

Mother remembers daughter through art, angels

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STAFF WRITER

Her eyes grew misty several times that day as she talked to visitors, carefully arranged angel-themed artwork and finally stole a few moments to observe.

"It makes me feel closer to Chelsea to do things in her honor," the mother said. "It's how I deal with the grief."

Tammy Grace, owner of Chelsea's art gallery, 15495 Quivira Road, Overland Park, has hosted an Angel Art Auction the past four years. All proceeds from the silent auction benefit The Dream Factory, a nationwide nonprofit organization that grants wishes to critically or chronically ill children.

Grace's own daughter, **Chelsea**, died of leukemia in 1994 at age 7. The Dream Factory granted Chelsea's wish - to have an Alice in Wonderland-style tea party near her house.

The Nov. 18 Angel Auction, always the Saturday before Thanksgiving, raised \$1,500 to grant other children's wishes.

"If I can carry on who she was..." Grace said, trailing off. "Even though she was only 7, she was very bright and wise beyond her years. She was obsessed with angels during the four months before she died."

Local artists donated the 50 angel pieces, which included paintings, jewelry, ceramics, mosaics, scarves and candles.

A Dream Factory child, **Curtis Geier**, 12, Independence, Mo., donated a blue mosaic angel.

Artist **Erin Miller**, Olathe, with EM Ceramics, donated three pieces.



SUZANNA STAGEMEYER/SUN PHOTO

DREAMS COME TRUE ... Alleyne Johnson, Lenexa, bids on an angel-embellished scarf at the fourth annual Angel Art Auction on Nov. 18 at Chelsea's art gallery, 15495 Quivira Road, Overland Park. The auction raises money for The Dream Factory, a nationwide nonprofit that grants wishes to critically or chronically ill children.

"I like being able to create and donate to excellent causes such as the Dream Factory," Miller said. "It's just a good feeling."

About 200 guests attended the auction, including a group of teachers from Oxford Middle

School in Overland Park.

Rosie Muehlebach, communication arts and reading teacher at Oxford, happened upon Chelsea's a few years before and told her colleagues about the auction.

"I walked in here one day and

met Tammy and heard her story about Chelsea," Muehlebach said. "It just captured my heart."

For more information about Chelsea's or to receive updates about the next Angel Art Auction, visit the Web site www.chelseasart.com.