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# News & Views

July 16, 2021

The City of New Hope's Employee Newsletter

## Aquatic Park Ribbon Cutting



*Parks & Recreation Staff: Aaron Thelen, Jill Smisek, Mark Severson, Susan Rader, Steve Ellingson, Tony Portesan, Matt Remore and Penny Spitzer*

On June 5, staff and invited guests celebrated the results of many years of work with a ribbon cutting at the New Hope Aquatic Park. Almost 100 individuals took part in a brief program presented by staff, including welcome and remarks from City Manager **Kirk McDonald**; Mayor Kathi Hemken; Representative Lyndon Carlson (retired); Representative Mike Freiberg; Director of Parks & Recreation **Susan Rader**; Dan Boyum, city engineer, Stantec; Kevin Bohrer, sr. project manager, Donlar Construction Co.; Bob Crunstedt, executive director, Minnesota Swimming (retired); and **Tony Portesan**, recreation facilities supervisor. The program was followed by an opportunity to tour the facility and talk with aquatic park staff. After the ribbon cutting, staff held a preview event

for season pass holders. Attendees could enjoy a complimentary hot dog and cookie while touring and talking with staff. It was very well attended with several hundred participants of all ages.

## Phase 1 of Public Works Expansion Begins

The City Council approved the improvements listed in the last issue of News & Views. Demolition work began at the public works garage on the parks and recreation tool area and the mezzanine level on Tuesday, July 6 and was completed by the end of the next day. Work on footings, plumbing and new walls began this week.



### Mark Your Calendar:

July 22 – Aug. 7 – OBMT's "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"  
July 28 – Wacky Wednesday (jeans or shorts!)  
July 28 – Wellness: Games in the Park  
August – Wellness: Park Passes  
Aug. 3 – National Night Out, New Hope's Night to Unite  
Aug. 6 – Wet and Wild Water Fun Day

Aug. 10-12 – Safety Camp  
Aug. 11 – Music in the Park: Blue Groove  
Aug. 19 – Emp. Club Dip-Off Competition  
Aug. 19 – Movie in the Park: Black Panther  
Aug. 25 – Wacky Wednesday (jeans or shorts!)  
Sept. 1 – Employee Appreciate Cookout  
Sept. 6 – Labor Day – City offices closed  
Sept. 9 – Commissioner Bus Tour

## New Employees

Welcome to Julian Kidd and Isaiah Gorman, both community service officers that started on June 28.

### Julian Kidd

Julian grew up in Bloomington where he still lives, as do his mom and stepdad and their Pomeranian, Papi. Julian's mom is a financial advisor and his stepdad works for Sherburne County as a Sheriff's Deputy. His dad is a low-voltage contractor and lives in East Bethel. Julian doesn't have any siblings but lots of cousins that he spends time with. His girlfriend, Jami (*pictured here with Julian*), also lives in East Bethel. Jami's grandma was an officer for Minneapolis and when she heard of Julian's opportunity in New Hope, encouraged him to seize it because of the positive reputation New Hope has among law enforcement agencies.



Julian played lacrosse growing up through high school and now enjoys coaching youth in the game. He was also a police explorer for two and a half years in high school. He will be finishing classes at Normandale and then attending Hennepin Tech for skills. When he's not attending classes or working, he enjoys working with his hands. He's currently restoring a 2000 Mustang with his dad and he and his stepdad are often engaged in woodworking. One of their more notable projects was a large family kitchen table.

The family spends quite a bit of time in Virginia, Minnesota where Julian's stepdad is from. If he has to sit, he enjoys watching shows such as Longmire. When asked what things might surprise others about him he said that he's an Eagle Scout, has some basic knowledge of ASL and has Cherokee and Shoshone heritage.



### Isaiah Gorman

Isaiah is returning to his hometown here in New Hope. He moved back from Chicago for the position with the city. This time he is joined by his wife of one year, Megan (*pictured here with Isaiah*), whom he met at an outreach event while they were both attending Moody Bible Institute. He will be attending Hennepin Tech for skills in August.

His parents now live in Florida where his father is a commercial lending manager and his mom is a home health nurse. His younger sister is also in Florida where she is a vet tech but will soon be studying cosmetology. His younger brother is an electrician for the Army Reserves and is planning to transfer locally once he's completed his basic training.

Isaiah and Megan just recently moved to an apartment in Crystal after living with friends in New Hope for a short time. They don't currently have any pets but would love to adopt a canine companion. They enjoy playing card and board games including Spades, Up and Down the River, and Catan; cooking together (he leaves the baking to Megan) and hiking. Some of their favorite hikes are Taylors Falls and Tettegouche; next summer they hope to enjoy a trip to the Boundary Waters. Isaiah is also active with softball and wake-up basketball.

Isaiah is glad to be back in the area and hopes to be here long-term.

*We are very glad to have you both here and starting out your law enforcement careers with the city!*

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## Recruitment Updates

Candidates for both police officer and community service officer met with the personnel board on Monday and Tuesday. They will meet with **City Manager McDonald** and **Chief Hoyt** next week. The city currently has two open positions for police officer and is completing the CSO recruitment to build a list of certified candidates.



