



July 25, 2017

It's an election year in Berkeley Lake and that means opportunities for citizens to be involved in the electoral process first hand by serving their community as a **volunteer poll officer**. On Tuesday, November 7, 2017 the city needs a team of dedicated individuals who are patient, enjoy working with people, are good communicators and detail-oriented to make the election run as smoothly as possible. You may serve as a poll officer if you are a resident of Berkeley Lake, a U.S. citizen, at least 16 years old, able to read, write and speak English, and are not related to a candidate. Assignments are available for morning and evening shifts from 6:00 AM through completion of ballot counting after the polls close at 7:00 PM. Volunteers must also attend a training session to be held prior to election day. Contact Pat Chapman, Deputy City Administrator at City Hall, 770.368.9484, ext. 102 or [deputy.admin@berkeley-lake.com](mailto:deputy.admin@berkeley-lake.com) to volunteer.

There will be a **city election** in November for three seats on our City Council currently held by Rodney Hammond, Scott Lee, and Chip McDaniel. I understand that all three of these guys are willing to serve again in a new term. If others would like to join them in running for office they should sign up with our Election Superintendent Pat Chapman at City Hall and pay their \$27 qualifying fee between August 21 and August 24.

And while we're thinking of elections, you can go to this website for [Georgia Online Voter Registration](#). Register, check to see if you are registered correctly, or make changes to your current registration.

**Thanks to all who participated in our city's celebration of Independence Day** on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Lou Mitcham and his volunteers cooked hot dogs for us. James



Peters painted little persons' faces. Scott Lee provided music. Paul (Revere) Myers led the parade, and Chip McDaniel brought his popcorn machine. We were happy to be joined by Major Everett Spellman, Commander of our local Police Precinct and by our State Representative Scott Hilton, seen here with his son. Thanks also to the community members who organized the BLHA party open to all in the evening and those who worked on and paid for the fireworks show later. I think we all enjoyed our celebration of the country's birthday.



We have had some concerns from folks who are not **receiving Mayor’s Messages**, and I am sometimes asked a question about something that I just sent information out about in a recent issue. Our amazing staff at City Hall recently did a check for one lady and found that someone had, perhaps erroneously, hit “unsubscribe” after receiving one Mayor’s Message. In compliance with the CAN-SPAM Act, the city honored that request immediately, and she hadn’t received any since. You may be reading this on Nextdoor because I generally send them out there also, but if you aren’t receiving yours directly after requesting them from City Hall, please check your spam filter. If it’s not there, call City Hall at 770.368.9484 and they will be glad to see what the problem is and try to fix it, as they did for this lady.



**Congratulations to Bill and Sandy Lacy** for being selected as Berkeley Lake’s July 2017 Yard of the Month! The winners received a gift certificate from the Rice Settlege Team of Keller Williams to My Secret Garden in Norcross. Bill and Sandy have been working on their garden since they first moved to Berkeley Lake in 1978. Their driveway off of Lakeshore leads to a hidden home and garden surrounded by trees and privacy around the bend. Bill has created most of the garden sculpture amid a wide variety of flowers. A praying mantis welcomes you to the entrance of the home, and whirly-gigs and more are around every corner. The next time you see Bill or Sandy, tell them congratulations and ask for a tour!



**Berkeley Lake Elementary School Teacher Kathy Bentley** is the 2017 winner of the Duluth Cluster Schools Foundation’s Professional Development Award. Seen here with our own Dr. Lesley Pendleton, new principal of Berkeley Lake Elementary, Mrs. Bentley is the Science Specialist at BLES, and has gone above and beyond her teaching duties for 20+ years. Mrs. Bentley heads up many outlets for kids to get involved with humanity, tech, environment and learning:

Green Team Club, Camp Invention, IT Girls Club, Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful, and as the STEM Academic Team Leader. Mrs. Bentley was honored recently at the Sunday Kind of Groove Concert to benefit DCSF.

**The next DCSF Sunday Groove concert** will be on **Sunday, August 20** with Big Band/Swing Era sounds by ATLANTA 17. It's been rumored that musically talented kids from Coleman STEAM School will give these classics a try, too. For tickets to this fun, bring-your-picnic concert, go to this [website](#), or email [ak509@bellsouth.net](mailto:ak509@bellsouth.net), or call 770.368.2076.



I’m happy to tell you that the **Berkeley Lake City Council has voted to lower the city’s 2017 property tax millage rate**, even below the rollback rate at which, although the millage rate might be lower, the total amount of taxes collected would be the same because of rising property values. The new rate of 2.269 mills is 1.69 percent below the rollback rate, so we will be collecting less total money and continuing to charge no stormwater infrastructure fees, although most

neighboring cities do. We will endeavor to keep our millage rate going in the right direction as it has been for years through very careful management of your tax dollars.

You may have heard that there have been some **bear sightings** nearby recently – two in Duluth and one in Norcross. They come down from the North Georgia mountains along the river banks where they can stay off of roads. Since the Chattahoochee River borders our city, we may see some at some point, but they avoid people as much as possible. We humans are building so much throughout North Georgia with urban sprawl and vacation homes that the bears are losing their habitat. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources cautions us to keep food out of our backyards in order to prevent bear visits. If a bear wanders into your backyard, don’t try to engage with it. You should never try to feed a bear or corner it. Bears are often only passing through, DNR says. I have decided to quit filling my birdfeeder until fall when the bears go back to hibernate and the birds really need it. It’s just a precaution, but birdfeeders are a major attraction for bears.



**Did you know that next year Gwinnett county will be 200 years old?** The State of Georgia created Gwinnett County on December 15, 1818, naming it for Button Gwinnett, one of Georgia’s three signers of the Declaration of Independence. Celebrations are being planned and the Bicentennial Committee is looking for people to contribute recordings to a Story Vault. Please check out the website [www.gwinnett200.com](http://www.gwinnett200.com) and let me know if you or someone you know would like to share knowledge of our local history.

**I am planning a Take Back Drugs Day for us on October 28 at City Hall so please save the date.** If you have unused prescriptions, you can avoid flushing them which, for those on sewer, sends them to the Chattahoochee River. It’s amazing how many of our drugs survive the water reclamation process to affect fish and wildlife, and there’s also the concern for children in your home who might get into some old medicine that could hurt them. Major Spellman has committed our police and representatives of the U. S. Drug Enforcement Agency to come that day and take our old or unneeded drugs for safe disposal. **At the same time, we will be honoring our local public servants.** Stay tuned for more information.

Stay safe in all your summer activities!

*Lis D. Salter*