**Garage Sale Gal**

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**Lynda Hammond-Garage Sale Gal**

**To hold or not to hold**

It’s happened to all of us.

We’re having a garage sale when a buyer shows interest in something—let’s say it’s a large television set. The potential buyer doesn’t have enough money or room left in the car. He insists he’ll be back shortly to pay for it and haul it off. Do you hold the TV for him?

No way, says Mesa resident Ray Flack. “I’ve lost many sales of high-priced items by holding them and the ‘gotta-have-it’ buyer never returned,” he wrote me via email.

I’ve received about two dozen letters recently—some of them reflecting the same opinion as Ray’s. The controversy was sparked by another column I’d written for the Republic; *Garage saler desperate to find treasure that got away* (4/4/08). While garage saling recently Sharin Louis found the treasure of a lifetime. She had offered to leave the sellers a $10 deposit for an antique cedar chest but she’d have to return later with more money and more room in her car. The sellers told Sharin a deposit wasn’t necessary, the trunk would be there when she got back. Instead, the sellers sold it to someone else.

Sharin was heartbroken. But she hasn’t given up. She’s searching for the person who ended up buying it so she can make an offer on it. Until that day she’ll continue to pine away for that beautiful hunk of cedar.

Donna Goodrich says she “feels sorry” for Sharin and thinks it’s awful the chest was sold to someone else. But—at the same time—she can understand why the seller’s what they did. “Sometimes at my garage sales I would hold something for hours because (the buyer) would promise to be back. It’s very frustrating because I believe people when they tell me something. And then I’d usually end up not even selling it.”

When Donna has a garage sale these days she sets some rules when it comes to holding an item. “I’ll give them a half hour. If someone else expresses interest in the item after that half hour is up then I’ll sell it to them.”

There are no set rules for holding garage sale items but here are a few guidelines that may help if you’re faced with the same situation.

**Holding garage sale items**

1/ *Show me the money!* Before agreeing to hold an item, get the full amount for it. Then the buyer is sure to come back for it.

2/ *No cash? No hold!* If a buyer wants an item but has no cash, don’t hold it. But if the buyer is persistent, take their phone number and tell them you’ll call if it’s still available at the end of the day.

3/ *Time is money!* If a buyer purchases a big item, it’s understandable he may need to come back for it. But make sure you exchange phone numbers and have him pick it up no later than the end of the day. After all, you want to get rid of it, not put it back in your garage.

4/ *Be kind and polite!* Remember, the buyer knows where you live and none of us wants to get toilet papered!
Deborah Montanez sent me this picture of her cedar chest. The Gilbert resident offered to sell it for $100 to Sharin Louis—who was recently lost out on buying a beautiful trunk. I sent the picture to Sharin but she told me it wasn’t quite what she was looking for. Still, she appreciates the outpouring of kindness. “It does make me feel good that there are people out there that do care about what happened to me,” Sharin says.

**MY FAVORITE FIND**

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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