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**Welcome to the Team**

Carlos Velasquez Jr.	PW	Seasonal PW Worker
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**Around Town Highlights**

**The Great American Puzzle Challenge**

HP Public Library - 494 Laurel Avenue  
June 1 | All Day

**48th Annual Ravinia Farmers Market**

Jens Jensen Park - 540 Roger Williams Ave.  
Wednesdays, June 3—Oct 28 | 7am—1pm

**Food Truck Thursdays**

Jens Jensen Park - 540 Roger Williams Ave.  
June 4—Sept 3 | 4:30pm—Dusk

**Cops & Bobbers**

The Preserve of HP - 1207 Park Avenue W  
June 6 | 9—11am

**Ft. Sheridan Nat'l Cemetery Walking Tour**

Ft. Sheridan National Cemetery, Vattman Rd.  
June 7  
10:00 AM • 11:15 AM • 12:30 PM • 1:45 PM • 3:00 PM

**Taste of Highland Park**

Port Clinton Square - 600 Central Avenue  
June 19 | 5—10pm & June 20 | 3—10pm

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

**Employee Anniversaries**

Last Name	First Name	Dept.	Title	Years
Stokes	Ginger	Police	Police Officer	29
Vega	Eduardo	PW	Maintenance Worker	27
Grzybek	Paul	Fire	Lieutenant	22
Maslon	Kevin	Fire	Lieutenant	22
Schmidt	Michael	Fire	Firefighter	19
Forte	Eric	Fire	Firefighter	19
Lopez	Albert	Fire	Lieutenant	18
Icasiano	Christine	Finance	Executive Assistant	11
Jackson	Sherry	Finance	Finance & CS Specialist	11
Wolff	Horatiu	CD	Sr. Plan Examiner/Inspector	10
Stadler	Teresa	Police	Police Officer	9
Mix	Andrew	Police	Police Officer	9
Johnson	Leroy	PW	Bus Driver	8
Lanahan	Jacob	Police	Police Officer	8
Hrdlicka	Brandon	Fire	Firefighter	8
Hassler	James	Fire	Public Safety Mechanic	7
Taylor	Jarrett	PW	Bus Driver	5
Cristea	Nate	Finance	Finance & CS Specialist	5
Gulo	Frankie	Fire	Firefighter	5
Moreno	Jose	PW	Maintenance Worker	3
De Peralta	Jonathan	PW	Fleet Mechanic	3
Moskos	Edward	Fire	Firefighter	3
Paitich	Justin	CD	Permit & CS Tech Suprv	2
Guerrero-Arzola	Fabian	Police	Police Officer	2
Eiskamp	Justin	Finance	Payroll & CS Specialist	1
Machuca	Noemi	CD	Permit & CS Tech	1
Schenkenfelder	Christopher	Fire	Firefighter	1
Larson	Andrew	Fire	Firefighter	1

**Parade Helpers Needed – Join the Celebration!**



The City is seeking employee volunteers to assist with the July 4 Independence Day Parade (America250) from approximately 7:30/8:00 AM–12:00 PM. If you're interested and not already assigned to July 4 activities, please contact Assistant City Manager Erin Jason by Wednesday, June 3. Please see Erin's email for additional details.

# WIN Program



**June Walking Challenge:** The June Challenge is underway! This year, we are walking from Chicago to Boston. Be sure to sync your devices and start logging your steps! For those seeking technical assistance on syncing their devices, please contact [walking@chcw.com](mailto:walking@chcw.com). Register by May 30<sup>th</sup>!



**Points “Check In”:** June is a great time to check in on your annual points progress. As a reminder, all points must be submitted by October 31 to ensure your eligible insurance discount for 2027. We’re already past the halfway mark! Don’t wait until the last minute to earn your points.

**Did You Know?** You can earn points by watching videos in the CHC app? eLearning videos can be accessed at any time. To access these point opportunities, log in to the CHC app and click “Improve Your Health” on the left menu. Click the Webinar or eLearning video of your choice. Points will automatically be applied to your account following completion of the video and accompanying questions.

**New Participants – Join the WIN Program!** If you’re not currently enrolled in the WIN program but want to participate, visit [CHC Wellness](https://www.chcwellness.com) and use Program Code **7092Cit189** to register your account. Once registered, schedule your health screening to complete enrollment. Discounts for new participants will take effect once biometric results are confirmed.

