

Frank and Nora (Vanderhoof) Aigner

Franz Aigner was born in Frankenburg, Austria on November 1, 1874, to Jacob and Maria (Streicher) Aigner. Shortly after his ninth birthday, he came to America with his parents, four brothers and two sisters. The family settled in Kiel, Wisconsin where Frank received his education and became an apprentice in a cigar factory. The family moved to Sheboygan, Wisconsin around 1890. He moved to Marshfield in the early 1900's, where he was involved with cigar making, working in the factories of George Wilhelm, John G. Hoetz, and Kohl & Herman. He was a member of Marshfield's first band, the famous Second Regiment, in which he played baritone.

Nora Vanderhoof was born on June 23, 1884 in the Town of Sherman, Clark County, Wisconsin to Elijah and Melinda J. (Gosline) Vanderhoof. When she was about a year old, her parents left her in the care of her grandparents, Theophilus and Elizabeth (Wells) Gosline, and they headed north to the Ashland/Hurley area where Elijah pursued the lumbering trade. The couple soon divorced, and Nora's mother married a second time. Two short months into this second marriage, Melinda became ill and died of spinal meningitis at the age of nineteen. Nora remained with her grandparents on the farm in Sherman Township until after her grandfather's death in 1893. Her grandmother sold the farm at that time, and they moved to a home on Cleveland Street in Marshfield. Her father remarried and started another family. When he moved west to Idaho, once again following the lumber industry, Nora remained behind with her grandmother. During her teen years she was busy attending school and learning the trade of dressmaking. She met the "popular young cigarmaker" (according to the Marshfield News), and they were married on January 7, 1904 at St. John's Catholic Church by Rev. John Eisen. The wedding reception was held at Grandma Gosline's home that afternoon and evening, and the couple moved to the Knippel residence on the corner of S. Chestnut Avenue and Depot Street.



Frank and Nora (Vanderhoof) Aigner, 1905

Frank soon built a home for Nora and his family on Chestnut Avenue to the east of Columbia Park and near their church, St. John's. (Their daughter, Virginia Stauber, now resides in the home.) It was here that Nora gave birth to, and they raised eight children: Edna (Mrs. Howard Trowbridge), Oscar, Florus (Mrs. Donald Johnson), Roger, Francis, Robert, Virginia (Stauber), and Richard.

As the cigar-making trade began to dwindle, Frank tried his luck as a proprietor of a shoe store, located on Chestnut Street across from the present post office. This venture was short-lived, and he accepted a position with the Felker Manufacturing Company, where he stayed until his retirement. While Frank was earning a living, Nora was busy raising their children, running the home, tending her vegetable and flower gardens, and darning socks over light bulbs. Probably the most heart-wrenching experience they endured was when their youngest son, Robert, returned from World War II paralyzed. He was shot in the neck by enemy fire in France. Frank had parallel bars installed on each side of their sidewalk for Robert to use as he tried to rebuild strength and walk again. It didn't work, but the effort put forth by both father and son was never forgotten. One favorite memory of Frank and Nora's children and grandchildren is gathering on the front porch on Wednesday evenings with Nora, and proudly listening to Frank play his baritone in the weekly concerts in Columbia Park across the street.

Frank and Nora were practical hard-working people. Their lives in Marshfield coincided with much of the city's growth and development. He served the community as a supervisor of the First Ward, was a member of St. John's Holy Name Society, the John Eisen Council and the Knights of Columbus. She was also active in the

church as a member of the Altar Rosary and Missionary Societies. Frank died on July 17, 1965 at the age of 90, and Nora died at the age of 83 on September 14, 1967. They are buried in Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Marshfield.

*Submitted by Patrick Johnson
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