

Mayor's Message

March, 2008



We are approaching the culmination of all the planning for our new City Hall. As you may recall, we began many months ago with citizen input and brainstorming sessions led by a professional planning firm. The vision distilled from that input was incorporated into a Request for Proposals and sent out to many architectural firms. The local firm of Wakefield, Beasley & Associates was chosen by Council as a premier architectural firm whose bid was much lower than their nearest competitor. They are the ones who designed the Forum near us and their offices are there. They have been working on designs for both the building and the site surrounding it with a committee led by Barbara Carroll and with Council. **The final plans will be presented to our citizens on Saturday, March 15, from 9-11 AM at the Chapel.** The architects will present a detailed description of their designs at 10 AM after citizens have had an hour to study the drawings and elevations. Citizens will be given the opportunity to ask questions and give their comments to Council members then. Please join us on that Saturday if you have an interest in the **new City Hall**.

Another project that has been in planning for a long time is the creation of **sidewalks along North Berkeley Lake Road**. Since this is a county road the county will design and build the sidewalks, and this will be quite a difficult project for them. They will share their plans with the public at **Berkeley Lake Elementary School on Monday, March 24 from 5-7 PM** and you should be seeing signs about this posted in the area soon.

For some time now I have wanted our **citizens to be able to listen to our City Council meetings at their convenience through our website**. Our new City Administrator, Tom Rozier, has now made that possible. He arranges the recording of a meeting along the written agenda so you can find a topic that most interests you quickly without listening to the whole meeting. All the written documents pertaining to the meeting are accessible also. Please our City website at www.berkeley-lake.com and try this out when you get a chance.

I regret to tell you that the county will no longer allow us to hire the **police officers** who have served us so well under our current arrangement. Doug McClure has served for almost 8 years as our Chief Police Liaison and during that time has given many of our citizens special assistance and support with problems, as well as finding and supervising our truly outstanding officers. Many of you have said that you will miss them and want to thank them as they leave us. There will be a brief reception before our next Council meeting for our officers, and you are welcome to come and say good-bye. Please join us at 7 PM in the Chapel on Thursday, March 20, before Council meeting begins at 7:30. At that meeting we will be discussing what new arrangements to make for our public safety, which I know is of primary importance to us all. We will contract with the county initially at a significantly higher rate to hire officers whom they will choose and send to us. I am investigating various details about hiring our own police officers, and Frank Lombardi is interested in and studying the possibilities of hiring security guards. There is much to consider in making these decisions.

For many years our City has supported a **Relay for Life team**, the Berkeley Lake Lifesavers, who work together raising money to fight cancer. Again this year Lesley Pendleton has consented to lead that team with the able assistance of Ellen Lee. If you are willing to join the team, please contact one of them. All are invited to a fundraising festivity on **Saturday, March 15, beginning at 6:30 at the Chapel**. This is adults only, please, and beverages will be provided, but bring a snack or appetizer to share. It's a St. Patrick's party so please wear green and bring some to donate (check or cash donation to BL Lifesavers Team greatly appreciated).

The **City is sponsoring an art show on Saturday, April 12** with set up and preview on Friday, April 11. If you want details about "Art by the Lake", please contact Carol Seitz.

The **City's Earth Day Celebration will be on Saturday, April 19 from 9AM until 1PM**. Please check the city's website for details as that event approaches.

For the first time our City is sponsoring a **citywide garage sale on Friday and Saturday, April 18 and 19 from 8 AM until 2 PM on both days**. All neighborhoods will be participating except River Mansions. Thanks to Ann Chambers in Miramont for coordinating this. Email her at cham521@bellsouth.net if you will be participating.

The grand finale of all our city events this spring will be our **Memorial Day celebration on Saturday, May 24, with a raindate of Monday, May 26**. We have invited the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation to bring a pristinely maintained Huey helicopter which actually flew in Viet Nam to our City. For a tax deductible contribution of \$50 our military visitors will fly you around our City, over the scenic Chattahoochee River basin, and surrounding area. Tickets are already selling now, so to get yours please contact Britt Collins at 770.242.3002. There will be many activities on that day to honor our veterans and a lot of fun besides. Please check the City website for later details.

One of our citizens recently got a call from a realtor who does not live in Berkeley Lake, but was interested in selling houses here. The realtor had evidently gotten this citizen's phone number from a **city directory** which they had obtained somehow, and I've been asked to ask all of you please not to share this with others beyond our city. I know many of you enjoy having ready access to your neighbors' contact information, but most wouldn't want it shared with the world.

On April 22 & 23, approximately 25 professional foresters and arborists will visit our city to gather information on tree diameter, health, species, etc. along streets and in sample locations across the city. The result will be a report that quantifies our urban forest from a financial and environmental perspective as well as recommendations for management and upkeep. For more details see the article "**What is the value of Berkeley Lake's Urban Forest?**" on the city website and the AJC article, "**Berkeley Lake teams with state, feds to catalog city's trees**", published on February 11, 2008. You may volunteer to assist in the collection of data by contacting Dale Higdon with the Georgia Forestry Commission at 678-476-6228 or dhigdon@gfc.state.ga.us

I recently delivered my yearly **State of the City message** to Council. You can read this on our website or obtain a copy at City Hall.

Lisa D. Walter