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Introduction

I caught garage sale fever over three decades ago. I had all the symptoms: the anticipation of the spring garage sale season, the thrill of the hunt, the joy from having perfect strangers hand over money for my stuff, the urge to buy used instead of paying retail, the need to own a station wagon, having difficulty driving past a sale without stopping, and not wanting the season to end in the fall. I am hooked on rummage.

And this is a good thing! Throughout my travels I have encountered wonderful people (some not), been able to view the unwanted trash and treasure of thousands of sellers, added to my various collections, and learned the rules and techniques of garage sale commerce. I have received quite an education.

As a writer with a passion for garage sales and flea markets, this book is the next logical step of my journey. I have the desire to share my stories and my ideas for garage sale success with others who have the Fever.

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Although I strongly believe that plain dumb luck plays a major role in garage sale endeavors for both buyers and sellers, I also know it is more than being at the right place at the right time. There are skills required for both buyers and sellers. And you gain these skills by experience, learning from mistakes, and listening to others. It is a continuing education.

Although I confess to being a garage sale junkie, I also have a regular life. I make my living as a full time writer and copy editor, working out of my home. Writing pays my bills. I am not a dealer of collectibles. I buy more than I sell and I sell only a few times a year only to make room to buy more. I buy to add to my collections. When I am not working, I frequent garage sales and flea markets. If you have the Fever, you know what I mean.

One aspect of this book that makes it unique is that it contains stories. Through my travels in Garage Sale Land I have discovered that everybody has a garage sale story. If you listen to others at garage sales and flea markets you hear stories of the treasure that got away or the one that didn't. This book shares some of my experiences including the time I had to call 911 during my lawn sale, the time I chased a bicycle thief, and the VCR that held a hidden surprise. These stories, along with those that tell about the treasures I discovered, are part of me as much as they are a part of everyone who has ever rejoiced over a garage sale find. We all have our stories.

Introduction

It is my hope that this book contains both stories that will inspire you to continue your quest for treasure and ideas that will make you more effective as a buyer or seller. I am sincerely passing along to you the best of my years of experience. Whether you are a garage sale novice or pro, there is always more to learn. If you have the Fever, the only cure is to experience for yourself the world of trash and treasure. Enjoy the journey.