

Local Corner

Meadows Bowl raises \$16,000

By RICK NOLAND
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MEDINA TWP. — A team captained by Erin Cureton won the 18th annual Meadows Turkey Bowl, but the real winner was St. Vincent DePaul Charities.

The Thanksgiving Day football game, once again held in the backyard of Mike Meadows, raised more than \$16,000, all of which went to St. Vincent DePaul.

"We always want to keep it backyard football, but over the years it's gone from playing football to raising money," Meadows said. "This group is excited about that."

The bulk of the money was raised through a free-agent player auction held at Weymouth Country Club at Fox Meadows the night before Thanksgiving.

Tim Blascak went for \$3,600, with Lenny Mullin bringing in more than \$2,000. Thanks to the bidding — and open checkbooks — of guys like John Brooks, Terry Blascak, Al Melchiorre, Ron Sency, Bob Parks, Brian Moran, Mike Priebe, Tom Gibson, Dino Shulie and Scott Furlong, players Bill Doraty (\$600), Tom Judson (\$400) and Bill Meadows (\$400) also went for major bucks.

"These guys are paying a lot of money for Tim Blascak to play football again and the camaraderie of getting in a huddle and getting muddy," Mike Meadows marveled. "I think that's extraordinary. This thing is getting bigger than I ever expected."

Eventually, Mike Meadows would like to take the format for the game to other cities, but his immediate goal is to raise \$20,000 in a single year. In 2004, the contest generated \$800. That figure grew to \$3,200 in 2005 and \$8,200 last year before vaulting to \$16,000 in '07.

And to think the game originally started as a simple get-together between friends.

This year, 40 players participated. There were also officials and more than 20 members of the Highland Marching Band, which played the national anthem, fight songs and "Hang on Sloopy."

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Meadows Turkey Bowl founder

More than 100 fans attended, which was why Mike Meadows wanted to make sure to thank his wife, Connie, for all her support over the years.

"Without her, we'd never dare have 150 people trample our backyard on Thanksgiving Day," he said. "She's been more than accommodating."

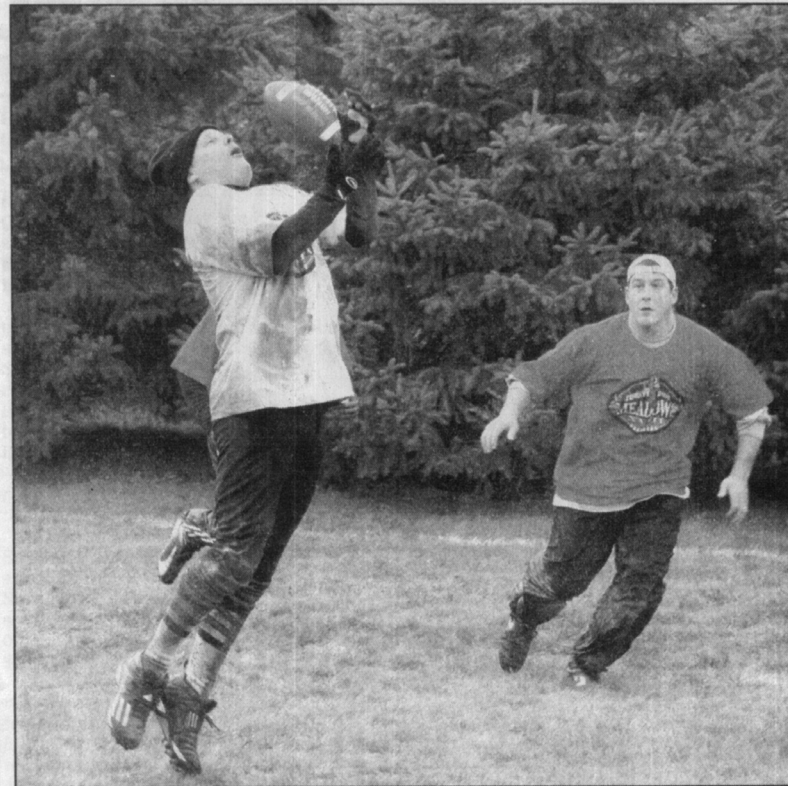
The festivities began the night before at Weymouth Country Club, where Dave Stumpf and Melchiorre were inducted into the Meadows Turkey Bowl Hall of Fame. They were presented by Frank Ciryak and Steve Garcia, respectively.

They joined previous inductees John Cassidy, Chad Larson, Jason Nemeth, Jordan Bruzda, Dave Earhart, Jeff Barnes, Joe Nemeth, Dave Steirer, Brooks and Judson.

Next was the player draft for the four teams, which were captained by Cureton, Chad Larson, Melchiorre and Sency/Ken Wisniewski.

Cureton went on to win MVP honors as his team defeated three-time defending champion Sency/Wisniewski for the title in three overtimes. Parks got the Mr. Hustle award, with longtime participant Mark Dennison capturing Mr. Toughest honors.

Similar to the NHL's Stanley Cup, the Meadows Cup will now be passed from player to player on the winning team for the next 12 months. Over the years, it has been touched by former Browns executive Carmen Policy and Pro Football Hall of Famer Barry Sanders.



Don Herrmann makes a catch during the 18th annual Meadows Turkey Bowl.

On Friday, a kids game was held, with Pete Meadows' team defeating Brennan McGowan's club in three overtimes for the Cassidy Cup, named after the vice chairman of the Meadows Turkey Bowl. The other captains were Sam Meadows and Kyle Stumpf.

Ethan Cureton earned MVP honors, with Patrick Carriban taking Mr. Hustle honors and Andrew Harris earning the Mr. Toughest award.

Sponsors of the 2007 event were MelCap Partners, Lamar Outdoor Advertising, Stumpf Construction, T&T Mortgage, Summit Packaging, Lance & Company, Redstone Storage (Hammer House), Reminger & Reminger, Medina Community Magazine, Network Fundraising, Weymouth Country Club and Dunkin Donuts.

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