

# Posterized!



WAYNE TILCOCK/ENTERPRISE PHOTO

Winners in the city's Street Smarts poster contest check out their handiwork at the awards ceremony last week.

## Small artists communicate big ideas on safety

SPECIAL TO THE ENTERPRISE

Aspiring artists showed off their safety knowledge in the city of Davis Street Smarts Poster Contest — Pollution Solutions.

Elementary school students were asked to create original artwork illustrating the importance of proper helmet use, safe bicycle riding, crossing the street safely and safe driving — including awareness about distracted driving and the dangers of talking or texting while on the road.

All contest entries are on display in an exhibit at the Davis Arts Center through Saturday. In addition to artwork, educational materials addressing the most common traffic safety issues for children and families help support the mission of the city's Street Smarts program — a bicycle, pedestrian and driver safety education campaign run through the Public Works Department.

During an art opening held last week at the Davis Arts Center, the contest's finalists and first-, second- and third-prize winners were announced.

Taking first place in the K-3 category was Aaron Yamamoto while Jayleen Shang took first in grades 4-6.

Second place went to Vivek Dusanapudi (K-3) and Sierra Baptiste (4-6), while third place

was won by Ruby Schwerin (K-3) and Alden McCabe (4-6).

Judges also chose the following finalists: Augie Schwerin, Neve Tulman, Samuel Liao, Annemarie Spiller, Sabrina Israel, Sylvia Snapp, Rowan Reising, Hannah Kishinami and Una Keller.

Local businesses provided prizes to contestants, including the Davis Food Co-op, Jake's Desserts, the Davis Arts Center, Bacciarini's Martial Arts, YoloBerry, B&L Bike Shop, The Avid Reader and The Paint Chip, which once again framed the winning artwork. Downtown businesses also will display the winning artwork in their stores during the coming year.

"It's great to see Davis kids getting involved in public health and safety," said Rachel Hartsough, Street Smarts program manager. "We are very excited to have a new batch of wonderful artwork to use in our upcoming education materials."

"I'm not telling where, but you'll see some of the winning artwork very soon, so be on the lookout."

For more information, visit <http://street-smarts.cityofdavis.org> or contact Rachel Hartsough at 530-757-5640 or [rhartsough@cityofdavis.org](mailto:rhartsough@cityofdavis.org).



WAYNE TILCOCK/ENTERPRISE PHOTO

Liam Stellyhawkes, left, and Adam Perry get Slide Hill Park ready for Christmas every year by trimming this perfectly shaped tree and arranging a star pattern in front of it.

## Local kids spruce up tree in Slide Hill Park

By Anne Ternus-Bellamy  
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

There's a tree of a different sort in Slide Hill Park, standing just steps up a small incline from Tulip Drive.

A little spruce, planted by a nearby resident more than 20 years ago.

It hasn't grown very tall during the course of those two decades, perhaps, neighbors say, because it's not really in the right climate or location. But its conic shape drew the attention several years ago of some children who live nearby.

"We saw it and said, 'That's a perfect Christmas tree,'" said Liam Stellyhawkes, 12.

So that year Stellyhawkes and his friend, Adam Perry, 12; Perry's sister Emily, 14; and her friend Sara Ludden, also 14; decided to turn it into a Christmas tree for real.

A neighbor provided them with ornaments that Emily and Sara carefully placed all over the tree while the boys made a tree skirt of sorts in the shape of giant star beneath it — the borders were made of dark leaves covered in red berries, the center filled with bright yellow leaves.

"It's looked really nice," Adam recalled.

There was only one problem: This was an unauthorized decoration of an unauthorized tree.

The city sent employees out to take down all the ornaments and cart them away, said Adam's father, Steve Perry.

A bit of an outcry ensued, with neighbors calling the city and writing letters to complain, he said.

And it must have worked, because when the four kids decorated the tree again the following year (with

replacement ornaments since they never got theirs back from the city) the ornaments stayed up, and they have ever since.

"They haven't mowed over the star either," Adam noted.

"Decorating the tree has become an annual tradition," said Adam's mom, Sandy Perry. "Some years, other neighbors have come by and placed decorations on the tree over the course of the season, which we love."

Over the years, Adam and Liam have continued to maintain responsibility for the star made of leaves and berries, spending most of an afternoon collecting and building the star and this year placing it out in front of the tree rather than beneath it.

Neighbors pitch in. Yellow leaves seemed to be in short supply this year, Adam said, but thanks to a nearby resident and his two grandchildren who helped search the park, enough were found. Another neighbor told the boys to pick all the red berries they needed off the trees in his yard.

"It's pretty impressive what you guys did in one day," said a nearby resident as he walked past the display one day last week.

The boys kind of agree.

The decorations will stay until after the new year begins, then they'll be taken down and stored until next year, Adam said.

But in the meantime, park visitors, neighbors and passersby will enjoy the fruits of their labor.

