

# The end of an era: Kumar's for sale in Wood River

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer  
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**WOOD RIVER** - After more than three decades in the family business, **Ellen Kumar** said she is going to retire.

Ellen Kumar and her husband, **Surinder Kumar**, own **Kumar's Kafe**, located at 53 E. Ferguson Ave. in Wood River. Kumar's Kafe was established in 1981 and has weathered

a lot during its tenure as the favorite eatery of **Downtown Wood River**. In 2004, a fatal fire nearly closed the business for good, and burnt the original building to the ground. By December of that same year, however, the business was up and running again.

So what could end such a resilient local business? The simple answer is retirement. Ellen Kumar said she has worked at the restaurant since her husband purchased it in 1981, saying that business is something her children have known since they were born. Ellen Kumar now has grandchildren and other personal matters demanding her attention.

"I need to have knee surgery and foot surgery," she said. "I've been doing it for 35 years, and it's time. We've done a lot and been through a lot."

She said she would not be turning the family-owned business over to her children. One of them is happy working at an area bank and the other is established in Springfield, Illinois.

The good news for fans of the restaurant is Ellen Kumar is putting the building and the business for sale. She described it as a "pretty turnkey business," saying members of the staff have been there for more than a dozen years, and they could offer help and guidance to any potential new business owners.

Currently, the building is being offered for sale at a price of \$190,000 through **Landmark Realty Bethalto Associate Broker Charlie Bertels**.

The description in the listing reads as follows:

*Kumar's Restaurant is for sale!!! Located in Downtown Wood River for 30+ years and 12+ years at the same location, corner of Ferguson Ave. and Whitelaw. Really great menu, reasonable prices, good service, nice variety, open from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, and 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday only, due to the high demand for fish. Great carryout sales, especially for the famous local salad. Additional information available through a realtor or by calling office or agent. Most servers and food prep employees have long time work history.*

That complete listing can be found at: [http://www.landmarkrealtyil.com/-/listing/18121185/53-East-Ferguson-Avenue-Wood-River-IL-62095?content\\_index=1&from=results](http://www.landmarkrealtyil.com/-/listing/18121185/53-East-Ferguson-Avenue-Wood-River-IL-62095?content_index=1&from=results)

Kumar's Kafe will continue to be in business until summer 2017, Ellen Kumar said.