

THE YARD SALE

By John F. Hall

My son, John asked me to help him during the annual 400-Mile Yard Sale. He set up three folding tables and used two trailers to display the items that he wanted to sell. The



yard sale was held on a corner lot located at Highway 68/80 and North Montgomery Road. My wife, Paula was not able to help because of her medical condition and the fact that she cannot tolerate the heat. The lot belonged to her uncle J.M. Towler. He and his wife, Susie operated one of the 'Mom and Pop' grocery stores in Trigg County. The store was demolished when Highway 68/80 was enlarged to four lanes. The state took the front part of the lot and J.M. Towler kept the back part of the lot.

The lot is adjacent to the Wildcat Chevrolet dealership and the Rocky Ridge Baptist Church. The Pastor of the church does not allow cars and pick-up trucks to park in the church parking lot during the yard sale. It might be a liability issue should someone get hurt on church property. J.M. Towler's son, Jimmy inherited the lot when his dad died. Jimmy keeps liability insurance on the lot that has no buildings. The Pastor is not too happy with Jimmy because he will not sell the lot to the church. And the owner of the Wildcat Chevrolet dealership is not happy with Jimmy because he will not sell the lot to the dealership.

The late singer, Ricky Nelson wrote a song called "Garden Party." He wrote it because he was booed at a concert. These are just a few of his lyrics: "Went to a garden party to reminisce with my old friends. A chance to share old memories and play our songs again. When I got to the garden party, they all knew my name. No one recognized me, I didn't look the same. But it's alright now, I've learned my lesson well. You see, ya can't please everyone, so ya got to please yourself..".

I can appreciate what the late Kentucky writer, Jesse Stuart felt about writing stories. It became his life. I feel that Christ loaned me the talent, and gave me the drive to write more stories than I thought was possible for a man in the twilight of his life. He gives me the grace upon grace upon grace and His Word inspires me. I just came to the yard sale to help my son. I had nothing to sell. Oscar Wilde wrote that a cynic is "a man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing." I feel that what is trash in the eyes of one person, can be a treasure in the eyes of another person.

My son set up three folding tables and used two small trailers to display the items that he wanted to sell. I came to the yard sale on a Friday afternoon and parked my car under one of the two shade trees on the lot. The only excitement to occur that day happened when about ten cars came racing down the road. One of the men at the yard sale pointed to the lead yellow car and said: "That's a \$700,000 Lamborghini Aventador! The yellow car came by so fast that I could only get a distant picture. I later learned that the Lamborghini

can go from zero to 62 mph in 2.9 seconds and its top speed is 217 mph. Nine more Lamborghinis of different colors came speeding by.

I assumed that the cars were heading back to Nashville. It was the first time I saw \$7 million dollars worth of cars, in one place, go speeding by in less than ten seconds. My Ford Escape has four things as those over-priced cars. It has four expensive tires.

On the Saturday morning of the yard sale, the temperature was expected to reach 90 degrees. I was the first person to arrive on the lot at 7:00 am. I parked my Ford between



the two shade trees on the lot. The night before, I put an eight by twelve-foot tarp, four wooden paint extension poles, four hollow metal posts, three metal chairs, and a battery operated radio in the Ford. I opened the back hatch of the Ford and secured one end of the tarp to the front of the hatch. I put the wood poles inside the metal posts. When I reached the height that I wanted, I used Duck tape to fasten the poles inside the metal posts. I used hay bale string that I fastened to the ground with screw drivers.

My son was sitting in his lawn chair, under my make-shift tent. I took his picture as he



was explaining to a friend the problem with pickup truck sales. He told this friend that Wildcat Chevrolet had 29 prepaid orders for new trucks, but they were on back order. He said the world is in the grips of a global chip shortage because the demand for semiconductors has surged beyond the capacity to supply. And the car makers have it the worst. The Chevrolet dealer told my son that they would give him the highest price for his truck. But my son told him that it was not for sale.

