

June 5, 2015

It's almost time for our **Berkeley Lake July 4th Celebration!** We have been holding our parade and festivities for almost 30 years now and it is always a joy to see the decorated cars and kids, pets and people.



We will convene at Berkeley Lake Elementary on Saturday, July 4 at 11:00 AM and begin to march about 11:30. When the parade concludes at the Chapel, there will be games and prizes for the



kids and food for purchase. I have some volunteers who have agreed to help in all this, but if you would like to help also, please let me know. Come and see your City Council in action: Scott Lee playing music, Chip McDaniel riding his unicycle, Rodney Hammond, Bob Smith, and I providing boat rides. It should be a lot of fun.

You may remember my January *Mayor's Message* in which I shared with you my recommendation that we create a **City Marshal** for Berkeley Lake. Since then the City Council has considered and adopted that plan; and you may have noticed the new vehicle patrolling our streets. Part of the impetus for this change was a concern that the security guards were having a high rate of turnover and not really able to remain as familiar with us and our neighborhoods as we would like. The City Marshal is employed directly by us and can be more responsive to us. We want the one who is watching over us to recognize subtle differences at our homes and businesses and be alert to call police when something seems unusual or concerning.

Our first Marshal is someone who knows us very well indeed, and you all know him, too – Gene Rogers. He will be working full-time now on a varying schedule and will continue to enforce city ordinances and write citations as necessary.



As I said in January, our Gwinnett County Police are much more responsive to us than they were when we initiated the security guards years ago, so if you see something that may be a crime, call 911 and not the old number we used for security guards. To access the City Marshal, call City Hall. We may add other marshals as time goes by if it can be shown to be cost effective.

There’s been a lot of interest in animals lately. We have coexisted with coyotes for quite a while now, but I recommend this information about what to do if you encounter a coyote while walking your dog. I walk mine as much as anybody and they have always avoided us, but it’s good to be knowledgeable about this. You can read the article [here](#).

Now we’re also beginning to have **bears** in the area. This picture was taken of a black bear in downtown Norcross by police officers there. The Department of Natural Resources says there are upwards of 5,000 bears in our state and there have been no known bear attacks on humans in Georgia. We are advised to treat them as we do coyotes, i.e. don’t leave out food that attracts them and if you see one don’t panic. Just move away and remember that they will try to avoid us if at all possible. For further information about bears, go to this [link](#).



And then there are the **snakes**. I was completely freaked out when I saw this one draped in my rosebush. It was identified as a Black Rat Snake - nonvenomous and "highly beneficial." I have since heard from neighbors who are thrilled to have them around to polish off rodents and bugs. Here's what the *Atlanta Journal Constitution* says quoting a snake expert named Clark: "If it's nonvenomous, you want it in your yard. Especially if it's a family that has kids or pets and they're worried about them getting bitten by snakes, as crazy as it sounds, that family wants to make sure they have non-venomous snakes there," Clark said. "Don't kill your harmless snakes. Some harmless snakes, such as the king snake, kill and eat venomous snakes. Others that don't prey on venomous snakes compete with them for food and shelter, so the more

of them you have, the fewer venomous ones you have." Living in this spectacularly beautiful natural area within our city sometimes takes some adjustment, for sure.

Our **Berkeley Lake Conservancy** is doing great things under the leadership of Susan Hanson. Here you see her about to lead a group on a Sunday walk in the Berkeley Lake Greenspace. All 18 people enjoyed the walk to see how spring wakes up many of the large



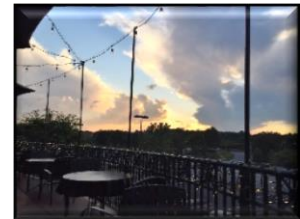
trees, (oak, tulip poplar, beech and more) and native ferns emerging on the forest floor. If you want to participate in Conservancy activities, please contact Susan.

Please remember that the **Outdoor Burn Ban is in effect from now through September 30.** The safe and cautious use of residential grills for outdoor cooking is still allowed and does not require a permit. However, you may not burn trees, limbs, or any other yard waste. Permits are required for all bonfires sponsored by civic or other groups for the purpose of celebration. Burn Permits are issued through the Fire Plan Review Section of Gwinnett County. For information on obtaining permits, click [here](#) or call 678.518.6000. For additional information on outdoor burning and fire safety, please contact the Gwinnett Fire Community Risk Reduction Division/Fire Marshal’s Office at 678.518.4980 or go to the [website](#).

Congratulations to all the young people in our neighborhoods who have just graduated and to their parents as well. Let’s all remember that since school is out we need to be even more **careful of children** as we drive through our city.

Please support our Berkeley Lake businesses:

Many of us continue to enjoy **Mackenzie’s Restaurant & Tap Room** at 4790 Peachtree Industrial Blvd., especially now that the weather is so nice and we can sit out on the balcony. The food is always good. Although there are lots of restaurants in our area, let’s support the ones in our own city whenever possible. www.mackenzies-restaurant.com 770.409.9889.



Drake School of Irish Dance, 25 years in Atlanta and now located in Berkeley Lake, also at 4790 Peachtree Industrial Blvd., is owned and directed by Karl Drake, who was born and raised in Dublin, Ireland. There are classes all summer for kids and adults. Information is available on www.drakedance.com or call the studio at 404.524.6986. I know there are some of you out there itching to take up Irish dancing!

Brenda Bakes, owned by Brenda Warbington, specializes in delicious, custom cakes and cupcakes personalized for your special occasion or celebration. Everything is made from scratch and made to order with the freshest ingredients. YUM! www.brendabakes.com 770-744-3505.

Lois D. Alter