

## The Garage Sale Vacation from Hell

*By Hap Hansen*

Ah, summertime. Lots of things are in full bloom. Marigolds. Roses. Garage sale signs. This is the time for garage sales. Get rid of all that junk. Make a little extra money. Money that won't have to be taxed, unless an IRS Agent happens by. What to do with my vacation? I know, I'll have a garage sale! I have had many vacation garage sales from hell. I know I will have many items on sale that are worth up to \$5 or more. Most garage sales buyers won't pay that much, so I'll ask for one dollar. Sure as hell, a customer will offer a quarter for the item. After much negotiation, we finally settle on a price of 50 cents. Sure enough, at my neighbor's garage sale some time later, I see the item I sold them on sale for 50 cents, the same amount they had paid me. I know I can sell that item for a dollar on my next vacation garage sale. After much negotiation, I buy the item for a quarter. I'm already ahead!

There are lots of things I have that I simply cannot sell at a garage sale, so they continue to take up storage space. How could I sell my son's Little League baseball bat? I couldn't. Too many memories. Or my daughter's ice skates, golf clubs or baton. No, can't sell them either. The bronzed baby shoes. Awfully sentimental. But just which child's were they?

I know I have six pairs of old dressshoes, mostly run down at the heel but I'm saving them to wear for yard work in my old age. And what about that perfectly usable pair of double knit polyester slacks? I know they are beginning to shred as if a cat had sharpened its claws repeatedly on each knee. But, my, they're comfortable, even though my kids tend to break out in hives every time they come near those old slacks. Nope. Those items I cannot sell at my summer vacation garage sale.

There are things I know I won't sell, but I collect them anyway. I counted twelve old 'D' batteries, some of which are leaking, but I intend to buy a battery charger any day now. I have 15 or 20 used toothbrushes. You never know when you might run out, or you may need a special brush to get the lint out of the cracks in the linoleum. Those old magazines and condensed books won't sell, but I need them for future research. I'm just not sure what or when. My golf shag bag with a couple dozen old fashioned balata golf balls full of slices and cuts won't sell. But it's just as well. I'll need them when I build an indoor driving range in the garage. Probably after next year's vacation garage sale from hell.

I won't even go into the other things I sold at my last garage sale and then bought back when the neighbors had their sale a few months later. It seems to me that nothing old or used ever leaves the neighborhood. Those items just get passed from garage sale to garage sale, eventually ending up with the original owner, who didn't want to sell them anyway.

Ah, summertime. Garage sale vacation memories from hell!