

# Press Clippings - 6/9/2023

## – Metra – Safety Contest winners announced

**June 8, 2023**

The votes have been tallied and Metra today announced the news that school-age children across the region have been waiting for: the names of the winners of its 2022-2023 Safety Poster and Essay Contest.

Metra invited students in grades K-12 throughout its six-county service area to submit poster designs and essays highlighting the importance of railroad safety. This year, Metra received 485 entries. Students created artwork and wrote essays around the theme “Stay Safe, Stay off Train Tracks.”

The contest, which is in its 16th year, enables students to use their creativity to take ownership of the safety message by creating posters and essays that are used by Metra in its safety campaigns.

“It’s wonderful to see students participate in this contest and learn the importance of staying safe near the railroad,” said Metra CEO/Executive Director Jim Derwinski. “My Metra is all about taking personal responsibility for our riders and each other, and the winners of this contest have done a great job of demonstrating it through their artwork and essays.”

First-, second- and third-place winners were chosen from each grade level in elementary school, middle school and high school. First-place poster and essay contest winners receive a \$500 gift card, while second- and third-place poster contest winners receive

\$250 and \$100 gift cards, respectively. Those receiving honorable mentions will receive a certificate noting their achievement.

A People's Choice Award winner will also be selected via voting on Metra's website [metra.com](http://metra.com). Members of the general public can select their favorite poster from this year's first-place winners. Voting for People's Choice will be available online at noon CDT Tuesday, June 13 through midnight June 30. The artist who garners the most votes will receive an additional \$250 prize. The winner of the People's Choice Award will be announced at the July 19 meeting of the Metra Board of Directors.

Metra also recognizes the school with the most entries submitted in the poster contest. This year's winner is Cicero West Elementary School in Cicero with 38 entries. In honor of this achievement, the school will receive notebook computers for use in the classroom.

The following is a complete list of the winners of the 2022-2023 Safety Poster and Essay Contest:

#### Top Participating School

Cicero West Elementary School, Cicero

#### First Place Essay

K-4 Division – Zachary Yin, Willard Elementary School, River Forest

5-8 Division – Aanand Vishvambhar, Plum Grove Junior High School, Rolling Meadows

9-12 Division – Abigail Cummings, West Aurora High School, Aurora

#### First Place Poster

Kindergarten – Rajat Thakur, Brookdale Elementary School, Naperville

1st Grade – Dasha Kosharko, Life Christian School, St. Charles

2nd Grade — Aadyansh Tripathi, Kildeer Countryside Elementary School, Kildeer  
3rd Grade — Callie Kim, Robert Crown Elementary School, Wauconda  
4th Grade — Kerim Usseinov, Reba O. Steck Elementary School, Aurora  
5th Grade — Abigail Sim, Woodland Intermediate School, Gurnee  
6th Grade — Minseo Kim, Aptakisic Junior High School, Buffalo Grove  
7th Grade — Mason Ramirez, Antioch Upper Grade School, Antioch  
8th Grade — Florence Lee, Aptakisic Junior High School, Buffalo Grove  
9th Grade — James Beomjin Kim, William Fremd High School, Palatine  
10th Grade — Chloe Takahashi, Hoffman Estates High School, Hoffman Estates  
11th Grade — Niyati Naveen, New Trier High School, Winnetka  
12th Grade — Wil Van Dyne, Cary-Grove High School, Cary

### **Second Place Poster**

Kindergarten — Ju-An Choi, Olive Mary Stitt Elementary School, Arlington Heights  
1st Grade — Yuri Paguntalan, Center School, Orland Park  
2nd Grade — Kavin Peter, Maplebrook Elementary School, Naperville  
3rd Grade — Pranav Mohna, Woodland Elementary School, Gages Lake  
4th Grade — Valeriia Halaida, North Elementary School, Des Plaines  
5th Grade — Shivansh Tripathi, Kildeer Countryside Elementary School, Kildeer  
6th Grade — Kate You, Frank C. Whitley School, Hoffman Estates  
7th Grade — Joshua Chong, Plum Grove Junior High School, Rolling Meadows  
8th Grade — Dianne Park, Woodlawn Middle School, Long Grove  
9th Grade — Habin Park, Glenbrook North High School, Northbrook  
10th Grade — Rayanne Attar, Lake Forest High School, Lake Forest  
11th Grade — David Aranda, Streamwood High School, Streamwood  
12th Grade — Kyle Baumgartner, Bolingbrook High School, Bolingbrook

## Third Place Poster

Kindergarten — Joanna Antony Francis, Homeschooled, South Elgin

1st Grade — Aksharasree Rajadurai, Tripp Elementary, Buffalo Grove

2nd Grade — Sebastian De Guzman, Westchester Primary School, Westchester

3rd Grade — Erin Love Lee, Willow Bend Elementary School, Rolling Meadows

4th Grade — Cameron Schmalz, The Joseph Sears School, Kenilworth

5th Grade — Hyowon Kee, Blackwell Elementary School Schaumburg

6th Grade — Martina Welsch, Fremont Middle School, Mundelein

7th Grade — Grace Kong, Highland Middle School, Libertyville

8th Grade — Grace Ahn, Twin Groves Middle School, Buffalo Grove

9th Grade — Annaliese Bristow, Wheaton Academy, West Chicago

10th Grade — Javier Emilio Aranda Rincon, Streamwood High School, Streamwood

11th Grade — Charlotte Castelan, Hoffman Estates High School, Hoffman Estates

12th Grade — Julia Levenshteyn, Adlai E. Stevenson High School, Lincolnshire

### Honorable Mention Essay

#### K-4 Division

Aadyansh Tripathi, 2nd Grade, Kildeer Countryside Elementary School, Kildeer

Lakshya Rayapaneni, 4th Grade, Marion Jordan Elementary School, Palatine

#### 5-8 Division

Sofia Faisal, 7th Grade, Kenwood Academy, Chicago

Siddharth Naveen, 7th Grade, Wilmette Junior High School, Wilmette

#### 9-12 Division

Matthew Lester Busch, 10th Grade, A.A. Stagg High School, Palos Hills

Adam Ahmed, 12th Grade, CICS Northtown Academy, Chicago

## **Honorable Mention Poster**

3rd Grade

Antonio Aranguibel, Medinah Intermediate School, Medinah

4th Grade

Emily Haas, Saint Clement School, Chicago

5th Grade

Jaya Wong, Maddison Elementary School, Hinsdale

6th Grade

Ellie Small, Hinsdale Middle School, Hinsdale

7th Grade

Danielle Rehder, Madison Junior High School, Naperville

8th Grade

Hudson Kim, Larsen Middle School, Elgin

## **– Chicago Tribune – Fire in library of Streamwood middle school causes \$85,000 in damage**

**June 7, 2023**

**By Daily Herald Report**

An early morning in the library of **Tefft Middle School** in Streamwood caused an estimated \$85,000 in damage, fire officials said Wednesday.

According to the Streamwood Fire Department, firefighters responded at 2:27 a.m.

Wednesday to a fire alarm at the school, 1100 Shirley Ave. They initially had difficulty accessing the building because of construction at the site, but eventually got in and located the blaze in the school library, officials said.

Fire crews extinguished the fire and then turned their attention to smoke evacuation. The smoke and heat generated by burning books and bookshelves was significant, and the library has no windows with outside access, according to the fire department.

Firefighters spent several hours on scene removing smoke from the building, with the assistance of a mobile ventilation unit from the Elk Grove Village Fire Department.

The fire remains under investigation, but it does not appear suspicious, officials said.