

Galsterer Family



he Galsterer name in Frankenmuth today invokes the thought of Ford cars. However, Andreas Galsterer, the originator of the Galsterer name in Frankenmuth, was a farmer. Andreas (1819-1887) was born in Defersdorf, Koenigsreich Bayern, Germany on October 19, 1819. He was baptized the following day and confirmed in 1833. There he married Gertraud Warnick (1819-1879). Together they left from Rosstal, Germany, traveled to the port of Bremen, and then sailed to America in 1847. Arriving in Frankenmuth, he settled on a farm just $\frac{3}{4}$ mile west of Main Street on Junction Road. Here Andreas and Gertraud raised their family of five children: Johann Georg (1851-1928) who married Clara Laura Will; Lorenz (born 1852) who married Rosina Margaret Hildner; and Anna Margaretha (born 1864).

Johann Georg, being the oldest son in the family, remained on the farm where he and his wife Clara Laura raised their six children. In the early 1900's the economy in Frankenmuth revolved around farming and few young people went to high school. But John sent his children on to receive a higher education. Carolina Anna Barbara (born 1890) and Rosina Barbara (born 1895) both became nurses; Andrew John (1899-1967) became a dentist and practiced in Frankenmuth; Edwin Karl (1900-1970) became a prominent obstetrician in Saginaw; and Hedwig Margaretha (1893-1945) was a bookkeeper at Star of the West in Frankenmuth.

Friedrich (Fred) Lorenz (1899-1965), the oldest in family, worked as a blacksmith and made \$1 a day. When he married Charlotte Rupprecht in 1916 his wages were doubled to \$2 a day. He studied business courses at Bliss Alger College in Saginaw. In 1918, he took a look at the country's transportation needs and got out of the business of shoeing horses. Instead, he began selling "horseless carriages".

In 1924, there was one Ford model, with one color and one price. A Model T Ford was black and sold for \$385.

Many times clients had to be taught to drive before they were able to buy a car. Not everyone had cash for a down payment. A team of horses, a tractor with big steel wheels, a cultivator, stock in a cheese company, a bowling alley, blue spruce trees, and a vacuum cleaner are just some of the unusual trade-ins at that time for a new car. When the car dealership was just starting out, Fred purchased a school bus, the first school bus in the county and very possibly the first in the state. He also purchased a truck to haul coal.

Fred's interest in politics led him to become Frankenmuth Township Supervisor for 10 years and later to serve as a County Road Commissioner. Besides being a firefighter in the community's volunteer force, he sold insurance, was active as the treasurer of St. Lorenz Church, and always furnished new cars for weddings during the early days of the dealership.

His interest in bowling led him to build a bowling alley next door to his dealership. Later when a new bowling alley was relocated to Main Street, the lanes from Fred's bowling alley were used as a business building.

Fred and Charlotte had four children: Walter, Lorine who died as a young girl of seven, Martin and Arline (Wenzel). Fred's sons, Walter and Martin (Marty) followed in their father's footsteps, continuing the family business. The dealership is presently managed by Fred's grandson Michael Galsterer (son of Marty). Marty's other son Robert is also involved in the dealership. Fred died in 1965 and is buried in St. Lorenz Cemetery.



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