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Greenfield officials, crowd pleased with fireworks display

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GREENFIELD — There wasn't a bad seat from Beacon to Lunt fields as the sky above Poet's Seat Tower lit up with colorful fireworks late Sunday night.

"I had goose bumps," said Greenfield Recreation Department Director Christy Moore. "I was particularly blown away by the finale. The entire show was impressive."

Spectators who had gathered at Beacon Field, on the field behind the middle school and on the three Lunt ballfields screamed, hooted, hollered and applauded when the last of the finale's shells disappeared in the night sky.

The town got what it hoped for this year as Atlas Pyrovision Productions Inc. of Jaffrey, N.H., made good on its promise.

"There was a new shooter and we had explained what we wanted," said Moore. "Atlas really impressed us. We got what we asked for."

The town learned last year that the New Hampshire company had short-changed Greenfield for the past three or four years, providing the town about half of what it paid for last year.

Earlier this year, the company and town came to an agreement, with Greenfield promised a "most spectacular show," and it was.

"I watched from Riddell Street," said Mayor William Martin. "I had a great view to some great fireworks, just as promised."

Just after 9:35 p.m. on Sunday, the first rocket rose and exploded with brilliant color. That one was

followed, for almost a half-hour, with the typical patriotic red, white and blue shells, but also lots of new colors and different types of willows and waterfall fireworks that seemed to fall into the crowd gathered below.

Atlas, which has provided the town its annual Fourth of July fireworks for more than two decades, hopes to continue for years to come.

“When something as unfortunate as what happened last year happens, you hit the reset button, hire new technicians, use new products and re-tweak the entire thing,” said Atlas Vice President Matt Shea. “We’re committed to Greenfield and its events. We want to be the ones that provide the fireworks for them.”

Shea said that while he hopes people throughout the Pioneer Valley understand that sometimes things go wrong, he also hopes they see that Atlas is always willing to fix things and make them better.

“Now it’s time to move forward,” he said.

Moore said people seemed to have a lot of fun on Sunday. Festivities began at 4 p.m. and continued into the night, culminating with a phenomenal fireworks display that ended shortly after 10 p.m.

“I just want to thank Atlas for following through,” said Moore. “The company met and surpassed our expectations.”

Moore said there aren’t many places like Greenfield when it comes to fireworks.

“Who can match that wonderful ridge along Poet’s Seat?”

She said it lends itself to the best views for spectators.

Just after watching the entire show, spectator Jeffrey Decker of Chicopee said, “That was insane!” He said he thought it was the most fireworks he’d ever seen in one show.

Greenfield native Don Creek said he loved the display.

“Excellent,” he said. “Twice as good as last year.”

And it was twice as good — the town counted just over 600 shells last year, while this year 1,338 were shot.

Fourth of July fireworks displays have cost the town between \$11,000 and \$12,000 for the past several years. This year, Atlas charged the town \$4,500.

Sunday’s display was the town’s second discounted show since Greenfield’s agreement with Atlas. The company also provided the fireworks display for the Winter Carnival in February.

The town didn’t collect fireworks donations this year, because the mayor said he wanted to give people a break.

“I’ve received several calls and emails about what a terrific show it was,” said Martin. “This was a good way to mitigate the problem. I’m confident things have turned around and been rectified. This was good for everyone.”

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