



UPDATES

Pennsylvania Envirothon

Summer 2010

2010 Canon Envirothon



An Envirothon team from Penncrest High School located in Media, Delaware County captured fifth place honors at the 2010 Canon Envirothon held in

Fresno, California. Fifty-four teams from forty-five states and nine provinces competed at the twenty-third annual event held at California State University, Fresno.

Each team member was awarded a Canon Envirothon scholarship in the

amount of \$1,500 for their accomplishments. In addition, the team was also awarded medals for receiving the highest score on the forestry and current issue station tests. Visit the Canon Envirothon website at <http://www.envirothon.org> for complete results and photos of the 2010 event.

The Pennsylvania Envirothon and Penncrest High School team extend sincere appreciation to Canon U.S.A. and the Canon Envirothon Board of Directors for the opportunity to participate in such a rewarding event. THANK YOU!



Penncrest High School Envirothon team: Advisor—Mark Samilenko; Team members—Nicholas Krandak, Barbara Munin, Alek Kormeniowski, Katherine Ferguson, Jennifer Walker, and Advisor—Amanda Meltz.

2011 Pennsylvania State Envirothon—Oral Presentation Component Reinstated

The Envirothon Board of Directors is excited to reinstate the oral presentation component segment to the Pennsylvania State Envirothon competition. The 28th Annual Pennsylvania State Envirothon event, a two-day competition, will be hosted by Susquehanna University located in Selinsgrove, Snyder County on Tuesday and Wednesday, May 24 and 25, 2011.

Teams that earn the honor to participate in the 2011 State Envirothon will compete in an oral presentation component event on Tuesday at the University. The oral component scenario will focus around the 2011 Current Issue topic—Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries.

On Wednesday, teams will travel to Shikellamy State Park located in Sunbury for the traditional station

testing. The park is about a 20-minute drive, northeast of the university.

Teams, advisors, and volunteers will be housed in the dormitories, and meals will be served in the Degenstein Campus Center. For more information about Susquehanna University, visit www.susqu.edu. For more information on the 2011 Pennsylvania Envirothon visit www.envirothonpa.org.

Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries

2011 Current Environmental Issue

An estuary is a partially enclosed coastal body of water where freshwater from the land measurably dilutes saltwater from the ocean. This mixture of water types creates a unique environment that is critical for the survival of many species of fish, birds, and other wildlife. Estuar-

ies provide safe spawning grounds and nurseries for fish and shellfish, ideal resting and refueling places for migratory birds, and habitat for many reptiles, amphibians, and mammals. Marshes and other wetlands, which often fringe estuaries, protect marine life and water

quality by filtering sediment and pollution from upstream sources. Estuaries also create natural protection to coasts and shorelines from damaging storm waves and floods.

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Battling Nature Deficit Disorder by “Taking a Minute to be In It!”

by Leigh Beamesderfer

Today, our technology-based world has left little room for outdoor play, imagination, creativity, and quiet observation. As more of today’s youth are tuned into computers, cell phones, and video games, there is less interaction with the outdoor world. Rarely do we take the time to watch the sun set, or look up in the sky for birds, or notice how the clouds spontaneously form patterns. In addition, teachers at the elementary level are pushed to teach reading and math, leaving minimal time for science. The result: our children are missing out on the wonders and beauty of our natural world—the world that sustains all of us.

Jane Kirkland, award-winning author and Pennsylvania native, offers a tip to help teachers train our students to be more observant and in tune with the natural world. Kirkland’s advice is simple—she asks us to “take a minute to be in it.”

Kirkland encourages teachers for all grade levels to mount a white board (erase board) or a large laminated piece of paper where students can post their observations about the nature around them throughout the day. The simple act of observing and recording is a basic science skill, but a very important step in learning basic fundamentals.

Some patience and guidance will be needed, as a few outlandish sightings may get posted at first; but as you train your students to **take a full minute** to observe nature, you’ll be pleasantly surprised with what they discover.

If your students become engaged in this simple task, interest and discussion will quickly grow. In fact, what started out as brief white board postings can grow into a large classroom or school project. These observations can be developed into written assignments or oral reports where students provide fuller

descriptions of the plant or animal, its natural habitat, and the features that make it unique. By observing and reporting on these elements of nature, students will not only gain a better appreciation of their natural surroundings, but will also enhance their writing and public speaking skills.

