

Message from the Manager:***Where's Waldo?***

Where's Waldo? was an extremely popular puzzle book game in the late 80's, early 90's (Due to the young age of many of our team members I must give some explanation because some of you don't know rolodexes, cassette tapes or Jefferson Starship, who evolved from Jefferson Airplane, but I digress – grow up people!). The object of the puzzle was to find “Waldo” in pictures set in different backgrounds, often with many other distracting characters in the picture. It's what we did before smart phones and Candy Crush! While it was in printed format during the 80s/90s stone age, you can find app versions for your smart phone for you young whippersnappers who want to learn more about Waldo. Now that we know where to search for Waldo, where are you in your journey? In 2024, have you achieved or are you on your way to achieving all you desired? If you are like me, you may have some successes and failures. You met some of your goals and some, well you are, like me, lost in the wilderness. On those I fell short of, I can tell you right where I went wrong. I was not intentional!

Goals without a plan of how to achieve them are doomed to fail. Goal setting is common for many of us, but detailed plans of how we will achieve them not so much. Without detailed plans we fail to be intentional in our pursuits. Plans should contain measures for success or how we should respond to failure that is an inevitable part of stretching and growing. We all fall short, especially if your goals are lofty enough. Many times, our best intentions go to the goal graveyard where dreams lie unrealized.

Thomas Edison is someone I look to when I think of living intentionally. You will know Edison from his invention of the light bulb among other things. For our young team members, Mr. Edison was even before my time! Did you know that Edison failed 2,774 times on his way to perfecting the light bulb? When asked about his failures, Edison said this, “I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that don't work.” To Edison each failure was a road sign to point him a new direction that could lead to success. He knew failure was a part of adventure. He embraced failure as a learning tool on how to achieve what he had set his mind to. Edison lived a very intentional life. One that set about to conquer big dreams. He planned and acted understanding failure as a learning tool. Adjusting as he learned, we remember him today for the inventions he left for us all.

What can Edison's life teach each of us about our goals? Set our goals high – what is it you really want to achieve in your lifetime? Track our progress – Edison knew he failed 2,774 times because he kept record. View failure as a natural part of growth and a chance to learn and refine. Adapt using what we have learned and adjust to continue the pursuit of what is important to you.

I bring this up to you now as I'll be asking you to commit to goal setting as we approach 2025. I want you to spend some time reflecting on what you want to achieve in your life. Are you on the journey to achieve that? Think about what it will take to achieve those goals and what failures might await. Spend some time in thought of how you will track your progress – long term goals take years to complete. Make your envisioned progress realistic – can what you want to achieve be achieved in the time you have set? You can make 2025 your most productive and fulfilling with preparation now!

David

“Goals are like a map. They help us determine where we want to end up and give us personal direction on which to focus our energy.” —Catherine Pulsifer

“A person should set his goals as early as he can and devote all his energy and talent to getting there. With enough effort, he may achieve it. Or he may find something that is even more rewarding. But in the end, no matter what the outcome, he will know he has been alive.” —Walt Disney

General Updates:

New Hires:

Welcome to all our new hires:

Ethan Ogas hired for the position of Police Officer Trainee on October 7th

Promotions:

Congratulations to all those promoted:

Jaime Davalos promoted to the position of Crew Leader on October 7th

Awards/Accomplishments:

PD's Lieutenant Roxanne Harrill graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Bachelor's Degree in Homeland Security and Emergency Management.

The City received the TML Excellence Award for Communications Programs for 2024 for cities over 25,000 in population. The award was for the City's innovative HH-N-GO program. It is the first time the City has received a TML Excellence Award!

The City received the Hire Vets gold Medallion Award from the US Department of Labor.

Blue Santa: PD is accepting monetary and/or new bike donations for Blue Santa.

October's Kudos Award Winners: Congratulations to Henry Nash, Ursula Paddie, Michelle Smart and Kiarrah Carlisle for being our October Kudos Award Winners! Wow, what great work you all do and we have many, many more kudos winners coming up!

