

**Message from the Manager:**

***You Did It!***

And boy did you! What an incredible story of service you have written! I always enjoy the stories you write in service the best. You are making a huge difference in the lives of others, and I am proud to be a team member serving alongside you! Now to your story:

**Aaron Dunnam – 2024 Employee of the Quarter – 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter**

Aaron Dunnam has dedicated nearly 14 years to the Harker Heights Fire Department, rising through the ranks to become the current Assistant Chief of Operations. Known for his infectious positive attitude and his talent for fostering a strong sense of family within the department, Chief Dunnam is widely respected for his commitment and leadership. Recently, Chief Dunnam's firefighting brother and next-door neighbor experienced the devastating loss of their home due to a fire. Chief Dunnam quickly responded, assisting local fire departments in their efforts to extinguish the blaze. Without having his proper gear, Chief Dunnam went above and beyond to search for a missing pet. His initiative, intuition, and extensive knowledge played a crucial role in the firefighting efforts. Chief Dunnam is the perfect example a leader going above and beyond! It is without reservation that we select Chief Dunnam for Employee of the Quarter.

**Joedi Rivera – 2024 Employee of the Quarter – 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter**

The selection committee for December's Employee Recognition Ceremony has selected Joedi Rivera (Fleet Maintenance). Joedi Rivera is an employee who isn't in the "spotlight" of the City. Many employees may not know his name, but they know his contagious smile. Joedi is a member of the Fleet Maintenance Department and interacts with almost every department in the City helping to handle the maintenance of every vehicle that the City owns. He has stepped up and done a phenomenal job while Burl is out, always communicating with departments regarding the status of vehicles, handling the backside of TML claims for hail damage from the spring storms, staying on top of invoices, inspections, and a multitude of other tasks, and always does it with a smile. Every employee that Joedi interacts with – or even passes by – has nothing but positive things to say. He is a hard worker and a great representative to have for our City when dealing with various vendors for our fleet. Joedi is the prime example of the type of employee that the City of Harker Heights prides itself on.

**Service Pins:**

Nicole Loayza - 5 Years

Andrea Contreras – 5 Years

Erica Rossmiller – 5 Years

Kristina Ramirez - 5 Years

Eric “Jack” Jackson – 5 Years

Johnny Widener – 5 Years

Paul Carey – 10 Years

Melissa Wolfe – 10 Years

Zully Reyes—10 Years

Sherill Carillo – 10 Years

Shiloh Wester – 10 Years

Joseph Byrne – 10 Years

Andrew Barnstable – 15 Years

Benjamin Duiker – 15 Years

Rene Fernandez – 15 Years

Kellie Mozek – 15 Years

Lisa Youngblood – 25 Years

**Finance:**

Remedios Duenas – New Customer Service Clerk

**Police Department:**

Lina Devora – New Telecommunicator

Erica Lozano - New Healthy Homes Youth Specialist

Rebekah Scottini – New Telecommunicator

Emily Wallace Sammons – New Records Clerk

Shailee Gilmore -New Telecommunicator

Cabrina Chase – Promoted to Records Clerk

Darlene Prechtel -Promoted to Executive Assistant

Steven McClain – Promoted to Sergeant

Crystal Thomas – Promoted to Administrative Officer to the Chief

Erica Lozano – Promoted to Victim/Witness Coordinator

Jazmyne Lee – Promoted to Healthy Homes Youth Specialist

Commander Randy Stefek – Recognition, LEMIT

Detective Duarte Fernandes – Recognition, BCERT (Basic Computer Evidence Recovery Training), Sponsored by Secret Service at NCFI Academy in Alabama (National Forensic Computer Institute)

### **Public Works:**

Brandon Casto – Promoted to Light Equipment operator

### **Planning:**

Yvonne Spell – Promoted to Planning Administrator

Stephanie Hall – Promoted to Planner

### **Code Enforcement:**

Michael Beard – Promoted to Building Official Administrator

Calvin Fleming – Promoted to Code Enforcement Supervisor

Fabian Brooks – Promoted to Building Inspector

Eric Moree – Promoted to Code and Building Coordinator

Trevor Jorgenson – Promoted to Building Official Secretary

Michael Beard earned Master Code Professional Designation. The highest certification in the Code Council Officers, only 1,000 in the U.S.

