

# ACE Employee Newsletter

For Amarillo City Employees

Volume 4, Issue 8 • August 2014



## New Logo in Use!

After working with the City's legal staff and a copyright attorney to register the new logo, it's finally in official use! As a reminder, the City seal is not being eliminated. It will still be used when and where appropriate. This will be a gradual change as we brand our City, replacing other logos that are currently in use. Please begin using the new logo when it is time for your department to order new shirts, hats, vehicles, business cards, letterheads, stationery, etc.

If you need help designing letterhead or other print items with the new logo, or if you have additional questions or concerns, please contact Sonja Gross, Community Relations Coordinator at [sonja.gross@amarillo.gov](mailto:sonja.gross@amarillo.gov) or 378-3549.

## Motorcycle Squad Officers Take ALS Challenge

by Sonja Gross, Community Relations Coordinator

Unless you're living under a rock—or simply aren't on social media—there's no doubt you've heard and seen the buzz about the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge. If you have been living under a rock, it's essentially an activity involving dumping a bucket of ice water on one's head and/or donating to ALS research. Videos of people taking the challenge have gone viral throughout social media in recent weeks, and donations for ALS research have skyrocketed.

The challenge dares nominated participants to be filmed while having a bucket of ice water poured on their heads. The fun is to then nominate other people to accept the challenge within 24 hours, or forfeit by way of a charitable financial donation.

It's a challenge that's sparked the spirit in people from across the nation—including former Pres. George W. Bush all the way to Kermit the Frog. Locally, though, it was employees at Tripp's Harley Davidson, whom, after taking the challenge on August 21, then challenged the H.O.G. Club as well as our own Amarillo Police Motorcycle Squad.

"We took the challenge at 7 p.m. on August 21 in the parking lot of Tripp's," says Sgt. Steve Davis. So, who did they challenge? The Amarillo Police COPPS Unit, of course!

ALS is an acronym for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. It is a disease of the nerve cells in the brain and spinal cord that control voluntary muscle movement. To learn more about the ALS Ice Bucket challenge, visit [www.alsa.org](http://www.alsa.org).



Sgt. Steve Davis, in the foreground, was joined by his fellow Motorcycle Squad officers Jon Heath, Trent Thomas and Jacob Charter. Pictures of the drenching are on Page 8 of this issue of ACE!

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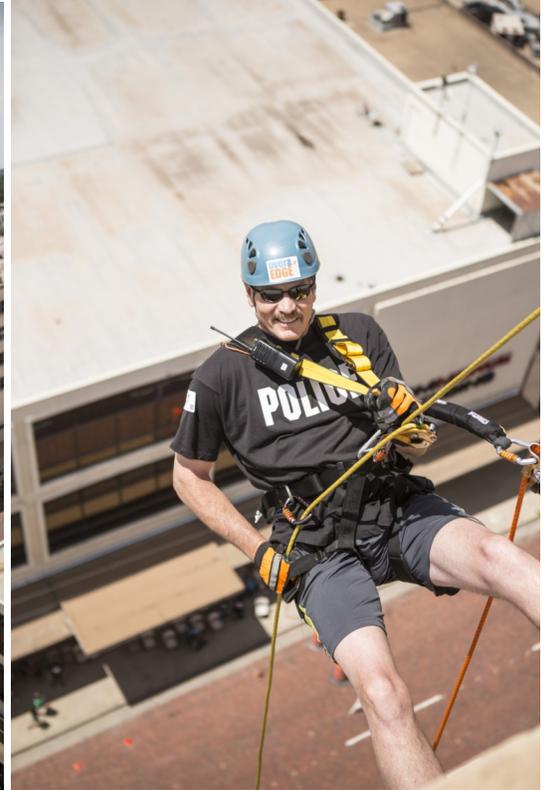
# Boots vs. Badges Go “Over the Edge” for CMBC

For the last several years, the City of Amarillo has partnered with Coffee Memorial Blood Center in a variety of “Boots vs. Badges” fundraising events pitting the Police and Fire departments against one another in friendly competition. The newest competition, which started last year, is the “Over the Edge” challenge, in which participants raise money for the opportunity to rappel down the side of the Eagle Centre building in downtown Amarillo.

