



Photos by DYLAN TOWNSEND | Times

Snowbird, the University of South Florida St. Petersburg's first comfort dog, receives his badge as he's sworn in for service on June 20 in St. Petersburg.

A very good boy

The newest mental health resource has four legs. Campus leaders hope Snowbird, USF St. Petersburg's first therapy dog, will help students feel less alone and overstressed.

BY SONIA RAO
Times Staff Writer

JENNY GELIN, an incoming first-year student at the University of South Florida St. Petersburg, sat in the front row of student orientation. A graduate from Tampa's Wharton High School, Gelin has never lived in a dorm and is nervous about meeting new people.

As the other 200 students trickled out of the auditorium for a break on a recent Thursday, Gelin stayed seated, questions swirling through her mind. Will everyone like me? Will I be able to make friends? What if they all think I'm annoying?

Then, she saw him.

A 62-pound, 2-year-old "goldador" — golden retriever and Labrador mix — eagerly greeting other incoming students.

That's Snowbird, USF St. Petersburg's newest employee. Snowbird is the school's first and only facility therapy dog, trained to provide comfort, emotional support and therapeutic benefits. He was recently sworn in to the university's police department, joining Bailey, a therapy K-9 at USF's Tampa campus.

Gelin didn't think twice about reaching out to pet Snowbird as he walked past with his handler.

"Usually, I don't go up to people, but then I saw the dog," Gelin said. "I was like, I don't even care."

Encouraging students to engage with people and events is just one benefit a comfort dog like Snowbird will bring, said Anita Sahgal, director of USF St. Petersburg's Wellness Center and Student Accessibility Services.

She said research indicates exposure to animals elevates mood and makes people feel calmer. Sitting with an animal can shift people's focus and help move them away
See SNOWBIRD, 19A



Student Jenny Gelin takes a selfie with Snowbird, a 62-pound, 2-year-old golden retriever and Labrador mix, on June 20 in St. Petersburg.

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SNOWBIRD continued from 17A

from distress. That's especially needed now as college campuses across the nation face a mental health crisis. Forty-one percent of college students had symptoms of depression and 36% had symptoms of anxiety disorder during the 2022-23 academic year, according to a national survey from the Healthy Minds Network, a research organization focused on adolescent and young adult mental health. As a police dog, Snowbird will help students who are getting used to college life or are stressed during exams. He might sit in with students visiting the wellness center for counseling or victim advocacy. He will also accompany officers when they respond to crisis calls related to mental health. Snowbird's handler, Master Police Officer Mark Lickenfelt, said he's seen a sharp rise in those types of calls since he started in 2006 — especially in the past five years. Lickenfelt wants Snowbird to bridge the gap between students and law enforcement. He is going to move his office to the library or veterans center so Snowbird can be closer to students. "If I can help one person, that's all that matters," he said. Snowbird lives with Lickenfelt, who has wanted to be a K-9 handler since he was in elementary school. It shows. Underneath the orange police vest hanging on his office wall is Snowbird's black crate nestled in the corner. A pile of tennis balls sits on the bookshelf. A dog bone lies on his desk next to the computer. On his belt, he carries his

gun, Taser, radio — and a small black bag of puppy treats. Lickenfelt, 51, pictures the pair retiring together, a step he expects for both of them in around a decade. As he walked Snowbird around campus, students he passed reacted with gasps. Smiles. Selfies. "Are you guys stressing today?" Lickenfelt asked them. "Now that he's here, it's a lot better," one student told him. Another started researching how to register their dog as an emotional support animal to bring to the dorms. Belen Valdivieso, a rising junior who was on campus for a summer job, has been excited about Snowbird's arrival since she first heard about him in the fall. She misses her dog at home, a half-Yorkie, half-shih tzu rescue. "We all need a therapy dog," added Emily Mann, a student services librarian who said Snowbird's presence will be just as beneficial for faculty. Back in the auditorium, Lickenfelt explained what a therapy dog was to Gelin. "Do you want him to give you a hug?" he asked. Gelin nodded. Snowbird crawled onto her lap. She closed her eyes, took a few deep breaths and calmed down. Eventually, she felt ready to head out on her own and explore a club fair downstairs. She would keep her eyes peeled for the school's Puppy Raisers club, where students partner with local nonprofit Dogs Inc. to raise service dogs. It's a club she knows she wants to join now that she's met Snowbird.

Contact *Somia Rao* at srao@tampabay.com.



Photos by DYLAN TOWNSEND | Times



▲ Officer Mark Lickenfelt walks Snowbird, the University of South Florida St. Petersburg's first comfort dog, on June 20 in St. Petersburg.

◀ From left: Students Jenny Gelin, Sara Peterseil and Alexie Leger pet comfort dog Snowbird during student orientation on June 20 in St. Petersburg.

tampabay.com/do

LEGAL NOTICE



City of Seminole
9199 113th Street North
Seminole, FL 33772

INVITATION TO BID

TITLE: **FY24 STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS**

Sealed bids must be received at City of Seminole City Hall, Office of the City Clerk, 9199 113th Street North, Seminole, FL 33772 **by 11:00am on August 2, 2024**. Bids shall be publicly opened and read aloud at City of Seminole City Hall, Council Chambers, immediately after closing.

The Scope of Work will consist of constructing approximately 1280-LF of new stormwater piping with new ditch bottom inlet and manhole conflict structures within the existing roadside ditch alignment as well as parkway grading and residential driveway reconstruction on Grove Terrace. The work will consist of furnishing all labor and materials and performing all work set forth in the Bid Documents, which include but are not limited to the plans and specifications prepared by Advanced Engineering & Design, Inc., and the City of Seminole Public Works Department.

