



## *One Chapter Closes and Another Opens: A New Beginning in Sugar Hill*

January 2014 saw the formal introduction and swearing in of our new Mayor Steve Edwards, a new Mayor Pro Tem, Marc Cohen, and Council members Mike Sullivan and Curtis Northrup. The large crowd stood for the invocation led by Union City Mayor Vince Williams and the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Ryan Edwards and Jordan Brannon. The first order of business was to swear in Mayor Edwards. Edwards was joined by his wife Denise, as outgoing Mayor Pirkle swore him into his new office. Mayor Edwards proceeded to administer the oath to Mayor Pro Tem Cohen, and Councilmen Sullivan and Northrup. At the conclusion of the ceremonial meeting, the community took the opportunity to thank outgoing Mayor Pirkle, his wife Alyson, and sons Scott and Jake for 16 years of service to the City.

Mayor Edwards called on the State, County, and Local officials in attendance.

- Gwinnett County Commissioner Jace Brooks spoke of Mayor Pirkle's integrity, the fact that he always knew where Gary stood on an issue, and the amazing progress Sugar Hill has experienced under his leadership.
- Gwinnett Municipal Association Managing Director Randy Meacham told the gathering how he appreciated the fact that Mayor Pirkle worked tirelessly on the service delivery issue, protecting Cities without their own police force and other services.
- Sugar Hill City Manager Bob Hail delivered a proclamation heralding Mayor Pirkle's achievements and surrounded by photos of events from the past 16 years.
- The City Council presented Gary a commemorative gavel plaque, and a photo memento from his first election.
- Downtown Development Authority Chairman Dawn Gober spoke about how much she and the DDA members appreciated his service and support through the years and his vision for the future of downtown.
- Ms. Denise Wilcox representing Sugar Hill Elementary and the schools of the Lanier Cluster thanked Mayor Pirkle for his and the City's support through the years and how much it has meant to the schools.



## *A New Beginning Continued:*

- City Judge Margaret Washburn thanked Mayor Pirkle for his years of service and for running a tight ship.
- Former Councilman Jim Stanley said that Mayor Pirkle brought harmony to a dysfunctional City Council at the time it needed most.
- Former City Manager and current State Senator Frank Ginn spoke of coming on board when the City was in turmoil and asking then Councilman Pirkle why they wanted to continue as a City. Gary's response was we wanted to decide our own destiny, not have it dictated by the County and Pirkle led the charge to fix the City. Mayor Pirkle's philosophy was working together we can do wonders.
- State Representative Brooks Coleman praised Mayor Pirkle's work ethic, stating he was a man who always worked hard who always had the City's best interest in mind and always had a positive attitude. He applauded his commitment to serve the community.
- State Senator Renee Unterman could not attend however sent a note that said she was proud of Mayor Pirkle's accomplishments and that he was a progressive leader that brought the City to where it is now.

The group then adjourned for a reception to honor former Mayor Pirkle, new Mayor Edwards, and the City Council.



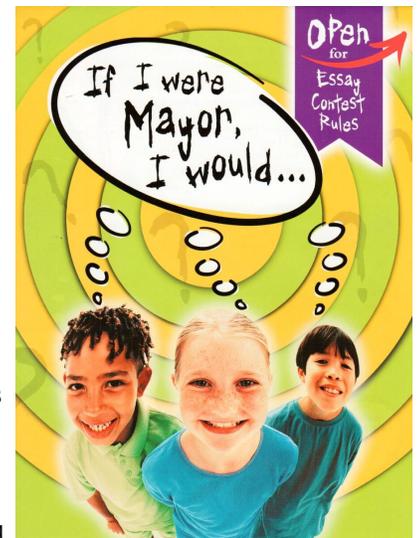
## *News Bites:*

- The Georgia Municipal Association is inviting all sixth graders across Georgia to become city leaders in the "If I Were Mayors, I Would . . ." essay contest. The deadline is **March 7, 2014**.

The City of Sugar Hill encourages 6th graders in our area to participate in the essay contest. The contest is open to all 6th graders, including home schooled students and private school students. The contest is a way for city officials to begin educating students about the role city government plays in their lives and community.

According to contest rules, **every essay must begin** with the sentence, **"If I were mayor, I would"** and essays may not be longer than **350** words. They can be either typed or hand written, but must be legible and have the student's name and school on them. One winner will be chosen from each of GMA's 12 districts, and will be selected by a panel of city officials. Each winner will receive a \$250 savings bond and other small prizes. Winners will be notified by the end of March, and will be invited, along with their teachers, parents and mayors, to a luncheon in Atlanta in April. Please contact Amy Henderson at (678) 686-6226 or via email at: [ahenderson@gmanet.com](mailto:ahenderson@gmanet.com) for information.

- Sugar Hill would like to welcome Dr. Reuben Gresham as the new principal for Lanier High School. Lanier is one of the two high schools responsible for educating students living in the city of Sugar Hill. "It's good to be home" Dr. Gresham said as he was welcomed by faculty, parents, & involved community members. Dr. Gresham helped start Lanier High School and was assistant principal there for 3 years. Outgoing Principal Wing, (she will become Principal at Collins Hill HS) has done a wonderful job making Lanier High School one of its best, and we look forward to Dr. Gresham continuing the momentum.



