

**Garage Sale Gal**  
**Red Hats get Red Hot Advise!**  
**THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC**



**Lynda Hammond**

I consider myself to be very fortunate. My job—anything and everything to do with garage sales-- is my passion. I get to write about garage sales each week in this column, I teach courses on garage sale buying and selling, I go to dozens of garage sales each week in search of rare bargains where I meet others who are just as passionate about garage saling. And to top it all off, I also speak about garage sales at group gatherings.

That's right. Garage sales are so popular here in the Valley I get to talk about them with other bargain hunting enthusiasts—what a treat!

My most recent speech was at a Red Hat Society gathering in Mesa. RHS is a national organization where ladies don red hats and purple outfits, get together and just have fun. There are chapters—each with its own name-- all across the nation. I attended a function put on by the Desert Darlins.

Marylyn Griffith is the “Queen”, or leader, of the Darlins and she invited me to speak. “I’ve been reading your column now for quite sometime and it’s just very interesting to me so I felt you’d present an interesting speech.”

During my presentation, I showed off some of my garage sale finds—some good, like the large Lennox bowl I found brand new in the original box for just a dollar (it had been a wedding gift someone never used!). And—some not so good, such as the “rebuilt” Ken Barbie doll-- with a body from 1968 and a newer head from 1999 recklessly twisted on to his neck. That one always gets a laugh because I thought I’d found an old doll worth some money which instead turned out to be worthless. I also shared some of my favorite garage sale tips, such as:

**Sellers**

**1/Don't price anything-** This seems to be one of my most controversial tips. Often times sellers get more money if they don't price items. Try it at your next sale.

**2/Friday sale-** Have your sale on a Friday. It's a seller's market. There are plenty of buyers looking for sales but a lot fewer sales from which to choose.

**3/Simply pink-** Keep your signs simple. Use pink board and black marker. The pink stands out and the black is easy to see. Write only “sale” and an arrow.

**Buyers**

**1/Get out early-** You'll find your best selection first thing in the morning—especially if you're looking for specific items such as purses or collectibles.

**2/Bargain-** Negotiate prices, that's half the fun. If a seller wants \$5 for an item, offer \$3.

**3/Look closely-** Examine items well. Check for cracks, chips or stains on clothing. And watch for those loose noggins!

The Red Hat Society was started in 1998 in part thanks to a *red hat*. Founder Sue Ellen Cooper bought the hat at a thrift store in Tucson. So, you might say the organization got off to a thrifty start. "Our ladies like thrift stores and garage sales. We're always looking for something unique, different and inexpensive," Marilyn tells me.

If you'd like more information on the Red Hat Society visit their web page at [Redhatsociety.com](http://Redhatsociety.com).

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Photo courtesy: Marilyn Griffith



Dorothy Hansen attends a recent Red Hat Society luncheon in Mesa. The "Desert Darlin" bought her entire outfit at garage sales for under \$10. Her shoes—which were purple suede--cost just 75 cents.

### **MY FAVORITE FIND**

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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](mailto:Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com). Watch for the story of *your* treasure in this column!

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*Lynda Hammond is a former television broadcaster 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.*

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