

Letter to the Editor in October 11, 2006 issue of Town Crier

Blocking Access?

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter in response to some articles that had been brought to my attention. Enclosed you will find proof of who I am and why am writing this letter. [Editor's note: copy of Deed dated August 21, 1957 enclosed with letter to Editor]

My Dad had a dream of having a home on the lake. From the time I was a few months old, my family rented a cottage every year at Angola, Wide Beach, Point Breeze and a few other places. One year, we met the Baker's, Howard and Helen. Howard, we understand was the nephew Father Baker, and the beach property had been in Helen's family before she and Howard got married. My Mom and Dad became close friends with the Baker's, and rented one of their cottages. We would always rent the last weeks of the season through Labor Day, and stayed to help close up the cottages for the winter.

Mr. Baker told my dad that he had a lot for sale and hoped that we could purchase it and become neighbors. At that time he told us about The Beach Association, and Mr. Edward Schneider II, the President of the Association at that time. He told us that Schneider wanted that piece of property at the end of Point Breeze Drive for their park, but didn't wish to purchase it. He wanted Mr. Baker to donate it, and had given the Baker's grief for not choosing to donate the property. Mr. Baker hoped that if we would build on it, it would put an end to all the grief.

We bought the property, cleared it, and had a split rail fence put up around it to keep cars from parking on it as they had become accustomed to doing so. Then the following year we went out to our property to find we had no beach access, because the Beach Association had put up a locked gate across the road. My dad was furious. He contacted Mr. Schneider, who told my father that if my dad would send a fee, he would mail him a key. My dad told Mr. Schneider that if he didn't mail a key without a fee, he would see to it that the gate was taken down. And so began Mr. Edward G. Schneider II's vendetta. Owning the property was a nightmare. We can't say who, but we would go there finding garbage all over on the lot, the fencing knocked down, and cars parked on the lot. We tried to keep the fence in repair, but eventually the rails disappeared.

One time, my girlfriend and I went to the beach to swim with her four children and my one. We took a small portable grill to toast marshmallows, when out of nowhere appeared Mr. Schneider II yelling, using foul language in front of the children, telling us to get off the beach. I told him that we owned the property and had rights to be there. He replied by saying "Then get up on your property where you belong your beach rights are only 10 feet from the bank!" We did move up to the bank as I didn't want trouble, but the kids were all scared and crying and wanted to go home.

If anyone should be accused of blocking the road or denying beach access, it should be Mr. Schneider II. We had always hoped that Mr. Schneider and the Association would eventually stop this feuding, and we could build, but my dad passed away and his dream was never fulfilled. My mom decided to sell the lot, hoping whoever bought it wouldn't have to go through the nightmare we had gone through. After all, several years had passed.

Mr. and Mrs. Mauer were interested in the property. They have a handicapped son that enjoys the water and the beach. They eventually purchased the property and built a home so their son could enjoy it as long as he was able.

These articles were brought to my attention, and I see this vendetta is still going on into the next generation of Schneider's. What is wrong here? Why can't they let the Mauer's alone to enjoy what they have worked for and deserve to have?

I wish to help the Mauer family in any way I can. I though perhaps by writing this letter, someone might listen and help to end this horror.

Sincerely,

Marilyn O'Neil (nee Kaufman)