

**Resource List for Decluttering**  
**Donna G. Spann**  
Part of the *Declutter for Life* series

**Note:** Some of these resources are specific to Northern VA where I live--these are noted with an \*\*\* -Everything else is available either nationally or internationally!

**Formal Wear & Accessories:**

Bridesmaid/Prom/Ball gowns, costume jewelry, dress shoes, dress purses, dress suits (guys) and other accessories—we ALL have these laying around the house! Turn that dress you know you're never going to wear again into a blessing for someone else!

\*\*\*Donate during May for **The House Inc.'s annual Cinderella Ball** – they give them to students with disabilities or life-threatening illnesses and give them an evening of feeling like a prince or princess. What a worthy cause! The items are collected by **Jewelry By Design** (my very favorite jewelry store and owned by Christians) at 2932 Prince William Parkway, Woodbridge, VA 22192, (703) 580-8880  
[www.jbd4u.com](http://www.jbd4u.com) - they only do this at particular times of the year, so check with them first.

**Donate My Dress** is another organization, not limited to Northern VA is [www.donatedmydress.org](http://www.donatedmydress.org) - “the first national network to bring together local dress drive organizations across the U.S., we help you find one in your area so that once you've had your dream night, you can give another girl hers!”

**Extra or no longer wanted Bicycles & Scooters:**

Sometimes it's hard to let go of the “first” bike, the trike or just the extra parts lying around that are too good to throw away. This guy will come and pick them up! He refurbishes them or uses the parts to make new bikes given to underprivileged children or schools to use as incentives.

\*\*\*“**Dr Bike**” **Charles Jones** 703-780-5026 or [chasrjones@earthlink.net](mailto:chasrjones@earthlink.net)

For all areas of the country, check this site for options to eliminate all those outgrown bikes and spare parts!

[http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4587481\\_donate-bicycles.html](http://www.ehow.com/how_4587481_donate-bicycles.html)

**Donations:**

\*\*\*I have a friend who does yard sales all summer long to raise money for missions. Simply drop the items off in her driveway by the garage doors anytime. They will provide you with a receipt for your taxes if you ask.

**Linda A. Nichols**

6414 Rosehill Drive

Alexandria, VA 22 -- You can also send her a message on Facebook

**Purple Heart** - to schedule online for a pickup- <http://zc.purpleheartpickup.org/>

I was able to go online and schedule a pickup for the NEXT MORNING! It was FABULOUS to see that truck roll up and remove a mountain of STUFF from my front porch—absolutely FREEING!

**AmVets** - <http://www.amvetspickup.org/pickup.php>

**GoodWill** – Donation centers: <http://locator.goodwill.org/>

**Salvation Army** - [http://www.use.salvationarmy.org/use/www\\_use.nsf/vw-text-dynamic-arrays/B126E05AEAE85714802572E300062069?openDocument](http://www.use.salvationarmy.org/use/www_use.nsf/vw-text-dynamic-arrays/B126E05AEAE85714802572E300062069?openDocument)

***Make sure you only donate good stuff though—it cost SA over a million dollars in one year to dispose of trash that people dumped off on them in the name of “charity”***

### **Baby Stuff:**

**Crisis Pregnancy Centers** ALWAYS need good condition baby clothes, blankets, equipment (depending on their storage space) to give to young moms who have chosen to give their baby life. Call for drop off times and items currently being accepted.

\*\*\***Capitol Hill Crisis Pregnancy Center**, 713 Maryland Avenue Northeast

Washington D.C., DC 20002-5233

(202) 546-1018

And

\*\*\***Life Choices Resource Center**— Alexandria and Fairfax (serves GMU students too)

703-323-8060 <http://www.slmregnancy.org/index.html>

**To find other crisis pregnancy centers:**

<http://www.optionline.org/>

<http://www.crisispregnancy.com/>

### **General Selling:**

**Yard/Garage Sale** – It’s all about LOCATION. If you live on a cul-de-sac deep in a neighborhood, no matter how well you advertise, it probably is not going to pay off for the amount of effort. Best to get together with a group on a busy street. The Boy Scout troop at Harvester PCA has been doing a Spring and Fall yard sale on their Rolling Road facing lawn for the last couple of year’s with good results—consider suggesting that to your church youth group, missions group or other group that needs to raise funds for a project or trip and then rent a table from them for the event.

