

**GREENFIELD**

# Hundreds ring in Independence Day weekend

By **BELLA LEVAVI**  
Staff Writer

**GREENFIELD** — Many attendees at Friday night's Independence Day celebration at Beacon Field ate fried dough. A select few ate Amherst resident Dede Wilson's cantaloupe prosciutto mint salad, salmon encrusted in a cucumber dill sauce, s'mores cake and chilled gazpacho.

Members of Wilson's group sat in camping chairs circled around on a carpeted floor. Their neighbors brought two cats, a gumball machine and free arcade games, as well as many inflatable couches.

"Dede has been planning this picnic since July 5 last year," Amherst resident Greg Anderson joked.

While many attendees had showy set-ups, the real person who went all out was organizer Christy Moore, Greenfield's recreation director. Moore spent months planning Friday's event and was out at Beacon Field starting at 7 a.m. on a day where temperatures rose into the 90s.

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**From left, Ngoc Doan, Dede Wilson and Michael Helmstadter show off their picnic at Beacon Field in Greenfield on Friday.**

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BELLA LEVAVI

# Independence

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“We have great music,” Moore said. “My favorite part of the night is watching the fireworks.”

Some of the community members gathered at Beacon Field shared in Moore’s favorite part of the festivities.

“I’ve been coming here since I was a kid,” commented Shelburne resident Chase Blair. “It’s a great tradition.”

While the event was sponsored by the Greenfield Recreation Department, the city provides no funding for the fireworks.

Moore raises roughly \$18,000 a year for the event, but was \$5,000 short when the festivities began. Volunteers circled the grounds hoping for donations from attendees.

Along with fireworks and picnics, Friday’s celebration included six performances on a stage near the front of the field, as well as food vendors lining the periphery.

“We performed all year for the performance,” said Mila Phelps, a 9-year-old dancer with Greenfield’s Pizazz Dance Studio. The young participants danced to eight songs for the crowd.

Every year, the Fortin Family Award — named in memory of Ken and Tina Fortin — is given out in recognition of an

individual or family that has dedicated service to the community in support of the Recreation Department. Greening Greenfield, an organization that advocates for increased energy and environmental sustainability, won the award this year, specifically Nancy Hazard, Edie Heinemann and Susan Worgaftik.

“This group is making Greenfield more vibrant, not only for residents, but for the next generation,” Moore said.

Attendee Joe Ruggeri, Greenfield resident and father of one of the Pizazz Dance Studio performers, said, “The (Recreation) Department does so much for our community. If you want to see the Greenfield community, come to this celebration.”