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# News & Views

November 24, 2021

The City of New Hope's Employee Newsletter



## Thank You to City Council

A hearty thank you to the City Council for their recent vote in support of an increase to the city contribution for insurance in 2022. We greatly appreciate the continued investment in city employees in many areas.

## Officer Larson Sworn In

At the Oct. 25 city council meeting, Officer Lee Larson took her oath of office as a police officer for the City of New Hope. Lee completed her one-year probation effective Oct. 19. Her husband, Eric, and son, Cooper, looked on as seen in the photo as the oath was administered by City Clerk Valerie Leone. *Photo Credit: Beth Kramer*

## Captain Crocker Retires

As I left his office he stated, "couldn't ask for much more in a career." And that is a perfect summary of the story I'm about to share with you.

Captain Scott Crocker started with the city of New Hope as a police officer on Feb. 1, 1985. At that time, the State of Minnesota had in place a police recruitment system that officers could register with; cities could then review their information and contact the candidates for interviews. New Hope was one of the cities that asked Scott to interview. He had worked here in New Hope at Lakeside Limited, a manufacturing facility on Boone, during school breaks so he was familiar with and liked the area. He was on the shortlist for other agencies, but New Hope fast-tracked his process and offered him a position that he accepted. Richfield tried to woo him away a couple of months later, but Scott had found his second home. He did work part-time at Metro Transit for about 20 years during his tenure here at New Hope, but never strayed any further.

Scott had many great experiences as an officer with the city. One of which was as part of the SWAT team. When he started it was just Golden Valley and New Hope police departments, and then Robbinsdale joined about the same time he did. At one point he served as assistant commander.

He created and managed the first defensive tactics program for the department. Prior to that, what had been offered was through the FBI. Scott had officers train at his home, as the department didn't have the space or equipment for any sort of needed training. He worked with a Crystal officer on the endeavor and coincidentally they shared the same birthdate.

One of the defining moments of Scott's life was being the first New Hope exchange officer in the ELATE (European Learning and Training Experience) program. In 1994, he

## Mark Your Calendar:

Nov. 25-26 – Thanksgiving Holiday: City Offices Closed  
Nov. 29 – RSVP Due Date for Emp. Recognition Event  
Dec. 9 – Employee Recognition Event  
Dec. 14 – Employee Potluck and Teen Toy Drive  
Dec. 22 – Wacky Wednesday – Jeans  
Dec. 23-24 – Christmas Holiday: City Offices Closed  
Dec. 31 – New Year's Holiday: City Offices Closed



traveled to London for three weeks, two weeks learning about law enforcement and the final week on vacation. He is still fast friends with a couple he met as part of the program and has exchanged visits with them over the years. His counterpart from the program recently retired from the Ministry of Defence after 40 years, so post-retirement Scott looks forward to returning to England and visiting them once again.

In April of 1997, Scott was awarded employee of the quarter for his work as an assistant and then the head advisor with the New Hope Explorer Post for many years. While working with the Explorers, the team won third place in the national competition for hostage negotiations.

In 1999, Scott was promoted to sergeant. He told me that over the years as he applied for positions, he was often “the bridesmaid, not the bride.” And while he didn’t have the goal of being promoted, based on his experience and initiative over the years, it fit. Then in 2011, he was promoted to captain. He recalls one of the questions during the interview, “What did you do to prepare to be captain?” His response, “Nothing, I just did what needed to be done.” Apparently, they saw it the same way.

What of the changes? Scott recalls using a clipboard and notepad when being dispatched, at that time by Golden Valley. It was good having the local dispatch as the dispatchers knew the area, but it meant the officers had to be on their toes with listening and recording what they heard. When the MDCs (mobile computers) were deployed the number of officer



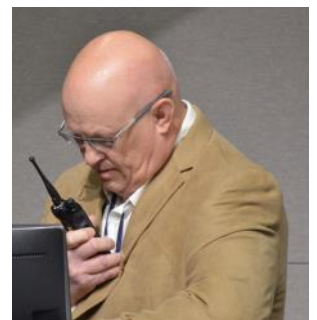
-involved vehicle collisions increased, but as officers adjusted it was an improvement, as the amount and accuracy of information increased efficiency in responses. He recalls a couple of models of police vehicles that provided challenges, such as the inability to go fast, or were a pain to refill because of the hydrogen fuel used. He recalls using a lighter to thaw the padlock at public works so he could fill his squad, versus using the gate opener that exists now. A more recent change that he applauds is the addition of the fitness room to City Hall; going across town to the gym versus across the hall makes a tremendous difference when working a 12-hour shift.

Scott has many fond memories: his first time on patrol after passing FTO (field training) and driving down the street humming the theme song to Hawaii-5-0; co-workers he admired such as Mike Mitchell, one of his FTOs; and one time on dogwatch when he woke up and ran out the door when he saw that the clock read 11:10 (his shift started at 11 p.m.), only to find out it was 11:10 a.m. He’s also grateful for a supportive Council over the years.

Scott is going to miss the sense of comradery and the great people that he has the privilege of working with. He will also miss the puzzles that come with operating a department, the things that sometimes seem like headaches at the time but provide challenges and engagement. He’s proud of his tenure and the fact that he’s worked with officers as early as badge #2 to the latest to start with the department, #111. And he has great admiration for those entering law enforcement currently.

**Advice?** One, he’s advised Captain Johnson not to share his card *carte blanche*, there will be plenty of people and tasks looking for his time. Two, do things for the department and city, not just for yourself. Three, be as kind as you can be.