**Craigslist:** [www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)

Cautions: if you have large items that require people come to your home, make sure you are not alone when they come. Whenever possible, meet people at a neutral public location like a Starbucks or McDonalds. Vet the buyer before you spend valuable time— if they are unwilling to identify themselves and give you a cell number, be suspicious. You will quickly develop a sense of when people are serious and when they are not. Be prepared for lots of spam and no-shows. This can be VERY time consuming, but profitable. Count the cost. My girls and I decluttered our house and set aside the cash for a trip to see their older sister graduate from Biola University in California along with a day trip to Disneyland—in three years we made over \$2000! We continue the practice to

save up for the “next vacation” – makes it easier to let go of things. If something doesn't sell within a period of time, I donate it. Sometimes that's my “fleece”. ☺

**Ebay:** <http://pages.ebay.com/sellerinformation/index.html>

**Amazon:** My daughter, Linzy, graduated from Biola U in California after 4 years. We live in VA. She had a LOT of stuff that we couldn't move from CA to VA and then to MN after her wedding a month after graduation. She used a combination of Craigslist and Amazon to sell nearly everything! There are some fees, but often you will get more for an item on Amazon than you will on Craigslist or Garage Sale and frankly, because they help you with “fulfillment” it's way easier. Time is money!

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/seller-account/mm-product-page.html>

## **Books:**

**Amazon (textbooks):** FREE SHIPPING!

[http://www.amazon.com/b/?ie=UTF8&node=2205237011&tag=googhydr-20&hvadid=5151583975&ref=pd\\_sl\\_757jy5wyvm\\_b](http://www.amazon.com/b/?ie=UTF8&node=2205237011&tag=googhydr-20&hvadid=5151583975&ref=pd_sl_757jy5wyvm_b)

**Ebay (textbooks):** FREE SHIPPING!

<http://sell.half.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?HalfBuyback&action=welcome>

\*\*\***HEAV Used Curriculum Sale :**

<http://www.heav.org/convention/ucs/index.html> - Now offering a “SAVE TIME WAIVER”!

## **Other Homeschool Conventions:**

See the Old Schoolhouse Magazine website for this and so much more!

<http://thehomeschoolmagazine.com/HomeschoolConventions.php>

By the way—LOVE this website for all things homeschooling!

\*\*\***C&W Used Books** – for Trade credit—great for fiction, children's books, dvd's, etc.

Just know that you're going to end up with MORE books—so use this to get rid of the ones you don't need anymore (or the children have outgrown) and get the books you DO need for now. Think “rotation” NOT “accumulation.”

<http://candwusedbooks.com/about-us/>

**Library donations** – will provide a receipt for tax purposes—drop off anytime they are open—you only need to put down how many hardback, how many paperbacks and #of DVD's, VHS, cassette tapes, etc. If you're serious about using a tax donation (and you're claiming over the \$500 limit, I'm pretty sure you need to list the books, condition, etc.)

## **Hazardous Materials and Paint:**

Getting rid of paint and other “hazardous” materials – Oh how they pile up in the garage, basement, shed...we won't even TALK about all the out-gassing of poisonous fumes into your living environment...time to literally CLEAN HOUSE—get rid of those cleaning supplies you thought you'd give a try and didn't like, the paint that you can't remember which room you used it in, the fertilizer that's older than your high schooler—for your safety and theirs, get rid of it.

Here is a list of what has to go to a particular site for disposal (and the location and hours) plus what you can throw in your trash. Did you know you're supposed to take your nail polish and removers to a "hazardous waste disposal site" :-). Anyway, here is the website that lists all the what and where.

*Note: Home Depot and Lowes sell a product you can put into a can of paint that will solidify it so you can dispose of it in the trash if you prefer.*

\*\*\*<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/trash/dispfacilities.htm>

**To find a location in your area, google "hazardous waste disposal" and your city or county.**

## **Building Supplies, Construction Materials, Furniture**

Have a few tiles or flooring left over from a big project? Can't get rid of that old armoire? **Habitat for Humanity Restore's** are the place! Back in your vehicle and offload all those odd pieces of trim and (literally!) the kitchen sink—these folks are more than happy to have them. Items are used in construction of Habitat homes and also made available to anyone for purchase at seriously discounted/cheap prices. Matter of fact, if you're doing a building project, check your local Restore first! Save you lots of \$\$\$\$ Donations are tax deductible too!

