

September 2021
Issue 29

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Office Hours:
MONDAY - FRIDAY
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Drive-Thru Window:
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

New Aqua Employee Has a Nose for Water

At Aqua Water, we are always happy to welcome new employees to our Aqua family. But we are particularly excited to introduce our newest employee: a faithful companion and a very good boy!

Meet Charlie, a leak detection K-9 helping Aqua detect water leaks to save money and conserve resources on behalf of our members.

Charlie's handler is Clifton Smith, an Aqua employee for the past 17 years. Working together, Clifton and Charlie canvas the Aqua service area to search for previously undetected water leaks, as well as pinpointing the exact location of suspected leaks. With a keen sense of smell, Charlie can sniff out treated water to identify leaks faster and more efficiently than human leak detection specialists.

Charlie was trained to be a water leak detection

dog by Carrie Kessler and Tracy Owen, owners of the On the Nose training program in central Arkansas, after his original owner put him up for adoption.

"Charlie was approximately one year old and had lived with a family that simply could not keep up with his desire to play ball *all the time*," said Kessler. "Sometimes that makes a pet difficult to live with, but it's one of the very traits we look for when evaluating a potential water leak detection dog."

Because of his desire to play ball, as well as a strong 'food drive', Charlie excelled during the imprinting phase of his training. "During training, it is critical to maintain a positive and highly rewarding working atmosphere," Kessler added. "This insures that the dog will want to find his target odor in order to do what he wants most in life: play

with his ball."

Kessler initiated Charlie's imprinting and detection training, after which he went into the Arkansas Paws in Prison program, where shelter and rescue dogs receive obedience training. Under the guidance of trainer Tracy Owen, Charlie received eight weeks of obedience training at the Arkansas Department of Corrections' Hawkins Women's Unit. Kessler and Owen then completed his detection and public access training before Charlie came to work for Aqua Water.

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Carrie, Clifton, Tracy and Charlie

New Aqua Employee (*continued*)

Having a highly trained leak detection dog like Charlie allows Aqua to save time and money, reducing the need for manpower and costly equipment to find leaks. Charlie can even accurately pinpoint non-surfacing leaks that can be otherwise hard to find, using his sense of smell to detect chlorine, which means he can quickly tell the difference between treated water and rainwater.

While leak detection dogs have been employed by water utilities in Australia and the U.K. for a number of years, Charlie is the first leak detection dog in Texas, and only the third dog in the U.S. to complete his training as a leak detection K-9. He follows in the paw prints of Vessel, the leak detection dog featured in our May 2020 newsletter issue who is working for the Central Arkansas Water system.

Leak detection dogs like Charlie are well-suited to searching for water leaks in utility easements, especially where trees and undergrowth make human access difficult. Because much of the Aqua service area is covered by forest, Charlie and his handler Clifton are a valuable asset to help us fulfill our water conservation mission, ensuring a reliable water supply for generations to come.

Visit www.OnTheNoseDetectionDogs.com or [Facebook.com/WaterLeakDetectionDogs](https://www.facebook.com/WaterLeakDetectionDogs) for more information.



Clifton and Charlie

Community Happenings

Annual Homecoming Festival

Sunday, September 26, at St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church in String Prairie. Mass to be celebrated at 10:00 a.m. BBQ brisket plates will be sold from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. An auction will be held at 1:00 p.m.

Bastrop VFW Post 12104

New Meeting Day and Time: Meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. New meeting location is 1349 FM 1441, Bastrop.

Delhi Volunteer Fire Dept. Gun Raffle/Chili Cook-Off

Saturday, October 23, at the Delhi Station, 6255 State Highway 304, Rosanky. Serving will begin at 4:00 p.m. followed by a live auction, concluding with the gun raffle drawing. Raffle tickets are on sale for \$20. To purchase tickets call (830) 263-1555 or visit the Delhi Volunteer Fire Department page on Facebook. All proceeds will benefit the Delhi VFD.

***Please Note:** The Aqua Water Supply newsletter is published 4 times per year. To submit Community Announcements for publication in an upcoming quarterly issue, please send your news in writing to the main Aqua office or via email to info@aquawsc.com by the fifth day of January, April, July or October.

Aqua Congratulates Scholarship Winners

Aqua Water Supply would like to congratulate the 2021 recipients of the Ernest William Bracewell, Sr. Memorial Scholarship Program. Each selected applicant will receive scholarship assistance to help support the continuing education goals of our members.

Congratulations to all of this year's winners!

Shelby Hofferek graduated from La Grange High School in May 2021. She plans to attend Texas A&M University to pursue a degree in Nursing. Shelby is the daughter of Mark and Stephanie Hofferek of Smithville.



Braden Murphy graduated Valedictorian from Cedar Creek High School in May 2021. He plans to attend the University of Texas at Austin to study Biomedical Engineering. Braden is the son of Patrick and Donna Murphy of Red Rock.

Emma Neidig graduated from Elgin High School in May. She plans to attend Stanford University to pursue a major in Economics, and a minor in Gender, Feminism, and Sexuality Studies. Emma is the daughter of Harlan and Juanita Neidig of Elgin.



Bodie Hughes graduated from Smithville High School in May 2021. He plans to attend Texas A&M University, majoring in Civil Engineering. Bodie is the son of Michael and Gretchen Hughes of Rosanky.

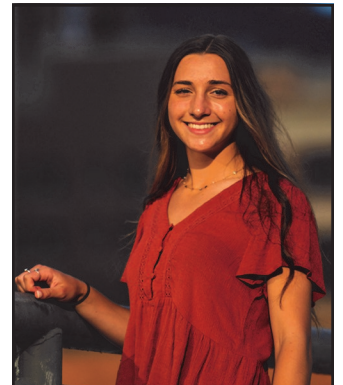


Isabel Seguin graduated from Cedar Creek High School in May 2021. She plans to attend the University of Texas at Austin to study Civil Engineering. Isabel is the daughter of John and Dana Seguin of Cedar Creek.

Luke Kadura graduated from Cedar Creek High School in May 2021. He plans to attend the University of Texas at Austin to pursue a degree in Electrical Engineering. Luke is the son of Rodney and Tracie Kadura of Red Rock.



Addi Taylor graduated from Bastrop High School in May 2021. She plans to study at Concordia University, majoring in Kinesiology. Addi is the daughter of Justin and Amy Taylor of Bastrop.



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CALL AQUA BEFORE YOU DIG:

Aqua Water will locate the Aqua water lines for you. Calling for a line locate before any type of excavation is a good idea. Water loss and service interruptions from damaged lines are avoidable, please call the Aqua office: (512) 303-3943.