HH-N-GO: The HH-N-GO bingo style challenge began on January 2. A new letter/number is 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. You can still get a card and play so contact HR if you want to play! This month saw winners: Clyde Hicks, Andrea Contreras, Fabian Brooks, Gary Bates, and citizen Deirdra "Dee" Stewart.

Fall Back into Fitness: Fall Back into Fitness was the October health and wellness challenge. A juicer was the grand prize for the challenge winner. Detective Peter Quichocho was the employee winner of the October challenge! We also had 3 citizen winners: Adam Sears, Sergio Ramirez, and Karen Martin.

Squatsgiving: November's challenge is called "Squatsgiving" and as the name implies it involves lots of squats! 11 teams of 3 are participating.

Pumpkin Carving Competition: Winners of this year's Pumpkin Carving Competition include:

Lyndsey Amundson – 1st place

Nichole Ratliff – 2nd place

Lorissa Byse – 3rd place

Halloween Costume Contest: This year’s spooky winners:

Best Group – Municipal Court

Best Individual – Clyde Hicks

Most Creative – Lorissa Byse

Scariest – Fernando Fernandez

Lunch and Learn: Sleep Apnea Lunch and Learn is scheduled for November 18 at 12 p.m. at the Activity Center.

Pre-retirement Overview: Pre-retirement overview is scheduled for November 19 from 9 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. at the Activities Center.

Farmers Market: The Market will run every Saturday through December 21. Come on out to City Hall on Saturdays to get fresh produce and/or unique gifts.

Dia de Muertos Festival: Join the Harker Heights Parks and Recreation Department’s Dia de Muertos Festival! Get ready to celebrate life, culture, and community at our annual event. This vibrant event is a unique opportunity to honor loved ones who have passed away while embracing the rich traditions of Mexican culture. The event will be held on Saturday, November 2, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Carl Levin Park.

Spotlight on Service:

Amber Love-Clark Brings Positive Energy: Parks Director Amy Atkins wrote to give praise to Amber Love-Clark. Amy had this to say about Amber, she *“has brought a wealth of knowledge, ideas, and positive energy to the athletics/aquatics division and department. We discussed division goals, and she wasted no time accomplishing one after another. She single-handedly cleaned and organized all the storage buildings/areas at Summitt Soccer Complex and Kern baseball field. Some of the items in storage had been there for over 10 years. There were 3 Coca-Cola Company*

refrigerators in storage from what we're told 15+ years because no one knew how to dispose of them. Amber called Coca-Cola and they came and picked them up within a week."

Nicole Loayza Brings Enthusiasm: Parks Director Amy Atkins wrote to thank Nicole Loayza. Amy stated *"Nicole helped Tyrik tremendously before we hired Amber with purchasing and making sure he was on time with t-shirts, medals, and supplies requests. Nicole also enthusiastically participated in Amber's onboarding to ensure her smooth transition. On Saturday, October 26 Nicole went up to the Recreation Center at 5 am to open the building for polling location volunteers because the recreation aides' access cards weren't letting them in at time of day."*

Nichole Broemer Takes the Lead: Parks Director Amy Atkins wrote to thank Nichole Broemer for her hard work. Amy wrote, *"The team has discussed the department's goal to have the website up-to-date and a department calendar with all division activities included. Nichole took the lead, working with IT to have a searchable by-division calendar put on the web page. She has updated outdated information throughout the PARD site and kept the social media posts updated."*

Casey Brazzil Takes Ownership: Parks Director Amy Atkins shared her thanks for Casey Brazzil. Amy wrote, *"The weekend of October 26 there was a tournament at Community Park. One of the crew members scheduled to work in the evening to pick up the facility and get the fields ready for play for the following day called in sick. Instead of calling a crew member not scheduled to work the weekend, Casey went himself to assist with the facility clean-up /preparation."*

Rose Ramon Helps Pup Find a Home: Pet Adoption's Shiloh Wester wrote to show her thanks for Rose Ramon. Shiloh wrote, *"I wanted to pass on praise for Rose Ramon from a rescue organization that recently came to pick up a dog that had been adopted from them back in 2018 and ended up in our shelter a few weeks ago. They communicated with Rose about making arrangements to pick up "Banjo", and made a post on Facebook thanking our shelter, and specifically Rose, for being patient and working with them through the process. We are so thankful for Rose!!"*

