



News & Views

December 29, 2017

The City of New Hope's Employee Newsletter

It's Official!

City Council majority votes in favor of a new Police Station and City Hall at their December 11, 2017 meeting

Let's face it. City Hall is falling apart and the police department is sorely underspaced. What to do?

The management team put together a plan in April 2013 with approval of the Council. It started with a space needs study by Wold Architects, which showed deficiencies in the structure including a the deteriorating roof, poor insulation, inefficient windows, boilers not up to code, ventilation units beyond life expectancy, poor temperature regulation, inefficient light fixtures and diffusers, roof leaks, and that is just the structure. The Police Department lacks secure interview rooms, report writing stations, space large enough for a full shift roll call, lockers that hold modern equipment, a large enough evidence room, space to house all police department vehicles, and space in the women's locker room. In addition, conference rooms are too small, there are not enough of them and they lack needed technology, the Council dais does not seat enough people, there is not nearly enough space for plan reviews, and more.

In the spring of 2015, Council authorized a Citizen Task Force consisting of city commissioners, residents, staff, and representatives from Wold Architects, to further study the issue. The Citizen Task Force held their kickoff meeting on May 15, 2015.

Costs were studied to upgrade the structure and to build a new structure. The costs were found to be close to each other. The Task Force met several times and made a recommendation to Council, in September of 2015, that a new facility be built.

Council agreed to continue to study the issue and the Task Force continued their work into 2016 and 2017. Through a well-planned process, several open houses were held, information was posted, citizen committees formed, and public hearings coordinated. Each of the many steps along the way was studied and approved by Council before the next step started.

The project was presented to the Council at the December 11, 2017 meeting, when bids and bonds were approved and the construction contract was awarded by a majority vote.

Soon, the signs of construction will be evident. The first step will be the destruction of the pool and its structures as that is the location for the new building.

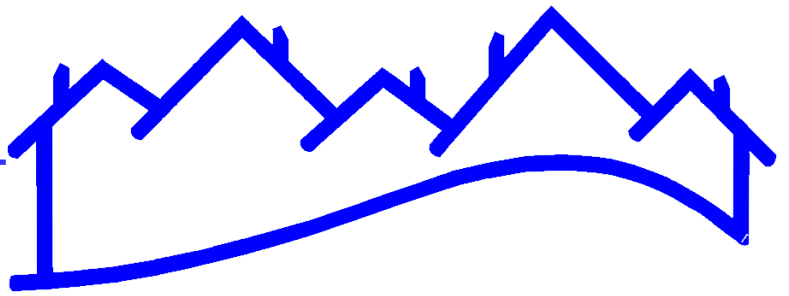
The plan is to complete the building in the spring of 2019.

THANK YOU, CITY COUNCIL!!



A groundbreaking is planned for January 5th at 10 a.m. to celebrate the beginning of construction.

Thanks to Staff



This has been a busy and successful year with many large projects happening at the same time. I am grateful to have an excellent staff who take their jobs seriously, and have fun at the same time, creating a great organizational culture. Here are some of the highlights of 2017.

Thanks to all, City Manager Kirk McDonald

Public Works Takes Good Care of the City

We may not see the Maintenance Workers and Mechanics very often, because they are hard at work keeping the streets clear, fixing water breaks, repairing our vehicles, and maintaining our parks. The office staff is also hard at work keeping up with all the details and the water bills.

The Northwood South and 49th Avenue MSA infrastructure projects were completed and the Northwood North project substantially completed, plus many transitions and promotions took place in the department.

Many thanks to all of PW, for your important contribution to our city and its residents!



Parks and Recreation

Beautiful parks-we have lots of them! Thanks to the Parks and Recreation department for keeping them up-to-date, providing many great activities and events in the parks and elsewhere in the city, and for the excellent maintenance of the arena, golf course, and pool.

A grand opening was held at Northwood Park and Fred Sims Park received new playground equipment. Also, strong beer was approved for the golf course and a tremendous amount of time was devoted to future swimming pool and Civic Center Park upgrades. The city is also known for its outstanding dance and gymnastics programs, with overflowing attendance every year.

And, this is just the tip of the recreation offerings. Thanks, Parks & Rec staff, for all you do to bring the city exciting events and activities all year long!



Finance

All those numbers! Many thanks to the finance department for keeping them all straight. Special thanks for again earning the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting and Standard & Poor's reaffirmed the city's AA bond rating.