Eric Moree passed Commercial Plumbing Inspector Exam

Fabian Brooks passed Commercial Plumbing Inspector Exam

Richelle Otero graduated with her Associates Degree

### **Pet Adoption**

Gage Genthner – New Animal Services Officer

Lindsay McLaughlin – New Animal Services Officer

## **Fire**

Daniel Regan - New Firefighter/Paramedic

Franklin Conlee – New Firefighter/Paramedic

Justin Tanner Read – Promoted to Lieutenant

Jason Moore – Promoted to Driver/Pump Operator

Chris Mahlstedt and Ethan Gingerich achieved certified Fire Marshal certification.

Firefighter Logan Green graduated from Paramedic School and was recognized as Salutatorian

Firefighter Ernesto Rodarte graduated from Paramedic School

Firefighter Joshua Brown graduated from Honor Guard Academy

Firefighter Mark Mata graduated from Honor Guard Academy

FD had six members participate in this year's 9/11 Memorial Stair Climb in Dallas and two members also participated in the San Antonio Climb.

## **Library**

Ashlyn Brooks – New Library Clerk

## **Administration**

Kiarrah Carlisle -Promoted to Human Resources Specialist

Mark Hyde – Promoted to Assistant City Manager

Lyndsey Amundson – Promoted to Employee Relations Manager

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!

HIREVets Gold Medallion award from the US Department of Labor. The City of Harker Heights was the only municipality awarded.

Texas Workforce Commission and Texas Veterans Commission for the City's participation in the "We Hire Vets" program.

The city was one of eleven cities in populations over 25,000 to be nominated for the Human Resources Impact Award at the Annual Texas Human Resources Association Conference.

Sara Clark was awarded a scholarship to attend the Public Funds Investment Act Seminar.

## **Courts**

Kaily Funez-Lenon – Promoted to Juvenile Case Manager/Teen Court Coordinator

Catharina Hoffman was awarded the Texas Court Clerk Association Scholarship for the 2024 Conference.

## **Parks**

Amber Love-Clark – New Sports and Aquatics Coordinator

Veronica Lupian-Soto – New Part Time Recreation Aide

Christian Batista - New Part Time Recreation Aide

## **STAR AWARDS:**

**The Vocal Reveler Award**– For always making some sort of noise at her desk whether it is singing, humming, sneezing, coughing, or constantly saying “oh darn”. Annette Hamman

**The Get It Done Award** - This award is given to the person who will get a job done quickly and correctly! By providing some exemplary ability to see a project through to its end. Annette Jorgenson

**The Middle School Teen Whisperer Award** - This award is given to a person who has been able to tame (for the most part) our afterschool teens. By giving them a consistent smile and letting them know that they are seen, she has provided calm and cool leadership for our staff and for our teens. Angie Sabino

**The Red Bottom Shoe Award** - For the individual who can spot the difference, between real red bottom and fake. Lynda Nash

**The Nostradamus Award** - For the individual who has a “sixth sense” when it comes to balancing finances, always knowing what’s coming next. Ayesha Lealiiee

**The Serious Poser Award** - For the person who is always camera-ready, ensuring every photo is a picture-perfect moment, always looking serious. Betiale Hawkins

**The Mount Vesuvius Award** - For always having a drink that’s as unpredictable as a volcanic explosion—unexpected, thrilling, and a little dangerous. Jennifer McCann

**The Penmanship Award** - most likely to have her grocery list mistaken for the declaration of independence. April Edwards

**The MacGyver Mentality Award** – For the person whose mindset and approach is all about using creativity, resourcefulness, and a little bit of elbow grease to solve tough problems. Joedi Rivera-Adorno

**Hero of the Hour Award** – For the person who always comes through when things get tough, ready to jump in and make everything better. Arno Stemmer

**Most Likely to Ask for a Flamethrowing Unicorn Award...** and Somehow Make It Happen. For always producing ideas when we least expect it. Sean Kampmeier

**Most Likely to Cause a Lunchroom Evacuation by Microwaving Fish Award** - For clearing the room faster than a fire drill with your microwaved fish. Chris Mahlstedt

**It's A Small World Award**– Adult most likely to be found at Disney World. Karry Fow

**The American Idol Award**- An award for the employee with a secret singing talent. Peter Quichocho

**The Buzzing Beehive Award** – For the individual who is constantly in motion, taking on every cleaning task with determination and making everything run like a well-organized hive. Amber Love-Clark

