

My Chicken Story



Sorry Mike and Ellie I'm desperate this week so telling my chicken story.

When I was growing up my parents always had chickens. Smelly dirty chickens. Hens for eggs to sell and roosters to butcher. It was my job to gather the eggs and yes, clean out the chicken poop and put down fresh straw. When the hens decided they wanted to hatch the eggs they could get downright mean pecking at you as you reached under them to gather the eggs. If you were fast enough you could throw them off the nest first. Animal cruelty!

After gathering the eggs, you took them inside and used warm water to wash the dirty things. We put them into egg cases and on Wednesday and Saturday nights you took them into town to the grocery store and would use the egg money for buying groceries. Dad parked the car by the bandstand so Mom and my aunt could sit in it and listen to the high school band and us kids

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could walk around town with our friends.

That was the only good thing about chickens and eggs.

Sometimes an occasional hen would go off to the barn and lay a bunch of eggs and sit on them until they hatched. They would then be moved to what was called a brooder house to be protected from other animals. They were fuzzy and cute for a very short time until the ugly white feathers started to appear. Folks also went to Waverly and got huge boxes of baby chicks. So cute for such a short while. Also, I had to feed and water them occasionally. Mom usually did it.

When the roosters were grown it was nothing for Mom to go out on a Saturday and butcher two or three for Sunday dinner because the older kids always came home on Sundays.

The chickens were allowed to run free outside in the warmer weather.

On a fall night the whole family would go out with long wires bent into hooks and nab them from trees, sheds and wherever they were perched and put them into the hen house. Family fun night it wasn't because they flapped all over.

After Bob and I moved to the farm we raised some roosters to butcher for a few years. My Dad would go with me to Waverly to the hatchery where he was friends with the owner. A bottle of

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some sort of booze was traded for about 50 roosters. When the chickens were grown, my parents, Bob's parents, his grandpa and grandma Kollman, and my Aunt Lucille would all come out to the farm for butchering day. The men chopped heads, plucked feathers, and singed them and the women had a line up in the kitchen to clean them. I luckily was allowed end of the line where I cut up and bagged them.

We also had a few hens for eggs. About a dozen hens supplied eggs for us, my parents, and my Aunt Elsie Frericks. Got rid of them after a few years.

Does this make it clear why I HATE chickens?

Mike and Natalie gave us a gift of a room at Hotel Patttee one year. We could have our choice of themed rooms. We said we would take the one that the clerk thought was the nicest. It was decorated with chicken lamps, chicken pictures, shelves with chickens. Bob thought I was crazy but went back and asked for a different room. Got one decorated with Victorian dolls. Much better.

A couple years ago Joyce asked me to buy her a metal chicken at a craft show here in town. Buying a chicken was against my better judgement but I did it. Only because I love her.

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This picture is actually Bob pulling Glenn in the wagon. I would never have taken a chicken picture