

# RHSAA Newsletter

## Change of Plans

It is with great sadness that we announce the cancellation of our Annual Chili Supper and the RHSAA Biennial meeting. This discussion was not made lightly and had input from both RHS administrators and Cherokee County Health Department.

The RHSAA Board of Directors hopes to reschedule the RHSAA Biennial Meeting at a later date. We would also like to take this opportunity to announce that Lester Hughes has been selected as the RHSAA Educator for 2020.

So in the meantime RHSAA members will be mailed a copy of the 2020 Memorial Booklet, along with financial and scholarship reports so you will have this information in hand.

We hope that everyone understands and will bear with us during these uncharted times.

## 2020 Scholarship Recipients

Recipient	Scholarship
Nicholas Kade Acker	Tom Sartain Memorial
Bailey Beard	Katherine & Houston White Memorial Family Scholarship
Jordan Booth	Frank Madden Memorial
Chloey Cleaver	Student Memorial
Constance Ford	Teacher Memorial
Haley Hancock	Lovelady Family Scholarship
Avery Kinney	Hubbard Family Memorial #4
David Seth Merchant	Hubbard Family Memorial #1
Kailee Millsap	Frank Summers Memorial
Drew Morton	Hubbard Family Memorial
Evelyn Peters	Hubbard Family Memorial #3
Sophie Grace Philibert	Judge Morris W. & Mauriete Hassell
Jaylei Wick	Dr. Jim Swink Memorial
Sarah Jane Wofford	E. H. and Marie Whitehead Memorial
Savanna "Grace" Young	Keith Conway Padgett Memorial

*Each recipient was awarded a \$1000 scholarship*

## Words from a Scholarship Recipient

Hello!! I am honored to have the opportunity to share life after receiving the Rusk High School Alumni Association Scholarship! My name is Crystal Nichols, but many in my hometown know me as Crystal Henderson. I received the Rusk High School Alumni Association Scholarship in 2006. I attended my freshman year of college at the University of North Texas before transferring to Stephen F. Austin State University. In 2010, I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies, Early Childhood - 6th grade. After graduation, I taught Kindergarten and 2nd grade in Katy, Texas. Soon after, I knew the best place to be was home. I returned to Rusk and continued my career as a 6th grade ELA teacher at Rusk Junior High. In my second year as

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## Lester Hughes RHSAA Educator the Year

Mr. Hughes acquired his job by unusual circumstances. He did not *interview* for his job of band director at Rusk ISD. In July 1961 Gerald Chapman and Mack Philbrick showed up to Lester Hughes' class at Stephen F. Austin College. Having already talked with Lester's college band director, teacher, and former employer, they offered Lester the job as they were anxious to get someone hired by August in time for band practices. Hughes, having never been to Rusk agreed to come over the next week and sign a contract.

Lester was born in Center, Texas and was raised on a farm outside of Center in the community of Arcadia. He was born into a musical family. His mother played the piano and sang, and his daddy taught gospel

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## Those Who Have Gone Before Us

These names have been added to the memorial book from July 15, 2019—July 15, 2020

1936	Katherine Pryor Lighthouse	1961	John H. Stover
1940	Dorothy Smith Byers*	1962	George Golightly
	Berniece Pryor Glass	1963	Herman "Freddy" Patrick
1944	Doris Parsons Hassell		Janeita Bobbitt Traylor
	Gwendolyn Patrick Stiefer		John M. Waddell
	Joe Kenneth Williamson*	1964	Charles Clark
1946	Davis Harrell*		Charles "Chuck" Swift*
	M. D. (Don) Hinton		Linda Weaver Tropp
	Maxine Denton Lindstrom	1966	Noel S. Largent
1947	Lillie Ann Phillips Bobbitt	1969	Gail Fisher Jensen*
	John F. Perkins	1970	Tommy Dosser
1948	Billy H. Guinn	1973	Larry Wayne Lusk
	Homer Lee Hinton		Lee Roy Sessions
1950	Glenda Littlejohn	1975	Kellie Lenex Powers*
1952	Dorla Smith Johnston	1979	James Richard Crippen, Jr.*
	Beverly Guinn Kanewske*	1980	Pamela Sue Bowden Blackwell
	Frances Echols Mangiafico	1980	Robert Kirk Stanley
1953	Rebecca Jane Stafford Gilbreath	1984	Monty Lee Berryhill
1954	Joy Beckham Buckner*	1989	Lisa Jane Brooks Lockett
	Charles D. Ramey	1993	Rodney Wayne Brooks
1955	Charles Rubin Dement, Jr.	1995	Michael Lynn Roberson
	Bobby Jack Dodson	2000	Rachael Wilson Finley
1957	Jerry D. Russell	2009	Katie Dotson-Smith
1958	Inell Stewart Scott*	2019	Michael Brummett
1960	Mary Earlene McCarty Chandler		
	Robert E. Stover*		

\* Rusk High School Alumni Association Member

\*\* Founding Board Member

Every effort is made to keep the memorial record correct and current.

