

## Turkey Bowl raises \$16,300 for Saint Vincent de Paul Society

By: Jake Poole

It was hard to imagine the 2007 Turkey Bowl fundraiser participants topping the \$8,200 raised for the 2006 event, but somehow they did. In fact, those involved nearly doubled the 2006 amount by raising \$16,300, with all proceeds going to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society.

When the amount was received, Turkey Bowl co-founder Mike Meadows was overwhelmed.

"Never in my wildest imagination did I think that we would be able to hit this amount of money," he said, trying to grasp how far the event had come.

Originally organized 18 years ago by Mike Meadows, his brother Bill Meadows, Tom Judson and John Cassidy, the Turkey Bowl is a three day event that includes backyard football games, a Hall of Fame induction roast and a player draft and auction, among other things. The player auction is pivotal to the event because it enables team captains to purchase players from other teams, with any money spent going to Saint Vincent de Paul.

This year, the Yellow team, captained by 2007 Turkey Bowl MVP Erin Cureton, won the Traveling Trophy and will be

pictured on a digital billboard on Rt. 18 in Medina, courtesy of Lamar Outdoor Advertising. Still, the champions have a unique challenge ahead of them. Being the winner of the Traveling Trophy, a cup created and fueled by the passion of Turkey Bowl co-founder John Cassidy, they bear the unique responsibility of topping past winners, not on the playing field but on the camera film. In prior years, the trophy has been photographed with Barry Sanders and Ted Ginn Jr., among others, and this year's winners are expected to raise the bar.

While the trophy is one of the many side-stories of the event, the fundraiser remains the highlight of the weekend. In the four years the event has been a fundraiser, the money total has risen exponentially each year, from \$800 to \$3,200 to \$8,200 and now to \$16,300.

Still, the event would have never reached the level it has if not for the many people working behind the scenes, especially Meadow's wife, Connie, who sends out e-mails, handles paperwork and cooks the player breakfast, while also handling other Turkey Bowl responsibilities.

"If it weren't for her, this Turkey Bowl wouldn't exist," Meadows explained.



The 2007 Turkey Bowl champions, captained by 2007 MVP Erin Cureton (front row, second from right), beat the three-time defending champions in two overtimes to earn the prized Traveling Trophy.

And now, word of the event has begun to spread.

Before this year's Turkey Bowl, Meadows said, "We all have day jobs, but we think it would be a neat thing to do maybe on a national level."

Well, his wish might be coming true. At Meadow's company office in Kansas City, Mo., co-workers have expressed interest in starting the event in their area.

Cassidy, Judson and the Meadows brothers plan to fly out and help the Kansas City organizers put together the event, which is expected to be held the weekend before Thanksgiving in 2008.

And who knows, maybe the other 48 states are next.