

# Larry's

## HEATING & COOLING

**920 Broadway, Yankton • 665-9461 • 1-800-491-9461**

Thirty five years ago, Larry Olson was a young man working for the Montgomery Ward tire center in Yankton, part time and sometimes full time, and the company closed its' doors putting Larry in quite a dilemma.

Larry was given an opportunity through a friend to enroll in a federal program called "CEDA". This program offered vocational training to young men who had earned less than \$600 in the previous six months.

In Larry's first year of training he became the best student out of twenty-two who were enrolled and he studied HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning). After his first year the CEDA funds expired and Larry was expected to pay for his second year's tuition, but with no money available he was forced to quit school.



**Larry's first store front business in 1981**



**...and we grew larger**

While working at the tire store Larry met his future wife Peggy. Neither of them had much money, Peggy was cleaning motel rooms and after they were married, she worked at Kmart.

In 1981 Peggy and Larry pooled their meager resources and paid \$180 for the first month's rent on a small house in Yankton, located at 416 Burleigh. They chose this particular house because it had a double garage where Larry could work on appliances and HVAC equipment. Although it had just a dirt floor – it was a start.

Larry spent the last of his money, \$20, on some business cards and he also took out some small ads in the classified section of the newspaper letting people know that he would service their HVAC any time, day or night. His service business grew because his competitors would not work on weekends or offer service in the middle of the night.

To this day when a customer calls for service, day or night, a human voice answers the phone, 24 hours a day. Larry and his staff pride themselves on offering 24 hour service.

Larry and Peggy bought an old van that cost a whopping \$300 and after three years in the service business they were also able to buy a bigger home with a shop.

This was the start of their appliance business. No store front, but word of mouth advertising

brought people to their shop, buying good used appliances. Peggy now worked full time in the business, answering phones, taking care of the books and still finding time to raise two children.

They soon enlarged the shop by 2,000 sq. ft. and bought the property. This allowed them to purchase some Admiral and Crosley appliances and they were in the new appliance business.

Their next move was into a store front. Larry and Peggy talked the local bank into financing a building with 4500 sq. ft. It was two stories high and they added more people and became a Maytag dealer. The first year in the store their business soared. Larry then added another 1700 sq. ft. to the property.

Never content to stand still, the poor boy from the plains of South Dakota wanted a bigger store. In 1997 they looked at a corner supermarket store that had been empty for years. It was run down and needed complete restoration but that didn't matter to Larry, it was the square footage and the visibility he wanted – the location at 920 Broadway, Yankton has been home for over 18 years.

Larry liked the idea of adding furniture and in 1998 they purchased the Slumberland franchise. With the Heating & Cooling, Appliance, and Furniture, they employ 25 people and are always looking for more honest, hard working people.

Larry and Peggy's business just keeps growing, and Larry says, "All I ever wanted was to help people." And that's just what they've done for 35 years.



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