The competition is two-fold. The first goal is to see who can raise the most money and the second is to see who can rappel to the bottom of the building first.

This year, Cpl. Jerry Neufeld represented the Amarillo Police Department, raising a total of \$1550 and, while he was in the lead early on in the fundraising effort, he was “edged” out by his competitor, Firefighter Jeff Justus, who raised \$1798 for Coffee Memorial Blood Center. Who made it to the bottom first? Justus. But in all fairness, the line did hang up a few times on both competitors.

Congratulations to both for being great sports and raising funds for a great cause!



Firefighter Jeff Justus (left) was the first to make it to the bottom of Eagle Centre in Downtown Amarillo during the annual “Over the Edge” fundraising competition for Coffee Memorial Blood Center. Blame it on some snags in the rope, but Cpl. Jerry Neufeld (right) of the Amarillo Police Department wasn’t too far behind!  
*Images by Gray’s Studio*

## City Employee Helps Officer in Arrest

You don’t have to have a badge to help fight crime! Just ask Edward Taylor, who was presented with a Citizens Certificate of Appreciation by the Amarillo Police Department.

On July 3, Cpl. Erik Grimland was in the process of arresting a man who was walking in and out of traffic on Interstate 40. The person was combative and resisting arrest. Cpl. Grimland grabbed the person to pull him back from traffic. The two fell to the ground, on the grassy part next to the Interstate. The person was rolling and kicking in an effort to get away from Cpl. Grimland. He even had his hands underneath his body, making it difficult to put handcuffs on him.

Taylor, a Utility Technician in the Water Distribution department, saw the altercation. He, along with two other citizens, took the time to pull over and asked Cpl. Grimland what they could do to help.

“Help me get the subject still and get his arms out to be handcuffed,” Cpl. Grimland asked—and the good Samaritans obliged.

The assistance Taylor and the others provided helped keep the officer and the subject safe from the traffic

danger on Interstate 40. Many thanks and congratulations to Taylor!



Sgt. Brent Barbee, Crime Prevention (left) and Cpl. Erik Grimland (right) present Edward Taylor, a Utility Technician in the City’s Water Distribution Department, with a Citizens Certificate of Recognition for assisting Cpl. Grimland in arresting an unruly subject.

## City Celebrity Chefs

Attendees at a recent Wellness Luncheon got a real treat when the City's "Celebrity Chefs" cooked up delicious Mexican fare. Margaret Payton from Women, Infants and Children (WIC) was the emcee for the event while Hector Mendoza, Health Plan Administrator and Jerry Danforth, Facilities Manager, served as the Celebrity Chefs. They demonstrated healthy cooking techniques with the recipes served—and, as they say, a good time was had by all!



*Hector Mendoza, Health Plan Administrator, Margaret Payton, WIC Director and Jerry Danforth, Facilities Manager hosted a Celebrity Chef-style cooking demonstration for employees during the July Wellness Luncheon.*

## CPR Training Completed



*We take safety seriously at the City of Amarillo. That's why all field employees in the Facilities Department recently completed CPR training. **Front row from left:** Jason Love-AFD Instructor, Gary Sain, Lanny Potts, Jeremy True and Ron Gibbs. **Second row from left:** Dewayne Johnson, Brad Booth, Carl Jones, Noah Vandagriff, Rick Smith, Robert Moore and Tommy Zion. **Back row from left:** Kirk Njus and Larry Shorts. **Not pictured:** Ronda-Leigh Johnson, Tim White, Christopher Chacon and John Sena.*

