

# Gagnon from page 14D

with the past 10 years. Where are all these former service technicians who quit these rip-off companies because they couldn't sleep at night due their guilt feelings. In my finest Timmins, Ontario, vocabulary, let me put it this way, "Where in the flaming hell, is everybody? Lyn Bankes and I need your help."

Just a couple of true stories and there are many.

A few years ago on my television show I interviewed a service technician who had worked for an appliance service company for a period of six years. We blanked out his face and changed his voice so that nobody could recognize who he was. During this half hour interview, this man informed the viewing audience of how many ways he would rip off eight to 10 customers each day.

The company he worked for is still in operation today and continues to do exactly what he described. This is that man's story as I remember the interview.

"I would go into a home to check out a washer which had quit operating. I removed the back lower cover and would see a broken wire to the motor which I left hanging there. I would inform the homeowner that they needed a new motor installed in the washer and that would take care of the problem. Their cost for the complete repair would be \$220 and that because of the excellent

condition of the machine, I would recommend repairing it versus buying a new washer. If the customer said they were not going to have it repaired, I would clip one of the motor windings or internal wires to make sure the motor wouldn't run if they called someone else to check it.

"In the vast majority of cases though, the consumer said go ahead and do the job. I would then remove the old motor and take it out to my truck and place the old motor into a neat cardboard empty motor box of which I always had plenty. I would walk back into the home with the customers old motor in a new box under my arm and complete the repairs. All I did, really, was remove the old motor and reinstall the old motor and then I fixed the broken wire. I earned several hundred dollars a day working for this company for over six years."

Folks, that's the end of that story, but he had many others.

I once went to a home where a man had a cold control replaced on his refrigerator for a sum of \$300. The service man was in and out of the house in less than a half hour and the control cost should have been \$26. I checked the control that was supposed to have been replaced and found it to be the exact control that was installed at the factory.

I asked the homeowner if he had watched the service man replace it and

he answered "No."

When the service man had quoted him the price of repairs, the homeowner asked why it should cost so much. The service man grabbed the customer by the shirt collar and asked him if he wanted the blankety-blank thing fixed or not. The customer said yes and went and sat on the chesterfield until the man was done. He wrote the man a check for \$300 and never moved off that sofa for the next two hours.

I went to court with that homeowner who was dying of cancer and weighed all of 82 pounds. I know, I carried that frail old man in my arms into the district court of Westland.

These are just a few stories of the many I've seen and experienced and maybe it's just enough to get you thinking of why Lyn Bankes and I need you. Drop me a note, I'd like to hear from you. Stay tuned next week — I'll tell you how to find the many good appliance repair companies that are out there in consumer land.

Joe Gagnon, the Appliance Doctor, will answer your questions about maintaining and repairing large appliances. Gagnon is president of Carmack Appliances in Garden City and does a weekly radio program on WJR-AM. He is author of "First Aid from the Appliance Doctor," available at area bookstores.

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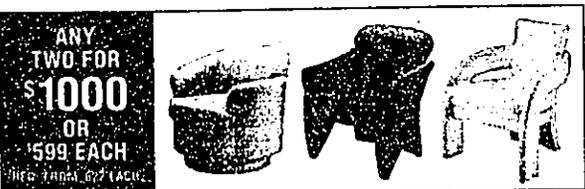
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