



February 25, 2020

As you know from my last Mayor's Message, the Gwinnett County Department of Water Resources is about to begin **tearing up South Berkeley Lake Road** and later, Little Ridge Road, in order to replace the water main that has been plagued by so many breaks in the recent past. I met recently with a bunch of engineers who are working on the project and they agreed to communicate with me regularly so that I can keep you informed. The road won't be completely closed but there will be delays caused by single lane closures on South Berkeley Lake Road, and later during the project Little Ridge Road may be closed to through traffic. Also, because the water line will be placed under the sidewalk for portions of the project, the sidewalk on South Berkeley Lake Road will be closed at some point and is expected to be closed from that point until the project is completed. They plan to work on the part from Bush Road to Little Ridge Road beginning the week of March 9 and try to finish by the end of May. Then after school is out, they'll continue on Phase 2 south from there. Please see [here](#) for more information. They also gave me an email address and phone number for you to use if you have any questions or concerns regarding the project. Feel free to contact them.

Email: [DWRConstruction@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:DWRConstruction@gwinnettcountry.com)

Phone: 678-376-7027

The Berkeley Lake Conservancy is hosting an **educational program on pruning trees and shrubs at 10:30 AM at City Hall on Saturday, March 14**. Master Gardener Barbara Dorfman will be presenting, and some have said they learn more the second time they attend her program. It's free to our citizens and guests. Please make a reservation by contacting city hall at [deputy.clerk@berkeleylake.com](mailto:deputy.clerk@berkeleylake.com). Custom coffee and fabulous snacks will be provided by Windsor Realty and The Rice Settlage Team – Keller Williams Realty.

You will remember our request that county elections officials come out and **demonstrate the new voting machines** for us before they go into use. Here are a few of the folks that joined us on that day. It was standing room only and I think we all thought the program was very helpful. The new voting system is expected to be fully implemented for the March 24 presidential preference primary election. They told us that they need to hire **poll officials** to staff 156 polling locations plus eight advance voting locations for the 2020 election season. Currently, positions pay up to a \$125 stipend. Learn more and apply at [GwinnettCountyJobs.com](http://GwinnettCountyJobs.com).



There has been a lot of discussion lately in our city about security issues. We continue to be very fortunate that crime is comparatively nonexistent here but the Chapel and HOAs sometime struggle with visitors to their property and we all struggle with speeders, etc. I have asked our police **Precinct Commander to join me for a Town Hall Meeting on March 28 at 10:30 AM in City Hall** to discuss with our neighbors how best to interact with police and get help when you need it. We’ll talk about how to be a good witness, when to contact the non-emergency number and 911, how to file a report with Gwinnett County Police (online, over the phone, officer dispatch), and additional resources the county has available to address community concerns. Everybody please come and get your questions answered by our very helpful officers. Custom coffee and fabulous snacks will once again be provided by Windsor Realty and The Rice Settlege Team – Keller Williams Realty.



I want to introduce you to our new Deputy City Clerk, Constance Hughes. She comes to us with over 20 years of municipal government experience, most recently as City Clerk for Twin City, a small city in middle Georgia. When in her interview I asked her for words that would accurately describe herself, she said, “hard-working” and “sweet.” I would add “smart” to that list, because she is already a clear asset to our city. Please welcome Constance to Berkeley Lake when you see her. I have told her that she has come to a very good place, and I look forward to her getting to meet you all. I also want to thank Dorris Hollingsworth who lives in Berkeley Walk. She and her human resources company assisted us in the search to replace the person who previously held this position and Dorris refused to invoice us for her time, saying, “I’m happy to provide some pro bono services for the city.” Thank you, Dorris!

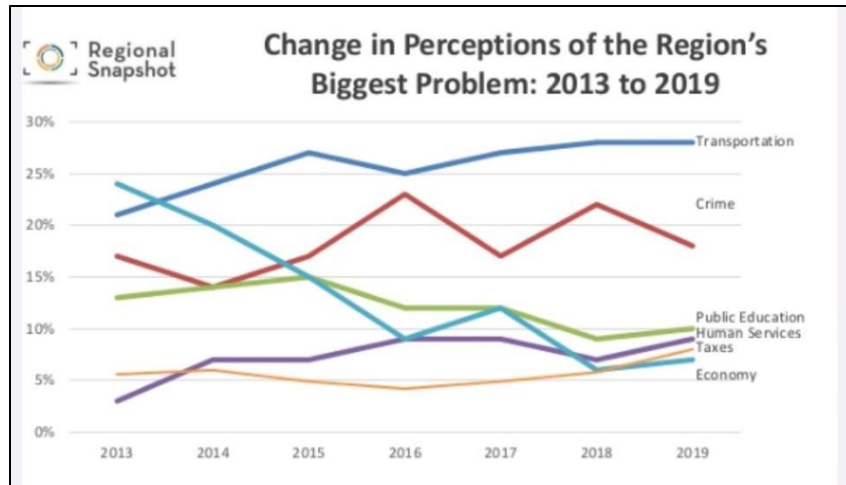
The City of Berkeley Lake has been recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation as a **Tree City USA city for the past 21 years** in recognition of our efforts to preserve the natural beauty and benefits of trees within the city. This year we are planting pink native azaleas, *Rhododendron canescens*, along Ridge Road. Their lovely flowers are the first to bloom in the spring. The blooms provide nectar for the tiger swallowtail butterfly that has been living in the leaves on the ground under the trees through winter. Berkeley Lake Conservancy Chair Susan Hanson tells me that’s one of the reasons not to remove leaves under your trees.

