

Auxiliary donates \$15,000

By **KRISTIN MORIARTY**

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The Houston Medical Center Auxiliary group made a \$15,000 donation to the Houston County Volunteer Medical Clinic Monday.

Dr. Virgil McEver, medical/executive director of the clinic, expressed gratitude and said the staff was ecstatic about the donation.

"This unbelievable donation will enable us to purchase more vaccinations to give to our patients and other medicines as well as any other supplies," McEver said. "The Auxiliary group does amazing work for Houston Healthcare and again, we are so grateful to them for this donation."

The Houston County Volunteer Medical Clinic was established in 2005. McEver said the clinic serves the working uninsured patients of Houston County who fall within the 200% federal poverty level.

"We currently have around 325 active patients," McEver said. "We serve ages 18-64



Kristin Moriarty/HHJ

The Houston Medical Center Auxiliary group donated \$15,000 to the Houston County Volunteer Medical Clinic Monday.

who fall within the 200% level at no cost to them. The clinic is run by one full-time and two part-time employees as well as 50 volunteers that range of different physicians, nurses, etc. The clinic does amazing work as well. It's all about coming together and serving the community."

The Houston Medical Center Auxiliary is a group of all volunteers who help with patient services at Houston Medical Center and the Perry Hospital. Vice-president Gary Mendell said they are servants

to the community. "We help escort patients, manage the front desks and more," Mendell said. "But we saw a need for us to step up and present this check today to the clinic. As a group we are honored to do so."

Mendell said they raised the money through uniform and gift shop sales, as well as fundraisers.

"Our mission is to help with whatever the patients need," Mendell said. "This donation should help a lot and it goes back to the patients."

WALKER

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include town hall meetings in all the districts and laying out a channel of communication with the city's business community.

While campaigning, Walker said he would propose quarterly town hall meetings to council; establish daily open hours for the mayor's office and work with city partners to develop a more effective form of communication.

He says discussions amongst the council about the town hall meetings have already begun; he anticipates a proposal being brought forth as early as October. Walker says the first meeting would likely take place in a district with longstanding representatives on council, such as District 1 or District 2. The dates for the meetings would be in a public in a calendar.

In the past, town hall meetings proved successful for District 2 Councilman Robert Jones. Jones said he was excit-

ed at the idea of assisting the mayor with these events, as they would provide more clarity for residents. "The more that we can stand in front of them [constituents] and answer questions, and provide one more venue of accountability and transparency, the better that is, so I'm looking very forward to those town hall meetings," said Jones.

City Manager Lee Gilmour says any strategy for improving the city's communication with its residents would serve as a benefit. He says a big difference residents could anticipate with mayor Walker is someone with more time on their hands. "I think the major change you're going to see with Mr. Walker is that he has the time to be able to have regular business hours and get out and get input from the community," he said. "I know he was very active in his campaign about going around to all the different neighborhoods and talking to the residents, so I'm sure he'll be bringing some suggestions about how the city can better serve its

residents."

At the Meet the Candidates forum held Thursday, Sept. 5, Walker said his five areas of focus, if elected, would be improving the quality of life for all citizens, keeping the City of Perry financially sound, ensuring Perry is a safe place to live and work, supporting a business friendly environment and effectively managing growth and change over time. In a previous interview with HHJ, he also outlined a plan to transform Perry into a "premiere destination."

After 9.5 years as mayor, James Faircloth announced his resignation Friday, May 10, with 2.5 years left in his mayoral term. Perry City Council soon after called for a special election to fill the remainder of Faircloth's term. Walker announced his campaign in May, resigned from his council seat in July and officially won the special election Tuesday, Sept. 17, with a total of 964 votes. In 2.5 years, Walker will kick off another campaign for the Perry mayoral seat.

ARREST

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victim of a sudden snatching that occurred at the Walmart located at 502 Booth Rd.

The victim told police her purse was in the buggy with the straps still in her hands when a male she had seen earlier on the aisle with two other males quickly ran past her and snatched the purse from her hands. Store management provided video of the suspects to Warner Robins Police.



X'Zavier Jackson

Detective Thompson was able to ID 17-year-old Norman Gerard Wright, from a tip through Crimestoppers and subsequently arrested him for the robbery on May 1.

