

East Texans steer warships, craft swords and more during sixth annual Tyler Mini Maker Faire

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Tucker Ponder, 8, makes a blade with the help of blacksmith Charles Adams of Shadowhawk Blades at the Tyler Mini Maker Faire at the Science Discovery Place on Saturday. The event featured more than 45 "makers." (Jessica T. Payne/Tyler Paper)

To be a member of the North Texas Battle Group, some knowledge of World War I and WWII history is needed, as well as an understanding of engineering.

Members of the group build 1/144 model warships from both wars, take them out on ponds, and have Axis versus Allies battles where they sink one another. The small warships fire BB's or metal ball bearings.

At the sixth annual Tyler Mini Maker Faire, held at Discovery Science Place, adults and children flocked to the 20-by-20-foot pond, set up outside the building, to sail one of the group's radio-controlled convoy ships.

"We just enjoy sharing the hobby and trying to introduce people to it," said Wes Wynne, a member of the North Texas Battle Group. "Some people really like the engineering challenges and some people like just going out and being competitive... It talks to a lot of people on different levels."

The organization, based in the Dallas area, was one of around 45 different maker booths set up at the Saturday event to show off what they do and create.

The family-friendly event was designed to be a day of making, learning and hands-on activities for people of all ages.

Chris Rasure, executive director of Discovery Science Place, said the event was very much in keeping with the museum's mission of igniting curiosity in young minds through fun, hands-on exploration.

He added that makers at the event represented a large variety of fields, from the scientific to the artistic, and that participants could leave having learned more about a possible new hobby or even a career option.

"You will come across someone doing something you never even thought of," he said.

One such example may have been at a booth set up by blacksmith Charles Adams, owner and master smith at Shadowhawk Blades in Winnsboro.

Assisted by Adams' apprentices, children used hammers to make miniature swords from duplex nails.

"I think the earlier you can teach a child how to use tools, the better," he said. "They just want somebody to teach them how to do something."

Tags

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