

COMMUNITY NEWS/EVENTS

Gardner-Webb's Octoberfest Returns with Community Partners

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Ruby C. Hunt YMCA and Town of Boiling Springs Join in Hosting a Fun Evening for Families

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—An annual fall tradition returns this year—with more activities and new partnerships. Gardner-Webb University's Octoberfest will be held Thursday, Oct. 27, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center (LYCC). Joining the GWU campus as hosts for the event are Ruby C. Hunt YMCA and the Town of Boiling Springs.

Robbie Gaines, associate minister to the University for Community Engagement & Athletic Ministries, said being able to once again offer the event is exciting for several reasons, but “the main thing is having the opportunity for our students, staff and faculty to engage with the community in a safe and fun environment.”



- ▲ Last year, a drive-through Trunk-or-Treat was held instead of Octoberfest. Photo by Sarah Garrison / GWU Photo Staff
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Octoberfest was cancelled in 2020 because of COVID-19 and then scaled back in 2021 to a drive-through Trunk-or-Treat. In the past, the event has drawn hundreds of children and their families. This year, visitors will enjoy a Trunk-or-Treat, inflatable obstacle course and 9-hole miniature golf course provided by the Ruby YMCA, and nearly 40 games and activities sponsored by GWU athletic teams and student clubs. The Town of Boiling Springs is bringing a display of rescue vehicles. Food will also be available. Also joining the event is the Cleveland County Partnership for Children, a non-profit agency that assists the families of Cleveland County in finding no cost childcare. They will distribute information and sign children up for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, which provides free books to children ages 0 to 5.

Barbara Fitch, operations director for the Ruby YMCA, is looking forward to the evening of fun. “My staff and I at Ruby C. Hunt YMCA are excited to partner with GWU and the Town of Boiling Springs,” she asserted. “When we pull our resources together, we can provide a great event for our community. I look forward to more partnerships in the future.”

Gaines added that everyone agrees the event is more than giving away candy; “We want the activities to be as engaging as possible—people connecting with people.”

He continued, “Hopefully, we can continue to make more events like this where we blur the lines of this is where Gardner-Webb starts. I’ve asked the clubs and athletes to think creatively about things they could make, or give, or do...make a memory and make a moment for a child. They may not remember our students’ names and might not remember all that goes with it, but they sure can remember that they had a lot of fun. It’s going to be the people they were with more than the things they received.”

Gaines noted that the Student-Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC) has made this project their focus for service this semester. “They will be a big part of what makes this a successful event,” he affirmed. “We have way too many incredible students, and I’m really excited for people to see them.”

Auxiliary aids will be made available to persons with disabilities upon request 10 working days prior to the event. Please call 704-406-4270 or email disabilityservices@gardner-webb.edu with your request.



▲ Photos from Octoberfest in 2019 and the drive-through event in 2021

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