**The Order Enforcer Award**– For the person who's always making sure things stay in order and no one gets off track. Nicole Loayza

**Swiss Army Knife Award**- For being the most indispensable. Billy is a Jack of all trades. He always has a smile on his face and a positive attitude. Billy Stevens

**Firing on All Cylinders Award**- For getting the best out of everyone. Casey always has your back and is supportive of his colleagues. Casey Brazzil

**The HR Assistant Award**- Recognizes outstanding performance, dedication, and contributions to the Human Resources department. Marcy Gardner

**The Squat Master Award** - This award goes to the individual who constantly pushes the boundaries of innovation, thinking outside the box and bringing fresh, bold ideas to life. Vincent Fernandez

**The Checkmate Award** - Plays chess against herself just so she can say checkmate twice. Because second place is the first loser. Leona Clay

**The Home Alone Award** - Awarded to the individual who, when at conferences, has mastered the art of barricading themselves in hotel rooms with unparalleled skill and creativity. Lyndsey Amundson

David

*"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."* - **Albert Schweitzer**

**General Updates:**

**Promotions:**

Congratulations to Dale Reeves who promoted to Inventory/Line Locator on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Achievements:**

Congratulations to Officer Massoud Howayeck who was selected for the 2024 Police Officer of the Year.

Congratulations to City Engineer Kristina Ramirez for passing the mandatory TxDOT class for MPO grant projects with a score of 100!

**Christmas Ornament Contest:** Winners of the Christmas Ornament challenge were: 1<sup>st</sup> Place – Angela Sabino, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – Lorissa Byse, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Fabian Brooks, and 4<sup>th</sup> Place Kelsey Coffman. Great job by all!

**December Kudos Award Winners:** Congratulations to Rene Gandara, Leona Clay, Cassey Brazzil and Johnny Widener for being our December 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 was 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. This month, on the final bingo number drawing, Cat Hoffman was our winner!

**Squatsgiving:** If you put your money on the Squatting Girls of Fall you won big! They along with citizen Robert Griffen II squatted home the prize for Squatsgiving!

**Work Out Time Challenge:** Our January team challenge begins January 4 and will challenge us to all perform and log the time from whatever fitness we enjoy doing. So far, we have 14 teams of 5 as well as 13 citizens participating!

**Harker Heights' Scavenger Hunt:** Be on the lookout for more information in the new year of a yearlong community challenge like HH-N-GO but will take on the form of a scavenger hunt!

## **Spotlight on Service:**

**The Library is the Best:** A citizen wrote on social media to show their love for our Library staff. The citizen wrote, *“The Librarians are the best! The Frost Fest was extra special because of your patience and dedication to helping the community enjoy the event! Thank you for all your hard work in the Library and while you support the community off site. We truly appreciate all that you do! Warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday season!”*

**Mark Hyde, PD, and Fabian Brooks Get Results:** City Engineer Kristina Ramirez shared some compliments a citizen gave the City. The citizen gave major props to ACM Mark Hyde for providing exceptional service. He expressed his appreciation for the Harker Heights PD and how respectful they have always been. He also was very impressed with his interaction with Fabian Brooks

**Lonnie Clark, Ryan Raben and Patrick Hogan Thanked:** A resident wrote to thank PD’s Sgt. Lonnie Clark, Officer Ryan Raben, and Officer Patrick Hogan. The citizen stated, *“I am writing to say thank you to the officers that showed up this morning when an individual was having a mental crisis in front of my home. From the moment they arrived they handled the situation with great care and understanding, they remained calm, professional, patient, and showed compassion for the individual who greatly needed it. Thank you, officers, for being the example that others should follow, we’re very proud of you.”*

**Massoud Howayeck is Exceptional:** Market Heights Property Manager, Norine Bowen, thanked PD’s Officer Massoud Howayeck. She advised Officer Howayeck is exceptional and goes to each business even when not on a call just to make sure everyone is ok and has assisted multiple times when PD is called for various incidents.