Please send updated information to [fillong@aol.com](mailto:fillong@aol.com)

### Many Thanks to our Donors

Texas National Bank  
Citizens 1st Bank  
Austin Bank  
William E. (Billy) Watson  
David & Cindy Fulton '77  
Robert E. (Bobby) Brooks '62  
Sandra Conner Staine '62  
Lewie & Elaine Byers  
Nelson Burton '56  
Connie Martin Catalani '75  
Martha Halbert '53  
Sarah Braswell Foerster '59  
David Crysyp '94  
Michael Russell '90  
John Mark Lester '64  
Juanita Reed Parsons '44  
Billie Seeton '93

### Welcome New Members

1965 Larry G. Davis  
1966 Elizabeth Dear Holcomb  
1969 William Terry Martin  
1969 Sharon McElroy Taylor  
1975 Cathy Perry Busbee  
1975 Ricky Richards  
1977 Anita Hassell Ocker  
1979 Roger Hassell  
1980 Darvin Collins  
1984 Misty Bowden O'Leary  
1991 Keith Crawford  
1993 Billie Dowling Seeton  
1994 Robert (Bart) Clayton  
2003 Sarah Parsons Clayton  
2019 Sydnee Seeton

a 6th-grade teacher, I realized I wanted to have more of an impact on student learning and to help other teachers as well. I enrolled in graduate school at Stephen F. Austin State University. In 2015, I graduated with a Master's degree in Educational Leadership. In the spring of 2016, I began applying for Assistant Principal positions in the East Texas area. I was extremely blessed to have been named the Assistant Principal at Rusk Primary School! I worked hard and learned a lot under the leadership of two amazing principals. In the fall of 2019, I was blessed once again to be named the Principal of G.W. Bradford Primary School, formerly known as Rusk Primary! To be able to serve the students in my hometown and in the same halls I once walked, is such an honor! Fourteen years later, I would like to thank the Rusk High School Alumni Association for believing in me and blessing my future with a scholarship that helped me get to where I am today!!!

*Crystal Nichols*

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## Become A RHSAA Member

RHSAA Membership is open to everyone and the sole purpose of the Rusk High School Alumni Association is to provide Scholarships to graduating seniors of RHS. Funded in 2002 the Association has awarded over \$100,000 in scholarships.

A Lifetime membership is \$100. Show your support of the RHSAA and be part of Eagle Nation.

Please mail memberships to RHSAA, PO Box 711, Rusk, TX 75785.

singing schools.

Lester was drum major in high school and in college for three years while he received his bachelor's degree in music and his fourth year he received his master's degree in education at SFA. He also attended Arizona State University and University of Hawaii a couple of summers. At age 22, Hughes began his career at Rusk High School. Many have said that when Lester first arrived, they thought he was a new student because he looked a very young 22 years old.

Not long after arriving in Rusk, Lester was invited by a friend to the First United Methodist Church, where he has been a proud member ever since. Lester has served as interim choir director *six* different times. Lester was also an active member of the Lions Club in the 1970s-80s.

When school integration began, Lester was asked to teach two band periods a day at the G. W. Bradford School during the school year 1967-68. In addition to band directing, he also taught driver's education at Rusk, Cushing, and Central Heights.

Lester married in his early 30s to Fay Birkelbach, who had graduated from Rusk in 1960 before Lester started teaching. Lester and Fay had two daughters, Cynthia and Adriene, who both followed in the band tradition, as well as being baton twirlers and drum majors in the band.

Lester and Fay have been blessed with granddaughter, Marilyn and grandson, Cooper. And last year they became great-grandparents to Anderson. After nineteen years of teaching, Hughes went to work at Citizens 1<sup>st</sup> Bank in Rusk for 12 years. Later Lester wanted to complete his teacher retirement years and went to work for the Windham School System at the Coffield Prison Unit in Tennessee Colony, Texas. He also worked there for 12 years and retired at the age of 61. During his tenure at Coffield, he bought Rusk Mini Storage from Travis McCain and later purchased storage units from Tom Ball. He continued and increased the business for 23 years.