The finance department is one that doesn't get much acknowledgement since everything they do is behind the scenes. However, those scenes are quite important-would you want to miss a pay day?

Thanks, finance, for doing your part so well!

Police Keep Us Safe

Thanks to all the police department staff -officers who keep our community safe, animal control who keeps our pets safe, office staff who keep track of all the details, and command staff who oversee it all. A new crime analyst was hired along with three new officers and a new police station/city hall facility was finally approved.

We are grateful for all you do in the city and for the kindness you show to residents and staff alike.

Thanks, PD!!



UNDER CONSTRUCTION



City Manager Department

Where would we be without our excellent city clerk and front desk person? Probably pretty lost.

Here are just a few things that the city manager department does:

- ◇ Issues and maintains business licenses
- ◇ Prepares agendas and composes minutes of City Council, Board of Review, and EDA meetings
- ◇ Maintains the city hall building
- ◇ Registers voters and holds elections
- ◇ Homesteads properties
- ◇ Processes legal papers on behalf of the city
- ◇ Maintains official city records
- ◇ Responds to inquiries and requests from the public
- ◇ Receives all claims made against the city
- ◇ Serves as data practices responsible authority
- ◇ Welcomes visitors to city hall and tends to their needs
- ◇ And, more!

Thanks to the city manager department, the city hums along harmoniously, day in and day out, meeting the needs of the city and its residents.

Communications

Good communications is the backbone of good relationships with residents, Council, and staff. The city has an outstanding one-person communications ‘department’ who handles all (and I mean ALL) the city’s communications. That includes, but is not limited to, city newsletters, Parks & Recreation brochures, In The Pipeline, television spots, media releases, the reader board, city events, a photo contest, and official photography. And, then there is the website; the communications coordinator has been instrumental in the development of the new city website, due out soon.



Many thanks for our excellent communications!!

Human Resources

Did you know that the city hired or promoted 18 people in 2017? That is about 20% of our regular staff. And, that is just part of what HR does.

There are also the safety program, Wellness (including the first ever very successful Healthy Living Fair), News & Views, Worker's Comp, FMLA, EEO, ADA, benefits, etc., etc., and so forth.

Thanks to HR, the city keeps up with all the new and existing laws, keeps the city staffed, and does all the other things that Human Resources does every day.



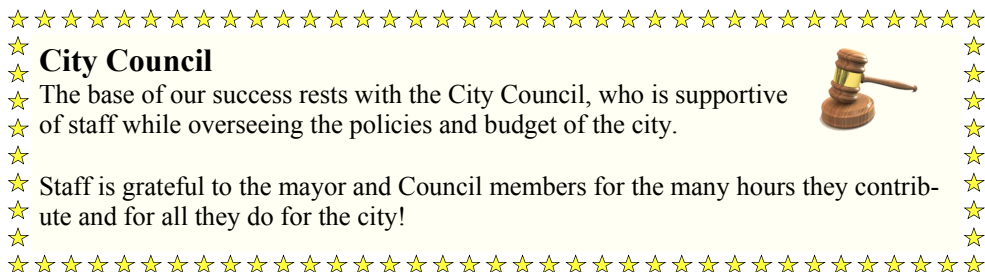
Thanks, HR!

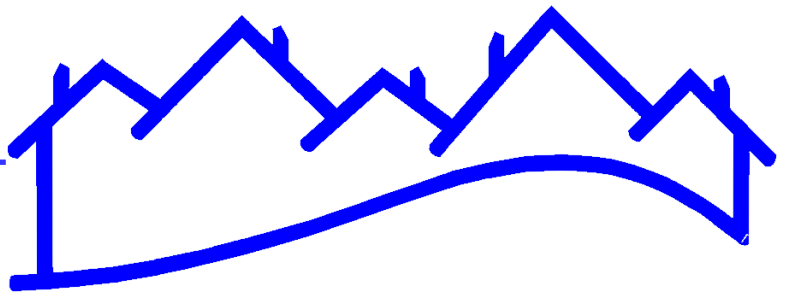
City Council

The base of our success rests with the City Council, who is supportive of staff while overseeing the policies and budget of the city.



Staff is grateful to the mayor and Council members for the many hours they contribute and for all they do for the city!