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# The latest things to know about financial aid

As many students' college application workload is winding down, parents' financial aid applications for their college student are just kicking into gear. Let's go over what is new this year and how to make the most of your scholarship search.



JENNIFER BORENSTEIN  
COLLEGE CORNER

Quick review first: Federal money is provided on a needs-based method via the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Eligibility is based on expected family contribution, which is what the government expects families to contribute toward their students' college education. The higher it is, the less aid the government provides. My experience has been that this is not the main way Yolo County families qualify for financial aid.

However, even if this is not the path for you, there are two important developments related to the FAFSA process to point out:

■ **New base year for income expected family contribution calculation.** For the first time, parents can use their adjusted gross income from two-year-old income tax returns rather than the latest (and often estimated) returns. This should make the process a little less confusing.

So, just in case you want to do some financial planning, those of you who have a high school senior, college freshman or college sophomore will use their 2015 income to count twice for financial aid purposes, and 2015 also will be the base year

for high school juniors.

■ **New date FAFSA can be filed.** After this application cycle, the first day that parents can file the FAFSA in future years will be moved up from Jan. 1 to Oct. 1.

Enough about the FAFSA for now. What if you do not want to access loans through the FAFSA? Well, to make college more affordable, I counsel families to focus their efforts on merit money and scholarships either through applying directly to a scholarship or to the schools that offer them. Often, these scholarship applications require some sort of additional essay and may have separate deadlines and separate forms, but not always.

About 150 colleges require students to submit the College Scholarship Search profile in order to be considered for merit money. (There is a list on the College Board website — <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>.) This form is available on the College Board website in October, and deadlines vary by school. But not all merit money is distributed based on the CSS profile; so just because a college does not require it does not mean there is not merit money.

**Note:** In my last few December columns, I have addressed the various types of financial aid options — federal grants, federal loans, school-based merit aid and private scholarships — and how to access them. See my website, [www.therightcollegeforyou.org](http://www.therightcollegeforyou.org), for more details.

What exactly is merit money? Basically, these funds are awarded for doing something notable — whether it is for high test scores or grades, or activities — and it's not usually need-based.

There are different types of scholarships for students to access. The biggest distinction is probably school-based versus local/regional/national. School-based merit aid is what it sounds like: money provided by a college to a student as a discount off tuition. Not all schools offer this, not Ivies nor Stanford, and most public colleges do not give generous merit money packages.

Keep in mind that this is different from demonstrated need. Many Ivies and other selective colleges have a policy of meeting 100 percent of demonstrated need, meaning that if the expected family contribution is lower than total cost of attendance, the college will make up the difference. But, again, demonstrated need is needs-based so it may not be open to all families.

How can you find out which schools are generous with their merit money packages? You can use the net price calculator on

each college's website to determine what you are likely to receive. Additionally, do research on the school at [www.meritaid.com](http://www.meritaid.com). And, check out the rankings at U.S. News & World Report for more information about merit money (<http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-colleges/rankings/most-merit-aid>).

I have found that St. Mary's, Whittier and Willamette are quite generous. Play an instrument? They'll offer \$10,000. Have higher than a 3.5 grade-point average? \$13,000. Also, look on [zinch.com](http://zinch.com) to find school-specific scholarships. Maybe you are an ideal candidate for a top scholarship at a school in the Midwest that you have never heard of but might attend if the price is right.

Just a few more tips: Make sure to do your research. Is the scholarship offer good for a year or every year? Do you need to maintain a certain minimum GPA in college to continue receiving the money?

Along with school-based scholarships there are geographic scholarships — either local, regional or national. Even though the national ones are competitive, that doesn't mean you shouldn't try. Look on [fastweb.com](http://fastweb.com) for these types of scholarships.

From a time-management perspective, it might be better to zero in on local/regional. In our area, there are local scholarship opportunities through DPNS, Odd Fellows and Golden 1 Credit Union, to name a few. Check with Julie Clayton in the Career

Center at Davis High School for more details.

Another way to search for scholarships is by activity. There are music scholarships, athletic scholarships, military scholarships and leadership scholarships, among others.

Additionally, there are relatively new websites that connect students more efficiently with scholarship opportunities. Raise Me (<https://www.raise.me>) enables students to access scholarship money through micro scholarships. Students may start earning money as early as ninth grade.

With more than 100 colleges on board, Raise Me provides small amounts for achievements that "can include good grades, participating in clubs, playing on a sports team, volunteering or even starting a club." How's that for immediate gratification?!

Then, there is Scholar Snapp ([www.scholarsnapp.org](http://www.scholarsnapp.org)), which helps students reuse a large amount of their scholarship application profile data in order to speed up the time it takes to complete a scholarship application. Nifty!

So on that upbeat note, it is time to bid adieu to 2015 ... I wish you a prosperous and fruitful 2016.

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