

December 2025
EDITION

GRIT

at Magnolia
MEADOWS

THE RESILIENCE REPORT

help. healing. hope.

Thanksgiving at Magnolia Meadows

What Three First Responders Discovered When They Spent Thanksgiving in Treatment

For most first responders and military personnel, holidays aren't "time off." They're mandatory shifts, emergency calls, or nights spent pretending the missed memories don't hurt. But this Thanksgiving at Magnolia Meadows, three first responders, two police officers and a paramedic found something they didn't expect: relief, connection, and a chance to breathe again.

"We've never been apart for the holidays." A Police Officer & Mom of Three

Walking into treatment meant missing the first holiday she'd ever spent away from her kids. She feared they'd be ashamed or afraid. Instead: "It was the best gift ever... they told me they were proud of me." Her children toured her living space, met the staff, and asked how they could support her, even exploring Alateen. What once felt like failure became family resilience.

"To see them... it was a heartfelt moment." A Seasoned Police Officer & Father

He hadn't seen his wife and sons for nearly three weeks. When he learned they could visit for Thanksgiving, something inside him shifted. "I was like a kid in a candy store... waiting at the window like a dog." His wife told him he looked healthier and for the first time, he believed it. His boys flipped through his therapy binder with pride, not fear. "When you lose time with family, you realize how much those days matter."

"It keyed me in – I am feeling stressed." A Paramedic Who Finally Let Himself Feel

Twelve years of holidays spent in firehouses and trauma bays had numbed him. Missing his son's birthday hit harder than missing Thanksgiving itself. When his wife arrived, "I didn't even realize how stressed I was until I saw her." She'd been in grim inpatient settings before, this wasn't that. She saw sunlight, dignity, warmth... and hope. And yes, he still swears the smoked turkey was the best he's ever tasted.

What Their Families Felt: Even though each responder walked their own path, their families shared the same reactions. Relief: "They're finally safe." Pride: "They're trying." Hope: "We're getting our person back." "Stay. Do the work. We're with you." Healing didn't push them apart, it brought them back together. ❤️

Why Their Stories Matter, Especially for You. If you're a first responder or military member reading this, you might be carrying the same questions they were: "Will I lose my family?" "Will people treat me differently?" "Will I look weak?" Here's what they want you to know: "You won't lose your family by getting help. You'll lose them if you don't." "Not asking for help ruins everything else." "You can't carry every call forever."

Magnolia Meadows Does It Differently. Families aren't visitors here; they're part of the healing. Recovery isn't hidden or shamed; it's supported. You're not treated like a problem; you're treated like a person. Thanksgiving wasn't perfect. We forgot a group photo. We improvised seating. Kids ran wild. But you know what we did have? Presence, connection, hope. If You're Wondering Whether It's Time... It Is. You're not weak. You're not failing. You're not alone. Let us help you come back. Because the people who protect our holidays deserve to have one too. The table will be set again for Christmas and next year.

To view the whole article about Thanksgiving, and other articles tailored to first responders/military visit

<https://www.magnoliameadows.com/articles/>



wanna
meet
Jenni?
→



www.magnoliameadows.com



FLAVOR BRIEFING with Chef Andy



It's Thanksgiving at Magnolia MEADOWS



GRIT

TEAM spotlight

Ben 2025

From holding down the fort overnight to coming onto the daytime crew, Ben brings steady care to every shift. Compassionate, patient, and always ready to listen, he helps clients feel safe and supported even on the tough days. Reliable and calm under pressure, he picks up shifts, handles property issues, and keeps a positive spirit throughout it all. We're grateful to have him as part of the GRIT family! Our clients and our team are better because Ben is here. ❤



Meet Jenni!

the Golden Retriever Certified Therapy Dog!

Birthday: March 24, 2023

Handler: Lori Housel

Hometown: Sneads Ferry, NC

Fave Food: Bananas, Watermelon and Veggies

Fave Toy: Balls, any and all balls

Jenni loves people and she's compassionate which makes her a gifted therapy dog. Her nickname is "Fur Missile" because she loves to play ball. She loves to swim in the pool at her home as well! In fact, she thinks the pool is hers so she swims in it daily, whether she has permission or not! Jenni is an American Red Cross volunteer and she visits the Naval Medical Center and WARR Center on Camp Lejeune.



**December 2025 EDITION
THE RESILIENCE REPORT**

Wellness RESOURCES

Books: Mindfulness for Warriors by Kim Colegrove

Podcasts: No One Fights Alone

Websites: www.responderhelp.com



GRIT

Gaining Resilience in Trauma



Residential Treatment for active or retired First Responders and Military Service Members



Need Help? Call us at (855) 644-7500
www.magnoliameadows.com

1750 Halls Creek Road Waverly, TN 37185

