



June 23, 2025



Many of us look forward every year to our wonderful, small town **celebration of Independence Day**. I hope you will decorate your cars, kids and pets as well as yourselves to participate in our July 4 parade. We will, as usual, **begin to gather at Berkeley Lake Elementary school at 11:30 AM**, and when it appears that we are semi-organized, we will follow Councilman Scott Lee and his wonderful music down the hill from school to Chapel. There we will be serving hotdogs, cold drinks, popcorn, and cookies at noon. Debbie Peters and her GASP group are kindly donating the hotdogs and drinks, as well as leading the various games and fun for

kids. Help the little ones try their hands at water balloon tossing, limbo, hula-hooping, face painting, and whatever else Debbie comes up with. If it appears that it might rain that day, please check Nextdoor and Facebook pages for information. Remember to keep your doggie's feet on the grass or in the shade because they can get burned on hot pavement without your even noticing.



We have some significant guests who are planning to join us on that day. If there isn't an active emergency nearby, the firefighters at Station 19 will bring their big fire engine for the kids to marvel at. Also, I want you to know that I have invited our police Precinct Commander to send any of his officers who can spare a moment from their duties to eat hotdogs with us. I hope you will make a point to thank any officers who can join us on that day for all they do for us. In response to my invitation Major Jordan Griffin replied, "You and the Berkeley Lake community do a great job of showing appreciation on a regular basis. Thank you!"

Here is another chance for us to show that appreciation. **Our police officers are collecting school supplies** for young people who may need those to start school prepared and confident. You can help the kids and our officers by bringing any of the following to **City Hall on or before July 15**: book bags and backpacks, colored pencils and markers, crayons, safety scissors, tissues, paper, pencils, glue sticks, calculators, index cards, highlighters, rulers, and notebooks. We will also be collecting these things on July 4 at the chapel, so please help our officers out.

I have been asked by leaders of the Hermitage Plantation HOA to let you know that for the first time citizens of other Berkeley Lake neighborhoods will be allowed access to the Hermitage **pool, tennis and pickleball courts, playground, and beautiful green space/walking trail on the river.** Spots are limited for nonresident members, so if you wish to apply please email treasurerhphoa@gmail.com for information on how to do so. The process is simple, and once approved, electronic payments can be accepted via Venmo and Zelle.



Rodney Hammond has recently let me know that he feels the need to retire from his seat on the City Council. Rodney has always taken his responsibilities very seriously and in consultation with his beloved Andrita, he will now lessen his workload on city matters to find more time for his family. This is not good news for any of us on the Council or the City staff who have worked with Rodney, for we hate to lose him. His commitments and contributions to our city stretch back for years and are truly unique and



unparalleled. After service on the **BLHA Board**, Rodney served for years as the outstanding **leader of our Planning and Zoning Commission**, a very challenging responsibility, and then moved on to many years as a **City Council** member. However, what is really remarkable about his contribution is that he **actually changed the geographical boundaries of our city.** Years ago, when I wanted to diversify our tax base by adding more business and

commercial properties and giving us more control over nearby areas that could affect our homes, our lake, and our green space, I knew that this would be a hugely difficult task. I asked three men whom I respected and trusted to reach out one by one to nearby business and property owners to make the case for their annexation into our city. Those men were Tom Kitchens, Dick Lackey, and Rodney Hammond. We owe them all a huge debt and they will forever be remembered in our city's history as changing its actual boundaries and character. Rodney with all his different avenues of service to Berkeley Lake is simply irreplaceable, and we will be forever grateful.

As you know, I try to share with you **things I learn at Mayor meetings**, that may be of general interest to you about our county and region. Recently, I learned that the Atlanta Regional Commission is forecasting a 30% increase in population and a 22% increase in employment between now and 2050. Our population is getting more diverse and older as well, with the fastest growth being in the outer counties. At another meeting, I thought this comparison of crime in our county compared with the city of Atlanta and the county of DeKalb was significant.