The task of observing and recording can incorporate various multi-disciplines, including writing, public speaking, social studies, art, and more. The opportunities to discover nature and bring it into the classroom are endless. In no time at all, the white board ‘take a minute to be in it’ list can become your very own field guide to your school yard or community.

Be creative—engage yourself and your students in nature. Take a minute—or a class period—and **BE IN IT!** You’ll be amazed at the list generated and the values you and the natural world will foster.

Salt and Fresh Water Estuaries 2011 Current Environmental Issue

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Estuaries are important parts of our lives; interconnected to our economy, hobbies and culture, and an important part of our coastal and ocean ecosystems. Estuaries provide commercial economic benefit to the U.S. in the form of seafood sales and jobs. They provide recreational activities such as fishing, birding, boating and hiking, which are enjoyed by millions of Americans each year in estuaries bringing income to coastal communities. Estuaries offer cultural importance to Americans. They are often city and trade centers, they are an important source of food, the buffer communities from storm surges, and they have a long history of cultural use by Native Americans. Estuaries are vital

ecosystems providing diverse habitat and nursery areas for many important organisms.



Because we are all connected to the nation’s coasts, our activities have many affects on estuaries. Do you live in the high mountains, arid deserts, or near fertile farm fields? Wherever you live, your actions affect estuaries. Everything that drains from the land feeds into many different estuaries and the oceans. Everyone lives in the watershed of an

estuary. A watershed is the land area that drains into a stream, river, lake, estuary, or coastal zone.

What lakes, rivers, or streams are near your home? And, where does the water in those channels travel? Wastewater (water from your yard, showers, dishwasher, etc.) drains downstream from your home or community and eventually into rivers and bays. Your water use affects estuaries every day. Keeping our rivers and streams clean keeps our estuaries and oceans clean.

Estuaries require everyone’s help and hard work to keep them clean and safe. There are many things you can do to help protect estuaries and to conserve the valuable natural resource in estuarine ecosystems.

“Note of Thanks”

From the Board of Directors



The Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our sponsors for their continued support of the Pennsylvania Envirothon. Several corporations and organizations have maintained their commitment to give financial contributions to support event and program operations. This funding has enabled the Envirothon to continue to provide a quality natural resource education program to thousands of high school students throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

These partnerships have been formed because of the common passion of encouraging youth participation and awareness in natural resource conservation issues that are shared by both the corporations and Envirothon.

With continued interest and support, the Envirothon strives to expand further involvement in this high-profile natural resource education program.

Pennsylvania Envirothon Program Coordinator Elected Chair of Canon Envirothon Board of Directors

During the 2010 event held at California State University, Fresno, the Canon Envirothon Committee held its annual summer meeting that included elections to the board of directors. Pennsylvania Envirothon Program Coordinator, Lorelle Steach, who has served on the Canon Envirothon Board for the past seven years, was elected to serve as chair for the next Canon Envirothon year.

The Canon Envirothon Board of Directors and staff are here to serve all who participate in and support the program. Lorelle is eager to take on this charge and honored to serve in this position. She looks forward to working along side the other six directors to further improve the program.

After 23 years of the North American

competition, we are now reaping the benefits of the Envirothon by having past participants become crucial decision makers, community leaders, as well as individuals who change the natural resource philosophy of upcoming generations. We look forward to continuing to prepare our students for the natural resource challenges of tomorrow.

THANK YOU!

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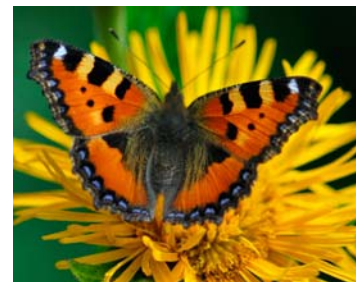
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2010 State Envirothon Highlights

Sixty-six teams competed in the twenty-seventh Pennsylvania State Envirothon held at PPL Montour Preserve located in Danville, Montour County on May 26, 2010.

The students were challenged in the areas of soil / land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and a current environmental issue. The 2010 current environmental issue focused on the protection of groundwater through urban, agricultural, and environmental planning. EXCO North Coast Energy provided valuable information about Marcellus Shale, natural gas drilling, and potential careers to the teams at the Discovery Station, the non-testing station.

The participating teams represented the best and the brightest of the thousands of high school teens who have competed in county Envirothon competitions. The Pennsylvania Envirothon is sponsored by Pennsylvania's sixty-six conservation districts, the State Conservation Commission, and the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts. The program is managed by a board of directors representing those sponsors. Technical expertise is provided by the following agency partners: Pennsylvania Departments of Agriculture, of Conservation and Natural Resources, of Education, of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Game Commission, and the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service.



