

Mayor's Message

March, 2007



At our last Council meeting, I delivered my yearly **State of the City Address**. You can read it if you like on our website at www.berkeley-lake.com/files/State_of_the_City_2007.pdf or obtain a copy in City Hall.

You are cordially invited to a **St. Patrick's Day party to raise funds for the Berkeley Lake Lifesavers Relay For Life team**. Everyone is asked to bring an appetizer to share. Beverages, music, and fun will be provided beginning at 6:30 PM on Saturday, March 17, at the Chapel. Adults only. A cash or check donation to combat cancer will be appreciated at the door. Please feel free to contact Lesley Pendleton with questions at 678-596-8787.

We are making progress on **our infrastructure project** and the lake is on the way back up. Please continue to monitor current information posted on our website. The big roll-off dumpsters around construction sites on Lakeshore Drive are the property of the city's contractor. Please do not deposit anything in them. Household waste goes to a different landfill than construction and demolition waste, so the mixing of the two really causes a problem for them. Also the City has hired a contractor to build up the edges of roads where there are no curbs and gutters. We were told by engineers that this was a safety need because as new pavement is added over the years and the dirt next to it erodes away or is compacted by parking cars, it creates a significant dropoff in some places. If a moving car's tire accidentally went off the edge on one of our many curves and dropped sharply, it could cause a serious accident. I know we're all getting tired of construction projects and the mess and inconvenience associated with them, but we're getting a lot done that has been needed for years. It will be over soon and we can get back to normal. Thank you all for your patience.

At the February meeting Council approved a new ordinance **prohibiting overnight parking on shoulders of city streets**. Enforcement of this will begin April 1st and as a practical matter affects only streets in the old part of the City where there are no curbs. Parking there compresses the shoulder area and causes breakage of the pavement edge, ultimately constituting a safety hazard as well as an infrastructure maintenance problem. Additionally it prevents pedestrians from moving rapidly off the road to avoid oncoming traffic. You may read the new ordinance in its entirety on our website or in City Hall.

City Hall will be closed on the following **holidays** for 2007: Memorial Day- Monday, May 28; Independence Day -Wednesday, July 4; Labor Day - Monday, September 3; Thanksgiving - Wednesday, November 21st and Thursday, November 22; Christmas -Monday, December 24, Tuesday, December 25, and Wednesday, December 26th.

After considering input from citizens, the Facilities Committee, and our professional planners at Urban Collage, our Council has chosen a **site for our new city hall**. It will be built somewhere

on the property where the current building sits. Although other sites were considered, Urban Collage presented several options for building on that site, all of which include room for future expansion, sufficient parking spaces, and room for a renovated children's park. The exact location on the property will be determined as plans progress. We have also had a meeting with some experts on LEED certified building. LEED stands for "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design." We will continue to keep you informed.

Our **Earth Day Celebration will be Saturday, April 14, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.** We have lined up the usual big trucks to be there that day for your trash and recycling, including the Iron Mountain shredders, but remember to bring proof of your residency in our city. A driver's license showing your address will be fine. The Reboot organization will be here to take all your old computers, printers, cell phones, and other electronic equipment. They usually ask for a small tax-deductible donation (last year \$10 per PC), which they use to recondition the items to be given to charities. Coffee and doughnuts will be served to kick off the day. Volunteers are needed to lead trash pick-up throughout the City. If you are interested in helping with that, please contact City Hall at 770 368-9484. Come out and celebrate the day with your fellow citizens and get your spring cleaning off to a good start!

The National Arbor Day Foundation recognized The City of Berkeley Lake as a "Tree City USA" for the eighth year. In order to be a **Tree City USA** we have to meet the following four standards: a tree board or department, a tree care ordinance, a comprehensive community forestry program, and an Arbor Day observance.

I am hoping to get our citizens interested in the **C.O.P.S. program**, which will not only contribute to our safety but will build relationships between neighbors as well. I will be talking with your homeowner presidents about this, but please let me know if you're interested and I'll send you some information. In the meantime here are some things you can do to protect your home from intruders.

- Purchase an alarm system for your home and use it whenever you're away. It is also a good idea to have your home alarm activated while you're asleep.
- Install motion sensor lights at the front and rear of your home.
- Make sure you keep your doors and windows locked. Do not hide a key outside of your home, because criminals know all the places that you can think of to hide it.
- Install double keyed deadbolt locks on all exterior doors if there is a window within arms reach of the interior lock. Make sure you keep a key readily available near each door in the event of a fire.
- Make sure that you pick-up your mail and newspapers on a daily basis. If you're not going to be at home for a few days or longer, arrange to have someone you trust pick-up your mail and newspapers every day.
- When you're going to be away from home on vacation put several interior lights on a timer, making sure you set them to go on and off at different times.
- Make sure your neighbors know to call the police immediately if they see any suspicious activity at your home. *(suggestions from Gwinnett County Police)*

You may also want to know about www.familywatchdog.us, suggested to me by Doug McClure, our Chief Police Liaison. When you visit this site you can enter your address and a map will pop up with the small icon of your house and colored dots surrounding your neighborhood and nearby area. When you click on these dots, a picture of a person will appear with an address and the description of the crime he or she has committed.