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News & Views

February 23, 2023

The City of New Hope's Employee Newsletter

Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to **Lorilee Stafford**, police clerk, for being selected as the employee of the quarter for 4th quarter 2022. Lorilee was nominated and ultimately selected for her willingness to jump in and support several community engagement events in addition to her regular job duties throughout the holiday season.

Lorilee helped organize and distribute toy donations, shop for and wrap tens of dozens of gifts, and decorate and coordinate refreshments for the police department's Blue Santa event.

Her work helped make the holidays happier for more than 40 children within the New Hope community. Lorilee completed all of this while also taking on the task of assembling the department's annual report.

Lorilee began with the city as a police clerk in February of 2016. Thank you for all of the fantastic work, Lorilee! *(photo credit: Beth Kramer, communications coordinator)*

Additional Nominees:

Riley McIlrath, police clerk, for her work with the police department's predatory offender registration database. Maintenance of this database requires organization of many details on each registrant and communication with officers conducting annual compliance checks and the BCA. She was also commended for her tech support and assistance in training new officers.

Nick Macklem, stormwater specialist/project coordinator, for continuously being someone that goes above and beyond in his work. He recently received accolades from members of the Meadow Lake Watershed Association for his work with them on the watershed's action plan and the Meadow Lake draw down. His nominator also observed that Nick consistently responds to all communications respectfully and thoroughly.



Seasonal Hiring Ramping Up!

Parks and recreation and public works have both started the hiring process for the summer. There are many positions available for students and adults alike. All active postings for the departments are now posted on newhopemn.gov/jobs.

Mark Your Calendar:

March 22 – Wacky Wednesday – Jeans
March 28-30 – Wellness: Biometric Screening
April 12 – Wellness: Minnesota Grown - CSAs and other healthy food sources
April 26 – Wacky Wednesday – Jeans
May 29 – Memorial Day- City Offices Closed

Employee Spotlights

Ricky Plemel, Golf Superintendent

Welcome to Ricky who started on Jan. 20. Ricky comes to the City most recently from Edina Country Club where he was an assistant superintendent. Originally from Cottage Grove, he and his partner, Sarah, live in Coon Rapids. He has two siblings, including a brother who works for the Bloomington parks and recreation department. Sarah is a paralegal for Fields Law Firm. They have owned their home in Coon Rapids for about one year and while their last canine companion passed in 2021, they look forward to adopting another one into their home in the not-too-distant future.

Ricky said that when he was growing up his grandparents lived on Indian Hills Golf Course in Stillwater, and he spent a lot of time out on the course with his grandfather. It's been a love of his since, along with many other sports. Sarah shares this passion for sports, so they spend much of their leisure time attending sporting events, especially the Twins and Saints. The sports theme even extends to their time at home where they enjoy piecing together sports-themed puzzles.

Another thing they enjoy doing together is cooking and exploring oriental markets. They appreciate spicy flavors and some of their favorite homemade dishes are Korean beef, ramen, enchiladas and mac and cheese. They also enjoy preparing recipes using sous vide as the method of cooking. Sarah is also a baker so they will often make pizza with homemade crusts and always save room for tasty desserts.

They have not traveled extensively at this point, but one of the destinations they have their sights set on is Hawaii. We're very glad to have you here at New Hope, Ricky, and we hope that your first season with the course includes a beautiful spring!



Christina Monson, Joint Community Police Partnership (JCPP) Program Liaison

Join me in welcoming Christina as the City's first JCPP Program Liaison as of Jan. 30. She is an employee of Hennepin County, not the city. However, we will be seeing her often as she will be working out of the New Hope Police Station. She and her counterpart, who is based out of Crystal, will work with minority communities in New Hope, Crystal and Robbinsdale. In Christina's words, the JCPP has been developed to "build bridges between police and community." She accepted this role to "be a part of the change that she has faith can and will come" through community engagement and in partnership with police department staff. She holds to the tenant that perception is nonnegotiable. Over the next few weeks, she will be riding along with officers on patrol and working to establish a multicultural advisory committee.

A little about Christina personally. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Restorative Justice from Metro State University. She started her career working at Hennepin County Adult Detention Center and RS Eden WatchGuard working with inmate programs. Christina then went on to manage affordable housing properties and programs for the past 20 years. Specifically, over the past eight years she worked at the City of Plymouth as an HRA Specialist with the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the program housing inspector. She recently married and together their blended family includes six children, two grandchildren and one more grandchild on the way. Christina is an AVID Vikings fan and in her spare time, she loves to spend time with her family, travel and attend her children's basketball games.



Recruitment Updates:

Maintenance Worker – Acting City Manager Hoyt has appointed a candidate from the list of certified candidates created by the personnel board last June. Scott Fendrich will be starting on March 15.