**What’s next?** He has no definitive trips planned because of the ongoing pandemic. With a school-age daughter still at home and pets, traveling during the school year would be limited anyway. But he is looking forward to working on projects around the house and being able to focus on himself and his health more. He is planning to spend more time during the summer in Park Rapids at his dad’s. And he *might even occasionally sleep in*.





## New Employee



### Nick Macklem, Stormwater Specialist/Project Coordinator

On the 15th, we welcomed Nick back to the city. He is originally from New Hope and spent almost nine years working as a parks and recreation seasonal employee during high school and on college breaks. He worked first as a program leader, then as a warming house attendant and ended his first tenure performing maintenance at the golf course. We are pleased that he wanted to return. He and Georgi, his wife of just over one year, are living here in New Hope as well. They met eight years ago when they were both attending the University of North Dakota, even though she is originally from Plymouth.

Nick's parents still live here in New Hope. His father is a mechanical engineer, and his mother is a nurse clinic manager. His sister, Emily, is also a former seasonal and still lives in the Twin Cities as well. Georgi is a graphic designer and works for Minnetonka based Sofia's Cookies, managing their design department, as well as a part-time gymnastics coach for Wayzata High.

Nick describes himself as "very outdoorsy" and enjoys hiking, camping and fishing. He's serious about the fishing too; before starting with the city he asked if he could still plan on a couple of ice fishing weekends this winter! When asked for favorite locations to be outdoors he said that he's partial to Hubbard County where he has been working for the last 3 ½ years. He also has multiple family members that have cabins in that area, so he spent a lot of time there growing up.

When spending time together, Nick and Georgi enjoy traveling. Georgi's sister recently moved to Boston, so they've added that to their not-so-distant destinations. And Georgi's parents have a place in Ephraim, Door County that they visit as often as they can.

When they have down time, Nick enjoys playing guitar and piano and Georgi enjoys painting and designing for herself, family and friends. *Welcome back to New Hope, Nick! We're glad to have you return!*

## Recruitment Updates

**Police Officer** – The external process will close on Nov. 29.

**Community Service Officer** – Two candidates are currently undergoing backgrounding. It is anticipated that at least one will be ready to start in December. The second candidate will replace CSO Scott Anderson who has announced his retirement as of Jan. 9, 2022. Look for more on that in the next issue of News & Views!



## Happenings

### City Day – Oct. 9

New Hope City Day was back in early October after a several-year hiatus due to Civic Center construction and then the COVID-19 pandemic. The event was well attended by community members who enjoyed the West Metro Fire-Rescue District open house and waffle breakfast, learning about city departments, projects and programs, watching

demos and performances and checking out police, fire and public works vehicles. Thank you to everyone who participated! Copy and photo credit to Beth Kramer, Communications Coordinator

### Citizens' Police Academy – Oct. 12

Brad Kallio, Crime Prevention/Comm. Relations Off., along with others from the police departments of New Hope, Crystal and Robbinsdale led the 30-member academy through classes on what it's like to be a police officer in the represented cities. *Pictured: Graduation on Oct. 12.*

### Food Bank Update

As we near the end of the year, Susan Rader, parks and recreation director, shared the following totals for 2021 to-date: 877 pounds of food and \$970!





## Employee Kudos



### Eric Piper, Housing/Code Enforcement Inspector

Last month, City Manager Kirk McDonald received a very complimentary voicemail from a resident of New Hope regarding Eric. She was selling her home and Eric performed her point of sale inspection. The resident stated that Eric was very kind and explained everything thoroughly. She asked Kirk to “let everyone know how great Eric Piper is.” We agree, Eric. Thank you for representing the city so well!

### Celebrations!



**New Baby**—Penny Spitzer, parks and recreation admin. specialist, and her husband, Rick, welcomed new grandbaby, Winston Hager on Oct. 18. Winston was born to Penny’s daughter Danielle (and husband, Dan). Congratulations, Penny!

**Wedding**—Jared Kuyper, police investigator, and fiancé, Inna Davydova, were married on Oct. 23 at the Hotel Crosby in Stillwater. They had about 70 people attend and we are anxiously awaiting photos to share. Once they have them, we will post one here! There is no honeymoon planned yet, but they have Hawaii in their sights.



### In Memoriam



Our sympathies to:

- The family of Larry Quade. Larry was a maintenance worker with the city until his retirement in 1999 and passed away on Oct. 8
- Shari Rains, accountant, her husband, Tim, and their family for the passing of Tim’s father, Tom, who passed away on Oct. 16.
- The family of Art Field. Besides his steadfast commitment to the New Hope Community, Art has worked as a seasonal employee for the city since 2015. He worked as a rink attendant, public works seasonal supervisor and in other various capacities as an employee and volunteer over the years. He passed suddenly on Nov. 13. His infectious smile and genuine interest in everyone he met will be sorely missed.

### Wellness Program

#### Workouts for Every Ability – Nov. 10

Sergeant Chris Swaja and Officer Josh Arthur presented to a group of 13 employees on ideas for starting a workout routine and then gave an orientation on some of the machines in the fitness room at City Hall. There wasn’t enough time for everything, so look for part two next year. Josh will also be offering initial one-on-one routine recommendations for interested employees. More details will be coming via email soon.



#### Home Safety – Dec. 8

Staff from West Metro will be presenting on home safety tips that will mirror what they would do if they were conducting one of their home safety inspections.

Lunch will be from Café Zupas. Be sure to submit your payment and order by Dec. 6.