First Place
Penncrest High School



Second Place
Carmichaels Area High School



Third Place
North East High School

The top 10 winners, with scores, include:

- First Place - Penncrest High School, Delaware County, with a score of 474;
- Second Place - Carmichaels Area High School, Greene County, with a score of 441;
- Third Place - North East High School, Erie County, with a score of 433;
- Fourth Place - Warren Area High School, Warren County, with a score of 430;
- Fifth Place - Homeschool, York County, with a score of 426;
- Sixth Place - Blue Mountain High School, Schuylkill County, with a score of 415;
- Seventh Place - Emmaus High School, Lehigh County, with a score of 406;
- Eighth Place - Oley Valley High School, Berks County, with a score of 404;
- Ninth Place - Bald Eagle Area High School, Centre County, with a score of 395; and
- Tenth Place - Littlestown High School, Adams County, with a score of 395.

The Envirothon awarded scholarships to the first, second, and third place teams. The scholarships were sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the State Conservation Commission. Each of the top ten teams received a plaque and other prizes.

For more information on the Envirothon program or how to join our team of partners and sponsors, contact your local conservation district or contact the Pennsylvania Envirothon by phone (814) 623-8099, Email paenvirothon@pennswoods.net, or visit the website at www.envirothonpa.org.

2010 State Envirothon—Moments to Remember

Tuesday Evening, Wednesday Welcome, and Awards Ceremony



Michael Kuriga—Master Falconer



Montour County Commissioner—Jerry Ward



Fred Gast—Superintendent Montour Preserve



PACD President—MaryAnn Warren



NRCS State Conservationist—Denise Coleman



Ed Zygmunt—Aide, Congressman Chris Carney

Event Highlights



Do they have an E & S Plan?



2011 PSSA Testing Calendar



The annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment used to measure a student's attainment of the academic standards while also determining the degree to which school programs enable students to attain proficiency of the standards. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 3 through 8 and grade 11 is assessed in reading and math. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 5, 8, and 11 is assessed in writing. Every Pennsylvania student in grades 4, 8, and 11 is assessed in science.

Conservation Districts and Envirothon Coordinators, we are making you aware of this issue to assist you when scheduling your county Envirothon events.

The following is the 2011 PSSA Testing Calendar.

| Assessment | Dates | Grade(s) |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| PSSA Math and Reading | March 14 -25, 2011 | 3 - 8, 11 |
| PSSA-M Math | | 4 - 8, 11 |
| PSSA-M Reading | | 4 - 8, 11 |
| PSSA Writing | March 28 - April 1, 2011 | 5, 8, 11 |
| PSSA Science | April 4 - 8, 2011 | 4, 8, 11 8, 11 |
| Continuation of all Make-Ups | April 11 - 15, 2011 | As Needed |

Reduce Waste

Do your part to conserve our natural resources. View the UPDATES newsletter on-line by visiting our web site:

www.envirothonpa.org

OR

E-mail the UPDATES newsletter to all of your Envirothon partners, participants, and supporters.

Upcoming Events at a Glance—Mark your Calendars!



September—November 2010

- Coordinators begin contacting and recruiting Envirothon teams and advisors.
- 2011 Teacher Resource Packets will be available late October.
- Envirothon Coordinator meeting via a Webinar. Tentatively scheduled for November 9, 2010.

April—May 2011

County Envirothon events sponsored in Pennsylvania's 67 counties.

May 24 & 25, 2011

Pennsylvania State Envirothon — Susquehanna University and Shikellamy State Park.

July 24—29, 2011

2011 Canon Envirothon — Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada.

July 22—28, 2012

2012 Canon Envirothon — Susquehanna University, Selingsgrove, Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Envirothon Mission

The Envirothon is an environmental education program made available to Pennsylvania Conservation Districts in partnership with related state and federal agencies and other organizations. The Envirothon program is designed to test high school students' knowledge of Pennsylvania's natural resources and environmental sciences. The program emphasizes the importance of environmental sensitivity while stressing a need to achieve a social, ecological, and economic balance. The Pennsylvania Envirothon provides future generations with the ability to be better equipped to address the complex natural resource concerns facing today's world as well as the challenges of tomorrow.



For more information:

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