

Adoption center may help lower animal euthanasia rate

Matt Belanger

Asst. News Editor

With a euthanasia rate of around 80 percent, the odds are against stray animals finding a home in Alamance County. However, a new

adoption center currently under construction in Haw River might be their saving grace.

The center, which will be run in conjunction with the Burlington Animal Shelter, is a jointly-funded project among Alamance County,

Burlington and private donors. Sam and Vicki Hunt of Burlington led an effort that collected \$250,000 in private monies to help fund the new center's construction. The city and county then matched that amount to meet the new facili-

ty's construction cost of \$750,000. The new building is located on the wooded lot directly adjacent to the current shelter facility on Stone Quarry Road and is more than 50 percent complete.

Lieutenant Gene Perry of the animal services division of the Burlington Police Department said the new center should help to relieve some of the stress placed on the current facility due to a lack of space.

"A lot of times, the reason we have to euthanize animals is because of a lack of space," Perry said.

Perry said the shelter follows state regulations regarding the minimum number of days an adoptable animal must be held before resorting to euthanasia. Each animal is given three days, not including the day it arrived or weekends and holidays. If after that time the animal is not selected for adoption, the animal is then slated to be euthanized.

The new facility will provide more space which will allow more animals to be displayed for adoption at the same time. Perry said at this time the shelter does not plan to change the number of days the animals are held.

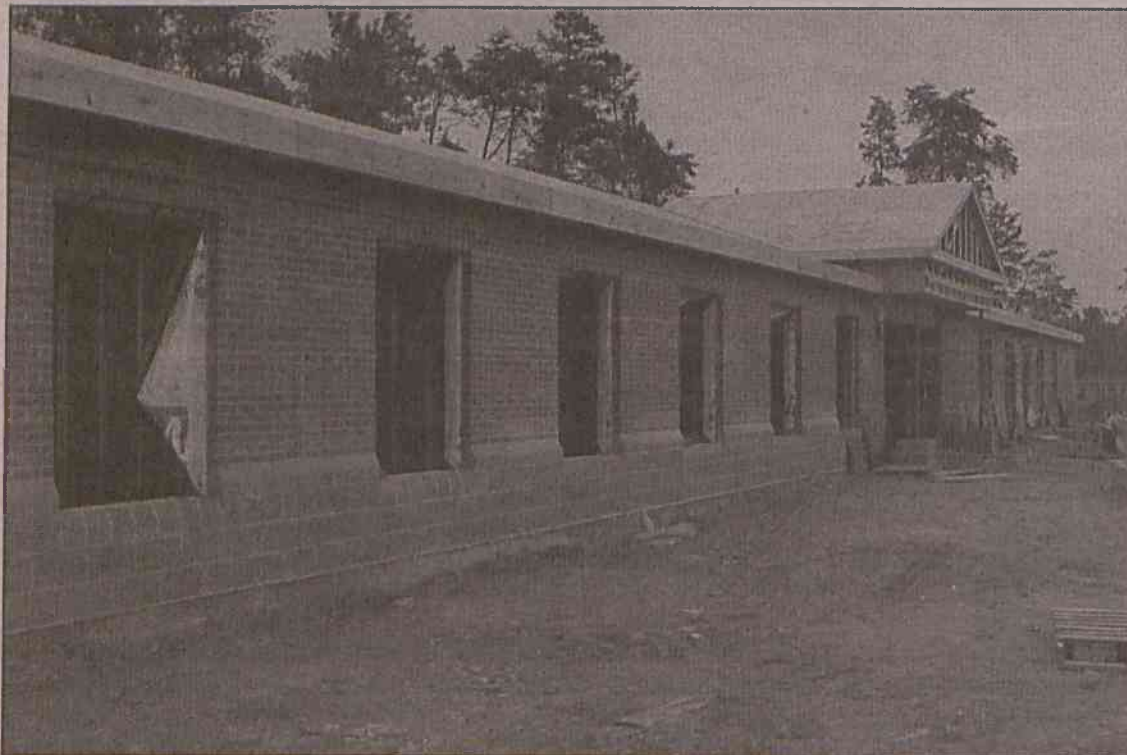
The adoption center's construction is projected to be finished by the end of December. Perry said the center should open to the public by January 2004. The facility will add 8,000 square feet and enough space to house 125 additional animals.

