

Mayor's Message *October, 2009*



On November 3rd from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in City Hall we'll hold an **election for three members of Council**. Remember that we're not voting at the Chapel anymore. You'll also have a little over 2 weeks to vote in advance, not just on that day; so hopefully this will be convenient for everyone. Absentee and early voting begins October 13th. You may vote absentee by mail or in person at City Hall during regular City Hall business hours through October 29th. Identification is required for voting in person and an application must be completed for early voting. You can download an application for early voting, absentee ballot, or a list of acceptable ID on our website; or visit City Hall. Votes will be counted in City Hall when the poll closes on Nov. 3, and results will be posted on our website.

As in past years, our homeowner association presidents are sponsoring a **Candidates' Forum** to help citizens make informed choices as they vote. Those running for office will answer questions publicly at Berkeley Lake Elementary School on Thursday, Oct 29th at 7pm. The candidates are Anne Carpenter, Jim Donnelly, William Hunkapiller, Scott Lee, Brian Strasburg, and Steve Throckmorton. Thanks to them all for their willingness to serve the City.

As I think everyone knows an irregularity was discovered on the face of the **dam** after the extreme rain event recently by our folks who were mowing up there. Although we do not expect the dam to fail, this is certainly a serious concern, and we have had 3 sets of engineers deeply involved with the dam ever since: our own City Engineers, Piedmont Geotechnical Engineers (dam specialists) and the Georgia Safe Dams agency. We attempted to notify everyone in the city by phone right after this was discovered, and we have kept updates of information on the city website as it came in. City staff have monitored the affected area for movement once or twice daily ever since and found none since the first measurement. We have installed 2 siphons to lower the lake level by 10 feet in an effort to lower the pressure on the dam embankment and reduce the seepage through the dam. We have authorized a very detailed survey of the dam based on all that we know about the history and structure of the dam, conversations with citizens who have knowledge of it, and the tests that have been made on it recently. When the survey is completed the City Engineer will begin to design a proposed action plan. I have asked him to create a preliminary report to present to Council and the public at our next meeting on Oct. 15 including recommendations for additional exploration and possible solutions. We are working to qualify for federal disaster funds in an effort to reduce costs associated with addressing this issue.

I know that everyone is very anxious about all this. The people who live below the dam are understandably worried, and the ones who live above it are suddenly coping with a big mud pit. Everyone wants and needs answers before I can get accurate ones from our engineers. Please continue to be patient, and know that everything that can be done is being done to the best of our experts' ability, and that we will continue to keep you informed as this develops.

Our fall **Earth Day** is scheduled for Saturday, Oct 17, from 9am - 1pm in the City Hall parking lot. We'll have the following, "*Advanced Disposal*" for "big trash" pickup, "*Recall*" for document shredding, "*Shinall*" for scrap metal (appliances, lawn mowers and grills, car batteries, etc.) and "*CompuPoint USA, LLC*" to collect electronics recyclers (working & non-working computer systems, software, printers, scanners, fax machines, etc.) No wet paints, construction material (lumber, bricks, etc) or entire trees. Don't forget to bring proof of residency in our City. This is not available to the public.

We will again hold a **citywide garage sale** on Oct 16th & 17th, Fri & Sat from 8am -2pm. The city will provide advertising in four local papers, on Craig's List, & place signs around the city. You may want to put a sign in front of your house to let people know to stop there, or the Chapel will be renting tables if you prefer a central sale site. First come, first serve until the spots are all taken - \$20 includes: two parking spaces & a table (rain or shine) with a \$10 no-refundable deposit in advance. Contact Beth Gilbert at gilbertbeth22@gmail.com or 404-285-2897. The City will also coordinate pickup of your leftovers by a charity after 2 PM on Saturday, should you desire to donate them. If you want at-home pickup, call or email me at lois.salter@gmail.com and I'll try to make sure you get that.

Everyone is excited about the **City Hall Grand Opening Celebration** which has been set for Sunday, Oct. 18 from 3-5 pm. Citizens will all be mailed a special invitation. Various elected officials from other cities, the county, and state have also been invited, as well as the press. I hope to see you all there.

As in past years, the city will fund a **Fall Festival** which will be on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 25 from 2pm – 5pm. It's at the Chapel and details will be available on our website in advance. We thank BLOSOMS for all their work on this day which we all enjoy.

I want to remind our **senior citizens** that you may receive a significant break on your county taxes by applying for certain exemptions. Please contact the county tax office to see if you qualify.

I have been asked by Council to let citizens know that when communicating with the City via email, they should be sure that the **email address** used is @berkeley-lake.com domain address.

Chapter 42, Article IX, (Water Conservation Measures) of our **City Code of Ordinances** has been changed since the last *Mayor's Message*. Details are available on the website.

Runners, **BL Elementary School's Turkey Trot** begins at 8:30 A.M. on Nov. 14 with a pancake breakfast to follow in the cafeteria. Contact [Rita McCormack@Gwinnett.k12.ga.us](mailto:Rita.McCormack@Gwinnett.k12.ga.us) if you'd like to participate and support the school.