

Metzger Family



he name Metzger was brought to Frankenmuth in 1955 by John F. Metzger, who became the president of the local bank and a civic leader. John was born August 10, 1930 and was baptized in St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Saginaw, Michigan. He was the first John Metzger within memory to be given a middle name. John's German heritage can be traced to his great-grandparents, the John Metzgers, who were enticed to emigrate from Freiburg, Germany to Neusatz, Austria-Hungary (now Novi Sod, Serbia) along with other villagers, in 1845. They were to develop the farming potential around Neusatz and act as a "buffer" between the Hungarian, Serbian and Turkish factions.

His grandfather, also named John, was a carpenter and shoemaker born May 8, 1883, in Neusatz. He married Theresa (Sebele) April 26, 1906. Their only child was a son named John born February 2, 1908. John Metzger brought his wife and young son to America in 1910 after he served a mandatory tour of military duty in the Austrian-Hungarian Army and recovered from a bayonet wound suffered in combat in the Balkans in 1905. The family lived in Cleveland, Ohio, before settling in Saginaw, Michigan, in 1912. John Metzger died May 25, 1946. His wife, Theresa, lived 20 years longer until January 29, 1966. Both are buried in Roselawn Memorial Cemetery in Saginaw, Michigan.

John and Theresa's son John married Alma S. Blower April 6, 1919 and they had four children. Their oldest was a son named John Frank (Hanz Franz) – keeping the Metzger tradition of naming the first son John intact for yet another generation. Incidentally, all of the John Metzgers the family can trace going back some 200 years were born on a Sunday and died on a Sunday. The couple's other children were: Rita J., June Y., and Norma P. John owned and operated a wholesale/retail oil and gas distributorship until his early death April 26, 1953. His son John F. purchased the business from his mother that year and retained ownership through the 50's.

John F. Metzger married Lois E. Trinklein October 24, 1953 in St. Lorenz Lutheran Church. Lois' uncle Reverend Herman Zehnder performed the ceremony. Lois was the daughter of Otto and Linda (Zehnder) Trinklein. Her mother was the oldest child of William and Emilie (Bickel) Zehnder and a sister to William Zehnder Jr., the patriarch of the Bavarian Inn Lodge family. Lois and Judy Zehnder Keller, owner and president of the Bavarian Inn Lodge, are first cousins.

The John F. Metzgers moved to Frankenmuth in 1955 after John F. began a job at the bank April 1. Eventually, he advanced to serve as President of Frankenmuth Bank and Trust – a position he held for more than 10 years. He was a recognized leader in the local area and the out of state banking circles.

In the community, John F. served as President of the Frankenmuth Chamber of Commerce, President of the Lions Club, President of St. Lorenz Church, President of the Frankenmuth Development Corporation and Treasurer of the Frankenmuth School District. He received a Presidential appointment from President Gerald Ford in 1977 and was honored as an outstanding Civic Leader in America in 1967. He also received a "Commendation" from the Commanding General of the 46th Infantry Division MNG in 1951.

John F. and Lois had four children: Mary Kay, a CFP and stockbroker; Linda J. Woodle, a registered nurse; John Otto, a certified public accountant; and Michael J., a lawyer and securities specialist. As of December 2005, the Metzger family included 8 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild. After retirement, John F. and Lois divided their time between Naples, Florida and Frankenmuth, Michigan.



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