



THE MESSENGER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY AND FOR CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK EMPLOYEES

HAPPY
New Year

January 2026 Edition

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Farewell to...

Chelsea Freytag	PD	Records Specialist
Manny Gomez	PW	City Engineer

Around Town Highlights

Lynfred Winery: Takeout Takeover Tuesdays

January 6, 13, 20, & 27 | 3—7:15pm
1823 St. Johns Avenue

Stargazing & S'mores by the Shore

January 9 | 6—7pm
Rosewood Beach
883 Sheridan Road

HP Poetry: Katana Smith & George Jensen

January 10 | 4—6pm
Wayfarer Theaters
1850 Second Street

Create Your 2026 Vision Board

January 13 | 7-9pm
Soulshine Boutique & Healing Sanctuary
459 Central Avenue (2nd Floor)

17th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service

January 19 | 10am—12:30pm
Park Fitness
1207 Park Ave. W

View more Highland Park events [here!](#)

Employee Anniversaries

Last Name	First Name	Dept.	Title	Years
Neuman	Steven	Police	Police Sergeant	27
Glasco	Claudia	PW	Admin & CS Specialist	26
Frey	Laura	CMO	Mgr of Senior Services	25
Verber	Brian	Police	Police Officer	24
Galati	Tony	Police	Police Commander	24
Dragicevich	Travis	Police	Police Officer	23
Olson	Jennifer	Police	Deputy Police Chief	23
White	Jacqueline	Police	Police Sergeant	22
Soldano	Brian	Police	Police Sergeant	19
Reif	Brian	Police	Police Sergeant	15
DiBasilio	Douglas	Police	Police Officer	15
Merkel	Brian	Police	Police Sergeant	15
Servin	David	PW	Maintenance Worker	14
Foley	Casey	Police	Police Sergeant	13
Eldridge	James	Police	Police Sergeant	13
Hansen	Trevor	Police	Police Officer	13
Painter	William	PW	Foreman	12
Cizek	Christopher	PW	Water Plant Operator	11
Earle	Christina	CMO	Senior Services Asst Mgr	10
Curtis	Randall	PW	Water Plant Operator	9
Walters	Kevin	PW	Fleet Mechanic	8
Bill	Michael	CD	Bldg / Housing Inspector PT	8
Ferber	James	CD	Senior Inspector	6
Miller	Keith	PW	Utilities Superintendent	3
Shaffer	Angela	CMO	Business Development Asst	3
Hyndman	Amy	Police	Records Supervisor	2
Yu	Sherry	CD	Permit & CS Tech	2
Salgado	Katherine	Police	Police Records Specialist	2
McComb	Megan	Police	Police Records Specialist	2
Cameron	Gerry	Police	Inv. Admin Spt Tech PT	1
Bonaguidi	Bill	Police	Admin Executive Officer PT	1
Seynos	Lesley	Police	Police Officer	1

CITY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★ MONDAY, JANUARY 19



WIN Program



2025-26 WIN Points: The portal is now open for participants to start earning points for the 2025-26 program year.

- Returning participants do not need a program code. Simply visit <https://app.chcw.com> to log in and begin tracking.
- New participants and qualifying spouses can register using program code **7092Cit189** at <https://app.chcw.com/#newparticipants>.
- Reach out via email for assistance with the initial registration and requirements.

February Biometric Health Screening Event: The City's Annual Biometric Screening Event will take place in February. This on-site event is the most convenient way for WIN participants to complete their annual biometric requirement. All WIN participants and spouses enrolled in City insurance must complete both an annual Biometric Screening and Health Risk Assessment (HRA), with no exceptions. Participants may also choose to complete their biometric screening through their physician or LabCorp; however, all results must be received by **February 28, 2026**. Be sure to complete your HRA first, as the portal will generate the required form for your appointment.

- Dates: February 18–21, 2026
- Location: Highland Park Police Department
- Registration: Log in to <https://app.chcw.com> and register through the dashboard
- Deadline: All screenings must be completed and results received by February 28, 2026 (no late exceptions)

Alternative Screening Options: For employees and spouses who do not attend the City's on-site screening, alternative biometric screening options are available. During registration, participants may select **Remote (LabCorp)** option or **Physician Screening** option, print the required form from the portal, and bring it to their appointment for completion. Spouses may complete their biometric screening through the City event, LabCorp, or their physician. Regardless of the option selected, all biometric results must be received by **February 28, 2026**. No late submissions will be accepted. **For Firefighters**, follow the same steps as the Physician Screening option and inform Health Endeavors to ensure all required wellness data is collected and remitted to CHC. Please make sure you **complete your HRA survey** in addition to your screening appointment. Spouses also need to complete an HRA survey and Biometric either through the city screening event or on their own by February 28, 2026.

