



UPDATES

Pennsylvania Envirothon

April 2018

2018 Pennsylvania Envirothon

The 2018 Pennsylvania Envirothon competition will be held at Susquehanna University and Camp Mount Luther on May 22 and 23. Upon completing and winning their county competition, teams should complete the online registration found on the [Pennsylvania Envirothon](#) website. County Envirothon coordinators will provide registration instructions and information to winning teams at the close of their respective county competition.

On Tuesday, May 22nd the Pennsylvania Envirothon state event activities will happen at Susquehanna University (SU) located in Selinsgrove, Snyder County. Check out [Susquehanna University](#) for more information.

Camp Mount Luther will host the State Event activities on Wednesday, May 23rd. Camp Mount Luther is located in Mifflinburg, Union County, which is a 40-minute drive from Susquehanna University. For more information, visit [Camp Mount Luther](#).

Oral Presentation Component—State Envirothon

The 2018 oral component scenario will be posted on the Pennsylvania Envirothon website on **Monday, May 14**, the week prior to the event. This will provide an opportunity to prepare for the oral presentation to those winning teams. Teams will be able to utilize existing resources, research new information, and obtain input and guidance from advisors to enhance their presentation. Additionally, posting the scenario to the web site will allow nonparticipating teams a chance to see how the scenario is written, what is expected, and “participate” on their own, helping them prepare for future State Envirothon events and for their own personal growth.

Upon completing their county competition, winning teams will receive a registration packet that includes the *Oral Component Rules and Guidelines* as well as the passcode to access the oral component training videos. In addition, a schedule of preparation and presentation times will be provided. If your team cannot make its assigned time, please contact the Pennsylvania Envirothon Executive Director, [Lorelle Steach](#) or phone (814) 310-3271 as soon as possible.

Who will help lead the National Anthem at the State Envirothon?

The Pennsylvania Envirothon is seeking an individual or an Envirothon team, who will be attending the State Event, to lead the group in singing the National Anthem at the start of the day on Wednesday. If a student or a team is interested, please contact the Pennsylvania Envirothon Executive Director, [Lorelle Steach](#) or phone (814) 310-3271.



Peregrine Falcon Workshop

The coaches and teachers attending the 2018 Pennsylvania Envirothon have the opportunity to attend a workshop on the recovery of the Peregrine Falcon within the Commonwealth. Participants will hear about the successful peregrine falcon reintroduction in Pennsylvania, its natural history, highlighting numerous adaptations, and about endangered species concepts. Peregrine falcons were absent from Pennsylvania by the early 1960's as the result of the use of DDT. While this species was rare for many years, the species made a remarkable comeback through reintroduction programs, adapting to life in cities including Harrisburg, Reading, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Williamsport. Since 1997 peregrine falcons have been nesting on the 15th floor ledge of, appropriately enough, the Rachel Carson State Office Building. Arguably this is the most successful falcon nest site, in terms of reproduction, in Pennsylvania with 61 young peregrines hatching since 2000. This workshop will be led by the Department of Environmental Protection's Director of Environmental Education, Bert Myers. It is designed to complement the [PA Falcon Cam](#) located on DEP's web-site.

Mike Dupuy, Master Falconer

Mike Dupuy will be the featured speaker for the Tuesday evening education program at this year's State Envirothon. Mike is a falconry/bird of prey expert and professional public speaker who passionately pursues falconry as a sport, a profession, and a metaphor for universal human aspirations.



Mike captures the imagination of diverse audiences through his unique infotainment style, which features personal anecdotes and demonstrations with Birds of Prey. He invites his audiences to open up and ask questions, to re-focus on their dreams and to follow their own passions, whatever they may be. Mike believes that people who witness the beauty of birds of prey and the 4,000-year-old interaction between a falconer and a bird of prey often discover their own connections to the natural world.

We hope that all teams will join us for this evening of fun and learning.

Envirothon Gear for Sale

We will once again have t-shirts, hats, hoodies, and polo shirts for purchase at this year's state competition. The gray t-shirts and hats along with the green polos will have an embroidered Pennsylvania Envirothon logo. The gray hoodies and polos will have a screen printed logo. In addition to the Envirothon gear, 2018 Envirothon t-shirts will be available for purchase.

While attending the state competition, bring some extra spending money and visit the Envirothon gear table.

Where are they now?

