

heck out of it. “It’s impossible to keep track of how many shoppers and vendors participate, but it’s grown to be an outrageously fun event with steals and deals around every corner,” its volunteers say.

Sellers and buyers alike hope for good weather through the weekend, not too hot, but with none of those pesky rain showers that spoil the fun.

And hotels and restaurants love it because it fills their establishments with visitors who are happily loading up their cars and trucks with bargains that they’ll haul home.

As the Visitors Bureau says, “One person’s trash is another person’s treasure.”

Handy purchases

Picking up true bargains at this Memorial Day Weekend event or at other sales involves luck.

Some 10 years ago, Bonnie Lou Cozby of Ocean Park attended an estate sale in Surfside.

“They had grouped many of the items into boxes that were sold as lots,” she said. “One box I purchased had books — old books. There were several ‘Who’s Who’-type books from California that were pre-1900. But the gem was a first edition, 1884, book by John G. Bourke called ‘The Moquis of Arizona.’”

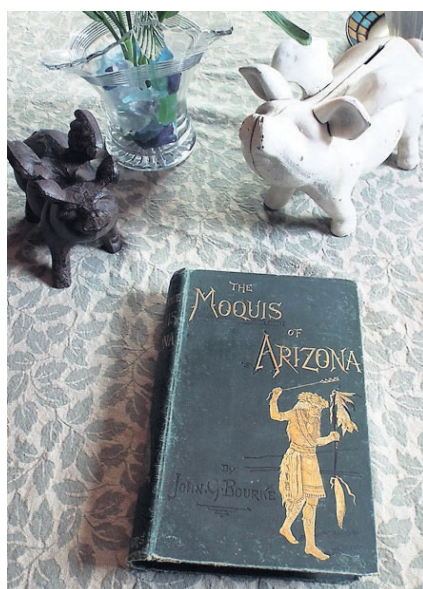
Bourke was a colonel in the U.S. Army who chronicled the lifestyles of Native Americans in Arizona, later becoming a prominent anthropologist. “The book is in fair to good condition and worth in the range of \$600,” Cozby said. “I bought the box for \$1.”

At the same sale, there were hand-tinted photographs of California from around 1930. “I bought the three for \$1 each. These were my top finds over the last 24 years of garage and estate sales on the Peninsula,” she added.

She is not alone. Last year, Cheryl Marie Newman bought a 1952 Singer Featherweight sewing machine. “I sew with it all the time,” she said.

Marilyn Raymer has lived in Surfside 12 years. She is especially proud of one handy purchase. “An enameled pot with a strainer inset, the perfect size to use for removing clam shells with boiling water,” she said. “Probably intended for spaghetti — it cost me \$1.”

Portland visitor Margot Moore-Wil-



COURTESY BONNIE LOU COZBY

Bonnie Lou Cozby cleverly bought some boxed lots at an estate sale in Surfside. One \$1 bargain box of old books included an 1884 first edition by John G. Bourke called “The Moquis of Arizona.” Bourke, a U.S. Army colonel, studied Native Americans in Arizona. Cozby said her book is in fair to good condition and worth about \$600.

son’s favorite find was some dental hygienist’s tools. “These are perfect for scrapbooking and other paper crafts,” she said.

Ilmari Kivinen of Vancouver, Wash., visited the Peninsula almost every weekend when growing up. Kivinen’s best buy was a 1940s “plein air” oil painting for only \$25.

Some treasures come with a backstory. Mary Rickie Daniels bought an antique gentlemen’s dresser for \$175, which she describes as “gorgeous.” “The owner told us how it had been handed down through the generations,” she said.

Finding treasures

Sellers know that tools in good condition will always find a buyer.

Jackie Sheldon of Ilwaco has a passion for emergency preparedness.

“The World’s Longest Garage Sale is a great time to pick up emergency supplies” she said. “I look for saws, axes, hammers, pry bars, blankets, life jackets, rope, camping stuff and containers.

I put supplies in my attic in case I have to ‘go vertical’ for an evacua-



COURTESY MARY RICKIE DANIELS

Mary Rickie Daniels bought this antique gentlemen’s dresser for just \$175. The seller mentioned it had been handed down through several generations.

tion.”

Sheldon mentioned that during the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina in 2005, many Louisiana residents climbed into their attics to escape flood waters. “However, they got stuck there, with no supplies to escape to the roof. Therefore, emergency supplies in the attic is a must for emergency preparedness,” she said.

A prior seller, Robert Johnson, benefited greatly. “It is a great way to get rid of those items that you just don’t seem to use anymore — I highly recommend it,” he said.

The Seattle resident’s parents, Bob and Boots Johnson, bought their first Peninsula property in Seaview in 1964 and retired to a nearby locale in 1986. After they died in the early 2000s, he scheduled an estate sale during Memorial Day.

“In one weekend, I sold the bulk of the estate and put close to \$6,000 in my pocket — and had fun doing it,” he said.

“I didn’t have to advertise; hundreds of garage sale enthusiasts were already fully aware of the chance to find plenty of treasures. I just had to organize 40

years’ worth of merchandise. And there was plenty of it: wicker furniture, pots and pans, artwork, tools, a Zodiac boat and motor, clam shovels — you name it, we had it.

“After three days, we had sold the bulk of the goods, meeting lots of lovely bargain hunters in the process.”

Bargain hunters

Shoppers sometimes re-sell items for a significant profit.

Paula Frazer Owens recalls picking up a canning jar full of pens and pencils. “We went through them — most were very old — and found a Meisterstuck fountain pen,” she said. “It sold on eBay that night for \$299 — the best bargain ever. The jar was free, they threw it in with our other purchases.”

A similar thing happened to Deborah Justice Cutrell of Raymond, Wash., who said she “can’t wait for the ‘big weekend.’”

“We found an engraved retirement bowl and were told it was silver plated,” she said. “We got home and found out it was solid silver. Paid \$6 for it, sold it for \$380.”

Miriam Sheaffer of Long Beach, a 40-year Peninsula resident, recalls picking up a free box of vintage Christmas ornaments. “I kept two for myself, sold the other box for \$20,” she said.

Of course, avid bargain hunters do run out of space. “Probably not going this year,” Sheaffer said. “I’m at the point now that I’m trying to scale back, not add to my collections — but I’ve had a lot of fun in the past.”

But Donna Raabe Price of Auburn, Wash., a part-time resident of Ocean Park for 17 years, is excited. “I have snagged some really sweet deals over the years,” she said.

“Last year, my husband snagged a brand new Lodge cast-iron Dutch oven for \$5,” she said. “Hoping to score more goodies this year.”

For Longview, Wash., resident, Katie Vincent-Sanderson, setting up her weekend sale is an annual pleasure at her mid-Peninsula beach house.

“We’ve never shopped, we are always busy selling and enjoying all of the people we get to talk to,” she said.

“My son and niece always have cookies for sale and people are always so generous and they sell so many. It’s our favorite event of the year.” **CW**