Jimmy Towler scratched his leg and it was bleeding a little. I carry a first aid kit in the Ford and I gave him a band aid. His granddaughter, Jamie brought her dog to the yard sale. I noticed that the dog was getting very thirsty. I got the plastic cover from the McDonald's big breakfast, that I had finished earlier. I filled it with ice cold water, and the dog drank it all. The dog went to lay down under Jamie's lawn chair in the shade. What surprised me is that Jimmy had a horse blanket for sale. But it did not interest the Amish or the Mennonites that came to the yard sale.

I like to watch the people that came to the yard sale. Several Amish and Mennonite families came. One Mennonite family came with the grandmother, the mother and five daughters. They were all barefooted. Later, an Amish family came. The women all wore black dresses, black knee high socks and highly polished black shoes. They wore the same style white bonnet. I said, "How are you ladies?" The mother responded, "Fine, Thank you." They gave me the impression that they had just come from a funeral.

The Amish play volleyball because the game is considered acceptable for both boys and girls to play together. When my youngest granddaughter, Heather was five years old, she was in kindergarten at Heritage Christian Academy in Hopkinsville. Her class was making tiny pilgrim men and women out of various household items. Paula and I were in a restaurant with Heather when an Amish family walked in. Heather whispered to us, "Look! Pilgrims!" We had to try very hard not to laugh because Heather really believed they were pilgrims.

During the yard sale, a little girl came and sat down on the clover grass near my son's pickup truck. She was taking pictures of us, from a distance of about 30 feet. She may have just been given the iPhone and she was concentrating on getting as many pictures of the people at the yard sale as she could. She stood up and continued to take pictures. As she walked by, I took her picture. I waved at her and she waived back. I wondered why she was taking so many pictures. Under my make-shift tent, my son, his wife Lori, her parents and Joe Jones, my son's friend were enjoying the shade.

My son built about a dozen corn hole boards two years ago. My wife, Paula sewed the bags for the game. Each bag contains 16 ounces of corn. Eight bags are required for each game. My son put large U K letters on both boards. Last year, a college girl wanted to buy the game, but my son would not come off the asking price of \$200. He kept the game in his garage for a year. I gave his wife, Lori some paper towels to wipe off the year-long dust on the boards. I had a roll of blue painter's tape and a marker. I tore off a four-inch piece and wrote \$200. I put the tape on one of the boards. My son set up the corn hole boards by his short trailer. The same college girl came back to the yard sale. She asked Lori if she would take less than \$200. Lori said, "No!" The college girl pulled out two \$100 bills and did not bat an eye. My son carried the boards to the college girl's car. The college girl realized the value of that game, to her, was the asking price.

My son helped Jimmy take the ping pong table off Jimmy's trailer. Lori mounted the small net on the table. I asked Jimmy the price that he wanted for the table. It was old and well used. He said he wanted \$65. I tore off another four-inch piece of painter's tape with the price written on it. That game sold in 20 minutes. Jimmy and his wife, Janet were ready to call it a day. I helped him hook his trailer to his pickup truck. It was time for me to disassemble the make-shift tent that I made from the tarp. I pulled up the screw drivers that held the tent pole strings, and I removed the duck tape from the wood/metal poles. The make-shift tent provided the welcome shade. There is a reference in 2 Corinthians, Chapter 5, Verse 1, that compares a human body to a tent. These are the words found in that scripture: "We know that the earthly tent that we live in will be destroyed. But we have a building built by God. It is a house in heaven that lasts forever. Human hands did not build it."

My Ford Escape's battery died from the back hatch being open and the lights staying on for nine hours. I should have disconnected one of the battery cables. I keep a small tool bag with jumper cables in the vehicle. My son gave me a jump to get the Ford started. I came to the yard sale to help my son. Along the way, I found a story to write and share with others. We only get to keep what we give away. My readers determine the value of

my stories. In Philippians, Chapter 2 Verses 3-4 are these words: “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interest but each of you to the interest of the others.”

John F. Hall

*Read other stories by John F. Hall at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>