

## ***Garage Sale Gal*** **THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC**



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### ***Mesa family thanks higher power for strength in selling excess***

***Lynda Hammond***

When most of us come to the realization we have too much stuff we hold a garage sale and—voila-- the problem is fixed. But Laura Thomas is taking her downsizing a lot further than that—making it a way of life. She and her husband and four sons are feeling very crowded in their small east Mesa home. “I’m kind of ashamed. We were looking around our home one night and we said ‘We have so much stuff.’”

I met Laura at one of her recent sales where she was selling toys, clothing, home décor, collectibles—things many of us want to get rid of. But she was also selling things for which she had an emotional attachment like an entire set of pink carnival glassware that had been given to her by an elderly family member. Laura says while it was hard parting with the dishes, she admits they just weren’t getting any use around her house. With four men in the family “pink” on the dinner table was a rare occasion. So, the dishware spent most of the time in her cupboards. The set sold for just \$50. “We have a new family motto: ‘We’re going to live with less so other people will have more.’ We will now buy only what we need.”

The family plans on holding several garage sales to get rid of the excess. They’ll be done “cleaning house” when they feel less burdened by the things around them. Half of the money they bring in will go toward paying down debt the other half will go to help other families. “If we could buy gas or groceries for a week for someone then that’s putting the money to good use.”

Laura’s motivation and inspiration for this new way of life comes from her relationship with Christ. “Things aren’t what make us happy. What makes us happy is God. We want to reach outward and see who has a need.”

Laura says she remembers a time not too long ago when her family was struggling and she came home to find a large basket of food on her front door step. “I still don’t know who left that but it meant so much to us. And that’s what we want to do for someone else.”

She opted for garage sales as a way to unload her items because they’re fun, easy and the results are immediate. “I mean after this first sale we went inside and said ‘Oh my gosh, I can see the back of my cupboards’ so I know we’re on the right track.”

If you want to get on the right track, too, look around your house and see what you’re not using. Plan a garage sale and enjoy the benefits of living a lighter but fuller life.



(Photo: Lynda Hammond) Laura Thomas holds a garage sale recently. The east Mesa resident is getting rid of the excess in her life and living only with the necessities. Some of the money from her sales will be given to people who can use the help. “We look around us and see people today who are losing their homes, their cars and having all kinds of financial difficulties. And then I look around us and see how much stuff we have. So we’re getting rid of it to help others.”

#### **MY FAVORITE FIND**

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Do you have a garage sale find you love? Something that makes you smile when you look at it? Share it with us. Send us your picture. Include your name, email address and phone number and email it to: [Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com](mailto:Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com). Watch for the story of *your* treasure in this column!

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*Lynda Hammond is a former television anchor who left the anchor desk for the love of garage sales. Contact her at [Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com](mailto:Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com). Lynda also does garage sale segments on 3-TV's Good Morning Arizona.*

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