

Message from the Manager:

This month brings a message from City Engineer Kristina Ramirez:

Lifelong Learning and Teaching

Longer days and rainfall are a clear sign that Spring is here. Traditionally this is a time for Spring cleaning and tending to gardens. So, how does this relate to you? Let's take a bit to look at Spring in the workforce.

You may have heard of the phrase "out with the old and in with the new". This Spring we celebrate those who have dedicatedly served our community and who are moving on to a new phase in their journey. They have actively participated in forming the foundation of our community and have set an example. At the same time, we are fortunate to be welcoming new colleagues to our team and in some cases to our community. With them they bring knowledge and different experiences to our team. Take a moment to think back to your first day on the job, or in your current position. What would you have appreciated someone sharing with or saying to you? Now remember that and take action the next time a new employee is introduced to you, or someone transfers into your department.

Personal development, mentorship and team development are all ways we tend to our own workforce. Longevity in a position means we enjoy what we do, or we are not ready to take the next step. It also means that person is knowledgeable in their field and may be a resource or mentor. Those who are new to a position have chosen to make a change and are committed to learning new things. No matter your longevity, there are always opportunities to learn new technology, new methods, or leadership skills. In fact, revisiting a topic previously covered can impact us differently based on our experiences along the way. Now take some time to write down your personal goals and then identify what it will take to achieve them. Have you discussed your goals with your supervisor or a mentor? They can help guide you to resources and opportunities. You won't know what options are available if you don't ask.

Some of you may be thinking, why should I bother with a mentor. Believe it or not mentors come in various forms. They can be the trusted colleague, the person you go to when you have a technical problem that you just can't seem to solve. They may be the person you confide in when you are looking for ways to improve communication with a supervisor or colleague. They may be someone who is a great listener while you talk through your thoughts. They can also be someone you periodically meet with to help guide you to reach the goals you have set for yourself. A Mentor is there for what you need and encourages you to explore the potential they see in you.

Overall team development is a joint responsibility. Supervisors are not perfect and like you are on their own personal development journey. They are also tasked with deliverables to the

community and development of a cohesive team. This cannot occur without respectful and honest communication between all parties. We are all charged with providing public services that empower people to focus on what matters most: their goals, hopes, and dreams. Never lose sight of the fact that we cannot achieve that vision if we do not also invest and support one another.

Change is hard for most of us. However, it is how we approach change that sets us and our community apart from others. This Spring take time to reflect on your professional journey, consider seeking or becoming a mentor, and commit to being a person who positively contributes to the development of the team. I believe you can do at least one of those things. If you don't know where to start, stop by and visit me at City Hall for a talk. If I can't help, I know some people who are willing to help and can point you in their direction.

Kristina

Joy in life is found in serving others. Mentoring is centered on serving others. Who can you learn from? Who can you help lift up? I'm thankful our team has mentors all through the organization that I learn from daily!

David

General Updates:

Retirements:

Richard Hatfield Retires: After 9 years of service within the Police Department Officer Richard Hatfield retired April 21. We wish Richard all the best in his retirement.

New Hires:

Caden Reese hired for position of Parks Light Equipment Operator on April 28th.

Transfers:

Nathaniel Trimble transferred to the position of Utility Billing Clerk on April 26th.

Accomplishments:

Ethan Ogas graduated from the police academy on April 11th.

The City of Harker Heights was selected as a VETS Indexes Employer in the 2025 VETS Indexes Employer Awards!

April Kudos Award Winners: Congratulations to Jerry Bark, Nichole Ratliff, John Fox and Betiale Hawkins for being our April Kudos Award Winners! Wow, what great work you all do, and we have many, many more kudos winners coming up!

Cinco De Mayo Salsa Challenge: Think you make the best salsa? Well put that to the test – or in this case taste! Bring your best salsa to City Hall by 1:30 p.m. on May 5 for the Cinco De Mayo Salsa Challenge. Judges Mark Hyde and David Mitchell (chosen for their impeccable taste) will begin their review of the salsas at 2:00 p.m.