Staff Changes

- ❖ **Nicole Boss** will start as the full-time Police Clerk on January 2, 2018.
- ❖ **Johnny Vang** has been named the second Code Enforcement Inspector and will also start on January 2, 2018.
- ❖ **Dan Barron**, Maintenance Worker, accepted a position with Brooklyn Center. His last day with New Hope was December 28.
- ❖ **Kelly Thompson**, certified in May for a maintenance worker position, has accepted the job and will start on January 16.
- ❖ Interviews will be held for the Building Official position in January. The city received seven applications and will interview three.
- ❖ Recruiting for the Human Resources Coordinator will close on January 2 with interviews starting the following week.

Staff to Receive Cost of Living Raise

All non-union staff will receive a cost of living raise in the amount of 2.5% in January. The raise is included in the 2018 budget approved by Council on December 11, 2017 and will show on the January 26 pay advice.

Union members will receive rates as detailed in the current contracts for LELS and 49ers.



Wold and city staff opened 19 bids (a hefty number) for the police station/city hall construction project on November 30. City Council awarded the contract to the lowest bidder, Terra General Contractors, at their December 11 meeting.

City Receives Financial Reporting Award

The city of New Hope has again received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016. This is the ninth consecutive year that the city has earned this award.

New Hope's 2016 report was judged by an impartial panel to demonstrate a constructive "spirit of full disclosure", to clearly communicate the city's financial story, and to motivate potential users and user groups to read the report.

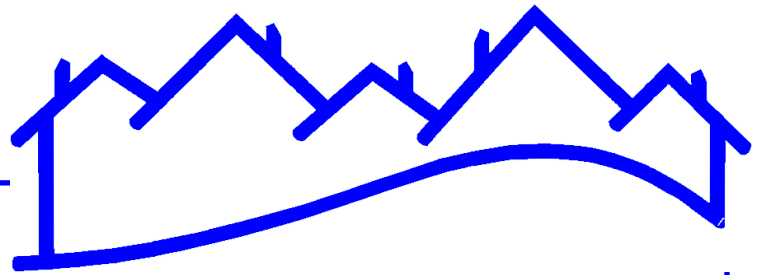
New Hope's 2016 report was found to be 'proficient' in all 17 of the grading categories. The GFOA award is the highest recognition the city can receive in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting and represents a significant accomplishment for the city and its management.

The GFOA is a professional association of about 19,000 federal, state, and local finance officers in the United States and Canada committed to providing leadership to the government finance profession through research, education, and recommended practices.

Thanks go to the finance department, AEM, and the management team for all their efforts, their expertise, and their attention to details throughout the year.



Employee of the Year



Jessi Weber, Administrative Specialist in Community Development, was named Employee of the Year at the annual Recognition Event on December 7. Jessi was chosen for her versatility, resilience, and positive attitude.

Jessi was hired as the Office Specialist and shortly thereafter the admin person resigned. So, while Jessi was learning her own job, she was also learning the admin job. A second Office Specialist was hired and she trained him. Later, the two Office Specialists competed for two Admin positions; Jessi was named to CD and the other to PW, leaving Jessi handling both positions in CD once again. Recently, a new Office Specialist was hired and, you got it, Jessi is training him, too.

During the periods when the position was open, Jessi worked collaboratively with the CD Assistant to make sure that all needs of the department were covered. She also worked closely with the City Manager Admin Specialist to make sure that the front counter and main phone line were always covered. The general public wouldn't have realized that she was acting as two people (except that she is pregnant and actually acting for two at the moment ;>)).

Through it all, Jessi provided her excellent level of work and always had a smile for visitors, contractors, and colleagues. This roller coaster of extra duties and continual training while maintaining an excellent attitude is reason enough for the honor.



Jessi, moments after being crowned with the "diamond" tiara. She will receive a \$200 gift certificate.



Nominees for Employee of the Year

Walker Crawford, City Manager Admin Specialist, was nominated for going above and beyond his job requirements day in and day out, for visitors and staff alike. He completes every task to the fullest and enjoys them all. He has a great attitude and is a joy to work with. He has great respect for visitors to city hall as well as city staff. He calls many of the 'regular' visitors by name, which makes them feel welcome. And regardless of his work load, he always has a big smile!

Carissa Hoyt, Utility Billing/Assessment Clerk, was nominated for taking on additional duties during a staff shortage. This has happened more than once and each time, Carissa rose to the challenge. She goes out of her way to be respectful and courteous while explaining water bills to residents and business owners. She always has a smile and helps staff with IT questions as needed.