We are coming up on **Berkeley Lake’s Earth Day at City Hall on Saturday, April 18 from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM**. City staff members will be on hand at City Hall, along with vendors and volunteers, to assist residents with shredding documents, disposal of unwanted items and recycling of others. We will be accepting yard waste and large household items such as desks, mattresses, box springs, etc. for disposal, scrap metal, appliances, lawn mowers, grills, car and truck batteries, and other metal items, as well as paper for onsite shredding. Please remember that this service is **provided by the City of Berkeley Lake at no cost only to citizens, so bring your identification showing a Berkeley Lake address** in order to dispose of or recycle items. The following will not be accepted: construction debris, wet paints, entire trees, televisions, microwave ovens, tires, or commercial waste. If you need to dispose of a television, please call Advanced Disposal at (678)

495-0058 to make arrangements with them to pick the television up at your home. Thanks so much to Jill Rice and Tracey Settlege who are again paying for the expensive shredder truck!

I recently attended the **State of the Region** report by the Chairman of the Atlanta Regional Commission, Kerry Armstrong. He talked about our “new normal” as 3 million more people move into our area over the next 30 years. This “amazing acceleration of change” will require all of us

to learn to live with “volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.” Our population is getting older and job types are changing dramatically. The fastest growing group is age 75+, and women are outliving their ability to drive by 10 years; men by 7. Gwinnett will soon surpass Fulton as Georgia’s most populous county. Housing



affordability problems are growing as retirees can’t afford to stay in their own homes and young people struggle to buy a home or even to afford rent. This chart shows that transportation is still the highest concern of people as it has been for the last 6 years. Wait until another 3 million show up!

I understand from our County Commissioner Ben Ku that a Gwinnett County contractor will be performing address verifications as part of a GIS database enhancements project to improve address data and aid in public safety operations. **GIS technicians will be conducting door-to-door address verifications through Friday, March 20. Since I have so often urged you to be aware of strange people in our neighborhood, I wanted you to know about this and not to be worried.** Staff are traveling via rental car, company car, and/or on foot during daylight hours to complete the address verifications. This will include photographing locations that require further study to verify the correct address. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact IT Manager Dax Flinn at [dax.flinn@gwinnettcountry.com](mailto:dax.flinn@gwinnettcountry.com) or (770) 822-8033.



Take your pesticides, cleaners, and other toxic products to the **Household Hazardous Waste disposal event this Saturday, February 29 from 8:00 AM to noon at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds.** For information on quantities and items accepted, or to sign up to volunteer, visit Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful's [event page](#).

In mid-March, the Census Bureau will send questionnaires to homes around the country. Completing the census is easy, important, and safe. The 2020 Census is the first time people can fill out their census online on mobile devices or desktop computers. You can also respond by phone or by mail. It's nine questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Census counts shape legislative and congressional districts, determine how federal and state resources are distributed, and influence critical policy decisions. It is illegal for anyone to share your personal information disclosed in the census. **More than \$675 billion in federal funds are awarded**

annually to states and communities based on census data. I want Berkeley Lake to get our fair share of tax dollars you are already paying, so please do the census thing!

Berkeley Lake Elementary School is having one of their most popular and well-attended events of the year, **Bingo Night on March 20**. I and possibly some other city council members will be serving as “celebrity” Bingo callers so support the school and join us for a game or two. The event runs from 6:00-9:00 PM but you can just drop in and out according your schedule. The school has recently been honored again this year by the Georgia Department of Education as a “Distinguished School” based on their high performance, so congratulations to them and our own Lesley Pendleton (seen here on the left), their outstanding principal.



Our Hometown Hero this month is Rand Kirkus, immediate past president of the BLHA and currently serving on our city’s Planning and Zoning Commission. He enjoys travel, golf, and spending time with wife Betty Covington and their family. They enjoy local theatre a lot and have season tickets to the Aurora and Horizon theatres. Rand says he drove around for 2 years before picking a place to live in Berkeley Lake, mainly for the grandkids to enjoy the lake, but he has found that the neighbors in our city are really its best asset. That has been my experience as well. Thanks, Rand!

*Lois D. Satter*