2023 Population:	983,526	510,823	762,992
Crime	Gwinnett	Atlanta	DeKalb
Murder	40	135	125
Rape	92	60	166
Robbery	412	599	878
Aggravated Assault	778	2,693	4,054
Burglary	1,389	1,691	2,983
Theft	4,796	5,252	6,521
Auto Theft	1,243	5,171	6,103

Goat Yoga is coming to Berkeley Lake! If you would like to participate in the Pinckneyville Park community center's goat yoga class, call this number for further information (678) 277-0920. Try this out at 10 AM on Saturday August 9 and see what you think. You will need to bring your own yoga mat. They are also

organizing some hikes with goat accompaniment, so you may want to inquire about those also. The goat hikes are open to all ages.



Many thanks to those of you who came out on **Memorial Day** to honor those who have served and sacrificed for our country. **BJ Van Gundy** played Taps for us again out across the lake which is always so moving. **Britt Collins** recited (entirely from memory) a very poignant letter written during the Civil War by a soldier to his wife on the night before his death. Many thanks to both of these



gentlemen for helping us to honor those who died for our country.

Our Gwinnett County police have recently taken down a multimillion dollar electronics theft ring. Officers seized over 5000 stolen electronics devices, \$1.2 million in US currency, multiple firearms and vehicles, etc. I thanked the Precinct Commander on your behalf, and asked him to congratulate all his colleagues who were involved, adding “That coordinated effort seems to me to go beyond ‘smart policing’. It was meticulous and patient, and amazingly successful. Many many thanks!” The Major responded “Thank you for reaching out! Our detectives work incredibly hard to see these cases through and it really is impressive to see what they can accomplish. I passed on your congratulations to their leadership and I know it will be appreciated on their end.”

At our June meeting the **City Council** appointed **Resa Mechling** to serve the remainder of Rodney Hammond’s term. On November 4, there will be a general election when citizens will choose someone to fill that seat for the next four years. Council members were unanimous in welcoming Resa; and Dick Carothers, our city attorney, is shown here swearing her in. Also at that meeting the Council authorized the expenditure of \$329,798 for **stormwater infrastructure**. Most of that will go into Miramont, but some other things will be taken care of as well which have been noted by staff members or citizens.



The Council also recently authorized **some street improvements in the city**. This week River Mansions will have high density mineral bond applied to preserve the pavement there. In July, Garrett Paving will begin milling and repaving Lakefield Bend and the streets in Berkeley Commons.

Since school is out, I have completed my weekly visits to **Berkeley Lake Elementary** to visit with a young lady assigned to me in their **mentoring program**. We had a good group of Berkeley Lakers working with other kiddos, and I commend the program to your consideration for next year. Ellen Whitlock and I planned our mentoring visits for the same time and day each week so that if one of us was out of town or unable to come, the other could meet with both kids. That worked well and we are signing up again for next year. It’s easy and pleasant to eat lunch with them and read stories or play games for a few brief

moments. I'm told that it makes a real difference to the kids. If you are interested in participating, please call Hunter McRae at (404) 213-5142 for more information.

There is a **state ordered burn ban** in effect throughout the metro area May 1 through Sept. 30. I think they do this every year, but please remember that any type of outdoor or open burning of trees, limbs, yard waste, etc. are prohibited.

I was recently notified by Gwinnett County commissioner Ben Ku that there is an interesting new program pairing **veterans** with support animals. **Gwinnett's Paws of Service** provides active-duty military personnel and retired U.S. veterans the opportunity to foster shelter animals for emotional support, with the possibility of adoption. Gwinnett County covers all pet food and medical expenses at no cost to the foster family. If you're interested in learning more about this rewarding program or wish to apply, please contact (770) 339-3200.



My featured Berkeley Lake business for today is Eurofed Automotive - a premier European automotive repair and performance shop dedicated to providing top-quality service for vehicles from brands like BMW, Audi, Porsche, Mercedes-Benz, and more. They specialize in everything from routine maintenance to high-performance builds with personalized customer care, helping drivers maintain reliability, performance, and peace of mind. Located at 4810 Peachtree Industrial Blvd in Berkeley Lake, they are open Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM and you can call them at (770) 326-9883.

This month's **Fun Fact about Berkeley Lake:** MSN recently conducted a study which identified Berkeley Lake as one of the 25 best small towns on the East Coast.

Enjoy your summer in our "Best Small Town."

Lois D. Satter