## From the Pantry ...

*Prepared by Margaret Payton, MBA, RD*



### SWEET DREAMS SALAD

Prep: 20 minutes

Bake: 20 minutes

Makes: 8 servings

- 4 cups cubed peeled butternut squash (about 1 lb.)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon honey
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 package (6 oz.) fresh baby spinach
- 2 cups coarsely chopped iceberg lettuce
- ½ cup shredded fat-free cheddar cheese
- 6 tablespoons reduced-fat poppy seed salad dressing, divided
- ½ cup seasoned stuffing cubes
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ cup slivered almonds, toasted
- 4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled

- Preheat oven to 400°F. In a large bowl, toss squash and onion with honey, salt, garlic powder and pepper. Transfer to a 15x10x1-inch baking pan coated with cooking spray. Bake 20-25 minutes or until vegetables are tender; stirring once. Cool slightly.
- In another bowl, combine spinach, lettuce, cheese and squash mixture. Just before serving, drizzle with 4 tablespoons dressing and toss to coat. Divide salad among 8 plates; top with stuffing cubes, cranberries, almonds and bacon. Toss with the remaining dressing.

**NOTE:** To toast nuts, spread in a 15x10x1-inch baking pan. Bake at 350°F for 5-10 minutes or until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Or, spread in a dry nonstick skillet and heat over low heat until lightly browned, stirring occasionally.

Per serving: 165 cal., 4 g fat (1g sat. fat), 5 mg chol., 453 mg sodium, 28 g carb., 4 g fiber, 7 g protein; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Starch, ½ Fat

# Safety Corner

by Charlie Sanchez, Safety Director

National Preparedness Month is an important reminder about our responsibility to prepare for emergencies. Those with the capacity to help themselves must do so in advance, so that during an event, responders can assist those who are unable to tend to themselves. From hurricanes and tropical storms along the Gulf Coast, to wildfires in the Texas Panhandle and California, flooding in the Midwest, and tornadoes along tornado alley, recent events remind us, more than ever, that we must prepare ourselves and our families for a disaster. This is the time of year when we should ask the question, "Am I ready?"

I encourage each of you to take important preparedness steps that will greatly improve your ability to survive and recover from all types of emergencies, whether natural or man-made. These steps include getting an emergency supply kit, making a family emergency plan, and thinking about getting involved in community preparedness and response efforts. **PREPARE NOW:**

**Tip # 1:** Prepare your car before you prepare your home. Why? Ninety percent of Americans own a car and travel in it regularly – far more than any other nation. Keep your Emergency Preparedness supplies in your vehicle and odds are you will have them handy when you need them.

**Tip # 2:** Eat the food in your freezer after the food in your refrigerator. Why? Eat and drink what is available in your home first before you break into your emergency supplies. If the power goes out, tape your freezer shut to hold the cold

inside. This can buy you an extra 24 hours. Eat the food in your refrigerator first, as it will spoil while the freezer food is slowly thawing in the sealed freezer compartment. After depleting the perishables in your fridge, then move on to the freezer items.

**Tip # 3:** Remember, too, that if you have a tank water heater, it would be the source of maybe a minimum of 40 gallons of safe water for your consumption to use for your potable water supply.

**Tip # 4:** Change your flashlight and emergency radio batteries every time you adjust your clocks (daylight saving time). Why? This is an easy way to remember to keep your emergency supplies ready to use. Each time you adjust your clocks forward or back, change the batteries in your emergency supplies and while you're at it, check the condition and expiration dates of everything in your emergency supply pack. It may be

time for replacements or to augment what you have gathered with additional supplies.

**Tip # 5:** Check your first responder first aid kit. Why? In the event of a minor incident that requires first aid treatment, you will have the medical supplies needed to treat the injury. Eye washes to irrigate the eyes in the event of a foreign object in the eyes. Compresses, bandages, tape, and antibiotic creams are just a few of the supplies you may need. Be sure and check the expiration dates on any of these items as well.

Using these tips will place you in a better position to be prepared in the event of an emergency.

