



July 1, 2013

We're all looking forward to celebrating the **Fourth of July** this week. This event is a joint effort of the City which funds prizes for kids' games, decorations, etc., and the Chapel and the Berkeley Lake Homeowners' Association. The Chapel and BLHA open their facilities to us all on this day when we celebrate together, and BLHA provides volunteers to lead children's games and cook for us. Decorate yourself, your kids and vehicles for the parade which lines up at Berkeley Lake Elementary School around 10:30 AM, and starts at 11:00 AM. We always have some decorated dogs, too, so in all the excitement don't forget to protect them from the heat. Bring a picnic, or buy hot dogs and burgers which BLHA will be selling. Any profits go to help fund fish restocking and lake restoration. Kids' games start around 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM. Also **the art show opening for "The Catch of the Day"** is July 4th from 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM at City Hall's Blue Heron Gallery. The exhibit is a combination of the creative works from the BIG FISH Fundraiser Events. Come and see art works done by everyone from kids at "Fish Camp" to featured artists like Jo Lackey, Deb Love, Britt Collins, and BJ Barrett. Have a happy and safe Fourth everyone.



In my last issue I mentioned that we hoped to be able to **further lower taxes** this year and invited you to a public hearing on the matter. Only two of our citizens came to speak to the Council about the millage rate at the hearings and both of them opposed dropping the rate, suggesting that we should accumulate funds for possible future needs. If there are others of you out there who share this view, I want to reassure you that both the citizen finance committee and the entire council felt strongly that the City could function well and prepare for foreseeable future needs with a lower millage rate. The rate that has been adopted is 6.32% lower than we would have had to collect the same taxes as last year. The millage rate for 2013 has been set at 2.67mils.

During the process of annexing Habersham on the River and Hermitage Plantation subdivisions, a number of residents asked about whether they could **use 'Berkeley Lake' in their street address**. Tom Rozier, our City Administrator, has been working with the U.S. Postal Service in order to get their records updated and has advised me that all residential addresses within our city limits should now be able to use 'Berkeley Lake' as their city in their street address. [You can test your individual address by entering 'Berkeley Lake' in the city along with the remainder of your address at this link.](#)

When I met last week with representatives from all our engineering groups and **the dam** contractors, the project supervisor said with some understandable frustration, "We're getting killed by the rains!" We still have more than half an acre of sod to get down; and there is contamination in the toe ditch which we'll have to remove at the end of all this. I sometimes wonder if that day will ever come, but at least we are happy to see all that water collecting in the lake. Here's an aerial photograph taken mid June which shows the sod we've gotten down so far and the lake growing in the background.



The Southwest Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce is collecting **school supplies for kids who will need them at BL Elementary** and other nearby schools. There will be a bin available in City Hall for you to drop off pencils, paper, notebooks, etc. This helps our local teachers too, frankly, because a lot of them wind up spending their own money on kids who need help in their classrooms. Please help if you can. You can drop off some stuff while visiting the art show in City Hall on the Fourth.

Thanks to all our volunteers who work so hard to create and put up our **veterans' crosses**. The City pays for them but the work is done by some dedicated folks who have asked not to be publicly recognized, desiring that recognition be directed entirely to the veterans. If you know of a deceased veteran who lived in what is now Berkeley Lake (this cross is in memory of a gentleman who lived in Hermitage Plantation), please let us know so we can honor their memory with a cross.



Sometimes in this time of year we have strong storms. Please consider discussing some **emergency plans** with your family. Where would you meet if you were separated? Do you have a household "ready kit?" If you need help, I recommend the Georgia Emergency Management Agency's guide at www.ready.ga.gov. I know you're all busy and not looking for anything else to add to your to-do list, but please think about this when you can.

Heaven and Associates is a full service CPA firm which provides a full range of accounting and tax services including cloud based accounting and payroll services. Their stated goal is to be your trusted advisors and strategic partners; and they've already partnered with BLHA by sponsoring the Big Fish Event. Please consider this local Berkeley Lake business which is already supporting your community. You can reach Ranae H. Heaven, CPA at (770)849-0078 or go by 4720 Peachtree Industrial Blvd., Suite 201.

Lois D. Salter