Bid and contract documents may be downloaded from the City website, under Public Notices, at www.myseminole.com or on Demand Star at www.demandstar.com after **12:00pm on July 3, 2024**.

THERE WILL BE A **MANDATORY PRE-BID MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, JULY 18, 2024, AT 2:00pm** at CITY OF SEMINOLE, CITY HALL LOCATED AT 9199 113th STREET NORTH, SEMINOLE, FL 33772.

Questions shall be submitted in writing via email to Advanced Engineering & Design Inc., Justin Keller, P.E. at email keller@aed-fl.com. Submission of bid responses by mail, hand delivery or express mail must be in a sealed envelope/box with the Bidder's name and return address indicated.

Submission of bid responses by mail, hand delivery or express mail must be in a sealed envelope/box with the Bidder's name and return address indicated.

The outside of the envelope/box used for the sealed bids shall be marked as follows:

"SEALED BID" "DO NOT OPEN"
"FY24 Stormwater Improvements"
Contractor's Name and Address

Address the bid submission to the following:

City of Seminole
Office of the City Clerk
9199 113th Street North
Seminole, FL 33772

Bids shall be accepted no later than the time and date specified on the Invitation to Bid. All bids received after that time shall be rejected. Offers by telegram, telephone or transmitted by facsimile (FAX) machine will not be accepted. No bid may be withdrawn or modified after the time fixed or the opening of the bid. The City of Seminole reserves the right to reject any and all bids if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the City.

7/3/24 and 7/10/24

0000350793-01

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LEGAL NOTICE



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

You are hereby notified that the City of St. Petersburg, Florida, has corrected violations of the City Code on properties in the City of St. Petersburg and has determined the amount to be assessed against each of said properties to defray the cost thereof. Such violations may include but are not limited to violations of the vegetation maintenance standards of Chapter 16, violations of the property maintenance standards of Chapter 8 to include demolition and securing of structures, removal of stinging insects under Chapter 4, and removal of graffiti pursuant to Chapter 19. A list of said properties and of properties abutting street rights-of-way upon which violations were corrected and the amount to be assessed against each of said properties is on file and open for inspection in the office of the City Clerk of the City of St. Petersburg, Florida.

You are further notified that the City Council of the City of St. Petersburg will hold a public hearing on **July 18, 2024, at 5:01 p.m.**, or as soon thereafter, in the Council Chamber at the City Hall in the City of St. Petersburg, Florida. Notice is hereby given that all interested parties may appear at the meeting and be heard by City Council with respect to the violations listed above.

Any property owner wishing to object to the amount of the assessment or needing additional information on same should call the Codes Compliance Director at (727) 892-5792, ten (10) days prior to the public hearing date set forth above. Failure to contact the Codes Compliance Director will make it much harder to address your concern because the necessary information will not be available at the Public Hearing.

If you are deaf/hard of hearing or require the services of an interpreter, please call our TDD number, (727) 892- 5259, or the Florida Relay Service at 711 as soon as possible. The City requests at least 72 hours advance notice, prior to the scheduled meeting, and every effort will be made to provide that service for you. If you are a person with a disability who needs an accommodation to participate in this/these proceedings or have any questions, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (727) 893-7448.

Additional information can be found on the City's website at www.stpete.org/meetings or by contacting the City Clerk by email at city.clerk@stpete.org, by phone at 893-7448, or by mail at City Clerk, P.O. Box 2842, St. Petersburg, FL 33731

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG
By: Candice Winter, Manager
Billing & Collections

7/03/2024

0000349788-01

LEGAL NOTICE

**CITY OF LARGO
NOTICE OF MUNICIPAL
GENERAL ELECTION
NOVEMBER 5, 2024**

In accordance with Section 100.021, Florida Statutes, notice is hereby given and published that the City of Largo will conduct a Municipal General Election on Tuesday, November 5, 2024. City Commission Seats 3, 4, and Mayor will be elected to four-year terms. The candidate qualifying period will begin at 8:00 am on July 18, 2024 and end at 5:00 pm on August 1, 2024. Candidate petition cards may be picked up beginning 45 days prior to the beginning of the qualifying period, June 3, 2024.

All voters who are residents of the City of Largo, Florida qualified by the constitution and laws of the State of Florida to vote in the city and who satisfy the requirements for registration prescribed by law, shall be qualified to vote in this election.

For further information call the City Clerk's Office at 587-6710.

Diane L. Bruner, CMC
City Clerk

**CIUDAD DE LARGO
AVISO DE ELECCIÓN
GENERAL MUNICIPAL
DEL 5 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2024**

De acuerdo con la Sección 100.021, Estatutos de Florida, por la presente se notifica y publica que la Ciudad de Largo realizará una Elección General Municipal el martes 5 de noviembre de 2024. Los Puestos 3, 4 de la Comisión de la Ciudad y el Alcalde serán elegidos por términos de cuatro años. El periodo de calificación de candidatos comenzará a las 8:00 am el 18 de julio de 2024 y finalizará a las 5:00 pm el 1 de agosto de 2024. Las tarjetas de petición de los candidatos podrán recogerse a partir de 45 días antes del inicio del periodo de calificación, el 3 de junio de 2024.

Todos los votantes que sean residentes de la Ciudad de Largo, Florida calificados por la constitución y las leyes del Estado de Florida para votar en la ciudad y que cumplan con los requisitos prescritos por la ley para registrarse, estarán calificados para votar en esta elección.

Para obtener más información, llame a la Oficina de la Secretaria de la Ciudad al 587-6710.

Diane L. Bruner, CMC
Secretaria de la Ciudad

06/26 and 07/03/24

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