\*\*\*Habitat for Humanity ReStore, 7770-G Richmond Hwy (Behind Gold's Gym), Alexandria, VA 22306, 703-360-6700

[www.habitatnova.org](http://www.habitatnova.org)

Outside Northern VA: <http://www.habitat.org/restores/>

## **Computers and Electronics:**

***Note: I had a stack of old laptops with the hard drives removed and posted them on CL for \$25. They sold that day. My husband couldn't believe it. LOL***

**Gazelle.com** is a website that buys back computers and other electronic gadgets. I've not used it myself, but have heard it advertised by someone I think is pretty careful about who they endorse—but check it out yourself:

<http://www.gazelle.com/>

If your stuff is beyond donation, buy back or you just need it gone, **Keep It Green partners with ServiceSource** to accept these donations and have their workers (who are disabled and mentally handicapped) take them apart and recycle the pieces. What a great service! They have two locations—Alexandria and Manassas.

<http://www.servicesource.org/contract-services/other-business-services/computer-recycling-keep-it-green>

The only thing you might have to pay for is if you have one of the old cathode ray tube monitors—they charge \$10 for the special handling those require. DO NOT put those out by the curb—you can get a hefty fine—they are illegal to put in landfills—and frankly, we don't want them there anyway—nasty stuff gets into the ground and eventually, the water. It's worth \$10. You can even arrange pickups for large donations or large items like copiers (you pay 20 cents per pound for floor model copiers and printers tho.) Still worthwhile!

**National Center for Electronics Recycling (NCER)** locator:

<http://www.electronicrecycling.org/Public/default.aspx>

**Best Buy** will take nearly anything—even pick up large TV's etc. regardless of where you originally purchased it. Some items they will give you trade-in credit for toward something new—definitely worth checking out!

<http://www.bestbuy.com/site/Global-Promotions/Recycling-Electronics/pcmcat149900050025.c?id=pcmcat149900050025&DCMP=rdr0001422>

## **BEANIE BABIES!**

For those of you who have more beanies than space, there are great places to donate them to:

**Beanies 4 Babies** needs MANY new or great condition Ty brand beanies that are given to aid preemie babies—from their website: *“While in the incubators, these tiny, struggling babies require constant care and movement to maintain them and keep them as comfortable as possible. This is the point where your donation of a small (like the Teeny Beanie's Mc.Donalds was giving out) or regular size Ty brand Beanie Baby is desperately needed! You see, the soft, moldable toy will be cuddled next to or under the tiny baby to hold tubing, equipment, and/or to adjust the infant in a position it is unable to hold on its own power (they're teeny tiny newborns, after all). Beyond the medical need the baby also mentally needs these Beanie Babies! They are alone inside those incubators... while a healthy baby born on or close to its due-date can be cuddled and held by their family, these premature babies we seek to help often cannot be. Quite often, they are too fragile to even be bathed beyond having a cotton ball gently and lightly pressed against their skin. Without the Ty brand Beanie Babies, they would have nothing and no one to hold onto while in the incubator.”*

Personally, I can't think of a better use of a Beanie—NOTE: They MUST be TY for health reasons, the pellets Ty uses are safe for the sterilization procedures necessary to make them safe for the preemie babies—Ty copycats have pellets that emit toxic gases when heated, so make sure you're sending **JUST** Ty. Here's the site and address: <http://www.beanies4babies.org/donation.html#how> or mail to: Beanies 4 Babies, c/o Jhennicea Morrow, 1685 E. Commerce Ave, Gilbert, AZ 85234, email [beanies4babies@gmail.com](mailto:beanies4babies@gmail.com) . Within 24 hours of receipt they will send you a confirmation (tax deductible) and the beanies are in the hospital within a week.

## **OTHER STUFFED ANIMALS (under 12”)**

**Stuffed Animals for Emergencies** is an organization that wants stuffed animals for children impacted by the tornados that ripped up Tuscaloosa, MS—another GREAT reason to declutter your stuffed animal jungle and help someone else: <http://www.stuffedanimalsforemergencies.org/>

\*\*\*There is a “chapter” locally which is currently accepting NEW (not used) stuffed animals and other items: Shelley S., Woodbridge, VA, [justplainegeorge@yahoo.com](mailto:justplainegeorge@yahoo.com) **Check her site to see which items she is currently accepting:** Usually, the list includes new stuffed animals, new toys, gently used toys, new children's books, gently used children's books, new baby/children's blankets, gently used baby/children's blankets, new pajamas.