Sgt John Howell is Outstanding: Park's Casey Brazzil wrote of his thanks for PD's Sgt John Howell. Casey wrote, *"I would like to share with you that Sgt. Howell is doing an outstanding job helping me with the Homeless camps and trash that is left behind from the homeless. Whenever I call him he comes out and helps me not only to help remove the person or persons, he stays and helps us remove all the trash and items left behind. He puts on his gloves and stays until all of it is picked up. The one thing I have noticed is that when he makes contact with the individual he treats them like they are a human being. He truly cares about the person. He does his job, but also has a heart. I just wanted to brag on Sgt. Howell and let everyone know what an outstanding job he does."*

Johnny Widener Assists: Pet Adoption's Johnny Widener was recently thanked by a citizen he assisted. Johnny assisted in locating an elderly man's service dog. The daughter of the citizen relayed that her father was extremely worried for his dog and was very glad to have his baby back thanks to Johnny!

Victoria Ellis and Ethan Phillips are Professional: A citizen praised Pet Adoption Officers Victoria Ellis and Ethan Phillips for containing two loose dogs that were causing concerns in a neighborhood. The citizen stated he appreciated their swift and professional service.

Miranda Jones Recognized: Pet Adoption's Kennel Tech Miranda Jones was recognized by PAC Staff for her unwavering dedication and willingness to help both animals and coworkers, highlighting her selflessness and commitment.

Gage Genthner and Victoria Ellis Earn Gratitude: Pet Adoption Officers Gage Genthner and Victoria Ellis helped an injured raccoon at a citizen's home, earning them gratitude for their compassionate assistance.

Rene Gandara gets a Kudos: Library Director Lisa Youngblood wrote to share her thanks for FD's Rene Gandara. Lisa wrote, *"I would like to give kudos to Firefighter Rene Gandara, LP. He worked with our Library staff to provide us CPR/First Aid training! I appreciate that he provided two small classes for us so that we could work our desks! Also, he allowed us to ask Library specific questions and discuss real scenarios. We feel much more confident in our abilities to assist our patrons in the events of emergencies!"*

Karry Fow Takes the Initiative: PD's Lawrence Stewart wrote to show his thanks for PD's Karry Fow. Lawrence wrote, *"Thanks Karry for the taking the initiative to redo our department travel expense form. The form was in need of some much-needed revisions. You didn't have to do it and you did an excellent job and showed great teamwork. Thank you."*

Jaime Davolos Responds Quickly: A resident called to share their thanks for Public Work's Jaime Davolos. The resident stated that Jaime did an good job and responded quickly.

Crystal Thomas Recruits: PD's Crystal Thomas was recently thanked by HR's Lyndsey Amundson. Lyndsey wrote about an applicant she was in processing and stated the following about the applicant's interaction with Crystal, *"he said he applied to Copperas Cove, Killeen, Belton and Harker Heights that you were the fastest and most streamline recruiter. He also said the day he put in his information you were in his email which made him feel like he was wanted."*

Quinton Amerson Takes Pride: A citizen wrote to share their appreciation for Park's Quinton Amerson. The citizen wrote, *"Speaking with Quinton for a few minutes sometimes you can tell he takes pride in the work he does for the city at the parks and is always looking for ways to improve. I see often on the HH Facebook page folks getting recognized by the city manager and mayor and if there is 1 person from the parks department that should get recognized it should be Quinton because he treats that park with genuine care and concern for the park users."*

Billy Stevens, Norris Lockett, Donovan Martinez, Quinton Amerson, Angel Rodriguez and Henry Nash Get a Shout Out: Parks' Billy Stevens, Norris Lockett, Donovan Martinez, Quinton Amerson, Angel Rodriguez and Henry Nash received some kind remarks from a citizen for their hard work setting up a large shade tent.

