

VanDevelde Family



The schools in the Frankenmuth area were operated by the members of St. Lorenz Lutheran Church until 1901. At the urging of Pastor Craemer, who visited Frankenmuth in 1855, the congregation opened an “English School” in 1858. Mr. Carl Pfeiffer was “called” to teach in this school. After being instructed in German in the morning, the older children would attend the “English School” in the afternoon to participate in English-language studies. Teacher Pfeiffer and the teachers that followed him were salaried by the township, not by the church. This arrangement continued so that in 1900, St. Lorenz Lutheran Church paid the salary on only one teacher, the other seven being salaried by the township.

In 1901, St. Lorenz was informed that this arrangement would no longer be permitted. St. Lorenz decided to take full responsibility for educating the children in the township for grades one to seven. The “English Schools” were closed or became schools offering only the eighth grade. This was the beginning of Frankenmuth’s public school system as it continues today.

In 1961, Frankenmuth Public Schools had an enrollment of 695 students—348 attended kindergarten through eighth grades, 347 attended the high school.

During this same time, Frankenmuth Public Schools needed a teacher of instrumental music. James A. VanDevelde, having just graduated from Michigan State University with a bachelor degree, accepted the position and moved to Frankenmuth in August.

James A. VanDevelde was born February 1, 1939 in Norway, Michigan to Gustaf and Agnes Tousignant VanDevelde. He was baptized February 14th at St. Barbara’s Church in Vulcan, Michigan, and confirmed July 23, 1952 at St. Mary’s Church in Norway, Michigan.

James attended Norway High School where he was class president of both his junior and senior classes. He was selected for the Michigan State University Honors College, where he graduated Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor’s degree in 1961 and a master’s degree in 1966. He taught instrumental music in the Frankenmuth Public Schools from 1961-1993.

James married Verna Darlene Herzog August 10, 1963 at St. Christopher’s Church in Bridgeport, Michigan. They had three children: Mark, Michael and Craig.

Mark James VanDevelde was born April 14, 1964. Mark married Nancy Richards of Dublin, Ohio on July 22, 1989. They had three sons: Andrew Timothy, born July 7, 1995; Nathan Robert, born June 4, 1996; and Dane Thomas born September 1, 1998. Mark and Nancy divorced in December 2002. Mark married Akemi Matsuo of Yame, Japan on June 21, 2004.

Michael Craig VanDevelde was born August 1, 1965. Michael married Teresa Boone Fishback of Atlanta, Georgia May 21, 1993. Michael and Teresa are the parents of Courtney Elizabeth Fishback, born August 17, 1987; Christopher Kyle Fishback, born August 31, 1990; Kennedy Darlene VanDevelde, born December 20, 1993; Kaitlin Eileen VanDevelde, born April 6, 1995; and Quinton Michael VanDevelde, born March 25, 1997.

Craig Robert VanDevelde was born December 9, 1966. Craig married CariAnn Faustin of Essexville, Michigan on December 28, 1991. Craig and CariAnn are the parents of Conner James VanDevelde, born October 12, 1995 and Morgan Diane VanDevelde, born July 18, 1997.

James and Verna continued to reside in Frankenmuth after retirement.



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