Walker, Carissa, and Jessi will be treated to lunch by the city manager.

During the party, there was a **Holiday Trivia** quiz. Everyone had a chance to answer 17 questions. Here is a sample:

1. How many NFL games are played each Thanksgiving?
2. What does the word Hanukkah mean?
3. What is the Yiddish name for potato pancakes?
4. How many American States have towns named Santa Claus?
5. Which country can be credited with the creation of eggnog?
6. What is the name of Tiny Tim's father in "A Christmas Carol"?
7. Where are New Year celebrations called "Spring Festival"?
8. At which New York location does the New Year's Eve Ball drop take place?

If you answered three, rededication, Latkes, three, England, Bob Cratchit, China, and Times Square, you are right!!

Crazy Bowling Winners

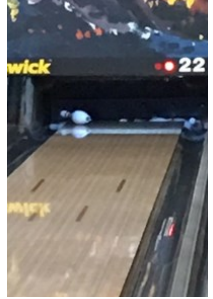
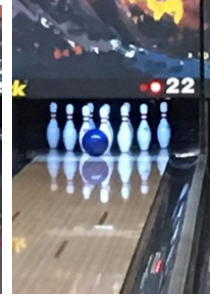
- ◇ Rich Johnson, highest score, won a bowling shirt
- ◇ Mary Jo Chirpich had the most zeros/gutter balls and won a bowling pin trophy
- ◇ Eric Piper had the lowest score and won a bowling pin trophy
- ◇ Jeff Alger had the most strikes and won a bowling pin trophy.





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Recognition Event

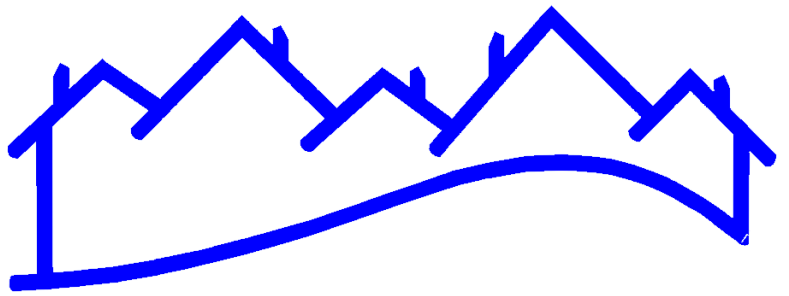


Crazy bowling

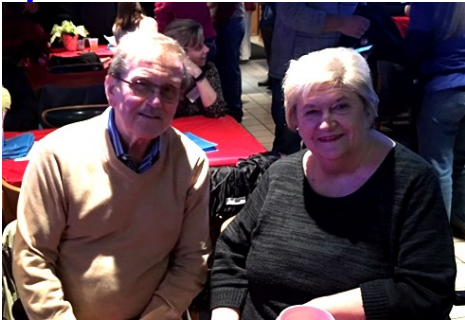


Not-so-crazy bowling

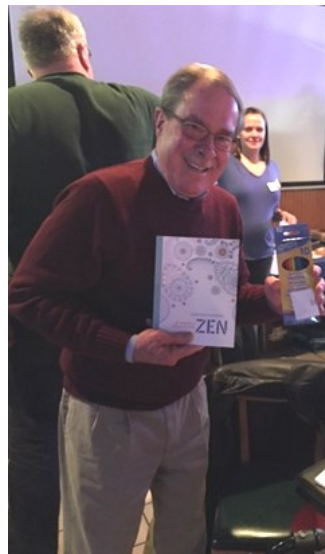
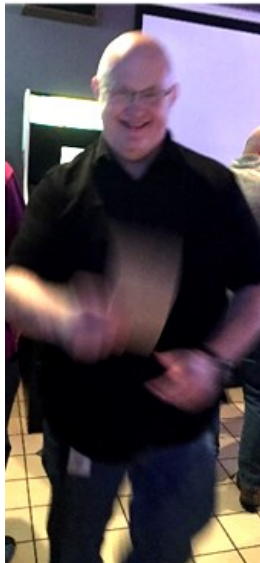