Important Links: [CHC Wellbeing App](#) | [WIN Forms](#) | [WIN Handbook](#)

Messenger Bulletin Board



Payroll Announcement

All employees, be on the lookout for information regarding 2025 payroll changes on the January 19, 2026 paycheck. If you have any questions, contact Justin Eiskamp ext. 1015, or via email at jeiskamp@cityhpil.com.



2025 Employee Wellness Survey Reminder

The EEWC would love your feedback on our 2025 wellness programs and employee events. If you haven't already done so, please take a few minutes to complete the survey by Friday, January 16. We truly appreciate your input! <https://forms.office.com/r/HXncUrERpC>



Thank you to everyone who participated in and attended our Mentor/Mentee Panel! A big thanks to our panelists for sharing their experiences and insights, and to everyone who joined the conversation and made it such a great discussion.

We appreciate your time and engagement. We look forward to our next Mentor Program!

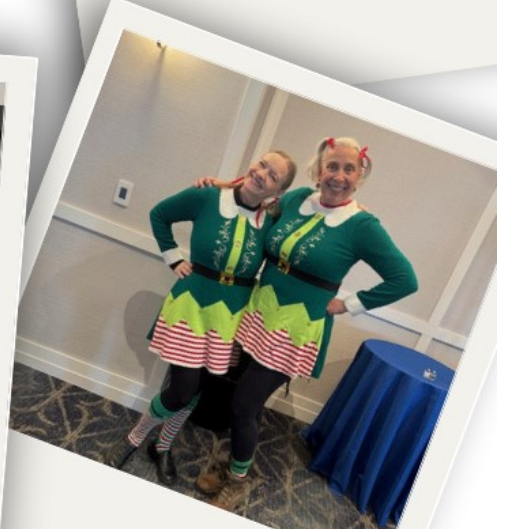
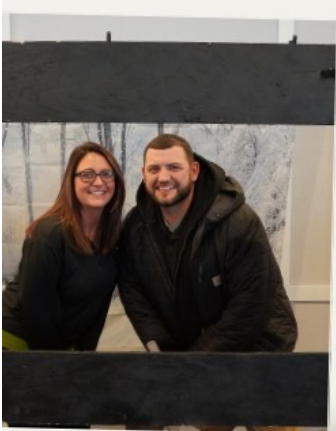


Messenger Bulletin Board



Holiday PARTY RECAP

Thank you to all the EEW
volunteers who helped
make our Winter
Wonderland Holiday Party
a success. And thank you
to everyone who attended
and shared in the holiday
spirit....it truly made the
celebration special!



Employee Spotlight

Each month, this piece highlights an employee from a different department. This month's employee interview is with **Noemi Machuca, Permit Customer Service Tech (Community Development)**.

Messenger Editor: Where did you grow up, and what's one fun/quirky fact about your hometown that people might not expect?

Noemi Machuca: I grew up in Gurnee and something interesting about it is that we get around 15 to 23 million visitors a year because of Six Flags and Gurnee Mills

ME: As a kid, what did you imagine you'd be doing as an adult—and does any part of that dream still live on today?

NM: When I was a kid I always had a goal that I was going to be a doctor and help people. As I grew up my dream shifted more to animals and I'm still very passionate about it.



ME: If your personality were a season, which one would it be and why?

NM: I really enjoy the Fall. The colors of fall are so warm and calm and I think my personality best suits that.

ME: What show, podcast, or book are you completely hooked on right now?

NM: The podcast that I've been listening to a lot is Rotten Mango which is a true crime podcast.

ME: If you could wake up tomorrow having instantly mastered one skill, what would it be—and how would it change your daily life? **NM:** I would love for it to be my cooking skills. I wouldn't have to worry about bad food from trial and error on recipes. And have amazing meals every day.

ME: What's your go-to workday snack or drink that keeps you going?

