



Meet Madison County's new animal control director

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EDWARDSVILLE — Adam Ohms didn't always plan on becoming a veterinarian, but 14 years after graduating college he's now operating his own practice and is the new director of Madison County Animal Care and Control.

"I think that I'm different from most veterinarians because I did not always know I wanted to be one," Ohms said.

Ohms grew up in Scales Mound, which is a small town in northern Illinois near the Wisconsin border. The town has a population of around 350 and Ohms graduated high school with a class of 21.

Ohms said although he always had pets growing up — a dog, ferret, hamsters, chameleons and a turtle — as well as bottle raising four Angus heifers, Anabelle, Jezzabelle, Lullabelle and Taco Belle) he didn't come to realize his current path until his first year of undergraduate studies at Western Illinois University.

"One afternoon I was working cattle with a local veterinarian and my employer suggested I pursue that career," he said. "It was just like something clicked and I never looked back."

Ohms graduated WIU with a Bachelor of Science degree where he majored in zoology and double minored in animal science and chemistry. He started his veterinary career working as an associate veterinarian in Galena, Ill.

In 2011, Ohms moved to Edwardsville when he began working at Hawthorne Animal Hospital in Glen Carbon. He's also worked as an associate veterinarian for Rosewood Pet Hospital in Rosewood Heights, Bethalto Animal Clinic, Animal Emergency Center in Collinsville as well Metro East Humane Society in Edwardsville.

In 2018, Ohms opened Heartland Veterinary Hospital in Edwardsville.

“I have worked on the private practice side of veterinary medicine for the past 10 years and I’m looking forward to the new challenges that Madison County will offer as I continue to dedicate myself to my profession,” Ohms said.

Ohms started in his new role on Jan. 1. The County Board approved his appointment in December. He replacing Dr. Ryan Jacob who resigned on Dec. 31 to take a position at a veterinary clinic in Southern Illinois.

Ohms said he loves the diversity in what he does and is constantly continuing his education. In May 2009, Ohms received his doctorate in veterinary medicine from the University of Illinois.

He said he’s happy to discuss everything from primary wellness to doing orthopedic surgery to fix a torn cruciate ligament to surgery on soft tissue removing a parathyroid gland to managing a diabetic all in the same day.

“I get to enjoy every facet of medicine across multiple species,” he said. “The hard part is discussing the cost associated with healthcare — every veterinarian will tell you this.”

He said taking on his new role at animal control would be a challenge, especially trying to balance public resources with animal care needs.

“I am looking forward to being a part of the good work in reducing the number of animals that are euthanized and working with the animal rescue groups,” Ohms said.

Chairman Kurt Prenzler said he’s looking forward to working with Ohms, especially in ways to reducing the euthanasia rates for dogs and cats and finding all healthy animals a loving home.