

# Tri-County Animal Shelter hires new director

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 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 nonprofit 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 Albenarle 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.

## COMPLEX

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construction.

The \$415,000 general contractor contract went to Sawyer's Land Developing Inc.

While the general contractor is based in Belhaven, Eure understands a good portion of the work will be subcontracted to Brown's Land Developing Inc. of Hertford. Eure said other subcontractors may also be local.

Eure is not sure however that the field can be ready by Aug. 15 and the start of the season.

"It's not going to happen. I'm meeting with the subs (contractors) and I will try. When it came out with a date of Aug. 17, I refused (to bid). I promised if they start on April 1, these buildings would be ready on Aug. 1."

That doesn't mean Eure isn't going to try and make that deadline.

"It's possible and I will have to strive for it."

Jim Davison, the maintenance director for the school

system, said the field should be ready.

"Unless a natural disaster happens the field will be ready and football will be played Aug. 17," Davison said.

Right now Davison is waiting on an erosion control permit. Once that is in hand, Sawyer and Brown can start moving dirt.

Sawyer has two deadlines. By June 26, the field must be ready to accept sod and by Aug. 14 the project must be substantially complete. Eure has a completion deadline of Sept. 25 for the buildings.

If the field house isn't complete for the first game, there is the gym and locker room across the street. And Port-A-Johns are a possibility.

"We want to shoot for a full house," Davison said for the first game. "We have a seating capacity of 1,500 and we think because it's something new and it's something the community has been talking about, we can have a full house."

"Right now I can't wait

to see them knocking down trees. I think everybody is going to get excited about it then."

To save money, construction has shifted from a block building with plaster, to a wood building with plaster to a pre-engineered metal building.

Eure said the \$134,980 bid was lower than what he would normally bid, but the first bids for the project were too expensive, so the school system reached out for more bids.

"I am not a big sports fan. I don't care. I don't go to watch sports. But I want to see our community grow and I want to see our kids encouraged."

Eure is also an advocate for more programs in public schools that teach trades.

"I've been working hard to get a trades program. That is what I would like to see come back to school."

Eure said there is a growing need for electricians, plumbers and carpenters.

The school system is using lottery proceeds to pay for the stadium lights,

bleachers and the concrete pads they will sit on. A portion of the NC Lottery is earmarked for school construction projects and the Perquimans schools get about \$110,000 to \$120,000 each year.

No local tax funds have been used on the project. Dr. William Nixon donated the 32 acres and the estate of the late Charles Ward provided \$600,000 for the project. Macon Turf Farm will be donating the sod.

The total cost of the first phase has been estimated at \$1.2 million.

When it's all said and done, Eure also said he doesn't want to see his company's name on a plaque. That's not why he's doing it.

"I did some volunteer work at a church in the county and I went back when they did the dedication they had a plaque. I asked them to take my name off. I don't like things like that."

Right now, Eure is ready to get to work.

"If he (Sawyers) can put me down two sand pads, I can start."

## Cole Phelps happy with 'underdog' role in race

BY JON HAWLEY  
The Daily Advance

With his Republican opponent in the fall election claiming to be both better known and better funded, Democrat Cole Phelps says he's happy to be the "underdog" in the Senate District 1 race.

Unlike state Rep. Bob Steinburg, R-Chowan, who won last week's Republican primary in Senate District 1, Phelps didn't have a primary opponent. He was going to have one — but then candidate Richard James was ruled ineligible to serve because he doesn't live in Senate District 1.

As a result, Phelps, a practicing attorney, instructor at East Carolina University and Washington County commissioner, cruised to victory on Tuesday. He watched as most Senate District 1 voters focused on Steinburg and his Republican primary opponent, Dare County businessman Clark Twiddy. Steinburg defeated Twiddy by more than 1,800 votes, winning nine of district's 11 counties.

With the primary now in the rearview mirror, Phelps is gearing up for the fall campaign. In an interview with The Daily Advance on Thursday, he reacted to Steinburg's win and discussed his campaign going forward. He's focused on his campaign, not the competition's, he said.

"We're focused on bringing a fresh presence to Raleigh," Phelps said.

He said he continues to rotate through the district's 11 counties — he had events scheduled on the Outer Banks over the weekend, he noted — and claims he's already seeing a lot of excitement for new leadership.

"We have a lot of Republican and unaffiliated support," Phelps said. "People who don't even know me

believe in this campaign."

Though Phelps has never held state legislative office, he argues his legal background and local government experience make him the better candidate. He also said his positions better reflect the district's priorities, including more support for public education.

"The biggest economic development tool we have is public education," Phelps said, arguing it's vital to keeping young people in eastern North Carolina.

Phelps said one of his goals is to restore counties' original, 40-percent share of proceeds from the NC Education Lottery; that's a goal Republican lawmakers made a gesture toward last year, notably. He also said the state needs to continue raising teacher pay to be more competitive nationally, and pay teachers for longevity and advanced degrees.