**Chief Stephens and Team Appreciated:** PD’s Commander Randy Stefek wrote to share his appreciation for Fire Chief Stephens and Team. Randy wrote, *“I would like to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude for allowing us to utilize a portion of your facility last week while we upgraded our patrol fleet to the new Axon camera systems. You and your team’s hospitality was wonderful and it made the installation very smooth. Thank you again for being a team player and always willing to help when needed.”*

**John Leivan is Recognized:** Court Clerk Aaliyah Smith wrote to thank Parks’ John Leivan. Aaliyah wrote, *“I would like to give a special shout out to Mr. John Leivan. He is seriously an essential part of our city, contributing to EVERY department. John is there when needed and always a pleasure to be around. We here at courts see how hard he works for the ENTIRE city, and we love having him*



*around. His infectious spirit and positive energy is truly one of a kind. He deserves all the recognition and more. John, Thank you very much for everything!"*

**Casey Brazzil, Billy Stevens, and Donovan Martinez Assist:** Sgt. John Howell wrote to show his appreciation for Parks' Casey Brazzil, Billy Stevens and Donovan Martinez. Sgt. Howell wrote, *"I just wanted to thank Casey Brazzil and his team, Billy and Donovan, for their assistance with Blue Santa. These guys did a lot of heavy lifting during the delivery of the bicycles, had an air compressor on stand-by for flat tires, and were always eager to help with getting the bicycles off the trailer, and delivered to the kids at six different elementary and middle schools in Harker Heights. A task that could not have been completed without their help. This is another great example of the teamwork displayed in our city."*

**Lorissa Byse, Casey Brazzil, Donovan Martinez and Billy Stevens Get a Shoutout:** HR Director Leona Clay wrote to thank IT's Lorissa Byse and Park's Casey Brazzil, Donovan Martinez and Billy Stevens. Leona wrote, *"I wanted to take a moment to give a massive shoutout to Lorissa Byse, Casey Brazzil, Billy Stevens, and Donovan Martinez for their invaluable assistance during the employee recognition ceremony. Their dedication and teamwork in supporting Lyndsey Amundson with the behind-the-scenes preparation and decorating made all the difference in ensuring the event was a huge success. Each of them played an integral role, and their efforts truly helped make the ceremony memorable. We are incredibly fortunate to have such amazing employees who go above and beyond. Please thank them for their hard work and for making this event so special!"*

**Lyndsey Amundson Gives Exceptional Effort:** HR Director Leona Clay wrote to express her appreciation for Lyndsey Amundson. Leona wrote, *"I want to take a moment to give a HUGE shoutout to Lyndsey Amundson for her exceptional efforts behind the scenes during our recent employee recognition event. Lyndsey went above and beyond, and her hard work and dedication played a key role in making the event such a success. Her attention to detail, planning, and coordination helped create a memorable experience for everyone involved. We are so fortunate to have someone like Lyndsey on our team, and I want to personally thank her for making this event truly special! Thank you, Lyndsey, for all that you do!"*

**IT Team Go Above and Beyond:** Police Chief Hawkins wrote to thank the entire IT Team. Chief Hawkins wrote, *"I wanted to reach out to you all and express our gratitude for everything that was done to help us get Axon installed and running these past few weeks. I observed you coming to work early, going to lunch later, and getting off later than expected just to ensure everything was completed properly. Thank you for your sacrifice and we couldn't have done it without you."*

**Clyde Hicks, Lisa Youngblood and Angie Sabino Bring the Smiles:** Mountainview Elementary School wrote to share their thanks for Admin's Clyde Hicks, Library's Lisa Youngblood and Angie

Sabino for participating in their Friday Friends program. A post on social media stated, *“A huge thank you to the City of Harker Heights Building Security Officer, Bailiff, Library Director and Executive Assistant for being our most recent Friday Friends! You brought all of the energy and started our day with huge smiles.”*

**Catharina Hoffman, Eugene Cuthbert, Kathleen Mascarenas and Brenda Hilton Get**

**Praise:** Mountainview Elementary School wrote to thank Courts’ Catharina Hoffman, Admin’s Eugene Cuthbert and PD’s Kathleen Mascarenas and Brenda Hilton for participating in their Friday Friends program. A social media post stated, *“A huge thank you to the Harker Heights Police Department (and others) for being today’s Friday Friends! You were so filled with joy and started our day with smiles thank you!”*

**PD Provides a Great Time:** PD’s Lieutenant Jack Wallace wrote of his thanks for the Police Department’s Cookies with Santa event. Jack stated, *“PD Cookies with Santa was a great time for all the G babies thank you to all at the Harker Heights’ Police Department for hosting and putting on this great event for the kiddos.”*