September is...  
**National  
 Preparedness  
 Month** Get a Kit, Make a Plan,  
 Be Informed and  
 Get Involved

## Dependent Eligibility Audit Update

By Hector Mendoza, Health Plan Administrator

Thank you to all who have completed the dependent eligibility audit. I appreciate your response and cooperation with this process. If you have received confirmation from HMS, either by mailed postcard or by web portal, you are done.

If you have yet to complete the process, it is very important to have this done by **SEPTEMBER 8**. A second letter was sent on August 21 to

individuals who have yet to submit all the required documents. Remember, there are three ways to submit the requested information:

1. Regular mail using the self-addressed envelope
2. Fax
3. Online using the web portal

Please read the instructions provided and remember to write your name and

the HMS provided reference number on the left hand corner of each document to facilitate verification.

If you have any questions regarding any part of this process, please call the toll free number provided by HMS (1-866-252-0671).

HMS has an extensive amount of experience with these audits and will be able to provide assistance.

# Lifeguard Recognized as a “Golden Guard”

by Pam Cognasi, Recreation Supervisor, Parks & Recreation

Jeff Ellis & Associates, Inc. is the unrivaled leader in aquatic safety with its Comprehensive Aquatic Risk Management Program and International Lifeguard Training Program. As a client with Jeff Ellis & Associates, the City of Amarillo’s Aquatic Department adheres to all the requirements set forth in their program to include unannounced audits of our facilities and staff, to ensure competence and maintenance standards.

At the August 12 Park Commission meeting, the Parks and Recreation staff and commissioners recognized one of our current lifeguards who recently received top recognition as a **Golden Guard** by Jeff



*Elijah Gutierrez (left), Lifeguard, is presented with the Golden Guard recognition by Yisrael Zimmerman, Assistant Aquatic Supervisor/Lifeguard Instructor and Shelley Gallagher, Aquatic Supervisor/Lifeguard Instructor.*

Ellis & Associates, Inc.

A **Golden Guard** is someone who epitomizes the perfect guard! A guard who is SO GOOD that an auditor watches and says WOW! That guard is the greatest! Elijah Gutierrez was chosen by a Jeff Ellis & Associates auditor who was so impressed this summer with his excellence, he earned the title **Golden Guard**. So far, there have only been **29** total Golden Guards worldwide at all of the Ellis facilities this year. The National Pool and Water Park Lifeguard Training Program

(NPWPLP) is currently used in 42 states, and in Mexico, Brazil, China, Spain, Bahamas, Korea, Cairo Egypt, Bahrain and Dubai.

## New Faces and Places in City Attorney’s Office Announced

By Marcus Norris, City Attorney

Two newly-hired attorneys recently started work in the City’s Legal Department, bringing our staffing back to its authorized level of seven attorneys and two administrative assistants. We are also pleased to confirm the promotion of another attorney.

**Ms. Sherry Sanders**, a newly licensed graduate of Thomas Cooley Law School in Lansing, Michigan, is our newest *Assistant City Attorney I/Prosecutor*. A native of Lubbock, she was a producer for a Lubbock television station before entering law school. She is now learning her way around Amarillo and is excited to begin her legal career with us. She joins fellow prosecutors Pamela Denholm and Kerry Tilley at the court.

**Ms. Tracie Reilly** recently arrived to fill the position of *Assistant City Attorney II/Public Safety Legal Advisor*.

She comes to us from the New York City Legal Department (The Bronx borough) where she prosecuted felonies and worked with NYPD officers for eight years, in addition to other legal experience. Growing up, she made summer visits to cousins in Amarillo. She and her husband decided to raise their children in the Panhandle, where she still has family. Welcome home, Tracie!

**Mr. Bryan McWilliams**, the former Public Safety Legal Advisor, has been promoted to *Assistant City Attorney III/Civil Litigation*. Bryan has been employed by the City of Amarillo for seven years. His promotion was occasioned by the departure of Courtney Goodman-Morris, who is now the City Attorney in Denison, Texas.

Please welcome Sherry and Tracie when you see them, and congratulate Bryan!