Phelps also strongly supports the state asking voters to approve a multi-billion-dollar bond to provide funding for improved school facilities.

"That needs to be put on the ballot now," Phelps said.

In recent interviews, Steinburg, who is currently in his third term in the state House, has not ruled out supporting that bond referendum.

The state's budget surplus also puts lawmakers in a good position to continue cutting income taxes — a high priority even as Democrats argue lawmakers are shortchanging key state investments. Phelps said tax cuts have to be balanced against other priorities, and tax cuts should not go to the wealthy at the expense of the middle class.

In an interview last week, Steinburg said he expects to enter the fall with advantages over Phelps, such as in fundraising and name recognition.

## HOUSE

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were an amazing team and not a single one has ever worked on a campaign before."

When she was asked if she'd run again, Hunter simply said, "I'm not going anywhere."

It was in Chowan County that Goodwin drew out heavy support. He beat Hunter by 262 votes. Still she was able to pick up a win in one of Chowan's six precincts,

Precinct No. 1 where she got 44 votes to Goodwin's 40. She also was close in two of others, No. 3 and No. 4, losing by a combined total of 15 votes.

In Camden, Goodwin won two of the three precincts and ended up with 527 votes compared to 487 for Hunter.

Goodwin said it was a clean campaign and he likes that.

"I was taught to be a gentleman and to be above board and try and stay out of the political ditch," Goodwin said.

"I'm happy I won and if I lost I would be a little unhappy but I would get over it. "Please tell the people of Perquimans County I appreciate their vote."

Goodwin didn't start campaigning earlier for a reason.

"There is no reason to start in September the year before. The idea is to peak right at early voting time. That was my strategy."

Because the only Republicans and unaffiliated voters could cast a ballot in the primary House race, knows his victory last week could be

different in the general election in December.

In Bertie County alone there are 10,000 Democrats who had to sit out last week's House vote.

"That makes it a whole lot tougher if you are going after 10,000 possible votes. If you are going for 500, it could be anybody's ballgame."

Goodwin still won the House race in Bertie with 131 votes to 88 for Hunter. But in the sheriff's race among two Democrats there were a total of 3,664 ballots cast last week.

## CARAVAN

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"For many, many years owning a vintage camper was a dream of mine," Gentry said. "When I finally found 'the one' in March 2016, a whole new world opened up for me. My husband and I worked for 15 months restoring our dar-

ling 'Clementine' back to her original glory. My love for all things vintage and my precious little coral camper is the inspiration behind The Coral Caravan."

The Coral Caravan is a traveling market featuring vintage finds, artisan creations, homemade treasures, homegrown produce, and repurposed items of all kinds. Many of our vendors

bring their vintage campers, mobile shops, and even an ice cream bike.

"A caravan by definition is (a) a group of people, especially traders or pilgrims, traveling together and (b) a vehicle equipped for living in, towed by a car and used for vacations," Gentry said. "This is us. This is Clementine. We are The Coral Caravan."

Gentry doesn't do a lot of lot of shows. The next one is in June at St. Bridges Feed and Seed in Chesapeake. There will be another one in the fall and one before Christmas.

Gentry calls herself just "a Mom" and when her kids got bigger, she was looking for something to do.

"I'm just a girl who likes to have fun."

## SENATE

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County commissioner and attorney in the general election.

Twiddy took his defeat in stride Wednesday, commenting the race "didn't go my way," but he was proud of his supporters and voters.

"I'm disappointed in the result, obviously, but I would never second-guess what the voters have to say," Twiddy said.

Steinburg and Twiddy were vying to replace Sen. Bill Cook, R-Beaufort, who did not seek re-election after he was drawn out of

the 1st Senate District during state lawmakers' redistricting last year. Cook not only endorsed Twiddy over Steinburg, but also issued a statement last month that claimed Steinburg lacked the temperament to serve as senator. Twiddy also ran ads noting that criticism.

Steinburg, meanwhile, framed Twiddy as inexperienced and not sufficiently devoted to the Republican Party. He raised the issue of Twiddy's campaign donations to Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper when Cooper was attorney general. Twiddy said he has donated to both Cooper and Republicans to advance his busi-

ness interests.

Asked if the negative campaigning against him would give ammunition to Phelps' campaign, Steinburg said no.

"The voters refuted all those (criticisms)," he said.

Steinburg also believes he enters the general election campaign with advantages Phelps doesn't have. He said he's well known in the district, voters know where he stands on the issues, and he should have a fundraising advantage.

For a breakdown of how each precinct voted, visit <https://er.ncsbe.gov/?election=dt=05/08/2018&county=id=0&office=FED&contest=0>

## BUNDY

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attended and been a lay minister for almost 15 years.

He became a licensed pastor in 2014 for the North Gates UMC. In January, he became pastor of the New Hope Methodist Church in New Hope.

Bundy is married to Carla Thornton Bundy and they have four grown children. They live on what was a part of the small farm where he was raised. His wife is the owner/operator of New Hope Stables.

Recycle.

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