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Warren Buffett to auction another lunch on eBay

REUTERS 


Reuters Photo: Warren Buffett, Chairman of Berkshire Hathaway, talks to reporters on the floor of the New...

By Jonathan Stempel

Tue Jun 6, 4:42 PM ET

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Lunch, anyone?

Billionaire [Warren Buffett](#) will auction another lunch on eBay Inc.'s Web site in late June to benefit a San Francisco non-profit, in what has become an annual tradition that last year raised \$351,100 from an anonymous bidder.

The Glide Foundation, which offers programs for the poor, hungry and homeless, announced the auction on its Web site.

As in previous years, the world's second-richest person will host the winner and up to seven friends.

Smith & Wollensky Restaurant Group Inc., the steakhouse chain, will host this year's lunch in New York.

Previous lunches were offered in New York or in the 75-year-old Buffett's hometown of Omaha, Nebraska, where his insurance and investment company Berkshire Hathaway Inc. is based.

The lunches began in 2000 after Buffett's wife Susan, who died in 2004, introduced him to the Rev. Cecil Williams' Glide Memorial United Methodist Church.

"People read about Warren Buffett or see him on television, talking about Glide," Williams said in an interview. "He knows about Glide. To have his commitment, as we try to meet our \$12 million annual budget, is unbelievable."

Until moving to eBay in 2003, the auctions were held live, with winning bids of \$25,000 to \$32,000, Williams has said.

In 2003, David Einhorn, who runs New York hedge fund Greenlight Capital LLC, won with a \$250,100 bid. A year later, Singapore resident Jason Choo won with a 202,100 bid, and wrote another check to increase his donation to \$250,000.

Smith & Wollensky will donate \$10,000, the second time it has done so, Williams said.

The auction begins on June 22 at 10 p.m. EDT (0200 GMT June 23), and concludes one week later. Bidding begins at \$25,000.

An eBay auction in May for a ukulele autographed by Buffett, who plays the instrument, received a \$11,211.11 winning bid by GoldenPalace.com, an online casino. Proceeds will benefit Omaha Children's Hospital.

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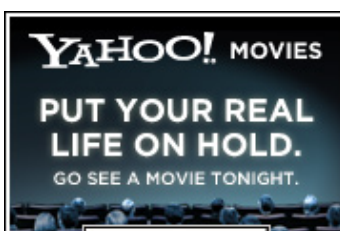
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With a net worth \$42 billion, mostly in Berkshire stock, Buffett trails only Microsoft Corp. Chairman [Bill Gates](#) on Forbes magazine's list of the world's richest people.

Buffett in March said every Berkshire share he owns is destined to go to philanthropies.

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