*From left: Tracie Reilly, Assistant City Attorney II/Public Safety Legal Advisor and Sherry Sanders, Assistant City Attorney I/Prosecutor were recently added to the City’s legal team, while Bryan Williams was promoted to Assistant City Attorney III/Civil Litigation.*

# Promotions/Transfers for July 2014

OLD			NEW	
Name	Title	Department	Title	Department
Samuel Gomez	Admin. Assistant 1	Library	Library Assistant	Library
William Burks	Utility Worker	Street	Street Foreperson I	Street
Elbert Jenkins	Utility Worker	Street	Equipment Operator II	Street
Oscar Jiminez-Ortiz	Utility Worker-hrly	Street	Utility Worker	Street
Shawn Snyder	Utility Worker-hrly	Street	Utility Worker	Street
Christian Berumen	Utility Worker-hrly	Solid Waste Collection	Utility Worker	Solid Waste Collection
Steven Brush	Sergeant	Police	Lieutenant	Police
Everett England	Corporal	Police	Sergeant	Police
Walter McGallian	Corporal	Police	Sergeant	Police
Marshall Pennington	Corporal	Police	Sergeant	Police
Mary Willis	Corporal	Police	Sergeant	Police
Richard Peebles	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection	Greenskeeper I	Ross Rogers Golf Course
Matthew Amerson	Firefighter	Fire	Fire Driver	Fire
William Banks	Firefighter	Fire	Fire Driver	Fire
William Phillips	Firefighter	Fire	Fire Driver	Fire
Jonathan Stevens	Firefighter	Fire	Fire Driver	Fire
Katherine Thomas	Inspector-hrly	Building Safety	Admin Assistant I	Community Development
Brandon Harman	Utility Maint. Mech.	Surface Water Treatment	Electrician I	Water Production
Doug Bates	E/I Technician	Surface Water Treatment	E/I Supervisor	Surface Water Treatment
Timothy Forrest	Utility Worker	Hollywood Rd. WWT Plant	Utility Maint. Mech.	Surface Water Treatment
Juan Portillo	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection	Utility Worker	Hollywood Rd. WWT Plant
Fabian Urias	Custodian- hrly	Dept of Aviations	Custodian	Dept. of Aviations
Keaton Hinsley	Utility Worker-hrly	Street	Utility Worker	Drainage Utility

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[www.youtube.com/City of Amarillo](http://www.youtube.com/City of Amarillo)



## Employee Milestones

Name	Title	Department	Years
Jay Alejandro	Fire Fighter	Fire Operations	5
Matthew Amerson	Fire Fighter	Fire Operations	5
Sherman Bass	Civic Center Manager	Civic Center Operations	5
Christopher Bowles	Firefighter	Fire Operations	5
Dexter Cearley	Firefighter	Fire Operations	5
Joshua Luscombe	Firefighter	Fire Operations	5
Amanda Berrera	Asst. Dir. Library Services	Library	10
Jason Griffin	Fire Fighter	Fire Operations	10
Jeffery Harbin	Fire Driver	Fire Operations	10
Andrew Mettham	Fire Driver	Fire Operations	10
Charissa Dowling	Administrative Asst. IV	Housing Assistance	15
Mollie Selby	Administrative Asst. IV	Engineering	15
Johnn Galaviz	Utility Worker	Street Department	15
Albert Baker	Disposal Equipment Operator	Solid Waste Disposal	20

