

All In The Family: *The Dynamics of Our Relationships*

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or many of us, it is a complex concept. Family. What does it mean, what were our own experiences of it, and what do we do with those experiences? What makes up a *good* family and is it okay to admit the dysfunctional parts of our familial history? This is a topic I approach gingerly in this forum, but it is one I know has been discussed in private, and what it has meant to be a Schneider is of paramount importance that it necessitates discussion and interpretation.

First of all, we have all graduated from our formative years, and are old enough and mature enough to reflect back on our upbringing to have a good perspective on the dynamics present in our family. For those of you who did not grow up with the Schneiders, you can apply this to your own experiences of family.

Secondly, I can only begin to scratch the surface of this topic in this space, and hope that it would provoke thought and reaction from all of you. I would be open to printing such reactions in a future edition of the *Breeze*.

One example of a family dynamic I seem to remember is the habit many of us exhibited of walking away from a confrontation or argument. Instead of rationally working it out, it invariably would lead to heightened levels of emotion, where one of the involved parties would suddenly leave, thus not allowing the issue to be resolved then and there. I found myself doing this one time that comes to mind several years ago, when I had a fight with David, my -ex, while in Rome together. I wanted to walk away from him, to avoid his harsh and angry words. What prevented me from doing so was his warning that if I walked away, I need not come back. Pretty powerful incentive to avoid avoidance. I can remember many times on Colonial Dr. when doors were slammed, shutting out one member of the argument from the other. Healthy? Not really. Our way of dealing

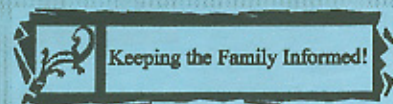
with unpleasant confrontation? Too often true.

Another aspect of our family dynamics that comes to mind was that we were all raised to be very independent. We seemed to have little problem making friends and spending more time with them than with our own brothers and sisters. Was this natural because of our age separations? To some degree I would say yes. For some families, this would only be an excuse. I have seen many families, the Latin families especially, where the children spend a lot of time with each other, confiding in each other, and relying on each other for their main support. We, on the other hand, have shown the tendency to seek our support from people outside the family, whether that be our own spouses or friends. Distance separates most of us, not only geographically, but emotionally as well, to some degree. I say to some degree because I realize that it's not the same for everyone. Having lived on this coast for almost 18 years, I often turn to my friends here for support and advice. I will always have the support of my family, but I can't recall the last time I turned to the family for advice and consolation. If this is difficult to read, it is not an easy thing to admit. Because I have come to realize that my vision of family has been an ideal, a fantasy. We all have our faults, our problems, our inadequacies, as well as our strengths. But it seems to me that it would be far healthier to realize and to *admit* our shortcomings as a family, than to deny them and to live in a fantasy world where problems are repressed or forgotten. This would be detrimental psychologically and spiritually for us, especially if we attempt to raise our own families in the same manner.

Coming to grips with being gay in a world that has traditionally been very hostile to homosexuals has flavored my personal reflections on what it was like to grow up a part

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California Breeze



Keeping the Family Informed!



...with Dad

The last few years we have been accumulating details about our heritage. So now I will give you a skeleton outline going back to your great-great-great-grandfather-Anton Schneider.

1826 Anton Schneider married Gertrude Huerter. They lived in Kehrig (Prussia) Germany, about 30 km. southwest of Koblenz. They had 10 children, all baptized at St. Castor Church. The family came to the USA in 1846. They settled in Gross Point, Illinois, now a part of Wilmette, a few miles north of Chicago.

1851 My great-grandfather, Martin Schneider, the 9th child of Anton and Gertrude, married Gertrude Reidon and they soon moved to Detroit. They had 12 children, including two sets of twins. One of their sons was Peter, my grandfather.

1864 This was the year Peter was born. Probably in the mid 80's he married Clara Hackett, daughter of Patrick and Dora (Regan) Hackett, who had migrated from Ireland. Their 6 children were Viola, Hilda, Harry, Marcus, Clarence, and Louis (you all remember him of course!).