Ryan Ling, PA DCNR Assistant District Forester



When people ask me why I chose a career in forestry, I always answer without hesitation the same two reasons, "Scouting and the Envirothon." Like most rural Pennsylvania kids, I spent most of my time as a youth with my brother and friends fishing, playing sports, participating in scouting, climbing trees and doing all the things little boys do while exploring the great outdoors. As I entered high school I still spent much of my free time outdoors playing sports, hunting and fishing. So when some of my friends floated the idea of having an Envirothon team at West Branch Area High School, I was absolutely on board. I didn't know at that time what an Envirothon was, but anything that was outdoors and a competition was something I could get

behind. So we studied and prepared our team; *The Environ-Mentals*, for the Clearfield County Envirothon. With our sights set on nothing less than first place, we succeeded the years we competed together. Our team still holds the highest state score of any Clearfield County Envirothon team.

To say the Envirothon was influencing was an understatement. Of that team of Environ-Mentals, a few of us are now making careers in the natural resource/environmental career fields. Today, I spend my days working for the Pennsylvania DCNR Bureau of Forestry's Moshannon State Forest as an Assistant District Forester. It is a career that I find very rewarding and enjoyable. I know it sounds cliché but being able to get up every day and go to a job you love is a blessing. I often look back at how I got to where I am today, and I know that my career choice was shaped in part, because of the Envirothon. I remember the DCNR forester coming to the school to help prepare us for competition and being amazed at how he appeared to love his job. I had the privilege of working with him at the end of his career, and he truly did love the work; I wanted that.

I would be remiss, and my Environ-Mental teammates wouldn't let me live it down, if I wasn't honest with the fact that I didn't go straight to Penn College and Penn State to study forestry. With a couple of short stints in other majors/programs at other colleges, I knew that those programs were not for me and quickly changed majors and schools until I settled on what made sense, forest science. So why do I find it necessary to throw that in? For you environmental educators and Envirothon team leaders who may be reading this, this is for you.

Few high school seniors at all of 17 or 18 years old know what they want to do with the rest of their life, but they are expected to be certain. Don't expect your students and team members to come out of the Envirothon with a guaranteed career path that aligns with what you have taught them. Know however, that what you teach them and how you go through the competition, will, with certainty, guide them. They may not say it at first, or they may not tell you at all, but what you are doing matters. You

may have students who choose environmental careers or others that pursue a different calling; what they are taking into their chosen career field is a competitive drive. A true win or lose experience that speaks volumes to real life.

Those days of my childhood I looked at the forest as nothing more than a never ending playground, but now I look at it as a workplace. I look at the forest as a resource that must be managed for all Pennsylvanians; a resource that we are entrusted with to ensure that it is well cared for and persists even better into the future. Some of those experiences that shaped me and the career I chose, I can trace back to the Envirothon. I can trace back to those partners who came to our school to help us prepare. I can trace back to our instructors who made sure we knew our potential and guided us throughout the process. I cannot vividly remember many of those high school days, but some of the clearest are of the Envirothon competitions. We prepared as a team. We succeeded as a team. We learned as a team, but it stayed with us as individuals long after. So to the advisers, especially ours, thank you. Without the backing of the Clearfield County Conservation District, this great program, the administration of West Branch Area High School, and our advisers Dan Socash and Andy Brickley, I for one would not be in the career path I am today.

2017 Monroe County Conservation Educator of the Year Maricatherine Garr - Pleasant Valley High School

By Karen Boyle, Environmental Educator, Monroe County Conservation District



Maricatherine Garr was recognized as the 2017 Monroe County Conservation Educator of the Year. She teaches grades 9, 11 and 12 in Chemistry, Earth & Environment, and AP Environmental Science at Pleasant Valley High School.

In 2013, she became the Pleasant Valley High School Envirothon Advisor. Since becoming the advisor, her team has won the competition three times which allowed them to represent Monroe County at the state competition where they competed against 65 teams from across Pennsylvania. In 2014, the team placed a very respectable twenty-second; in 2016, the team did even better and placed ninth; and in 2017, the team went further than any other team in the history of the Monroe County Envirothon. It placed fifth overall,

which earned each team member scholarship money.

In addition to her leadership as an Envirothon Advisor, Maricatherine has also been passionate about reviving the AP Environmental Science Course at Pleasant Valley High School which had been seeing a decline in student registration. Today there are 40 students in the class with a total of 95 having completed the course over the last few years.

Finally, over the course of the last year Maricatherine has worked on the Science Task Force to require all Pleasant Valley High School ninth grade students to complete the Earth & Environmental class to graduate. It is a goal that she has been working hard to attain to ensure that her students are more environmentally aware. It seems to be working as one of her past students wrote about Maricatherine, "She is a teacher who enlightened my mind and broadened my horizons and ways of thinking."

It is clear that Pleasant Valley High School students, both past and present, are fortunate to have such an inspiring, passionate, and dedicated teacher.

****We invite all conservation districts who recognize Envirothon teachers, coaches, and/or students to submit articles and photos to include in the Pennsylvania Envirothon UPDATES newsletter.**