

# Tri-County Animal Shelter hires manager

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Katelyn Robertson has been named the new director of the Tri-County Animal Shelter in Tyner. The shelter serves Chowan, Gates and Perquimans counties.

Prior to taking the job, Robertson had been employed since 2014 as a veterinary assistant at Chowan Animal Hospital in Edenton. While there her duties included learning patient care assessment and other skills that she feels will benefit her in her new position.

Her first day on the job, Monday, May 7, was one she described as “a good day” as the shelter staff and volunteers got 11 animals out to a rescue where they hopefully will have a good chance to be adopted. Four more went to rescue on Thursday of that week, she said.

Based on numbers for 2016 and 2017 between 1,000 and 1,500 cats and approximately 1,000 dogs are taken in by the shelter each year. Tri-County has rescue



ROBERTSON

agreements in place with the Elizabeth City SPCA, the Suffolk Humane Society and Hope for Living in Virginia Beach. Robertson said one of her personal goals as the new shelter director is to pursue other such rescue agreements to increase the chances of an animal being adopted.

But along with that, she said, she also plans to work on increasing foot traffic at the shelter on Icaria Road and creating more opportunities for the animals to be seen at public places such as the adoption events held in front of Sound Feet Shoes in downtown Edenton. The shelter is scheduled to have animals outside the store again this Saturday; check with the shelter at 221-8514 for times and other information.

Another such event took place on Saturday when the

Edenton Farmers Market invited the shelter to have animals on-site so that potential pet owners would have a chance to see and interact with them. Several potential matches were made as a result.

“We had people that were very interested in two of our dogs,” Robertson said, “so we’re hoping they’ll follow up.”

She added that the shelter wants to host a Family Fun Day this fall to get people more familiar with where the shelter is located and to see the results of phase I of a renovation project scheduled to begin in July that will allow the shelter staff to better accommodate puppies and kittens, and sick animals that need separate quarters.

“We’re really looking forward to that,” she said.

Robertson said another dream she has for the shelter is to see the number of volunteers increase so that the animals have more opportunities for being socialized. Playing with the kittens and walking the dogs are ways

people could help. Currently, the shelter has one full-time employee and three part-time employees.

Mary Jo Sellers, a board member for AWARE, a non-profit group that works closely with the shelter, said she has met Robertson, an Edenton native, and feels confident she will do a good job.

“We’re very excited to have her as the new director,” Sellers said. “She loves animals and has a lot of good ideas. We hope she stays there for a long time.”

Prior to working at the veterinary clinic, Robertson was a certified nursing assistant (CNA) at Albemarle Hospital in Elizabeth City and was also performing private duty home care.

“I was pursuing a career in nursing when I was hired as a part-time receptionist at Chowan Animal Hospital,” she said. “I quickly realized that animal nursing was what I was meant to do instead of people nursing.”

Robertson said she was appreciative of the hands-on

approach exhibited by the numerous volunteers from AWARE who visit the shelter on an almost daily basis to spend time with the animals.

“I’m open to having more volunteers from the community as we want to begin having the dogs walked for five to 10 minutes daily around our property to give them more time outside of the shelter,” she said.

Robertson acknowledged that euthanizing animals would be the most difficult part of her job but said that she and her staff would continue to work on strategies for saving as many of them as possible. Sadly, not all of them find a home.

“The hardest part of the job is euthanasia and that is something I have previously had experience with working at the animal hospital,” she said. “I am aware that we cannot save every pet. To do this job you have to be able to understand that a humane decision to euthanize will have to be made.”

But her focus will be on increasing the numbers of

those pets adopted from the shelter and saving more animals than are euthanized, Robertson said.

“My goal is to try to get each pet that is adoptable or a fit for a rescue out the door,” she said. “I want euthanasia to be the absolute last resort for those that are adoptable. There will be times the decision will have to be made and it will be sad but I have almost five years of experience that has well prepared me for this part of the job.”

“The most rewarding part of my job will be increasing our adoption numbers and saving more animals than we euthanize,” Robertson added. “I have a great team of employees that have been brainstorming ideas with me of things we can do to increase our foot traffic and get our name out there. We have big plans for the Tri-County Animal Shelter and I can’t wait to see the difference we make.”

