

'We lucked out'

Hundreds enjoy downtown trick-or-treating

By **DOMENIC POLI**
Staff Writer

GREENFIELD — No, you're weren't dreaming.

A mix of princesses, witches and your favorite movie characters marched down Main Street on Wednesday as part of Greenfield's Downtown Trick or Treat, Rag Shag Parade & Costume Contest, hosted by the town's recreation department.

Dozens of families decked out in costumes and makeup went trick-or-treating starting at 4 p.m., stopping by various local businesses for candy before the parade began at 5:30 p.m. Children dressed as fairies, ninjas, Boston sports players and countless superheroes sauntered around Main Street under the safe watch of parents and guardians, just as the event is designed to ensure.

Luciano Stoffolano, 7, and 3-year-old brother Noah made out like bandits — even though they were dressed as Mario and Luigi, from the popular video game franchise. During a break at the Greenfield common, they showed off the loot they collected, mentioning that KitKats are their favorites, before playing on the cannon statue. Their mother, Melissa Stoffolano, dressed as Princess

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STAFF PHOTOS/DAN LITTLE
Tuba player Logan Field, above, heads down Main Street with the Greenfield Marching Band during the annual Rag Shag Parade, Wednesday, in Greenfield. Below left, Rachel Cronen-Townsend, from left, Julia Ellingboe, Meg Baker, and Steve Cronen-Townsend dressed as the four seasons. Below right, John Burt, 9, marches down Main Street as a school bus.





STAFF PHOTO/DAN LITTLE

Maple Pollock, 2, dresses as a prize-winning rabbit from the Franklin County Fair during Halloween festivities in Greenfield, Wednesday.

Rag Shag

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Peach, and grandmother, Susan, said the event provides trick-or-treating fun in a structured environment.

"Everyone's very generous, and we appreciate it. And we have fun," Susan said. "It's easier and safer than walking around neighborhoods. And we like that it's early.

"And it's a warm night," she added. "We lucked out."

Emily Ethier of MedCare Emergency Health Ambulance parked near the Veterans Memorial Mall, with fun-size candy laid out on a stretcher for people to take.

"I don't think it scared anyone away. It actually seemed to interest them more because they wanted to see if I had someone," she said with a smile. "And I told them, 'Nope, I changed it by magic into candy. It's Halloween magic - just candy.'"

She was helped by her father, Jerry Ethier, who started the ambulance company as Mercy Ambulance in 1970. Emily said the only challenge she didn't foresee was the tiniest children having to be hoisted to grab some candy off the stretcher.

"So next year I'll bring a stool," she said.

The United Way of Franklin County set up a table on the common to give out free chil-

dren's books. Executive Director Kelly Brigham-Steiner said the thought was to offer a treat "that promotes lifelong learning that lasts a long time." She said she started with candy and hundreds of books, and only one child opted for sweets.

"Kids love to read," she said. "It's been very popular."

The parade that started at Mohawk Mall turned right onto Fiske Avenue to Energy Park, where costume contest winners were chosen.

Best Homemade: First place, Christian Clark (a Transformer). Second place, Elijah Castillo (astronaut); **Most Original:** First place, Sparrow Badi (waitress). Second place, Bryn Appell (pet rock); **Scariest:** First Place, Ryan Voiland (scary guy). Second place, Felicia Gallison (bloody zombie girl); **Cutest:** First place, Maple Pollock (wagon). Second place, John DeStefano (baby wizard); **Best Cartoon Character:** First Place, Simone Wells (Cookie Monster). Second place, Kelli Broga (Oscar); **Adult Open Category:** First Place, Juliette Ellingboe, Meg Baker, and Rachel and Steve Cronen-Townsend (seasons). Second place, Trouble Mandeson (universe); **Group/Family Category:** First place, Morin family (chicken coop). Second place, Anderson family (Viking ship).

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