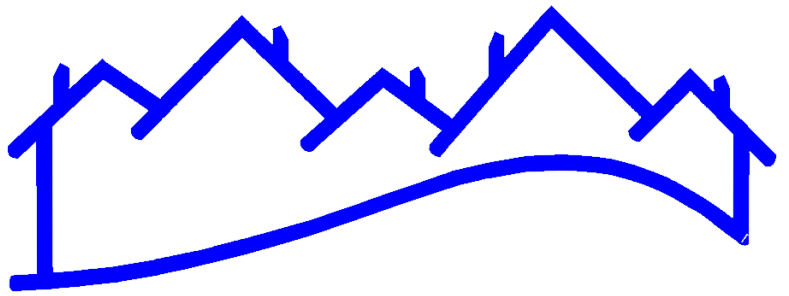


7 Recognition Event



Conversation,
Prizes, and Food





8

Recognition Event



Service Awards

30 Years
Todd Black

25 Years
Bill Robberstad

20 Years
Doug Brunner

10 Years
Miguel Robles
Kaitlyn Baker
Kevin Zurn

5 Years
Jeff Sargent
Britni Austin
Erick Dyer
Miranda Reed
Jean Andersen

**Congratulations
to all!**



City of New Hope

9 Holiday Train

For the second year, the Canadian Pacific Holiday Train roared into New Hope to the delight of kids and adults alike.

The Holiday Train travels across the US and Canada every year to spread holiday cheer, present live music, and collect food and money for local food banks and food shelves.

This year, the weather was mild and the crowd increased from about 1,200 last year to approximately 2,000 this year. Food donations were 3,308 pounds plus \$6,081 in cash, which was donated to The Food Group who, in turn, will share half of it with NEAR and use the rest for the local community.

The CP event coordinator intends to recommend to Canadian Pacific that the train return to New Hope again in 2018.



Special Thanks Go To

Jeff Alger, Community Development Assistant, for his tireless efforts of getting the train here last year and again this year, and for all the logistics and details he planned.

And to:

Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union - hot chocolate

Minnesota Rusco - hot caramel cider

St. Therese of New Hope - holiday cookies

State Farm Insurance - popcorn

Canadian Pacific which gave a \$4,500 donation for The Food Group

Hy-Vee for matching 1,500 pounds of food donated to The Food Group

Communications Coordinator Jerry Beck

Mr. and Mrs. Claus

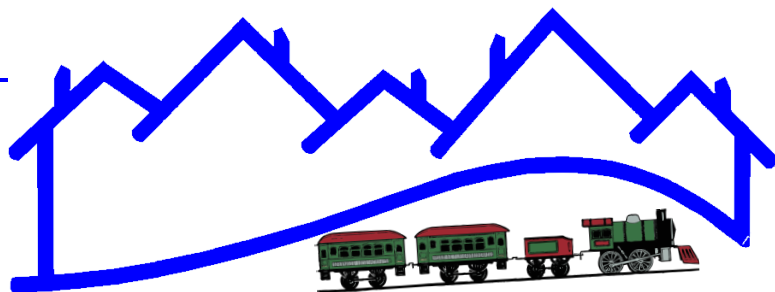
Police Department

Public Works

Parks & Recreation

West Metro Fire



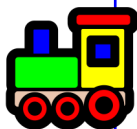


10 Generous Toy Donations

Record Breaking Toy Drive

The annual toy drive, spearheaded by Police Officer Nicole Korth, ended on December 15. With generous donations from Toy Fest, staff, residents, West Metro Fire staff, and two anonymous cash donors, the city delivered:

- * More than 1,000 toys to local charities
- * More than \$1,900 in cash donations to support local charities and Shop With A Cop
- * More than \$250 in gift cards
- * Movie passes



Together, all our efforts have made a HUGE difference for many families this holiday season!!

Potluck and Teen Toy Drive

A room full of happy and hungry people enjoyed the annual Potluck and Teen Toy Drive on **Friday, December 8**. The event was a combination of fun, food, and festivities for the season.

The potluck brought many delicious items, all calorie free! ;>)

Participants were challenged with Land of 10,000 Lakes Trivia, with a prize for the person who knew the most. Do you know how many counties in Minnesota do not have any natural lakes? Or what percentage of Minnesota is water? Ben Frank, CD Office Specialist, was the winner and received a prize.

Gifts of many sizes and shapes, all geared toward teens, were donated to the annual toy drive.

Thanks to all who participated! Photos on the next page.



Where did all those toys come from?

Toy Fest December 1 & 2:
846 toys
\$465 cash
\$190 in gift cards

Employees:
22 teen gifts
\$60 cash
\$20 in gift cards



PD Lobby:
108 toys
\$60 cash
\$20 in gift cards 10 movie passes

City Hall Bin:
25 toys



Grand total:
1001 toys
\$1905 cash
\$250 in gift cards
10 movie passes

And, Where Did They Go?

