

# The History of the Flash Mob at the Alton Halloween Parade (And How to View It)

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter  
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ALTON - Principia College's dance program will continue its flash mob tradition at the 106th Alton Halloween Parade on Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2023.

This year marks the 12th anniversary of the flash mob. Principia students choreograph and perform the dance in front of Frew's Bridal, right before the parade hits the

intersection of Piasa and 3rd Street in downtown Alton. Erin Lane, the Principia dance professor who organizes the flash mob, explained the tradition is a fun and meaningful way for students to connect with the Alton community.

“Alton is really special,” she said. “It’s wonderful, and I’m really happy that Prin Dance can be a part of it as much as we are, and I hope that we can grow and do more.”

To get the best view of the flash mob, Lane suggests gathering near the end of the parade route at Frew’s Bridal — located at 305 Piasa Street in Alton — by 7:30 p.m. on Oct. 31. They hope to perform around 7:45 p.m.

“The beauty of the flash mob is you never really know when it’s going to happen,” Lane laughed, adding, “It’s just what the students want to bring to the community and it’s my greatest pleasure mentoring them through this journey of finding their own artistic voice and finding themselves within their expression, and it’s just beautiful to watch it bloom and shift as the years go by.”

Fifteen students will participate in the flash mob this year, including many campus leaders and non-dance students who wanted to get involved. Students Hanna Dow and Emily Kraack choreographed the dance.

The flash mob started as a partnership between Principia’s dance program and Frew’s Bridal, where students posed as live models in the windows during the parade. The model tradition ended during the COVID-19 Pandemic, but Principia has continued to partner with Frew’s and local dance studios for a parade performance. Lane explained that the flash mob is at the end of the parade route to encourage people to gather in that direction, as thousands of people attend the parade each year.

Lane enjoys working with students to choreograph and perform the flash mob because the tradition shows students how they can bring dance into their communities. She points out that it’s good practice for students to get involved in the local art scene beyond campus, and it encourages them to continue dancing after graduation.

“I just love connecting with people within our community and within the local dance community. I think that’s really important for us to do and for our students to see how they can connect with a community that’s around them,” Lane said. “a beautiful opportunity for community connection to Principia and Principia Dance.”

Principia’s dance program has “a strong footprint on campus,” Lane added. The college offers a dance minor, but the classes are open to all students. You can learn more about Principia Dance, including upcoming performances, at [the program’s official webpage](#).

Visit [RiverBender.com/events](https://RiverBender.com/events) for [more information about the 106th Alton Halloween Parade](#). The parade kicks off at 7 p.m. on Oct. 31, 2023 at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Broadway. Check out [this article](#) on [RiverBender.com](https://RiverBender.com) for details about additional Halloween celebrations in the Riverbend.