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



Delta Dental is upgrading its benefits administration system on **June 3, 2026**, to enhance the member experience, improve functionality, and strengthen data security. While many of the changes will occur behind the scenes, employees will notice several updates to their online Member Connection portal and account information.

## What's Changing?

- A refreshed Member Connection portal with enhanced functionality and an improved user experience
- A new member ID number beginning with "67" followed by your existing 11-digit ID number
- Updated Explanation of Benefits (EOB) statements and correspondence formats
- A new portal URL (be sure to update any saved bookmarks)

## What's Staying the Same?

- Your Member Connection username and password
- Delta Dental's customer service phone number, email address, and website
- Your dental coverage and benefits
- Existing physical ID cards (new cards will not be mailed)
- You may continue using your current member ID number at dental appointments

## Important Dates

- Now through June 3: Delta Dental's Member Connection portal is undergoing a system upgrade. Members may experience limited access, including view-only functionality through June 2 and a temporary portal outage from May 30–June 3. Updates to Electronic EOB and Enhanced Benefits Program preferences will be unavailable during this period.
- June 3: The enhanced Member Connection portal launches with updated features and functionality.
- Claims Processing: Claims received on or after May 9 may experience temporary processing delays during the transition; however, dental coverage and benefits remain unchanged.

## The Member Connection portal allows members to:

- View claims and Explanation of Benefits (EOBs)
- Access and print digital ID cards
- Check eligibility and benefit information
- Track deductibles and annual maximums
- Search for in-network dentists
- Enroll in electronic EOBs for faster, paperless communication

## Need Assistance?

Website: <https://www.deltadentalil.com>

Member Connection Portal: <https://www.deltadentalil.com/resources/member-connection/>

Customer Service: 800-323-1743

Email: [CSI@deltadentalil.com](mailto:CSI@deltadentalil.com)

For the latest information regarding the June 3 system upgrade, visit [Delta Dental's System Upgrade Resource Center](#).

# Messenger Bulletin Board

## Employee Celebration Spotlight

We're excited to share that Ashley Palbitska, Assistant to the City Manager and Deputy City Clerk, was recently featured on the Local Gov Stories Podcast hosted by ILCMA.

In the episode, Ashley reflects on her 20-year journey with the City of Highland Park, sharing insights on leadership growth, career development, and the importance of stepping outside of your comfort zone to pursue new opportunities. Her story is a wonderful reminder that leadership can begin simply by raising your hand and being willing to learn, grow, and serve others.

Ashley, thank you for the positive impact you continue to make for both our employees and the Highland Park community. Your dedication to public service and commitment to supporting others does not go unnoticed, and we are proud to celebrate this recognition with you!

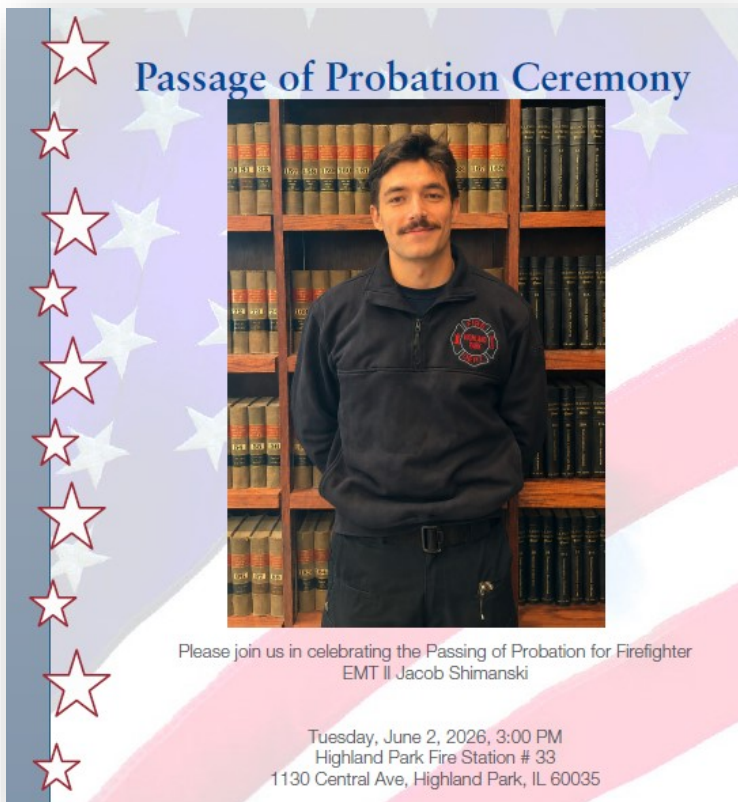


Listen or watch here:

- Watch: <https://youtu.be/S18TdIJDwmo>
- Listen: <https://rss.com/podcasts/local-gov-stories/2803015>

Congratulations, Ashley!

