

# THE RECORDER

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## BLUES, BREWS AND BARBECUE



Recorder/Paul Franz

The Janet Ryan blues band entertained the crowd at Beacon Field in Greenfield on Saturday. This was just one of the bands that played during the Riverside Blues and BBQ Festival during the weekend.



Recorder/Paul Franz

Local favorites Element Brewery were just one of the many fine beers and ales available this weekend at the Riverside Blues and BBQ Festival at Beacon Field in Greenfield. Charlie Emerson of Millers Falls wore his favorite beer-drinking shirt complete with a quote from Ben Franklin.

## Festival

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some food and beer in that combo it's irresistible," said Lee Scherer of Bernardston, seated on the grass with friend Charlotte Kuzmeskus of Erving and smaller and younger friend Sawyer, 3.

"We can split up and all enjoy ourselves," Kuzmeskus said.

Scherer said their husbands were in the beer tent, and they were watching Sawyer for his parents. Sawyer applied himself to a dish of blueberry ice cream while the adults enjoyed bacon-wrapped barbecued meatballs from Cliff's Smokin' Backyard BBQ, one of several vendors doing brisk business. Sawyer described his ice cream as "great."

Scherer said she had found all the barbecue cooks friendly and happy to share their secrets, particularly the entrants from Maryland.

The Maryland entrants were Tim Simmons and Trey Myers, from the Brunswick catering business The Pig Hole.

The team won the People's Choice award for their pulled pork preparation, "pan 2" for those who attended. Que and a Half Men, "pan 8," walked away with the People's Choice award for Saturday's chicken wing sampling.

"It's all about the rub and the sauce and taking your time," Myers said. The rub was a mixture of brown sugar, chili pepper, cayenne pepper and paprika, he said. Myers was less descriptive regarding the sauce, a homemade blend. The key, he said, is to balance sweet and heat.

Taking your time is what distinguishes barbecue from grilling; barbecued meat is cooked for hours over indirect heat, allowing the meat to soften and absorb the flavor of the smoke, many of the cooks in the crowd said.

For the dozen or so teams and individuals who spent the weekend tending slowly-cook-

ing meat in Beacon Field, the festival is a stop in the New England Barbecue Society and Kansas City Barbeque Society competition circuits.

Some of the competitors are caterers or professional cooks, but many cook only for competition. Jared and Suzanne Huizenga of Worcester compete as Insane Swine BBQ.

"We're doing 14 contests this year," Jared said. "Quite frankly we're tired of barbecue." Before they lost their taste for it, beef brisket was their latest favorite dish. Their favorite had been pulled pork, Suzanne said, but they got sick of that.

What keeps them involved is the camaraderie of the events, which see them camping out in fields all night with the other competitors, tending the cook fires.

While they don't eat it, they still cook it, and Insane Swine walked away with the overall grand prize for the sum of their dishes in the KCBS competition.

The three-day festival is hosted by the Franklin County Rotary Club and the Greenfield Recreation Department. "We had thousands of people throughout the weekend here. The festival grounds were packed. Great food, great blues music plus the BrewFest Beer Sampling Saloon, you can't go wrong there," Recreation Director Christy Moore said.

### And the winners ...

Winners in the New England Barbecue Society Grilling Contest were:

Chicken wings: Howling Hog Barbecue  
Sausage: Baor-n-Que  
Pizza: Sweet Breathe BBQ  
Desert: Howling Hog Barbecue

Overall champion:  
Smokin' Bulldogs, runner-up Joepeanuts

Winners in the Kansas City Barbeque Society Competition were:

Chicken: Insane Swine BBQ  
Ribs: Smokin' Bulldogs  
Pork: Que and a Half Men  
Brisket: Smokin Barrels BBQ Vt.

Overall:  
Insane Swine BBQ

## A smokin' good time

By CHRIS CURTIS  
Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — Equal parts meat, beer and music was the recipe for a Beacon Field filled with cheerful people this weekend for the third annual Riverside Blues and BBQ Festival.

Candy Faddah and fiance Rod Burrell of Greenfield and his friend Fraser Stowe of South Deerfield sat at a table within the boundary of the beer sampling tent and within sight of the stage Sunday afternoon, Stowe with an aluminum cake pan filled with sample cups of shredded pork.

"This is a true friend — I've known Rod since fourth grade and I got here a little late," Stowe said. "Look at what he set me up with: two samples each of everything that was left, one for me and one for my wife."

The barbecued pulled pork samples were a rare commodity by early afternoon. Volunteers said the sampling tent, where visitors cast votes for their favorite dish of the day — chicken wings Saturday and pulled pork on Sunday — was cleaned out an hour and 10 minutes after opening Sunday.

"I read about it in the paper and the first thing that caught my eye was blues. I love the blues, and then when you stick

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Recorder/Paul Franz

Bacon-wrapped meatballs and pulled pork are what Chris Beebe and his son Tanner, 12, of Westfield were sampling at the Riverside Blues and BBQ Festival Saturday.