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### Winners Announced in Art Students' Holiday Window Competition

Winners of the fifth annual "War of the Windows" creative competition, sponsored by Naperville Dental Specialists and General Oral Health Care and Innovative Orthodontic Centers, were announced yesterday. Art club sponsors from the three participating schools have been notified, and cash prizes will be sent to benefit the art departments in each school.

Metea Valley High School captured first place, earning the school's art department a \$500 prize. Naperville North High School art students earned the second place prize of \$250, and Neuqua Valley High School took third, also receiving \$250.

Armed with their imaginations, paints, and competitive spirit, students from the three high schools arrived at Main Street Promenade's second floor dental offices in late November to face off in the annual holiday "War of the Windows." The talented students were asked to design and paint holiday scenes that included the downtown mascot, Sam the Snowman, somewhere on the festive windows. Thirty-one students worked with their art club sponsors and teachers to create their delightful masterpieces, including Neuqua Valley's windows with a gingerbread house theme, Metea Valley's with characters from a popular children's book, and North's with Huskies pulling a sled.

Karen Popovich, art teacher, art club sponsor, and National Art Honor Society sponsor at Metea Valley High School, described her students' winning concept. She said, "We wanted to come up with something that was creative, would grab the attention of the viewers, as well as tell a story. I suggested a children's book that I read to my sons, *The Mystery of the Missing Mitten* by Steven Kellogg, and they all agreed that this would be a great starting point." According to Popovich, "They had a lot of fun fostering a sense of community through this artistic endeavor. They worked as a team."

Student Stephanie Guarino, a Metea Valley senior, added, "I'm grateful for being able to be part of a project that can allow others to see how art can come to life in our community."

Sam Steier, also a senior at Metea Valley High School, commented, "It was inspiring to come together as a team to accomplish a project that will bring joy to the

community. From giving each other artistic advice, adjusting the composition, and catching paint about to drip onto the floor, all of us shared laughter and a sense of camaraderie through this opportunity.”

Doctors from both dental offices and their staffs voted on the windows and selected the winners. Dr. LaVacca truly enjoys sponsoring the window competition each year. He said, “All of our windows were truly amazing. The students put their heart and soul into their creations. We enjoy giving them the opportunity to work together and showcase their art.”

Dr. Ibrahim added, “The teens always do an outstanding job designing and painting our windows. It is such fun to watch them work together and to know they are proud to share their talents with the community.”

The dental offices are located on the second floor of the Main Street Promenade, at 55 S. Main Street, suites 231, 241, and 251. To learn more about their services, please visit [www.ndscare.com](http://www.ndscare.com) or [www.orthocenters.org](http://www.orthocenters.org) or stop by the dental offices.

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Photo and caption:



Metca Valley High School National Art Honor Society students designed their holiday window with concepts from a children’s book, *The Mystery of the Missing Mitten*. Their creative window earned the school’s art department a first-place prize of \$500. The annual competition is sponsored by Naperville Dental Specialists and General Oral Health Care and Innovative Orthodontic Centers. Naperville North and Neuqua Valley high school entries each earned \$250 prizes. (Photo by Jini Clare)