

The Eddie D. Harris Annual Memorial Scholarship Tournament

By Krystal Ward Carter

This year's 4th annual Eddie D. Harris Memorial Scholarship Tournament was held August 3-4th at the Rusk High School and Junior High gyms. The tournament consisted of two high school boys teams: Jacksonville High School and Rusk High School; three high school girl teams: Rusk, Jacksonville, and Mt. Enterprise. The men's bracket consisted of Jacksonville, Slab Riders, Drillers, ICE, Rusk, and TNT. The first place teams were awarded a championship trophy and t-shirts and the runner-ups were awarded t-shirts. Jacksonville swept the tournament with first place in each division. Jacksonville won the men's division, with the Slab Riders of Tyler as the runner-up team. Jacksonville High School boys won the boys division, with Rusk High runner-ups. The East Texas All-Stars of Jacksonville won the High School girls division and Mt. Enterprise was the first place runner-ups.

Since 2004 the tournament has been held to commemorate Eddie D. Harris. He was born and raised in Jacksonville, Texas. He graduated Jacksonville High School in 1982 and attended Jacksonville Baptist College. He met and married Kathy Session from Rusk, Texas. Eddie and Kathy lived in Rusk with their children. Eddie volunteered much of his time with the youth of Rusk, Jacksonville, and the East Texas area for 12 plus years as a basketball and baseball coach and mentor.

He was a member of the Cherokee County Brotherhood Club and Mt. Pleasant Church. He worked diligently at Rusk State Hospital for 11 years before illness left him unable to work. In 2002, he was diagnosed with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis, a progressive scarring of the lung disease in which there is no cure. On July 5, 2003, Eddie lost the battle with the disease and he died at the age of 39.

The proceeds from the tournament have been used to award college scholarships to deserving high school students that are active in their church, participated in high school sports, and maintained a 3.0 GPA in high school.

Mt. Pleasant CME Church Youth Department and the Eddie Harris Scholarship Board are pleased to announce this year's scholarship recipients: (Top right) Eddie W. Harris, Shonundra Martin, Jon Michael Jackson all of Rusk. Eddie is the son of the late Eddie Harris and Kathy Harris and will attend Angelina Junior College. Shonundra Martin is the daughter of Alice Martin, and she will attend Tyler Junior College. Jon Michael Jackson is the son of Jackie and James Griffin and will attend Tyler Junior College. The past recipients include Cody Glenn (University of

Nebraska-Sociology), Armistia Sanders (Tyler Junior College-Nursing), Sharaick Jackson (Tyler, Junior College), and Crystal Henderson (University of North Texas-Accounting) all of Rusk. Scholarship recipients are encouraged to give back to the community by volunteering.

In January 2006, the scholarship board held a college preparatory workshop in the computer lab at Rusk Intermediate School. The workshop will be continued to provide students and parents information about scholarships, applications, admission exams, and general information about college.

This year's workshop is tentatively scheduled for October. Continue reading the Texas Informer for updates.

This year's tournament would not have been possible without our sponsors and supporters: Mt. Pleasant CME Church, Texas National Bank, Daphne Session Attorney At Law, Austin Young State Farm Insurance, Jerry Ocker, DDS; The BLAZE Radio Station, Southern Cherokee Federal Credit Union, Citizens First Bank, Community Funeral Home, The Colston Family, Elmer Stewart, Brookshire Brothers, L & P paint and Body Shop - Palestine, Texas, Ed Bruce, Flowers 'N Things, Tosh Insurance Agency, Texas Informer, O. T. Allen & Son Funeral Home Terri's Cakes, Austin Bank.

Special thanks to our referees and volunteers: The teams and coaches that participated, Oliver Stuns, Marcus Carter (tournament coordinator), Krystal Carter (coordinator) Kingsley Idemudia, X, X, Kimberly Clark, Terri Franklin, Kathy Harris, Daphne Session, Shunnon Ratcliff, Joel McGowan, Maxine Session, Raven Gipson, Matthew Davis, Sharaick Foreman, Armistia Sanders, Sam O'Neal, Coach James Holcomb, Elmer Stewart, Cody Glenn, Darren Franklin, and Garrett Floyd.

