with the maintenance and enhancement of the showgrounds and trails. We purchase equipment, help with arena footing material as needed and do all we can to protect and promote the Park for use of equestrians and pedestrians.
6. Describe the banquet a bit. Let them know it is our primary fund raising event and includes dinner and presentation of year end awards and ribbons. Be sure to mention that how our annual year end awards banquet starts off with a silent auction. Which is the reason you are here. Let them know that the banquet is attended by local equestrians, usually close to 150 people of all ages. If you have an idea of what you would like to request, introduce the idea but be willing to accept anything they are willing to donate.
7. If they are willing to donate something, BE SURE TO THANK THEM SINCERELY. Document the item on both copies of the donation request letter and leave one copy with them. If they do not give you the item at the time, make arrangements to pick it up.
8. Once you are back home. [Enter the donation information into the online form](#). You are the Procurer, the business is the Donor. If you are donating an item yourself, just enter "same as procurer" or "na" in the donor section. The form will ask you to select whether you want to deliver your auction item to the auction staff or have them pick it up.
9. **Lastly – THANK YOU!** We know that asking for donations is not easy for a lot of people and we sincerely appreciate your help to make the auction a wonderful event that helps LWSC do what we do.