May 2016

The Road Ahead

Contests Crown Top Teen Drivers

Vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among 16 to 24 year olds. Key contributors to crashes involving teen drivers in Pennsylvania include driver inexperience, driver distractions, driving too fast for conditions, and improper or careless turning.

To help educate young drivers, several organizations throughout Northwest Pennsylvania hosted four regional Teen Driver Competitions between April 18 and 21. This edition of the Road Ahead offers an overview of the events as well as the names of the winners.

Competitions Test Participants' Knowledge, Skills

The contests challenged teenage participants to show off their driving skills and knowledge through a series of scored tests. The top three drivers at each competition were awarded prizes — $1,000 for first place, $500 for second, and $300 for third. A team award was also given to the school that had the highest combined score among the three-person teams.

Over the course of the four days nearly 100 teens from five counties participated in the following stations:

- Slow driving obstacle course with parallel parking
- Written exam on rules from the state Driver's Manual
- Perception test, using a driver's view of the road
- Pre-trip inspection of a vehicle for unsafe conditions
- Impaired and distracted driver simulator
- Share the road semi-truck demonstration

Organizers included XPO Logistics, the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association, Northwest Regional Highway Safety Network, PennDOT, and the sheriff's offices of Mercer, Crawford, Venango and Forest counties.

Prizes were donated by Kingsley Blasco & Associates, Allstate and State Farm insurance agencies and other community groups and businesses. State and local police along with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and other safety-minded organizations provided volunteers to help the events run smoothly.

The top two finishers from each county are eligible to compete in the statewide Young Driving Championship May 12 in Camp Hill. There, the top teen driver will take home a $5,000 scholarship. Second place will receive a $3,000 scholarship, and third place will get a $2,000 scholarship.

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And the winners are…

Allison Pollock of Harborcreek High School earned the top spot in the Erie competition. Cory Kephart of General McLane High School came in second. Sullivan Johnson of Cathedral Prep High School was third.

Top finishers in the Crawford event were **Anthony Parulski** of Maplewood High School, first; Zack Ford of Cochranton High School, second; and Cameron Collins of Maplewood High School, third.

Ava Homan and Hunter Lancaster of Venango Catholic High School took the top two spots in the Venango-Forest competition. Addison Shull of Rocky Grove High School finished in third place.

Jasmine Day of Farrell High School won first place in the Mercer County event. Katie Kosick of Grove City High School was second, and Timothy Edney of Lakeview High School was third.

Top High School Teams Honored Along Side Individuals

Taking team titles at this year's regional competitions were **General McLane High School** (Cory Kephart, Nathan Myers, and Rachel Pamula), Erie County; **Meadville Area High School** (Joseph Coffee, Derek Ridgeway, and Evan Vanyo), Crawford County; **Venango Catholic High School** (Ava Homan, Hunter Lancaster and Sarah Graner), Venango-Forest counties; and **Farrell High School** (Jasmine Day, Marcus McCoy, and Leon Lewis), Mercer County.

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