HH-N-GO: A new HH-N-GO bingo challenge began with the start of 2025! A new letter/number will be pulled each week and there are specific things to do for that letter/number if you have it on your card. There is a game card for employees and one for citizens. The game helps us to get to know our organization better and for our citizens it helps them get to know the City better. Contact HR for your bingo card! I was an early winner last year and I already have **nine** hits on my bingo card so far this year – can you beat me?? No winners as of the end of April! You can't win if you don't play – join me (but you probably won't beat me)!

Chew on This: The March wellness challenge was called Chew on This. This challenge focused on several small, attainable goals to help us all improve our food choices. The March Wellness Challenge ran from March 17 to April 20th. And your winners (drum roll!): 1st Place Jerry Bark, 2nd Place Melonie Matthewson, and 3rd Place Leona Clay.

Clyde and Gene's Crossword Challenge: This month's Clyde and Gene's Crossword Challenge was about 305/307 Millers Crossing. Winners of the challenge were: Gary Bates, Andrea Contreras, and Fabian Brooks. Be on the lookout for May's crossword challenge in Kiarrah's Height's Report!

Harker Heights' Scavenger Hunt: The new Harker Heights' Scavenger Hunt has begun. Check out the City's social media pages for clues! We already have our first winner in the scavenger

hunt – Nichole Ratliff! Nichole knows the City – how well do you? Put your knowledge to the test and join the scavenger hunt!

Harker Heights Farmers Market: It's back! This Saturday, May 3, the Harker Heights Farmers Market is officially back! The Market runs every Saturday from May 3 to July 26 and then again from October 4 to December 6.

Harker Heights Memorial Ceremony and Remembrance Walk 2025: The Harker Heights Memorial Ceremony and Remembrance Walk 2025 will be held Saturday, May 24, at 9 a.m. at Carl Levin Park Amphitheater. The walk will be around the park trail following the ceremony. The ceremony will feature a traditional wreath laying in honor of those who gave their lives. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will move indoors to the Harker Heights Recreation Center.

Keep Texas Beautiful Great Texas Trash Off – Harker Heights Edition: The Keep Texas Beautiful Great Texas Trash off – Harker Heights Edition will be on May 3 at 9 a.m. and will be a morning of cleaning at Dana Peak Park.

Go Heights Programs: There are several upcoming nature classes provided through the Go Heights initiative especially for children. Check out the Parks website or contact Parks for more information.

Library Programs: I always say our Library programs never slow – they just reload! This time you can “Spring” with the Library with National Jazz Month, National Poetry Month, Stress Awareness Month, Earth Day, World Book Day, and more! Lisa and the Library Team have so many offerings for all ages – check out the Library’s webpage or better yet stop in and visit with the Library team to learn more!

First Fridays Music Series: Join us Friday, May 2 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Carl Levin Park Amphitheater for the First Fridays Music Series! The May 2 concert will be Glen Meloy! Food trucks will be present at the event. First Friday Music Series will run through June and again September to November at Carl Levin Park Amphitheater from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Bring out a lawn chair or a blanket and enjoy some good music and fun!

May the Fourth Be With You: The Library invites you to celebrate Star Wars and all things science fiction from May 1 to 3! Drop by the Library and visit our Facebook page for booklists, online programs, in-person story times, and more!

Senior Mystery Masquerade Prom: Seniors ages 50 and up are invited to a “Mystery Masquerade” Senior Prom on Saturday, May 10 from 4 to 7 p.m at the Activities Center! There will be music, dancing, photos and light refreshments!

Dive Into Summer Safety Event: Dive into Summer Safety Event will take place on May 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Carl Levin Pool. There will be summer swim lesson sign-ups, safe grilling lessons, water and heat safety training and more!

Harker Heights Police Department Health Fair: The HHPD Health Fair will be Saturday, May 17 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Activities Center.

Spotlight on Service:

Parks Impresses: A citizen took time to share their appreciation for the Parks’ crew keeping the bathrooms so clean. The citizen stated they were super impressed with how clean the bathrooms in the park they visited were and that the bathrooms were very well kept and clean.

