

July 30, 2019

Many of us have been very frustrated by the **frequent power outages** recently. Although I do not bother him very often, I have been in contact several times lately with the Regional Manager of Georgia Power. In response he initiated a review of possible problems in our city to see what might be causing the unusual number of these. Here is some of his response to me:

“As you would expect the majority of the outages in this area have been tree related. I took a ride through the area last week, and although the trees are beautiful, I can certainly see where they are causing problems with our system. Below are a couple of points to consider.

- *Since this is a heavily treed area, the potential for outages associated with trees is much greater – especially during summer thunderstorms and winter ice events. These outages can be caused by trees falling into our lines, limbs and vegetation that contact our lines and animals such as squirrels that live in the canopy contacting our equipment.*
- *With the amount of rain and warm weather that we have experienced, there is additional growth on the trees in the area which also increases the likelihood that they will make contact with our lines – even on days when there is not a cloud in the sky. Also, heavy rainfall saturates the ground which increases the probability that trees will simply uproot and fall.*
- *When storms pass through the area, our crews generally try to remove all damaged limbs and trees that threaten our lines, however; some damage is not always easy to identify. These limbs may become stressed and create problems several weeks after the storm has passed.*
- *Georgia Power regularly maintains and prunes vegetation around our lines on trees that are located in the right of way to prevent contact with our equipment. However, often trees that cause outages are located on private property, and our tree crews cannot address these hazards. It is always a good idea for property owners to assess their trees for stress and have trees that present a threat to property either pruned or removed. If these trees are in proximity to power lines, Georgia Power will be happy to work with property owners to make sure that the trees are safely removed.*
- *As I mentioned, Georgia Power regularly trims trees around our lines, but we are often unable to trim as aggressively as needed in residential areas due to concerns of the residents – people do love their trees. Since we cannot continuously trim these trees, this lighter trimming can lead to issues as we reach the end of our trimming cycle. This area is scheduled for trimming next year, so we are likely at the point where new growth is*

beginning to cause issues. Currently our contractors are surveying this area in preparation for the pruning cycle. If they identify locations that present an imminent threat to our lines, we may address these areas early.

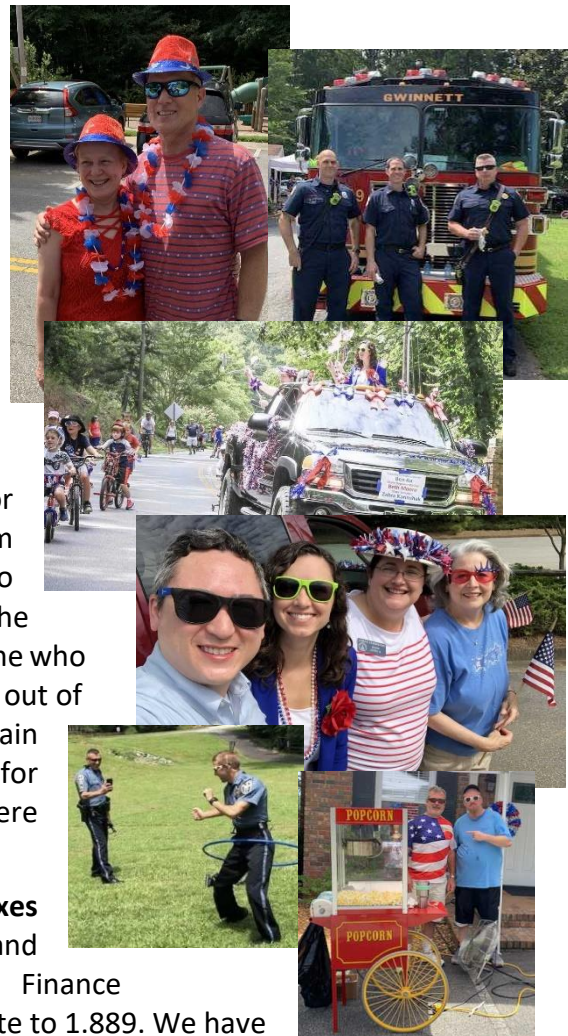
Mayor, we certainly understand that these interruptions are inconvenient and frustrating for our customers, and we work hard to prevent outages as much as possible. Areas like this are always a challenge for us as we work to balance the aesthetics that residents desire with the reliable electric service that they deserve. I hope this information is helpful to you. If you would like, I would be happy to tour the area with you to explain how our system operates and to discuss opportunities where we can partner with the city to make improvements.”

I appreciate, as I’m sure you do, the extra attention he is giving to our concerns. I am going to take him up on his offer to tour the area with him and discuss further. Meanwhile, please check out the trees or branches on your private property that might fall and knock out power to you and large numbers of your neighbors. Far better for us all to take care of those beforehand without causing loss of power for everybody. Also, you should know that Tom Rozier has done a very thorough investigation of the feasibility of burying power lines and presented that to your City Council members recently. The very brief version is that it would be astronomically expensive and require the removal of a great many trees along our roadsides, which lots of people would find objectionable.