Evidence Technician – Staff is interviewing five candidates for this position tomorrow. Candidates moving forward will interview with the personnel board next week.

Police Officer – The City completed the external posting period on Tuesday and received applications from 11 candidates. All 11 have been invited to interview with staff next week.

Happenings

GreenStep Coordinator Recognized

Congrats to **Jeff Alger**, community development specialist, for being selected for GreenStep's Coordinator Spotlight in their most recent newsletter. The following is excerpted/edited from the text, including a bit about Jeff and what the City has accomplished under his leadership.



"New Hope ... joined the GreenStep Cities program in 2015. As the city's GreenStep Coordinator, Jeff advanced the city to Step 3 in just one year and has been busy implementing and reporting actions ever since then! Jeff has a B.A. in Business Administration and Management from Augsburg University and a Master's in Urban & Regional Studies and a Graduate Certificate in Local Government Management from Minnesota State University, Mankato. Jeff interned with GreenStep partner, Rethos, before starting at New Hope.

Jeff is proud of the City's accomplishments related to sustainability, including:

- The completion of 94 GreenStep Cities best practice actions, the third most of the 146 participating cities.
- New Hope received the 2017 LMC Sustainable City Award for the Northwood Park stormwater improvement project, which included rain gardens, a stormwater pond, and a 160,000-gallon underground water reuse system and stormwater treatment structure.
- The city's new police station/city hall was constructed in 2019 using Section 179D Energy-Efficient Commercial Building Tax Deduction program, which will save approximately \$50,932 in energy costs annually.
- Jeff has played a large role in developing Safe Routes to School plans for the elementary schools in New Hope. The City recently completed a demonstration pilot program at Meadow Lake Elementary and received a grant for infrastructure improvements that will encourage walking and improve safety for students and pedestrians.
- New Hope is home to one of the most unique and sustainable car washes in the country. The Holiday Station store car wash located at 7201 Bass Lake Road utilizes a stormwater collection system that retains all rainwater onsite and reuses it for the car wash. A filtration system recycles and reuses the water that is used by the car wash. It is the first known car wash in the country to utilize such technology."

Chili Cook-off – Feb. 18

The employee club hosted 18 participants, including six chili chefs at this year's annual event. The chef's were Brandon Bell, Linda Bergemann, Brad Kallio, Shawn Markham, Bill Robberstad and Jill Smisek. Congratulations to Brad for cooking the winning entry and taking home the trophy!

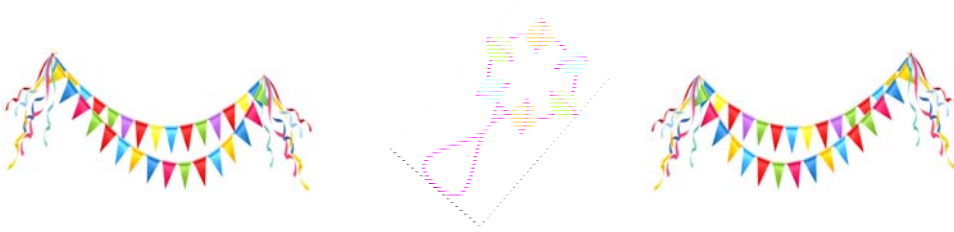
The cook-off was made extra special by guest Kirk McDonald, former city manager. Thank you to Shari Rains for organizing, to Bill Robberstad and Jill Smisek for bringing homemade cheesecakes and cookies, respectively, and Walker MacBeath for bringing homemade corn muffins and beer bread. Pictured is last year's champion, Linda, passing the trophy to Brad (*photo credit: Beth Kramer, communications coordinator*).



Celebration

New Baby

Congratulations to Jeff Alger and his wife, Megan, on the birth of their first child on Jan. 19. Welcome to the world, Brodie!



In Memoriam



Our sympathies to:

- Andrew and Beth Kramer and their family for the passing of Andrew's mother, Mary on Jan. 5.
- Tom Evans and his family for the passing of Tom's father, Kerry on Jan. 13.

Wellness

Biometric Screening – March 28-30

Employees can sign-up for a 15-minute screening process that includes collecting a blood sample from a finger prick that will be used to determine cholesterol levels, triglycerides and glucose level, as well as taking resting blood pressure; measurements of weight and waist; and body mass index. Those participating will receive a \$50 gift card. More details to be announced soon.



Minnesota Grown: CSAs and other healthy food sources – April 12

Rachel Wandrei, marketing manager for Minnesota Grown will present on options for locally sourcing healthy food. The Minnesota Grown Program is a statewide partnership between the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and Minnesota producers of specialty crops and livestock. It was created more than 30 years ago by specialty crop growers to differentiate their produce from produce grown thousands of miles away.

Mark the date for other upcoming programs:

May 1 – Step to It Kick-off Event

May 17 – New Hope Ice Arena Open House and Employee Open Skate

