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Dress

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to Charlotte to promote her perfume. Wooten, a newspaper reporter at the time, covered the event.

Later that same night, he traveled to New York to attend the Jackie Kennedy Onassis estate auction. He didn't buy anything there, but it was still fun to be a part of it, he says.

Through the years, he's collected several items belonging to the Kennedys, including John F. and Jacqueline Kennedy's wedding invitation, a Jackie Kennedy pillbox hat and a piece of upholstery from the car in which the former president was killed.

"Some people collect stamps. Some people collect art. I collect history," Wooten says.

Wooten, 45, recalls reading a lot about Elizabeth Taylor when he was growing up.

He admires her zest for life and philanthropy.

Proceeds of a portion of the auction sales and events will go to the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation.

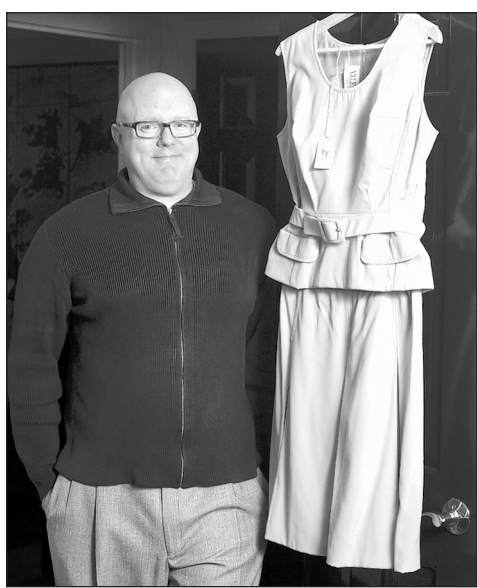
The auction brought staggering bids — 26 items sold for more than \$1 million and six netted more than \$5 million.

Wooten won't divulge how much he spent on the Valentino ensemble, but says he got really lucky in what he calls his "moment of silly spontaneity."

"I think the auction Gods were smiling down at me at just the right moment, and I got an incredible deal on an item," he says.

"Compared to what some people paid for a lot of other things, I would say that I got pretty good bang for my buck."

Several friends have asked if they could borrow or try on the ensemble, which includes a sleeveless top with envelope pockets, belt and two pleated knee-



Lynn Wooten bought this silk wool ensemble by Valentino Couture from Elizabeth Taylor's estate. Wooten says Taylor wore the outfit in the 1973 movie "Night Watch."

NELSON KEPLEY
News & Record

length skirts.

Some even asked if they could rent it.

Wooten jokes that he should allow that to recoup some of his money, but won't.

"I recognize that there are a lot of people who wouldn't pay a dime for something like this, and I

appreciate that," he says.

"I have a very good friend who says something is only worth what someone will pay. ... It gives me a lot of joy to collect these kinds of things."

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Zahra's stepmother accepts a drug plea

Elisa Baker, who pleaded guilty in September to killing her 10-year-old stepdaughter, Zahra, has cut a deal with prosecutors on federal drug-trafficking charges.

In a plea agreement filed earlier this week, Baker agreed to plead guilty to conspiring to distribute a mixture that contained painkillers oxycodone and hydrocodone and the anti-anxiety drug alprazolam.

The conspiracy charge is punishable by a maximum of 20 years in prison and a \$1 million fine.

The plea agreement says Baker's crime involved about 12,000 doses of oxycodone, about 10,000 doses of hydrocodone and about 29,000

doses of alprazolam.

Baker, 43, has agreed in the plea bargain to pay restitution to victims directly or indirectly harmed by her conduct.

Baker was sentenced to 15 to 18 years in prison in September after pleading guilty to second-degree murder in connection with Zahra's death. She also pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice, bigamy, four counts of obstructing property through false pretenses and two counts of identity theft.

Zahra's freckled face and smile captured hearts in North Carolina. She was reported missing in October 2010, triggering a massive search. But she was already dead.

— *The Charlotte Observer*

Holder

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after giving birth to daughter Shianne in February. Beth died in March. In recent months, Holder took in Kayla, 15, whose parents were having marital problems.

While living at 923 Co-coa Drive, the five kids became like brothers and sisters, Rocky and Christina said.

They were a tight-knit unit. Rocky and Mary Ann still talked to each other every day about the kids, although they had been divorced more than 13 years and he had remarried.

And he'd text the teens every night: "Good night. I love you." He'd talk to Hana every morning on her ride to school.

On that tragic Sunday, everyone was supposed to gather at Rocky's Summerfield home to celebrate his 38th birthday.

He talked to Mary Ann and Dylan, 17, on Saturday to discuss when they would

drive over. He didn't sense anything was wrong.

"We were too close to the situation," Rocky said. "We were on top of it."

That Sunday morning, Christina talked to her mother after Mary Ann picked up Zack, 14, from a family friend's house.

Mary Ann spoke slowly and deliberately, though she usually was "a 90-mile-an-hour talker," Christina said. She asked her mom what was wrong. Mary Ann replied that she was just tired.

"She said, 'I'll see you later. I love you,'" Christina said. "Zack yelled 'I love you' in the background, and that was it. I never talked to anyone again."

Mary Ann and Dylan, 17, died from their gunshot wounds Nov. 20.

Rocky and Christina spent the next few days in Moses Cone Hospital with Hana, Zack, Ricky and Kayla during their last moments.

The father-daughter team comforted others, mostly the teens' class-

mates from Southeast Guilford High School. They took small groups of kids to Zack, Ricky and Kayla's ICU rooms to say goodbye.

Christina kept busy writing the obituaries as the families planned a private funeral for Mary Ann and a public, joint service for the five children. Nearly 1,500 people attended.

But some people, even strangers, are openly angry about Mary Ann and the shootings.

Rocky and Christina said they're not angry with her, and they would have the right to be. Dwelling on the negative won't serve anyone well, they said.

Others think they're helping by sharing their theories about how and why the shootings occurred Nov. 20. "The people who play detectives," Rocky said, "they hurt more than anything."

Christina said, "When they're focused on the 'Mary Ann Holder case,' it takes the focus away from the five beautiful children. I never want them to be

forgotten."

Rocky and Christina understand that people want answers. They've been cooperating with Guilford County sheriff's deputies, who are still waiting on results from autopsies, toxicology reports and forensic tests.

But from here on, Rocky and Christina won't focus on what happened, but on how everyone can learn from it.

They've spoken and performed music for an event at the Sherri Denese Jackson Foundation for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, where their six loved ones were honored.

They're also researching mental illness, depression and stress to educate people on the signs.

Something had to make Mary Ann snap that day, Rocky said.

They will promote organ

donation. Twenty-one people have benefited from the passing of Ricky, Zack and Hana because the families agreed to harvest their organs before it was too late.

"Parents and teenagers, when you go get your license, go ahead and sign up," Rocky said.

"Our goal is to try to help families that lose younger children understand that their lives can go on through other people."

The Smiths still have to carry on for the smallest members of their family.

They must raise the two 10-month-olds at home — Christina's son, Tristen, and Shianne. The babies were born just a day apart.

In this tough time, their antics keep the adults laughing.

"Right now, they think they're twins," Rocky said.

"They even take each other's (pacifiers) out and swap. It's hilarious."

Rocky and Christina are keeping scrapbooks of news clippings for them. They know explaining their family history will be a challenge.

"How do you explain to these children who these people were in pictures?" Christina asked.

"It's not that somebody died in a car accident. This is the huge tragedy that a child's going to want to know about one day."

Rocky is holding onto the motto: "Triumph through tragedy".

"Just because we went through this tragedy does not mean that we can't be triumphant and help people not go through this."

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