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2020, Hughes sold his two storage building sites to My Garage Self Storage. He and the family have laughed because several have asked, "What is he going to do now?" Because at the age of 81, Lester has more than earned the privilege of doing what he wants most days....which still includes rent houses, but also includes reading lots of books, watching westerns on T.V., and visiting with people on the phone.

Lester said "I have enjoyed every moment in Rusk and especially the people. I hope to remain in Rusk the rest of my life."

By the way, he has plots in Rusk's Cedar Hill Cemetery.

## Memorial Donations August 2019– July 2020

Donor	In Memory of	Donor	In Memory of
	<b>August</b>		<b>October</b>
Dr. John Barlow RHS '90 Ron & Paula Travis	Gloria Dotson Brandon McElroy Barbara McClure '64 Clarence Weaver '65 Robert Stover '60 Robert Stover '60 Janie Sue Hatfield '60 Gerald Ray Cox '60 Sharon Starkey New '79 Ann Keels Russell '59 Ann Keels Russell '59 Ann Keels Russell '59 Lorane Sparkman '38 Kathy Townley '84 Ronny Willingham '84 Ann Keels Russell '59 David Brown Mildred Mosely Gibson '36 Robert Alan Holcomb '66 Larry Jack Bowman '64 Betty Jones McCrary '47 Jack Berry '44 Larry Jack Bowman '64 Robert Alan Holcomb '66 Houston White Ann Keels Russell '59 Ann Keels Russell '59	David & Frances Long David & Frances Long  Joe & Emadean French Don & Cathy Jones David & Lila Murray Mike Sartain Ronny McElroy Don & Cathy Jones RHS Class of '89  Class of '80 Class of '54 Class of '57 Gary & Luanne Halbert  Mike & Carol Byrd Suzann McCarty  Class of '54 Ronny McElroy Don & Cathy Jones  David & Lila Murray  Class of '62  Lem & Linda Derrington Jeanne Duncan Waggener Judy Duncan Edwards RHS Class of '83  Daye Collins Don & Cathy Jones  Lem & Linda Derrington  Mike, Sissy, Katie, & David Crysop David Norton Don & Cathy Jones  RHS Class of '58 Judy Waugh Don & Cathy Jones David & Frances Long	Rachael Wilson Finley 2000 Lisa Brooks Lockett '89  <b>November</b> Joy Beckham Buckner '54 Jerry Russell '57 Charles E. "Chuck" Swift '64 Charles E. "Chuck" Swift '64 Charles E. "Chuck" Swift '64 Charles E. "Chuck" Swift '64 Lisa Brooks Lockett '89  <b>December</b> Kirk Stanley '80 Joy Beckham Buckner '54 Jerry Russell '57 Freddie Dear White '35  <b>January</b> Bruce & Patsy Pruett Charles E. "Chuck" Swift '64 Bruce & Patsy Pruett Charles Ramey '54 Bruce & Patsy Pruett Bruce & Patsy Pruett  <b>February</b> Bruce & Patsy Pruett  <b>March</b> George Golightly '62  <b>April</b> Ross Primm Gail Fisher Jensen '69 Gail Fisher Jensen '69 Jim & Audrey Townsend  <b>May</b> Ann Keels Russell '59 John M. Waddell '63 Linda Weaver Tropp '64 Charles Dement '55  <b>June</b> Michael Roberson '95 Gail Fisher Jensen '69 Wayne Brooks '93  <b>July</b> Inell Stewart Scott '58 Inell Stewart Scott '58 Linda McIntyre Beard '51 Michael Roberson '95
	<b>September</b>		
Ernest & Martha Hudnall  David & Lila Murray  Mike B. Sartain  Ronny McElroy Don & Cathy Jones  David & Frances Long  Cornelius, Littlejohn, Lloyd '79	Harold Hudnall Richard Crippen '79 Larry Jack Bowman '64 Phillip Burton '55 Robert Stover '60 Freddy Patrick '63 Lisa Brooks Lockett '89 Jamie Crippen '79 Herman Freddy Patrick '63 James Richard Crippen Jr. '79 Herman Freddy Patrick '63 Herman Freddy Patrick '63 Jamie Crippen '79 Lisa Brooks Lockett '89 Jamie Crippen '79 Kelli Powers '75 Jamie Crippen '75 Sharon Starkey New '79 David DeFoor '79		