

THE SECRETS TO BEING SUCCESSFUL WEST BOTTOMS FLEA MARKET VENDORS

BY CYNTHIA BILLHARTZ GREGORIAN
cgregorian@kcstar.com

All those West Bottoms warehouses chock full of pretty vintage stuff. Where does it come from and how does it get there? Via vendors, of course.

As a rule, each warehouse holds one flea market, and each flea market leases space to dozens of vendors, more than 600 in all. (Some warehouses, like [the Painted Sofa](#) and [Varnish & Vine](#), are one-vendor boutiques.)

And those vendors spend a good portion of their waking hours finding, fixing, painting, creating and artfully staging their merchandise.

The first weeks immediately after the monthly First Friday sales are spent hunting, then turning the items into something to covet. Gary and Sally Paredes, vendors at [Good JuJu](#), work seven days a week to stock their space. They estimate that they spend 30 percent of that time shopping at garage, yard and estate sales, as well as auctions. The other 70 percent is spent fixing things up. Sometimes they find stuff on the curb, especially on days when municipalities do bulk pickup and residents put out their unwanted furniture. “I found pieces of a table on a curb one time; I put it back together and got \$200 for it,” Gary says. “We see chests of drawers sitting out all the time, and they’re solid wood, so we stop and grab them,” Sally says. “We find old workbenches, and we clean them up and wax them and people use them as kitchen islands. Garage sales are OK, but you have to go to a lot to find just a few things. I really like estate sales because I can get a look at a lot of things at one time.”

Read more here: <http://www.kansascity.com/living/home-garden/article85288352.html#storylink=cpy>