

October 2025  
EDITION

GRIT

at Magnolia  
MEADOWS

# THE RESILIENCE REPORT



help. healing. hope.



## GRIT'S FIRST ALUMNI PICNIC *Why It Hit Home*

The first weekend of September, the GRIT campus wasn't quiet. The place was alive — kids running, barbecue smoke in the air, people swapping stories like they'd known each other for years. It wasn't just a cookout. It was proof that when you put first responders, veterans, and their families in the same space, something real happens. One guy, still in treatment, met an alumnus who'd lived almost the exact same life. Both law enforcement, both carrying the weight of critical incidents that never really leave you. They'd never crossed paths before, not even online, but within minutes they were comparing calls, sharing laughs, and talking like old partners. Their wives connected too, which for him was just as big. *"It reassured her — and me — that I'm in the right place, doing the right thing,"* he said. They've already made plans to meet again after he's out. Another client didn't dive right in. He figured there'd be maybe a dozen people — not eighty. At first, he stayed upstairs watching football, building up the nerve to go out there. When he finally did, he ended up in deep conversations with alumni who had walked the same path. *"It reminded me I'm not alone,"* he said. He didn't speak during the gratitude circle and wishes he had. His takeaway? Start using the weekly alumni meetings to practice speaking up. One of the few women to come through the program brought her young son. He ran with the older kids like he'd been part of the crew forever, wore himself out, and decided strawberry shortcake is the best "ice cream" ever. She'd met some alumni on Zoom before, but face-to-face was different. *"In my field, I've been pushed aside before,"* she said. *"But here, I was just... welcomed. It felt good to belong."* Everyone agreed on one thing — next year, we need a group photo. Alumni, staff, families, all in one shot. Other suggestions? Easier ways to spot alumni in the crowd, maybe an alumni-only meet-and-greet, and for the ambitious —



a zip line. But the real wins from the day weren't the bounce house or Andy's sausage (though those were legit). They were things that matter long after you leave. Things like meeting someone who actually gets your story. Pushing past hesitation and finding your people. Letting family be part of your healing. The GRIT alumni network isn't just a contact list — it's a family forged in the same fire. If this first picnic is any sign, the bonds will only get stronger. Next year? We'll get that photo. Maybe even the zip line. But most importantly, we'll keep building connections that last.

**See the Picnic Food on Page 2!**

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meet Ozzy!



# FLAVOR BRIEFING *with Chef Andy* The Picnic Food!



**Ozzy Bark-borne**




**Kali's Korner**

## Meet Ozzy Bark-borne!

Born May 15, 2025, Ozzy is a pure Old English Bulldog who already tips the scales at 26.3 lbs. He's happiest tagging along with his mama to work, soaking up all the love and attention from clients. Ozzy made quite the splash at the Alumni Picnic, where he stole hearts instantly. From time to time, he makes his big debut at the facility—playing, exploring, and occasionally annoying his big "sister," Kali. His favorite treats are peanut butter and pumpkin, though he's just as content chewing on anything he can get his paws on. While he enjoys plenty of play, Ozzy's favorite "sport" will always be simply being by his mama's side.

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*Ruthann 2025* 

Meet Ruthann, our Day Shift CCT who always goes the extra mile! From creating stunning centerpieces for the Alumni Picnic to hosting fire pit movie nights, popcorn shows, and dessert parties, she's all about making special moments for our clients. She's also quick to pick up shifts, fix appliances, and jump in wherever she's needed. Ruthann's dedication and creativity make her a true cornerstone of our GRIT family.

## Wellness RESOURCES

**Books:** *Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement* by Kevin M. Gilmartin  
**Podcasts:** *Carry the Load Podcast*  
**Websites:** [www.responderstrong.org](http://www.responderstrong.org)

**GRIT**  
Gaining Resilience in Trauma



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and Military Service Members**



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