

MOMS CLUB OF WR HELPS MIDDLE GA PREEMIES



Misty Reynolds, treasurer (left) and Amanda Cross, AVP prepare for the Friday and Saturday sale

Kendra Norman Holmes/Managing Editor

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The "MOMS" in MOMS Club is an acronym for Moms Offering Moms Support, and internationally, the group is known for its ongoing efforts to be a community backing—a village, of sorts—for mothers across the globe. Locally, MOMS Club of Warner Robins has been in existence since 2003, and in just a few

days, its members will be doing its part to help those who, perhaps, need help the most. Premature infants.

"We actually have two goals this year," said Kristin Gandy, who serves as the local group's current president. "We offer a 'come and go' food pantry at Lake Joy and 96 in front of Between Friends Coffee House. So, we have a two-fold project that we're trying to hit this year. The first is to try and build another community pantry somewhere in the mall area, or somewhere on that side of town."

The mall that Gandy referenced is Houston County Galleria in the Centerville area.

"Watson Boulevard is our target," injected Misty Reynolds, treasurer. "Tractor Supply, the Houston Galleria mall—anywhere from Carl Vincent to [Highway] 41 on Watson is our objective."

"We're looking for a location that will be willing to host the new pantry for us on that side of town," Gandy expounded. "We specifically want it to be a local business because we would like to be able to support them as well. The only thing that we would need from them is just the permission to use their location—outside their doors—for the pantry."

The way they intend to raise the \$500 that it would take to build a custom pantry and get it set up is the second goal of MOMS Club of Warner Robins. On Friday and Saturday, April 9 and 10, the organization will host a sale wherein all proceeds, beyond the \$500 pantry funds, will go the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in Macon, Georgia.

According to Gandy, most parents don't pre-plan for the possibility of having a premature baby, so they're unprepared when they find themselves in need of NICU services.

"Several moms in our club have been through the NICU experience," she shared. "One of the moms we spoke to said that when she was there, she was fortunate enough to really get to know some of the nurses. She told us that the nurses used their own money to buy things like car seats for families and to help with preemie clothes. Since our goals are to always help mothers, we really felt called to that particular place to help in their situation."

Amanda Cross is the AVP of MOMS Club of Warner Robins, and she explained why the NICU in Bibb County was selected over one in Houston County.

"The reason why is because the Houston Medical Center has a small NICU for babies that aren't really in a danger situation," Cross said. "They might have low blood sugar or something like that, but it's not a serious life-threatening medical condition. But if babies go to Navicent in Macon and the Beverly [Knight] Olson Children's Hospital, that's a more serious NICU where—sometimes for weeks and months—preemies that are born have to stay."

Reynolds added, "One of the big things, too, is this. We wanted to do more than support the moms; we wanted to support the nurses that support the moms. That's the difference with Navicent as well. We know that the nurses there are paying out-of-pocket for a lot of these things, so what we're doing is helping them to help the moms."

With the proceeds that are collected from the two-day sale, the members of MOMS Club will purchase preemie car seats, soothers that go in the babies' cribs, preemie clothing, and any other needs.

"I was a preemie myself," Gandy revealed. "I was born nine weeks early, and I was in the hospital for probably 18 weeks. I've heard firsthand from my parents how scary that experience can be, so we want to support people who are supporting the parents who are going through this. We just felt really called to help this particular group."

The sale will take place at Christ Chapel located at 3328 Moody Road in Warner Robins this Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. and on Saturday, from 7:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Though rain is in the forecast, the event will take place rain or shine.

