

This is an Open Letter to Ray Tartaglione....

Ray, I'm not surprised by your September 4th Journal News article.....Frankly, I expected it sooner.....It was only a matter of time before you took this step in your irrational attack upon the Board Members of the Kuder Island Colony..and the the Kuder Island community as a whole.

I'm of the opinion this article will generate consequences you may not have thought about...Or, maybe you have...I'm unsure what goes on in your mind...Unsure of what motivates your actions...I have some opinions...I shall keep them to myself, for fear of being sued.

The once peaceful island you have recently come to inhabit has, for generations, been a haven for those few families fortunate enough to be able to call it their summer home..a place they can retreat to and be comfortable; enjoy restful evenings and commune with others; or not...a place where, until fairly recently, they could cast their worries aside and drink in the sunsets and awaken to the sound of seagulls and buoy bells....

It is now a place where many have to confront problems unforeseen and unexpected...costly to many who are not as fortunate as you...costly in ways they may not be able to afford.....

Kuder Island has become, through no effort of those living there, an investment...simply due to it's location...an investment which families may want to pass along to their children, their grandchildren....an investment which may now be depreciated substantially.....It's sad to me this is happening....

In your brief time at Hen Island you have taken it upon yourself to be the Holden Caulfield of Hen Island..Literally, The Catcher in the Rye. You have taken it upon yourself to save islanders from themselves, save them from what you may have perceived as their inability to manage their lives, save them from their inability to do what they have been doing for many, many years, without your interference.....live with their island's surroundings, including mosquitoes and trees and wildlife....enjoying every bit of what is included in island residence...

Perhaps the value of individual campsites will withstand the costs associated with apparent unending lawsuits....perhaps. I don't portend to know what the results of all this will be..I do not think they will be good. I see the Soundkeeper is now considering joining in your lawsuit....

Perhaps the Kuder Island community will survive.....Unfortunately, I fear it will not.....Values may follow your "personally observed untreated sewage from these residences discharge directly into the Long Island Sound..".

I find it somewhat confusing that you took the effort to portray Hen Island as a piece of heaven on earth, several years ago, in an article for the NY Times...yet, now you consider it (quoting from your Journal News article) "Tartaglione portrays the island as home to a mosquito-infested collection of ramshackle cottages with makeshift sewage and plumbing systems that leak into the Sound."

Effective today, I intend to personally begin a disfellowship doctrine. I shall shun you along with others who have contributed their support to your lawsuit...."Others similarly situated" : Claudio and Barbara Iodice, Doug Austrian, Lori DeCaro, Dina Santangelo, Red Pfohl, as well as Martha and Peter Barotz...I don't expect you will miss my fellowship. As I have been less inclined to visit Hen Island, with all it's recent turmoil.

Perhaps others will join in my commitment to completely ignore the people I have mentioned.

Michael Johnson