Catharina Hoffman and Andrea Contreras Go the Extra Mile: Court's Catharina Hoffman and Andrea Contreras assisted in a special celebration for our citizen volunteer John Footman. Finance Director Ayesha Lealiiiee wrote to share her appreciation. Ayesha stated, *"Not only did you participate in our celebration for Mr. John today, but you also helped Finance staff in cleaning up our conference room. Many thanks and appreciation to you for helping without even being asked. Thank you from all of us!!"*

Stuart Kiefer, Alyssa Schwindt, Josh Larremore, Daniel Regan and Isaac Perez Serve Well: Fire Chief Shannon Stephens had a citizen relay some kind words for some of the FD team. The citizen complimented the good work of Firefighters Stuart Kiefer, Alyssa Schwindt, Josh Larremore, Daniel Regan and Isaac Perez for excellent patient care and customer service.

Nichole Ratliff is Thoughtful: Finance Director Ayesha Lealiiiee wrote to thank Nichole Ratliff for her assistance in coordinating a celebration for citizen volunteer John Footman. Ayesha wrote, *"Kudos to you for thinking of Mr. John Footman today. For taking the time to coordinate a healthy potluck and ensure it was okay to do so. From his words, I am sure he was thoroughly thrilled with it. Your thoughtfulness and caring are noticed every day but especially today."*

Casey Brazzil is a Team Player: Police Chief Hawkins wrote of his thanks for Parks' Casey Brazzil. Chief Hawkins wrote, *"I want to thank you for all the assistance that you and your team contributes to this cause. The teamwork makes all this possible."*

Johnny Widener and Ethan Phillips Make us Proud: Animal Service Officers Johnny Widener and Ethan Phillips were thanked by a citizen for assistance after their cat was bitten by a rattlesnake. Thankfully ASO Johnny Widener and ASO Ethan Phillips were able to assist in capturing and relocating the snake, and the kitty was able to get to the vet quickly for treatment. Pet Adoption

Center Manager Shiloh Wester wrote, *"I am incredibly proud of our Animal Services Officers for their professionalism and expertise. We hope their fearless kitty makes a full recovery!"*

Casey Brazzil, Billy Stevens, Donovan Martinez and Henry Nash are Hard Workers: Pet Adoption Center Manager Shiloh Wester wrote of her appreciation for Parks' Casey Brazzil, Billy Stevens, Donovan Martinez and Henry Nash. Shiloh wrote, *"I want to express my gratitude to Casey Brazzil and his crew for installing the new dog kennel doors at PAC over the last few weeks. I know it was an extra project on top of their other responsibilities, and we are all incredibly thankful for their hard work and their positive attitudes!! The kennel doors look fantastic and we are very excited to have this project completed!"*

Jack Wallace, Jake Greenwood and Mike O'Hala Appreciated: HR Director Leona Clay wrote to thank PD's Lt. Jack Wallace, Lt. Jake Greenwood and Sgt. Mike O'Hala for assisting with a recent training. Leona wrote, *"I wanted to take a moment to give a shout out to Jack Wallace, Jake Greenwood and Mike O'Hala for the outstanding job they did teaching the ALERRT training. They are very knowledgeable and a pleasure to be around. Please let them know how much I appreciated being a part of the training."*

Andrew Barnstable Makes the Day Better: A citizen contacted the City to let us know about a positive interaction he had with PD Officer Andrew Barnstable. The citizen was having a tough day and encountered Officer Barnstable during a traffic stop. Officer Barnstable made him feel better about this situation. He stated the traffic stop was sign from God and wanted to thank Officer Barnstable.

Duarte Fernandes Keeps Them Safe: A+ Federal Credit Union wrote to the City to express their appreciation for PD Detective Duarte Fernandes. They stated Duarte, *"has joined us over the past 3 years in leading and training our employees on robbery trainings...This training is educational for our employees in keeping them safer and building relationships with the Harker Heights Police Department. We appreciate Harker Heights Police Department and Detective D. Fernandes with leading, speaking, and sharing his robbery power point presentation with our team."*