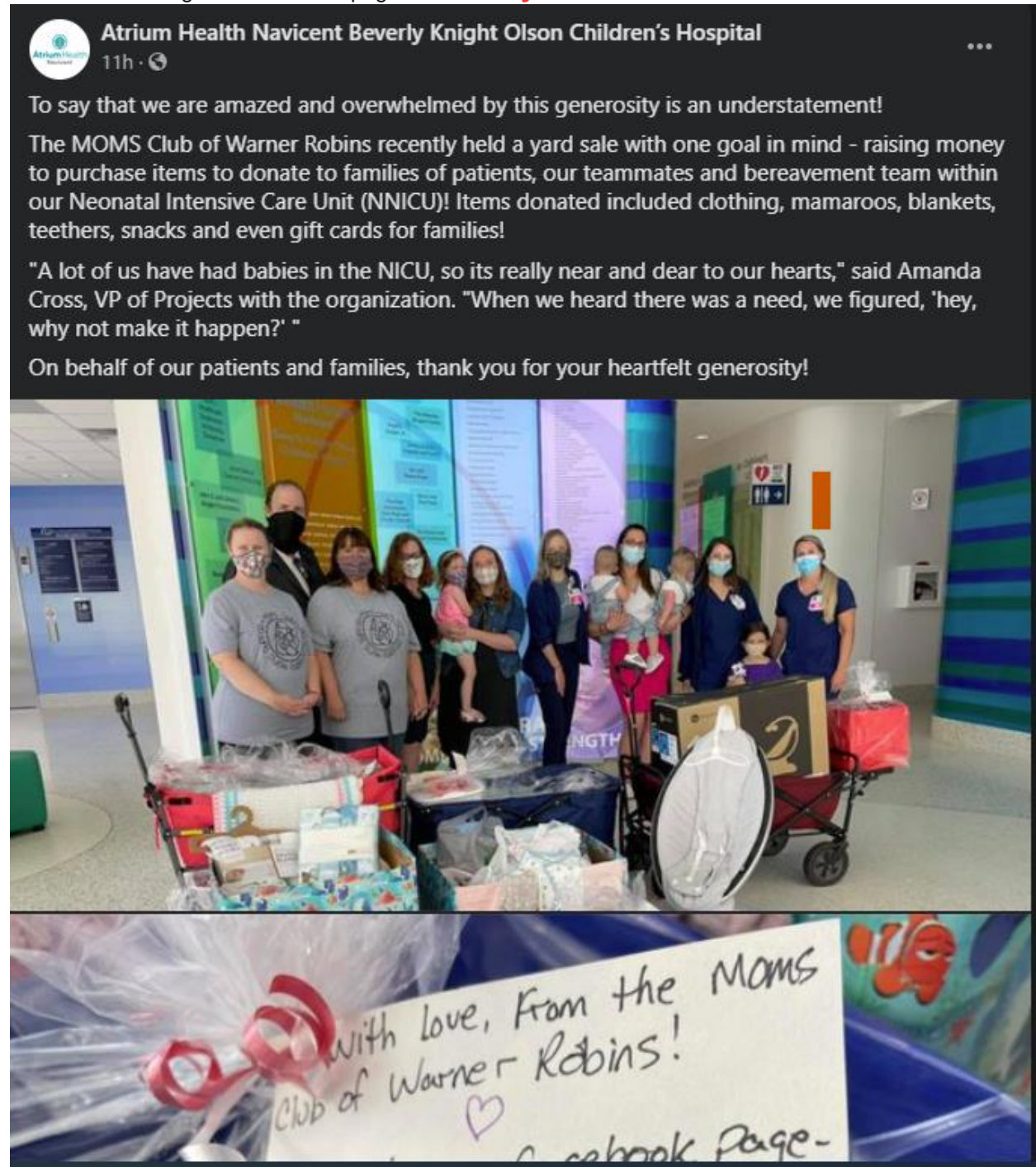
"If it's raining, we will be inside that first building when you pull into the parking lot," Gandy mentioned. "If it's sunny, we will be outside in the parking lot."

There are still opportunities for those who wish to volunteer. On Thursday, a great deal of effort will be going toward hauling items to the location, and the women of MOMS Club can use all the hands and help that they can get.

"We've got a lot of great stuff," said Gandy. "We've had members of the community donate some racecar beds, couches, baby gear, toys, frames, artwork, houseware, Tupperware, clothing—we have a club member that's moving into a tiny house, and she made her husband donate all of his cool stuff," she added with a laugh.

Donations for the sale will be received through Thursday evening, but what the women said they need most, at this point, are buyers who will come out and help them reach their goal.

Anyone who wishes to volunteer or donate to the cause may visit the group's public Facebook page at MOMS Club of Warner Robins Georgia. Membership is open as well, and information regarding that can be obtained through the Facebook page as well. - **HHJ News**



MOMS Club of Warner Robins to donate to help premature Central Georgia babies

The group spent their Tuesday preparing for a yard sale. Some of the funds will be used to buy items like blankets, preemie clothes and car seats.



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HOUSTON COUNTY, Ga. — MOMS Club of Warner Robins is hosting a fundraiser to benefit premature babies at the Beverly Knight Olson Children's Hospital.

When you're expecting a baby, there's a lot of excitement. Picking a name, buying clothes, and more, but some parents might not be able to take their baby home immediately.

Morgan Miller, a nurse at Atrium Health Navicent, says babies can stay in the hospital for months.

"NICU stands for the neonatal intensive care unit. We get any babies that are born premature, as well as some term babies that may have a reason to come over here and get care from us," said Miller.

MOMS Club of Warner Robins came up with an idea to help Navicent's NICU.

The group spent their Tuesday preparing for a yard sale. Some of the funds will be used to buy items like blankets, preemie clothes, and car seats.

Both Amanda Cross and Marion Dwyer had premature babies so they saw the need firsthand.

"We're just trying to help those parents, because we've seen some of them they can't even afford the basic items that the babies need and the nurses they spend lots of their own money for those families for their patients, and I think it's something that just needs to be more supported," said Dwyer.

Miller says this means a lot -- their unit stays at capacity.

"We do have a great need for these items. We are mostly always full. We are so thankful for the moms group for putting this yard sale together and helping us out," said Miller.

Kristin Gandy and Sara Fowler say \$500 raised from their yard sale will go toward opening a new community pantry.

"So many of us are so focused on caring for other people, that we just feel like, 'Hey, I can make an impact in the community at large,'" said Gandy.

The group is still looking for a location for its second community pantry -- they're looking for permission from a local business to use the outside of their building.

The yard sale will take place at Christ Chapel located at 3328 Moody Road in Warner Robins this Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and on Saturday, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. If it rains, the event will take place inside.

You can connect with MOMS Club of Warner Robins via [Facebook](#).