Brianna Daniel Appreciated: PD Officer Brianna Daniel was recently thanked by a citizen she encountered during a traffic stop. The citizen wrote, *“I would also like to thank Officer Daniel for her kindness and the respect she showed during the traffic stop. She was not only kind, but professional and I appreciated that.”*

Sara Clark Thanked: A citizen wrote to express their thanks for Admin’s Sara Clark. The citizen stated, *“I’d like to nominate Sara for recognition in your “Kudos” program. My request was processed and a response provided faster than a speeding bullet. I want Sara to know that I appreciate all she does for the citizens of our City and her contributions are important. Thank you, Sara, for all you do.”*

Haley Alcorn Commended: Library's Angie Sabino wrote to commend Library's Haley Alcorn. Angie wrote, *"I would like to send a kudos for Haley Alcorn for staying calm and handling a patron emergency in a quick assertive and professional manner. Haley, your ability to stay calm and focused during the recent emergency was truly commendable. Thank you for all you do."*

Chuck Adams and the Streets Team Get it Done: Building Inspection's Fabian Brooks wrote to thank Public Works' Chuck Adams and the entire Streets Team. Fabian wrote, *"I want to express my gratitude and appreciation for the street dept. I was traveling down FM 2410 and noticed a lot of trash had fallen out of someone's vehicle in front of the City Chambers of Commerce. I called to let Chuck know and he immediately got his guys on it. I appreciate all they do to keep the city looking in tip top shape!"*

Fire Department Shows Kindness: Library's Angie Sabino wrote to express her appreciation for the Fire Department. Angie wrote, *"I just wanted to say thank you to our Fire Department for the quick response time (our recent emergency) and kind professional manner towards our patrons and team. We appreciate all you do!"*

Samirah Williams is Exceptional: Court's Andrea Contreras wrote to thank PD Telecommunicator Samirah Williams for an interaction they had. Andrea wrote, *"I wanted to take a moment to commend Samirah for providing exceptional customer service. When I called the police station on Friday to inquire about warrant cards, Samirah was genuinely kind and took the time to walk me through the procedure."*

Dr. Molly Chauhan Goes Above and Beyond: Pet Adoption Manager Shiloh Wester wrote to give praise for the efforts of Pet Adoption's Dr. Molly Chauhan. Shiloh wrote, *"The City of Harker Heights is incredibly fortunate to have Dr Molly Chauhan as our full time Veterinarian at PAC. Dr. Chauhan has been with the city for over 5 years, providing not just sterilization surgeries for the shelters dogs and cats, but so much more. While our primary focus is spay and neuter surgeries, there are often shelter pets that need additional treatment or surgery, and Dr. Chauhan is often able to provide that high quality care at the shelter. She has been known to take home very ill kittens to foster, providing them with round the clock care that they otherwise would not have been able to receive. Dr. Chauhan goes above and beyond every single day, and we are grateful to have her on our team!"*

Loretta Harvey and Kayla Seymour are Invaluable: Pet Adoption Manager Shiloh Wester wrote to thank Vet Techs Loretta Havey and Kayla Seymour. Shiloh wrote, *“Our two full time Veterinary Technicians, Loretta Harvey and Kayla Seymour, are the backbone of our clinic staff, ensuring that daily medications are given, tiny kittens are fed, surgery packs are cleaned and sterilized, ringworm kittens are dipped and treated, and on surgery days, they are multi-tasking masters, juggling dozens of patients at a time in various stages of sedation, surgery and recovery. They also are known to take home fragile kittens to foster when necessary, providing overnight care that is critical to their survival. Their knowledge and experience is invaluable, and we are thankful to have them both on our veterinary team!”*

City Gets Some Love: The City held a ceremony honoring former City Manager Steve Carpenter. Former Councilman John Reider wrote, *“What a great celebration for a really great guy. It was an honor serving with him for 18 1/2 years. You all did a great job!!!! Thanks so much for including me.”*