



March 7, 2023

“This is something that could contribute to thinking about how we can be more beneficial to nature in the future, not just focusing on planting pollinator gardens, but also protecting forest patches within our cities as well.”

- Kennesaw State University professor Clint Panick on the surprising number of species of bees found in Georgia cities

I read recently that all species of **fireflies** or “lightning bugs” are declining rapidly. If you want to help, try to leave a little bit of wilderness around your home instead of keeping it all in a manicured lawn. Our Berkeley Lake Conservancy chair, Susan Hanson, often encourages us to focus on native plants and avoid insecticides for many reasons, and that helps lightning bugs, too. It’s a good idea to turn off outdoor lights where possible so they can

communicate with each other. Butterflies and bees are also declining and are important, not only for their beauty but for pollinating our food crops. You can learn more at Norcross’s **Planting for Pollinators Workshop this Saturday, March 11 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.** at the Norcross City Hall 2nd floor Conference Room. To pre-register, email [communitydevelopment@norcrossga.net](mailto:communitydevelopment@norcrossga.net). Additionally, The **Berkeley Lake Conservancy is sponsoring a guided walk in the Greenspace on Sunday afternoon, March 26 at 4:00 p.m.** Some of the native azaleas should be blooming by then.

Julie Huntington and her volunteers are getting ready for our **food drive this Sunday, March 12 at 1:00 p.m.** It’s a “time-change” weekend, so we will once again be collecting food to donate to the local food pantry. Please place non-perishable food in bags at your mailbox by 1:00 p.m. so volunteers can pick them up. There will also be collection tubs located at the City Hall, the Chapel, and at the mailbox at 888 Lakeshore Drive beginning Tuesday, March 7, if you would like to drop off instead. We will be donating to [Duluth Hands of Christ Ministry](#) and also to the student-led Duluth Middle School food closet.



Financial donations to the Duluth Hands of Christ Co-op are also welcomed! Items especially needed include: peanut butter, canned tuna and chicken, chunky/hearty soups, canned fruits/vegetables, toilet paper, personal care items, small sized laundry detergent, canned or dried beans, pastas and sauce.



Don't forget **our city's Earth Day on Saturday, April 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** We have already booked Fully Furnished Ministries for furniture repurposing and Waste Management for “big trash” as well as the metal recycling guy. The Rice Settlement Team has again committed to sponsor the big shredder truck this year. Thanks Jill and Tracey!

**The Georgia Municipal Association is concerned about a growing lack of civility in many of our cities’ meetings and gatherings.** To quote them: “We are all aware that in recent years some meetings and interactions between and among elected officials and the public have degenerated into attacks, threats and abuse. For public service to be effective, there must be an atmosphere of respect and tolerance, and a commitment to a healthy public exchange of diverse ideas and viewpoints.” I was asked to share that with you, but I’m grateful that our Berkeley Lake meetings have been collegial and mutually respectful. As many of you know, we were out ahead of that problem by creating and adopting an ordinance some years ago that requires our elected officials to recommit at the beginning of each year to a code of conduct. It requires me or whoever is conducting the meeting to manage it in such a way that people disagree about ideas with courtesy and mutual respect. I urge you to read our [code of conduct](#) on our website. I think it’s something you can all be proud of.

While I’m thinking about City meetings, I want also to remind all of you that we go out of our way to give our citizens all the information we will be considering at any meeting well in advance so that you can conveniently consider it, learn more about it, and possibly come to the meeting to share your thoughts or concerns about it. **We try to publish not only a meeting’s agenda, but all the documents that relate to that agenda and information about everything that will be considered a full week in advance.**

Nicole Love Hendrickson has been unusually helpful to our city and managed our county well as County Commission Chair. She recently gave a [State of the County](#) report which you may want to see here.



I got a call recently from **Georgia Power’s** regional manager to let me know that they are expecting to raise bills in response to increasing fuel costs. If that plan goes through, they expect the average residential electric bill to go up by \$17 or more a month.

Lake Berkeley Chapel will award 4 \$1000 **College Scholarships** this spring, 3 from the Chapel and 1 in Memory of Ashley DesRoches, given by her mother, a long-time BL resident, Lane Shutt and Ashley’s sister Leah Smith.

- Deadline: April 15, 2023
- <https://blchapel.org/scholarship>
- Applicants must be
  - A high school senior that resides in the City of Berkeley Lake that attends ANY high school or home school program OR
  - a senior at Duluth High School - doesn't need to be a Berkeley Lake citizen



As the weather warms, I have gotten out my snake boots to wander around the yard, and I urge you to be careful as well. Remember that the only **venomous snakes** seen frequently in our area are copperheads, and that other snakes actually help us by either eating copperheads or competing with them for food. Possums and foxes are also helpful in that regard. Please don’t kill the good snakes.

At one of my recent mayor meetings, Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger talked about SB 84, which attempts to provide greater **financial protections** for elder and disabled adults who may be victims of financial exploitation. Apparently, those of us who are 65 or over are being targeted more and more with scams in all kinds of ways. I and several others recently got a request purporting to be from one of our neighbors that turned out to be a scam. Please be very careful and if you need help, contact the Division of Aging Services. They can provide some free legal assistance on drawing up wills and other elder-related issues, Medicare advising, etc.

In another meeting, I was told that our **community’s baseline immunity against Covid cases** is now much better thanks to shots that have been given and infections that have been endured. I was told that we are not “bulletproof from another variant” but things are certainly better; and it was predicted that we may at some point have a yearly Covid shot similar to the flu shots that many of us get now.

**From our police officers:** thanks for the children’s gifts Berkeley Lakers contributed to their holiday collection. Also, they would like us to know that if you ever dial 911 by accident, don’t hang up! Stay on the line and let the dispatcher know it was an accident. If you don't, the dispatcher will proceed as if your call is an emergency and send a police officer out to check. Accidental calls tie up operators and take away vital resources from callers in need. Visit [GwinnettCounty.com/911](http://GwinnettCounty.com/911) for more tips to help prevent accidental calls.



My **featured Berkeley Lake business** for today is Heaven & Alvarez, LLC which provides accounting and tax services to business and individual clients. They’ve been part of our city for eleven years, and their goal is to provide the information clients need to make the best financial decisions possible and pay the least amount of taxes legally possible.

Ranae H Heaven CPA  
Heaven & Alvarez, LLC  
4720 Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, Suite 201  
770/849-0078 [www.heavencpa.com](http://www.heavencpa.com)

City of Berkeley Lake – Mayor’s Message

This month’s **Fun Fact about Berkeley Lake:**

We were declared an Urban Wildlife Sanctuary by the Humane Society of the United States for resolving conflicts with wildlife.

Happy Spring, everybody!

*Lois D. Salter*