Perry said the new center will also require additional staff, including two new full-time and three part-time employees. Perry also said marketing will play a big role in the success of the new center.

"This is crucial to our success," Perry said. "We are going to have to market this a lot and bring people from other counties to adopt our animals." Perry, along with a number of other officers, already broadcasts a number of "Animal of the Week" segments in conjunction with Time Warner Cable to help spread the word about animals that are up for adoption. However, he said more marketing will be necessary.

For more information regarding adoption procedures, contact the Burlington Animal Shelter at 578-1386.

Contact Matt Belanger at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.



Jeff Heyer/ Photo Editor

The new adoption center in Haw River will add more than 8,000 square feet of space to the Burlington Animal Shelter's current facility. The building will have space to house 125 animals, administrative offices and work areas.

Student wins national KFC commercial contest, share of \$10,000

Steve Earley

News Editor

Whether it would be used to sell donuts, popcorn chicken or another product — fried food or otherwise — senior Geoff Pilkington and the other two members of Rouse Productions knew they had a good idea for a commercial.

Judges at Kentucky Fried Chicken and 2,424 Internet voters agreed.

Pilkington and his friends, Nathan Brown of Washington University and Joe Ackerman of the University of Illinois were the \$10,000 first place winners in KFC's nationwide popcorn chicken commercial contest. Their commercial, "Big Fish," aired last Thursday during NBC's "Scrubs" and on Fox during the Major League Baseball playoffs.

The 30-second spot, in which a novice fisher, played by Pilkington, uses popcorn chicken as bait to snag a whale out of a small pond, was initially developed with

Krispy Kreme donuts in mind.

Pilkington explained that through a contact of his father's, he and his friends had pitched commercial ideas to Krispy Kreme. After being turned down, Pilkington said they decided they might have better luck if they had a product to offer, instead of just an idea.

So, they shot three commercials last summer: Two for Krispy Kreme and one for Fitz's root beer.

However, unlike Pilkington's character in the winning commercial, the three still weren't getting any bites.

Then, on Sept. 2, Brown saw the press release announcing the KFC contest. "He said, 'This is what we did all summer,'" Pilkington said. "Why don't we take our best idea and re-shoot it using popcorn chicken instead of Krispy Kremes?"

Pilkington said the commercial's theme matched KFC's marketing message. "They were looking for 'Popcorn chicken, bigger and better,'" he said. "And the

whale is a bigger and better fish."

While the commercial's theme was a good fit, the props used were a little less than perfect, Pilkington said. The chicken used in the commercial was not actually KFC's.

Tight on time, the three started production in their hometown of Ladue, Mo., at 8 a.m. "We realized we needed a box of chicken," Pilkington said. The local KFC came through with a box, but did not have any chicken ready. So, the three producers went to grocery store to find a look-a-like.

"It looked like popcorn chicken," Pilkington said of the store-bought Tyson's chicken. "We put it in the microwave and tore the chicken apart."

The hastily thrown together imitation was enough to fool KFC judges. After KFC contacted Brown regarding copyright issues, "Big Fish" was named one of three finalists out of 1,500 entries.

The winner was selected based on Internet voting from Sept. 24 to 25.

"I told everyone I knew," Pilkington said. He also got an announcement posted on E-net titled "Elon Student Needs Your Vote." Pilkington said this proved particularly effective. "I didn't think so many students checked E-net," he said.

On Oct. 1, right before he was to take a criminal behavior test, Pilkington got the news they had won. He said his grade suffered a bit because of his excitement. "It's been hard to focus," Pilkington said of the last week.

As far as what to do with his cut of the \$10,000, Pilkington said he's gotten plenty of suggestions. "A friend of mine said to go to [Las] Vegas and put it all down on Black [Jack]," he said. "But I'm definitely not doing that." Pilkington said he's going to save the cash for after graduation. He said he plans to move to Los Angeles and pursue an acting career.

Contact Steve Earley at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.