

Garage Sale Gal
THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC



Sad Sales

Lynda Hammond

I love garage sales.

They make me happy.

There's nothing like the feeling I get when I find a treasure for a great price.

You know what I mean—maybe it's a collectible you had as a kid. Maybe it's a carnival glass bowl you filled with your favorite snack--cheese crackers. And while watching Password one Summer afternoon on TV with your grandma you accidentally broke it. But lo and behold you find one just like it for .10 at a garage sale. It's memories like this that fuels the drive for us to continue searching garage sales for those rare finds.

But as much as I love the hunt sometimes garage sales make me sad. The reasons some folks have to sell their items often stems from tough times and misfortune. Perhaps there's been a death in the family, someone's going into a nursing home, or financial strains have forced the sale.

That's the case for Rick Allen.

I went to his estate sale the other day in east Mesa and he was selling everything—a beautiful sofa, tables, chairs—everything. “Well, I can't find a job. I've found a few temporary positions but nothing permanent,” Rick says.

Rick has been looking for work in the computer industry but nothing has panned out so he's selling his house and all his belonging hoping to find work elsewhere. “Well, you have to face up to the facts. It's like having to start over again. So, once this is gone and out of the way, I'm going to travel light for awhile.”

Rick had a great selection of items up for sale. But what caught my eye was a rickety, old 1920s table sitting in the kitchen. Although I didn't know where I'd put it in my house, I knew I had to have it. My first question to Rick wasn't “How much?” but instead “Why are you selling it?” I couldn't believe he'd want to part with it. It's one of those unique pieces with character and history—something you could never find in a store. That's when Rick told me about his job situation.

Although I was glad to have a chance at owning it, I was a bit sad he had to sell it. “Yeah, that’s been with me for a long time. I had a lot of feeling there (about selling it). It’s a good antique piece. You couldn’t buy something like that now.”

Rick was nice enough to deliver the table for me in his pick-up truck. I’d already made room for it in my home office. In fact, I’m looking at it now. It sits up against the wall and I’ll use it for supplies and writing materials. It’s just perfect. I cleaned it up, put a little wax on it and it seems like it’s been here forever.

If there’s one thing Rick is glad about when it comes to selling the table, it’s that it went to someone who’s really going to appreciate it. “Yeah, that made a difference. Sometimes you almost worry that your items aren’t going to a good home. But I know you’ll take care of it.”

Indeed I will.

(PHOTO BY LYNDA HAMMOND):



MY FAVORITE FIND

Rick Allen makes a special delivery to my house. I bought this old table at his estate sale for \$100 and he was kind enough to bring it over in his pick-up truck. Rick, 60, found the table about 12 years ago in the California desert on a friend’s property. His friend, who works for Disney Studios, says it’d been sitting outside for years.

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. Watch for the story of *your* treasure in this column!

Lynda Hammond is a former television anchor who left the anchor desk for the love of

garage sales. Contact her at Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com. Lynda also does garage sale segments on 3-TV's Good Morning Arizona.

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