*Chowan Herald Editor Miles Layton contributed to this story.*

## CRIMEWATCH

### EDENTON POLICE DEPARTMENT ARRESTS

■ May 10 — Kelcey Rendell Boston, 39, of Cabarrus Street, 39, was arrested on one misdemeanor count of possession of a Schedule VI controlled substance and one misdemeanor count of resisting arrest.

■ May 9 — Leslie Ann Bond, 26, of Wedgewood

Apts., was arrested on one misdemeanor count of failure to appear.

■ May 6 — Dexter Jermaine Ford, 25, on East Peterson Street, was issued a criminal summons for one misdemeanor count of assault.

■ May 5 — Eric Jon Swenson, 55, of South Broad Street, was arrested on one misdemeanor count of communicating threats and one misdemeanor count of failure to appear.

■ May 4 — Thomas Warren, 46, of Coke Avenue, was arrested on one misdemeanor count of failure to appear.

■ May 3 — Victor Felton Oliver Jr., 41, of Jackson Street, was arrested based on a true bill of indictment for two felony counts of trafficking opium or heroin. He was also issued citations the same day for driving while impaired and possession of an open alcoholic beverage container in the passenger area of a motor vehicle.

■ May 2 — Taylor Elaine Jethro, 25, of Macedonia Road, was arrested on one misdemeanor count of possession of drug paraphernalia.

■ May 2 — Emily Kaylin Moore, 19, of Millbrooke Circle, Elizabeth City, was arrested on one count of failure to appear.

### INCIDENTS

■ May 9 — Hit and run on Virginia Road.

■ May 6 — Larceny of a bicycle on Old Hertford Road.

### CHOWAN COUNTY

### SHERIFF'S OFFICE ARRESTS

■ May 8 — Daniel Lee Herrar, 35, of Johnston Street, was arrested on one misdemeanor count of failure to pay child support.

■ May 8 — Sharhonda Davinia Holley, 28, of Evans Church Road, was charged with one misdemeanor count of school attendance violation.

## Paving progress produced toward road repairs

BY REBECCA BUNCH  
Staff Writer

Derrick Smith of the Wooten Company's Greenville, NC-based office offered an optimistic look at the progress being made on street repairs in Edenton during the Town Council's May 8 monthly meeting.

“I have nothing but good news to talk about,” he said.

Smith reminded the council that at the start of the project the town's Public Works staff identified streets that needed attention and set four levels of priorities. The Wooten Company was then asked to develop a \$1-million street improvements project that would encompass work to be done on those streets identified as priority 1 and 2.

“Twiddy Avenue, Luke Street, West Hicks Street and West Carteret Street were selected as priorities for phase 1,” he said.

The project was bid in October 2017 and awarded to Barnhill Contracting, he said, with the contract awarded in November of that year. Notice to proceed was issued the following month.

Total construction cost estimate for phase 1 was \$926,000. When Barnhill's bid came in at just \$608,000 that allowed the inclusion of several additional streets — Mark Drive, North Oakum Street and Dicks Street — to the list of places where repairs could be made during the first phase of the project.

“Work on Luke Street has been completed,” Smith told the council. “Mark Drive is complete as well.”

Smith noted that the hope had been for a mild winter so that work could begin promptly but since that did not happen, lots of activity had begun to take place in recent weeks once spring finally arrived. He said there had been some surprises such as the fact that Hicks

Street had turned out to need far more work than originally thought.

And Councilman Steve Biggs mentioned the same could be said for Peterson Street which is scheduled to be a part of the plan of work for phase 2. He pointed out that many of the problems there were “self-inflicted” as a result of other necessary work performed by the town.

“If I lived down there, I'd be in your office every day,” Biggs told Knighton.

“We will get an estimate on Peterson,” the town manager responded. “I hear what you're saying.”

And Smith said that as the street repairs project moved into phase 2, such areas would be targeted so they could be built into the budget.

Councilman Roscoe Poole asked that attention be given to Badham Road which he called “one of the worst streets in town.”

Smith said his company would look at the funds that are expected to be left from the existing work, possibly as much as \$42,000, and see what could be done sooner rather than later.

Smith said that he has already spoken with a representative of the USDA in preparation for developing a proposal for the remaining streets identified as priority 1, and for phase 2 of the project, and has been assured that they do have “ample funds” on hand. But, he said, they are encouraging him to get a plan approved by July; in August, they have to return to the federal government any unused funds for the year.

