

## "What is special about growing up in Little Silver?"

As I grow older, the more excited I become about leaving Little Silver. I can't wait to live in a town with more than 6,000 people. I can't wait to be able to leave my house and not run into ten people I know. I can't wait to live somewhere where not one single person knows me.

But then I realize, this is what I love about Little Silver. Going to Acme for one grocery item and ending up spending 45 minutes there because you run into at least five people you know, and sitting in Grandma's Bagels in the morning and having your mailman deliver your mail to you at the table because he knows you. Eating lunch at Edie's and running into old teachers from Markham and Point Road. I loved staying up until midnight on those middle school nights playing manhunt with the whole grade in someone's neighborhood. I realize that the quaintness of Little Silver and the community of people is what I love.

I think about the volunteer EMTs who at 2am rushed out of their homes to save my dad's life; the same volunteers who inspired me to take my EMR course and join the Little Silver EMS cadets. And I remember the volunteer coaches I had in the LS rec sports I attempted to play as kid; the same volunteers who inspired me to coach a rec basketball team for two years. These people are why I love Little Silver

As I grow more excited to leave this town of 6,000 I reminisce on the memories that only a small town would be able to provide me with. Memories only someone who was born and raised in Little Silver would understand. Like having my first "date" in "town," or painting the window of Dr. Dowd's office with pumpkins for halloween, or playing the trumpet every year at the tree lighting and memorial day services, and shopping for a bridesmaid dress for eighth grade graduation. Only Little Silver kids know what the sprint feels like to Giannis and Grandmas Bagels on half days so you are the first in line. Many of these childhood memories seem foreign and strange to most people, but to Little Silverians these memories built our childhood. These memories shaped my entire life and made me into the person I am today. These are the memories I want my children to have when they grow up.

The close knit community of Little Silver instilled in me a strong sense of friendship. Little Silver's schools, community, neighbors and memories shaped me into the strong, independent woman I am today. It's hard for me to say goodbye to a town that has given me so much but I know that I would not be the person I am today if it weren't for Little Silver.