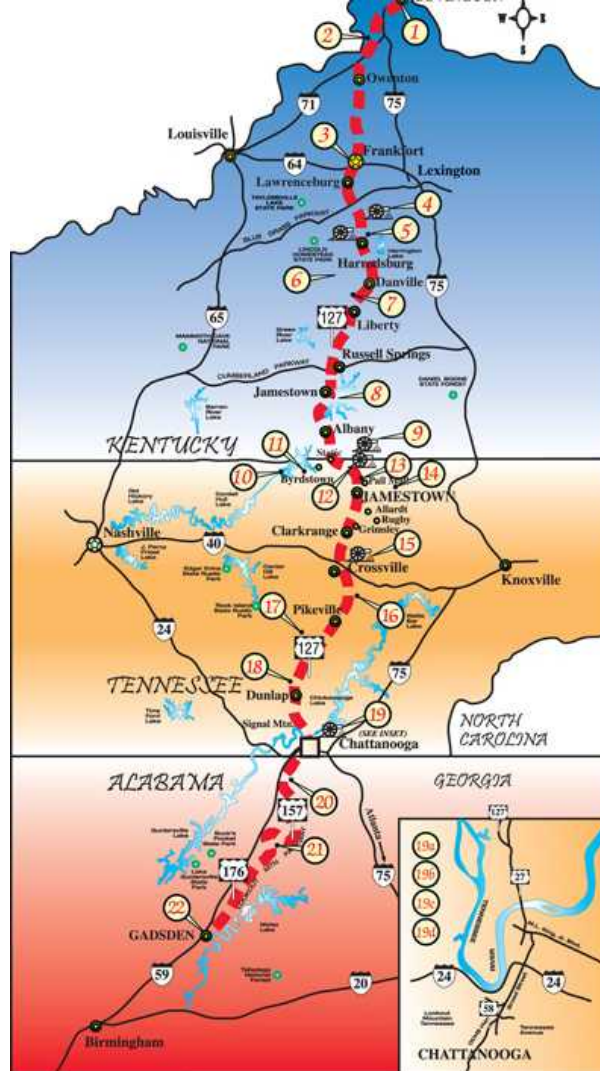


## Satisfy a yard-sale need mile after mile



Lynda Hammond-The Garage Sale Gal



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I can't believe I even considered going. The World's Longest Yard Sale is in full swing in the Southeast, and I wanted to be there. I need to get a grip!

Yard sales are my vice, like a sugar addict visiting the Ethel M Chocolate Factory in Las Vegas. Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to ban garage sales from my routine. But I am trying to cut back on buying bargains at sales. (I'm also trying to quit eating chocolate, but that's another column). It's tough for me to pass up a good bargain, and I'm simply running out of room for all of it. But if you're one of the lucky ones and you have room to spare for all the gems you'll bring home, here are some details on this huge sale, which runs Thursday through Sunday the first weekend in August each year.

The World's Longest Yard Sale is 450 miles long, winding through several states. It stretches from Covington, Ky., to Gadsden, Ala. All types of booths are set up, from professional antique dealers to homeowners wanting to get rid of items they don't have room for anymore. It is pure heaven to a garage sale lover.

Tennessee resident Mike Walker came up with the idea.

"It's a crazy, funny event," he said. "You have professional antiques dealers in one booth selling upscale items and then your next-door neighbor selling old clothes. It's an incredible variety of things for sale."

Mike was the chief financial officer of Fentress County in 1987 when he and his staff were brainstorming ways to bring more tourists to their neck of the woods.

"We needed to bring people off the main interstates and into our area, and we thought this was the best way to do it," he said.

Mike's mother, Carolyn Walker, 65, has a prime spot for the big sale. Her home sits right on the main stretch of U.S. 127, the main corridor for the sale.

"I just love it," she said. "This is a great time of year."

Carolyn said she goes to garage sales throughout the year, buys items and then resells them.

Don't plan on driving fast along the main route. Mike says traffic moves at a snail's pace because folks are looking at all the merchandise from their cars. Although there has never been an official count, Mike says more than 2,000 vendors set up shop in Fentress County alone. He has seen license plates from at least 37 states and Canada.

You can bet Carolyn welcomes the folks with open arms. She can bring in as much as \$3,500 during the four days. She has some advice for folks who may head East from Arizona for the event.

"Tell them to wear comfortable shoes, light clothing, a hat and bring plenty of water, because it gets very hot in August," she said.

OK, hot is something we know about!

**Lynda Hammond runs the [www.GarageSaleGal.com](http://www.GarageSaleGal.com) Web site, where you can list and look for garage sales online. Reach her at [lynda@garagesalegal.com](mailto:lynda@garagesalegal.com). She also appears on 3-TV's Good Morning Arizona.**