## Employee Departures

### Adam Link, Community Service Officer

Adam's last day was May 31. He resigned to accept a position with Carver County as a deputy sheriff. Adam started with the city in July of 2017, left for a short period while living in Washington and then returned to the city in January of 2020. We wish him the best of luck at Carver.

### Erick Dyer, K-9 Police Officer

Erick's last day was July 5. He started with New Hope as an officer in 2012. Over the years he assisted with defensive tactics and police explorers. Erick will be working in construction management. Dex, Erick's K-9 companion, will be staying with Erick and his family. We wish both of them the best in the future!

## Employee of the Quarter



Congratulations to **Tony Portesan** for being selected as Employee of the Quarter! Multiple nominations were received to recognize Tony for his leadership in opening the new aquatic park facility. He's put in many hours over the last few months to train an almost entirely new crew, learn the many systems of a new facility and work through some unexpected issues. One of the unexpected issues were shared by Tony's nominators. During a swim meet early in the season, a filter malfunctioned, requiring research on how to remedy. The response from the public to the new park has been fantastic and much of that has to do with the organization and training that Tony has brought to the operation. Thank you, Tony, for a job well done! And if you have not yet made it to the aquatic park, Tony and his staff are anxious to see you!

*Other nominations:*

Tony Loser, police investigator, for dedication to the Meals on Wheels program. Tony's nominator said that Tony "doesn't just drop off the meals and run," but takes the time to connect with those he's providing meals to. This provides positive encounters on a community level and it helps those he's talking with on an individual basis as they're often not able to leave their homes on a regular basis.

Jeff Alger, community development specialist, and Johnny Vang, housing/code enforcement inspector were co-nominated. According to their nominator, both Jeff and Johnny put their non-English speaking skills to work at work on a frequent basis. This not only makes people feel "more welcome and comfortable," but it also helps the department accomplish what they need to efficiently.



## Employee Kudos



**City Manager McDonald** received a complimentary voicemail from a 45-year resident of New Hope recently. The resident shared with Kirk how they worked with **Eric Piper**, housing/code enforcement inspector, on a point of sale inspection. They shared that Eric was wonderful to work with, walked him and his wife through the process, and was knowledgeable and empathetic. Thank you, Eric, for providing top-notch customer service and taking the resident from "not thrilled" to thankful!



## Happenings

### Stantec Community Day – June 24

Several Stantec staff participated in their annual community day by volunteering at the golf course. As part of the day, they cooked up lunch with approximately 50 New Hope employees attending. (pictured Dan Boyum, Stantec engineer)

## 2022 Budget Process is underway

For the last couple of months, many staff have been contributing to the preliminary 2022 budget preparation. This month, department heads are reviewing these budgets line-by-line with the city manager and staff from AEM.



### NEAR Update

**Susan Rader** shared the following totals for 2021 to-date: 392 pounds of food and \$565! Thank you to everyone that has dropped off food and participated in Wacky Wednesdays.

## Upcoming Events



### Summer Musical – July 22 through Aug. 7

Off-Broadway Musical Theatre is back in 2021 and will be performing in the New Hope Performance Center for the first time. This year's performance is "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee." Performances will run Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 22 through Aug. 7. For more information, go to [obmt-newhope.org](http://obmt-newhope.org).

### Dip-Off Competition – Aug. 19

The City of New Hope Employee Club will be sponsoring a new event this summer open to all city employees. Employees can enter their favorite summer dips and other related foods for judging by their peers. Prizes will be awarded! There will be a nominal cost for non-members, free for members. Entries are not required to participate. More details to be announced at the end of July.



## Wellness Program

### Home Tips and Inspection Tricks – May 26

**Eric Piper** shared many valuable tricks for learning more about your home, practices to avoid and ways to make the most of our resources as we seek to maintain and improve our living spaces. 24 employees participated and gained from Eric's wealth of knowledge. Look for part two in the future due to insatiable demand.

### Increasing your Mental Health Awareness – June 9

**Britni Austin**, New Hope Police Officer, accompanied by Sergeant Chris Swaja, shared with employees what to be aware of when interacting with people that come to city counters and out in the field. 28 employees participated and came away with a greater understanding of those who experience mental illnesses. A great tip that Britni shared is that an individual can call **\*\*CRISIS (274747) from anywhere in Minnesota and reach the local county crisis team.**

### Summer Picnic and Games in the Park – July 28

Get outside and challenge your colleagues to some healthy sport of lawn games! Games in the past have included horseshoes, bag toss, Frisbee and bocce ball. When you sign up, be sure to select the game you would like to play and if you have specific employees you would like to challenge. To make sure everyone has a chance to play, those not making selections will be randomly assigned to games and opponents to follow the provided lunch! Raffle prizes to be drawn following score submissions. There is no charge for this event and sign-up is available at I:/Wellness.



### Outdoor Activity Passes – August

This program was so popular last year that we are continuing it this year. For a small copay, the city will provide passes to assist employees in getting out and enjoy outside activities. Look for more details at the end of the month.