

June broadened the horizons of many in Little Silver, with departures, awards, and new opportunities continuing through the summer.

In our schools, Little Silver was proud to again be the home of Red Bank Regional High School's Valedictorian. This year, Leah Roberts claimed the honor. Leah is off to the University of California at Berkeley in the fall.

We've also got the Salutatorian, Brendan Hickey. Brendan is headed to the University of Delaware. Congratulations to Leah, Brendan, and all of our graduating seniors.

We're very fortunate to have an excellent public high school, generating top students. We'll miss Superintendent Jim Stefankiewicz, who is leaving RBR to become superintendent in Ocean Township, where his own children are students.

In our outstanding grammar schools, our eighth graders graduated in June, the girls in formal dresses and the boys in white jackets. Like RBR, we lost an experienced administrator at Markham Place School, Principal Dennis Morolda, who also left to take a position closer to home.

We wish both administrators well in their new positions. Our school boards worked hard to find worthy successors. We welcome new principal Eric Platt to Markham Place, and interim superintendent Thomas Pagano to RBR.

In town matters, we're losing the services of Rosemary Brewer, the long-time chairwoman of our Environmental Commission. Rosemary will be remembered for appearing, notes in hand, at Planning Board meetings and sessions of the Borough Council to report on the Commission's review of various proposals, suggestions for improving our public places, or concerns over the care being given to our trails, historic properties, or public parks.

We wish Rosemary a happy retirement in her new home state of Utah. We have confidence in her successor, Bonnie Akey, and look forward to Bonnie's leadership and the continuing role of the Commission in town affairs.

The Environmental Commission, by the way, was formed in the 1970's with the assistance of Dirk Van Nest, a long-time Little Silver resident, who was devoted to the environmental cause. I had the pleasure of speaking with Mr. Van Nest once or twice on an issue or two, and was saddened to learn of his recent passing. We extend our sympathy to his family, and our thanks for his thoughtful service.

The last of the June departures is taking place in our tax office. Our long-time Assessor, Steve Walters, is heading to Texas to spend more time with his family. Steve also served our neighbors, Shrewsbury and Fair Haven. We wish Steve a long and happy retirement.

In other tax news, the 2014 tax bill should be available for mailing to residents early in July, depending on the state budget adoption. The due date will be extended to 25 days from the date of mailing. You may view your tax account at any time by going to www.littlesilver.org and clicking on "Pay Taxes Online."

At the firehouse, the Fire Department in June hosted a dedication for its new ladder truck. It was a bittersweet day for our volunteers, some of whom earlier that day had attended a funeral service for Bob Meyer, the Union Beach firefighter who lost his life in the line of duty last month. It was a fine example of the way our area fire departments come together in celebration and in mourning, sometimes at the same time, all in the name of service to their towns, and in mutual support.

By the way, you might want to check with your homeowner's carrier to see if the addition of the ladder truck to the town's firefighting arsenal will lower your premium. It has already helped cause an influential insurance risk evaluation service, the ISO, to improve Little Silver's rating, and the carriers who use that service (and perhaps others as well) may make premium adjustments.

As summer continues apace, remember our air-conditioned, wifi-ready library. The library conducts an excellent reading program, and holds a contest to see who can read the most books over the summer. Stop in, sign up (or sign the kids up and pry them from their electronics for awhile), and treat yourself to the simple (and free, at the library) pleasure of hiding out with a great book.

In closing, please call Borough Hall with any concerns, or contact me directly by calling my home phone at 732-576-8595, or emailing me at bobneff80@gmail.com. On behalf of the Governing Body, we wish you all a safe and happy July 4th.