1897 Louis James Schneider was born. He married Evelyn Affeld about 1920.

1924 Louis John Schneider was born (remember me?). Marilyn, EveAnn

and Mary Sue followed in the ensuing years.

1928 Peter died. Clara died within 2 or 3 years, I believe.

1948 Lou and Audrey Lynn were married and you 8 kids know the rest. It is noteworthy to add that the Schneider name will/is being carried on by Jason, Devin, and Gregory (so far).

There are more details of the other family members of Anton, Martin, and Peter which I could relate in the future. I will add that some of the businesses the various uncles and aunts were in, mainly in the west and southwest part of Detroit were a furniture store, a movie theater, a construction business and a brickyard. (I have one of their bricks with the Schneider name pressed on it.) Dad's Aunt Gertrude (a popular name with the family) became an I.H.M. nun--Sr. Winifred.

In the future I will relate the family tree of my mother's sidethe Affelds and the Tischbeins. We will try to get some of the Lynn and McCabe ancestors, too.

A man burst into a psychologist's office. "Doctor, you've got to help me!" he cried. "I keep thinking I'm a pair of curtains!"

"Hmmm," the doctor said thoughtfully, "then my advice is that you go home and pull yourself together."

dates to remember...

August 17: Bill's birthday
(he's gonna be 42!)

August 23: Mary Lou turns 33!

August 29: John and Melissa
celebrate 14 yrs. of marriage!!

And Finally...

You may not be aware that Family Memberships to the Edison Credit Union are available to our children and grandchildren, and included are all the benefits we enjoy. Recent savings dividends paid quarterly were 4.06% on average daily balance; checking at 1.76%. Sample certificate rates: Daily high yield 5.75%; 6-11 months 5.5%; 30-47 months 6.25%; 72 months 7.25%.

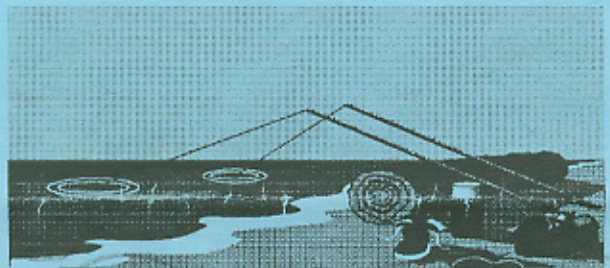
Also available are VISA/Mastercards (no annual fee), ATM cards, Telephone Transaction System with 800 number, new or used car loans; even mortgages for 1st time buyers. If you want to open an account I would be your sponsor and request a form for you. It would take a minimum \$5 deposit to open an account. Let me know if you are interested.

We took a 2-day vacation along the Thumb's Lake Huron shore July 12-14 to avoid the 90-100 degree heat at home. The 1st night was at Lexington at a not-too-bad motel. But the breezes were cool and the view from the bluff was nice, overlooking Lake Huron. The town marina nearby was loaded with boats of every kind and it was fun to walk the extensive sea wall that formed the harbor. After 9 a.m. Mass the next day we drove up the shoreline highway to Port Austin, at the tip of the

Thumb. We were surprised to find there at the Castaways resort motel our neighbors, the Girolamo's, who with about 30 of their relatives were spending their 18th annual reunion at this very place.

Again we enjoyed the broad expanse of water beyond the sandy beach and the hungry sea gulls. About 4:30 p.m., however, the skies quickly darkened and the winds blew hard. The sea rose in protest and large waves pounded the shore as lightning flashed over the water. Beach chairs flew and patio tables slid as we watched from the shelter of the floor-length windows that formed a hall outside our room Mother Nature's fury. The power went out at 5 p.m. Fortunately darkness didn't fall until after 10 p.m. We did find a nice restaurant just 3 miles up the road where power was still on. But back at the motel there were no lights and no water. We slept fitfully that night and left for home at 6:30 the next morning. But, it was a nice change of pace.

Dad



California Breeze

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