

# VINCENT'S NEWS

## The 'Van-Go' Gallery



*OWNER'S CORNER*

**61 Years of Excellence!**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

*Through My Eyes* 1  
*"Hissing Noise"* 1  
*Did You Know...* 1  
*What Our Clients Say* 3  
*Word Search* 4  
*Humor* 4

### Did you know...

...it's important to have periodic preventive maintenance inspections of your entire home?

This includes your electric wiring, water and drain lines and - as the nearby article highlights - your natural gas – or propane - delivery system.

## THROUGH MY EYES

A friend challenged me to share some of the dumb things that I have done. I said I would, but - wow - after all the years I have spent trying to forget about them?

And so as I sifted through my repressed memories a pattern emerged. Some of the dumbest things I've ever done were early in my marriage and involved Christmas gifts for my wife, Karen.

So this month I want to share "Three Things a New Husband Needs to Learn NOT to Do at Christmas."

### Lesson One...

**Repress Any Urges to Be a Joker and Play a Trick On Your Wife.**

I actually learned this lesson on Christmas just a few days before

we were married. I thought I would be clever and play a trick on Karen. The trick was that I had bought something

*"Wherever you see a 'Vincent's Van Go' you know the job will be a work of art."*



Here are Karen and I, then and now. - Daniel Squires

***Continued Page 3***

## The "Hissing Noise" The Homeowner Heard Was Natural Gas Dumping into the Basement

Recently our techs Michael and Marvin both averted situations involving improperly installed natural gas lines that at minimum saved major property damage and possibly lives.

Michael was dispatched on a Saturday service call for a hissing sound in the furnace. He assumed

that he would find a restricted air filter that was causing the noise - a relatively benign problem. What he found instead was very dangerous.

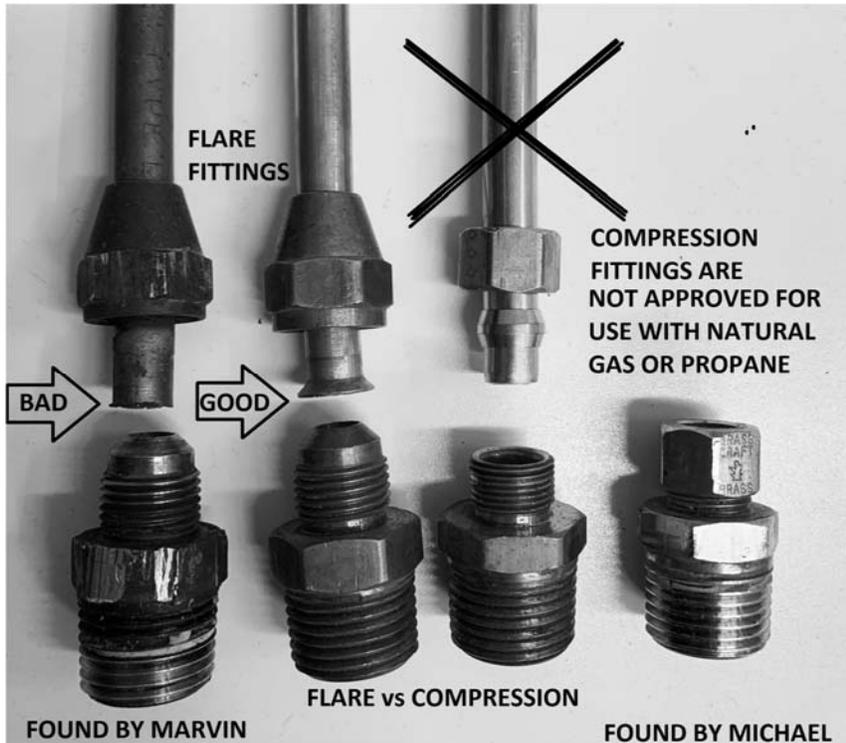
After introducing himself to the customer, he noted the smell of natural gas when he entered the house. He made a mental note to recommend a gas leak check. His concern

immediately escalated as he descended into the basement and the smell of gas became stronger. He quickly abandoned the idea that the hissing sound was a noise caused by the furnace filter - the furnace was off.

Scanning nearby he immediately discovered the problem: a copper

***Continued Page 2***

## Gas Leak ... (Continued from Page 1)



"The arrow labeled 'GOOD' points to the properly made bell-like flare on the end of the copper tubing. The mating surfaces of the nut and the fitting are designed to match the flare on the tubing to create a gas-tight seal."

gas line had completely broken off at the fitting. The hissing sound was raw natural gas dumping into the basement! Seeing no accessible shutoff nearby, he raced up the stairs and then outside to find the main shutoff to the house at the meter.

