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Holmdel students get a chance to float their stuff at Waterfront Park

By [JENNIFER BRADSHAW](#) • STAFF WRITER • September 24, 2010



HOLMDEL — In a pinch, empty orange juice cartons and Seltzer bottles will make a seaworthy vessel.

On Friday, the students of the New School in Holmdel took to the water at Bayshore Waterfront Park in Port Monmouth for their annual "Boat Day."

The students tested out six boats they built themselves out of the bottles and cartons, milk jugs, duct tape and cardboard.

The event is a tradition for the K-8 private alternative school, going on for nearly 20 years.

Students build boats in different themes each year and take them into the water to ultimately see if their designs are viable.

Rebekah Chilvers, a teacher at the school said the year's academic theme was "Music and Movement," resulting in boats that looked like a keyboard, a stage, a guitar and the "Jackson Squid," as in the late pop singer Michael Jackson.

The bay didn't have a wave in sight to the delight of the group, who were able to take their boats far out into the water with the help of parent volunteers.

All six stayed afloat.

Melody Chibnik, 12, of Middletown, was confident in her group's design, called the "Musical Frog."

"It's going to float," she said.

Their design was also one of the best, she said.

"Because we have pinwheels on our boat," she said.

Danielle Azzolina, 13, of Middletown, worked on the "Musical Cat," with cat being short for catamaran.

"We are very confident," she said of the design.

Susan Chilvers, educational director of the school, said that the physical construction of the projects were not handed to parents after students come up with the ideas - they see the boats through in planning and building them.

"They build (the boats) themselves," she said.

David Cavuto, of Edison, who has a 5-year-old at the school, waded into the water to help support the boats, specifically the guitar-shaped boat that his son's group worked on.

"Who would have thought a guitar would float?" he said.

Cavuto said the project had a lot of merit — students were learning physics by calculating what it would take to keep the boats above water, whether they realized it or not.

And, the uniqueness of the project would stay with them, he said.

"Something you learn that way you never forget," he said.

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