

Making Patriotic Traditions

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Our country's celebration of independence, the Fourth of July, represents the spirit of patriotism and the passion, justice, and liberty that united our country during the Revolutionary War. This same spirit of unity and activism is also a vital part of the atmosphere here at CONA. Therefore, it seems surprising that Independence Day was never officially celebrated here on Black Mountain until last year, when the Massachusetts delegation initiated a water balloon reenactment of the Battle of Lexington and Concord in recognition of this historical holiday. With the Massachusetts delegation's plans to hold a reenactment of the Battle of Bunker Hill this year, it is hoped that this Fourth of July observance will become an annual tradition. "Last year's [Battle of Lexington and Concord] was fun, but this year's is going to be way better," Rebecca Damon of Massachusetts said.

The Battle of Bunker Hill was one of the major battles of the Revolutionary War. The battle took place on June 17, 1775, on Breed's Hill, which was fortified by Patriot troops. Angry at the colonists' seizure of the hill, the Redcoats fired on neighboring Charlestown and subsequently attempted to take Breed's Hill. After the first two waves of British troops were cut down, the colonists began to run out of ammunition and the British took both Breed's Hill and Bunker Hill, to which the Americans had retreated.

The Massachusetts delegation plans re-create the actual Battle of Bunker Hill with the Americans meeting at the entrance to the bushes below Lee Hall and the British assembling lower on the hill in the Blue Ridge Center parking lot. Generals Ryan Thompson and Catherine Denial will lead the British troops in red shirts and the leaders of the blue-clothed American troops will be Generals Shanique Spalding and Halie Bourke. The battle is planned for 5:00 on Wednesday, and in the meantime Massachusetts delegates are busy filling hundreds of brightly colored water balloons in preparation.

"I encourage everybody to contact one of the generals and to get involved because the more people we have, the more fun we're going to have," said Ryan Thompson, the mastermind behind the battle. Indeed, all delegates are encouraged to participate in this Massachusetts-led battle on the Fourth of July, a fun-filled tradition that you won't want to miss!