

BRIEFS

Curtains of color

You think of yourself as pretty hip, pretty happening. You've kept up technologically — have an iPod, love your TiVo, have even started a blog. And your home is pretty cool, too, if you do say so yourself. But still, you're always on the lookout for more neat stuff, more hip accent pieces, more happening decor.

You'll find it at J Schatz. The company, which specializes in designing and creating functional and artistic home products, has just introduced a line of Happening Curtains (\$1,250 each). Made of 70 glossy 4-inch-round colored ceramic tiles, the curtains are great as a room divider or attractive accent piece in a den. The curtains' ceramic tiles float from a 30-inch-wide stainless steel frame, which attaches to beaded chains that can fasten to any sturdy hooks. The curtains, weighing 22 pounds, are available in four color combinations: Primary (red, white, aqua, yellow); Ginger & Silver Gray; Multicolored; and Light Aqua, Burnt Red & Silver Gray.

Other unique items from J Schatz include the colorful, handcrafted ceramic Egg Shade Lamps (\$175-\$200), Egg Floor Lamps (\$350), Star Egg Nightlights (\$125); Dobo Vases (\$135) and Ono Vases (\$125). All items are available at www.jschatz.com or by calling 866-344-5267.

Selling the heirloom

An old cookie jar. Stacks of vinyl records. A few atrocious vases. Grandma's velvet chairs. They all sit in your attic or your garage collecting dust. But for whatever reason, you haven't gotten rid of them. Well, you're

not alone.

Families in the HGTV series *Cash in the Attic* haven't been able to part with their stored-away possessions either. But with a little help from host John Sencio and appraisers Tim Luke and Christine Downing, families will go on a treasure hunt through their homes to find items that could be worth big bucks at auction. Viewers will watch as families deliberate and often fight about keeping the sentimental item. And viewers will follow families that chose to cash in on their finds through the exciting purchases they've made with the profits.

The series airs at 8 p.m. Mondays on HGTV. Visit www.hgtv.com for show information.

One smart hook

Smarter than your average hook, the new Clever Hook from Linden Sweden knows just how to grip your hanging items. The Clever Hook features a dual-hook mechanism to keep clothes, towels, backpacks and other items hanging in place and never sliding to the floor. Simply place an item on the lower arm of the hook, and the top arm closes down onto the item, keeping it securely in place. To remove an item, simply lift it up and off the hook.

Perfect for bathrooms, bedrooms, garages, kitchens and pool areas, the Clever Hook is a snap to install. It comes with two wood screws for easy mounting and can hold up to 40 pounds. The Clever Hook is available in beech wood (\$17) and in a variety of colors in plastic (\$11).

Find the hook at www.dsnkitchenutensils.com or at www.target.com. Visit www.cleverhook.net or call 952-465-0052 for information.

— LORI SEARS
THE BALTIMORE SUN

Yard sales can lighten the load

■ MOVE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1E

neighborhood near Young Circle, I was sold.

I loved the beach and the up-and-coming energy of the town. We put a bid on a Key West bungalow, the third house we saw.

Everything was in motion. To make the financial timing work, we had to sell our house immediately. We had four days to make repairs and tidy up our one-acre yard. While I transplanted day lilies and chopped hedges, Ronnie began calling repairmen. At least, I thought he did. I came inside and caught him on his computer searching eBay for surf shorts.

"There's no time for that!" I shouted over the weed-trimmer.

I was glad Ronnie was excited about living in Florida again, but there would be time for wardrobe later. There was a shed to clean.

Due to a good seller's market and a terrific real estate agent, our house sold in two days.

Now the pressure was really on.

Step One: Yard Sale

Like Floridians, Tennessee folks love yard sales. It amazes me how much people love other people's junk, but I'm glad they do.

Before we began tagging, I had a sit-down with Ronnie. We

were moving into a much smaller house and we still had things from Wisconsin, where we lived in a log cabin. If we were serious about our new Florida life, many things (mounted fish, mountain man lithographs, cross country skis) would have to go.

