

GOLD PARTY: Hidden Treasure

Trap

Kelli from Boynton Beach couldn't resist the invitation to go to her friend's party in Boynton Beach. **A gold party!** It sounded fun, and she had a big box of discarded jewelry. She excitedly went to the party across town and met a lot of people equally excited to sell their gold, enjoying wine and snacks. There was a professional looking lady weighing the gold and writing checks. Kelli handed over her bag of jewelry and made more than three hundred dollars! She even got a tip on how she could start her own gold party business. Later that night she wondered if she got such a great deal. Her hubby was also not happy about her selling his high school pendant.

Tips

The gold bullion exchange industry is largely unregulated and Florida does not require licensing. There are ways to avoid a gold party nightmare:

- First, decide if you really want to sell your gold. Jewelry can often be worth more than its salvage weight when you include artistic or sentimental value.
- Gold parties may be fun and convenient, but may not give you the best deal. It is important to know the karat of your gold and to get it appraised beforehand. Call a local jewelry store or go to www.goldprice.org.
- Keep in mind nobody does business to lose. Gold parties operate with many costs such as host commissions, the buyer's time and the refiner's costs. These expenses mean your gold may be bought at up to half of what it is really worth.
- Be wary of buyers who lump your gold into one pile. Sort your gold by karat weight beforehand, and be cautious if told your gold is of a different karat.
- Understand the scales. Gold is measured in Troy ounces (31.1 grams). Shady buyers will weigh gold in what's called pennyweight (1.555 grams) and pay you in grams. Make sure you are paid the right price for the unit of measurement.
- Remember that many reputable jewelry stores also will purchase your gold and estate item pieces.

For more information, call Palm Beach County Consumer Affairs at 561-712-6600 (Boca/Delray 888-852-7362 toll free)