After shutting off the gas and airing out the house, he inspected the problem. The damaged gas line was copper tubing that served a gas log in a fireplace. It had broken where the copper line had been attached with an unapproved connection to the original hard iron pipe

system. Instead of using an approved 'flare' fitting connection, whomever had installed it had used a compression fitting connection intended for use with water lines. (Shown in the photo above.)

A few days later, Marvin made a similar discovery for a different customer. In this situation, the correct flare fitting connection had been used, but whomever had installed it had not 'flared' the end of the tubing. This means that the tubing was straight and did not have the

(trumpet-like) bell shaped end. The 'flare' is needed to securely fasten the copper tubing, and without it, the tubing slipped easily out of the fitting when Marvin tested it.

Both cases were the result of bad workmanship – probably performed by unlicensed people that had not been properly trained. In Michael's situation, that a compression fitting was used on a gas line shows ignorance of the mechanical code and knowledge of accepted safe practices. In Marvin's situation, while the correct fitting was used, the installer lacked the ability or knowledge to do it correctly. Unfortunately, 'do-it-yourselfers' and handymen don't always recognize when their knowledge and/or abilities are deficient and professional expertise is required - as proven in these situations.

As dangerous as natural gas and propane can be, it is a good practice to have your home's entire gas delivery system professionally inspected periodically to ensure the safety of you and your family. At minimum, this can provide peace of mind – or it might reveal dangerous situations – like the ones Michael and Marvin discovered – and potentially save your home and your life. - Daniel Squires

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Vincent's Heating & Plumbing is proud to install Amana equipment, made in the USA.

## Through My Eyes (Continued from Page 1)

obviously very cheap along with the real gift. I gave her the cheap gift on Christmas eve at her family's Christmas but held off giving her the real gift as a surprise for Christmas day with my parents. Thinking to 'build the surprise' (!) I even recruited one of her sisters to comment to her about what a cheapskate I was... talk about bad instincts! Well, all my 'trick' did was make Karen feel bad and to probably even question whether she really wanted go through with the wedding! I don't think that my real gift made up for how dumb my idea was. That she did marry me proves that she must have really loved me and that she is a saint.

### **Lesson Two...Don't Wait Until The Last Minute!**

I think this one was next year – our first married Christmas together. This was just plain procrastination on my part. First, I was working a lot – that was back when I was still running heating service calls.

Second, I neglected to make a plan. Third, I just waited too long. And so, late afternoon December 24<sup>th</sup> found me scrambling. I remember thinking 'What? – why are all the stores closed already!!!' Except for K-Mart - when it was still on 24<sup>th</sup> St in Port Huron near Lapeer Rd. By then I was panicking. I ended up buying a bunch of random stuff out of desperation. When she opened her 'gifts' I cringed and just knew that she was thinking 'I really married this guy?' as she held up the electric hairbrush that was one of the items. Somehow I survived...

### **Lesson Three...Unless SHE Specifically Asks for Them, Don't Buy Appliances And Things To Help Her Do Housework.**

There is nothing that says 'I Love You' like a new vacuum cleaner or a new coffee maker. Not! These items say something completely different. This was a very

important lesson for me to learn fairly early on. The takeaway from that Christmas was to figure out something 'personal' to buy for her. And even if she asks for something useful around the house, to still get her something personal, too.

Well, here I am having just celebrated my 40<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary with Karen, so obviously I must have learned a few things along the way. And I can only say thank you to her for her patience.

Last year was also a big anniversary year for Vincent's Heating & Plumbing, celebrating our 60<sup>th</sup> year in business. And I trust that I've also learned a few important things along the way about treating you and our other clients well.

Here's to lessons learned in life that lead to lasting relationships - in business with you and my other clients and personally for Karen and me! - **Daniel Squires**

## What Our Clients Are Saying...

We appreciate VHP sending a tech out a week after having a new furnace installed to make sure things are running as they should! Greg was informative & efficient as he explained what he was looking for & answered my questions politely. Overall, Vincent's has made a good impression on us & we will recommend them to any of our friends! Great job guys!!!! Thank you!

*Lynne Cornell—Kimball*

# Anniversary Word Search

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## Humor Section



*The Most Reasons to be  
Your Best Choice*

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A man is reading his newspaper and says to his wife: "Look, Honey. Here is an article about how women use about twice as many words per day as men do."

His wife smiled: "That's because we have to tell you everything twice!"

*May 2020 Be Your Best  
Year Ever!*