

Central Regional students showcase recycling projects, real and imagined



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Patrick Mulrane, 13, explains his project during Green Fest on Monday at Central Regional Middle School. Mulrane envisions using spare pieces of wood and used, cleaned oil drums as pontoons to make a raft for swimmers to dive from or to rest, or perhaps to use as a floating dock to work on boats. / STAFF PHOTO: BOB BIELK



Written by

[HARTRIONO B. SASTROWARDOYO](#)
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WASTE NOT

Ocean County operates two recycling centers. The northern center is on New Hampshire Avenue, off Route 70 in Lakewood; the southern center is on Haywood Road near the state motor vehicle inspection station in Stafford.

Residents can drop off materials to be recycled ... aluminum and tin cans, including aerosol cans; glass and plastic containers; newspapers, mixed paper and residential cardboard ... at either site 24 hours a day.

Other materials ... batteries of all types, used motor oil and filters, antifreeze, tires, paint and empty steel paint cans, boat shrink wrap, phone books, computers and ink cartridges, cellphones, leaves, light brush and Christmas trees ... may be recycled at either center between 7:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

Some schools, such as Central Regional Middle School, collect used cellphones for soldiers as well as used ink cartridges to earn money.

BERKELEY — Patrick Mulrane knows the importance of keeping such waters as Barnegat Bay clean. Mulrane envisions using spare pieces of wood and used, cleaned oil drums as pontoons to make a raft for swimmers to dive from or to rest, or perhaps to use as a floating dock to work on boats.

Even his scale model was just as environmentally friendly. The floats were made of discarded water bottles.

"Me and my dad like boats, and we were talking how it would be easier to fix our boats on the water," said Patrick, 13, of Ocean Gate.

Patrick and other Central Regional Middle School students were showcasing their projects and inventions, both real and imagined, in the school's first Green Fest Monday.

"I want students to be excited about recycling and saving the Earth. It's important," said Liora McCourtney, a mathematics teacher and Green Fest coordinator.

Drink pouches were turned into pocketbooks. Milk cartons and soda bottles became bird feeders. And pizza boxes were reused as game boards, among other items on display.

Students exhibited informative displays as well. Nicholas Passeri talked about Ocean Gate's wind turbine, noting that it reduces carbon emissions by 80 tons a year. The model used a baseball bat for the turbine's tower.

Perhaps Xavier Wagner expressed it best, with a poster imploring "Don't abuse, reuse." The message's letters were cut from newspaper.

"This involves all the curriculums, such as math, science and Spanish," McCourtney said, gesturing at the room. "Everybody came together and pitched in."

Students in the Spanish classes provided a display on recycling efforts in Latin American countries.

Currently, applications are available for municipal recycling coordinators and school districts to enter the 2011 Ocean County Recycling Grant program to help improve recycling initiatives.

Ocean County Freeholder James F. Lacey noted in a prepared statement that \$165,000 in recycling grants is available. Towns and schools must match the grant amount by 50 percent.

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In 2010, almost \$28,000 in grant money was used to upgrade or establish school recycling programs.

"Schools are large producers of recyclable materials," said Lacey. "From papers to plastic bottles, district employees and students alike can make a substantial contribution to the environmental and economic benefits derived from recycling."

Green Fest coincided with a presentation heard earlier in the day about the importance on being environmentally friendly. It is a lesson that already resonates with the Central Regional Middle School students.

"I try to recycle as much as possible," said Mike Cirrincione, 13, of Berkeley.

Mulrane also said he does the same, at home as well as at school.

"Recycling is very important. Oil drums are a big problem, because people just throw them out after they use them," Mulrane said. "It's time to wake up."

ON THE WEB: Visit www.centralreg.k12.nj.us/MiddleSchool.cfm for more information about Central Regional Middle School.