

# *The Voice of Maybee*

**Village of Maybee**

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## **Council Corner**

The May council meeting had two people in attendance that are running for state office. Both of them were invited to be part of Downtown Maybee Day and meet and greet the residents from the surrounding area. The council also made a decision on the traffic problem on Raisin street from the railroad track North. A three way stop will be installed at Raisin and High Street in an effort to slow down the traffic. A petition signed by the residents of the street was a deciding factor. Council was also asked to attend the public hearing next Wednesday regarding the special land use permit submitted by Stoneco. The hearing will start at 7:00 pm and the public is invited.

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## **Downtown Maybee Day**

For the people that are new to the area the Downtown Maybee Day Festival has been going on for over thirty years. It is a chance for all the people that live in the area to meet in one place for a good time and start the Spring season with a bang. The purpose of the festival was to raise money to help support the Maybee recreation department with the cost of activities at the park. Even though the park was established with money from State grants, this was only a part of the cost. To keep the park in useable condition for the use of Maybee, Exeter, Raisinville and London residents requires a lot of time and effort. Money that is generated by the Maybee Day Festival has helped pay for picnic tables, basketball court, shelter maintenance, and this year the committee will donate \$7,000 toward the installation of new lights at the ball field. To put on an event as large as this requires a lot of time and devotion on the part of a few individuals who want to make the village stand out as a terrific place to live. This Saturday why not become a part of the activities and support the town and the good things that are being done and not just use it as a means to capitalize on the hard work of a few individuals to bring people to the village so you can have your own sale. Ask any of the people that have been part of the committee over the years and you will understand the work that goes into the event. We hope to see you there.

The parade will start at 10:00 on Joseph street and head South to Bluebush where it will head East to Main street. This will be the best place to watch the parade from. This years parade will be one of the longest so far. A note to the kids. People that run for political office love to pass out candy and other items and there will be a few in the parade. Another item for the kids to see this year will be some of the very large equipment used by the stone quarry for mining. It will be on display next to the Post Office.

## Visit the new “Suds n Tubs” Laundromat in Maybee



## Right across the street from First Merit Bank



## **When I was a Kid growing up in Maybee....by Marjorie VanAuker**

When I was a kid growing up in Maybee, I started very early to have an appreciation and love for birds. Dad had implanted this interest in the creatures of the air by his respect for and knowledge of their beauty and habits. Under his tutelage, I learned how to tell what bird was what by its color, its song or call, its size, the manner in which it flew in the air or hopped on the ground, how it built its nest and what color and size of eggs it laid. He pointed out the tiniest of nest built by a hummingbird in the lilac bush in my Great Aunt Julia Karle's front yard on Hoffman Road and drove me to the shores of Lake Erie to show me the immense structure, large enough for a grown man to sit in, constructed by the American Bald eagle. I learned that robins build works of art...tightly woven, meant-to-last nests and reuse them frequently year-to-year, whereas mourning doves are the scatter brains of architecture and toss a few twigs together on any old branch and frequently lose them to the first spring wind storm that comes along.

Dad had bird houses scattered around on his property that were specialized homes for the purple martins, wrens and blue birds. I was in charge of slogging through the snow in the winter with my overflowing seed buckets to make sure the big feeder outside the dining room window was always well-stocked. When driving around the countryside in the fall, not an ear of corn that fell off a farmer's wagon escaped his eye or went to waste. We stopped, scooped it up and placed it on a nail on a post in the back yard for the big winter birds like the blue jays and cardinals.

My house reflects my love of birds. Pictures, nests, figurines, bird houses and feeders are plentiful. I have Dad's collection of hand-carved and painted wooden birds that he collected over the years from an old gentleman who lived outside Shelldrake, Michigan on the shores of Whitefish Bay in the Upper Peninsula. We spent a week in Paradise, down the road from Shelldrake, every year, and *always* stopped on our way to Whitefish Point to visit with Mr. Hawkins to view his latest selection of carvings.

I had pet parakeets as a kid and I took in injured birds when I found them and nursed them back to health. With the birds of the air, I have always had an affinity. BUT, there was one area of 'bird-dom' with which I have literally comes to blows! When it comes to chickens, roosters, ducks, geese...and *even swans*...one might say, I have 'run afoul...of fowl'. I learned very early that those adorable little 'puffs of fluff'...those cute and cuddly chickies and duckies... can grow up to be 'the bullies of the barn yard'!

My grandparents (John and Mary Rupp) always raised chickens for food and eggs. The birds were free-range and wandered the barn yard all day until they returned to the coop at night. Once Grandma had a BEAUTIFUL rooster named Cling (how he earned his name will become apparent). He was blessed with pretty, shiny, multi-colored feathers that shone in the sunlight. He would strut his stuff as if he was God's gift to the hen-house. (And he probably was.) He was definitely his own biggest fan! He 'patrolled' the barn yard, with pomp and circumstance. NO ONE came between him and his harem of hens...a mistake, I, unfortunately, made way too often. When I came into view, he would stop in his tracks...take a bead on me...and start running full speed in my direction, unfurling his wings to full width...just before he launched himself into the air and attacked. He 'clung' onto me with those sharp talons on the ends of his skinny chicken legs while I wailed like a banshee until rescued. Oh, how I hated that bird! It was truly a day of rejoicing when I learned he eventually 'earned' his way into the soup kettle!

When Grandma sent me to the coop to gather eggs I always returned with an injury. She could slide her hand deftly under a setting hen and come out with a warm egg and her skin totally intact. But let ME try it...and I had pecks and pinch marks all over my little hands! Then, of course, there was the flock of geese that held reign as watch dogs and guardians of the old Rupp-Hoeszle homestead on Hoffman Road that would just as soon pinch bottoms and bare calves as do anything else. Thankfully, they raised such a racket when a car pulled in the barn yard, that Great Aunt Helen would quickly appear on the steps of the

summer kitchen and shoo them off, allowing time for visitors to make a quick dash into the house with all their body parts intact.

But my most surprising encounter came when I was a camp counselor at a church camp one summer in the Irish Hills. It was routine to take that week's campers on a field trip to close-by Hidden Lake Gardens. While standing on the edge of one of the hidden lakes, I pointed excitedly to the family of swans swimming gracefully across the lake. I was expounding on my knowledge of the swan and their baby signet to my campers when all of a sudden Papa Swan made a sharp 90 degree turn and started swimming swiftly in our direction. I thought how wonderful that would be to show my kids this magnificent bird up close! But, half way to us, he rose up out of the water and literally took off running across the top of it with his mighty, full-spread wings propelling him at an alarming speed! The kids ran, with me at their heels, but alas! I was the last to flee and the swan caught my ankle in the vise of his strong bill! Thankfully, I was wearing a thick pair of good old Bobby sox and he swam away with only a mouthful of cotton fuzz.

So if given my choice between which segment of feathered friends to hang with, I opt for the smaller, backyard variety...*even though* an owl once chased me down Center Street right here in town while I was walking home from my grandparents after dark...I'll forgive him that. It sure beats being chased and body-slammed by unfriendly fowl! Such was *my* early education of the wonderful world of birds... when I was a kid...growing up in Maybee.