



January 23, 2018

Susan Hanson, chair of our Berkeley Lake Conservancy, is organizing a spring seminar on proper pruning for shrubs. Join us on Saturday, February 17 at 2 PM at City Hall to learn what a difference pruning can make in the beauty and health of your home landscape. Although it may seem simple and common sense, I have learned the hard way that whacking a plant at the wrong time or in the wrong way can be disastrous, whereas doing it correctly can spur its growth in a big way. Afterwards some of us will adjourn to the outdoors to plant a tree as a celebration of our city's continuing honor as a Tree City. We have achieved that recognition for 17 years now. All of us in Berkeley Lake are proud of our trees and the natural beauty around us. Susan has invited a noted expert in pruning to come for this event, and I hope you plan, as I do, to attend. If so, please reserve a space by calling Roxanne at City Hall, (770) 368-9484 or email to deputy.clerk@berkeley-lake.com

Again, in this past holiday season, Ginny Nevins and Windsor Realty sponsored our city's annual Christmas Lights Contest. First Place was won by the Cooper Family at 3312 Glen Devon Lane, Second Place by the Cochran Family at 3815 Berkeley View Drive, and Third Place by the Bible Family at 4225 South Berkeley Lake Road. Each winner has received a \$100 gift card from Publix or Target, compliments of Windsor Realty. Aside from gladdening the hearts of big and little children, this contest produced 742 canned goods (as votes for each entry) for Norcross Cooperative Ministries to distribute to the needy in our area, beating last year's total collection. What a wonderful turnout we had this year and so many beautiful displays! Thanks to everyone who participated. Here is a picture taken from my backseat by my 10-year old grandchild. We all loved the lights!



Berkeley Lake is such a generous city. Besides Ginny's food collection, **Lou Mitcham was collecting toys for the kids at Norcross Cooperative Ministries.** He does this every year, and you all brought lots of toys to City Hall for us to pass on. This year he also aligned our efforts with our local Police Precinct and had them collecting, too! Here is one of our officers working on that. Thanks to them and to you.



We’ve had more than our usual share of **winter weather** this year and I’ve gotten some questions about ice on the roads. The City of Berkeley Lake pays our landscaper to treat icy patches on Mansions Parkway approaching Bush Road and on Ridge Road approaching North Berkeley Lake Road where people could slide downhill into oncoming traffic. The City Council has studied and discussed this for years and been advised by police and emergency management personnel not to encourage people to get out of subdivisions and onto the roads when they are dangerous. We weigh the expense to your taxes in the risk/benefit discussion. Since our city’s roads are so hilly and curvy throughout, it would be quite expensive to treat the whole city, only to get people out a day or two earlier, especially when the police are urging us to stay in.

At our January meeting of the City Council, two important things happen that I want to share with you. Some years back the Council spent significant time working to arrive at a mutual agreement on conduct and ethics for ourselves. We felt so strongly about this commitment to each other and to our citizens that we made it a part of our city ordinances and policies. The policy requires that each year the **Code of Conduct** should be publicly reviewed and recommitted to by all council members. I’m proud of this document, and I urge you to find time to read it for yourself. It talks about conflicts of interest, use of city resources, accepting gifts or favors, transparency, and much else. It makes me as Mayor responsible for insuring that no one at our meetings makes personally disparaging remarks or reflects negatively on the character of others, as opposed to expressing a different point of view respectfully. When civility elsewhere in our society seems to be eroding and governments struggle to accomplish things, it is not an accident that our little city works so well. You can read our Code of Conduct [here](#).

There is a second thing that happens at the start of each new year. The **Mayor makes a list of appointments** for the council’s approval. You can read those [here](#) and I urge you to do so in order to understand, as a citizen, who’s responsible for what around here. You will find the names not



only of our staff, but an appointed liaison on the City Council to each neighborhood who can help you as needed. You will find the names of some wonderful volunteers on our committees who help look after our greenspaces, who study and advise regarding the city’s finances and others who support our city in many ways. I hope you will find the words to thank these neighbors of yours when you see them, because as the pace of life increases, volunteers are harder and harder to find, but their work is still so important. A friend who is an outstanding public servant shared this with me from the Federation of Women’s Clubs. I am very grateful for ALL of our volunteers!

As I have reported in a previous Mayor’s Message, **Gwinnett County is celebrating its Bicentennial this year.** Part of that involves runners carrying a commemorative Torch to important locations throughout the county, in the manner of Olympic torch runs. I have been working with Charlotte Nash, County Commission Chair, and Judy Johnson, Mayor of Lawrenceville to make arrangements for the run to come through our city. The torch will arrive here in late October and spend the night at our City Hall. I will give you more details as the time nears.

My **Hometown Hero** for this issue seems an obvious choice, since I have already been writing here about her efforts for our city. **Susan Hanson** is a certified Master Gardener who has led our



Berkeley Lake Conservancy for years, and that’s a very important job. She loves tennis, birds, and of course gardening, and says she’s glad to live in a place where people appreciate nature and are such fun to be with. If she could change anything, she would want people to have opinions without being intolerant of others’ opinions. Susan lives on North Berkeley Lake Road. Here’s a picture of her working in the garden area at City Hall where she can often be found. Thanks, Susan!

My featured Berkeley Lake business this time is Rice n’ Pie in the shopping center across from our Greenspace at the intersection of Peachtree Industrial Boulevard and North Berkeley Lake Road. They have wonderful creative rice dishes and the “Pie” refers to pizza which is available in many interesting and tasty versions. James Peters, seen here, liked his pizza. Have you tried it? Go by when you can, and support all our Berkeley Lake businesses.



Rice n’ Pie, 3980 Peachtree Industrial Blvd., Ste. 800, 770.302.0320, www.ricenpie.com

SAVE THE DATE: Earth Day in Berkeley Lake is Saturday, April 21, 9 AM until 2 PM.

I hope everybody is off to a great new year. See you at the Berkeley Lake Conservancy’s seminar on Feb. 17!

Sis D. Alter