## Congratulations July Retirees!

**Deree Duke**

Environmental Health

27 years

**Sonya Scruggs**

Accounting

35 years

**Bonnie Paschall**

Transit

6 years

# Welcome to the COA Team!

Name	Title	Department
Rodney Ramirez	Engineering Assistant II	Engineering
Roy Watts	Civil Engineer II	Engineering
Zachry Allen	Utility Worker-hrly	Street
Kyler Britt	Utility Worker-hrly	Street
Tyler Skeen	Utility Worker-hrly	Street
Jeremy Brown	Utility Worker	Solid Waste Collection
Meho Salihovic	Commercial Equip. Op.	Solid Waste Collection
Janice Smith-Wise	Admin. Assistant I	Police Civilian Personnel
Dustin Reeves	Utility Worker	Traffic Field Operations
Marisa Torres	Permit Technician	Building Safety
Rose Duran	Bus Driver	Transit
Russell Saunders	Bus Driver	Transit
Dusty McBroom	Utility Worker-hrly	Comanche Trail Golf Course
Daniel Larralde	Youth Worker-hrly	Park Maintenance
Bryan Falke	Youth Worker-hrly	Park Maintenance
Benjamin Cooper	Youth Worker-hrly	Park Maintenance
Juan Bergara	Utility Worker-hrly	Park Maintenance
Brian Rodriguez	Utility Worker-hrly	Park Maintenance
Carl Wesley	Crew Leader-hrly	Park Maintenance
Sylvan McDaniel	Gate Attendant-hrly	Zoo
Carole McKnight	Registered Nurse-hrly	Public Health
Lenor Gomez	WIC Technician-hrly	WIC
Linda Bachand	Office Administrator	Director of Utilities
Alex Ary	Utility Worker	Water Production
Gabriel Zambrano	E/I Technician	Water Production
Consuelo Cruz	Utility Worker-hrly	Water Transmission
Shawn Holland	Utility Worker	Water Distribution
Jerrod Standridge	Utility Worker	Water Distribution
Jeremy Knowles	Utility Worker	Water Distribution
Lanelle Walzier	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection
John McLaughlin	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection
Charles Williams	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection
Jose Lira	Utility Worker	Wastewater Collection
Angel Hernandez, Jr.	Utility Worker-hrly	River Road WWT Plant
Carlton Waterhouse	Treatment Plant Op.-hrly	River Road WWT Plant
Keaton Hinsley	Utility Worker	Drainage Utility
Jeremy Schmidt	Mechanic Apprentice	Municipal Garage
Chase Vernon	IT Analyst	IT
Kevin Brown	IT Coordinator	IT

## Employees Earn Welding Certifications

Just because there wasn't a camera to take a picture doesn't mean it didn't happen! We'd like to take the opportunity to congratulate employees from Solid Waste, Parks, and Radio Communications who recently graduated with Welding Certifications. Kudos on a job well done to Jessie Donald, Arthur Johnson, John Sena, Jeremy True, John Oberbrockling, Rick Barrera and Jose Olguin.

## THANK YOU!

A recent thank you note received by the City commended the kindness and compassion of an Animal Welfare & Management Officer who responded to a call of an abandoned dog.

"It wasn't his fault he was dumped ..." the note reads, adding that the officer arrived as soon as she and her husband called. "We want to send this thank you note to your officer for the very kind way she handled the situation. She loved and loved on the dog. Thank you so very much."

While dogs and cats are most commonly associated with Animal Management & Welfare, you'll note they respond to a variety of animal calls—including an injured duck. Pictured below are Brittany Hall, an officer with Animal Management & Welfare and Dr. Johnson from Yarbrough Veterinary Clinic.



## Smile of the Month!



Are You Smiling? Share It!

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**PUBLICATION POLICY:**

The ACE employee newsletter is distributed by the City Secretary's office monthly through e-mail, print copies and the City's Intranet site. It is designed to help keep you informed of events and accomplishments throughout the organization you serve. If you have ideas for future stories, features or photo opportunities, or to receive this newsletter electronically, contact:

newsletter@amarillo.gov  
378-3549

Items must be received no later than the first Friday of each month to make that month's edition.

All items are subject to space availability and edited for appropriateness.

**CITY OF AMARILLO**

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Continued from the cover — from left—Motorcycle Squad officers Jon Heath, Sgt. Steve Davis, Trent Thomas and Jacob Charter complete the Ice Bucket Challenge-given to them by the employees of Tripp's Harley Davidson.