

Garage Sale Gal

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC



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I've received emails from readers curious about how the Garage Sale Gal came to be (thanks Mom and Dad)! No but seriously, I want to share my story in the hopes it'll inspire others who are struggling during these challenging economic times.

I was born a garage sale snob.

The thought of buying someone else's used stuff made me cringe.

But, oh how things can change when life throws you a curve ball.

I went to my first garage sale in Kansas in the early 90s. Never having been to one before, I couldn't believe the quality of items up for grabs. My first buy was an old copper boiler. I've been hooked ever since.

But garage sales weren't very important to me—that is until I lost my job as a television news anchor. It was quite a blow. I mean TV news was my life. So, I did what a lot of us do when we're down on our luck-- I sulked and felt sorry for myself. But then slowly I began filling my time by going to garage sales. I'd buy something for a buck, fix it up—maybe give it a coat of paint--then display it in my house like it was worth a million dollars. It was therapeutic and life was looking up. But then another setback—my husband lost his job as a TV news director. We'd sit on the sidelines—looking for work-- for more than a year. In the meantime, we kicked it up a notch in the field of garage saling. We'd buy collectibles for a \$1 and sell them for big profits in on-line auctions. It worked. We paid our mortgage and other bills this way.

You don't have to be an expert to buy and resell things. A little bit of knowledge can do the trick. I once bought a Harley-Davidson leather biker's jacket at a garage sale for \$15 and sold it on line for \$372. Trust me I know nothing about biker's jackets but I do know just how collectible the motorcycle maker's items can be. Here are some ideas on how garage sales just might help you and your family, too.

Money-making ideas with garage sales

1/Search the Web- Find out what's in demand by searching on line. It's amazing what you can find out about a "Tiffany vase" with a click of the mouse.

2/Buy inexpensively- So, let's say you're at a garage sale and you spot an unusual ceramic bowl for a \$1 and you *think* it might sell on line. Go ahead, take the plunge. Buy it. If it doesn't sell on line chances are you can sell it at one of your garage sales for more than a buck. After all *you* liked it, surely someone else will too.

3/Have a garage sale- You might be surprised on how much you can earn. What may seem like junk to you may be exactly what someone else is looking for. So, a rule of thumb for your sale: when in doubt put it out.

4/Find a niche- Artists create incredible things with vintage "junk": License plates, blue jeans and old record albums are used to make purses; broken plates are turned into mosaic furniture and mirrors. Find things at sales and sell to

artists or develop your own line of unique products.

After moving to the Valley, I was amazed by the popularity of garage sales here. So, I launched my Web site for garage sale buyers and sellers. I added TV segments by doing garage sale projects on 3-TV's Good Morning Arizona. And now thankfully, there's *this*, my weekly column here in the *Republic*.

You're reading my 125th column.

All of this thanks to the power of garage sales!

Contact the Garage Sale Gal at Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. And golly gee, be sure to list your next garage sale on www.GarageSaleGal.com it's a fun Web site where you can list & look for garage sales on line!



(Caption for picture above) That's me with my husband, Kevin Nunn, on-set during one of our morning newscasts in Wichita, Kan. in the early 90s. I'm no longer concerned about reporting the "lead story" of the day instead just *lead* me to the next garage sale!