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Garnet Valley Wins Delco Hi-Q Title

Over 1,000 spectators watched at Penncrest High School as Garnet Valley won the title for the first time since 2002 by besting the two-time defending champions Penncrest and the Chichester High School team.

With Garnet Valley taking the win at the last moment by breaking a late contest tie, faculty advisor Carol Rockafellow said it was awesome to be ending her 39-year teaching career on such a high note. Garnet Valley senior Kevin Wharton added "It feels great," about the victory.

It was apparent that this was going to be a tight match, as all three teams nailed their respective questions in Current Events and American History with relative ease. A slight stumble by both Garnet Valley and Chichester allowed Penncrest to take the lead. Penncrest had a perfect first half and correctly answered all of their questions for 32 points. Garnet Valley was nipping at their heels with 28 and Chichester was still in the hunt with 19. The first half was so close that not a single pick-up point was scored.

The second half remained just as close. Chichester closed the gap with Garnet Valley and Penncrest earning points in Art History, Team Choice, Physics, Government and World History. Chi also had four of the five bonus points of the entire contest to add to their score. By the middle of the second half, Penncrest extended their lead to five points. However Garnet battled back stealing four important points in the Team Choice Toss-Up. Penncrest scored three points in Physics which allowed Garnet to tie the match by gaining the full four points in the category. Each question is worth four points on the first try and teams are given four attempts to answer. They lose one point with each incorrect answer.

Chichester missed only four of its 14 questions and picked up extra points for correct answers to questions missed by its opponents. It also correctly answered a tough chemistry question missed by the two other teams, but missed its own chemistry question. It just wasn't enough to overcome the fierce competition.

Penncrest and Garnet Valley remained tied going into the final question, the Math Toss-Up. You could cut the tension with a knife as Quizmaster Tom McCarthy started to read the question. The tension was short lived as Garnet Valley gave the correct answer before McCarthy could even finish reading the question. Final Scores were Garnet Valley – 52, Penncrest – 48, Chichester -42.

"It was amazing to have it come down to one question, this was the closest championship match we've had in quite a while, all of these student scholars are winners" said Delco Hi-Q Director Rick Durante, vice president of education for Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union.

It was tough for regular season top scoring Penncrest to watch the visitors accept the Donna Zerby Trophy from Delaware County Executive Director Dr. Larry O' Shea and FMFCU Board Member Harry Jamison but the home team members were good sports. "Garnet Valley had a great match and Chichester had a great year," said Penncrest junior Alek Korzeniowski. "We'll be back strong next year."

Indeed, Chichester had a “Cinderella season” this year, appearing in the championship match for the first time since 1968.

Faculty advisor John Cole, who has coached Chichester teams for the past 32 years, a Hi-Q player in his high school days, expressed pleasure and pride in his team’s performance. Penncrest’s coach Mike Ludwig has one less year than Cole and has presided over eight of Penncrest’s nine championships. He was proud of his team’s performance and hopes to be back for a rematch next season.

All three teams were congratulated by their respective superintendents, principals, parents, and school board members who made the trip to support their teams.

The three winning teams will receive their awards at the annual Partners in Learning Celebration on May 5 at Drexelbrook Corporate Events Center, when all participating teams will be honored. Also to be recognized at the event will be 19 county educators receiving this year’s Excellence in Teaching Award.

Durante noted the Garnet Valley champs will compete in the first ever national online Hi-Q competition March 30 against regional Hi-Q champions from Everett Washington, Mobile County Alabama, and Marinette Wisconsin.

Team Members

* GARNET VALLEY: Faculty advisors Carol Rockafellow and Dr. Leslie Arensberg; Tom Scott, Paul Becker, John Mygra, Kevin Wharton, Haley Randolph, Michael Dubnansky, Mory Elsaify, Bryan Fox, Alex Gil and John Curran.

* PENNCREST: Faculty advisor Michael Ludwig; Alek Koreniowski, Andrew Kaiden, Nicholas Kandrak, Jeremy Bennett, Sanj Singh, Barbara Munin, Sarah McKeown, Matt Liu, Grace Chang and Danielle Su.

* CHICHESTER: Faculty advisor John Cole; Tim Henderson, Marissa Murdock, Matt Mokary, Marwan al-Nakhleh, Malik al-Nakhleh, Kristen von Steubon, Jacki Barnes, Aseel Abdalla, Lauren Maher and Rachel Adams.

Delco-Hi-Q is a partnership between Delaware County Intermediate Unit and Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union. Veteran actor Tom McCarthy is Quizmaster, Rick Durante from FMFCU serves as Director, Dave Bramble from Delaware County Intermediate Unit is the production engineer, Wes Crane is Hi-Q Coordinator

In addition to the participating schools’ support, primary corporate sponsor is Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union Foundation. Long-time Valedictorian sponsor is Kimberly-Clark Corporation and the Delaware County Daily Times is a supporter of the 63rd Season.