**Nichole Ratliff Gets a Kudos:** Finance Director Ayesha Lealiiee wrote of her thanks for Nichole Ratliff. Ayesha wrote, *“I’d like to give kudos to Nichole Ratliff for her actions yesterday afternoon. We had a gentleman who kept calling yesterday due to issues with getting his water on. We sent out a technician to have his water cut on that afternoon and he was calling again to check on it. Nichole spoke with him for awhile walking him through where his meter was, how we read it, finding the nearest spicket, turning it on and going back to see if the corrective measures he took fixed the leak he had (how to check if it was spinning). She spent a good amount of time on the phone with him remaining patient and calm the entire time. We are lucky to have Nichole as part of #teamheights!”*

**Jerry Bark Gets an Attaboy:** Mayor Blomquist publicly thanked Jerry Bark for his assistance with a recent Health District meeting held in the City’s Council Chambers.

**John Fox Does Amazing Work:** Citizen and volunteer John Footman shared his thanks for the fantastic work of John Fox in creating and installing Purple Heart City signs around the City.

**Nicole Loayza Impresses:** Parks’ Casey Brazzil recently praised Parks’ Nicole Loayza. Casey wrote, *“I would like to let everyone know that Nicole Loayza has done an outstanding job within our department. She goes above and beyond in keeping our department going. She has a lot of work to do but is always willing to help wherever needed. During this time of the year, she pretty alone responds to all 5 Elementary schools Santa letters. She has it down to a fine art. It’s a lot of work*

*and is very time consuming. This resource we give the children is a wonderful thing. I would like to give her a big Thanks to her from us."*

**Eve Vazquez is Outstanding:** Finance's Nichole Ratliff wrote to share her thanks for Finance's Eve Vazquez. Nichole wrote, *"I wanted to give kudos to Eve Vazquez. She went above and beyond assisting an elderly customer with setting up her online water account and draft. She was professional, kind and patient. Her customer service is outstanding."*

**Jaime Davalos is Noticed:** A citizen called in to express their thanks for Public Works' Jaime Davalos. The resident was very pleased with Jaime's work and wanted the City to know what a good job our employees are doing.

**Amber Love-Clark Helps Out:** A coach in one of our recreation programs wrote to express their thanks for Parks' Amber Love-Clark. The coach wrote, *"Since Ms. Love has taken over, she has really helped your program. She is very responsive and solves problems quickly and efficiently. Amber simply gets things done. She is resourceful and takes initiative."*

**Library and Parks Collaborate:** The Harker Heights' Herald wrote a nice story on a collaboration between our Library and Parks Departments. The story covered the Spooky Science Stroll special program the City offered.

**Pet Adoption Center and especially Rose Ramon Make a Difference:** The Pet Adoption Center got a letter from a citizen thanking them for having the Pet Pantry available for those that need temporary assistance. She wrote *"I want to extend a HUGE thank you and show of gratitude to the staff, management, volunteers, and a special thank you to Rose, and all the people who kindly donated pet food and supplies. To each and every one of you, my family and fur babies truly appreciate to have benefited from your kindness."*

**Miranda Jones and Sue Reynaga Care:** A visitor to the Pet Adoption Center gave a kudos to kennel techs Miranda Jones and Sue Reynaga for the cleanliness of the shelter and the care they were giving the animals.

**Gage Genthner and Lindsay McLaughlin Complimented:** Animal Services Officers Gage Genthner and Lindsay McLaughlin were complimented by a citizen for their fast and competent services. He stated, *"they came out immediately and were able to pick up the two loose dogs that were running in my neighborhood."*

**Rose Ramon is Dedicated:** Pet Adoption Coordinator Rose Ramon was complimented by a citizen. She said that Rose was "*incredibly sweet, dedicated, and in-tune with the community's needs.*"

**Shiloh Wester Applauded:** Pet Adoption Center Manager Shiloh Wester was applauded by a family that was visiting the area for the wonderful environment and friendly staff they encountered at the Pet Adoption Center. They said they "*could tell that the manager (Shiloh) and the Staff genuinely care for the animals and work very hard to give them the best life while they are here and find good homes for them.*"

**Leona Clay, Melonie Matthewson, Lyndsey Amundson, and Kiarrah Carlisle Care:** HR's Leona Clay, Melonie Matthewson, Lyndsey Amundson, and Kiarrah Carlisle received a thank you card from Finance's Susan Crawley. Susan wrote, "*Thank you all for everything you do for the employees. You take care of us so well and make working her so fun!*"