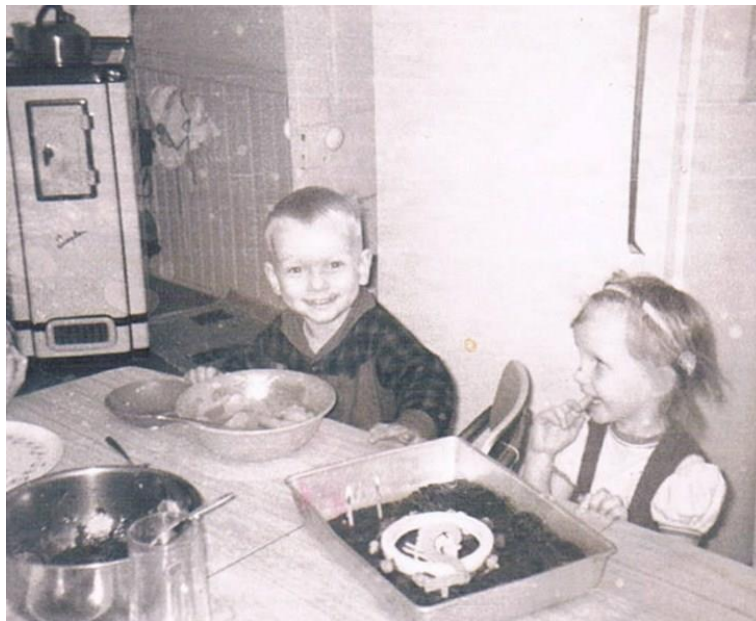


## Florence Heat

The original source of heat in the house at 455 W. Florence Road was two oil burners, the white Siegler in the kitchen and a larger brown oil burner in the living room.

The house had two stairways which did a great job of letting heat rise to the three upstairs bedrooms. My five kids LOVED! to tear up and down those stairs in a big circle....drove me nuts, it did, until I blocked off one set of stairs. They used to ride a pillow down the steps, which worked fine on the back steps but didn't work worth a hoot on the kitchen steps due to the ninety degree turn at its base. Bonked heads did not seem to bother them.

In the picture below are Randy and Sandi by the kitchen Siegler. That stove usually had a teakettle humming on it for moisture in the air. It was the perfect place to cook fudge too. On the floor beside it was a newspaper that held drying wet gloves...and there were plenty of wet gloves with five little kids around.



That's Cindy, Lori, Larry and Sandi in the picture below. It shows the living room stove. Note that puny TV in the corner. By the way, it was Christmastime in the picture and each kid had a big box to stash their loot into.



In about 1966 the oil burners were replaced by electric heat wall units in every room. Oh, we were so modern! Verlyn Rosenstiel installed them. The electric company was offering a drastic rate reduction during the winter months for people with grain dryers and we qualified so electric heat was a slam dunk for us.

Below is the wall unit in the family room plus Randy in one of his more serious moments in 1979:



Eventually, Com Ed cut off the reduced rates so the next step was a wood-burning furnace in the basement with ducts built to the family room and kitchen. Ah, that wood heat was so nice! Of course, the need for wood to burn facilitated buying and cutting up logs, the purchase of a log splitter and a shed to store the wood. That's the wood splitter under the plastic tarp below.



One year we bought a truckload of logs and Art Ross spent a good bit of time cutting it into furnace-size hunks.



Dad's green trailer hauled a whole lot of wood to the house.



The wood was tossed into the flop-door basement entry and then stacked in the basement. It was a job to haul and stack it all but, oh, so satisfying to feel all that good heat.

For a few years teen-age Cindy worked the closing shift at McDonalds and we always knew when she had a rough night. After midnight you would hear the “whack, whack” of Cindy venting her frustrations by chopping logs with an axe. I can still see Larry, parked in front of the family room duct with a quilt over his head and the grate, just absorbing all that wonderful wood heat.

Eventually, an LP furnace was put in place by Duane Eisemann as a backup for the wood burner. There wasn't always somebody home when the wood furnace needed more fuel and the uninsulated house cooled off fast so the LP furnace was yet another improvement.

I left Florence Road in 1998 and the property was sold a few years later. I have no idea what kind of heat is keeping the house toasty now but I have fond memories of my five little kids playing in a warm home.

