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# Long Beach becomes marble for artists

## Sand sculptures, fashion and music kick off the city's first Go Green Festival

By **ALYSON GOODMAN**



Alyson Goodman/Herald

Dan Doubleday works on his sculpture, "Sanctuary."



Sculpting sandcastles in Long Beach is not a new practice, but this year was the first time that a sand sculpting competition was held on the barrier island. The competition was part of the Go Green Festival spearheaded by Long Beach resident Bill Hostetter, who owns and operates Go Green Dry Cleaning on West Park Avenue with fellow resident Kevin Donald.

The festival kicked off on June 8 when six sand sculptors took to the sand at National Boulevard and started creating their masterpieces. They were given 21 hours to carve 10 to 12 tons of sand.

Matt Long, of Staten Island, of the sand sculpting tool company, Can You Dig It, created the non-competitive sculpture displaying the sponsors names along with Andrew Gertler of Sea Cliff. Long started creating sand sculptures about 15 years ago while on vacation in Cape May, N.J. He is also the creator of the September 11 sculpture created each year for the Freedom Flight event held at Long Beach Boulevard beach.

According to Long, using sand as an art medium is rather tricky. "There's a whole bunch of mechanics and physics well before the artistic

expression begins," he said. "Techniques and methods are more important to the finished pieces than in any other medium."

Long explained that sand is heavy to work with and adding water to the mix weighs it down more. To carve sand effectively it has to be compacted with water into a container, which is then removed before starting to work with it. After the sculptures are completed, glue is diluted with water, using a fine mist garden sprayer, then applied to the sculpture as a fixative. "Sand is a most magnificent medium to work in," said Long. "Sand itself is somehow woven into the fabric of our lives. It's a metaphor for time, age, infinite quantity and the temporal nature of things."

Having the opportunity of seeing these pieces up close and how intricate the detail work was on each of them, you look at them in amazement of what can be created in such a short period of time. I overheard one man on the boardwalk looking at the sculptures say that this is the most amazing thing he has seen done on the beach.

“We’re creating art out of sand and water, how much greener can you get,” said Hostetter. The sculptures were judged by City Manager Charles Theofan, Allen Rosenberg, developer of the Allegría Hotel and Todd Jacobs, executive chef of The Atlantica at the Allegría Hotel. The winning sculpture was a mermaid titled “Crude Awakening” created by Meredith Corson of Treasure Island, Fla.

A green fashion show and concert that featured the Go Green Jamsters was held at the Allegría Hotel on Thursday evening. Saturday afternoon, a green forum was held at the Long Beach Public Library and was moderated by Alan Colmes of the Fox News duo Hannity and Colmes. It also featured Hostetter, David Schieren of EmPower, a solar engineering and contracting company and local environmentalist Neil Monteko. The event came to a close Sunday evening on the beach with a mandala closing ceremony. Children were then invited to return the sand back to its normal state by demolishing the works of art.

Hostetter said he created this festival to raise awareness and start a dialogue concerning green issues. It took Hostetter, who is a board member of the city’s Environmental Advisory Board, two months to put this festival together. Hostetter said he is hopeful that next year, the event will be even bigger and will attract more sculptors and musicians.

For more information on the Go Green Festival, visit [www.gogreenlbny.com](http://www.gogreenlbny.com)