

LIFE IN A BALLOON

Children in the Community YMCA's Children Achievement Center explore the inside of a retired 75-foot-tall hot air balloon in Matawan on Friday. PHOTOS BY EVAJO ALVAREZ/CORRESPONDENT

Matawan preschoolers play inside 75-foot craft

Staff report

Asbury Park Press USA TODAY NETWORK - NJ

MATAWAN - About 50 children in the Community YMCA's Children Achievement Center got ground's eye-view of a hot air balloon Friday.

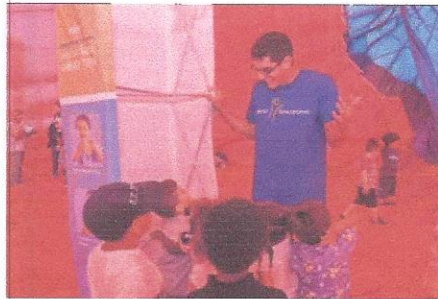
The QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning and PNC Bank brought a 75-foot-tall hot air balloon to promote PNC's "Grow Up Great" school readiness program. The balloon was inflated on its side with cold air and secured to the ground, allowing the preschoolers to play inside. Festival executive producer Howard Freeman provided a lesson on the science of hot air ballooning.

The 36th annual balloon festival, the largest summertime hot air balloon and music festival in North America, will be held July 27 to 29 at Solberg

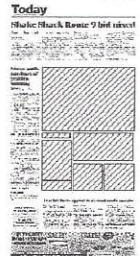
Airport in Readington.

More online

Search "balloon" at APP.com to see more photos from the event.



Approximately 50 preschool children got to check out the retired balloon courtesy of PNC Bank's Grow Up Great school readiness program.





Children in the Community YMCA's Children Achievement Center in Matawan learn part of what goes into hot air ballooning.



Children explore the outside of a partially deflated hot air balloon from the [QuickChek New Jersey Festival of Ballooning](#) on Friday.