

## Bid4aCure 2009

By Panther Miklos

Much like the Little Engine That Could, the Bid4ACure 2009 Team knew the climb up and over the hills would be difficult and arduous at best. With an eye to the purpose, energy stocks were piled high, visions were implemented, and off the Team went into the unknown. Our first whistle stop was in February 2009 and we chugged right on through the planning stages with a constant thought of the dwindling economy both in the virtual world of Second Life® and that of our own real lives. Bid4ACure founder, Jocelyn Sands, kept the team focused on the mantra: "every little bit counts." Despite the steepness of the hills, the detours, and tiring hours, we hitched our cars together and found the biggest and best "steam engine" around: Second Life® Residents; and merrily chugged our way to the most successful campaign in our three year history. Our final virtual world grand total raised was L\$1,785,236. This figure translated to a contribution of US\$3,437 to the American Diabetes Association and GB£2,092 to Diabetes UK.

Bid4ACure 2009 was a year of new faces, new sponsors, new local events, camaraderie, silliness and all around great fun. The two highlight events of Bid4ACure, the Goods and Services Auction and the Date Auction were phenomenal hits once again. Items from top designers in Second Life® ranging from wall hangings to full blown castle making kits, to one of a kind sculptures, jewelry, clothing and vehicles were positioned atop silent bid pedestals and placed around Bid4ACure Event Island for residents to view and bid while we set about auctioning off some of the most amazing live music artists and DJ's in Second Life®. As is the norm, or so we have found with Bid4ACure auctions, there were several seemingly never ending bid wars over a few of the live artists. Just when we thought the bidding was complete, yet another bid would come flying out of the heavens. Residents and team members alike watched in astonishment at bids began reaching L\$100,000 and beyond. The much anticipated Date Auction took place this year on Bid4ACure Event Island. The auction stage nestled in amongst a beautiful backdrop of mountains and streams, brought out the silliness in residents. Bidding wars were everywhere on June 28th as one by one the auctionees were sold off to the highest bidder (a few of which would stop and ask, "who is it I am bidding for again?") for a date of their choosing.

Tombstone WildWest Roleplaying Sims and its Navajo residents gathered for a successful auction of Native American finely crafted items and included informational cards on the incidence of diabetes amongst the Native American population. Their local event was such a success that the "Mayor" has begun talk of what their community can look forward to during next year's Bid4ACure campaign. Skate4ACure was also spawned during the 2009 campaign. This local event was fashioned after the 80's rollerskating craze, including tunes from the era, that funky 80's clothing we all love to hate and included the auction of a vehicle donated by a member of the EMH Motors group. Prizes were handed out for those dressed in the best 80's wear and one lucky bidder walked away with her brand new cherry red Eclips.

At the end of the trip up and over that hill, the Bid4ACure 2009 team that could unhitched their cars, cleaned them up and maneuvered them onto the holding tracks for next year when their annual trip up and over that monstrous hill will begin again. With another year behind us, new friends and family members and the ever present "Striving to give Diabetics a second life too," the Bid4ACure team would like to give a heartfelt thank you to everyone involved in this year's campaign. Most notably, the largest and best "steam engine" ever made... the residents of Second Life® for stepping forward and assisting us in our endeavor to end the shots. With everyone's support and donations, Bid4ACure 2009 became the Little Engine that DID!