## Congratulations, FF Shimanski!



## Welcome, Baby Angelie!



Congratulations to Executive Assistant Meriyen Hernandez and her family on the arrival of their daughter, Angelie, on May 26, 2026! Please join us in wishing them love, happiness, and many wonderful memories as they welcome their newest little blessing!

# Messenger Bulletin Board

## Celebrating Public Works Week

During National Public Works Week, we proudly recognized the hardworking employees who keep Highland Park running year-round. Whether braving winter storms, maintaining our roads and infrastructure, caring for our parks, or responding to community needs in every season, Public Works staff play a vital role in serving our residents each day.

To celebrate their dedication, employees gathered for a staff appreciation cookout filled with great food, laughter, and camaraderie. It was a wonderful opportunity to take a break, connect with colleagues, and recognize the outstanding work Public Works employees do to keep our community safe, beautiful, and functioning at its best.



**Thank you to our Public Works team for your commitment, service, and all that you do for Highland Park!**

## Messenger Bulletin Board

### **Father's Day is Sunday, June 21!**



This Father's Day, we celebrate all the dads, stepdads, grandfathers, and father figures who inspire us through their guidance, support, and dedication. Thank you for the many ways you make a difference both at home and in our workplace. Wishing you a wonderful day filled with appreciation, laughter, and time spent with loved ones.

Here are some Father's Day events near and around HP:

- [Duck Derby at Hidden Creek AquaPark](#) (6/20 at 3pm)
- [Coffee & Canoes at Heller Nature Center](#) (6/21 from 9:30—11:30am)
- [Miniature Golf at River's Edge Mini Golf](#) (6/21 from 9am—6pm)
- [Free Int'l Day of Yoga at the Preserve of Highland Park](#) (6/21 9-10am)

Find more events [here](#).

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### **Donate Your Old Cell Phones—Support a Worthy Cause**



**911 CELLPHONE BANK**

The City of Highland Park is partnering with the **911 Cell Phone Bank** to provide free phones to individuals experiencing domestic violence and human trafficking. As part of this partnership, the City is assisting with the collection of donated devices.

All personal portable electronics are accepted in any condition, along with their accessories. Donated devices are either securely data-cleared or responsibly recycled. To prepare your device for donation, you may complete a factory reset; however, all phones are professionally processed and overwritten. The organization has received the highest certification for digital destruction, ensuring that all personal data is permanently unreadable.

If you have a cell phone or other portable electronic device available for donation, please email Amy Bricker ([abricker@cityhpil.com](mailto:abricker@cityhpil.com)) to arrange pickup. The collection period is ongoing.

To learn more, go to <https://www.911cellphonebank.org/>

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### **Team Highland Park Shines at the North Shore Classic**



Another successful North Shore Classic is in the books! The weather could not have been more perfect, making for a beautiful morning to run, walk, and cheer alongside our community.

We were thrilled to see such strong representation from City of Highland Park employees, with staff from multiple departments participating! Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the event a fun and memorable experience.

# Messenger Bulletin Board

## Pet Therapy Days Bring Smiles Across the City

A big thank you to everyone who participated in our Mental Health Awareness Month pet therapy events! Employees had the opportunity to spend time with JR, the emotional support chicken, and several wonderful therapy dogs from Rainbow Animal Assisted Therapy. We hope these visits brought a few smiles, a moment to recharge, and a little extra calm to your workday. Thank you to everyone who stopped by and helped make these events a success!



## Employee Spotlight

Each month, this piece highlights an employee from a different department. This month's employee interview is with **Bess Abramovitz, (Permit & C/S 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?**

**Bess Abramovitz:** I grew up in Chicago and I moved to Park Ridge in July of 2024 with my Mom and our dogs. A fun fact is that I went to Jones College Prep in downtown Chicago and Chance the Rapper was a senior there when I was a freshman (if you want to consider that a fun fact about Chicago).

**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?**

**BA:** I thought I was going to teach high school History and I did teach Social Studies and Language Arts for a few years before deciding to pursue a government career after doing research and writing work for the Chicago Park District. I love working with records and data, doing research and writing, and helping people. I was able to do that as a teacher and for the Chicago Park District and I am doing that now for Highland Park.

