

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



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***Economic hard times call for garage sales***

***Lynda Hammond***

It was an emotional day for Jennifer Maglinao.

She and her family were selling most of their belongings at a garage sale. “Getting rid of the stuff at the garage sale didn’t bother me. What was hard was leaving my house for the last time last night,” Jennifer tells me choking back tears.

Jennifer, her husband and their two daughters lost their Maricopa home to foreclosure. They bought it in 2005 at the height of the housing boom but after the value dropped and their adjustable rate mortgage kicked in—forcing their payments higher-- they just couldn’t pay the bills. The bank took it over in March.

The family went from a 2300 sq. ft. home to an apartment about a third that size in Tucson so they were forced to get rid of a lot of their things. Jennifer, a bookkeeper, says having a garage sale was the most convenient way to do it. “A garage sale was the easiest way to get rid of stuff fast and get money now. We priced most everything to sell and the money we got is something we never expected to have.”

The Maglinaos brought in \$1500 by selling gym equipment, furniture, clothes, toys and other items they didn’t need or couldn’t fit into the new place. Some things were priced high such as the big screen TV--\$3000. But other items had much lower tags—tools for \$5 or toys for \$1. Jennifer says she was shocked at people who haggled over dollar items—or those who would walk away from already low prices. “I couldn’t believe people would make low ball offers on stuff. It was interesting.”

Yep, sounds a bit frustrating when you’re trying to squeak every cent possible out of your belongings so you can pay the bills. But I do have a couple theories on why buyers insist on haggling no matter what a seller’s motivation is.

1/Bargaining for the best price—a real deal-- is all part of the fun for shoppers. So, sellers---if you want to get \$5 out of something—mark it at \$8 and let buyers work to get that price lower! Getting a few bucks knocked off the asking price makes us feel better about—and helps to justify-- what we’re buying. It’s not unlike shopping in a store, spotting something you want and then discovering it’s on sale.

2/Then there’s the economy which has affected all of us in one way or another. That means we garage sale buyers are watching our pennies these days.

You see, typically we don’t even need the items we’re ogling, so we’re thinking twice before plunking down a dollar for that old vase or used wallet.

At the end of the day, the Maglinaos had a few leftovers which they took to Goodwill. They couldn’t get the money they wanted for their TV so they put it in storage. Jennifer says it’ll be there for them when they get back on their feet again—which hopefully won’t be too far off.



(pic provided by Jennifer Maglinao) Jennifer Maglinao, 29, talks with a customer at her recent garage sale in Pinal County. Jennifer and her family had to move out after they lost their home to foreclosure. “I kind of feel like we failed a little bit. It’s just hard to see that we had to let (the house) go. Anything at the garage sale that sold was fine. But just letting go of the house--that was the hard part,” Jennifer told me on the phone from her Tucson apartment.

#### **MY FAVORITE FIND**

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Send us a picture of your favorite find. 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.*