

# SUCCESS STORY

## WILLISTON 2023



### HOME COMFORTS

**WILLISTON** - Dale and Bev Salmen embarked on a unique entrepreneurial journey in their sixties, allowing for new purpose in their lives. Their move from Minnesota to western North Dakota was unexpected. Dale first arrived in the area to take on drywall projects and was drawn in by the local charm. In 2014, he began working with his brother-in-law at a wireline company in Williston, and Bev followed in 2015.

The couple's venture into entrepreneurship began when they stumbled upon an empty retail space, sparking their entrepreneurial spirit. Dale

recalls, "It was pure chance, I suppose, that there was an empty space. I would drive by it all the time." With the help of a friend who had interior design expertise, they made the decision to establish a home interior focused retail store.

In 2017, Home Comforts officially opened, specializing in bedding, florals, furniture, and home décor. Their best-selling products include pillows and sheets. Bev's commitment to helping people create cozy home environments was apparent, and they carefully select items from various vendors and artists.

The whole Salmen family has played a crucial role in Home Comforts. Their son-in-law helps with furniture deliveries, grandchildren assist with pricing, and four of their sons have invested in the business. Previously, Bev had been a stay-at-home parent, a master gardener, had experience in retail, and co-owned an art gallery with her husband back in Minnesota. Also, Dale's past experiences in drywall and wirelines, along with co-owning the art gallery, broadened his skill set and adaptability to various opportunities. Their shared passion for connecting with people through art was a driving force in their journey to Williston. Their dedication has paid off as they consistently expand their business. Bev proudly states, "We've grown every year, so that's been huge."

While their future plans remain open-ended, their determination remains undiminished. Dale values the unpredictability of running the business, stating, "Every day is different. You just never know. You can plan out your day and then things happen and pretty soon you are 180



The Salmen's lending package for their initial Home Comforts location included a commercial loan from First State Bank, a Bank of North Dakota buy down program, and the local Star Fund, along with owner investment. Their ongoing dedication and utilization of available resources not only transformed their vision into a thriving business, but also brought comfort and joy to countless homes in North Dakota.

Home Comforts was recognized at the 2023 Williston Economic Development and Williston ND SBDC awards as the Existing Business of the Year. Congrats to Bev and Dale on this recognition.

degrees from where you started." Their journey of growth led them to relocate Home Comforts to the former Kum & Go location in Williston, providing more space for their showroom and office. They celebrated the grand opening at this new location on May 4, 2023.

Dale attributes their success to recognizing opportunities and taking risks. He offers valuable advice to aspiring entrepreneurs: "You do the best you can to mitigate your odds. Then, at

some point, you just have to go for it." Bev echoes this sentiment, encouraging others to make full use of available resources and to stay curious. The North Dakota Small Business Development Centers (ND SBDC) and Keith Olson, their advisor, played crucial roles in their journey. Dale expressed his gratitude, noting, "He (Keith) gave us seemingly unbiased and educated advice. Because he knows all the resources, he gave us his opinion on what it would be like. And he was so spot on."



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