The overwhelming generosity of donated toys gave staff the ability to make donations to:

- * NEAR
- * PRISM
- * Toys for Tots
- * Shop With A Cop



Many kids and teens will have a nicer holiday due to the generosity of New Hope residents and staff.

Thanks to all who donated!!

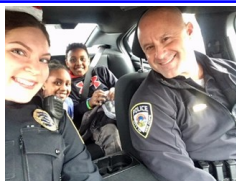
Shop With A Cop

Kids who may not have money to buy gifts for family members, were able to do so through the Shop With A Cop program, arranged by Officer Nichole Korth. The program pairs police officers with underprivileged elementary school students selected by the schools.

The city partnered with Plymouth Target, which hosted the group and donated all the wrapping paper. The kids were able to buy gifts for their families and themselves. After shopping, they were treated to a meal at city hall donated by Sweet Taste of Italy. Snacks were supplied by a family from Officer Korth's Girl Scout Troup.

The officers who participated included Chief Fournier, Captain Crocker, Sergeant Hoyt, and Officers Baker, Austin, Janson, and Ryan. CSO Nickelson and the New Hope Explorers also took part.

It was lots of fun for the kids, and from the looks of the photos (below and left), for the officers, too!



11 Teen Gift & Potluck



The annual Teen Gift and Potluck was another great success, thanks to Police Officer **Nichole Korth**, Community Development Assistant **Jeff Alger**, and Recreation Supervisor **Aaron Thelen**, who coordinated the event, and to all who brought great food and thoughtful gifts to this fun party.



Participants enjoyed delicious (calorie-free) food, the heart-warming gift of giving to teens who are often left out of the toy donations during the holidays, and a roaring fire.

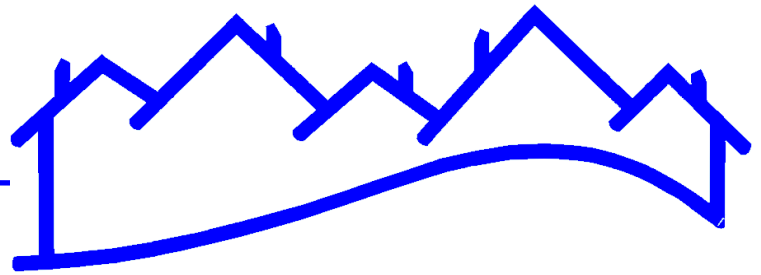


Food choices ran the gamut from appetizers to main courses to desserts, all of them delicious!



The challenge, Land of 10,000 Lakes Trivia, was won by Ben Frank, Office Specialist in Community Development. The "prize" was two water bottles and a small stuffed animal.





12 Giving to Others



Mayor Kathi Hemken thinks big and makes it happen. Above right, hefty amounts of food sold at cost from Hy-Vee to Rotary and a small army of Rotary Club volunteers packed 93 baskets of food for needy families as suggested by PRISM and NEAR.

Above, Kathi, Hy-Vee Store Manager Tony Taylor, and Anita Perkins, Rotary volunteer, in front of a small part of the food from Hy-Vee.



Kathi's cookies: gratitude baked into every bite!

Left, Kathi baked more than 75 dozen cookies (that's 900+) consisting of five different varieties. Then, she bagged 2 of each type, put a hand written note of thanks to city staff on each, and gave them out at the annual Recognition Event.

Thanks, Kathi,
they were yummy!!

Right, some of
Kathi's cookies,
baked and ready
for packaging.



Holiday Food Donations

City staff delivered 413 pounds of food and \$40 cash donations to NEAR on December 18. This represents donations from the bins in city hall, public works, and the Skate with Santa event at the arena.



Wacky Wednesdays continue, giving staff an opportunity to dress down on that day in exchange for a donation of \$5 to the food bank. The Wacky Wednesday dollars were donated to NEAR in 2017.

Total donations for year are now at 886 pounds of food and \$1,062 cash, including Wacky Wednesday.

Many thanks to those who have donated to this very worthwhile cause.

Coming Up...

- January 1 New Year's Day Holiday
- January 5 Groundbreaking for new city hall & police station, 10 am
- January 15 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday
- February 19 Presidents' Day Holiday

