



Opinion

Expect Respect community walk a success

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About 100 men, women, and children walked, rolled and strolled from the Grant County Courthouse to Jonesboro Saturday, Sept. 18 to show the community they were taking a stand against domestic violence.

The second annual Expect Respect Hands of Hope Community Walk was kicked off with a rally at the Grant County Courthouse with encouragement from Grant County Prosecutor Jim Luttrull and Walk Chair Steve Newcomer.

Everyone was ready to walk after a motivating rallying the group message from Nathan Dalton, Hands of Hope Male Outreach Coordinator, who challenged walkers to really think about those living in the houses the walk route would take participants past.

It is easy to forget those who struggle and live in fear for their lives if the victim is not someone you know, Dalton told the crowd. Dalton encouraged everyone in attendance to get involved and do their part to stop domestic violence. His mantra "Enough Is Enough" could be heard occasionally on the walk route as a resident came out of their house and asked a passerby what they were walking for.

It was thanks to tremendous support from the Marion Police Department, Grant County Sheriff's Department and Grant County Emergency Management Administration who provided safe travels along the route down the middle of Washington Street to Adams Street/ Ind. 15 into Jonesboro.

In addition to the perfect weather, the hospitality provided by Via Credit Union staff who purchased snacks and water, set up and traveled to each rest stop along the way was greatly appreciated.

A shout out also to the businesses who graciously donated gift cards — Marsh, Meijer, Wal-Mart and New Market which covered the cost of the water and snack food for walkers. A thanks to Vicki and Jeff Pulley, St. James Lutheran Church, Fairmount Baptist Church for their corporate financial support. And thanks to Phoenix Data Corporation who raised money through a bake sale.

In addition, thanks to the City of Marion Bus Department who provided transportation to tired walkers, the Parks Department that allowed walkers to take a break at Splash House opening up the facilities and God's Grace Ministries United Methodist Church and First Presbyterian Church of Grant County for also opening their restroom facilities for the event.

A thanks also to the distinguished Expect Respect Walk Committee — Ben Crandall, Joe Chambers, Mike Cline, Tony Melton and Steve Newcomer and those who helped with registration that morning — Connie Rose, Jerry Rose, Rick McDaniel and Brenda McDaniel.

And finally, and most importantly, a thank you to each person who walked, rolled or pulled a wagon or stroller in the six mile walk and to those individuals and businesses who financially supported each walker through registration fees or pledges.

The Expect Respect Community Walk truly was a community event that brought together people from across Grant County for a common purpose — to stop domestic violence. Let's continue the momentum begun with the walk by making a point to attend the Hands of Hope Candlelight Vigil at 7 p.m., Oct. 21 at St. James Lutheran Church, 1206 N. Miller Ave., Marion. For more information

about Hands of Hope — contact Linda Wilk at 662-9971 ext. 123, email at lwilk@famservices.com or www.famservices.com Hands of Hope/Family Services is a United Way agency.

Linda Wilk is Hands of Hope Director, a division of Family Service Society, Inc.

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