

Changing Spaces Chatter

The latest information, news, and rightsizing tips from Lincoln's premiere senior move management company!

3rd Quarter - 2015

When Our “Stuff” Has A Story To Tell

Recently, another Changing Spaces SRS staff member and I had the pleasure of volunteering at the filming of an episode of Antiques Roadshow in Omaha. It was such an interesting experience, to see the thousands and thousands of people come parading through the CenturyLink Center holding all sorts of fantastic items, large and small. There were over 5,000 people in attendance, and each person was allowed to bring two items to be appraised: that's 10,000 items that were appraised all in one day!

Of course, there is always a glimmer of hope that your item will be one of the chosen few (only 50 or so were filmed for television) but many folks that I talked to really just wanted to know more information about their item. They wanted the appraiser to tell them if the story they had always heard about the item was true. Or, more likely, they wanted to tell the story about their item to someone else, someone who would care. The lines for appraisals were long (some very long), but I was amazed at the good spirits everyone had as they waited for sometimes up to an hour or more for their appraisal. I saw folks everywhere making friends with others in line, telling each other what they brought, how they got the item, and what they knew about it.

It's hard for me not to compare an experience like this to my daughter's preschool, where they have “Show & Share” every Wednesday. I'm in no way trying to belittle the experience of bringing a (sometimes) valuable antique or artifact to an appraisal event such as Antiques Roadshow, but the sentiment is the same, isn't it? Those 4 and 5 year olds get excited every week to bring a different toy from their house, stand up in front of their classmates and tell the story of that item. Isn't that what all those folks at the Antiques Roadshow were doing, as well?

In our work at Changing Spaces SRS, we become the audience to which our clients share their stories about their items. Sometimes they are asking us what we think we can sell the item for at one of our estate sales, but most other times they just want someone to listen, someone to care about the story behind the item. They want to share what this item means to them, and to know that it matters. That they matter.

We say it all the time: *Stuff is just “stuff.” Objects don't hold memories, people do. You can't take it with you.* But even though it's just stuff – it does matter. The people we work with matter, and their stories matter. That's why one of the most important things we do for our clients is listen. Sure, we manage the logistics of the move and the estate sale, but the most valuable service we provide is the listening, and the caring.

We see you. Your stuff matters.
Your story matters. You matter. After all,
isn't that what all of us want to know?

~Jeannine Bryant, Owner



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Rightsizing & Relocation Assistance

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Our Services Include:

- Assess your new residence, measure your furniture, and create a customized floorplan for your new home.
- Assist with the downsizing process of all your household's contents, room by room.
- Provide moving boxes and packing supplies, and carefully and efficiently pack all items for the move.
- Arrange moving dates and times with a moving company.
- Supervise and direct movers on moving day.
- Empty refrigerator and freezer items, transporting perishables to new home.
- Unpack and organize essentials in your new residence (make the beds, plug in lamps and phones, unpack bathroom and kitchen items) on move day so you can be comfortable in your new home the first night.
- Put everything – furniture, knick knacks, clothing, dishes – in its place in your new home.
- Make the beds, hang pictures, connect phone, TV, computer, clocks, etc.
- Dispose of all packing material and boxes.
- Empty old residence of all items not moved, either by hosting an estate sale, online consignment sale, or arranging for charity pick-up of items.

A few photos from our day at the Antiques Roadshow recently:



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Downsizing: Advice from those who have been there before

We know that downsizing is hard. We see it all the time. We try hard to meet our clients where they're at, and realize that even though we guide our clients through this process each and every week, this still may be the first move this particular client has been through in 20, 30, 40, or even 50 years. It's easy for us to say, in an offhanded way, "It'll be alright. You'll feel so much less of a burden once you've downsized." But it's not our homes, now is it? And it's not our stuff. It's their home, their stuff.

So when we interact with clients who are moving, especially to a retirement community, we remind them that the other residents there have all been through exactly the same process – virtually everyone had to downsize in order to move into their new apartment. They know what it's like to say goodbye to family mementos and make difficult decisions about what to keep and what to give up. So in an effort to give good advice to those considering a move, we decided to turn to the experts – our former clients! We surveyed some of the wonderful folks we've had the pleasure of knowing in the last few years and they shared some of their wisdom about rightsizing with us.

One of the universal pieces of advice they shared had to do with deciding on the "big stuff." In fact, this is often the first step we take with clients – a floorplan. Making a floorplan, to scale, and measuring your furniture to that same scale is essential, said many of our clients. It allows you to enter into move day with a clear plan of what furniture will go where in your new home. Once you know which furniture will be moving, you'll have a better sense of how much (or how little) storage space you'll have. This dictates how much of the "small stuff" you can bring.

This is where one of the biggest challenges came from, said our former client Ron, who said that "furniture was easy to deal with but personal family items were difficult." He wished he had started earlier and made a box for each child/grandchild for when they were sorting family items. One way he made it easier was to sort through photo albums and remove the pictures. He took them to Costco in Omaha, where they scanned the photos onto a DVD for him. There are other companies online that will do the same.

Another client, Marlo, wished he had tackled some of the "problem areas" of his home sooner. For him, that meant his woodshop. For others, it might be a basement or garage. The items in these areas take a bit more planning and work to clear out – whether you plan to sell, donate or give away the items in these areas, often it requires quite a bit of sorting beforehand, so start early!

For clients Gates and Daisy, the hardest part of the entire process was just "thinking about it!" Oftentimes, the anticipation is worse than the actual event. This is why we encourage clients to simply put one foot in front of the other and take the transition in small steps – taking action always feels better than inaction, coupled with "stewing." Now that the process is over, say Gates and Daisy, they are so glad they went through the rightsizing process. "There is so much less work for our own children in the future," they said.

Ed and Vickie echoed that sentiment, saying they are so glad they went through the rightsizing process when they did: "We decided where stuff was to go, someone else did not make the decisions. We didn't have to relinquish control to kids or others." Starting early, we always say, keeps you in the driver's seat.

In the end, the best reminder came from Ed and Vickie who said: "Things are just things. We haven't forgotten mom just because we don't have her cranberry compote any longer." ☺

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Join us for one of our upcoming estate sales!

July 10-11: 1717 Indigo Road

July 17-18: DOUBLE SALE! 7146 South Street and 1427 A Street

July 24-25: 5940 Cullen Drive

All sales run Friday 8:30-5:30 and Saturday 8:30-3:30

All items full-price Friday

25% off Saturday 8:30 a.m. -Noon

50% off Saturday Noon-3:30 p.m.

For more information on all sales (and photos of sale items!) check out our website at www.ChangingSpacesSRS.com and our Facebook page "Changing Spaces SRS."

To receive e-mail notifications of all our sales, e-mail us at info@ChangingSpacesSRS.com

Do you know someone who needs to have an estate sale?

As always, we do free in-home consultations for anyone interested in our services. Calling sooner is always better than later – our weekend dates do tend to fill up quickly!

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