Many thanks to all who participated in our July 4 festivities. I think a very good time was had by all, especially the children who were entertained by Debbie Peters and her Georgia After School Program (GASPI). They sponsored the kids’ activities for us. Our local fire department led our parade with a big fire engine and gave our kids some fire safety training afterwards at the Chapel. Our police officers helped manage our parade and made time to play with the kids also.

Thanks to State Representative Beth Moore, our County Commissioner Ben Ku, and our State Senator Zahra Karinshak for attending, and to Mayor ProTem Rebecca Spitler and Major General Rex Spitler who transported these important guests at the head of the parade. We appreciate Crowell Brothers Funeral Home who provided a nice canopy for us to keep the little ones out of the sun, and Lou Mitcham for cooking hot dogs again this year. Chip McDaniel did his popcorn thing again for us and Scott Lee, as always, provided great music. Here are some pictures.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that your city taxes will drop again this year. With the supervision and unanimous approval of our citizens on the Finance Committee, the Council voted to drop the millage rate to 1.889. We have



been at or below the rollback rate for the last 9 years, and that represents some careful management on the part of our very able staff and your Council.

With summer and all the yard maintenance and other outdoor activities it brings in full swing, I want to remind you that it is illegal to put anything in a storm drain or ditch other than stormwater. Since much of our stormwater runs into our beautiful lake, this is really important. Here are 10 tips for cleaner water:

1. Never dump anything down a storm drain or into a drainage ditch. Make sure your hired contractors understand the level of vigilance we keep on that in our city since many of them do not expect it.
2. Recycle motor oil and other vehicle fluids.
3. Put litter in its place and pick it up along our roadsides when you can.
4. Clean up after your pet.
5. Check your vehicles for leaks and repair them.
6. Dispose of household hazardous wastes at designated locations.
7. Compost or bag yard clippings. Do not allow your landscaper to blow them into the street or a storm drain. You may prefer to leave them on the lawn - they are a natural fertilizer.
8. Use fertilizer and pesticides only when needed. (Read the label. You may be horrified.)
9. If you wash your vehicle at home, consider doing that on the lawn rather than on pavement.
10. When pressure washing, make sure you follow these environmentally-responsible [guidelines](#) or use a contractor who does.

Remember, don’t dump or spray something on or near your property that you wouldn’t want kids to swim in when they go to the lake, or fish to struggle with in the Chattahoochee which borders us. Sunset on the lake photo by Jill Rice.



It’s 2019 and that means that there is a **General Election** this year. Here is some important information.

- **Election Day:** Tuesday, November 5, 2019. 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM
- **Qualifying** to run for mayor and two council seats (currently held by Rebecca Spitler and Bob Smith): Monday, August 19, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, August 20 - 22, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM.
- **Qualifying fees** - \$150 for mayor, \$27 for council member.
- **Also on the ballot:** "Brunch Bill" question to allow Sunday alcoholic beverage sales by the drink to begin at 11:00 AM.
- **Volunteers** are needed to serve on Election Day as poll officials helping people through the voting process and counting votes after polls close. This is a great way to meet your neighbors.

- See the city [website](#) or contact Pat Chapman at city hall, 770.368.9484 or deputy.admin@berkeleylake.com, for more information about running for office or volunteering.



Our Hometown Hero this month is Sandy Lacy who is providing excellent leadership as president of the Chapel Association in a time when major changes are being considered for that organization. The Chapel has been such an important part of our community for decades, and now as its 60th Anniversary is coming up, the board is studying various proposals for renovation. Sandy says, “I am totally committed to getting this done.” Fundraisers like the recent tour of private gardens in our city and the celebration path of commemorative bricks in the Chapel’s own garden have taken a lot of organization and energy. We appreciate Sandy and all those who have helped her. Sandy’s own personal garden is renowned for its succession of “garden rooms” over about an acre of land with beautiful plants and pottery. She is certainly brightening our city in multiple ways.

Hard to believe it’s already back to school time! **The Rice Settlage Team is supporting the teachers at our local elementary school by collecting things they will need.** Berkeley Lake Elementary’s principal, Lesley Pendleton, has created a list of the supplies most in demand for their classrooms. Please help support our community school and donate items. We have drop boxes at City Hall, as well as the Rice and Settlage’s porches (on Lakeshore and in Miramont). Everyone who donates will be given an entry in a drawing to win a dinner at the new Lazy Dog Restaurant. Here’s what Lesley says they need the most:

- Dry Erase/Whiteboard markers*
- Post-it Notes-Regular size*
- Post-it Notes -11x11 for Anchor Charts*
- Baby wipes*
- Lysol wipes*
- Kleenex tissues*
- Various size Ziploc bags*
- Pencils*
- Velcro Dots – Homme brand*
- Glue sticks*

Our July Yard of the Month winners are Helen and John Kokoska at 4835 Berkeley Walk Point. Their beautifully landscaped yard has so many interesting plantings. They have designed a gorgeous four-season interest yard with stone walls as a backdrop for their plantings. Their huge azaleas make quite a show in the spring.



Lois D. Satter