

# History of Geier Florist by Dennis Beaupre



Geier Florist was built by the German immigrant, William Geier and his wife Elizabeth (Lizzy) back in 1910. Shortly after they built their business, another greenhouse opened next door. After some time passed, Geier bought the other greenhouse and moved it to its present location.



When Geier retired, he passed the business on to his daughter, Helen. She married a German immigrant named Emil Henrich, and they ran the business together for many years. They built the present structure in 1950. Their two children, Emil Jr. and Betty, worked at the flower shop from the time they were small. Thirty years ago, when Henrich retired, he passed the florist shop on to his son, Emil Jr. He and his wife Joan ran the shop together for many years. Emil and Joan had three children, Michele, Mike and David.



In 1970, their oldest child, Michele, who was a student at The Academy of Our Lady High School, hung around with a crowd of pseudo-intellectuals and musicians who called themselves "The Family". It was then she met Dennis Beaupre, a student at Spalding Institute, the boys' school. She asked her Dad if Dennis could deliver flowers to earn extra cash for Christmas. Emil took a chance.



Spalding Class of 1972



Emil's Daughter Michele, 1970



From that time on, Dennis worked after school delivering flowers and scraping and painting greenhouse bars during the summer. Years went by, and Dennis became part of the Henrich family, becoming more like friends with Michele and coming to see Emil as more of a father than an employer.

Eventually, Emil needed a skilled Floral Designer. Dennis, who was delivering flowers at the time, was confident he could do the job ... so Emil took another chance with Dennis, and sent him to an expensive design school in Chicago. Emil's chance paid off, and Dennis became an accomplished Floral Designer over the next 18 years. He became Emil's right hand man.



When Emil was ready to retire, his children had already established successful lives and careers, so they weren't interested in assuming the responsibilities of a busy and successful floral shop ... so Emil took another chance on Dennis. He would sell the business to Dennis, his most experienced employee.



Dennis purchased the flower shop on January 1, 1991, after working there for more than 20 years. One of Emil Henrich's favorite sayings is, "I taught him all he knows and he still don't know nothing"! But, over the years, he taught Dennis much about running a flower shop and being a businessman. Today, even though Emil is retired, he still works with Dennis (between golf games).



Since 1991 Dennis has made many improvements to the business. He redesigned the front of the building to resemble a New Orleans storefront. He's developed computerized bookkeeping, extended the parking lot, and built a brand-new, modern greenhouse.



His most recent and largest project, the new greenhouse, is a resounding success. Many plans, permits, bids and designs were considered and finally it all came together. The demolition of the old greenhouse began on June 23, 1997, and on July 22, a new house stood in its place. Before this improvement, Dennis and Emil spent many hours repairing rusted support pipes, rotten wooden bars, and loose glass. Today, Geier's modern greenhouse is a safer and more economical addition to the main structure. The new house is made of galvanized steel and covered with a very sturdy material called Lexan. The old dirt floor has been replaced with concrete. Work remains to install bathrooms, water pipes and a new cooler.



So, Dennis Beaupre continues to grow his flower shop into a thriving business. He is grateful for and continues to thank all his customers and supporters. Their loyalty, support and interest in the business will ensure Geier Florist grows into the next millennium.