

EDUCATION

Penncrest scores fourth

By Leslie Krowchenko
Times Correspondent

MIDDLETOWN » A hat trick is quite an accomplishment in ice hockey.

Until this year, it was a rather significant accomplishment in NCF-Envirothon, too.

The five-member team representing Penncrest High School, composed of Cole Gaboriault, Thy-Lan Gale, Dennis Harrsch, Rachel Hughes and Abigail Schwartz, captured the school's fourth top prize in the international event, held July 23-29 at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Md. The win joins its gold medals from 2000, 2005 and 2009.

"It was pretty awesome because we came so close last year," said co-captain and now Penncrest alum Dennis Harrsch. "Our advisors Mr. (Mark) Samilenko and Mrs. (Chrissa) Kuntz put in so much time and effort with the team and it was nice to come in first."

Sponsored by the National Conservation Foundation, NCF-Envirothon strives to help students learn more about the natural environment while equipping them with the knowledge needed to apply that information to complex environmental issues. It simultaneously promotes stewardship of natural resources to maintain a balance between the quality of life and the environment.

The competition involved high schools from 45 states and seven Canadian and two Chinese provinces, each of which took the top prize at its state/provincial and regional competitions to reach the international level. The Penncrest gold team, one of two at the school, topped groups from Strath Haven and Sun Valley high schools and the

Glen Mills Schools, then bested more than 65 teams across the state to secure its spot.

The teams tested their knowledge in aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife, this year's current events topic, agricultural soil and water conservation stewardship, and orals. They prepared using study materials and various publications and tests developed by professionals from the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, Game Commission and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources - Forestry and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. Penncrest received the highest scores in the forestry, wildlife and current events topics in its overall win.

"The students each specialize in a different category, but they function as a team," said Kuntz. "One person may be doing an analysis while another is using the necessary equipment to take measurements."

Like most awards ceremonies, the top prize was preceded by other announcements, which in any other year would have been an excruciating wait. The honors were highlighted, however, with Samilenko and Kuntz inducted into the Envirothon Hall of Fame, an accolade recognizing the leadership and dedication of those involved with the program. Approximately 20 individuals, including those who founded and expanded the program, have their names inscribed on the plaque and the coaches, both of whom have been involved with Penncrest teams for nearly 20 years, are two of only three advisors so honored.

"It was so exciting," said co-captain and fellow alum Rachel Hughes. "First they were named to the Hall of

Fame, then our team was named the winner."

Like most coaches, Samilenko turned the tribute back to the team.

"It is a very nice honor, but it is the students who put in the time and effort," he said. "We have a common goal to do our best and advance as far as we can. They follow my lead and execute and that is really fulfilling as an educator."

The victory is accompanied by a \$15,000 prize divided evenly among the team members. With Harrsch on his way to Duke University to study pre-med and environmental policy and Hughes headed to Notre Dame University hoping to double major in environmental studies and liberal arts, the funds will no doubt be put to good use.

"Not only did I learn about environmental issues, but we worked well as a team," she said. "Both will be helpful in my career."

national Envirothon win



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Penncrest High School captured its fourth win this summer at the NCF-Envirothon. Joining for the check presentation were, left to right, Bill Gill, vice president of environmental affairs for Smithfield Foods, team advisor Mark Samilenko, team advisor Chrissa Kuntz, members Rachel Hughes, Dennis Harrsch, Thy-Lan Gale, Abigail Schwartz and Cole Gaboriault and Millie Langley, chair of the NCF-Envirothon Operations Committee.

es are today's tonight's lows.
 The pathes... wind, humidity, sunshine intensity, cloudiness, precipitation, pressure and elevation on the human body.
 Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2017

...tell the Army Corps.

SOME FREE ADVICE

To all musicians: Please sing your songs without making personal or political comments. People go to hear you sing to get away from the problems of the day. Also, if you're going to promote a new album at a concert, please charge a lot less.

CLASSIC ROCKER

DON'T BLAME TRUMP

I heard people complaining about Trump making that "fire and fury" comment on the anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki. This is what's so messed up about the regressive American left today. I will throw money down that it never even crossed their minds to say that North Korea shouldn't

be threatening to nuke Guam over the course of the three days corresponding to the anniversaries of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks.

STRICTLY BUSINESS

Trump is a micro-manager. If you work for Trump and you don't produce, he tells you about it. Since "Made Man In Morton" wants to bring up "The Godfather," remember - "It's not personal. It's business."

GET CLEAN

To "Union Guy On Union Ave.," no, we don't want these things shipped by rail. We also don't want them shipped in the pipeline either. We want to get rid of them and go to alternative, clean energy like the rest of the world is doing.

ONE WHO KNOWS