Council members expressed positive thoughts with regard to the progress that is being made to improve the town's street.

“It's nice to see the repairs going on,” Biggs said. “It's something we have needed to do.”

## PLAYGROUND

Continued from 1A

ing that had to be done for this project.”

Jackson was assisted by the town's Public Works staff, Landscape Supervisor Tosh Towe and Bud Powell, purchasing agent for the town.

Knighton noted that the investment in this project is in keeping with the town's Vision Statement and the goal set by the town council of making the community a welcoming place for families with young children.

Jackson, the wife of School Superintendent Rob Jackson, said it had been “a pleasure and an honor” to be a part of this particular project.

She said that one of the first things visitors to the playground would see is a beautiful new color scheme that was cleverly chosen by the Edenton Historic Commission.

“There are blue water hues and soft tans that are found in nature and enhance the colors of the Albemarle Sound,” Jackson said. “Secondly, they will notice that the playground has been enlarged and has some cutting-edge new designs that encourage fitness on all levels.”

She added that the playground is based on a “universal” design.

“It will meet the needs of children and parents of all abilities,” Jackson said. “It will be a place that excludes no one.”

The playground was designed to encourage interaction between family members, Jackson said.

“Parents in wheelchairs can now easily maneuver throughout the playground and see the smiles on their children's faces as they play,” she said. “Parents also have the option of exercising on one of the outdoor stair step machines that face the playground. This will enable them to get a workout while they monitor their children. High-quality aluminum fencing surrounds the playground for safety.”

“The grant also allowed us to include workout equipment placed next to the waterfront designed to accommodate disabled veterans, handicapped adults or just those that wish to have a

serene view while they exercise,” Jackson said.

During a presentation she gave to the town council prior to the start of work at the site, it was stated that funds used to pay for the project would come from a CNCB Block Grant in the amount of \$198,720 that would fund 80 percent of the project along with a 20 percent match in the amount of \$49,680 for a total of cost of \$248,400.

The grant application process began in the fall of 2016 with public opinion being solicited through an online survey. Jackson's committee recommended that work on the playground be carried out by Carolina Parks and Play, the low bidder among three companies that expressed interest in participating in the project.

## BREAKFAST

Continued from 1A

The DC trip is an example of Superintendent

Rob Jackson's pursuit of having Chowan County students share the same experiences as their peers from schools statewide.

“Dr. Jackson challenges

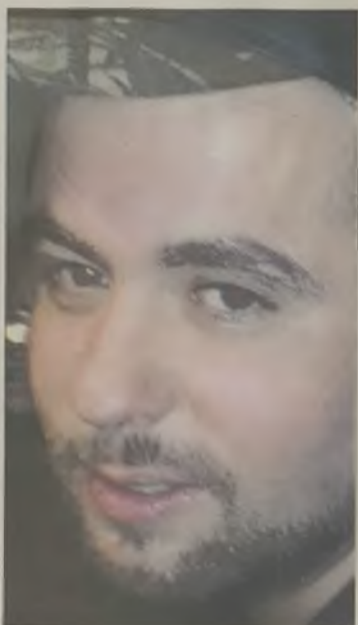
us as a school to make sure our kids get the same educational opportunities as any other kid in any other part of the state,” Lassiter said.

“Field trips like DC and technology like Chrome Books gives our kids an even playing field to achieve any dream that they set their mind to.”

## CORRECTION

■ In a story on organ donation that appeared in last week's paper (Organ donations save lives/May 2), we inadvertently said the cost of a kidney transplant was \$14,000; the cost is actually \$414,000. Also, the sponsor for an upcoming fundraiser for Kecia Phelps, one of those profiled in the article, is the National Foundation of Transplants; co-sponsors are the Rocky Hock Lions Club, Sisters of Strength, the New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church and Grace Community Church.

## PROBATION VIOLATOR ARRESTED



SUBMITTED PHOTO  
After the Chowan County Sheriff's Office posted a bulletin on Monday to social media seeking the whereabouts of Joseph Adam Herndon, he was arrested Tuesday for a probation violation while other charges may be pending, Sheriff Dwayne Goodwin said. The Sheriff's Office said Herndon had active warrants and is suspected in multiple break-ins in Chowan County.

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