

Lynda Hammond **THE GARAGE SALE GAL**



Haiti Help *Lynda Hammond*

For Amy Trias the sadness was almost too much to bear. “I’ll never forget seeing a 2-year-old girl alone on the street.” Amy gets choked up as she thinks about the television news report. “Every time a woman would walk by she would cry out to her, hoping it was her mother. It was so tragic.” After seeing the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake play out on TV the Chandler resident couldn’t sit idly by anymore and just watch. She had to do something.

Amy had been planning on holding a garage sale to raise money to buy furniture for her son’s room. Instead, realizing the dresser and bed could wait, she held a garage sale to raise money for the people of Haiti.

The stay-at-home Mom had a few things to sell but she needed more so she canvassed the neighborhood asking for donations. She gathered stuff—bicycles, TVs, a futon, a desk, coffee table and gobs of clothing--- from about fifteen homes. Amy held the sale on two separate weekends and was able to raise almost \$800 for the Red Cross. She says the show of generosity was heartwarming. “Some people didn’t haggle, some said keep the change and others just came up and gave us some money.”

Amy turned the money over to Tracey Kiest of the Grand Canyon Chapter of the Arizona Red Cross. “Garage saling is a really creative way to get the community involved and make a difference. It’s a great thing to do for someone who doesn’t have much money,” Tracey says.

Kathy and Bob Ripley also know the power of a garage sale.

Last weekend they had one to raise money for the family of Lt. Eric Shuhandler, the Gilbert Police Officer gunned down in the line of duty. “I was so impressed by the generosity and the sympathy for the officer’s family. One woman brought me a huge jar for the cash and said ‘here you’ll need this’ and there was already money in it.”

The Ripley’s were able to raise more than \$3600 during the two-day sale.

Fundraising garage sales

I love garage sale fundraisers for several reasons; No overhead costs—so all the money goes to the cause, the inventory is donated and they are usually very successful. Here are a few things to think about when holding a benefit garage sale:

1/Give yourself time- Plan the sale a few weeks in advance so you’ll have enough time to gather donations from stores and individuals.

2/Spread the news- Make sure you get the word out by advertising the sale. Send out emails and fliers. You might even contact the organization to which you’ll donate the proceeds—they’ll likely want to help spread the word, too.

3/Descriptive signs-Make sure your signs state the reason for the sale. When garage sale buyers know the money is going for a good cause, we typically don't haggle and in fact, give extra or say "Keep the change".

4/Help from friends-Make sure you have plenty of manpower available to work the day of the sale. Making and putting up signs, setting up and operating a big sale takes a lot of people.



(pic provided by Amy Trias) Amy Trias and her two children, Andrew, 6 and Hallie, 5, raise money at their garage sale for victims of the Haiti earthquake.

Talk to the Garage Sale Gal!

Do you have a question or comment about garage or estate bargain sales? Email the Garage Sale Gal: Lynda@GarageSaleGal.com.

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 local TV stations.

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