

# The Voice of Maybee

**Village of Maybee issue 172**      [www.maybeevillage.com](http://www.maybeevillage.com)

**P.O. Box 36 734-587-2900 fax 734-587-6534 Sept., 2014**

---

## Council Corner

At last night's council meeting a resolution was passed listing the job description and compensation for all village personnel. The transfer of Doty Road from Scofield Road to Maybee-Scofield and Maybee-Scofield from the old village limits to Doty road was approved by the council and the maintenance of these roads will now be handled by the village using Act 51 money.

Also the results of a meeting with the State of Michigan Transportation Dept., the railroad and the village president were presented. A new set of crossing gates and lights will be installed on Bluebush Road at no cost to the village. New lights only will be installed at the Raisin Street crossing. The village will still have to pay the railroad a fee every year to maintain the lights and gates.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*

**The Library Table 734-587-3680**

---

**With a whole new website and so much going on, take full advantage of the system by going to**

**<http://monroe.lib.mi.us/>**

**and selecting the Maybee Branch section. There is a lot more to the library than just reading books.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Village Elections

The village elections will take place in November this year and will be held at the Exeter Township Hall. There will be three council seats to be voted on along with the village president position. Council position is for a four year term and the president position is for a two year term. The election now takes place with the General Election.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Keep a watch out for a new business that will be opening in town.**

## When I was a Kid growing up in Maybee....by Marjorie Van Auken

When I was a kid growing up in Maybee, I became privy to the knowledge of...privies. It wasn't a choice I intentionally made, but it seems no matter where I went, I encountered an outhouse. It wasn't as if indoor plumbing didn't exist when I was a kid...it most certainly did! (I'm not THAT old!) It just seemed my destiny to avoid it.

I have always said I was one lucky kid to have been exposed to all the old family farms that still were in operation when I was little. I got to view first-hand what old time farm life in this area was like and reap the rewards that went along with that...like home-made butter, farm fresh eggs, roaming the pastures while avoiding the bull, climbing in haylofts and playing with litter after litter of barn kittens. But along with this style of life also came...privies. The old German farmstead on Hoffman Road had one, my grandparents' farm on Stewart Road had one and the old log cabin gas station had one.

The interesting thing about outhouses is that each has its own personality and often, its own 'history'. For example, the one at the family farmstead was small, had a slanted roof and was equipped with a Sears catalog. Yes, it's true. Sears and Roebuck served more than one purpose in those days! And the more pages it had, the happier the lady of the house was because it would go so much further! It was this particular outhouse in which my mother, in her young married days, once got stranded because my Aunt Helen's flock of 'attack geese' surrounded the privy and wouldn't let her out. Mom yelled loudly for a long time before someone finally heard her and came to her rescue. Of course, she never lived it down and the story survives to this very day.

The outhouse at 1922 Stewart Road where my grandparents (John and Mary Rupp) lived after moving from Maybee also had a privy with a slanted roof. It was half way between the house and the chicken coop and close to the orchard. Sounds charming, doesn't it? Not really. What I recall most about that one was the crooked, creaky door, the bees and wasps that set up house-keeping inside and the occasional garter snake or blue racer that sought out the cool shelter of the outhouse cement step and came between you and your destination. (Apparently all these creatures have a very poor sense of smell...).

My dad's log cabin gas station at the corner of Blue Bush and Blazer had a more sophisticated privy. It was a large gray/white washed wooden building, divided in the middle so ladies had one side and gentlemen the other. I don't recall snakes or stinging insects inhabiting that one, but its 'special feature' was a huge water puddle that would form outside the door on the women's side on rainy days which then froze into a slippery skating rink in the winter. My feet flipped out from under me more than once in my quest to reach the door and, I'm sure, I'm not the only one to which that happened.

Even when I went on vacation I couldn't be free of privies. In the early days of 'going up north'...before the extensive system of expressways was in place...and the tourist-friendly rest areas equipped with rows of flush toilets, soap dispensers and hand driers, ( and even pop and candy machines)...the journey took long hours and many roadside park stops (those little oases offering pine picnic tables, ice cold water from hand pumps...and privies.) Stinky, stinky, stinky privies. I certainly have been in enough of them in my lifetime to never, ever forget their aromatic lack of appeal!

It isn't that our society is *totally* free of outhouses even now. But the porta-potties of today have

come a long way in comfort and design. They are self-contained, have a disinfected, clean smell, offer space, purse hooks, hand sanitizer, LOTS of TP, are portable and are a welcome sight at large events. I'm sure they have had their problems with nesting wasps occasionally and some people may have had their humorous experiences with them but probably not the colorful tales that have gone down in the annals of family history. Such as when my dad, as a young man on his boyhood farm, heeded the call of nature just at the time a very serious storm was approaching Maybee. The violent winds not only took the roof off the farmhouse but it blew the outhouse over...with Dad in it...door down! Yep, another family story, hard to live down, and around for me to retell today. And, of course, at Halloween, outhouses were prime targets for pranksters who loved to tip them over causing great inconvenience for the farm family victims. I LOVE the story though about the farmer who had had enough of this prank over the years and went out earlier in the day and *moved* his outhouse forward...so that when the culprits approached from behind...well, you get the picture!

The privy, outhouse, the little house out back...whatever you call them...were a part of my history, perhaps *not my favorite part*...but still a part of my life, when I was a kid... growing up in Maybee.