



Wood River Celebrates Growth with Chili Cookoff, Halloween Fun and More in October

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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WOOD RIVER - As the cooler weather settles in, the City of Wood River invites the Riverbend region to enjoy fall-themed fun at several events in the coming weeks.

“We’ve got lots of things happening downtown and we’ve got new businesses opening a lot, so this just gives us an opportunity to show off what we’re doing,” Kristen Burns said. Burns is a community leader and member of Wood River Economic Development, an organization that promotes growth in Wood River.

The organization’s second annual Chili Cookoff will start the spooky season. This free event is scheduled for 2–6 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023. Families can listen to bands, check out local businesses and judge the city’s best chili. The [band Money Shot](#) will play throughout the afternoon.

The Chili Cookoff event will be centered in the downtown district along E. Ferguson Avenue. Team can compete for \$40 to see who has the best chili. Check out the [Wood River Economic Development, LLC Facebook page](#) for details, including how to register.

Following the Chili Cookoff, Burns and Mayor Tom Stalcup predict Halloween will be frighteningly fun with Wood River’s Downtown Trick-or-Treat event. Families are encouraged to stop by E. Ferguson Avenue from 6–8 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 23, 2023. Kids can show off their costumes and collect candy from Wood River’s businesses.

“It’s so crazy and so much fun,” Burns said. “Everybody brings their kids out and we usually run out of candy because there’s so many people. All of the businesses come out

and do something fun. It's just a really cool experience to see all these people down there."

The spooky spirit continues with the Wood River Fire Department's 38th annual Halloween parade on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023. The parade will take off at 10:30 a.m. on 6th Street and end at the Parks and Recreation department's Round House on N. Wood River Avenue. To register your float, visit the [registration website](#) or check out the [official Wood River Fire Department Facebook page](#).

And speaking of the Wood River Parks and Recreation department, the Round House will be hosting a job fair from 5–7 p.m. on Oct. 19, 2023. Director Jason Woody is hoping to fill several positions at the new Wood River recreation center, which Stalcup predicts will be open by the end of the year.

"We had some naysayers on the rec center when we first began, and we've turned them," Stalcup added. "We've had people come in and want to apply for jobs that didn't want anything to do with it beforehand. It's really a positive thing for the city of Wood River."

Ultimately, Burns and Stalcup hope the upcoming events will bring more people downtown to check out the new businesses and developments. The City of Wood River has been focused on expansion, and they are excited to celebrate that growth with their residents throughout the month of October.

"To get the people out is great. It's good friends that you see that you don't see all the time," Stalcup said. "They get to see all the improvements that have been done throughout the months, so we look forward to it."