## News Bites:

- The Annual City of Sugar Hill Employee Christmas Luncheon recognized several staff members for their years of service. Pictured from left to right: Bob Hail City Manager, Joe Appling, Street Department Supervisor, 20 years! - Jane Whittington, City Clerk, 10 years - Chris Jackson, Street Department, 10 years - Jared Bennett, Street Department, 5 years - Burny Agee, Building Inspector, 10 years, Mayor Gary Pirkle. Not pictured: Joseph Cantrell, Street Department, 5 years and Naomi Brown, Customer Service Supervisor, 5 years.
- 2014 kicks off the City's **75th Anniversary** and the Committee is working on a number of exciting projects. We are currently looking for items to include in the time capsule (which will be buried at a public City Hall ceremony on **March 23, 2014 - save the date!**) so let us know what you would like to see enshrined for posterity or contribute. Photo: Mayor Steve Edwards and Mayor Pro Tem/75th Anniversary Chair Marc Cohen pose with the 75th Anniversary Time Capsule. Check our web site for more information on the events/activities. Contact Don Kelemen 770-945-6716
- Sugar Hill Councilmember Curtis Northup received the very prestigious **Certificate of Recognition** from the Georgia Municipal Training Institute at the GMA Annual Mayors' Day Conference in Atlanta on January 26. The Georgia Municipal Training Institute, a cooperative effort of GMA and the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, provides a nationally recognized series of training opportunities for elected city officials. To receive a Certificate of Recognition, a city official must complete a minimum of 42 units of credit, including three courses from the required list. The training program consists of a series of more than 40 courses. "This is an outstanding achievement," said GMA Executive Director Lamar Norton. "We commend Councilmember Northup for this accomplishment and for the dedication he's shown in using this valuable resource to become a more effective city official."
 

Based in Atlanta, Georgia Municipal Association is a voluntary, non-profit organization that provides legislative advocacy, research, training, employee benefit and technical consulting services to its 500 member cities.
- The January 13th the City Council ushered in a new era with new Mayor Steve Edwards. Sugar Hill resident, Minister MacLane Forbus of the North Metro Baptist Church led the gathering in the invocation. Topics of discussion included a motion to approach the County about a speed reduction on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard from the previous 55 mph to 45 mph. The reduction came about from a request from the City of Suwanee due to the build up of commercial development. The section of PIB in Sugar Hill is currently undeveloped and drivers are being ticketed thinking the limit is 55. City Manager Bob Hail said he will be requesting a change after checking the speed limit on PIB north of Hwy 20. Mayor Pro Tem Marc Cohen, gave an update on the 75th Anniversary Committee preparations for the events this year. He mentioned the Senior Valentines Dance will feature a big band sound in keeping with the period of the 1930s-40s. More updates to follow on events in this newsletter and on the City of Sugar Hill web site.



## News Bites:

- 2014 kicks off the City’s **75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** and the Committee is working on a number of exciting projects. Make sure you check our web site for more information on the events/activities. We need some volunteers, if you are interested to help manage or volunteering for one of the many exciting planned activities during the year, please contact, Marc Cohen: [marccohen@cityofsugarhill.com](mailto:marccohen@cityofsugarhill.com)
- Pictured is one of the street banners celebrating the 75th Anniversary of Sugar Hill. They are also displayed at Gary Pirkle Park and EE Robinson Park. There will be more themed items and giveaways to come this year.
- Councilman Curtis Northrup and City Manager Bob Hail stand in front of one of the City’s natural gas conversion trucks. The City of Sugar Hill has begun the process of converting its Code Enforcement, Meter Reader and Chief Building Inspector vehicles to dual fuel capability. These vehicles will be able to use compressed natural gas as its primary fuel and gasoline as a backup. The system will reduce the “cost” of fuel to approximately \$1.50 per gallon. This is at least a 50% savings for fuel usage. These will be the test vehicles for possible future conversion of other City vehicles. The engines start on regular gasoline fuel to ensure the engine is lubricated and in running condition, then it is switched to natural gas with no loss of engine efficiency, but fuel costs will be reduced and will reduce engine emissions that are found in gasoline engines.



## Construction Watch:



Construction has resumed on the new expanded covered playground at EE Robinson Park. We’ve experienced weather delays with all the rain, but the steel frame is now progressing on the 4,510 Sq. Ft. playground.

### **2014 Meeting Schedule :**

#### **February / March**

**February 3 / March 3**  
7:00 PM, City Council Work Session - City Hall Annex (Jan.)

**February 10 / March 10**  
7:30 PM, City Council Meeting, City Hall

**February 15 / March 21**  
1:00 PM, City Court Session, City Hall

**February 17 / March 18**  
7:00PM, Planning and Zoning Meeting, City Hall

**February 25 / March 25**  
6:30 PM, Downtown Development Authority, City Hall

Everyone is invited to attend Sugar Hill’s monthly Council Work Sessions and Council Meetings. All meetings for the City of Sugar Hill will be held in City Hall located at 5039 West Broad Street, Your comments, suggestions and support will help make your city a community to be proud of

Videos of our monthly City Council meetings are shown on Charter Cable channel 19, @ 6:30 pm, every 3rd, 4th and 5th Sunday of each month.

Agendas and meeting minutes can be found on the Sugar Hill website at: [www.cityofsugarhill.com](http://www.cityofsugarhill.com).