We honored our Eagles and others, reached an historic affordable housing milestone, enjoyed a musical Ramble, and otherwise had a very busy May schedule, with much to come in June.

So let’s get the drier (but very important) news out of the way, with the fun stuff to follow.

At a May hearing, a Superior Court judge approved the town’s plan to accommodate low and moderate income housing. That doesn’t sound exciting, but the decision comes after years of planning, public hearings and comment, and intense effort by everyone involved. Importantly, it provides us with immunity from lawsuits by developers who would seek to usurp the town’s control over its zoning.

That is a huge step forward in preserving the character of our town, while providing a reasonable opportunity for the construction of accessory apartments and other affordable housing, as the Supreme Court requires. Thank you to the many people involved in that challenging exercise.

In other governing body news, after much public discussion over many months, the Council put in place in May a funding ordinance to provide for the installation or (more often) the repair/replacement of certain sidewalks, including on Branch Avenue and Prospect Avenue. In qualifying for a new state loan program that provides 50-percent interest-free loans, we will be able to implement this important safety and aesthetics improvement over the next year or two at a significant savings.

The details will continue to be discussed at our regular public meetings over the next few months, with public comment welcome.

We’re also in the midst of congratulating no less than seven Boy Scouts who have achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. From Troop 67, Erik Olsen and Craig Scharmann have achieved the rank that only four percent of Scouts achieve. And from Troop 126, Richard Kane III, Gianni Perfetto, Robert Duncan, Brendan Loftus, and Marc Brewer will be honored in a ceremony on June 2.

Congratulations to all on reaching that rare milestone, which puts our Scouts in the company of president Gerald Ford, scientist Alfred Kinsey, astronaut and first man to orbit the Earth John Glenn, and others.

Among our other honorees last month was Erin Simon, who won the Recreation Department’s Spirit Award. Erin, a former rec soccer player here in town and high school standout, played in the English Women’s Football Association Cup Championship this year. Erin is a starting defender on London’s West Ham United team, and graduated Syracuse University, which she attended on an academic scholarship. Congratulations Erin!

Honored also were former mayor and judge Tony Bruno, former EMS captain Michael Very (who continues to serve), and current fire chief Mike Welsh, who were all inducted into the Red Bank Regional Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame in May. Judge Bruno and Michael Very were the Little Silver inductees, but (with apologies to Red Bank, where Chief Welsh lived when he was in high school) we also claim Chief Welsh as a dedicated Little Silver volunteer.

Next, our Board of Health has shared information about ticks, mosquitoes, and sun protection to help everyone through the spring and summer seasons. Please look for details in this newsletter, and find further information in Borough Hall and on the website. It’s all about good health and safety.

As we move toward summer, our Library has lots planned, most prominently the kickoff of its annual Summer Reading Program on June 1. The theme is “A Universe of Stories,” and residents can pick up their reading logs and join one of the Summer Reading Clubs (for all ages)
at the Library, which has become a popular community center. Air conditioning! Wi-fi! An outdoor patio!

And speaking of great community gathering places, the Parker Homestead in May hosted its second, highly successful musical Ramble on its front porch and lawn, with another to be scheduled in the early fall. This is a great chance to see some very talented local musicians, so keep an eye on the calendar for the next one. Thanks to Dave Ballard and Keith Wells for teaming up with the Borough to bring us this wonderful event.

In other Homestead news, we are working with our partners in Monmouth County government in a shared endeavor to dredge the pond outside the Homestead, along with an adjacent stream extending behind the Homestead. Our meeting in May was productive, and I expect that we will get that done this year.

Also coming up is National Gun Violence Awareness Day on June 7, when all are encouraged to wear orange. Thank you to Little Silver’s chapter of Mom’s Demand Action for promoting this effort. Little Silver is one of more than 30 towns in Monmouth County to support this call for sensible legislation and gun safety initiatives.

Looking back to May, there were many successful events, including the first town-wide garage sale; a Taste of Little Silver; a celebratory service in honor of the Embury United Methodist Church’s 150th birthday; Student Government Day; our Sports Parade followed by fun and games at the borough fields; our Memorial Day parade and ceremony; and the second Ridge Road Run for Suicide Awareness (about $65,000 raised!). I wish I had more space to write about them in detail.

On the heels of Memorial Day, please recall the heroism of Little Silver resident and Air Force Captain Thomas B. McDerby 33 years ago. He and three crew members were killed when their jet tanker crashed near the former Howard Air Force Base in Panama. He was 29 years old, and had steered his failing craft away from a village, likely saving many lives.

I mention this because Captain McDerby was not killed in battle, and therefore technically is not one of those honored on Memorial Day. His unselfish act reminds us of the perils of military service, even in times of peace. We are proud that Captain McDerby called Little Silver home.

Lastly, at the risk of being repetitive, every household and business should be signed up to receive emergency alerts. If you are not enrolled, PLEASE go to www.littlesilver.org and click on Two River Alert under the Emergency Services directory at the top of the page, or call (866) 939-0911 or borough hall for assistance. June is the official start of hurricane season. Just do it.

The governing body wishes you all a safe and healthy summer season, and offers a heartfelt congratulations to all our graduates! As always, 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.