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## **Leno's Star VMAX is the star of Barrett-Jackson auction and helps NYC community arts program to the Max**



Jay Leno auctioned off his customized Star VMAX motorcycle to benefit a Brooklyn community arts program run by one of his oldest friends. His lighthearted approach to auctioneering earned the charity some serious money!

Saturday evening, as live coverage of the Barrett-Jackson classic car auction from Las Vegas reached its climax, Jay Leno put his star power to good use. In a town that worships celebrity and is perhaps the world's capital of stand-up comedy, Leno's definitely at the top of the 'A-list.' Add that to his celebrity amongst car collectors – and the fact that the sale was to benefit Bailey's Café, a worthy charity – and the stage was set for an epic auction.

Bailey's Café is a community arts program that operates in a tough Brooklyn neighborhood. It was founded by Stefanie Siegel, who was a close friend of Leno's during their college days. The two had not seen each other for 18 years, until they met in the VIP 'green room' behind the stage at the Mandalay Bay convention center.

Backstage, as the two old friends caught up and anticipated the sale, Leno kept an eye on the television monitor. "I thought that Shelby Cobra would go for more," he said, adding, "It's a tough economy."

Still, once Leno himself rode the VMAX onto the Barrett-Jackson stage, bidding on the bike – which featured an old-school hot rod-style paint job by Benny Flores – quickly reached \$60,000. Although it seemed the bidding might stall there, Leno had the crowd enthralled. He sweetened the pot with a Garmin GPS system, then his Alpinestars jacket and Arai helmet, and a personal tour of his garage. As the bids reached \$70,000-\$80,000, Yamaha's Bob Starr announced that Yamaha's musical instrument division had donated 6 guitars and a drum set to the arts program. That prompted Leno to virtually demand bidders pony up another \$5,000.



Bailey's Café ([www.baileyscafe.org](http://www.baileyscafe.org)) uses the arts as a way of building a true sense of community in inner city neighborhoods. Programs are for people of all ages and focus on creating inter-generational respect and understanding.

Leno was some times serious, saying, "You know what school funding is like," and "Every cent goes to the kids." Other times he adopted a stand-up tone that was a little more risqué than his TV persona, joking that the alternative to running up the bid was having some poor kid in Brooklyn join a street gang.

When the hammer finally fell, Jay's customized Star VMAX sold for \$120,000. That's nearly 8 times MSRP. And, Jay was right... 100% of the proceeds did go to Bailey's Café, because Barrett-Jackson donated all the transaction's fees to the cause, as well. Stefanie Siegel, the founder of Bailey's Café had never been to 'Vegas until that day. She left on Sunday as one of the town's big winners.

Before the auction, Jay had joked that, "Bailey's Café is an arts program, but I didn't have any Yamaha musical instruments to sell, so I thought I'd sell my Star VMAX, which is made by Yamaha." Either way, Stefanie Siegel and Bailey's Café left town as one of the weekend's big winners. You might say \$120,000 to the good.

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The Star VMAX is a limited-production/built-to-order motorcycle. Customers who wish to purchase a 2010 VMAX have until November 30 to place a deposit with their Star dealer. Deliveries of 2010 models are scheduled for December. Full information on all Star models can be found at <http://www.starmotorcycles.com>.

