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## Sand castle contest in Belmar on Wednesday

Posted by the Asbury Park Press on 07/16/07

BY **ERIK LARSEN**  
COASTAL MONMOUTH BUREAU

BELMAR — An estimated 10,000 people are expected to turn out Wednesday for the 21st annual Sand Castle Contest on the borough's beachfront, billed as the biggest of its kind on the Jersey Shore.

So many people, actually, that K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital at Jersey Shore University Medical Center in Neptune, plans to dispatch a doctor to remind the public about the importance of protecting themselves from the sun's ultraviolet rays, said Kelly David, a spokeswoman for the contest.

About 400 teams, ranging from amateur sand castle builders to skilled sculptors and artists, enter the contest each year. The contest winners are selected among a number of groups, including several children's age groups and also a 16 and over competition.

The event covers an area of beach several blocks north and south of 18th Avenue, which the public will be permitted free access to Wednesday, David said.

Some enthusiastic sculptors are even expected to be hard at work, shaping their masterpieces and using Michelangelo as a muse, as early as 5 a.m., David said.

Chuck Feld, a professional sand castle builder from West Chester, Pa., will return for his 17th year to show everyone else how it's done. However, Feld does not compete in the competition to keep the playing field, or rather beach that is, level.

For a good sand sculpture, Feld offered these words of advice last summer: "Water, water, water. The biggest mistake people make is that they don't use enough water. Every grain of sand has to be wet."



(PRESS FILE PHOTOS)

The Maslanka family of Howell works on an elaborate sand castle during last year's Sand Castle Contest in Belmar.

### IF YOU GO

The 21st annual Sand Castle Contest in Belmar will be headquartered at the 18th Avenue beach. Parking will be limited, so be prepared to leave the car several blocks from the beachfront and walk the rest of the distance.

A schedule of events is as follows:

5 a.m.: The most die-hard sand sculptors arrive to become one with the beach and channel Michelangelo.

8 a.m.: Everybody else scheduled to arrive and registration begins.

12 p.m.: Judging begins.

1 p.m.: The winners are announced and awards are distributed.

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The contest is sponsored by the Belmar Board of Tourism, D'Jais Oceanside Bar and Cafe in Belmar, YoKidsYo.com on the Internet and Springboard Public Relations in Marlboro.

There will be free giveaways and refreshments, David said.

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