A roadtrip to a country auction

Sometimes there is no better way to spend a Saturday morning than to search for little treasures, bargains or a combination thereof. Ever better is being able to experience a good of country auction while looking for these treasures!

Sitting proudly along Old Louisiana Hwy. 13 in Evangeline Parish in the small community of Reddell is Farmers' Auction Market. Don't let the name fool you—Farmers' Auction Market is not a place where farmers buy and sell supplies, but a gathering place that has been a tradition for more than 30 years. There, buyers of all ages and walks of life and sellers of all sorts of goods meet every Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. (some gather as early as 6 a.m.), regardless of the weather. It's a family operation that began several decades ago as a weekend business for the husband and wife team of the late Edley "Kye" and Ivy Fontenot. Today, Farmers' Auction Market still is family owned and operated.

As you near the building that once housed a grocery store, you will see hundreds of items often covering every inch of the parking lot. What are these items for sale? You name and dryers, hand tools, toys, even a litter of puppies! Other Saturdays, you may see an aluminum boat, cargo trailer, tennis racquets, lawn mowers, estate items and maybe even an old pick up truck. Every week brings new faces and different items.

What happens when you walk inside the glass-front building? To the right, you'll see the administration area where sellers register their "lots" of goods and where buyers sign up for their auction paddles. You also will see old theater seats and chairs where spectators and buyers perch as they await the auctioneer's auction chant on items inside the building.

What goodies will you find for sale inside the building? Just like the items that line the parking lot, these change weekly too. You may find fresh country eggs or, as they are called in some big city grocery stores, free range eggs. You can even find seasonal homegrown vegetables and homemade sweet dough pies. But most interesting is the plethora of birds and other small animals like bunnies that arrive every week. Looking for live quail? Guineas? Turkeys? Rabbits? You will likely find them here. What about a beautiful rooster or hen? Of course!

If you live in or if you are visiting Acadiana and want to get a feel for its rural life while looking for a little treasure, head to the Farmers' Auction Market.

If you have items you want to sell, head to the auction.

If you've never participated in an auction and want to see what it's all about, head to the Farmers' Auction Market. It's a great place for beginners. Be brave, walk up to the counter,
register, get your wooden paddle with hand painted numbers and check out all the lots to find the items you must have. Just remember, don't yawn and stretch your arms out while wielding the mighty paddle—you just might be unwittingly going home with the cutest Easter bunny ever!

-Susan Boudreaux

Auctioneer James “Fox” Fontenot (top left) and other Famers’ Auction employees and patrons. (Photos courtesy of the Fontenot family)