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SPORTS, 1B

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A new study examined how participating in a dog training program affected female veterans with PTSD.

DOUG HOKE/THE OKLAHOMAN FILE

Study: Training dogs helps PTSD

Research on vets shows effect on cellular level

Steve Dorfman
Palm Beach Post
USA TODAY NETWORK

Perhaps you heard about the heartwarming story that went viral when, after an 86-year-old Destin, Florida, woman fell and couldn't get up one evening while walking her son's dog Eeyore, the "very good boy" left her side and soon led an Okaloosa County Sheriff's Deputy straight to the mod-

erately injured woman.

It was like a scene out of "Lassie." And yet more anecdotal proof that dogs truly are "man's best friend."

New research shows that positive interactions with dogs may help slow biological aging in women.

A recently completed study focused on female veterans in the United States conducted by Florida Atlantic University researchers, in collaboration with the University of Maryland School of Nursing, the Medical College of Georgia, and Warrior Canine Connection is among the first to examine the impact of working with service

dogs. By measuring biological indicators of stress, the researchers have uncovered a key insight: The way stress is felt emotionally doesn't always reflect how it affects the body at a cellular level.

Unique challenges for female soldiers

Women have served in the U.S. military for generations and, their roles have expanded dramatically in recent decades and are likely to

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Pritzker explains SNAP situation in Illinois

Program supports nearly 2 million people in the state

JJ Bullock
Peoria Journal Star
USA TODAY NETWORK

PEORIA — Ahead of an expected expiration of SNAP benefits for more than 40 million Americans, Gov. JB Pritzker said "all of us" need to be concerned about the future of the program which supports nearly 2 million people in Illinois.

Pritzker said the federal government could, and has been asked, to use emergency funds to keep SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) running beyond Nov. 1 but the Trump administration has elected not to.

The United States Department of Agriculture said in a message earlier this week that the "well has run dry" on SNAP benefits, which include food stamps, because of the government shutdown.

"They could keep that program going," Pritzker said while speaking in Peoria on Tuesday. "They have been asked to keep that program going with those emergency funds and the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the federal administration, under Donald Trump's administration, has said they will not use those funds to keep SNAP going even though we know there are many people on SNAP who cannot survive without the food that they might get without SNAP."

The prolonged government shutdown has led to more than 750,000 government employees to be furloughed and is now threatening to see programs like SNAP impacted.

The state of Illinois operates the SNAP program, but it is entirely funded by the federal government. Pritzker said if the state tried to take over funding the program after Nov. 1 it would cost \$350 million per month to "fill in the gap."

"That's not something the state could possibly fill in," Pritzker said. "But what we can do though, I'm glad that you asked, is we're going to do a lot to support our food pantries and other organizations that are privately operated but they're non-profit or-

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How to prep for fall leaf pickup this season

Abreanna Blose
AI-assisted reporter
USA TODAY NETWORK

Lincoln Street Department crews will begin fall leaf collection Nov. 5.

Collection will take place every Wednesday through Dec. 10, according to a community announcement. Pickup will start at 7 a.m. and continue until a pass has been completed through town on each scheduled date.

Residents are asked to place leaves in biodegradable paper bags or containers, such as trash cans, and set them at the curb the night before or by 7 a.m. on the day of pickup. Bags or containers should not exceed 50 pounds. The collection is for leaves only, and no brush or other landscape waste will be picked up. Bags or containers containing litter, plastic or other waste will not be collected. Crews will not return to any ward to pick up bags or containers that were not out until the next scheduled pickup date, according to the announcement.

Residents are reminded not to rake, mow or blow leaves or grass into the

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streets.

For those who prefer to manage their own leaves, options include mulching with a mower, composting or hauling leaves to the City Landscape Waste Facility at 957 Broadwell Dr.

The Landscape Waste Facility will have extended hours beginning Nov. 5. It will be open Wednesday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 3:50 p.m. until Dec. 14. The facility will be closed on Thanksgiving

Day. Regular hours will resume Dec. 17, with the facility open Wednesdays and Saturdays.

This story was created by reporter Abreanna Blose, ablose@gannett.com, with the assistance of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Journalists were involved in every step of the information gathering, review, editing and publishing process. Learn more at cm.usatoday.com/ethical-conduct.

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