NM: It's not a snack but I love Neuro gum. It helps me a lot when I really need to focus.

ME: It's karaoke night! What's your go-to song to bring the crowd to life?

NM: Any older Bruno Mars song. His songs always tend to get everyone singing along.

ME: You get three seats at your dream dinner table—anyone from any time. Who's on the guest list? **NM:** My first one would be my grandpa and great grandpa on my mom's side because I have so many questions for them on life. And my cousin Osvaldo. I would love to just have a meal with any of these 3.

ME: Hollywood is making a movie about your life – who's playing you, and what's the title?

NM: America Ferrera – Lost in Translation

A Gentle Start to the New Year

A new year is often seen as a fresh start—but that doesn't mean pressure. You're allowed to begin this year at your own pace. Growth can be quiet, slow, and still meaningful.



Easy Self-Care Ideas for the New Year

You don't need big resolutions. Try small moments of care instead:

Drink water and stretch when you wake up

Take a short break when things feel overwhelming

Get enough rest when you can

Talk kindly to yourself, especially on tough days

Asking for help or support when you need it

Small steps count more than you think

New Year Mindset

Instead of asking "What should I change?" try asking:

"What do I need more of this year?"

Rest, confidence, patience, or joy—all are valid.

As routines and responsibilities pick up this year, remember that self-care isn't something extra—it's essential. Small, healthy choices made each day can make a big difference over time.



Wishing you a positive, healthy, and balanced start to the New Year.

Top New Year's Resolutions: What are people committing to in 2026?



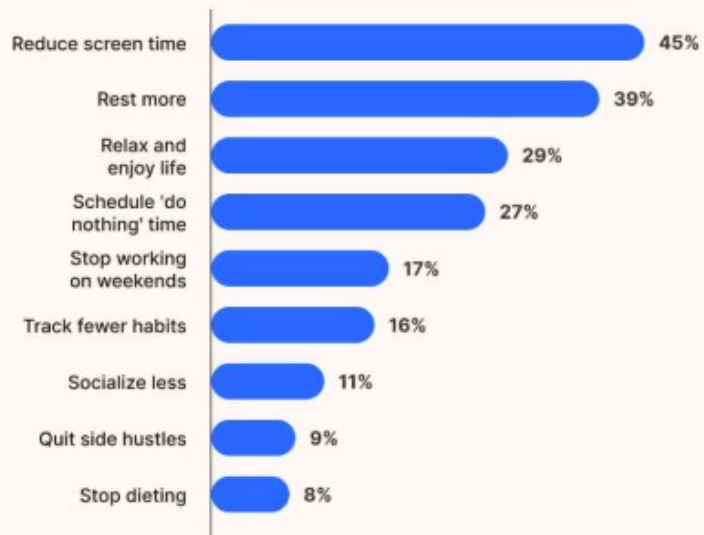
45%

of people want to reduce their screen time in 2026, while 39% aim to get more rest

*Participants were invited to select multiple responses based on their preferences

Source: makeheadway.com

Which non-traditional resolution goals appeal to you this year?



In 2026, people are redefining what “New Year, new you” means, focusing less on perfection and more on gentle, meaningful improvements that support long-term well-being.

A recent Headway survey of 2,000 adults reveals a shift in how people are approaching New Year's resolutions in 2026. Rather than chasing dramatic life changes, many are choosing more sustainable, low-pressure goals that fit today's realities.

Key Findings:

- Most people still make resolutions. 80% plan to set at least one goal for the year.
- Traditional goals are fading: Many respondents are putting less emphasis on big objectives like strict diets, intense exercise plans, career leaps, or relationship targets.

What people are prioritizing in 2026:

- Slowing down & enjoying life: 68% want a quieter, more intentional pace.
- Reducing pressure on themselves: 38% are lowering expectations.
- Digital detox goals: Nearly half want to cut screen time, with 45% planning less device use and 23% aiming to swap doomscrolling for learning.
- Work-life boundaries: A strong 89% plan to set stricter limits between work and personal time.

Challenges remain:

- 44% admit resolutions often fail and 40% say they struggle to appreciate small wins if they don't hit big goals.
- Financial pressures also impact goals, with many feeling ambitious resolutions aren't affordable this year.

Source: <https://makeheadway.com/blog/new-years-resolutions-survey/>