If you go to the Stuffed Animals for Emergencies main website, there are links to other WONDERFUL organizations that can use the items that are burdening you to lift the burden that others are carrying—PLEASE make full use of these!

## **Decrease the phone calls & junk mail coming into the house!**

Free registration for **National Do Not Call Registry**:

<https://www.donotcall.gov/default.aspx>

This literally takes seconds—I registered my home, all 5 of our cell phones and my parents' phone in less than a minute. Done Done and Done. AND it no longer expires like it used to AND you can file a complaint if someone violates it (which is especially easy/gratifying to do with telemarketers and robocallers who use up your cell-phone minutes and interrupt your day!

**To opt out of direct mail, unsolicited credit card apps, etc.** go to this site:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt063.shtm>

you can opt out for six years online or PERMANENTLY if you print out the form and mail it with a signature after registering online. Also has links to file a complaint, if you need to. AND you can **OPT OUT OF JUNK EMAIL** – it won't catch everything (especially spam from overseas) but it may decrease some of the junk and save you a mouse clicks a day. The link to opt out of junk mail and email is broken on the government site (I'll resist the urge to editorialize here), but here's the one you need:

<https://www.dmachoice.org/dma/member/home.action>

## **For SERIOUS declutter issues/remodeling/move:**

**Rent a Roll-off or Dumpster:**

<http://www.suite101.com/content/how-to-rent-a-dumpster---trash-hauling-a202801> tells you how to figure out if you need one, and if so, what kind, how big, etc. google "dumpster rental" and your city or county and you get a list of vendors—check with BBB first before working with one.

\*\*\*In Virginia: The "foursales.com" guy mentioned below has his own, so if you are in a situation where you need a dumpster, you might talk to him first before doing it on your own.

Downsizing a home/emptying a storage unit?

\*\*\*<http://www.foursales.com>

This is an ingenious business. This guy, Don Sanders, will take care of any amount of "stuff."

His people will remove all the items from your home (if there is enough), take it to another location, price it, sell it and keep a portion of the proceeds. Think of it—all those boxes GONE and you get a check. Yep. He offers several options—If he hauls it all away and sells/disposes of it, he charges the cost of the truck plus keeps 40% of the proceeds (worth every penny, in my opinion). Don tells me that when he meets with a potential client (consult is free) he makes sure that there is at least a \$3-4000 potential for auction to ensure it is worthwhile for both he and the client. If he comes and does the sale in your home, he keeps 30% but there is a minimum fee. If he meets with a potential client and doesn't think they have enough to make an auction/removal/in-house

sale worthwhile, he refers the person to a “buy out guy” that Don has worked with for many years who will take the smaller loads. Regardless, according to Don, he has the equipment (auction trucks, junk trucks, etc.) and ability to handle ANY amount of stuff/decluttering. He works with a lot of folks who are downsizing and relocating as well as estate. Consult is free. He tells me his is a “one stop shop” and you don’t even need to bother with all these other resources (but I’m gonna give ‘em to you anyway ‘cause there are some really worthwhile ones).

There are, unfortunately, a lot of crooks in the estate sale company business—too many for me just to put links here. Ask around—contact your local retirement community (the one my parent’s moved to actually had a list of recommended vendors that they had checked out and worked with before). You might also check with a realtor or broker you know and trust. I personally use Angie’s List [www.angieslist.com](http://www.angieslist.com) for finding service people and checking out businesses before using them—Companies cannot pay to be on it and for a small annual membership (usually offered half price on Groupon!) folks like you and me can look at the history of a company, reviews by customers, awards, Better Business Bureau report, etc. At the very least, check any company you are considering doing business with out with Better Business Bureau! <http://www.bbb.org/>

This list will be ever changing and ever expanding! If you know of creative and helpful ways to get rid of your clutter by sharing it with a business or organization for whom it is NOT clutter, please email me at [donnaspann@gmail.com](mailto:donnaspann@gmail.com) and you will be participating in a win/win/win!

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