Over the weekend, Warner Robins Police arrested X'Zavier Jackson (19) and Cedavion Mitchell (17), both from Warner Robins and are charged with the robbery. Both are also presently housed in the Houston County Detention Center.

H.A.L.O.'S

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skills and friendships with their community.

The Fire Truck Pull raised money in support of initiatives associated with developing H.A.L.O.'s Life Skills and Vocational Academy, also the renovation of the New Perry Hotel and restaurant as its future home. Cuti said business teams who entered made a \$700 donation to the group.

"Teams were competing to have the fastest pull time of pulling the fire truck 50 feet," Cuti said. "The truck weighed about 34,000lbs. and the first place team was Destiny Fitness with a pull time of 14.48 seconds. The local fire departments also came out and had a competition amongst them, but the truck weighed more for them because it was filled with water. Warner Robins Fire Department



Kristin Moriarty/HHJ

H.A.L.O. Group co-founder Angela Cuti (third front left) joined in on the fun, helping one of the team's pull during the event Saturday.

won in their division, with pull time of 18 seconds. It was just all around a great fun day."

Cuti said participants were told her the event should be done twice a year.

"We are certainly going to look into that," Cuti said. "During this week we will debrief as a team

and see how we can better the event for next year, because it will definitely be an annual event. This was the first one branding ourselves, and I believe it was a great success. We cannot say thank you enough to all of our sponsors and the community for their generosity and support."

RALLY

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working on her master's in clinical mental health counseling at Walden University. She started Black Girl Empowerment in 2015; it's an organization for young black girls ages 4-19, helping build their self-esteem.

Multiple vendors were included at the rally: counselors, the Warner Robins Police Forensics Unit, voter registration, dunking booth, grocery giveaway from Harvest Builders Worship Center and guests speakers who were impacted by gun violence.

Tracie Huff, widow to the late Willie Huff III, said she is still healing from her husband's death in October 2016.

"It was a normal day," Huff said. "We were celebrating our son's birthday. Everything went great, we had the party at local entertainment place and then we came home. My husband had worked for a roofing company and they did a lot of

work in different towns. Well, he told me he was headed to the grocery store to grab food for work the next day. When he came back, my life and my kids lives were changed forever."

Huff's daughter heard her dad pull into the driveway, and a moment later heard gunshots.

"My daughter came running and screaming saying 'daddy's been shot, daddy's been shot,'" Huff said. "So I ran outside [and] grabbed my husband while my sister called 911. When the police arrived, they asked me where I wanted them to take him, I said Macon because I knew they had a trauma center. Well when my sister and I followed the ambulance they made a left onto Watson, heading to Houston Medical Center. I said something is not right; I asked them to go to Macon."

Huff said when she arrived to the hospital they put her in the same room when her grandfather passed away; he

also died from gun violence.

"It was all senseless," she went on to say. "All I know is that someone was trying to rob my husband, his case is still unsolved. But we need to learn to love as a community and not hate. I ask everyone to put the guns down."

Next to speak was Jalen Walker, a victim of gun violence. When he was 17, Walker was at a party when a bullet came through the window and grazed his face.

"I was a happy go lucky kid before that happened," Walker said. "Care free, was into music and clothes and played basketball. I thought I had everything figured out, but then I started to deviate from my path and began partying too much. It was in that moment after I came to when the bullet grazed my face that my life changed. I got back on the right track because I realized I could have lost my life to senseless shooting at a party. I too ask that everyone put the guns down. Guns don't make you a man; it's not worth it."

[and] learning together."

According to Brooks, Mass Virtual originated in the gaming industry until it later inserted itself into defense technology. Having earned contracts with other branches of military, Brooks says the company is excited about earning its first contract with Robins and hopes for a lengthy relationship in the future. "It's exciting because this is a chance to participate with another Air Force entity that's committed to driving this field...it's what you hope for when you're designing something that's a solution to help people," said Brooks.

The press release states that

the implementation of the VR training system would enhance the mission effectiveness of approximately 500 Air Control Wing Personnel.

Mass Virtual was one of five vendors vying for the JSTARS contract. Each of the contractors presented 15-minute pitches on why their company was best for the project to a panel of military personnel. The press release described the "Pitch Day" as "An opportunity to observe innovative training technology platforms, meet companies in the training industry and understand the tools available for procurement."

BUSINESS\$ \$ BATTLEFIELD



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