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

**BA:** Probably Spring because it is my favorite season. People have described me as having a bubbly and bright personality and I love the season! Seeing nature come back to life, feeling the sun and warm air when I am outside with my family and friends, and feeling like everything is new again.

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

**BA:** Typically, I like to read historical fiction (yes, I am a nerd), but with work and school, I am mainly watching shows and listening to podcasts and music. Most of the time, I am watching some version of Law & Order (I tend to binge watch shows and those shows have many seasons, especially Law & Order: SVU). Aside from those, I also watch comedies, such as Frasier and Schitt's Creek, Chicago P.D., Outlander, Doctor Who, and any genre of movie. I listen to podcasts, including the FredShow and the Tangent. I will take any recommendations for shows/movies, podcasts, music, and books! :)

**ME: If you could wake up tomorrow having instantly mastered one skill, what would it be—and how would it change your daily life?**

**BA:** I would love to be able to play guitar. I have an electric guitar and an acoustic guitar and I have tried over the years to teach myself, but other obligations have gotten in the way. It would change my daily life if I could whip out a guitar and play my favorite songs by Post Malone and Nirvana (or just any song).

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

**BA:** Some kind of carb or cheese (my brother calls me Carb Queen).

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

**BA:** Probably Better Now by Post Malone or Smells Like Teen Spirit by Nirvana. Really anything by Post Malone or Nirvana.

**ME: You get three seats at your dream dinner table—anyone from any time. Who's on the guest list?**

**BA:** My Mom, Dad, and my Grandpa (on my Mom's side). My Dad and Grandpa both passed away (Dad in 2022 and Grandpa in 2006) and I would love to have a classic family dinner with them and my Mom. As a family of very sarcastic people who enjoy good food and drinks and love to tell stories and jokes, I would love to be able to have dinner with all of them to talk about their lives, memories, and things I never got the chance to learn from them and that I am still learning from my Mom. I would also love to tell them about my life now and my dreams and see how we all interact now that I am an adult.

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

**BA:** Moira Rose from the show Schitt's Creek and Bess: Blonde Sarcasm.



# See the World Clearly

## Wear the Right Eye Protection

Your eyes are one of your most important tools on the job and at home. Every day, workers experience preventable eye injuries caused by flying debris, dust, chemicals, sparks, and improper tool use. The good news is that most eye injuries can be avoided by wearing proper eye protection.



Choose the  
Right  
Protection



Inspect  
Before Use



Wear it  
Consistently

Eye protection only works if it's worn properly and consistently. Even quick tasks can cause serious injuries in seconds.

# Sunglasses Are More Than a Fashion Statement

Wear sunglasses while driving  
Use eye protection during yard work or sports  
Never look directly at the sun  
Replace scratched or damaged lenses



No matter what the weather looks like outside, harmful UV rays can still reach your eyes. Even on cloudy, hazy, or cooler days, wearing sunglasses with UV protection helps protect your vision year-round.

Healthy Vision Starts with Daily Eye Protection

# 2026 FIFA World Cup: Fun Facts & Prediction Challenge

The 2026 FIFA World Cup runs from June 11 – July 19, 2026 and will be the largest World Cup ever, featuring 48 teams from around the globe!

Did You Know?

- The official FIFA World Cup Trophy is made of 18-karat gold and weighs nearly 14 pounds.
- Soccer (or football) is the most popular sport in the world, with an estimated 3.5 billion fans.
- The tournament will feature 104 matches, more than any previous World Cup.
- Mexico will become the first country to host World Cup matches in three different tournaments (1970, 1986, and 2026).
- Canada will host men's World Cup matches for the first time ever.
- The fastest goal in World Cup history was scored just 11 seconds into a match.
- The championship match will be played at MetLife Stadium in New York/New Jersey on July 19, 2026.



Who do you think will lift the trophy?

- Complete the **World Cup Prediction Certificate** ("[Q:\HUMAN RESOURCES\World Cup Prediction.pdf](https://www.cityhpil.com/World-Cup-Prediction.pdf)")
- Snap a photo wearing your favorite soccer jersey (or team colors) holding your prediction certificate
- Email your photo to [hr@cityhpil.com](mailto:hr@cityhpil.com) by **Wednesday, June 10**
- Correct predictions will earn bragging rights as Highland Park's official World Cup expert and be entered into a raffle to win a gift card!
- Winners will be announced the week of **July 19**

Sources: <https://www.britannica.com/sports/World-Cup-football>