MAYOR’S MESSAGE, FEBRUARY 2018

We’ve got two nifty events coming up, a couple reminders this month, news of an Olympian with Little Silver roots and a proud hometown grandma, and two police promotions to tell you about. But first I’d like to issue a quick piece of travel advice.

Small towns are often reluctant to issue traffic tickets to its residents, particular to one-time offenders, or those who are just having a particularly bad day. So for seemingly minor violations, typically a warning is issued, and that’s the end of it. Police in Little Silver and other towns have always had that discretion.

The exercise of that discretion is a matter of degree, of course, and is often the subject of debate. In the 50 years or so that I’ve lived in the area, one topic of discussion that pops up occasionally is which towns are really tough on drivers, which are more lenient, and whether the towns who issue lots of tickets due so as a money-makers, rather than as a means of keeping a town safe and simply doing justice.

Little Silver has never asked its police department to issue tickets just to bring in revenue.

But in the coming months, our police officers are being asked to exercise their discretion far less in favor of issuing a warning, and much more often in favor of issuing a summons, particularly for speeding or cell phone violations, and especially near schools, walking routes to schools and the train station, and frequent pedestrian routes. That includes residents and non-residents alike.

So please take heed: the warnings that used to be given out are about to morph into tickets.

By way of explanation, the borough periodically struggles with speeding issues. With seven county roads going through town, three public schools, a nursery school, a busy downtown, a train station, and other public gathering places, it’s often not easy. And it’s a sprawling topic that prompts frequent discussion, with opinions ranging all over the map.

Recently, pedestrian walkways have been repainted, pedestrian crossing signs have been placed at various intersections and in the middle of roadways, new stop signs have been installed, and lit pedestrian crossing signals have been placed at Willow, Prospect and Kings, as part of the town’s efforts to control the flow of traffic. We’ve also issued requests through this newsletter, through the website, and through our officers’ interactions with the public, that drivers stay off their cell phones while driving, and simply slow down. And the governing body is constantly seeking funding to improve or add sidewalks to help make Little Silver a pedestrian-friendly place.

But frustration sets in when some decide to ignore the law and public safety, and continue to speed, or continue to fail to stop for pedestrians in cross walks, or continue to text or talk on phones, despite our officers’ warnings and the public improvements. Sometimes the nice-guy route doesn’t work. So please take care when behind the wheel, be safe, and avoid becoming a victim of a shift in discretion. Help us make Little Silver an even safer place to live.
So on to some fun stuff, and a couple reminders. First, yes, there will be a **second Little Silver Day** this year, thanks to the Little Silver Charitable Foundation. Planning is underway, and interested sponsors can visit lscfinc.com. The event will feature music, games, events, food, and lots of great community action, from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. on June 23.

Near term, **comedian Denny More** will engage the audience with “Mind Games” on February 23 at the Women’s Club, featuring adult magic and astounding ESP. Tickets will be available at Borough Hall starting February 5, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

And in sports news, former resident **Meg Tierney**, a Point Road School alum, has been named to the U.S. Olympic Snowboard Team and will compete in the snowboard cross event at PyeongChang, South Korea. Her dad Chris says he and his wife Sandy and three kids loved Little Silver, but heard the calling and moved west for the snow.

“Who would have thought a kid from Little Silver would be in the Winter Olympics,” Chris writes us. To our Little Silver youngsters, take note: anything is possible! We imagine that Meg’s grandma Kathy, who lives here in town, will be watching.

In police news, officers **Paul Halpin and Kevin Halpin** (no relation) have been promoted to lieutenant to round out our command structure. The promotions are well-deserved, so when you see our new LT’s around town, please offer your congratulations.

Lastly, while it sometimes doesn’t feel like it, spring is not far away. So public works asks that, when you get the **spring clean up** urge (or bring in your landscaper), please remember to separate your leaves from the brush and limbs you put out. And please follow the schedule, which is in this newsletter.

From your governing body, we wish you safe travels, and hope you have the chance to catch Meg in South Korea later this month. If you have any questions or concerns, please call borough hall, or reach out to me directly at bobneff80@gmail.com, or 732-576-8595.