



Staff photo by Ben Foglietto

Marjorie Roshkoff rides a wave at Saturday's Moms and Groms Surf Camp in Margate. Organizer Stacy Marchel started the camp because all women came to her and asked for lessons. 'We're trying to teach them all about surfing so they can pursue it on their own,' Marchel said.

## Surf camps teach sport to new group: Moms, groms



Staff photo by Ben Foglietto

Camp founder Stacy Marchel instructs adults at the camp Saturday. Marchel only recently started surfing but got so hooked on the sport that she decided to help teach others. 'I got hooked,' she said. 'So hooked.'

■ Margate resident Stacy Marchel's Moms and Groms Surf Camps have been a huge success.

By JON COEN  
For The Press

**MARGATE** — For decades, surfing has been an activity that a younger generation participated in to get away from rules, teachers, and, especially, parents. Now, just like many aspects of surfing, that has changed.

Surfing is no longer something to divide generations. It's bringing them together.

The parents and kids who take part in the Moms and Groms Surf Camps in Margate are finding it a perfect way to bond.

"Grom" is a common term in the surfing vernacular, short for grommet — a young, beginning surfer.

Here, groms are taking to the water with their mothers and loving it.

"I figure I can either watch from



Staff photo by Ben Foglietto

Ann-Marie Reardon of Philadelphia wipes out during camp

the beach or I can get in the water with them," camp founder Stacy Marchel said. "It's such a great sport, and it helps so much in your everyday life."

Growing up here, Marchel always hung around surfers but never tried it herself.

"My sister surfed, but I had no interest," said Marchel, a real-

### Camp information

**When:** Monday, July 7; July 17

**Where:** Quincy Avenue Margate

**Cost:** \$40, includes rash guard and use of board

**To sign up:** Go to Heritage Sport in Margate or call 3331

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# Surfing

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estate agent. "I wasn't an athlete. I didn't surf until my sons had an interest. I was about 35 when I got hooked — so hooked. We just took to the lifestyle."

Marchel's sons — Spencer, 11, and Cameron, 9 — are both in the water this summer. They live on Quincy Avenue, which is the designated surfing beach here. Stacy has found a way to bond with her boys in the outdoors, a pastime traditionally for fathers and sons.

Spencer got his feet wet five years ago, and Cameron is just starting to take to it. But they're not the only groms surfing with their moms, thanks to Stacy taking the initiative to get other parents in the water with their kids.

Marchel has surfed for the last few years, even in the winter. But there aren't many women to share the experience with, so Marchel usually surfs with men.

"She's really enthusiastic. She's a grown-up grom herself," said Mark Neustadter, one of the men with whom Marchel surfs. "We took her under our wing about three or four years ago. She's addicted. We tell her it's too cold in the winter, and she paddles out anyway."

Marchel has overcome



Staff photo by Ben Fogletto

**Instructor Stacy Marchel works with 5-year-old Logan Russo of Northfield during the Moms and Groms surfing camp on Saturday at Quincy Avenue beach in Margate.**

some fears, but she understands why other women hold back.

"Women want to learn how to surf, but they're intimidated to walk into a surf shop for a lesson. It's perceived as a man's sport," she said. "There are some young girls surfing now, but we missed it by one generation."

Several women in the community came to Marchel and asked if she would give them surf lessons. Marchel knew that camps for women and

their kids were happening in Hawaii and California, but they had yet to catch on in New Jersey. She decided to do a one-day camp and hire some instructors to help out on June 21.

The first camp was so popular that many of the mothers asked for further instruction, while new campers expressed interest. Marchel went to the Margate Heritage Surf & Sport shop to help with the organization. She arranged one instructor for every three or

four people. Kids are matched with their moms.

Moms and Groms camps will be held again Monday and July 17 at the Quincy Avenue Beach. The \$40 includes the two-hour session, a camp rash guard and use of a board. Because so many moms and groms want to return, Marchel offers a secondary camp on Saturdays from 5:30-7 p.m.

Marchel starts the camp on land. She talks to the moms and kids about having realis-

tic expectations, overcoming their fears, and how surfing relates to life.

The manager of the Margate Heritage, Kevin Morris, comes down to discuss safety, etiquette, ocean awareness and technique. Then the campers and instructors take to the water. The mothers find a common ground with a passion that their children may acquire for life. Some take their children to Fish Stix Restaurant in Margate afterwards, which

holds an all-ages surf night each Thursday.

"We're trying to teach them all about surfing so they can pursue it on their own, not just, 'Hey, I rode a wave. I surfed.' The ocean is a classroom, therapy and a playground," Marchel said.

Marchel notes how proud she is that her son Spencer has taken to teaching other people to surf. She sees the camp as much for the kids as for the moms.

"She's such a good people-person," Neustadter said. "And she's really settled into the surf lifestyle."

In the future, Marchel would like to take her group to a surf camp in another country. She has traveled solo to Surf Diva Surf School in Nosara, Costa Rica, and has journeyed with her boys to find waves in that country as well as the Dominican Republic and St. Bart's.

"Surfing is a metaphor for life. If my kids are scared, I push them to do it, and sometimes they say it was their greatest wave ever. It gives them that good feeling, that sense of accomplishment," Marchel said. "Or other times, I emphasize that you can be having a terrible day, but one good wave can change your whole attitude."

Information and registration can be found at Heritage Surf Shop, 9223 Ventnor Avenue, Margate, or by calling 609-823-3331.