To my shock, he agreed and actively participated in the sale. When a man admired an Indian drum, "How much?" Ronnie drove a hard bargain.

"I have to go \$30. It belonged to Geronimo's grandson."

The man didn't even crack a smile. "Will you take \$5?" I noted the extreme irony of haggling with people for \$5, \$3 and \$1 while our agent negotiated our new home price in increments of 10 and 20 grand.

The sale was a success. We put an ad in the newspaper and placed signs at key neighborhood intersections.

But our best idea was organizing a pre-sale the night before, which was also a Goodbye Happy Hour for friends. Our friends were the best customers and things we loved — papier-mâché cactus, singing James Brown doll — went to good homes.

After the sale, we took leftovers to Goodwill. But the drop-off clerk actually refused my cross-country skis, telling me they hadn't sold a pair of skis in Tennessee in 10 years.

I hated to throw them away. A friend suggested selling them on eBay, but I didn't want to do the legwork. So I took the skis and several other items, including a new but way too big Samsonite suitcase, to Snappy Auctions, an eBay retail store. They do the work for a small commission and give away anything they can't sell. (Note: Be sure to set a

The ABCs of a moving sale

Thinking of having a moving sale? Here are some tips to make it easier:

Price everything ahead of time. Post-its work well or make a big sign \$5 and place same-priced items together.

Don't price things too low. The price is a starting point. People will offer less.

Be ready early. If your sign says 7 a.m., they'll be there at 6 a.m. or earlier.

Get friends to help. This makes it fun and efficient. Plus it's safer. Friends can help you keep an eye on the house and the cash.

Try selling some things through eBay drop-off stores. This could bring in a little more cash than yard sales typically generate. Here are some local stores: Sell the eWay, 5060 W. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach; 561-381-7575; Quick Drop, 6931 W. Broward Blvd., Plantation; 954-792-2222; Easy Dropoff, 2316 S. Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach; 561-832-0056.

Try a preview sale/party. Friends make great customers!

— M.B. ROBERTS

minimum price. I didn't and fetched only \$5 for a \$200 suitcase.)

Step Two: Packing

Everyone knows, loading and labeling boxes by room works best. This we did. We held back some irreplaceables (autographed baseballs, etc.), and packed them in the car for the 900-mile drive to Florida.

When we arrived at our mortgage broker's office for the closing, we were tired, grumpy and overwhelmed with papers. The seller's agent arrived one hour late and slapped down a pile of keys on the table.

"I have no idea what these go to," she announced.

I resisted the urge to mentally calculate and her commission and tried to focus.

"How do we set up the water account?" I asked. "I couldn't do it by phone."

The agent said the water was turned off. Her client hadn't paid the bill and we would have to go in person to straighten things out. It was 4:50 p.m. on a Friday. Painters were due Saturday and I thought what fun it would be to have them washing brushes (not to mention flushing toilets) with bottled water all weekend.

My mortgage broker called a City of Hollywood manager who turned on our water if I

promised to pay the deposit first thing Monday. I was truly touched and didn't even gripe about the enormous deposit.

Our movers arrived Sunday evening. They were professional, but next time I would call ahead and ask how many would be in the crew. Our driver brought his wife and 10-year-old daughter to move the entire load and although they worked diligently, the process was excruciatingly slow with just 2½ of them. It took till midnight and got dicey at times as there was very little light in the house.

They always say, "Set up your stereo first." Next time I would make sure we had plenty of lights and bulbs.

And next time, I wouldn't be the one to run out for pizza. When I did, Ronnie (who was anxious for the movers to finish), told them to just put things anywhere. Six weeks later, we will still be hauling boxes labeled "Kitchen" from the guesthouse.

Next time . . . well, the only thing keeping me sane right now as we continue to settle in is the fact that there won't be a next time.

Hurray for Hollywood!

M.B. Roberts is an author and freelance writer.



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