

Garage Sale Gal

THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC



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Big stuff, big on my list

Lynda Hammond

When I was living in Indianapolis and in between successes (read: jobs) I had a lot of time on my hands so television watching became a big part of my daily schedule. I fell in love with decorating shows—where I learned how to spruce up my home without spending a lot of money. One lesson that has stayed with me is: *choose large decorator items—vases, birdcages, iron pieces—and display them on high surfaces.* This does several things for a room: it draws the eye upwards which gives the illusion of more space; it adds interest in soaring spots that a lot of us may typically overlook; and bigger is better---it beats having lots of little smaller things which can create clutter. I had fun with this advice in my Indiana home with its 20 ft ceilings and built-in niches. I bet you can guess what I used in the space--yep---garage sale finds. I'd keep my eyes open for anything large—baskets, round brass table tops, iron gates and vases--and voila I had my beautiful professional looking decorator's touch on a budget. It didn't matter if the item was broken—heck I could always turn the “unsightly” side to the wall and no one would be the wiser. If I could buy it for a buck or two, I'd bring it home and make it work.

Now that I live here in Arizona I've continued that buying pattern. And boy did I discover a fun treasure the other day at a garage sale. It's a huge wood-framed bird cage I picked up in Gilbert for just \$5. It'd look great perched above cabinets with a vine of greenery intertwined through it. There's just one problem. You see, at only 9 ft., my ceilings aren't exactly lofty. I have shelves but, above them, there's only limited space. Gosh, I don't even have a stairway landing (no second story) where I could put things on display. Still, what do I do? I buy *big* things at garage sales.

So, what am I thinking you might wonder? Well, I'm following rule #1 when it comes to garage sales—*Buy what you love. If you love it you'll make it work in your home.* Since these extra large decorator pieces won't fit in this house---I'll have to move!

Okay, wait a minute—stop the presses, by george, I think I've got it. I've been staring at this space all day. Just across from my computer in my office where I'm writing this column is *the* perfect place for my birdcage. It can fill bare wall-space above two framed pictures I bought at an auction ten years ago. Dilemma solved! House hunting put on hold. Now, where do I put my high, round Tuscan bar table, my bulky iron patio set, the enormous wooden trunk, the green gargantuanokay you get the picture!

(Photos: provided by Lynda)



I found this terrific, extra-large birdcage at a garage sale in Gilbert a couple weeks ago. It has a strip of wood that needs gluing—but is this a gem or what? I paid just \$5!



So, as I'm writing this column, it hits me—perch the birdcage here. This blank wall space is in my office across from my computer. Now, I just have to build the shelf or find one at a garage sale!

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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