



June 21, 2017

Our **July 4th Celebration** is always a joy to me and the local kids. Maybe for you, too? If so, decorate your cars, kids, pets, and people and join the parade at Berkeley Lake Elementary on Tuesday, July 4 at 11:00 AM. We will begin to march about 11:30 AM and our state Representative Scott Hilton will be leading the parade with me in Paul and Elaine Myers' famous El Camino. When the parade concludes at the Chapel, there will be the usual fun and face painting for the kids. Hot dogs, drinks, and other



goodies will be available for purchase and Scott Lee will be playing music. In case of rain, check the Nextdoor website for info about possible changes. I look forward to seeing you all there to celebrate our country's Independence Day!

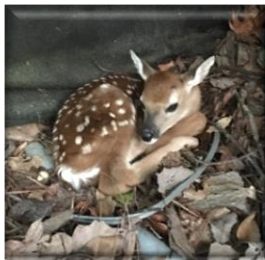
Later that afternoon and evening you can sign up to join BLHA for barbeque and a concert which is open to all citizens of Berkeley Lake. If interested, sign up [here](#). However you celebrate, be cautious about possible heat stroke, about safety around fireworks, and protect your pets that evening. It's the biggest night of the year for lost pets who are terrified by the noise and may hurt themselves trying to run away. Secure them safely and consider playing some music if you're not home to mask somewhat the explosive noises.

It was exciting to learn that Berkeley Lake has been recognized among the top 10 [2017 Best Suburbs To Live In Georgia](#), according to Niche.com, based on data from a number of sources including the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Census Bureau, the FBI's Uniform Crime Report and others. **Our city got an A+ rating and a top mark in the "good for families" category.** Good for us all!

Congratulations to **Margaret Bergeron** on South Berkeley Lake Road. Margaret’s garden is a certified Wildlife Habitat and now it is **Berkeley Lake’s Yard of the Month!** Her front yard gets a good bit of sun, and she has planted some annuals, varieties of hostas, some azaleas and much more, but that’s just the beginning. The backyard is where the real beauty lies. There is a beautiful waterfall, a butterfly garden, meandering trails, and even a Japanese garden area. So much beauty and variety in the shade, and it’s mostly deer resistant. We applaud Margaret and give thanks to Tracey Settlege and Jill Rice who organize and support our Yard of the Month program.



Please remember our **“No Bikes” rule in the greenspace.** The tires make ruts that increase erosion on the trails, and we don’t want that to become a problem.



It’s the time of year when lots of animals are more visible to us, including newborn fawns, and I’ve gotten worried calls about some of those. In response I have found someone who has experience in rescuing motherless fawns and taking them to a place in north Georgia where they can be cared for. I’m told that mother **deer** often leave their babies for as much as 24 hours and that if humans intervene when mom is not really gone permanently, we do harm rather than good. So you need to do some serious investigation and observation before intervening. If you have observed enough to be reasonably certain that mom is not coming back, please call me and I will try to get help.

There have also been some questions about **coyotes and foxes.** DNR says it's illegal to move a coyote to a new place, so if anyone like a pest removal service traps one they must destroy it. There has never been a documented coyote attack on a human in Georgia, but they will occasionally take a small pet, particularly if it's weak or elderly and unsupervised. Ditto for some of our larger predatory birds like hawks and owls. If for some reason the coyote population should go down, the deer and rodent population will skyrocket. Foxes don't do well in pursuit of pets. If you look at one closely, the body (excluding the tail) is smaller than a cat's, so they are pretty limited to eating rodents, bugs, and snakes. DNR suggests supervising your pets and making sure you don't leave their pet food or any other food out to attract wildlife.

And lastly in the wild kingdom category, I want to caution everybody again about **copperheads.** The TV reporters are after me again to talk about my bite last summer and I have declined (tired of being the snakebite poster child) but I do want to remind you, my neighbors, to watch carefully where you step, especially at night. I never go out anymore in the dark without a powerful flashlight. Also, know your snakes, and don’t kill the nonpoisonous ones, which I have learned are the very best protection against the bad ones. Read more about that [here](#) if you didn’t see it before. There’s a picture of a copperhead and other information. If you do get bitten, get to the hospital ASAP. Not all have the very expensive antivenin but Gwinnett Medical, Scottish Rite, and Grady usually do.

Some of you have complained about the unsightly trash that people leave along PIB. Although that is not a city-maintained road, our City Council has agreed to pay our landscaping group to remove trash there regularly as well as along Ridge Road. Ridge is the only road in the city that is wooded for enough distance that people think they can dump there with impunity. Our citizens have always done an excellent job of picking up trash as they walk throughout city. I urge you to continue that and to report the tag number of anybody that you see **littering** or dumping. We will see that they are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.



**Congratulations to Dr. Lesley Pendleton** who has been chosen to lead our local elementary school as principal. We have enjoyed working with several outstanding principals there in recent years, but this will be the first one who actually lives in our city. Lesley will do a wonderful job, and we are delighted for her and for the school.

**Congratulations also to Robin Sansone** who has been chosen for the next Leadership Gwinnett group. This is a great honor since only about 30 - 40 outstanding community leaders are invited yearly to an intensive yearlong training program to make them even better leaders. Robin is a former president of Miramont’s homeowner association and a valuable member of our community, both in the city and beyond.



Some of you have noticed the **new LED street lights** that are going up in our city replacing the older technology. The city purchases lighting service from Georgia Power on a monthly per-unit (light) basis. The Georgia Public Service Commission sets rates for these services. The new LED street light rates are similar to existing non-LED rates, but the city benefits from the LED lights by producing somewhat less upward light pollution, having more reliable lighting service and a more pleasing and efficient color of light in our neighborhoods. Georgia Power benefits from their capital investment in the new street lights by reducing their maintenance and operations costs for providing the service to cities. Everyone benefits from the fact that LED lighting does not contain toxic chemicals such as mercury, unlike traditional high-pressure sodium lamps or mercury-vapor lamps. You can get more information [here](#).

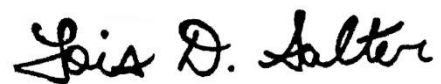
**Thanks to the BLOSOMS for hosting the Senior Luncheon** recently. It is always much enjoyed, as you can see here in these pictures.





I have been asked to let you know about the **Student Ambassador Program** - a leadership development program for high school students that centers on civic engagement, voter registration promotion, and volunteerism. This statewide program is limited but free to join, and there is a team at the Georgia Secretary of State’s office coordinating it. For more information, please contact the Secretary of State’s Outreach Team at [ambassadorsupport@sos.ga.gov](mailto:ambassadorsupport@sos.ga.gov). You may also visit their [website](#).

**Happy Fourth to you all! Stay safe.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lois D. Alter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".