

Garage Sale Gal

Keep your garage sale Grinch-free



We've all heard about the Grinch who stole Christmas but have you heard about the Grinch who can sometimes put a damper on garage sales? He may not be green, mean and ugly but he could show up at your sale. "They stole three things. They were right here," says one garage saler in Gilbert who didn't want her name used.

Chances are if you've had a garage sale you've had something stolen or you've been worried about the possibility of someone putting a damper on your sale.

Cheryl Burnett frets about it. She lives in East Mesa and recently had a sale along with neighbors on her street close to Brown and Power Roads. She says every time she has a garage sale she's convinced someone will snatch an item when she's not looking. Cheryl laughs when she tells me she's never even had anything taken so she's not quite sure why she worries about it—but she does. "It's a bit ironic because here I am willing to get rid of things for just pennies but at the same time I'm worried about people just walking up and taking stuff. I guess because it would be a violation and that would bother me."

As you know I go to a lot of garage sales and I occasionally hold them. And, yes, I've had something stolen, too. It was a few years ago---a picture-perfect Fall day in Arizona when the bandit struck. I had a large, bright yellow vase, displayed nicely on a card table in the middle of the driveway. It was an awkward-shaped, hand-blown vase with thick heavy glass, There was a sticker on one side proclaiming "Made in Poland". But I'm not upset about it—in fact I've completely forgotten every detail surrounding the incident! No but seriously, to be honest with you I didn't even notice it was missing until a few days later. And that's understandable. I mean think about it when you have a garage sale it's so easy to be distracted with all the people coming and going. You're answering a lot of questions and trying to make a sale each time...think carnival atmosphere..fun-- but it can be hectic at times.

But you know what, even though I've had a few things swiped from my garage sales I'm still convinced the good outweighs the bad. After all, at garage sales we can meet new people, de-clutter our homes and make some decent pocket change.

Just remember we don't live in Whoville and no one can make the Grinch a great guy like the ending in the cartoon but there are a few things we can do to keep the Grinch at bay.

A Grinch-free sale:

- 1/Keep the Grinch away from your garage sale by having plenty of folks minding the store.***
- 2/Keep an eye on your money box or better yet keep your loot with you at all times by carrying it in a pouch or a fanny pack.***
- 3/Keep your doors to your house locked at all times.***
- 4/Have your cell phone outside with you.***
- 5/If your sale is fairly large or you're having an estate sale consider hiring an off-duty police officer to ward off would-be thieves.***

(Grinch animation Caption):(or you can simply go without a caption).

Chances are it's happened to you. You have a garage sale to raise a little bit of extra spending money and the Grinch stops by. Later you realize something's missing but there's no money to show for it!

MY FAVORITE FIND <mailto:kathie.winter@davita.com>

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. Tell us a little bit about it. Include your name, email address and phone number and email it to: Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Watch for the story of *your* treasure in this column!

Lynda Hammond is a former television anchor who runs the website www.GarageSaleGal.com where you can list and look for garage sales on-line. Contact her at Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Lynda also does garage sale segments on 3-TV's Good Morning Arizona.

#####

Cheryl Burnett: 373-8134 cherylbchd@architects.com